

# Bridge: Commemorative tokens will mark the occasion

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ceremony with this year's Miss Oregon, Alexis Mather.

After the speakers, those at the rededication will be invited to take a drive across the 4.1-mile bridge to the Dismal Nitch Rest Area. Commemorative tokens will be handed out to mark the occasion.

State Department of Transportation spokesman Lou Torres said the bridge rededication is a big day for the state department.

ODOT director Garrett plans to speak about the history of the bridge, the continued work being done and the bridge's importance today.

"It's a bridge we maintain and operate. We have a really strong interest in everything that goes on with the bridge," Torres said.

In conjunction with the rededication, about 10 to 15 bridge workers will gather Saturday for a reunion. Gallegos will not be able to make it this weekend, he said, but he plans to be back in Astoria this fall for his birthday.

Bridge workers will also join in the Grand Land Parade during the Astoria Regatta.

## Satisfaction

Gallegos recalls the excitement he felt starting work as a cement finisher on the Astoria Bridge right out of high school in 1964. His older, half-brother helped him get the job.

"I had worked at other jobs in Seaside and the surrounding area and never was paid over \$1.25 an hour, and now I was going to work and would be paid journeyman wages of \$4 per hour, plus hazard pay of 20 cents per hour," Gallegos said. "My life was in for a big change."

During his job orientation, Gallegos was handed a life jacket and told to paint the last four digits of his Social Security number on the vest. He was told the numbers would help identify him if he fell in the water.

After the first day, Gallegos said, he got used to working more than 50 feet above the river.

He looks back fondly on those hard-working days.

"I get ecstatic. It's a great feeling, the personal satisfaction of working there," he said. "It's still standing."

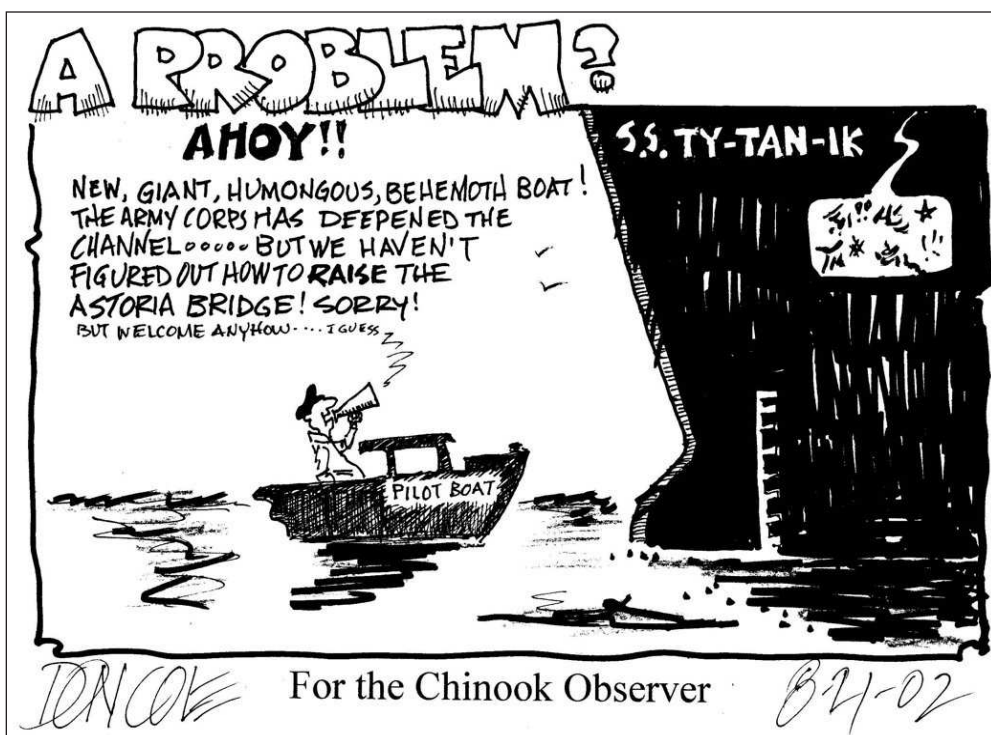


Jim Gallegos in 1964.



The Daily Astorian/File Photo

The Astoria Bridge is just as impressive by air as it is from the ground in 2002.



An editorial cartoon in the Chinook Observer mentioned the Astoria Bridge in 2002 as the states were considering ever larger tankers.



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian  
The Astoria Bridge opened on Aug. 29, 1966.

# Walmart: Divisive issue regularly draws opponents from neighboring communities

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The win for Walmart came a week after a judge dismissed a case brought by a local opposition group, Clatsop Residents Against Walmart, against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The citizens group, formed in 2010 to oppose the retailer's move to Warrenton, sued the Army Corps more than a year ago, claiming the agency failed to adequately protect wetland and consider alternatives in its review of a wetland fill permit application by Peaksview LLC, which owns land Walmart plans to build on. The Corps issued Peaksview a permit to fill 0.37 acres of wetland for construction of a big-box retailer.

Karl Anuta, the attorney for the citizens group, said he plans to file a supplemental memo appealing the judge's ruling.

"In his view, they didn't need to look at the studies Walmart had supposedly done," Anuta said. "They just asked about them. We don't agree. That's what our supplemental memo will be around."

Walmart intends to begin construction in spring 2017, assuming the federal litigation has been resolved, Skip Urling, Warrenton's community development director, said.

## Divisive issue

Walmart's plan to build in Warrenton is a divisive issue for North Coast residents, one that regularly draws opponents, including from neighboring communities.

"This request should be denied because, number one, it was a mistake to grant the permit in the first place," said Sara Meyer, an Astoria resident and a member of CRAW, at Tuesday's meeting.

Among her objections, the project, she said, "only looks at short-term construction employment and a few part-time employees at this site. It does



Keith Pinkstaff, Warrenton's harbormaster since 1998, is retiring this week. At Tuesday's City Commission meeting, Mayor Mark Kujala presented Pinkstaff with an award of appreciation.

Erick Bengel  
The Daily Astorian

not address the long-term economic health in the city."

CRAW, she said, "wants you to know that we are not anti-business. We support business and smart, sustainable growth. Walmart is the opposite of that."

Meyer, a plaintiff in the lawsuit against the Army Corps, added that the citizens group worries the money spent at Walmart won't recirculate in the community. "They will, ultimately, take that money out of this community. That is why we fight them," she said.

Should construction get underway, CRAW's members will monitor Walmart's adherence to safe-building and environmental practices, Meyer said. "We expect the city to be supportive of aggressive enforcement" when violations are reported.

Betty Stennick, of Hammond, shops at Walmart in Longview, Washington, and could not disagree more. "I believe the sooner that Walmart gets built, the better we're all going to be."

"I say 'yes' on Walmart, and let's hurry up. We need it here. Both Fred Meyer and Safeway need more competition," she said, eliciting an "amen" from an audience member. "And after that, maybe WinCo will come in — the more the merrier."

## Harbormaster retires

In other business Tuesday night, Kujala — wearing a sport coat for the occasion — presented an award of appreciation to Keith Pinkstaff, who has served as the city's harbormaster for 18 years and is retiring this week.

"On behalf of the city of Warrenton, we all want to thank you for all of your service," the mayor told him.

Pinkstaff said he is grateful to the commission and city staff for their support and for helping him improve Warrenton and Hammond's harbors and marinas over the years.

"I'm here to help the city. I'm not going anywhere," he said, "so thank you."

Edward Stratton contributed to this report.

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