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Don't blow it

The Port's financial improvement must not be squandered

The legendary Notre Dame football coach Knute Rockne was renowned for his halftime locker room pep talks. In one of those, Rockne says: "And when you get 'em on the run, keep 'em on the run."

That is good advice for the Port of Astoria. After years of bad financial reports, this year's audit is worth pause and praise. Edward Stratton's Wednesday story describes auditor James Lanzarotta's appearance at this week's commission meeting.

In a nutshell, the Port's financial condition is \$1 million better than at this point in the prior fiscal year. The Port has improved its financial position in three of the past five fiscal years. And, as Lanzarotta noted, it is worth remembering that five years ago the Port had insufficient cash to last 10 days. It is also important to remember that it took Port Executive Director Jim Knight more than a year of financial digging to get the Port's books to a number that was reliable.

The Port and its commission were such a basketcase that civic leaders explored ways to

change its governance.

There is no substitute for sound management, and that is what the Port has for the first time in a decade. Knight brings a broad perspective to the Port, and he has withstood the sometimes baffling and demoralizing arguments within the Port Commission.

Large challenges remain. The commission made a disastrous choice in a management contract for the former Red Lion Inn property. Instead of choosing experienced professionals, they chose a relative amateur with dubious ethics, and they have bled dollars for that mistake.

As the commission takes the next step in developing a long-term plan for the hotel footprint, it must not let cronyism get in the way of smart management.

To paraphrase Rockne, the Port's positive momentum must not be squandered.

World doesn't realize we're in this together

Even the most adamant defender of Lower Columbia River-based fisheries will admit there was rampant overfishing during all of the 19th century and much of the 20th. It was a classic case of grabbing as much as you could before some other guy got it. A new study from the University of British Columbia strongly suggests that these wasteful and greedy patterns continue in much of the world.

In our neighborhood, recognition that everyone's livelihood was being endangered led to some of the world's earliest effective conservation measures. More than a century ago, the commercial industry acted in concert with states to declare some days, and even months, closed to fishing in order to preserve salmon broodstock for future seasons. These conservation steps weren't perfect, but most seasons were economically ample. It wasn't until dam construction that salmon runs fell apart.

However, rarely if ever in earlier years was much consideration given to what happened offshore. It's clear from records at the time that fisheries enforcement was problematic even within the confines of the enormous Columbia estuary. At sea, it literally was the wild west for those fishermen willing to brave the Pacific. It wasn't until 1982 adoption of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea that the U.S. really began enforcing fishing laws out 200 nautical miles. Before then, in the 1960s or example, Japanese and Russian fishing

trawlers routinely nudged close to, or even within, our 12-mile territorial limits.

Basic human behavior, lack of laws and enforcement, poorly designed rules and other factors are all contributing to far more fish mortality than is officially recognized, UBC researchers say in their new study. They believe the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization does a decent job of counting catches from large-scale industrial fisheries, but that it drastically undercounts the quantity of fish caught by small-scale commercial fisheries and subsistence fisheries. Discarded bycatch and illegal fishing also are undercounted.

This undercount, the researchers say, totals more than 70.5 billion pounds a year, more than the weight of the entire human population of the U.S.

They also say that a reported worldwide decline in fish caught since the 1990s has been much larger than previously believed. "This isn't because the world is doing less fishing, it's because over exploitation means there are simply less fish being caught," according to a story by the BBC.

It is time for all nations of the world to arrive at the same conclusions Columbia River and U.S. West Coast fishermen did decades ago: Long-term survival requires enforceable rules, cooperation among fishermen, timely information about stocks, and a commitment to common-sense conservation that ensures delicious fish for consumers and jobs for future generations of fishing families.

GUEST COLUMN

Way to Wellville looks back on Year 1

By SUSAN CODY
Way to Wellville

Way to Wellville recently completed the first year of the five-year initiative to get Clatsop County and four other selected communities around the nation healthier.

"We are in a good place after the first year," said Nicole Williams, vice chairwoman of the Way to Wellville Strategic Council.

The main focus for Clatsop County is early childhood education, she points out, and there is a plan in place to execute it.

"I think the biggest accomplishment in 2015 for all Wellville Five communities, and in Clatsop County particularly, is forming a cohesive leadership team," says Rick Brush, CEO of HICCup (Health Initiative Coordinating Council), the organization that launched Way to Wellville. Brush and Marya Stark, chief investment officer, recently visited Clatsop County to meet with the Way to Wellville Strategic Council.

"The council has a broad representation, with ongoing rhythm setting priorities and is making progress," Brush said. "It is a leadership group that represents the community."

"We have the same voice in the community," added Williams.

"I'm most excited about the fact that our strategic council represents all different interests. We have come together to recognize that prekindergarten education is a great area of focus. We have come to recognize that this priority is part of all our initiatives.

"Our partnership with HICCup has expanded our knowledge of resources outside our community and state."



Susan Cody

WAY TO WELLVILLE CLATSOP COUNTY STRATEGIC COUNCIL

Pam Ackley, Windermere, real estate broker and Warrenton city commissioner
Steven Blakesley, Clatsop County Public Health health promotion specialist
Stacey Brown, Seaside Police Department communications manager
Dan Gaffney, Clatsop P3 coordinator and Clatsop Early Childhood Clinic director
Jeff Hazen, Sunset Empire Transportation executive director
Chris Holen, Baked Alaska chef/owner
Nancy Knopf, Columbia Pacific CCO community health partnership manager
Paulette McCoy, Providence Seaside Hospital public affairs manager
Debbie Morrow, Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization and Warrenton School Board member
Greg Peterson, Clatsop Community Bank vice president
Jill Quackenbush, Clatsop County Juvenile Department prevention coordinator
Jeanette Schacher, Lower Columbia Hospice and Columbia Memorial Hospital home health manager
Kristin Tschannen, Seaside Yoga owner
Nicole Williams, Clatsop Care Health District chief executive officer

The main focus for Clatsop County is early childhood education.

Launching initiatives

Clatsop County Way to Wellville is rolling out Rx: 4 Play, a program in which doctors will prescribe physical activity to their patients who are obese, diabetic or simply could benefit from more activity. The prescription will come with a voucher for free parking at national and state parks and another voucher for Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District or Astoria Parks and Recreation. The program was funded by a \$10,000 grant from Providence Health & Services. The national parks are also planning a prescription program for free annual passes.

"We want people to take advantage of the wonderful natural areas and facilities we have here in Clatsop County," said Sydney Van Dusen, coordinator for Clatsop County's Way to Wellville.

Looking forward

"In 2016, the challenge will be to form clear goals and metrics, establish baselines for initiatives, then identify specific outcomes Way to Wellville hopes to reach by the end of the chal-

lenge in 2019," Brush said.

HICCup now has five employees who will act as "navigators" for each of the Wellville Five communities. Marya Stark is the navigator for Clatsop County. She says her expertise is in structuring financial deals, organizing communities, and "connecting the dots and making connections so initiatives are investment ready."

"We all see the big picture," Williams said of the strategic council members. "Even if education is not what we represent, we can see that investing in early childhood education has a positive impact on the areas we do represent. Down the line, it will affect jobs, graduation rates and the economy."

"I have always seen that the best things are achieved through collaboration, and that's what Way to Wellville is all about. We can leverage partnerships for a healthier community with help from outside sources."

Susan Cody is the communications lead for the Clatsop County Way to Wellville. She is also a former deputy managing editor for The Daily Astorian.

My Sarah Palin romance is over

By ROSS DOUTHAT
New York Times News Service

As a political journalist, you never forget the first time you stop just covering a politician and start identifying with her.

The first time you wed your high-minded vision of what politics should be to a real candidate's perishable breath.

My first time arrived in 2008. It lasted only a short while. Her name was Sarah Palin.

Let me explain. That spring, in between the Republican primary and the fall campaign, my friend Reihan Salam and I had published a book called *Grand New Party: How Republicans Can Win the Working Class and Save the American Dream*.

As the title suggests, we were calling for the GOP to change but not to moderate in the way that a lot of centrist pundits favored, returning to a Rockefeller-Republican model of fiscally prudent social liberalism. Rather, we thought the party's opportunity (and the country's) lay in a kind of socially conservative populism, which would link the family-values language of the religious right to an economic agenda more favorable to the working class than what the Republicans usually had offered.

Unfortunately this message conspicuously lacked a tribune in 2008. Mike Huckabee flirted with populism in the primary but never fleshed out an agenda, and the eventual nominee, John McCain, was an "honor and country" candidate who didn't care much about economic policy.

But in Alaska, there was a young, rising-star governor. She was pro-life, evangelical, a working mom. And her record way up north was reformist in a distinctly nonideological way: She was best known for fighting a corrupt nexus of politicians and the oil-and-gas industry, tackling crony capitalism on behalf of ordinary Alaskans.

And then, shockingly, McCain picked her as his running mate.

At which point the chattering classes went temporarily insane. Or maybe I went insane. Who can say? But either way it seemed like everything I hated, a mix of sneering social liberalism, fecundophobia, anti-evangelical paranoia and class contempt, was being hurled at a candidate who seemed to fit exactly with the "Grand New Party" mold.

So I defended her. I assailed her critics. And then — well, you know what happened then.

Palin gave interviews — terrible, terrible interviews. She was in over her head. Her own paranoia took center stage. She became her critics' caricature, embracing a mix of willful ignorance and proud resentment. What was distinctive about her Alaskan career was subsumed into a much more conventional sort of movement conservatism, which she picked up from the professional ideologues who rallied to her during her trial by fire. And eventually the movement tired of her, the culture tired of her, and her act ceased to be interesting even as reality TV.

But now that she has re-emerged to endorse Donald Trump, uniting her brand with his "Make America Great Again" nationalism, it's worth revisiting the original Palin, the outsider who took on a corrupt Alaskan establishment.

Palin's own paranoia took center stage.

A lot of conservatives, especially in Ted Cruz's orbit, have acted shocked or disappointed that Palin would endorse a figure like Trump, who has no plausible claim to be a principled conservative.

But given Palin's Alaskan past, the endorsement makes perfect sense. Her real roots are not in Reaganism or libertarianism or the orthodoxies of the donor class. They're in the same kind of blue-collar, Jacksonian, "who's looking out for you?" populism that has carried Trump to the top of the Republican polls. And it's a populism that the GOP is discovering has a lot more appeal to many of its voters than the litmus tests of the official right.

Which means that, in a certain way, Trump and Palin together on a stage is the closest American politics has come to offering the populist grand new party that Salam and I called for two presidential campaigns ago.

Except that it isn't what we called for, because we wanted a populism with substance — one that actually offered policy solutions to stagnant wages and rising health care costs, one that could help Republicans reach out to upwardly mobile blacks and Hispanics as well as whites, and so on down an optimistic wish list.

Whereas Trump-era populism, while it plays very effectively on economic anxiety, mostly offers braggadocio rather than solutions, and white identity politics rather than any kind of one-nation conservatism.



Ross Douthat

I would like to tell you that this is all the fault of the Republican leadership — that had they been more receptive to populist ideas in 2008 or 2012, they wouldn't be facing a Trumpian revolt today.

That's roughly the argument that David Frum makes in this month's *Atlantic*, in a sweeping essay on the roots of Trumpism. And he makes a strong case. A large part of the Republican donor class would rather lose with "you didn't build that!" than compromise on upper-bracket tax cuts. It would rather try to win Hispanics with immigration reform a hundred times over than try to win them once on pocketbook issues. It prefers to campaign as though it's always 1980 and has little to say to people who have lost out from globalization and socioeconomic change.

A critique that stops with GOP elites, though, might let the voting public off the hook. Because it's also possible that Trumpism, in all its boastful, lord-of-misrule meretriciousness, is what many struggling Americans actually want.

That is, at a certain point disillusionment with the system becomes so strong that no wonkish policy proposal is likely to resonate anymore. So you can talk all you want (as Marco Rubio's water-treading campaign has tried to do) about improving vocational education or increasing the child-tax credit, and people will tune you out: They want someone who will arm-wrestle the Chinese, make Mexico pay for the wall, smite our enemies and generally stand in solidarity with their resentments, regardless of the policy results.

Since this is a recipe for American-style Putinism, it's not exactly a good sign for the republic that it seems to be resonating. But those of us who want a better, saner and more decent populism than what Trump is selling need to reckon with the implications of his indubitable appeal.

Maybe — hopefully — there's a bridge from Trumpism to a more responsible alternative, as there was between Huey Long and FDR or from George Wallace to Richard Nixon.

But it's also possible that my fellow eggheads and I are grasping at a dream that's already slipped behind us — lost back in the land of might-have-beens, where the dark fields of Wasilla roll on under the night.