

THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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We exemplify goals of Cultural Trust

Newcomers to Astoria commonly express amazement at the level of voluntarism and giving that rolls out every year. In this season, which includes United Way giving as well as end-of-year charitable giving, Clatsop County's goodwill is especially apparent.

Our county is a poster child for Oregon's commitment to arts and culture, which is rewarded by the Oregon Cultural Trust. Last Thursday night at the Liberty Theater, the Clatsop County Cultural Coalition gave checks for almost \$11,000 to a group of disparate causes. Some recipients were familiar to local audiences — Little Ballet Theater, North Coast Chorale and Partners for the PAC, for instance. Others are less well known — Clatsop Care Memory Community and the Maritime Archaeological Society.

Taken as a group, these beneficiaries exemplify the cultural richness of life in this corner of Oregon.

Our local Cultural Coalition gets its money from the Oregon Cultural Trust, which gains its revenues from a tax credit, as well as sales of custom license plates. Created by the Oregon

Legislature in 2001, the Cultural Trust is unique. No other state provides a single funding mechanism that allows taxpayers to benefit while giving to an array of arts, culture and historic preservation organizations in all parts of Oregon.

In its 14th year, the Oregon Cultural Trust raised a record \$4.4 million in fiscal year 2015 and will give \$2.6 million in fiscal year 2016. The Trust's principal is more than \$26 million.

Now is the time to think about making gift to the Oregon Cultural Trust. If you have given to a nonprofit organization in the arts and culture category, you may give an identical amount to the Trust. And you get a tax credit equal to your amount of giving.

For most of us, it is one of the best deals in Oregon tax law.

Support the Trust. It's a gift you will be proud of.

Get it together to create housing payoff

In the latest bad news for renters — and quite good news for landlords — the U.S. Census Bureau last week said that Oregon's 2014 rental vacancy rate was 3.6 percent in 2014, the lowest in the whole nation.

Nor can apartment hunters hope for much more luck by looking across the Columbia River — the vacancy rate in Washington state was 4.2 percent — the fifth lowest in the U.S., including Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico.

This issue is one abundantly familiar to renters in towns around the Columbia estuary and the adjacent seashore. Though perhaps not so scarce or anywhere near as pricey as in Portland and Seattle, lack of apartments and affordable rental houses is becoming a limiting factor for our economy.

When it comes to recruiting and retaining employees, their ability to locate affordable housing is a prime factor. Particularly for important local industries including hospitality and seafood, prevailing wages run headlong into a rental market that can easily consume half of monthly take-home pay. The rule of thumb is that landlords require annual income of 40 times monthly rent. A bargain-basement, one-bedroom apartment in our area might therefore require an income of \$30,000. The one rental house in a recent local classified advertising section would necessitate at least \$50,000 in annual income.

The U.S. Coast Guard, one of our biggest economic contributors and one that plays a huge role in ensuring the viability of

maritime commerce and fisheries, provides some of its own housing. Even so, the tightness of the rental market is bound to be a consideration for the service as it contemplates expansion plans.

Answers to this problem are largely up to the interplay of our capitalist system, in the form of private investments in new multi-family housing construction, as well as working to improve business conditions so employers can afford to pay higher wages.

From a public-policy standpoint, leaders of municipalities and counties must keep housing as a top action item. We need to be looking at tax incentives, flexibility in terms of land-use rules and the full inventory of other tools to encourage and facilitate affordable housing. Area nonprofits such as Craft3 also can play a valuable role in helping find solutions and by matchmaking between investors and developers.

The population west of the Cascades in Oregon and Washington will be swelling for many years into the future. The equivalent of entire cities-worth of new residents will be squeezing into this fortunate and fragile area. Managing this growth will require finding places for everyone to live, without despoiling farms, forests, wildlife habitat and open spaces.

Deliberate, well-planned housing solutions will take years to bring to fruition. We to get our act together and lay plans now for keeping roofs over Pacific Northwest heads for generations to come.

Republicans, guns and abortion

By GAIL COLLINS
New York Times News Service

The presidential race has degenerated to the point where I am going to attempt to cheer you up by talking about abortion and guns.

And state legislatures.

We do not, as a nation, devote a whole lot of attention to what happens in state capitols, although I personally enjoy those fights about selecting an official rock or state muffin. In recent years, one of the most popular activities in many legislatures has been finding new ways to expand the right to bear arms in places like schools (Utah) or bars (Tennessee) or airports (Georgia). The other is tromping on reproductive rights. I am telling you all this as a lead-in to a fascinating bill that was recently proposed in the Missouri House of Representatives. It would treat Missourians seeking to buy firearms the same way it treats Missourians seeking to end a pregnancy.

"For instance, there would be a 72-hour waiting period," said the sponsor, Rep. Stacey Newman.

Missouri has piled so many unnecessary requirements on abortion providers that it's down to one clinic in St. Louis. Newman didn't attempt to limit the state to one gun store — her bill just requires that residents buy their guns at a licensed dealer located at least 120 miles from their homes. After cooling their heels in a local motel for three days, the prospective buyers would have to listen to a lecture about the medical risks associated with firearms and view pictures of people with fatal gun wounds.

Most Missouri lawmakers regard themselves as pro-life. Therefore, Newman feels, they ought to want to do something about the fact that St. Louis and Kansas City both rank in the Top 10 American cities for firearm deaths.



Gail Collins



Missouri state Rep. Stacey Newman

What this campaign needs is a 72-hour waiting period for everything.

"It was one way to get people's attention," she said.

Nobody thinks her bill is going to pass — or even get a hearing in the Republican-dominated Legislature. Newman says the odds are far more favorable for proposed legislation that would allow people to carry concealed weapons on college campuses and require that women who want abortions get permission from the man who impregnated them.

We live in hard times, people. But when you think of Missouri, give a fond mental shout-out to Stacey Newman. And remember her lesson — when it comes to civil liberties, there's currently far more concern in this country over the right to buy weapons than there is over a woman's right to control her own body.

All the major Republican candidates for president are pretty much on the same page when it comes to firearms. So much so that you probably can't guess which one of them said: "I used to think they needed to be registered,

but if you register them they just come and find you and take your guns."

OK, it was Ben Carson.

All the major candidates are also opposed to giving women any rights whatsoever when it comes to terminating a pregnancy. But lately, there's been disagreement on the far edge of the issue: whether bans should include an exception for rape and incest victims. It came up at a recent gathering of a group of donors and activists called the Republican Jewish Coalition. (This was the same event where Donald Trump told his Jewish audience: "I'm a negotiator, like you folks ... Is there anyone in this room who doesn't negotiate deals?")

Sen. Ted Cruz, the up-and-coming darling of social conservatives, was asked about his abortion positions, and he rambled on about the evils of contraceptives without ever acknowledging that he does oppose giving any leeway in the cases of rape or incest. Cruz is also, of course, an avid protector of all things gun-related, and recently theorized that the man arrested in the mass shooting at a Planned Parenthood clinic was a "transgender leftist activist." Ah Ted Cruz, Ted Cruz.

"If the nominee of the Republican Party will not allow an exception for rape and incest, they will not win," predicted Sen. Lindsey Graham, who followed Cruz to the podium. The presumption is that voters will demand some show of mercy, but there are plenty of women who are not victims of rape whose stories are equally heart-rending. Girls who become pregnant before they're old enough to know what they're doing. Poor women with several children and two jobs whose birth control method fails. Women who desperately want a baby but discover the fetus they're carrying is too deformed to survive after birth. Most Americans don't want to prioritize — they'd leave the whole matter to the women and their doctors.

But the current debate on the Republican side has slid so far to the right that the moderates are people who do not want to force rape victims to carry the fetus to full term. Or allow concealed weapons in kindergarten.

Maybe what this campaign needs is a 72-hour waiting period for everything.

The Ted Cruz establishment

By DAVID BROOKS
New York Times News Service

There are two types of Machiavellians in politics, Selfish Machiavellians and Kind Machiavellians.

The Selfish ones are the ones we usually think of — the nakedly ambitious people who are always strategizing, sometimes ruthlessly, for their own personal advantage.

The Kind Machiavellians realize that it's smart to get along with people, so they pick their friendships strategically, feigning affection toward those who might be useful.

In Washington and maybe in life, there are many more Kind Machiavellians than Selfish ones. But Ted Cruz has always stood out for being nakedly ambitious for himself.

He was always drawn to establishment institutions: Princeton, Harvard Law. His personal drive to gain elite posts was noted, even by the standards of such places. He learned tennis to get a clerkship with Justice William Rehnquist. According to *The Boston Globe*, a female law student who was giving him a ride was shocked when he quickly asked her about her IQ and SAT scores.

He joined the Republican establishment while young, working for George W. Bush, although he was marginalized when administration jobs were handed out, reportedly because his ambition was off-putting. Yet Cruz is intelligent, and knows that sometimes you have to switch tactics in order to climb. Over the past few years, Cruz has become a team player. In fact, he's become a central member of the conservative establishment.

A little history lesson is in order. During the 1970s conservatives self-consciously built establishment institutions to counter the liberal establishment. But with the election of Ronald Reagan, the conservative establishment split into two. There was the regular conservative establishment, filled with mainstream conservatives who wanted to use the inside levers of power that Republicans now controlled.

But there was also a conservative counter-establishment. This was populated with people like Paul Weyrich,



Richard Vigue, Brent Bozell and others who were temperamentally incapable of governance. Many of these Old Right people broke with Reagan because he wasn't ideologically pure on this or that policy matter.

Today the conservative community still has at least two establishments, or three if you want to throw in the young Reform Conservatives. The mainstream establishment tends to side with party leaders like Paul Ryan and whoever the presidential nominee is. The Old Right Counter Conservative Establishment has grown in recent years. For example, the Heritage Foundation, which used to be more or less conservative establishment, has gone more Counter Establishment.

The difference is the establishment wants to use the levers of power to practically pass reforms. The Counter Establishment believes that Washington is pervasively corrupt and is implacably hostile to the GOP leadership.

Since he came to Washington, Ted Cruz has meticulously aligned himself with the rising and rich conservative Counter Establishment. He's called his party leader a liar on the Senate floor. In another recent floor speech he accused every Republican but him and Mike Lee of selling out their principles for money. His efforts to shut down the government did enormous harm to the Republican Party and to the country, but they cemented his relationship with the members of the Counter Establishment. Crucially, those battles enabled him to amass the email lists that are a large part of his donor base.

His campaign is uniting the Counter Establishment. According to some excellent reporting in the *National Journal*, he was rapturously received by

Republican presidential candidate Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas meets with supporters after speaking at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, Thursday.

Pablo Martinez Monsivais AP Photo

Ted Cruz has always stood out for being nakedly ambitious for himself.

put it, the paradox of Cruz is that "The man who boasts of his ideological purity is perhaps the most obviously tactical candidate."

Cruz is riding the shift in the conservative activist establishment, the way groups like the Club for Growth now provide a power base for someone who wants to run against the GOP leadership.

A friend once joked that the journal has the ultimate power: The power to choose who he wants to be co-opted by. Ted Cruz is surging as the figurehead of the rich and interlocked Counter Establishment. And he gets to do it while pretending that he is anti-establishment. That's a nice trick. Even a Machiavellian one.