

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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## OUR VIEW

# Computer hacking shows need for more cybersecurity

Russian meddling in the U.S. election certainly should make all Americans angry, no matter our political differences. Moving forward, it's important to learn from it and incorporate these lessons throughout our personal, professional and political lives.

Despicable as it was to hack into Democratic National Committee computers and selectively leak information in a way that undercut the party's candidate, such shenanigans couldn't have been effective if the DNC had not engaged in embarrassing acts and stockpiled damaging data in its files.

Three key points to note about this:

- The DNC and, presumably, the Republican National Committee are guilty of trying to skew the presidential selection process in ways that support favorites already anointed behind the scenes. Many in the DNC believed Hillary Clinton was owed her party's nomination by acclamation. They resented Bernie Sanders' spirited opposition. To the extent they are capable of doing so, the national political committees must resolve to be honest brokers who provide a level playing field for all credible candidates. Citizen resentment about being force-fed political dynasties — in the form of the Clintons and Bushes — partly precipitated the Trump surprise.

- If the DNC was incapable of withstanding or resisting efforts by Clinton stalwarts to skew the selection process, it should at a minimum have been much smarter about protecting its inner workings. For would-be world leaders, they were blindingly stupid. Unlike the Watergate burglary that required physically entering an office and trying to steal papers, we live in an age when electronic information is spread throughout the world on computer servers, protected (and unprotected) in ways few of us understand. Nothing should ever be sent in an email or stored electronically that you would not want to have read aloud in a court deposition or news report. For ordinary citizens, the corresponding lesson is to zealously safeguard financial information, credit card numbers and passwords.

- Government and corporations owe an enormous responsibility to better protect electronic information. Our democracy, economy and security hang in the balance. Far more important than a physical fence along a peaceful international border, defending our electronic frontier ought to be at the forefront of the U.S. national agenda. If the world tips into chaos — as it has often done in the past — in today's world it may be because a madman, tyrant or criminal enterprise deliberately or accidentally crashes the information systems on which we rely for so many vital services in modern life.

We've been delivered a stinging rebuke about sloppy data management, and it's not a partisan issue, it affects us all. Let's never allow it to be repeated.

# Rent control proposal is a fool's bargain

Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek threw red meat to her Portland constituents by proposing legislation to create rent control. Portland rents have escalated as the city has become one of the nation's most desirable locations. Kotek extended her rent control proposal beyond Portland's boundaries, to all Oregon communities.

Rent control is now prohibited in Oregon statute.

America's on-again, off-again experience with rent control began during World War II housing shortages. With almost 70 years of history in various cities such as New York, rent control has generated enormous economic study and literature. Retired Portland State University Professor John Walker said: "The shelves of literature on rent control are bigger than the Astoria Public Library."

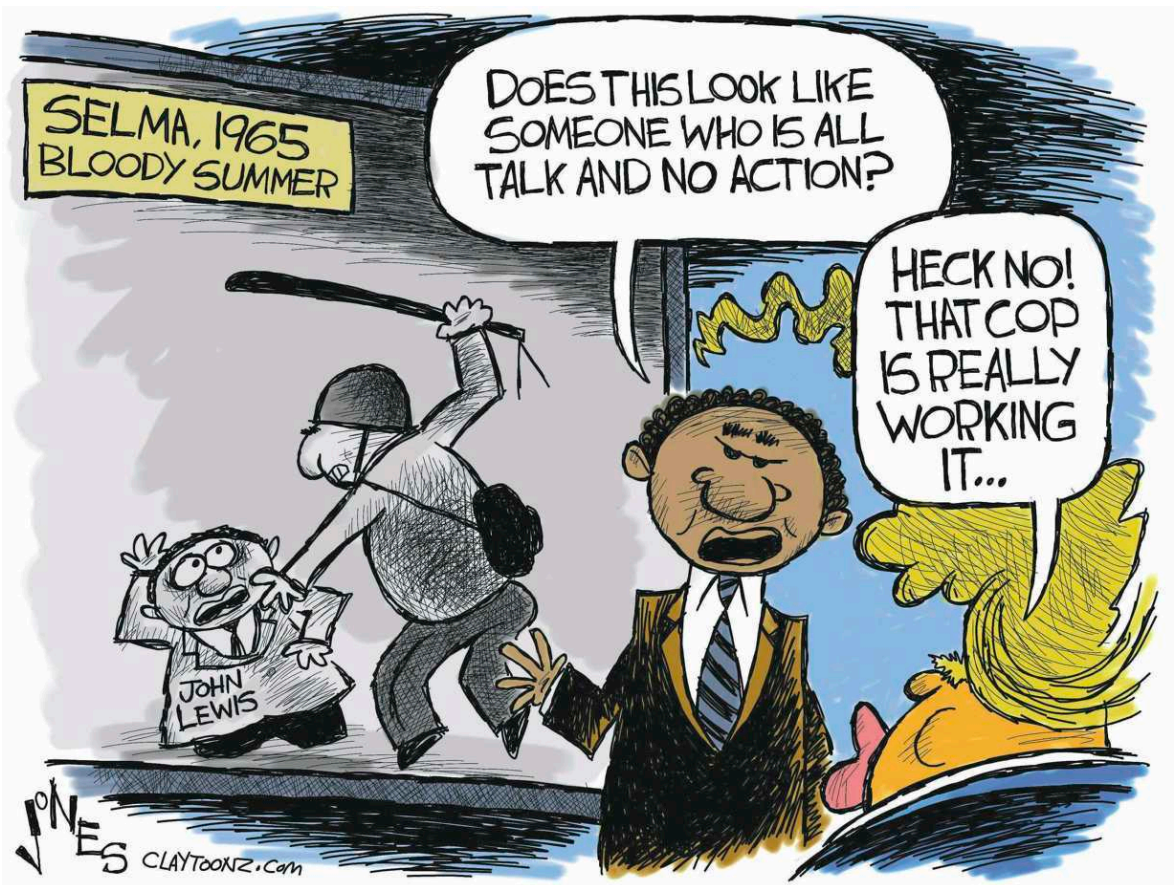
Of rent control, one can say two things: it will generate a huge bureaucracy and it is fraught with unintended consequences that are not what hard-pressed tenants hope for.

South of us, in San Francisco, lies one of the most unfortunate conundrums, born of rent control. Writing in Willamette Week last June, Aaron Mesh explored the San Francisco example. "Many landlords either evict tenants or keep apartments empty," wrote Mesh. "Roughly one in 12 housing units in San Francisco sit vacant, according to the U.S. Census Bureau."

Of San Francisco, Tim Duy of the University of Oregon economics department asked: "Has that really been effective at solving their problems? No. You think you're helping people, but you are constraining the stock of affordable housing."

For Speaker Kotek to propose rent control for all Oregon communities is an especially ridiculous concept.

Asking the Oregon Legislature to embark on consideration of rent control is a fool's bargain.



## SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

# Looking at life from both sides now

Sorry, this message can't be conveyed in 140 characters or less.

Only a few weeks into the new year, the nation is plunged into a tug-of-war on issues as profound as our health, our planet and war. The deep splits on these issues not only exhibit our individual preferences — or prejudices — but regional ones.



An editorial in a sister newspaper described the gap between rural and urban Oregonians as "stark and deep. ... In the wake of a bitter presidential campaign and tight election, the gap has never seemed so wide." Only eight counties out of 36 counties tilted to Hillary Clinton in Oregon, but Donald Trump received 220,000 fewer votes.

The editorial nevertheless recalled Abraham Lincoln's first inaugural address and concluded on an optimistic note: "We are more alike than different."

I would posit that in this state, we are more different than alike — and that will require some radically different thinking.

### A matter of perspective

The League of Oregon Cities listed its legislative session priorities for the new year in Salem. Among them, housing, land use, lodging tax, marijuana and water/wastewater, all critical issues close to home.

The South County is a little schizophrenic, developed by hunters, fishermen and loggers, but today relying on an economy driven by tourism, largely funded by a cosmopolitan audience that couldn't tell the difference between halibut and haddock. That which we valued — Paul Bunyan ranging overland with a chainsaw strapped to his back — does not appear to have the same role in a world where mountain bicyclists would prefer to pedal among the trees sporting Day-Glo insignia and GoPro cameras strapped to their helmets.

Visitors come to Cannon Beach to bask among the natural resources — vast swaths of timberland, rolling mountains and fertile streams — not to exploit them, but to appreciate their beauty in their natural state.

Do we want more visitors or less? They supply the city's tax coffers, but they also choke downtown streets and roads.

Is land preservation a good thing? Conservationist Anne French, who led a cadre of dowdy old socialites in front of bulldozers seeking to pave a rural dirt road, once told me she hated the word "development," because it implied there was something lacking in our natural environment. Yet I also interviewed a New York developer who said he couldn't look at a piece of land without imagining a super-market on it. Members of the North Coast Land Conservancy recently celebrated the \$10 million purchase of 3,300 acres of land at Onion Peak, this in addition to the \$1.3 million Boneyard Ridge acquisition adjacent to Ecola State Park. Will business and industry share their enthusiasm?

The city will be establishing an emergency management site for



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

Will Cannon Beach always be a town you can ride your horse for a cup of coffee at Insomnia?



The Daily Astorian/File Photo

This affordable home plan design was rejected in 2016.



Submitted Photo

Maybe we can all agree on something: the scenic beauty of Cannon Beach. The Cannon Beach Gallery Group, hosts of the Plein Air Festival, received a portion of the Tourism and Arts Commission's grant funding.

mass care shelter. The process will require rezoning and expanded urban growth boundaries.

The city's strategic plan states by July 2018, an additional 25 units of affordable housing will be in place. By the end of that year, the city will experience a 10 percent increase in long-term rentals. By July 2020, Cannon Beach will make an additional 25 units of affordable housing available.

More people, more traffic and so it goes. At the end of this year, the city will create 50 new parking spaces in the downtown district. Is Cannon Beach going to become more like Bend or Beaverton?

The city's Ecola Creek watershed provides municipal water to Cannon Beach. The Department of Fish and Wildlife considers Ecola Creek West Fork a vital area for coho salmon.

The city plans workforce housing on city-owned land — starting with placing park model homes at the RV Park. Since the homes have no storage tanks or propane tanks, a permanent sewer will be needed, as well as changes to the city's zone codes. As new park model homes come to the RV Resort in Cannon Beach and elsewhere, who will determine limits on septic and wastewater runoff?

In November, opponents in Cannon Beach of retail cannabis sales sought prohibition. The vote was close, 51 percent to 49 percent. Whose rules will we play by? Future decisions could tilt either way.

### Fresh ideas

Environmental consequences of overfishing, water contamination, clear-cutting or other man-made activity are all too apparent. Social consequences — lack of affordable housing, medical care and need for educational opportunities — will only become more pressing. Risks of tsunami and natural disaster will be competing for dollars in a session that starts already \$1.7 billion in the hole.

Our differences are real and hard and at times we share little common ground.

My message: that's OK. Dig in and stand firm.

Our points of view are our strongest asset, combined with a will to sustain our values.

The legislative session lasts only 160 days. In Cannon Beach, these issues are discussed year round at council, planning and design review meetings.

So ladies and gentlemen, to your corners. Get involved in city politics. Hold representatives accountable. Show up at City Hall. Tell us what's important to you. Annoy your friends on Facebook with political barbs. We've never needed fresh ideas more than now, or to do more with less.

Let's keep the discussion alive and have confidence that our tolerance — and our tenacity — will yield results we can all live with.

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