

Sued for our trees

Many people are not aware of the \$1.4 billion Linn County class action law suit filed against the State of Oregon. Nor are they aware of the impact it could have on the place where we live. If the suit succeeds, Oregon Department of Forestry will be under pressure to operate much like the timber industry in order to squeeze more logging revenue out of state managed forests. The mandate to ODF will be to log, mostly clearcut, for greater revenue. We will lose the goal of balance with other values such as environment, species protection and recreation.

Look around you at the clearcut hills. More of this is what we would be choosing. But wait, we don't even have to choose. In fact, if we say nothing, since it is a class action suit naming 15 counties including Clackamas and Tillamook, we will just silently slide right along with the pack. Incidentally this suit, although called by a county name, was backed and financed by the timber industry.

The hard truth for some of us is that the timber industry does not live with the consequence of their actions. They do not live with hills that have been denuded and sprayed. They do not experience the effect of toxic spray in the water, the mud slides and flooding in the winter, the siltation of the streams and rivers, the dying off of wildlife and fish and the loss of forests. We are, in fact, even forgetting what the word forest means. It is not acres of homogenous trees. A few

Consider blessings and give thanks

This week, we celebrate Thanksgiving, which in America is a tradition that started with the Pilgrims in 1623. Among other things, they thanked God for an abundance of wheat, corn, peas, squash, wild game, fish and clams.

Today, we are more apt to celebrate with turkey, yams, mashed potatoes, gravy and pumpkin pie. For many, it is a paid holiday with a lot of football.

May we enjoy it all, and consider sharing our blessings with some

less-fortunate person(s). But above all, let's not get to give thanks to God for:

- This wonderful land of freedom and opportunities that we live in;
- The police, military and firemen who guard and protects us and our property;
- The abundance of good things that we enjoy;
- Our nation's leaders that they will guide our land with wisdom and righteousness.

"Praise the Lord. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love endures forever. Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the Lord or fully declare his praise? Blessed are they who maintain justice, who constantly do what is right."

— Psalm 106:1-3

"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good."

— Psalm 107.1 and Psalm 136.1

KEN TIPPS
Astoria Church of Christ

of us were lucky enough to know forests as children, to play in them and learn from them. This is a value beyond money that we hope to share with our children's children.

We still have time. Contact your County Commissioners. Ask them to opt out of the Linn County law suit. Ask them not to support a forest management policy destructive to the place where we live.

GWENDOLYN
ENDICOTT
Nehalem

Excluding others

I found the recent editorial "Give each other the benefit of doubt" (*The Daily Astorian*, Nov. 14) amusing in its contradictions. At the same time as the paper declares a need to be inclusive and tolerant, the piece employs exclusionary language.

"Mary and Joseph's time" sure sounds like a biblical reference, though no last names are given to verify their identities nor relevance

to modern U.S. federal government representation. One can only assume that *The Daily Astorian* takes Christianity as the premise for rulership.

"The blood of those who created this nation" also doesn't sound very welcoming to more recent immigrants, who may come from other lineages.

Not least, "it is foolish for ordinary people to fight with each other over such matters that are truly beyond our control" is a very anti-democratic statement. This is precisely what we should be doing: debating a better path and acting to build a better future. Decisions in Washington absolutely do affect us here in the Goondocks and we should have opinions on them.

I do agree that there is much good to be done locally, but calling on the Bible and (presumably white European) founders as the dominant model for this effort doesn't seem to help us overcome our differences all that much. I'll give you the benefit of the

doubt here, and assume you had good intentions anyway.

NIK ROUDA
Astoria

We need Trump

The protests taking place in our country by the illegal aliens and their supporters are a good example of just how much we need what Trump is promising us, enforcing our immigration laws.

Obama and Hillary have been strong supporters of the illegal aliens, giving them most everything they wanted at taxpayers' expense, and disregarding all of our immigration laws.

This mess they have created for our country has made me very ashamed that I was once a registered Democrat. The Democrat control of our country for so long has put us in need of a whole lot of fixing, and the illegal alien mess is one of our major problems that the Democrats created.

Hillary kept preaching that we must all work together. Those words seem to have

fallen on deaf ears with her supporters. But I'm thinking that her supporters aren't any too smart in the first place.

Let's all pray that the Republicans can fix a lot of the mess that the Democrats have gotten us into.

I'm sure that all of our enemies around the world feel the same as these protesters do. They don't want us to have a strong president.

JIM ELVIN
Salem

Good value for us?

Driving to Longview, Washington, for a medical appointment recently, I was again amazed at the amount of large truck traffic on U.S. Highway 30. It made me realize that soon there will be more of this, when the new Walmart comes to Warrenton. Will Highway 30, as well as U.S. Highway 26, be widened and improved to accommodate the increase? Perhaps restrict them to night-time use?

Car traffic from Washington will increase as a closer super

store will be available, tax-free, as well as shoppers from all surrounding areas, adding to already too much traffic. When is enough, enough? Is this added congestion a good value/tradeoff for us who make this place our home?

KATE McFADDEN
Warrenton

Blame the media

In the aftermath of the recent presidential election, I've seen on TV some extremely disgusting displays of savagery and viciousness that make me wonder where this specimen of subhuman came from.

The news networks announced that at least seven of our cities have been subjected to rioting, injuring innocent citizens and inflicting mass destruction, all plainly seen on the TV screen. The reason? Donald Trump defeated Hillary Clinton.

What manner of human being (?) could resort to this mindless form of savagery? I saw one scene of horror in which three burly young Democrat thugs were kicking and repeatedly slamming one defenseless man while screaming "You voted for Trump" over and over. Many of these riots erupted in the wonderful city of Portland — the Rose City. It should be renamed ... maybe the Disgusting City.

I lay most of the blame for these sickening, savage outbursts on the great majority of the so-called mainstream news media, both newspapers and television news channels. I charge them with inciting to riot.

E. ROBERT NASSIKAS
Astoria



AP Photo/Mark Lennihan

President-elect Donald Trump gives a thumbs-up to the crowd as he leaves The New York Times building following a meeting Tuesday in New York. Trump met with a group of about two dozen journalists for more than an hour.

Trump's demand for very much love

By FRANK BRUNI
New York Times News Service

I had just shaken the president-elect's normal-size hand and he was moving on to the next person when he wheeled around, took a half step back, touched my arm and looked me in the eye anew.

"I'm going to get you to write some good stuff about me," Donald Trump said.

It's entirely possible. I keep an open mind. But I'm decided on this much: Winning the most powerful office in the world did nothing to diminish his epic ache for adoration or outside need to tell everyone how much he deserves it.

He sat down for more than an hour with about two dozen of us at The Times on Tuesday afternoon, and what subject do you suppose he spent his first eight minutes on? When the floor was his, to use as he pleased?

The incredibility of his win two weeks ago.

Highlights

"A great victory," he said as he went back, unbidden, through all the Trump-affirming highlights: the size of his crowds; the screens and loudspeakers for the overflow; the enthusiasm gap between his rallies and poor Hillary Clinton's. It's a song I've heard so often I could sing it in my sleep.

He volunteered that until he came along, Republican presidential candidates had been foiled in both Michigan and Pennsylvania for "38 years or something." The "something" apparently covered the actual figure, 28.

He said that he got close to 15 percent of African-Americans' votes, though exit

polls suggest it was just 8 percent, and he asserted that their modest turnout was in fact a huge compliment to him, demonstrating that "they liked what I was saying" and thus didn't bother to show up for Clinton.

He mentioned the popular vote before any of us could — to let us know that he would have won it if it had mattered and his strategy had been devised accordingly.

"The popular vote would have been a lot easier," he said, making clear that his Electoral College triumph was the truly remarkable one.

Like breathing

For Trump, bragging is like breathing: continuous, spontaneous. He wants nothing more than for his audience to be impressed.

And when his audience is a group of people, like us, who haven't clapped the way he'd like?

He sands down his edges. Modulates his voice. Bends.

That was perhaps the most interesting part of the meeting, the one that makes his presidency such a question mark. Will he tilt in whatever direction, and toward whichever constituency, is the surest source of applause? Is our best hope for the best Trump to be so fantastically adulatory when he's reasonable that he's motivated to stay on that course, lest the adulation wane?

The Trump who visited The Times was purged of any zeal to investigate Clinton's emails or the Clinton Foundation, willing to hear out the scientists on global warming, skeptical of waterboarding and unhesitant to disavow white nationalists. He never mentioned the border wall.

He more or less told us to disregard all the huffing and puffing he'd done about curtailing press freedoms, and he looked forward to another meeting — a year from

now — when we'd all reunite in a spirit of newfound amity to celebrate his administration's uncontroversial accomplishments. I could see the big group hug. I could hear "Kumbaya."

And though one of his splenic tweets just seven hours before our meeting had again branded The Times a "failing" news organization, he said to our faces that we weren't just a "great, great American jewel" but a "world jewel."

Lessons

There was a lesson here about his desire to be approved of and his hunger to be loved. There was another about the shockingly unformed, pliable nature of the clay that is our 70-year-old president-elect.

His reservations about waterboarding, he said, arose from a conversation he'd just had with James Mattis, a retired Marine general under consideration for secretary of defense. During that talk Mattis had bluntly questioned waterboarding's effectiveness — and so, now, did Trump.

It was as if he'd never really thought through the issue during that endless campaign, and it suggested that the most influential voice in Trumplandia is the last one he happened to listen to. That's worrying, because some of the voices he has thus far put closest to him — those of Steve Bannon, Mike Flynn, Jeff Sessions — aren't the most constructive, restrained, unifying ones.

And to my eyes and ears, Trump still has grandiose intentions in lieu of concrete plans. Toward the end of our meeting, he went so far as to prophesy that he might be able to accomplish what his predecessors couldn't and broker a lasting peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

That'd definitely do the trick. We'd all be writing nothing but very, very good stuff about him then.

Trump reassures media (for now)

By DAVID
LEONHARDT
New York Times News
Service

"I think you'll be happy, I think you'll be happy."

That was President-elect Donald Trump, talking to a group of New York Times journalists Tuesday about his views on the First Amendment.

The real issue, of course, is not whether journalists are happy. (We're not exactly a popular bunch with most Americans.)

The issue is whether the next president and his administration plan to remain faithful to the Constitution.

And there are reasons to worry. During the campaign, Trump referred to the reporters covering him as "scum" and said that he wanted to "open up" libel laws to make it easier to sue media companies for unfavorable coverage.

He is also part of a small group of wealthy Americans who have tried to intimidate journalists with lawsuits, as my colleague Emily Bazelon wrote for *The Times Magazine*. "Once installed in the White House, Trump will have a wider array of tools at his disposal," Bazelon wrote, "and his record suggests that, more than his predecessors, he will try to use the press — and also control and subdue it."

Alarming

All of this is alarming. No matter how good or bad any individual piece of journalism or publication is, a free press is crucial to a functioning democracy. "Our liberty," as Thomas Jefferson said, "cannot be guarded but by the freedom of the press, nor that be limited without danger of losing it."

As it happens, Jefferson isn't the only famous populist from an agrarian state

who has eloquently made the case for a free press. There is another — named Mike Pence.

In a bit of history that's been partly forgotten, Pence — now the vice president-elect, then a member of Congress — co-sponsored a bill about a decade ago to create a so-called shield law. Had it



A free press is crucial to a functioning democracy.

passed, the bill would have protected journalists from being dragged into court to reveal anonymous sources. Pence

decided to push the bill after reading a *Times* editorial criticizing the jailing of Judith Miller, a former *Times* reporter, according to the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

Pence was quite clear that he often didn't like what he read in the media, too. He bemoaned "bad news bias." But he also understood that there were more important principles.

"Our founders did not put the freedom of the press in the First Amendment because they got good press — quite the opposite was true," he said. Like them, though, he believed in "the public good that a free and independent press represents" because it allowed citizens to "make informed decisions," he said.

It's not clear how much of a free-press defender Pence remains. Either way, vice presidents generally yield to presidents. But he does seem to have instincts that his boss would benefit from hearing.

I thought of his shield-law history last weekend, after the much-hyped incident when Pence was booed by the crowd at "Hamilton." Trump took to Twitter to demand an apology from the cast. Pence, in the moment, had a different reaction: He turned to his daughter inside the theater and said, "That's what freedom sounds like."