

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## A TRIBUTE

# Region is richer because of attorney Snow

Lawyers get a bad rap. But there is a type of small-town lawyer that very few Americans know. That lawyer is absolutely essential to the community's progress. And that's who Hal Snow was.

My first encounter with Hal was in a booth of the Fred Meyer Deli some 25 years ago. Hal and Sandra Swain double-teamed to draft me as the next president of the Lower Columbia Youth Soccer Association — a nonprofit they and a few others had established some five years prior.

I protested that I'd never played the game. They were ready with an answer. I acquiesced.

Years hence, when a few of us began the drive to restore the historic but decrepit Liberty Theater, I asked Hal if he would be our non-profit's corporate secretary. And for the next decade, Hal was a tireless adviser to the project, fundraiser and a donor whose generosity was expressed again and again.

Beyond our many Liberty Theater conversations, Hal loved to talk baseball. He and his wife, Jeanyse, were faithful to the Mariner cause.

When we talked politics, Hal expressed frustration with what had become of his party. "I'm a Mark Hatfield-Tom McCall Republican," he would explain — describing two politicians who would no longer be welcome in an Oregon GOP primary.

My wife has observed that, "a lot of what Hal did was social work." He embodied the role of the counselor. His work often ranged beyond drafting legal documents, into a larger realm of helping people navigate life's challenges.

Charitable giving was a large focus of Hal's life. He encouraged it. As a director of the Oregon Community Foundation, he kept Clatsop County nonprofits in the game.

Astoria and the Columbia-Pacific region are richer because Hal Snow resided among us.

— Steve Forrester



Hal Snow

## OUR VIEW

# In politics and government, looks are everything

Richard L. Neuberger famously said that Oregon politics was so clean "it squeaks." The prodigious writer and Democratic U.S. senator from our state may have been overly optimistic in the 1940s, when he uttered that line. But Neuberger's characterization certainly does not fit today's statehouse.

Former Gov. John Kitzhaber's third term was ruined by his financially compromised girlfriend, Cylvia Hayes. She ran her own subsidiary business from an office down the hall from Kitzhaber's chamber.

Kate Brown understood the need to scrub the governor's suite when she suddenly took the oath of office in February 2015, upon Kitzhaber's resignation.

If the new governor announced one thing in her hastily prepared inaugural address, it was transparency. She wanted to enact rules that would ensure against the kind of conflict of interest and self-dealing that Hayes exemplified in the Kitzhaber administration.

Sadly, Gov. Brown doesn't seem to get it.

This past Wednesday, Willamette Week published a revealing report by Nigel Jaquiss that describes key Brown subordinates who are clearly compromised. In the simplest words, these Brown lieutenants are working for the governor and the state while also serving the financial interests of other entities. Neither Gov. Brown nor the employees have acknowledged this. The full article can be found at [www.wweek.com](http://www.wweek.com).

If you are familiar with the questions being raised by President-elect Donald Trump's private holdings, you will get what's disquieting about the predicament that Gov. Brown refuses to see. The problem Jaquiss describes is much smaller than Trump's, but it is plainly obvious.

Appearances are everything in politics and government. By ignoring the relevance of her inaugural proclamation, Gov. Brown seems to be telling the rest of us that she knows she can skirt the rules and win reelection simply because she's a Democrat and backed by the public employees unions.



## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

# No rain, no gain

I want my Thanksgiving turkey! We were all dressed up and ready to go when the rain — the polite word for that drenching from the sky — turned up the volume. We received the word that Avenue U was closed to southbound traffic — meaning we wouldn't get through to our Cannon Beach destination.

It was a pot-luck affair, and our contribution was fruit salad. We had pounds of cantaloupe, apples, grapes and berries — all dressed up with nowhere to go.



Did I only imagine that the early Clatsop tribe had 80 words for "rain"?

I am quickly discovering that rain here comes with more mythology than a Greek mermaid.

A day after a torrential down-pour occupied us for 12 straight hours, the sun peeked from a thinly veiled curtain like a mirage. That little poke of light was enough to hold a promise of sunnier days ahead.

"Well at least it can't get any worse than yesterday," I mused.

Liz, at my left on the stool, cast me a lightning bolt look. "Don't ever say that!"

Liz — who like us is from back East — shared a brief but detailed story of a ride from Washington, D.C., to their former home in Connecticut marred by storms that intensified throughout the ride — after one of the riders had prophetically ventured, "It can't get any worse."

### Read the weather

In general, prophecies are about 50-50 truth. Since being in Oregon I've learned to read the weather drawings on the forecast page with their own particular nuance.

The sunny sky icon is rarely seen.

If it shows a crowded number of raindrops on a gray background, I get the sense that it will be really dark, dreary. If they add some "pelted" streaks to the raindrops they can add to the level of intensity.

Rex Amos tells me in 1961 it rained every day for a month. "So a friend and I fled Portland just to see how long it would take to get out of the rain," Amos writes. "It didn't stop raining until we got to Big Sur, California. That was a good place to get dry. And we got to work in the Big Sur Inn."

Contrast that: Our friend Jeff recalled driving with his 3-year-old daughter in Southern California's San Fernando Valley when it began to rain.

"Daddy, why is the car getting wet?" the befuddled toddler inquired.

That wouldn't happen here. If you leave your car window open overnight, you can collect enough



Submitted Photo

Steve Prefontaine set the pace for rainy-day runners.



File Photo

Rising waters in Ecola Creek, 2015.

water to soak a brisket. Kids know what rain is before they go through their first binky.

Gretchen at Seaside's convention center told me last December that if you wait for the weather to get better, you'll be waiting until June.

### Defined by mood

But while Oregon's rain is inarguable, inconsiderate and inhospitable and sometimes even deadly, its danger is defined by its mood. There is rain ringed with anger and fury, rain as faint and dainty as a pianist's staccato and rain as windy as a horn.

All this rain provides lots of opportunities for Yahtzee.

But sometimes you have to get outside no matter how hard the wind is blowing or how dark the skies are.

The South County is a runners' destination — there are an astonishing amount of people who just like running in rain cold as a polar bear's washcloth — look how many sign up for the Hood to Coast Relay every year.

The group Cannon Beach Running schedules runs for mornings and sunsets, offering silent and meditation running in a sacred space. "Listen to your headphones or the ocean." Their motto is: "Silence is a source of strength."

Alas, running organizer Melinda Sage Bruton told me this week she has taken a pause from

the project, but she urges those inclined to carry the torch.

She's on the right track.

### Prefontaine

Maybe it's the Nike effect or the legacy of Oregon's track athletes from way back when. I attribute a large part of the state's running passion to the great Olympian Steve Prefontaine.

"No former Duck athlete captured the hearts of a nation as the brash, charismatic native son," writes the University of Oregon in a tribute.

Prefontaine got his feet wet in Coos Bay and then the University of Oregon, where he circled Eugene's bark paths in rain-filled udders of clouds. "Pre" claimed seven NCAA titles and a fourth-place Olympic finish before his death in a car crash at age 24.

In writing about Cannon Beach author Ursula K. Le Guin for a recent column, I learned of her predilection for a game called "Fibble," where "the only words allowed are words that (so far as anybody there knows) do not exist."

My entry for today's consideration:

*Prefont-rain:* What you experience running into a coastal winter headwind, raindrops stinging like a Waterpik on your cheeks.

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

Visitors to Cannon Beach are rarely surprised by the winter weather.

R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

