

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## Fighting for press freedom ... again

The First Amendment is explicit about where the press fits in the orbit of government. The amendment states that Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of the press.

In *Printers and Press Freedom: The Ideology of Early American Journalism*, Jeffrey A. Smith writes that by the time the Constitution was written, Americans had known 200 years of an unbridled press that was free to criticize its rulers. That, says Smith, is where the First Amendment came from.

It is perhaps a leap from the Constitution to what's going on in Arizona. But the Arizona House of Representatives' demand for extensive background checks on reporters before giving them access to the House is at odds with where the press historically has fit in its always contentious relationship with government. See "Arizona House restricts journalists who reject check" on Page 5A today.

Inherent in the First Amendment and in what early Americans, such as Thomas Jefferson, expressed is the notion that government

must always be watched. After more than 200 years of American government, that is no less true. The opportunities for misfeasance and malfeasance are just as rife.

As our story indicates, the apparent genesis of the Arizona House's new security measure is an Arizona newspaper's investigation that revealed the Arizona House speaker was violating financial rules that apply to a government official campaigning for office.

The House speaker has used a recent incident in the House chamber as his excuse to apply background checks on reporters.

This is a step in the wrong direction. While we in the press will object to what the Arizona House and its speaker intend to do, there is another, more important remedy. We must do our jobs effectively and not be intimidated by barriers thrown up by those in political power.

## At 40, fishery law needs revamping

*Fishermen's News* is primarily a trade publication for industry insiders, but every issue has articles that demonstrate how commercial fishing touches all our lives here in the fishing ports of the Lower Columbia River. The April issue contains several noteworthy items:

• This Wednesday is the 40th anniversary of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. Writing on behalf of the At-sea Processors Association, a columnist offers an enthusiastic opinion that the act sets the "gold standard" for U.S. and world fisheries.

Magnuson-Stevens has brought economic benefits, largely by pushing foreign vessels out beyond the 200-mile U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. With refinements in 2006, the act improved management of overfishing.

But it remains a disappointment in a variety of ways. This is perhaps most obvious on the East Coast, where groundfish stocks are a small fraction of what they were in 1976. Fisheries on the West Coast, and the

U.S. in general, continue to struggle.

• Commenting on 2016 federal legislative priorities, two employees of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations write of the need for a thorough revamp of Magnuson-Stevens. They argue that "fishing is a business that depends entirely on the health of the environment."

As such, they highlight the need to manage factors like onshore pollution. It's not fair, they argue, to penalize fishermen for factors beyond their control.

• On the pragmatic issue of maximizing the value of harvested fish by making sure they are fresh for consumers, *Fishermen's News* editor Chris Philips reports on a new hand-held device that can instantly tell how much shelf life is left in any particular fish. This will reward fishermen who take appropriate steps to cool fish and keep them that way after harvest. Improving consumer confidence will boost seafood popularity and prices.

These improvements will be good for all of us at the mouth of the Columbia.

## GUEST COLUMN

# Older Americans Act poised to return



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici believes the Astoria Senior Center and others like it show the benefits of social programs for seniors. From left: Larry Miller, director of the Senior Center, John Ryan, Mayor Arline Lamear, Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, Councilor Drew Herzig and Yvonne McCann, take part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Astoria Senior Center in February.

By U.S. Rep. SUZANNE BONAMICI  
 For The Daily Astorian

It's been five years since the first baby boomers turned 65, and each day 10,000 more Americans reach that age.

It has also been five years since Congress allowed the Older Americans Act (OAA) to expire. A Senate bill to reauthorize the act passed the U.S. House in March.

As the population of older adults continues to increase and Americans live longer lives, our nation's policies need to keep pace.

The growing need to have effective programs that help seniors live with dignity is why I recently took a lead role in helping the House improve and pass an updated Older Americans Act.

Originally a part of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, the OAA funds programs that provide services to seniors in urban, suburban and rural communities throughout the country. The law supports nutritional and transportation services, in-home and legal assistance, protections against elder abuse and family caregiver support. Taken together, Older Americans Act programs make it possible for millions of older adults to remain independent and healthy, and to age with dignity in their homes and communities.

At home in Oregon, I have seen how OAA programs help seniors remain connected to their communities and avoid costlier long-term care. Many homebound seniors receive their only hot meal of the day from programs like the OAA-funded Meals on Wheels, and the volunteers who deliver these meals may provide the only chance for social interaction. I've packaged and delivered meals to older adults and have seen how important that contact is, especially for those in isolated or rural areas.

Recently I joined hundreds of seniors to celebrate the reopening of the newly renovated Astoria Senior Center. This vibrant community hub, and others like it in my district, show the tremendous benefits of —and need for—social programs for our seniors.

The new and bipartisan Older Americans Act also increases funding for other programs to meet the growing need for supportive services. Importantly, this legislation takes several meaningful steps to combat elder abuse.

According to the Elder Justice Coalition, there are more than 6 million victims of elder abuse every year — roughly 1 in 10 people over age 60.

Victims of elder financial abuse lose an estimated \$2.9 billion a year, which sometimes includes their entire life savings. We should do all we can to make sure older adults are not robbed of their resources or denied the dignity they deserve.

But like any compromise, my colleagues and I made sacrifices in order to move this legislation closer to the finish line. We will need to continue to modernize OAA programs to reflect the increasing diversity among older adults, and in particular work to remove barriers that prevent older adults — including LGBT elders and older individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds — from fully accessing the programs that keep them healthy and engaged in their communities.

The passage of the bill in the House is significant because it shows a bipartisan commitment to seniors by members of Congress, but we have a lot more to do. I'm proud of what we've accomplished, and I will continue working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to strengthen programs for older Americans in the future.

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., has served in the House since 2012.

**There are more than 6 million victims of elder abuse every year.**

## 'Bernie Bro' Sanders over the edge

By PAUL KRUGMAN  
 New York Times News Service

From the beginning, many and probably most liberal policy wonks were skeptical about Bernie Sanders.

On many major issues — including the signature issues of his campaign, especially financial reform — he seemed to go for easy slogans over hard thinking. And his political theory of change, his waving away of limits, seemed utterly unrealistic.

Some Sanders supporters responded angrily when these concerns were raised, immediately accusing anyone expressing doubts about their hero of being corrupt if not actually criminal. But intolerance and cultishness from some of a candidate's supporters are one thing; what about the candidate himself?

Unfortunately, in the past few days the answer has become all too clear: Sanders is starting to sound like his worst followers. Bernie is becoming a Bernie Bro.

Let me illustrate the point about issues by talking about bank reform.

The easy slogan here is "Break up the big banks." It's obvious why this slogan is appealing from a political point of view: Wall Street supplies an excellent cast of villains. But were big banks really at the heart of the financial crisis, and would breaking them up protect us from future crises?

Many analysts concluded years ago that the answers to both questions were no. Predatory lending was largely carried out by smaller, non-Wall Street institutions like Countrywide Financial; the crisis itself was centered not on big banks but on "shadow banks" like Lehman Brothers that weren't necessarily that big. And the financial reform that President Barack Obama signed in 2010 made a real effort to address these problems. It could and should be made stronger, but pounding

the table about big banks misses the point.

Yet going on about big banks is pretty much all Sanders has done. On the rare occasions on which he was asked for more detail, he didn't seem to have anything more to offer. And this absence of substance beyond the slogans seems to be true of his positions across the board.

You could argue that policy details are unimportant as long as a politician has the right values and character. As it happens, I don't agree. For one thing, a politician's policy specifics are often a very important clue to his or her true character — I warned about George W. Bush's mendacity back when most journalists were still portraying him as a bluff, honest fellow, because I actually looked at his tax proposals. For another, I consider a commitment to facing hard choices as opposed to taking the easy way out an important value in itself.

**The way Sanders is campaigning raises serious character and values issues.**

But in any case, the way Sanders is campaigning raises serious character and values issues.

It's one thing for the Sanders campaign to point to Hillary Clinton's Wall Street connections, which are real, although the question should be whether they have distorted her positions, a case the campaign has never even tried to make. But recent attacks on Clinton as a tool of the fossil fuel industry are just plain dishonest and speak of a campaign that has lost its ethical moorings.



Paul Krugman

And then there was Wednesday's rant about how Clinton is not "qualified" to be president.

What probably set that off was a recent interview of Sanders by the *Daily News*, in which he repeatedly seemed unable to respond when pressed to go beyond his usual slogans. Clinton, asked about that interview, was careful in her choice of words, suggesting that "he hadn't done his homework."

But Sanders wasn't careful at all, declaring that what he considers Clinton's past sins, including her support for trade agreements and her vote to authorize the Iraq War — for which she has apologized — make her totally unfit for office.

This is really bad, on two levels. Holding people accountable for their past is OK, but imposing a standard of purity, in which any compromise or misstep makes you the moral equivalent of the bad guys, isn't. Abraham Lincoln didn't meet that standard; neither did FDR. Nor, for that matter, has Bernie Sanders (think guns).

And the timing of the Sanders rant was truly astonishing. Given her large lead in delegates — based largely on the support of African-American voters, who respond to her pragmatism because history tells them to distrust extravagant promises — Clinton is the strong favorite for the Democratic nomination.

Is Sanders positioning himself to join the "Bernie or bust" crowd, walking away if he can't pull off an extraordinary upset and possibly helping put Donald Trump or Ted Cruz in the White House? If not, what does he think he's doing?

The Sanders campaign has brought out a lot of idealism and energy that the progressive movement needs. It has also, however, brought out a streak of petulant self-righteousness among some supporters. Has it brought out that streak in the candidate, too?