

# 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

For nearly two hours, the Astoria Fishermen and the Sherwood Bowmen were locked up in one of the most intense, dramatic Oregon high school state championship games ever played.

And then it wasn't so dramatic. And then it really wasn't dramatic. And then Sherwood just wanted it to end.

And after a while it did, mercifully and with respect.

When the dust settled, the Astoria Fishermen — winners of 17 games in a row — had won their 18th straight and first state baseball title, a 9-2 decision over the Bowmen at Volcanoes Stadium in Keizer.

**Astoria took a big step Thursday toward a memorial to honor Chinese immigrants and their contributions to Oregon's coastal economy and history.**

**U.S. Rep David Wu announced that \$75,000 has been allocated for the project by a U.S. House subcommittee.**

**"Chinese immigrants were an essential part of the coastal economy, and contributed greatly to the vibrant history of Astoria and Clatsop County," said Wu an immigrant from Taiwan. "I am honored to have this opportunity to memorialize their rightful place in Oregon's history."**

The staff and students at Astoria High School capped a four-day roller coaster ride with a huge, emotion-packed pep assembly Tuesday afternoon at the Brick House.

Following Saturday's historic championship victory, the Astoria baseball team was officially presented with the state trophy, while the student body — complete with pep band — honored all of its spring sports athletes who competed at the state tournament level.

The reaping of rewards actually began Monday night at the Astoria City Council meeting, when Astoria Mayor Willis Van Dusen recognized the team for its 2006 championship season.

The mayor proclaimed June 6, 2006 to be "Astoria High School Baseball Day," in honor of the team's first state championship.

### 50 years ago — 1966

**Clatsop college is apparently going to finish the current fiscal year "in the black" for the first time in its career, a report finance committee chairman Henry Desler indicated Thursday night at the regular meeting of the college district board.**

**Desler reported that it appeared the district would end the fiscal year June 30 with perhaps \$5,000 financial surplus for the year's operations.**

Clatsop County Powder Puff Derby entries, pilot Mrs. Lucy Drucker and co-pilot Mrs. Rita Ginn were guest speakers at the Tuesday Chamber of Commerce luncheon. The 20th anniversary flight of the Powder Puff Derby, sponsored by the National Aeronautics Association, will begin July 2 from Boeing Field, Seattle, to end four days later in Clearwater, Fla.

Mrs. Drucker, with more than 500 flight hours compiled since she began flying in 1935, explained that she still had to recently complete 40 hours of instrument flight in order to become eligible for the derby. Co-pilot Mrs. Ginn has been flying since 1958 with 100 flight hours to her credit.

According to Mrs. Drucker the derby is made up of amateurs and professional women fliers with the latter having 12,000-15,000 hours of flight time. The race is run on a handicap basis with the best speed combined with weather and wind judgment declared the winner.

### 75 years ago — 1941

**While everybody is shouting about Seaside's prospects for a howling summer success in resort business, on down the road a spell the good people of Cannon Beach, nestled betwixt Tillamook Head and Arch Cap, are quietly preparing for their own private little nervous breakdown.**

**Cannon Beach has been more somnolent than Seaside. More bucolic. To the vacationing public the resort settlement on the south of Tillamook promontory has amounted to a better symbol of nature in the raw, without the fine feathers, the white paint and chromium of city business.**

**Somebody once said that haystack rock is the third largest monolith in the world. Yes or no, this great, mountainous stone and its jagged fraternity of lesser brethren washed by the blue Pacific all melds into one of the most gorgeous panoramic landscapes on any coast of the seven seas. Beauty has been the trump of Cannon Beach.**

The regional office of the Civil Aeronautics administration has recommended to Washington that Astoria have a non-college student flier training program this summer, it was announced today by Neil R. Morfitt, chairman of the Chamber of Commerce's aviation committee.

## GUEST COLUMN

# Story too sympathetic to violent felon

By JOSHUA MARQUIS  
For The Daily Astorian

A front-page story in The Daily Astorian on May 30 told the account of a local man, Vincent Davidson-Gilbert, who sounded like he couldn't catch a break.

This highly sympathetic story claimed that Davidson-Gilbert had somehow gotten a 65-month prison sentence from Judge Cindee Matyas because of "misdeeds" somehow caused by his heroin addiction.

Readers should know that his defense lawyer's claim that the "criminal justice system has criminalized the mental health disease of addiction" is flatly untrue. Davidson-Gilbert didn't receive a five-year prison sentence for using heroin. He earned that sentence because in the course of two months earlier this year he armed himself with a gun and then burst into one home, threatened the people who lived there and then, two months later, broke into his ex-wife's home and assaulted two people.

A home-invasion burglary is one of the most dangerous crimes. The writer attempted to wring sympathy for Davidson-Gilbert by claiming, "It didn't matter that Vincent's first felony occurred almost a decade ago. It didn't matter that he had volunteered for a local food bank . . ."

What mattered is that he had a gun and broke into two homes and terrified the occupants. The District Attorney's Office *does* look at all factors of a defendant's crimes, including his life and various second, third and fourth chances.

A reader of this story would assume Davidson-Gilbert got himself sent to prison for joy riding nine

years ago, then held down a supervisor's job at a local big box store. Except that wasn't his record. The reporter just took the word of the defendant, his mom, and his lawyer and only did a cursory review of the record. The reporter also attended the sentencing on the two home-invasion burglaries yet never mentioned the tearful statement by one of the victims.

In Oregon, less than 7 percent of prison inmates are doing time for drugs. Davidson is part of the 70 percent who are in for violent felonies. Back in 2007, at age 18, he racked up eight felony convictions and three misdemeanors. The crimes for which he went to prison included another home invasion burglary and a felony assault. Although the article implied he had straightened out between 2008 and 2011, he had in fact spent most of that time in prison.

Despite Davidson-Gilbert's appalling record, a local company took a chance on him and gave him a good job. By all accounts he had a supportive family. His mother is quoted throughout the article, blaming drugs and a less-than-perfect mental health system for her son's failures.

Davidson repaid the fresh start that was offered him by racking up a second, then a third drunken-driving charge before arming himself (illegal for a violent felon) and breaking into two homes earlier this year.

Those of us in law enforcement don't get rewarded for send-



Josh Marquis

## A home-invasion burglary is one of the most dangerous crimes.

ing people to prison. We have plenty of customers and would much rather help those willing to show responsibility for their own addictions. Our drug courts reward participation in treatment and staying clean by erasing a felony conviction. Davidson-Gilbert was far beyond that. His drug of choice was heroin.

Prison is all that's left for someone who has now reached double digits in felony convictions — half of them for violent crimes (DUIs aren't considered violent crimes).

There are participants in Judge Philip Nelson's drug court who have inspirational stories of redemption. It's an insult to their accomplishments when

we continue to offer multiple chances to a man like Davidson-Gilbert.

Readers deserve to know what he did to earn his lifetime achievement award for crime. This is why his mom won't get what she wants — her son released after a year or two. Still, Davidson-Gilbert may only serve 47 months of his 65-month sentence. His lawyer, Ms. Inhofe, got him a pretty good deal considering that if convicted of just the two new burglaries, sentencing guidelines could have meant a 130-month sentence.

As the district attorney for more than 22 years, I often see people who really screw up but deserve a second or third chance. Vincent Davidson-Gilbert isn't one of them after 10 felonies and six misdemeanors.

*Joshua Marquis has served as the district attorney of Clatsop County since 1994.*



Hannah Saylor/For The Daily Astorian

The Sea-Pac Ham Radio Convention was last weekend at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

## Ham radio buffs have stories to tell

By TERESIA SAYLER  
For The Daily Astorian

I used to think ham was just a tasty treat during the holidays ... but then I became one.

Let me explain.

The term "ham" is the title given of amateur radio operators. The Federal Radio Act of 1912 tempered the mania of this new technology that had gripped thousands by requiring the licensing of the radio operators and stations.

What has transpired over the decades is a culture of service, belonging and love of this hobby for well over 700,000 in the U.S. alone. Each June, thousands attend the Northwest's largest convention of these "hams" in Seaside, known as Sea-Pac.

In times of disaster, when your cellphones and land lines fail, you can rest assured that these radio geeks will be there to support and communicate wherever their signals can reach.

While conventions have their share of lectures and the mandatory swap meet of all things radio, what I found most appealing were the stories of what these hams are capable of.

Twilight on the beachfront brought a zombie-like trek of one ham after another to huddle around an experiment of hoisting aloft a wire antenna affixed to a kite and attached to a radio, from which the operator would attempt contact others as far from his location as possible.

With little to no wind on Friday evening, the "techie" in them came out. A quadcopter drone was revved up as a substitute for the kite. About

10 minutes later a roar of applause broke out from the crowd. It was almost as if contact was made with someone on the moon.

Other endearing stories come out of just listening to the hams chat about the latest gadgets, interfacing radios with computers, the ability to track movements of radio equipped vehicles, etc. To see the expressions of the younger generation when told you can link computers to the radios and cover even more distance is priceless.

Hearing the one about the young man in his basement bedroom in the middle of Idaho dairy country, where he was able to receive the mayday call of a fishing vessel off the Pacific Coast and summoned help for it, was remarkable. Good thing his parents allowed him to mount that antenna on top of the feed silo that was several stories tall.

The stubbornness and motivation of hams can come out on the air as well. There was the blind ham who was chatting one day with another ham on the radio about borrowing a ladder to climb a tree to install a better antenna ... needless to say, help was sent over for his project as his wife had already grounded him for beginning to trim the tree with a chainsaw.

What impresses me most about the culture of these hams is their devotion to each other. Many will



Teresia Saylor

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meet weekly for a Saturday morning brunch, to chat about the latest upgrades to radios, accessories, computers, etc., and have been doing so for decades. They trade, give advice and perhaps give a young new ham used equipment to get them started.

I recently witnessed this devotion save a life of an amateur radio operator. Over a two-three year period, one of the local group's member's health began to decline very seriously. At one of the regular gatherings, he needed immediate medical attention. The comrades rallied around their longtime friend, got him to the healthcare he needed just in the nick of time.

While he recovered his ham family rallied once again to clear out his house, take care of his kitty and encourage his return to the "air" and social events soon. Most were afraid that 2014 was his last Sea-Pac event, but this year he was there smiling from ear to ear.

While some may think these folks are super geeky odd ducks, I am happy to be associated with one of the most kind, generous groups of "amateurs" you'll ever meet.

*Teresia Saylor is a long-time ham aficionado who lives in Clearwater, Washington. She has been active with Civil Air Patrol for 36 years and Snohomish County Search and Rescue for several years.*