

Clammed up

Open letter to the director of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Gov. Kate Brown: I received a letter telling me that my Disabled Clam Digging Permit No. 662 is being canceled.

I went to the trouble of getting my doctor's certification that my arthritic back problems were keeping me from enjoying this activity. I live at the coast, and have a son who can dig my clams for me, but he is limited, and I don't want to go into his limit to get some for myself. I paid for, and have an active clam diggers license.

I called the ODFW office, and was told by a representative that Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) now being enforced were passed in 1964, long before I obtained my permit. The new revised statutes, as presented by the ODFW to me, do not allow a permit for my disability — they only relate to fishing and hunting.

It would seem to me that if the director of ODFW is conscientious in his responsibility, that he would do something to remedy this injustice.

For the department to suddenly come out and cancel procedures that have been in effect for 50 years, based on legislation passed in 1964, appears to me to be an overreach.

Certainly the department must have some procedure to correct this wrongful cancellation? Please advise.

NORMAN BENKE
Gearhart

Warrenton wishes?

It is outrageous that Warrenton and Seaside kids are excluded from the Wishing Tree gifts. For several years now, we've donated approximately \$300 worth of toys, clothes, and books per season for the needy children whose paper bells we selected from the wishing trees set up in Warrenton banks and businesses, thinking we were helping all Clatsop County kids, including Warrenton kids.

Recently we learned from a front page article, "A wish, an ornament, a promise" (*The Daily Astorian*, Dec. 11), that our contributions benefited only Knappa and Astoria kids. Even the staff at the stores and banks who host a wishing tree were under the impression it was for all kids in the county. How deceptive is that?

We will never contribute to the Wishing Tree again. Instead, we'll find a needy family in Warrenton and donate directly. The Wishing Tree organizers have cooked their own Christmas goose.

MARY ANN BRANDON
Warrenton

Parking power

Get real, people. It's a parking lot, not a heritage site. Most small towns would love to have so many free city parking spaces. It is also nice to be able to kick the cars off so there can be events like Sunday Market.

Get rid of the contaminated soil, fill the hole, pave it and get on with playing in the lot.

A real estate consultant would tell you that one level flat space for parking is this property's "highest and best use."

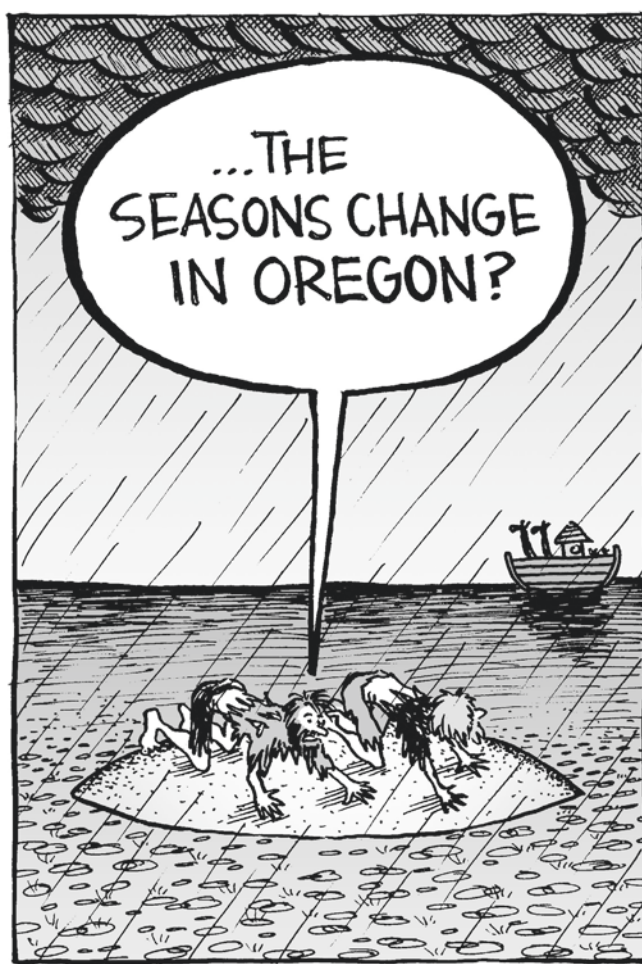
STEVE EMMONS
Astoria

LNG a good thing

Find myself flabbergasted when reading the letters opposing the proposed liquefied natural gas LNG facility in Warrenton, in light of the economy of the lower Columbia region.

Every year we have multiple food drives to provide food for individuals and families, and every year the need grows. Providing food for those who can't find a job, or get a job that pays more than minimum wage is good, but how about doing something to reverse this trend, like finding industries that will pay a living family wage?

The LNG facility in Warrenton will do that, and it will be the catalyst to others to start spin-off and support businesses that will also pay good wages. We are talking about 100 jobs in the plant when it is finished. I believe I



Protect our North Coast brand

The best job-creating industry in my state is clean energy," said Washington Gov. Jay Inslee during a panel discussion at the climate talks in Paris. Speaking on the same panel, the mayor of Vancouver, B.C., Gregor Robertson, praised the "brand value" of being a green city. According to a brand valuation, Vancouver's being a green city is worth a \$31.5 billion "core value."

I don't know the dollar amount of Clatsop County's core value, but I do know that what we have here is priceless.

Our North Coast brand and our core value is our clean and healthy air, easy access to our beautiful and relatively unspoiled natural world, neighborly rural and small-town life, dark night skies, rich and compelling history, the mighty Columbia, the magnificent Pacific, and much more — enough to

fill our hearts and enrich our lives. We are a blessed alternative to the noise, crowds, and pressures of industrialized and big city life.

These treasured aspects of our lives here would be destroyed by Oregon LNG's export terminal and pipeline proposed for Clatsop County. Check out www.columbiariverkeeper.org/our-work to see how bad this project would be for us.

The North Coast has the talent, resources, and people to create clean energy jobs. These are the jobs Oregon and the U.S. will need by the thousands for decades to come, long after the global natural gas, coal, and oil markets have collapsed and long after a liquefied natural gas terminal in Warrenton would be obsolete.

It's up to us to protect our brand, our core value and our future. Tell Gov. Kate Brown to uphold Oregon

law and Clatsop County's denial of the pipeline. Tell Sens Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley and Rep. Suzanne Bonamici to walk their talk of U.S. energy independence, confronting climate change and a sustainable, renewable future.

Their contact information is as follows:

- Gov. Brown, 503-378-4582 or <http://1.usa.gov/LLWuTxU>
- Sen. Wyden, 503-589-4555 or www.wyden.senate.gov/contact
- Sen. Merkley, 202-224-3753 or www.merkley.senate.gov/contact
- Rep. Bonamici, 202-225-0855 or <http://1.usa.gov/2258jur>

Be inspired to create a green Oregon future. Listen to the podcast of the panel discussion at <http://bit.ly/1O7oW4w>. Onward to a green Oregon.

LAURIE CAPLAN
Astoria

read that the average salary for LNG facilities in this country is about \$75,000 a year. There will be at least two large tugs stationed here.

The taxes paid — did I hear \$90 million, annually? The Warrenton School District would be a major recipient, and could likely be freed from the state support system that isn't getting the job done. The Warrenton city income would be another winner — it could finally afford the police and fire protection that the citizens have wanted, and has been recommended in numerous studies.

The Port of Astoria, Clatsop County and Clatsop Community College would realize substantial increases in tax revenue. Also, there will be some 1,500 construction jobs, many of which local workers would be able to fill. How could these things be bad for us?

The concerns for the river environment and safety are phony. How can something that is some minus 2,500 degrees be warm enough to increase the temperature of our river? Then there's "it will explode," but LNG will not explode. It will burn as it warms and becomes a gas.

If you are really afraid, the double tanker trucks hauling gasoline through Astoria could explode. Then there is the "big one" (earthquake) — the tank may rupture and burn or sink into the ground. Japan has many LNG tanks, and recently had a "big one." They weren't damaged.

Why is the 1,500 foot safety zone surrounding the LNG tankers of concern? Cruise ships have the same security zone.

Like it or not, LNG is going to become a major source of power for the merchant ships that transit our river. The state of Washington is ordering new ferries powered by LNG. We can either get with this developing trend, or again lose out.

KARL R. (DICK)
HELLBERG
Warrenton

Readers needed

Start Making a Reader Today (SMART) grade school program is in need of a few good volunteers.

Reads like a call to arms,

does it not? Well, it is a call for a few volunteers who can spare an hour minimum each week, working with students in grades 1, 2 and 3 in schools within our county. SMART is in Astoria, Warrenton, Gearhart and Seaside. When offering your time to help a student learn, you are enhancing a child's learning abilities.

An hour includes two one half hour sessions with two students. Working with a local SMART coordinator, your choice of time could be anywhere from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. If you feel you might have the time to help, please call your local school of choice and make contact with a coordinator for an application.

For those of you in the Warrenton area, your coordinator is Jeanne Moha, 503-861-0443. If you feel you could help out in this program, call her and ask for an application.

As a member of the SMART program for the past 10 years, I continue to volunteer hours at Warrenton Grade School. For any person wishing to become involved in this very important addition to learning for our children within our county, I will be glad to fax, email or mail an application to you. Just call me at 503-861-2030 or 503-440-0086. Any volunteers wanting to sign up with Warrenton, I will pass your information on to our coordinator.

Also, the SMART volunteers at Warrenton have their names entered onto the "Awesome" awards that each student receives just prior to summer vacation.

We wish you all the very best, and have a wonderful holiday and new year.

MEL JASMIN
Warrenton

Recall needed

The hamlets of Cannon Beach and Arch Cape are facing a potentially critical situation. Our fire chief was fired a couple of months ago with the explanation that there were "administrative and personnel issues." This seemed a dissatisfying reason to almost everyone, but especially to his fellow firefighters. This is because there is no one they trust more than Chief Mike Balzer

to lead them at the scene of any kind of emergency.

There are several locals who are taking the lead in righting this wrong. We have been handed over 60 letters from the community. But more telling, we have 18 letters from Cannon Beach Rural Fire Department emergency medical technicians and firefighters denouncing the board and in support of their beloved chief.

When one of the board members informed the volunteers of Chief Balzer's abrupt termination in a meeting, they asked "Why?" They were told, that it isn't open for discussion, it's a closed issue and to get over it.

Chief Balzer didn't deserve what he was dealt, and his crew certainly doesn't deserve to be talked to like unruly children. Without these volunteers our town would suffer horribly with day-to-day emergencies, let alone a big one.

In a letter it was recommended to the board that this whole matter be considered an opportunity to air differences and reconcile. For the good of all, that would be the best case scenario. There are several reasons for this: It would take years for a newly hired chief to get to know and gain the trust of his team; it would take just as long to attain a working knowledge of the streets and the terrain of the area; and most importantly, for the board to regain the respect and trust of the Volunteer Fire Department.

It appears that they are out of touch with the will of the citizens and fire crew. They displayed a disturbing lack of respect for a man who has dedicated 32 years of selfless duty. Then they showed disregard for the grief and anxiety the crew has over losing their trusted leader — for no substantiated reason. They obviously have no understanding of the bond responders develop for one another.

So if pride and prejudice shall prevail among their insulated little circle, then the community must do what they believe best for their safety and the future of the fire department that is irreplaceable. That would sadly entail a recall.

SUSAN NEUWIRTH
Tolovana Park

Reason for season

Christmas is a wonderful time of year. Stores and streets and many homes are decorated with beautiful lights, ornaments, decorations and messages indicating this to be a very special season. The air and airways are filled with sweet sounds of carols and hymns. Friends, neighbors, co-workers and even strangers greet one another with smiles and "Merry Christmas!"

Children line up to sit in the lap of Santa and present pleas for bikes, dolls and whatever the latest toy might be. And of course, they all confess to having been good the past year.

We send cards and receive cards from friends, family, loved ones, and sometimes nearly forgotten acquaintances. The cards are beautiful, often showing appropriate scenes of snow, sleighs, Santa, wise men, shepherds, angels, and baby Jesus in manger, etc., with wishes of peace, joy, and good will to all.

It is also a very enjoyable season for families to gather and share a feast of good food and express and display love of one another.

Christmas is in many ways the most enjoyable season of the year, but let us not forget, it all points back to Jesus, the son of God. Without Jesus there would be no Christmas.

And the angel said unto (shepherds in the field), "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ, the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:10-14)

Enjoy Christmas, but help someone less fortunate, and pray for our military men and women who are serving and protecting our freedoms and way of life. Attend a church service and give thanks for Jesus our Lord. But resolve to let him be your Lord all the time, not just during this brief season.

KEN TIPPS
Minister, Astoria Church of Christ

Giving community

As a volunteer with the Astoria/Knappa Wishing Tree program, I'd like to express appreciation to the many community members helping to make the program successful. Numerous hours are spent in the multi-step process from application to delivery, usually accompanied by a family food box put together by the Food Basket program.

Accomplishing this in time for distribution day, Dec. 19, takes many individuals and groups working together. As a shopper, this is my favorite gift buying — imaging a child's excitement as they open their gifts. As a volunteer, the many hours spent checking and packaging the gifts is lightened by the generosity of our community. To see these kind and thoughtful gifts come in warms my heart over and over. I feel blessed to live in a community that looks out for its members in so many ways.

Thank you for all your contributions large and small. Together we can make the season a little brighter.

GERI JOHNSON FICK
Astoria

Praying for peace

We've been tempted to start wearing our "I am a Muslim" armbands. We are not Muslims. But the hateful, divisive language on the airways is sickening. We want to say that such antipathy against "them," is also painful to us.

In truth, we don't have such armbands. But, we do have a symbol that tells us that such Muslims are our brothers and sisters, with whom we stand in solidarity. For us, as Lutheran Christians, that symbol is the cross.

For us, Jesus is many things, but one powerful thing he is, is an expression of hospitality. He welcomes the stranger, includes the outcast, removes walls. So it is very painful to hear on the radio a Christian pastor preach hatefully about Muslims. It is ignorant and it is wrong.

We think that the loud hateful rhetoric of we/they is an attempt to have an easy answer in, what is for some people, an uncomfortably diverse world. But we choose to embrace the words of Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in a recent letter to the Muslim American community when she wrote:

"We believe God calls us to resist what is divisive, discriminatory, xenophobic, racist or violent, and we want you to look to us as allies and friends ... "Together with you, we are committed to building a stronger society based on the dignity of each human being, the value of diversity, the holiness of creation and the common good ..."

In this holy season we pray that the light of peace and love will shine brightly here on the North Coast.

PASTOR JOHN AND
JACKIE WECKER
Astoria

Victim's fault?

Blame the victim. Roberta Morgan has been hit by inattentive drivers eight times, usually while crossing Lief Erikson Drive at the signal on 33rd Street in her motorized wheelchair ("At an Uppertown adult foster home, a crash course in responsibility," *The Daily Astorian*, Dec. 14).

Ms. Morgan has been faulted for driving her chair in the street, but as a matter of fact, she has little choice. The sidewalks on her route to Safeway, especially on 33rd, are so broken up that maneuvering a wheelchair on them is dangerous or near impossible. Furthermore, residents routinely park cars on the sidewalks on both sides of narrow 33rd.

Ms. Morgan has installed flags on her wheelchair to add to her visibility, but to the clueless she and her wheelchair are invisible — or at best an annoyance in their way. So let's blame the victim for having the gall to have a life, a "home away from home," for getting in the way of our cars.

FRED WHITE
Astoria