

## Trump's wall

One of the most repulsive of Donald Trump's rich kid schoolyard bully statements, which have astoundingly made him a leading Republican presidential candidate, was the first one that got so much attention, his promise to "build a Great Wall" between the U.S. and Mexico.

He still drags it out occasionally, though the most cursory glance at the world and its history reveals it is littered with walls men have built to keep other people in or out of someplace. And every one of them failed. Hear about the one in Berlin? How about the one to keep the Scottish Picts out of Britain?

How about every castle and walled town ever built? How about the Great Wall of China, which is reportedly visible from the moon? If its purpose was to keep out moon men, maybe it succeeded. Otherwise, it's a proven stupid idea.

And so are virtually all the rest of his proclamations. I think he's the first candidate actively courting stupid people as his political base. And they're responding. Fortunately, I don't think 25 percent of registered Republicans have ever elected anybody.

JOSEPH WEBB  
Astoria

## Buckle kids up

We have clear guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: "All children aged 12 and under should ride properly buckled in the back seat. Air bags can kill young children riding in the front seat." Turning off the air bag or moving a seat back is not an option.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week that I am involved with the Start Making A Reader Today (SMART) program at Warrenton Grade School, in the morning, I observe adults dropping off children at the school from the front seat of their vehicles — several without use of the seat belt — and from the back seat without a safety device.

This happens about two to three times a week, in plain sight of most everyone around them. It is like an everyday thing. I worry that there might be an accident along the way to school, and a child would be lost due to this lack of judgment by the parent.

Please, when carrying children in the vehicle, ensure their safety by using the proper restraints and putting young children in the back seat.

MEL JASMIN  
Warrenton

## Thanks to all

Following Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I'd like to give some thanks to some of the people and organizations in our wonderful community.

Many thanks to *The Daily Astorian*, whose staff and management have been so willing and open to shining a spotlight on Metastatic Breast Cancer (MBC), the incurable breast cancer. Our newspaper went above and beyond, with coverage highlighting the need for more research funding to find a cure. We all now know we will not cure breast cancer until we cure MBC.

To the Astoria High School women's soccer team: Putting on your #pinkisnota-cure T-shirts and spreading awareness of the plight of 30 percent of breast cancer patients really rocked my world. Social media has spread that amazing photograph around, and the feedback and kudos have been amazing.

Special thanks to Kelsey and Adrienne Hunter for spearheading a different kind of awareness, and also fundraising for Metavivor, an organization dedicating 100 percent of funds to MBC research grants.

To Zetty Nemlowill and the Astoria Co-op's "Beers to your Health" lecture series: Thank you for allowing and encouraging me to talk about an uncomfortable subject to a wonderful crowd as part of this lecture series.

Thank you to Columbia Memorial Hospital for asking me to tell my own story at their annual Astoria Column Pink Out event. Our community, hospital, and Cancer Care Center have been so sup-

# Homeless lives matter, too

Some good people of Astoria may be incensed, chagrined, or enraged upon reading "The homelessness dilemma" article in *The Daily Astorian* Oct. 23. As a priest/lawyer I'm in the enraged category.

In his visit to the U.S., Pope Francis said, "we can find no social or moral justification, no justification whatsoever, for lack of housing." Apparently, this finding is not based on religious doctrine. While being interviewed, Bernie Sanders, when asked his religion said, "I am who I am." Then he added that he shares Francis' concern for the poor.

The article leads one to conclude that such concerns are not embraced by local leaders. To them, the problem is public urination and defecation by street people and their tendency to hang out in Astoria's 63 parks. The first problem is solved by placing three por-

ta-pottys along the Riverwalk (rental cost at about \$300 a month). Only more police rousting is proposed for the park problem.

How street people will find their special toilets, or get there from locations throughout the city is unknown. Why tent cities could not be established in a couple of parks is unknown. And why spend thousands of dollars on police, auto, and jail expenses when these persons are on the streets again in a few hours, due to jail overcrowding?

Absent serious crime, police intervention does little to alleviate homelessness. Recognizing this, some Astorians established a warming center for cold winter months. First United Methodist Church has provided its hall. A shower, washer and dryer will be installed. Expenses for heating, water, light, blankets, towels and some coffee and snacks will be incurred.

Asked to contribute to these expenses, the city said there is no money in the budget, but found an unbudgeted amount of \$16,000 for a dog and pony show promoting a new library. Notwithstanding a long line of U.S. Supreme Court cases allowing religious organizations to receive public funds for exclusively secular purposes, the city claims a contribution to the shelter is unconstitutional.

If you believe homeless lives matter please contribute to the warming shelter. Make your tax deductible check to Grace Episcopal Church. On the memo line, be sure to put Jubilee Ministries/Warming Center. Send to the church at 1545 Franklin Ave., Astoria OR 97103.

Volunteer to help monitor at the shelter by calling 503-325-1895 or emailing drewherzig@gmail.com

GEORGE McCARTIN  
Astoria

portive of my efforts to bring awareness to some of the realities of breast cancer.

Last but not least — probably most — thanks to Libby DiBartolomeo for organizing the Astoria Die-in for Metastatic Breast Cancer as her senior project. Her passion and ongoing fundraising for Metavivor have been awe-inspiring. The Die-in was one of several that took place across the U.S. on Oct. 13, including on the west lawn of the Capital in Washington, DC.

The brainchild of <http://metup.org>, a new activist organization whose members are mostly MBC patients themselves, these events have netted awareness to all, but especially to our federal legislators on the committee for cancer research funding. We might see amazing changes in allocations towards MBC research as a result. Our small community is part of something much larger, thanks to Libby's hard work.

LAURA SNYDER  
Astoria

## Time to say no

Open letter to Gov. Kate Brown: I am one of many people in Clatsop County fighting against liquefied natural gas (LNG) import/export in Oregon and on the Columbia River.

It has been over 10 years since we started educating ourselves, writing letters, giving public comment, going to meetings at the federal, state, county, and city level. Citizens of Oregon know that LNG, whether importing or exporting, is horrible for our environment, our economic growth, our health, and livability along our beautiful Oregon coast.

You, Gov. Brown, can stop this insanity by using the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act. I am sure there are even more ways at your disposal to stop this gold rush to export our natural resources.

When you were running for Oregon Secretary of State, you came to Astoria. We asked you what was your position concerning Oregon LNG and Bradwood Landing LNG building huge terminals on the lower Columbia River. You told us that you thought it was not a good idea. What is your opinion now?

Please do the right thing and just say no to LNG export/import in Oregon. No to Oregon LNG and no to Jordan Cove LNG in Coos Bay.

Washington state said no to LNG. California said no to LNG. Tijuana, Mexico, said no to LNG. When is the state of Oregon going to finally say no?

LORI DURHEIM  
Astoria

## Thank you

I am writing to publicly thank the young woman and her friend who helped me out in a moment of panic and confusion. The engine of my old Dodge had just died in heavy traffic, leaving me stranded and blocking the east bound lane on Marine Drive. I hopped out and checked under the hood, but could see no obvious problem. Later I found out that my fuel pump had failed.

My cell phone had broken

the day before so I had no way to call AAA. I tried pushing the vehicle to the curb, but the incline and the weight of the vehicle were too much for me. Cars were beginning to line up, and I could feel the seething impatience.

Seeing my befuddlement and despair, a young woman in a white pickup immediately behind me decided to help out rather than drive around me, as others were beginning to do. She offered me her phone to make a call. As I thanked her profusely, she gave me a greater, albeit intangible, gift. She said, "No worries. We're a community." That really touched my heart.

Though there was no time to say so, to me her act of spontaneous kindness reflected the true spirit of Astoria. We're a community. Exactly. That's our strong suit, the reason my wife and I love living here.

Before I could finish the call the young woman noticed a fellow pulling up in his pickup on the adjacent street. She recognized him and said he graduated from high school in her class, and was a really nice guy. He helped me push my car into a safe area off of the roadway.

I regret that in my befuddlement I didn't get either of the young people's names. I hope in some way they will find out that I revere them as shining examples of Astoria citizenry. I thank them again for their help, and for the gift.

We're a community. Pass it on.

ROGER DORBAND  
Astoria

## Hearts and minds

I am an economic exile from Astoria. I was evicted on New Year's Day 2015 from a old house in which I lived as a rental tenant for nearly 16 years. The house was sold to provide my landlord hospice care for Alzheimer's. Ironically he died the day I was evicted.

The new owner from Utah stipulated the eviction. The old house is probably gentrified by now, shielded from demolition by Astoria's stringent preservation edicts.

Homeless war veterans are a national cliché, so I am fortunate my sister has allowed my unplanned imposition upon her household.

I lived in Astoria for 30 years. I earlier worked on local tuna and crab boats a few

seasons. I was aboard one boat when it sank in the notorious Columbia River Bar, which might be considered an eviction of sorts. So might a house I lived in on Bond Street that burned beyond repair in 1989. A careless smoker fell asleep one night in an upstairs apartment, the first of his two cremations.

I am one of millions of Americans who have lost their places of residence since the advent of the Great Recession, and are unable to find affordable housing. Hyper-escalating property rates and rents have provoked the homeless epidemic nearly everywhere in the U.S. The causes are mottled; blatant greed and unscrupulous home foreclosures generated by the odious financial collapse foremost among them.

The impetuous gentrification that has swept upon the Oregon coast like a tsunami has been a boon to the real estate industry, especially in popular tourist areas such as Astoria has become quite recently.

Local realty agents expediting sales and evictions claim they are just doing their jobs. That was also what we said in Vietnam when we dis-

possessed Vietnamese families from their homes, and set fire to their villages. At least realtors don't shoot the people they cause to be turned out of their homes, and obviously don't burn down their houses.

But long-term consequences for local families who are unable to find affordable places to live after eviction (or any other form of forced dislocation) might well be as abysmal.

Official Astoria finally seems to be taking notice of the housing disparity, holding meetings and forming committees at least — and developers claim to be interested in building low-cost housing if certain land-use regulations are relaxed. Of course that might also provide a backdoor to logging off the city forest Astoria residents have fought hard to preserve. But their persistent struggle to save the trees might be undercut by losing citizens' rights to property predators.

I did not care for remarks quoted in a Portland newspaper that people from all over the world are moving into Astoria and starting small boutique businesses "that bring a new level of excitement and sophistication to a working class town."

That seems to exalt inequality: those who have more are "better" because they have more. And validates coldblooded displacement of the lesser affluent, who obviously do not possess the sophistry (a root of 'sophistication') of their betters.

Astoria is swiftly becoming a place where personal worth is reckoned by the contents of a wallet rather than hearts and minds. The influx of newer affluence might create a "need" for wall-to-wall (gated) condos on the riverfront adjoining a massive cruise-ship pier and marina. And downtown a tourist Elysium that would be an affected parody of Astoria as the oldest city in the American West.

I just might have to wait until after the earthquake before I am able to afford to live in Astoria again.

MICHAEL PAUL  
McCUSKER  
Waldport



## ENERGY COSTS TOO HIGH? TRY LOOKING AT IT IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT.

Want to lower your energy costs? When you update lighting and other equipment, you can see the difference instantly and recoup your investment in no time. Talk to a qualified trade ally to learn about Energy Trust of Oregon cash incentives for all kinds of energy-saving solutions.



Get more from your energy.

Visit [www.energytrust.org/mybusiness](http://www.energytrust.org/mybusiness) or call us at 1.866.368.7878.

Serving customers of Portland General Electric,  
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