

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## Water under the bridge

Compiled by Bob Duke

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers



### 10 years ago this week — 2006

"We've burned the mortgage. We now own the trolley," a beaming Mayor Willis Van Dusen recently announced to the Astoria City Council.

Known as Old 300, the Astoria Riverfront Trolley is the mayor's pride and joy and a favorite of visitors and residents alike. The Astoria Riverfront Trolley Association (ARTA) had been leasing it from the San Antonio Art Museum for \$1 a year.

But with concerns rising that someone else might come along and buy it, last August the Trolley Association borrowed \$50,000 from the Bank of Astoria and made the trolley its own.

In the short time since then, the community came forward with enough money to pay off the loan and then some. "Everyone was more than generous," said Van Dusen, who besides being mayor is president of ARTA. The trolley is insured for \$450,000, he said, so ARTA got a very good deal.

**A lack of funding in Oregon's education system may have consequences for Knappa students that follow them beyond high school and out of the state.**

Knappa High School has withdrawn from the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools, the regional agency that reviews whether schools meet standards that ensure their students can transfer degrees and academic credits to other institutions.

Schools pay to be members of the association, and most of the process involves self-review, aside from an outside-team visit about every five years.

Knappa High School belonged to the organization for half a century, said Knappa School district Superintendent Rick Pass. The district paid \$600 to \$700 annually.

He said it was pointless for the high school to pay to be graded on standards it can no longer afford to meet.

A vicious storm barely slowed the workers and volunteers assembling the new Fort Clatsop this week.

The team building the replica fort took the afternoon off Wednesday when high winds began dropping branches on the work site. But the group was back and ready to go Thursday morning, and despite more wind, rain and hail the walls rose quickly on the "Officers' Quarters" side of the structure.

**SEASIDE — While Rep. Scott Bruun had plenty of kind words for the Republican Party at the 42nd annual Dorchester Conference Saturday night, he said Republicans have lost their way.**

"We've become the party of power for power's own sake," said Bruun, R-West Linn. "We've become the party of big government."

### 50 years ago — 1966

Clatsop County was fighting to break the late grip of winter Wednesday as temperatures began to warm and snow was melting from highways.

This area now has an industrial site ready for delivery, so far as land title is concerned, to a site-seeking industry. This results from Pacific Power and Light's purchase at public auction of the county-owned portion of the so-called aluminum plant site south and east of Warrenton.

The site became well-known at the time a combine of aluminum producing companies sought a site somewhere in the Northwest two years ago. The combine's agents looked over this site and apparently gave it serious consideration before eventually picking Bellingham, Wash.

**Astoria clinched a Metro League berth in the Oregon A-1 high school basketball tournament Tuesday night and they didn't have to play to do it.**

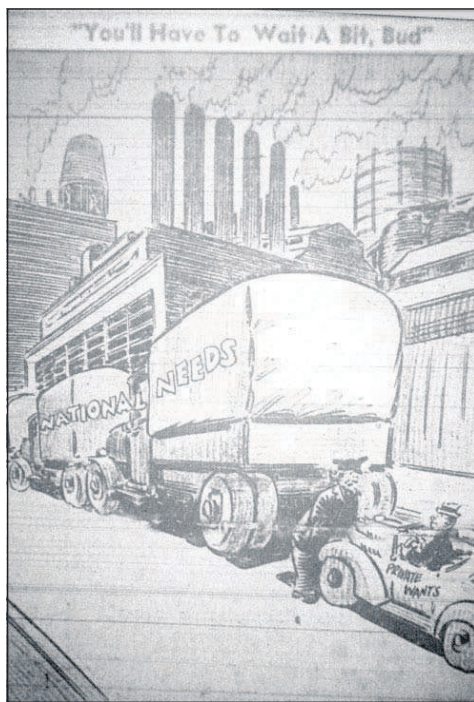
Coach Pete Bryant's Fishermen, with a 16-3 overall league mark and an 8-1 second half record, were assured of at least a second place finish in the second half and a tourney berth when David Douglas surprised Gresham 76-59 to knock the Gophers partially out of contention for the second round laurels.

### 75 years ago — 1941

The captain and officers of the Russian ship Serge Kirov, which entered the river last week, saw what they considered an amazing sight as their ship passed Fort Stevens, it was related by Clarence Ash, bar pilot who brought the vessel over the bar.

Ash said the captain was standing on the bridge and looking toward the new cantonment buildings recently erected there. He scanned the shoreline with his binoculars, then suddenly called several of his officers to the bridge for a look through the glasses. They all babbled in Russian and appeared to be excited by something, Ash said.

The captain told Ash he had seen a red flag, carried by some soldiers who were marching within sight of the ship. Ash said it was either a guidon or regimental colors. The Russian ship captain told him, "I never expected to see the red flag in the American army."



This editorial cartoon appeared in the Daily Astorian this week in 1941. It expressed the mood throughout the country as war approached.

# Former Cannon Beach mayor says, let bylaws be bylaws

## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

BY R.J. MARX

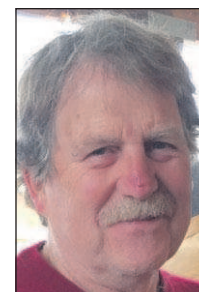


A couple of months back, we wrote about Initiative Petition 28, a state proposal headed to the November ballot.

Corporations with more than \$25 million in revenues would be subject to a gross receipts tax, with a new levy of 2.5 percent of their gross Oregon sales.

The \$5.3 billion it could raise over two years would go into the state's general fund.

Former Cannon Beach Mayor Mike Morgan likes the proposal. He thinks it's fair to raise state funds for education and public safety through a tax on the state's largest companies. And he doesn't want to see local business groups derail a fund that could provide money for Oregon's schools, which, he said, are desperately short-changed.



Mike Morgan

### Safety, school needs

Oregon is 49th out of 50 states in business tax rankings, behind only Louisiana, Morgan said. Washington state is 24th, he added, citing statistics from the nonprofit group A Better Oregon, an advocate for the corporate earnings tax.

"That's the thing that struck me," Morgan said over coffee at Sleepy Monk. "Look at some of the states that have higher taxes but a much stronger economy. You can't possibly make the argument it's going to hurt the economy."

Morgan and proponents initiative say it would fund schools and services, to the tune of more than \$2 billion a year, bumping up the general fund by "10 percent or so."

"Thirty-four-hundred teachers laid off in last decade, third-largest class size in the nation, 200,000 people who don't have health insurance," Morgan said. "Oregon, supposedly such a progressive state, has such a terrible higher education system. The amount of money the state provides to the higher education system is pathetic compared to other states."

A portion of the \$2.5 billion per year potentially raised by the tax could be used for emergency preparedness: building and retrofitting the state's at-risk hospitals, schools, city halls, and police and fire stations.

Morgan said he is outraged the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce is considering a change in bylaws to allow lobbying in opposition to the tax.

"It's not going to affect mom-and-



Submitted Photo

### Georgia-Pacific holdings in Oregon.

pop operations," Morgan said. "It will affect the Intels, Walgreens and the Georgia-Pacifics. I think it's amazing that the chambers of commerce brought this issue up. Probably the only corporation in Clatsop County that has more than \$25 million in sales is the Koch Brothers' Wauna Mill on the Columbia River."

Wauna Mill's parent Georgia-Pacific has revenue in the billions, Morgan said, a substantial slice of that from Oregon operations.

### Koch brothers in mix

Our attention really perked when Morgan mentioned the Koch brothers. Bringing them into a political debate is like throwing red meat to the lions. The brothers — Charles and David — are summoned as demons by the progressive left and heralded as not-so-quiet doers for the right.

Koch Industries Inc. purchased Georgia-Pacific for \$21 billion in 2005. Georgia-Pacific, according to their own business overview, employs 2,000 people in nine Oregon locations from Clatskanie to Coos Bay. The company provides a total of \$517 million in total combined wages and benefits to Oregon workers and \$662 million in capital investment for growth.

In Clatsop County, one doesn't need to do much research to find a direct connection.

"Georgia-Pacific's Wauna paper mill, which turns 50 this year, remains the largest single employer in Clatsop County, with more than 800 employees," wrote Edward Stratton in *The Daily Astorian* last October.

Are the Koch brothers fighting this corporate tax?

We contacted Georgia-Pacific at their Atlanta, Georgia, office and Koch Industries in Wichita, Kansas.

"Thanks for reaching out to us on

this and apologies for the delayed reply," David Dziok, director of communications for Koch Companies Public Sector said in an email Tuesday. "This measure is not yet on the ballot and we're continuing to assess it. It's fair to say, however, that like hundreds of other employers in our state, we have some initial concerns. A \$5 billion tax increase on the sale of products and services that Oregon consumers buy every day will increase costs for Oregon families, small businesses and large employers alike."

### Chamber role

A meeting of the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce — an independent chamber not affiliated with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce — on the topic locally was delayed, according to Executive Director Court Carrier.

"We were shy a few board of directors due to vacations, medical issues and holiday conflicts from the weekend," Carrier said after the chamber's February meeting. "I have emailed our president requesting that he call a meeting of the bylaws committee to discuss it."

Morgan said the chamber should stay out of political lobbying.

"I'm glad Cannon Beach uses the bulk of its hotel and lodging revenues to run the city," Morgan said. "You've got expenses caused by tourism, like police, parking lots, public restrooms, all of those things are directly caused by the influx of tourists."

"As far as political lobbying — the chamber would be wise to stay away from that," he added.

R.J. Marx is *The Daily Astorian's* South County reporter and editor of the *Seaside Signal* and *Cannon Beach Gazette*.

## Oregon is 49th out of 50 states in business tax rankings, behind only Louisiana.

# The Donald doesn't understand libel law ... which surprises no one

By DAVID CHAVERN  
Newspaper Association of America

Donald Trump said Friday, "I'm gonna open up our libel laws, so when they write purposely negative and horrible, false articles, we can sue them and win lots of money."

The specific media outlets he mentioned were *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*.

The first thing to understand is that under the landmark Supreme Court case of *New York Times* vs. Sullivan, it was determined that news organizations could be found liable when they deliberately publish false information. The specific standard is "actual malice." So if Mr. Trump wants to address media organizations that "write purposely negative and horrible, false articles" then the law is

already established as to his rights to do that.

But we all know that Mr. Trump isn't interested in legalities in this case. He is clearly just trying to intimidate news organizations and bully them in providing more positive coverage of him and his candidacy for president.

## Newspapers have dealt with more intimidating figures than Mr. Trump.

He should pick a different target. Newspapers have dealt with more intimidating figures than Mr. Trump.

Newspapers, actually, have a long, long history of responsibly speaking truth in the face of great power. One could think of Watergate or the Oscar-nominated movie "Spotlight" for some better-known examples. Throughout history, those in power have complained about newspaper reporting when it didn't meet their agenda and the number of instances where the reporting has been found



David Chavern

to be on target has vastly outweighed any circumstances where it wasn't. The fact is that our society relies upon the newspaper industry to be a consistent, challenging voice to the wealthy and powerful — and newspapers have a long history of carrying out that mandate with care and a deep sense of responsibility.

Newspapers have successfully stood up to sitting presidents, vast religious organizations, governors, mayors and immensely powerful corporations, among many others. If Mr. Trump wants to try to bully news organizations into providing reporting that he likes, then he will have to do a whole lot better than making weak, misguided promises about changes to a law that aren't needed in the first place.

David Chavern is the president and CEO of the Newspaper Association of America, a nonprofit organization representing nearly 2,000 newspapers and their multi-platform businesses in the United States and Canada.