

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## Sealed landfill became a mecca

*Soccer association is among our best nonprofits*

Among the good things to celebrate in Clatsop County are two former landfills — Astoria's and Warrenton's. Turnaround of the Warrenton landfill came first. In 1986 it was sealed. The city offered the site to the nascent Lower Columbia Youth Soccer Assn. Over some 25 years, the league has created a soccer complex that is renowned across Oregon.

The soccer association epitomizes the benefits of partnership and leveraging. The league's first soccer field had numerous benefactors. The Oregon Community Foundation was one of them. In fact, the foundation's gift to the soccer association was among its first into this county.

Now the league has done it again, as it responds to a request from the city of Warrenton for a playground. Erick Bengel's story Tuesday described the array of the playground's benefactors, including the city, which provided \$25,000 in a pass-through grant from a foundation. Nygaard Logging and Big River

Construction contributed. One of Bengel's anecdotes is about Phil Gaffney, superintendent at Big Rock. Having grown up playing on the soccer fields, he's returned as a volunteer to upgrade the complex.

Now the league is over-capitalized, as Jerry Boisvert put it. And that may allow it to help the city of Warrenton create more outdoor recreation destinations.

Creation of the soccer league and its fields made life richer for generations of Clatsop County boys and girls. The league's ingenuity and energy are an example for all of Clatsop County's nonprofit organizations.

## Transportation panel should be open

Few state functions generate as much interest, or cost so much money, as transportation. Keeping deliberations about transportation policies and priorities open to public scrutiny ought to be a top priority for all who truly care about government transparency.

Taking a page from the Obama administration, which talks a good game on openness but actually suppresses the free flow of information, Gov. Kate Brown takes the position that a majority of the Oregon Transportation Commission can meet privately as part of a planning committee without any notice. As Hillary Borrud of our Capital Bureau reported, the planning group — appointed by Oregon Transportation Commission Chairwoman Tammy Baney — is discussing what issues a contractor should examine as part of a review of the Department of Transportation.

There may very well be politically awkward aspects

of the review. How this examination is framed will help determine the agency's future directions and look at how state highways and other transportation infrastructure currently function. On the line are hundreds of millions of dollars in project spending the Legislature could approve next year.

In light of cities vying with rural areas, gas taxes, perennial suspicions about waste and favoritism, debates over motor vehicles versus public transit, and a host of other issues, these discussions obviously should be conducted in public.

Our open meetings law states: "The Oregon form of government requires an informed public aware of the deliberations and decisions of governing bodies and the information upon which such decisions were made."

It does not bode well for Gov. Brown's views of transparency that she sees no contradiction in her rhetoric and actions on this matter.

# 100th anniversary of the Seaside High School: now can we move?

## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

BY R.J. MARX



There were eight students in the graduating class of 1915. The school budget totaled \$12,650. Today that number would just about pay for a season's worth of volleyballs.

Of the 1916-17 budget, the lion's share — \$4,000 — was for teacher's salaries, \$1,275 for maps, apparatus, stoves, curtains and other necessities.

"After the first year of school the levy will not be as high as it is this season as the building is new and must be equipped with all that is necessary to make a modern school and one that every voter and taxpayer in the district may be proud of," the Seaside Signal wrote.

### A half century

In 1966, the district consolidated three districts: Seaside, Gearhart and Cannon Beach.

"All of the districts are growing and additional facilities will be needed," wrote the Signal.

The unified district debuted in September 1967 with 1,475 students, 501 at the high school.

In decades to come, with increased enrollment, buildings past their projected life span and evidence of a mortal seismic threat, the need for a new school building became a perennial topic of conversation.

In 1970, 400 voters in the school district filled out building questionnaires.

"Construct a Clatsop County High School," was the suggestion in one reply.

"Replace Central and remodel Broadway," "Consolidate with Warrenton-Lewis and Clark area" and "build a new high school in Clatsop Plains," were others.

Only 20 of 400 respondents voted for a "do nothing" plan.

Throughout the next two decades successions of administrators, board members and the community sought solutions.

In 1986-87 voters had the chance to approve a plan that would allow the district to develop ideas for a new high school.

Plans for a 25-year bond issue included purchase of a new site and building of an 800-student high school.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Seaside High School students participate in a tsunami evacuation drill.

That year's \$12.3 million plan would have alleviated space problems at the elementary level as well, particularly in Gearhart and Cannon Beach. That was a lot of money — a "rib-eye" purchase, the Signal wrote.

The verdict from the voters was crushing — 2,913 to 570.

It was at about this time that Oregon State University marine biologist Curt Peterson and researcher Mark Darienzo began piecing together the links between the Juan de Fuca plate and seismic activity along the coast, referred to then as "tectonic subsistence."

This information was to have a profound influence on all efforts to replace at-risk schools.

### Obvious risk

In 2013, with declining enrollment, Cannon Beach Elementary School closed after two engineering consultants found that its gym was likely to collapse in a quake.

Compelling research brought the realization Gearhart Elementary School, Seaside High School and Broadway Elementary School were potential death traps for kids in a disaster scenario.

Led by Superintendent Doug Dougherty, the district brought a \$128.8 million bond measure to fund construction of a new consolidated school campus above the tsunami inundation zone.

Supporters of the bond measure focused their campaign on children's safe, high-tech classrooms, wrote Bonnie Henderson in her recounting of the campaign in "The Next Tsunami: Living on a Restless Coast."

"But the bottom line for many 'no' voters seemed to be the cost," Henderson wrote. "Even some supporters were having a hard time swallowing the increase in property taxes that the construction of the new campus would have required."

The defeat sent Dougherty and the school board back to the draw-

ing board, according to Henderson, to consider other options, such as building a smaller campus on the hill or one to house just elementary school students.

This century mark is bittersweet. While we welcome the 100th year of Seaside High School, we join in the enthusiasm and urgency for a new high school to take its place.

One hundred, 50, 25 years ago there was no hard evidence of the risk we face every day. There is now.

The high school stands 14 to 18 feet above sea level, according to geologist Tom Horning. The likely tsunami will flood to elevations of about 40 to 50 feet, nearly to the top of the high school gymnasium roof.

"The wave will strike about 15 minutes after the inception of quaking," Horning said in an email. "It takes roughly 15 minutes to reach safety in the hills from the school, assuming that traffic doesn't block evacuation and that the weather is good for evacuating. The high school structure will be swept away, leaving only concrete foundations and steps. Anyone caught in the building by the tsunami will die. Anyone caught below 50 feet elevation will also likely die. Very dangerous place."

Taylor Barnes, a Seaside High School senior and student representative on the City Council, among young leaders seeking to move the school. Their voices are reaching to Portland, Salem and points beyond.

"I think this is the year," Barnes said last week after Seaside's council meeting. "Ultimately it's going to come down to the community members. They're ready. A lot of people are frustrated. The time is now because we can't wait. Whether we're ready or not, it needs to be now."

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

**This century mark is bittersweet.**

## Let's talk about Trump and taxes

By PAUL KRUGMAN  
*New York Times News Service*

This seems to be the week for Trump tax mysteries. One mystery is why Donald Trump, unlike every other major party nominee in modern times, is refusing to release his tax returns. The other is why, having decided that he needs experts to clean up his ludicrous tax-cut proposals, he chose to call on the services of the gang that couldn't think straight.

On the first mystery: Trump's excuse, that he can't release his returns while they're being audited, is an obvious lie. On the contrary, the fact that he's being audited (or at least that he says he's being audited) should make it easier for him to go public — after all, he needn't fear triggering an audit! Clearly, he must be hiding something. What?

It could be how little he pays in taxes, a revelation that hurt Mitt Romney in 2012. But I doubt it; given how Trump rolls, he'd probably boast that his ability to game the tax system shows how smart he is compared to all the losers out there.

So my guess, shared by a number of observers, is that the dirty secret hidden in those returns is that he isn't as rich as he claims to be. In Trump-world, the revelation that he's only worth a couple of billion — maybe even less than a billion — would be utterly humiliating. So he'll try to tough it out. Of course, if he does, we'll never know.

Meanwhile, however, we can look at the candidate's policy proposals. And what has been going on there is just as revealing, in its own way, as his

attempt to dodge scrutiny of his personal finances.

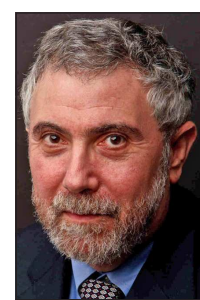
The story so far: Last fall Trump suggested that he would break with Republican orthodoxy by raising taxes on the wealthy. But then he unveiled a tax plan that would, in fact, lavish huge tax cuts on the rich. And it would also, according to nonpartisan analyses, cause deficits to explode, adding around \$10 trillion to the national debt over a decade.

Now, the inconsistency between Trump's rhetoric and his specific proposals didn't seem to hurt him in the Republican primaries. Neither did the wild irresponsibility of those specifics, perhaps because all the major contenders for the GOP nomination were proposing huge, budget-busting tax cuts for the rich. True, none of them were quite as off the charts as the Trump plan, but such distinctions were probably lost on primary voters — \$4 trillion, \$10 trillion, who cares?

Having secured the nomination, however, Trump apparently feels the need to seem more respectable. The goal, I suspect, is to bring the headline numbers down enough to let the media's propensity for false equivalence kick in. Hillary Clinton has a plan that actually adds up, while Donald Trump has a plan that will cost \$4 trillion, but which he claims is deficit-neutral? Hey, it's the same thing!

Oh, and meanwhile he suggested once again that he might raise taxes on the rich, then walked it back, with credulous media eating it all up.

But what's really interesting is whom, according to *Politico*, Trump has brought in to revise his plans: Larry Kudlow of CNBC and Stephen Moore of the Heritage Foundation. That news had economic analysts spitting out their morning coffee all across America.



Paul Krugman

For those who don't follow such things, Kudlow has a record of being wrong about, well, everything. In 2005 he ridiculed "bubbleheads who expect housing-price crashes in Las Vegas or Naples, Florida, to bring down the consumer, the rest of the economy, and the entire stock market" — which was exactly what happened. In 2007 he predicted three years of "Goldilocks" prosperity. And on and on.

Moore has a comparable forecasting record, but he also has a remarkable inability to get facts straight. Perhaps most famously, he once attempted to rebut, well, me with an article detailing the supposed benefits of state tax cuts; incredibly, not one of the many numbers in that article was right.

So why would Trump turn to these of all people to, ahem, fix his numbers?

It could be a peace offering, an attempt to reassure insiders by bringing in Kudlow and Moore, who are influential members of the Republican establishment — which incidentally tells you a lot about their party.

But my guess is that the explanation is simpler: The candidate has no idea who is and isn't competent. I mean, it's not as if he has any independent knowledge of economics, or even knows what he doesn't know. For example, he keeps asserting that America has the world's highest taxes, when we're actually at the bottom among advanced nations.

So he probably just went with a couple of guys he's seen on TV, assuming that they must be there because they know their stuff.

Now, you might wonder how someone that careless and incurious was such a huge success in business. But one answer is, how successful was he, really? What's in those tax returns?

Editorials that appear on this page are written by Publisher Steve Forrester and Matt Winters, editor of the *Chinook Observer* and *Coast River Business Journal*, or staff members from the *EO Media Group's* sister newspapers.