

Unscrupulous SEIU

Today's labor laws offer enough protection so that in most situations there is little need for the unscrupulous unions, such as the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which was established in the late 1970s by bringing Morton Shapiro out here from Chicago to bring about a vote of the state workers.

Shapiro was convicted on mail fraud for his corrupt activities during that 1979 referendum, but to my knowledge, the election results were never contested (<http://bit.ly/2mFYgPa>). This corrupt election brought about the need for all state employees to join the union or pay the so-called "Fair Share," which allowed them to claim a refund of any of that money that was used for political purposes.

Becoming a Fair Share member was not enough to obtain the refund of those political funds. They must also file a request during a 15-day period during the year. This period varied for each employee, making it very difficult for them to get their promised refunds.

So here, again, SEIU is fulfilling their unscrupulous ways to use those unreturned funds to elect and control the Democratic candidates. However, there is now some good help for these Fair Share employees from the Freedom Foundation (www.freedomfoundation.com). Check it out.

JIM ELVIN
Salem

Tragic proposal

The proposed sale of the Elliott State Forest is a tragedy in the making. Public lands are to be held in the public trust. They are islands of biodiversity. If this sale proceeds, the decision to privatize surely will be felt in the way in which the Oregon Department of Forestry manages our remaining public forests.

It is difficult to ignore what the sale of the Elliott might mean for harvest levels in the Clatsop State Forest or the Tillamook State Forest, if we expect to maintain current levels of revenue dedicated to the Common School Fund. On a related subject, the Linn County lawsuit to intensify harvest levels in our state forests is proof that for the profit seekers, more can never be enough.

The phrase "sustainable timber harvest" ought to be stricken from the lexicon whenever or wherever harvest levels are debated. The expression is so time-worn it has lost all meaning. We may have sustainable harvests, or we may have sustainable timber, but in the whole, the two ideals are a contradiction and a misconception.

The photo on the front page March 7 of Astoria District Forester Dan Goody and the first growth Douglas fir stump illustrates perfectly how far we have come in the past 75 years ("Forestry to reassess some fire fees," The Daily Astorian). The stump itself stands as a monument to the folly we know as sustainable timber harvests.

We cannot continue to cut trees faster than they grow, particularly the trees we have stocking public lands. The very idea that the Elliot State Forest could be privatized confirms that the relatively modest and conservative stewardship practiced by the Oregon Department of Forestry can be seen as a value-added and sustainable manner of forestry.

GARY DURHEIM
Cannon Beach

Great compassion

The world is a better place because of young people like Hayden Spratt ("Free the zoo animals" The Daily Astorian, Feb. 24). Her compassion for animals, and direct action by writing a letter to the editor, is crucial for the present and future generations. I also agree that zoos are no fun for the animals. Confined to small spaces, in comparison to what their natural habitat would be, is unacceptable.

Portland's most famous elephant, Packy, was euthanized on Feb. 10, a decision made due to a chronic case of tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is com-

Judgmental and insulting

I noted the editorial comments made by the Skipanon Water Control District Board of Directors in both The Daily Astorian ("Dam is obsolete and potentially dangerous") and Columbia Press newspapers on March 10.

I found the commentary to be judgmental and insulting with its intent to make the mayor of Warrenton and the city commissioners appear to be abusing the citizens of Warrenton by attempting to protect the interests of the city from the consequences of decisions made by people who would not be directly affected by these decisions.

The Eighth Street Dam sits inside the Warrenton city limits, and was

built as part of the levee system that protects the city of Warrenton during "worst case" flooding in winter months.

The city of Warrenton has no control when the Bonneville Dam is forced to release larger than normal amounts of water during periods of very heavy rain upriver from Warrenton. These river flow increases, combined with unusually high tides, sustained winter rain and high winds in the Warrenton area, have happened in the past.

One needs to believe that the U.S. Department of Agriculture were complete fools for funding and building this dam if they did not see a future

potential flooding problem in the location of the dam.

No one knows for sure if there will be an unacceptable risk of upstream flooding either in Warrenton itself, or farther to the south of the Eighth Street Dam.

For the SWCD to assume that there will be very little to no risk of substantial economic damage done to levees or property south of the dam location, if the dam is fully removed, is not realistic. The SWCD goal is to provide unobstructed access to fish migration, which is political arrogance, in my opinion.

SCOTT WIDDICOMBE
Warrenton

mon to pachyderms in captivity. A caring group called FreeOregonZooElephants.org has been trying for years to have Packy released to a sanctuary, where he could have lived out the rest of his life as an elephant and not an exhibit. Sadly enough, this request for his freedom was declined.

Thank you, Hayden, for speaking out for the unacceptable conditions and exploitation of zoo animals.

STACEY MCKENNEY
Astoria

Tourist destination?

A couple years ago, the city fathers in Warrenton were all up in arms because some businessman wanted to open a liquor store at the entrance to town. "It'll make Warrenton look bad," they cried. "People coming into town will think we're all a bunch of drunks." As it happens, I doubt it hurt Warrenton in the long run.

Astoria, of course, is much too sophisticated to worry about such things. For over 50 years, I've been hearing how Astoria is going to be a tourist destination someday. If only we could come up with a reason for people to come here and, of course, spend their money.

We run off any big business that wants to come to the area. We hate the sea lions — although the fake killer whale was entertaining. We have the beach ... no, that's in Warrenton. We have the fishing ... no, that's Warrenton, too. Fort Stevens, the Peter Iredale ... nope, Warrenton again.

Wait ... we do have something we're getting famous for. We have the panhandlers and the potheads. We should have a whole advertising program just to promote this new situation. Maybe a slogan, "Welcome to Astoria, where you can get harassed and high as you go by!"

Let's face it folks, as long as this is the direction the city wants to go, Astoria is never going to be anything more than the place you go through, on your way somewhere else.

DAVE BERGQUIST
Gearhart

Where's Jaime?

Many Long Beach, Washington, Peninsula residents (voters) wish that our fourth-term U.S. representative, Jaime Herrera Beutler, would appear in person to field questions and address our concerns at a town hall. Beutler seems to prefer telephone town halls — sometimes quickly announced and conducted — community coffee meetings or sending surrogates to communities in her district. That's not sufficient.

Her predecessor, Brian Baird, conducted over 300 town hall meetings during his 12-year tenure. Many were held in Long Beach, where residents (voters) were free to ask tough questions, and Baird agreed or disagreed with their viewpoints. It was truly democracy in action. Rep. Beutler, however, hasn't shown up here, except for fundraisers, meetings with local Republicans or gatherings of specific targeted groups.

In a recent letter to us, Beutler claimed that "I value your feedback and opinion. ... It's important that you get the chance to talk directly (emphasis ours) to your member of Congress ..."

We're providing an opportunity for her to live up to her claims. We will establish a venue for her appearance, locate nonpartisan individuals to moderate and handle all other logistical matters sometime during her forthcoming April 10-21 Congressional recess.

While Beutler may have made personal town-hall appearances in counties such as Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Skamania, Wahkiakum and Thurston counties, she seems to have forgotten Pacific County, with its 20,000 residents, many of us elderly voters.

Pacific County constituents — Republicans, Democrats, Independents and others who agree with the need for a Beutler personal appearance — can call her Washington or Vancouver offices, send a letter or postcard, email her or show up at her doorstep to express their concerns. Try 1107 Longworth HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515, 202-225-3536; or in care of Gen. O. O. Howard House, 750 Anderson St., Suite B, Vancouver, WA 98661, 360-695-6292; or <http://herreraeutler.house.gov>; or <http://herreraeutler.house.gov/contact>; or WA03.HerreraBeutler@mail.house.gov

U.S. representatives pay most attention to phone calls and postcards, less to emails and petitions.

This event will be sponsored by DoGoodnics, a peninsula nonprofit agency.

ROBERT BRAKE
Ocean Park, Washington

Chief Joseph

The recent article about Wallowa County by The Daily Astorian's retired editor, Steve Forester, caught my eye ("Wallowa County offers a rich cultural experience," March 10). In 1978, I taught for three months in an artist in residency program in Enterprise. I was very excited to be there at the foot of the Wallowa Mountains because as a young man I was taken by the story of Chief Joseph and the Wallowa Nez Perce.

Central to that story was the chief, who was known for his compassion as well as his bravery. He was considered the ultimate warrior by his adversaries who marveled at his military strategy. The long retreat he led attempting to move his people to Canada and save them from overwhelming forces stands as the work of a military genius.

In surrender, when his people could no longer continue in the face of starvation and the harsh elements, he gave one of the most moving speeches in American history, concluding with the words, "From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever."

While I don't expect others to share my veneration of Chief Joseph, I am adamant that he and his people and their plight, as well as that of all Native Americans, not be forgotten or downplayed. Joseph and his people sanctified the Wallowa land by living in harmony with it, something the white man has never accomplished.

Consequently, I was disappointed that the Nez Perce received no reference in Forester's article amid his heralding of new development and the success of his EO Media Group. In fairness, when Forester meditated on

the big mountains rising above Wallowa Lake and imagined the "Valkyries of Norse and German mythology" carrying the fallen heroes, perhaps he had Chief Joseph and his warriors in mind.

I know that when I was there, and meditated on those same mountains, my thoughts were always with Chief Joseph. It was there that he did his vision quest as a young man and received the native name, Thunder Rolling on the Mountain. Chief Joseph was a giant among men who along with his people will be remembered long after all of the publishers, developers and media groups are forgotten.

ROGER DORBAND
Astoria

Try thinking

Last week, I read in a local newspaper about the concern citizens are showing for our big budget deficits. I, too, am very concerned. But, I would like to point out to citizens that last year, ballot Measure 97, which would have brought \$3 billion in new revenue to Oregon every year, did not pass. How did you guys miss this?

Wouldn't it be great if it had passed? Money for important programs. Wells Fargo, recently in trouble for

massive fraud against its customers, and Comcast, were among giant corporations that paid out over \$27 million to defeat this bill.

Obviously, these corporations care about you, to put out so much money. The bill was defeated because you, dear voter, did not want to put in a 2.5 percent tax on gross profits over \$25 million. Instead, you choose to go without, or pay more taxes yourself.

What happened to thinking? Oh — advertising take the place of thinking, and who has lots of money to advertise? Corporations that pay little or no taxes. Lots of big shiny (expensive) cards arrived in the mail, sometimes two a week, telling you to vote against this bill, and you did. Really. Next time try thinking to make a decision, it would benefit your community.

DIXIE GAINER
Nehalem

Focus on health care

We seem to be talking health care again, since if you don't deal correctly with a problem, it keeps on being there every time you look. So, I get to say again that what we need is a health care program, not a health insurance program. The insurance companies are the meat and pota-

toes of the problem. They float atop the health care pond like bloated frogs sucking up huge profits, while contributing nothing but blabber and misdirection.

Basically, we bet that we're going to get sick, hurt and old; and they bet that we're not; and we both bet with our money. It's the slickest organized crime scene in history. How long until we realize that the rest of the world doesn't do it this way, and it works just fine for them? Let's pay for health care, not health insurance.

JOSEPH WEBB
Astoria

New care act

So, as of March 13, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has provided us with its initial analyses of the Republicans' new and improved health care plan, the American Health Care Act or, AHCA. How about we call it the Conservative American Care Act or, CACA.

BOB POTTER
Astoria

Inviting trouble?

This is a wonderful town, and destination spot, that is groaning over bad behavior toward police, guests and those who live in Astoria ("Aggressive panhandling sullies downtown core," The Daily Astorian, March 7).

Is it any wonder, with what we are inviting here? To start with, on the east end of town the "lady" figure starts our welcome. Questionable to some, or most?

Then the drive through town: How many shops of alternative health and recreation can a town need? It must be for the visitors, and some of the risky life choices we're mirroring come party here.

Finally, there are so many breweries that bring life problems. Not intentional ones, but discourse. Not to mention the illegal availability of drugs and meth.

What can we expect? Maybe we should be a city on our knees.

CAROLYN OLSON
Astoria

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.

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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