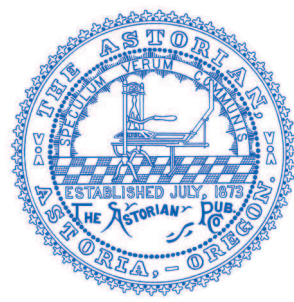


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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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

The officer shouted at the suspect to stop but he wouldn't obey. He just kept coming.

"Then he pulled a cellphone out of his pocket and I shot him right in the heart," said Russ Warr.

But the "bullet" was a paintball, a police officer was portraying the suspect, and Warr, a member of the Astoria City Council, was participating in a role-playing scenario during the 2006 Citizen Police Academy.

The exercise illustrated how difficult it is to make split-second, life-and-death decisions, Warr said. If he hadn't fired and the cellphone had turned out to be a gun, in real life, the officer could have paid for that decision with his life. Warr said he now has a much greater understanding of how the police department operates and "a real appreciation for the obstacles and frustrations officers run into on a daily basis."

Replacing old equipment at the Wauna Mill with faster, state-of-the-art machinery isn't enough.

If the mill is going to keep up with overseas competition, Mill Manager James Jordan says its workers and work processes also need to be leaner and more innovative.

So, over the past three months, the mill has undergone a "Rapid Transformation" process, shedding 33 salaried workers through severance offerings, losing hourly position to retirement, reassigning responsibilities and retraining its roughly 1,000 remaining employees.

Astoria cross country runner Aurora Olson recently competed in the USATF Region 13 Junior Olympic Championships, and qualified for nationals Dec. 9 in Spokane, Wash.

Olson placed 30th overall in the Regional event, held Saturday in Seattle.

Running in the 3,000-meter Midget Girls division, Olson finished in 12 minutes, 48.05 seconds.

Olson is a sixth-grader at Lewis and Clark Elementary School who runs for the Astoria Middle School team.

Competing for Oregon Cross Country's A team, Olson will run again in the National Championships in Spokane. She is coached by Astoria Middle School and assistant high school coach Brett Dixon.

50 years ago — 1966

SEAVIEW — Washington Coast Highway association held first meeting in two years on the Peninsula Saturday afternoon to discuss a future bridge crossing over Willapa harbor from the north end of the Peninsula to the Tokeland area.

It was noted that the state has about 22 miles of Highway 101 along the coast. If the bridge is built, members felt that it would be a giant step in opening up the Washington coast.

A former resident of the Peninsula, now living in Portland, Joseph Woerndle, 86, made a special trip to attend the meeting.

Having read in one of the local papers about the association, Woerndle wanted to join the organization and "hoped he lives to see the bridge built."



Heck Harper, cowboy musician and television star, will be grand marshal of the Christmas parade sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce retail merchants' bureau Saturday at 1 p.m.

The Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission Friday asked the federal government to take steps, including negotiations with Russian and Japanese governments, to preserve Pacific Coast Fisheries stock.

The resolution, which is an outgrowth of concern over offshore fishing by foreign countries, was passed unanimously.

It suggested that Russian and Japanese governments be asked to suspend or cut back their North American coastal fisheries until adequate studies of the resource could be made.

75 years ago — 1941

The port of Astoria dredge Natoma narrowly escaped sinking in the old Hammond mill pond at Garibaldi Monday when her discharge pipe burst inside the hull of the craft and quickly filled a bulkhead with sand, gravel and water, it was learned today.

Only the fact that the Natoma was digging in shallow water saved her from the third sinking of her career.

Applicants for naval service at shore stations and coast patrol today were being interviewed at the Astoria naval section base on pier No. 2 following the arrival of the former John Barrymore pleasure yacht, now a navy patrol vessel.

Built in 1930 was a marine joy of the "great profile," the navy has removed trimmings from the boat until today the USS Amber is just like any other navy vessel. She has taken on "war paint" very convincingly, so skillful the "makeup" in the navy yard. A gun is now mounted forward, and the stern is host to a rack of depth charges.

Authoritative sources today expressed fear that Japan's answer to American demands that she withdraw from the axis and get out of China may be a Japanese attack on Thailand within the next few days.



A jolt of blue-collar hope

By DAVID LEONHARDT
New York Times News Service

NEW CASTLE, Del. — The nearby factory that made Dodge Durangos closed eight years ago. The General Motors Boxwood Road Plant



— open since 1947 — closed the next year. So did the oil refinery in Delaware City.

In the span of a year during the financial crisis, once-prosperous northern Delaware had to confront post-industrial devastation.

It's sort of the devastation that now has the country's attention. Donald Trump won the presidency with huge margins in places left behind. He lost the popular vote but won 26 of the 30 lowest-income states, including the old powerhouses of Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan.

These places are stuck in what I call the Great American Stagnation. Tens of millions of people have experienced scant progress for decades. Median net worth is lower than in the 1980s, and middle-aged whites, shockingly, aren't living as long as they used to. Ending this stagnation is the central political problem of our age: It fuels Trumpian anger and makes every other societal problem harder to solve.

Promising

I came here to New Castle looking for a jolt of hope after the terribly dispiriting presidential campaign. I came to see one of the more promising attacks on the Great American Stagnation.

In the wake of the financial crisis, Delaware's new governor, Jack Markell, and other officials did obvious things, like using stimulus money to stem the damage and even managing to reopen the refinery. But Markell, who'd run as an insurgent Democrat, understood that nostalgia alone

wouldn't help families pay their bills. So he began looking for ways both to save old jobs and to create new ones. His answer wasn't original — but that's OK, because it was right.

In his almost eight years in office, he has made his No. 1 priority lifting the skills of Delaware's citizens. He worked on traditional education, expanding high-quality pre-K and helping low-income teenagers go to college. And he worked on what academic researchers like Robert Schwartz call "the forgotten half": the many students who won't graduate from college but who also need strong skills to find decent jobs. Their struggles are a major reason that America's workforce is no longer considered the world's most highly skilled.

Too early to say

It's too early for a final verdict in the state, but the signs are encouraging. High school graduation rates have jumped. Educational attainment is above average — as are incomes. The jobless rate is 4.3 percent.

New Castle, on the Delaware River, is telling, because it has focused on skills while staying true to its blue-collar roots. It's home to the state's largest high school, William Penn, which has long educated the children of workers from General Motors and the refinery. By 2011, enrollment had fallen by nearly 20 percent as students fled for other options.

"People came out and said, 'The high school is not serving the community,'" the former principal, Jeffrey Menzer, told me. "They wanted more career opportunities, more hands-on stuff."

Markell makes a similar point: "A lot of kids who drop out of high school — they don't drop out because they're not intelligent. They drop out because they think what they're learning is not relevant to the rest of their lives."

Picking a path

William Penn reorganized itself into 20 "majors," and every student must pick one, be it manufacturing, computer science or agriculture. (The state has a broader version of the program, called Pathways to Prosperity.) One goal, of course, is to prepare students for a career. When William Penn tried to start a nursing major, the state pushed back, pointing to a glut of such programs — and the school started a medical-diagnostics major instead.

But having a major can also help students who don't know what they want to be when they grow up. It connects book learning to real life. It can help launch them into college or a certificate program and avoid the epidemic of academic drift. No wonder enrollment at William Penn has improved.

Kiara Roach, a senior, told me that she didn't care about her grades, or do very well, until she became passionate about cooking. (As she told me this, I was enjoying a moist pork sandwich in a teacher cafe she helps run.) Mike Rodriguez, who one day hopes to start a heating-and-cooling business, said: "I get bored in class. I like standing up and working on something." Jacob Sobolesky, a junior, told me: "There's only so much you can learn from word of mouth."

Many people in New Castle, not to mention the industrial Midwest, feel a deep cultural connection to craftsmanship — to making things and working with their hands. They're not inspired by working in cubicles or comfortable offices.

At the same time, they can't simply do as previous generations did and graduate from high school into a good job. They can't bring back yesterday's economy. They need blue-collar skill-building to thrive.

The country has failed to provide nearly enough of that skill-building, and we're all living with the consequences.

Time to engage in a little listening

By DAVID BROOKS
New York Times News Service

I've been thinking a lot about the best imaginable Trump voter.

This is the Trump supporter who wasn't motivated by racism or bigotry. This is the one who cringed every time Donald Trump did something cruel, vulgar and misogynistic.

But this voter needed somebody to change the systems that are failing her. She needed somebody to change the public school system that serves the suburban children of professors, journalists and lawyers, but has left her kids under-skilled and underpaid. She needed some way to protect herself from the tech executives who give exciting speeches about disruption but don't know anything about the people actually being disrupted.

She is one of those people whom Joan C. Williams writes about in *The Harvard Business Review* who admires rich people but disdains professionals — the teachers who condescend to her, the doctors who don't make time for her, the activists whose definition of social justice never includes the people like her.

This voter wants leaders tough enough to crack through the reigning dysfunction, and sure enough, Trump's appointments so far represent the densest concentration of hyper-macho belligerence outside a drill sergeant retirement home.

This voter wants a philosophic change of course, and Trump offers that, too. The two party establishments are mired in their orthodoxies, but Trump and his appointees are embodiments of the nationalism espoused by Pat Buchanan, the most influential public intellectual in America today.

Buchanan's organizing worldview is embodied in visceral form in the person of Steve Bannon.

"The globalists gutted the American working class and created a middle class in Asia," Bannon said in his *Hollywood Reporter* interview. The new political movement, he said, is "everything related to jobs."

He vowed to drive conservatives crazy with a gigantic spending program to create jobs. He vowed to use that money to create a new New Deal that will win over 40 percent of the black and Hispanic vote, creating a neo-Jacksonian majority that will govern for 50 years.

It's not my cup of tea, but I can see why some good people might be willing to tolerate Trump and Bannon's personalities in order to pursue it.

Emotional pause

Thinking about this best voter has helped me take an emotional pause. Many of my fellow Trump critics are expressing outrage, depression, bewilderment or disgust. They're marching or writing essays: Should we normalize Trump or fight the normalizers?

It all seems so useless during this

transition moment. It's all a series of narcissistic displays and discussions about our own emotional states.

It seems like the first thing to do is learn what this election is teaching us. Second, this seems like a moment for some low-passion wonkery. It's stupid to react to every Trump tweet outrage with your own predictable howls. It's silly to treat politics and governance purely on cultural grounds, as a high school popularity contest, where my sort of people denigrates your sort of people.

The Democratic Party is losing badly on the local, state and national levels. If you were a football team you'd be 2-8. Maybe you can do better than responding with the sentiment: Sadly, the country isn't good enough for us.

Those of us in the opinion class have been complaining that Trump voters are post-truth, that they don't have a respect for expertise. Well, the experts created a school system that doesn't produce skilled graduates. The experts designed Obamacare exchanges that are failing. Maybe those of us in the class need to win back some credibility the old-fashioned way, with effective reform.

There will be plenty of time to be disgusted with Trump's bigotry, narcissism and incompetence. It's tempting to get so caught up in his outrage du jour that you never have to do any self-examination. But let's be honest: It wouldn't kill us Trump critics to take a break from our never-ending umbrage to engage in a little listening.