

## Teen pregnancy

As someone who grew up in rural Douglas County when the teen pregnancy rate was at an all-time high in mid-1990s, I really appreciate your article on teen pregnancy (“Teen pregnancy: An urban-rural divide,” The Daily Astorian, Feb. 23) and op-ed on contraception (“Rural communities should ensure contraceptive care,” The Daily Astorian, Feb. 27).

In my graduating class of what should have been 21 students, six of my girlfriends were mothers by graduation, one already pregnant with a second child. Now in their late 30s, most of them are already grandmothers, with grown children who now have babies.

As the balanced article shares, there are many joys of motherhood, but any accidental pregnancy can be more stressful than joyful. No one wants to feel as though they can’t control their life, or take on of the challenge of raising a child without both parents committed and the extended family in full support. There is a reason they say “it takes a village to raise a child.”

One of the things that I love about Astoria and the North Coast is that it does feel like a lot of small villages. For the sake of both our current youth and future generations, I think we need to prioritize further reducing the teen pregnancy rate.

Growing up with such a high pregnancy rate, I know that none of my girlfriends had contraceptives available, and few probably really understood the risks of their behavior. Several got pregnant after their first sexual encounter. Thankfully, my sister, who was date raped, didn’t get pregnant.

I felt like the very fortunate one to have learned vicariously, and graduated still a virgin. I even set the goal of earning my master’s degree before starting a family, and was overjoyed to announce at my graduation that I was starting a family, at age 28.

I would love for our community to view preventing teen pregnancy and providing contraception as more than a social service, but also an economic development strategy that gives all our youth the chance to reach their full potential. It will take our whole village, but we will all benefit.

DARCY ROSE CRONIN  
Astoria

## Statue is tribute

In response to the letter “Racist effigy” (The Daily Astorian, Feb. 24): Why do people move to Clatsop County from another state (however many years ago) and want to remove or change what we have come to know and love, such as the Warrenton warrior statue? I am so pleased he has found a new home at E. Harbor Street and W. Main Ave.

Never in my 65 years (born and raised in Astoria) have I thought of that statue as anything but a tribute to a strong high school ball team. Nor have I thought in a derogatory way of any Native American.

To call Warrenton racist for supporting the warrior is absurd. It’s a statue, a piece of art, a sculpture — it shouldn’t have to resemble any tribe. Our kids made it. They were proud of it, and they should be.

Perhaps the people opposed to it need a safe room and some cocoa.

The effort put into that “racist effigy” letter should be directed where it’s important: Our drug problems, our veterans, our homeless.

PATTI MURRAY  
Coquille

## No hometown

In response to the letter “Promote sea lions” (The Daily Astorian, Feb. 17) since when is Sea Lion Defense Brigade a hometown? The rules for letters to the editor clearly state that an address must be provided and all other letters include one. Why does this one not? Could it be that the writer resides in Portland? Why did The Daily Astorian print a letter not including the town? Many questions.

# Citizen activism works

There was a positive example of citizen activism in Clatsop County last week. The Daily Astorian covered the events at the Clatsop Care Health District (CCHD) very well in its Monday edition (“Clatsop Care hires private management firm”).

A group of us, who are concerned about the management problems which have led to staff turnover and empty beds in district facilities, got together and did our homework on the situation. We attended a CCHD Board meeting on a Tuesday, at which the board was considering a contract to turn over the day-to-day operations of the facilities to a private management consulting company. The board was courteous and welcoming to our comments.

On the following Friday, the board met again to consider a revised contract and to explain issues and events in response to our comments. Again, they welcomed public comment. The board should be applauded for its openness and amenability to adopt changes suggested by citizen

input and to the speed with which they responded to requests for information.

The CCHD Board now understands that there are many people in the community who value this wonderful resource. We support their efforts to provide valued services to us, especially to our older and health challenged neighbors. We encouraged the board to: focus on the quality of care for all clients; maintain good paying jobs and vendors in our community; and pay greater attention to the long-term financial viability of the district’s programs. The board now knows that the performance of the management consultant will be carefully watched. Their goal should be to provide temporary “turn-around” expertise, which will return to a community-based management model, where managers are part of our community, have children in our schools, and meet us on the street.

Citizen involvement works.

PAMELA WEV  
Astoria

Does the writer really think the sea lions are good for the fish? She probably does not live near the sea lions, so she cannot smell them or listen to them barking 24 hours per day. The town residents do not need sea lions residing on the port boat docks. Tourism should not be had at the expense of residents.

ERIC OLSON  
Astoria

## Support for Spence

A strong candidate! Frank Spence’s declaration of candidacy for the Port Commission is a definite plus for Clatsop County (“Spence runs for Port seat,” The Daily Astorian, Feb. 23). I have worked with Frank for several years and know him to be capable and a steady influence on organizational leadership. Among his multiple local activities, as president of Exploring New Concepts of Retirement Education (ENCORE), he is wise and level-headed, prompt and decisive. His years of experience in executive positions in the public realm are what the Port Commission urgently needs. Our citizens will be well served with Frank Spence at the rudder.

ERHARD W. GROSS  
Astoria

## Uninformed

The recent article on Clatsop Care Center gives a good look at some of the difficulties facing the Clatsop Care Health District (“We need to preserve services for seniors,” The Daily Astorian, Feb. 23). Unfortunately, the editorial is uninformed.

The comment that the decrease in residents at the Care Center (from 70 to 24) is a “warning sign” is misleading. The real issue, which we on the board have been addressing, is: What is the right number of residents and the right mix of services at the Care Center that will meet the district’s needs now, and into the near future? That number has not been 70 for years, and probably lies between 30 and 40 beds.

The editor advised us to “incubate” additional services for our seniors. In fact, since 1999, in addition to operating the Care Center, the district has opened Clatsop Retirement Village, an in-home care service, and the Memory Care Facility — increasing care options, and more than doubling the number of people served by the district.

We were told to study a “smart model” that had “strong outside partnerships.” Exactly. The current proposal to contract with a company experienced in long-term care does not farm out management functions, but instead creates a strong partnership that will bring additional resources and skills to the district.

The Health District Board works in near total obscurity. If a Daily Astorian reporter had attended just a few of our meetings these last two years, the editor’s confusion about what the district is doing, and has done, could have been resolved.

We encourage all to attend

our meetings. Check out the district’s website, [www.clatsopcare.org](http://www.clatsopcare.org). Board meeting dates, agendas and minutes can be found there. The more known about what we do, the better we can work for all. We can’t promise dramatic meetings that are attractive above the fold, but you will see a board acting diligently, and with the best interests of our community in mind.

ROY LITTLE  
Astoria

## Justice for all

I am writing in response to an article in The Daily Astorian, “End of transgender bathroom rule gets conservative praise” (Feb. 23). Jeff Sessions, our new attorney general, is rolling back protections of transgender children who wish to use the bathroom — in which they feel the most comfortable and the safest — in public schools.

Although as the U.S. attorney general, he has a duty to enforce federal law and to protect minority children, he rejects doing so, based on the principle that it is best left to the states to decide. On the other hand, Sessions is threatening to interfere with state laws legalizing marijuana by enforcing federal law?

As a former sympathizer for the Ku Klux Klan, it is little wonder that Sessions has a problem with the feds interfering in public schools, particularly with regard to protecting the civil rights of minorities — who are the most vulnerable and easily targeted. Only 26.5 percent of eligible voters voted for Hillary Clinton, and 26.3 percent of eligible voters voted for Trump. We are all minorities. It is time we heal our divisions, and join together against being robbed by the rich, and enslaved by those who manipulate and enslave us.

Let’s pause. Take a deep breath. Think? “Indivisible, with liberty and justice for all” — isn’t that our ideal? Who are we, not to think first of the other person’s needs, before our selfish ends? What have we allowed ourselves to become, when any of one of us should praise the cause of any misfortune and sorrow for any of “our” children?

DANI WILLIAMS  
Astoria

## Trolley’s success

I am very surprised and disappointed that The Daily Astorian would wish to intrude into the successful operation of the Astoria Riverfront Trolley. The article that was published Feb. 16, “Off track: City, trolley face tough decisions over premier attraction,” misidentified the city of Astoria as being responsible for trolley maintenance, among other errors elsewhere. People were identified incorrectly, as well.

Now the newspaper has apparently determined the Riverfront Trolley should be more expensive to our riders (“Trolley fare too much of a bargain,” The Daily Astorian, Feb. 21). To equate the Riverfront Trolley with the San Francisco cable cars is laughable. San Francisco cable cars cater to an entirely different

ridership than our passengers.

Our trolley caters to mom, dad and their kids. Chances are they can afford the \$1 each fare, or even the \$2 all day fare. Our trolley is successful because it doesn’t compete with San Francisco cable cars, or Disneyland, but is for folks who are just getting by, and looking for an inexpensive hour or two of fun. That is what makes our trolley successful.

Every year, in spring and fall, the trolley offers free rides to school children and other nonprofit groups. The trolley is available for charter at \$100 an hour outside normal operating hours.

As to partnerships with local civic groups, tell us which ones have a deep enough pocket to provide funds, and which ones are willing. Businesses participate by buying advertisements on the trolley, and at the waiting shelters, and that has been a good source (solicited by volunteers) of income, although limited.

The trolley gets no money from the city. The city owns the railroad track the trolley

runs on, but because of benign neglect for years, the city has more track work that must be done in the near future. The track is safe for trolley operations. Because the city is strapped for funds, the trolley has contributed to the city to help track repair. The trolley and the city work together to address issues which can be coordinated.

The trolley is 103 years old, not 93, and is in good shape for its age, thanks to a cadre of volunteers devoted to keep the trolley looking and running well. Other organizations in other cities have contacted trolley volunteers here to ask how to get started, because they want to emulate our success as trolley operators.

The late Ken Lockett (the Trolley Guy) warned that the trolley would be forced to change into something that would fail. I hope he was wrong, but after reading the editorial of Feb. 21, it appears failure is foretold, at least by this newspaper.

I have been a trolley volunteer since 2003, and I am still going to hold out for the \$1 fare because it’s proper.

RUSS THOMPSON  
Astoria

## Affairs of state

Largely as a result of the efforts of a much-maligned free press, we understand the following to be true facts:

- Vladimir Putin has led Russia aggressively against democratic aspirations and efforts in Chechnya, Georgia, Crimea, Ukraine, Syria and elsewhere, as well as in his own country, contrary to American interests and values.

- Under Putin’s leadership, Russia has repeated violated its treaties and diplomatic agreements with the U.S.

- Putin is one of the wealthiest individuals in the world today, largely as a result of his “relations” with the Russian government-owned oil company, Rosneft.

- The largest business transaction in world history was the 2011 agreement between Rosneft and Exxon-Mobil for the development

and marketing of Russia’s oil reserves, publicly announced to be worth one-half trillion dollars.

- Performance of that agreement has been largely prevented to date by the American-led sanctions against Russia for its invasions of Crimea and Ukraine.

- The head of Exxon-Mobil who negotiated that agreement has just become the U.S. Secretary of State, and has publicly spoken against these sanctions both in the U.S. and in visits to Russia.

- Numerous key members of the new administration, including the president, have refused or failed to disclose publicly their current business interests, including any involving either Exxon-Mobil or Russian government-owned entities.

- The Russian government actively interfered in the U.S. presidential election with the express purpose of aiding the Trump campaign.

- Representatives of the Trump campaign were in contact with representatives of the Russian government during the election campaign, while such interference was under way.

- The president’s recently-resigned National Security Advisor discussed new American sanctions (adopted because of such interference) with the Russian government prior to any authority to conduct or be involved in American foreign policy, and the administration was fully informed (although the vice president may not have been informed) at the time the administration’s authorized press spokesperson publicly denied it.

- It has been reported that large financial incentives were offered to associates of the president himself to arrange lifting American sanctions against Russia.

- Under our Constitution, Congress must be impelled to question whether the current administration is “putting America first” or “selling America out. Follow the money.

DANIEL J. and  
KATHRYN D. SEIFER  
Arch Cape

Get your rear in gear

Colorectal Cancer Is the Cancer You Can Prevent

COLUMBIA  
MEMORIAL  
HOSPITAL

Be in the know

A colonoscopy may be your best option for cancer screening and prevention. Talk to your doctor and learn more about your options online at [www.columbiamemorial.org](http://www.columbiamemorial.org).

3 Facts for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

1. Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the U.S. Finding it now could save your life.
2. Everyone over the age of 50 should be screened. Ask your doctor if you should be screened sooner.
3. There are several colorectal cancer screening tests, including affordable, simple, at-home screening options.

Call **503-338-4075** now to make an appointment.

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