

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## OUR VIEW

Each week we recognize those people and organizations in the community deserving of public praise for the good things they do to make the North Coast a better place to live, and also those who should be called out for their actions.



## SHOUTOUTS

This week's Shoutouts go to:

### • Warrenton Mayor

**Mark Kujala**, who stepped down this week after serving more than a decade on the City Commission. Kujala is leaving public office to focus more time on his family and business and he attended his final meeting as mayor Tuesday evening. Kujala served on the commission for 12 years, five as mayor, and helped guide the city through a number of difficult challenges. Kujala's fellow commissioners honored him individually and as a group at Tuesday's meeting, which featured a large turnout filled with family and friends. Kujala reminisced about his time in office, saying he really "enjoyed it," and that he "wouldn't trade it for anything."



Erick Bengel/The Daily Astorian  
**Mark Kujala, left, was recognized during his last Warrenton City Commission meeting as mayor.**

• Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce Director **Skip Hauke** and Assistant Director **Jim Servino**, who were recognized by the Tongue Point Job Corps earlier this month for the support they have given the organization. Katrina Morrell Gasser, of the Job Corps, said Servino has been a member of the local center's Workforce Council, which plays a vital role by helping ensure students are trained for jobs in demand. Servino has been a council member since 2015. Gasser said Hauke has been a longtime supporter, and has penned signed letters of support for the organization in times of need.

• The more than **170 volunteers** who took part in the **10th Biennial Nehalem Estuary Cleanup** earlier this month that resulted in more than 2.6 tons of trash being picked up. In addition, the participants gathered 1,369 pounds of recyclable and reusable material and 60 pounds of hazardous or potentially hazardous material from Nehalem Bay. The cleanup effort was led by community partners Lower Nehalem Community Trust, Lower Nehalem Watershed Council, CARTM, Nehalem Bay State Park, the North Coast Land Conservancy and the Tillamook Estuaries Partnership.

• **Pam Ackley** and **Barbara Maltman**, Windermere Stellar Real Estate brokers in Gearhart, and **Kate Merrell** and **Jackie Weber**, brokers in the company's Cannon Beach office, who were honored by the firm for being in the top 10 percent of 2016 production. The 39 brokers on the company's overall list handled a total of 1,890 combined sales, contributing to the growth in the real estate markets of Portland-metro, Vancouver-metro and the north Oregon Coast. Joan Allen, Windermere Stellar co-owner, said the brokers also consistently play a large role within the company's charitable giving. In 2016 the company's 11 offices combined to donate \$360,000 to 41 charities supporting low-income families and children.

• **Ilwaco High School girls basketball player Makenzie Kaech**, who was selected this week to the first team Washington Class B All State Team by the Associated Press. Kaech helped lead the Lady Fishermen to a fifth place finish in the state tournament in the 58-team 2B classification after a magical 23-win regular season. The team had six additional wins in the playoffs, and as Kaech said afterward about the tournament run, "Kids dream of playing here growing up."



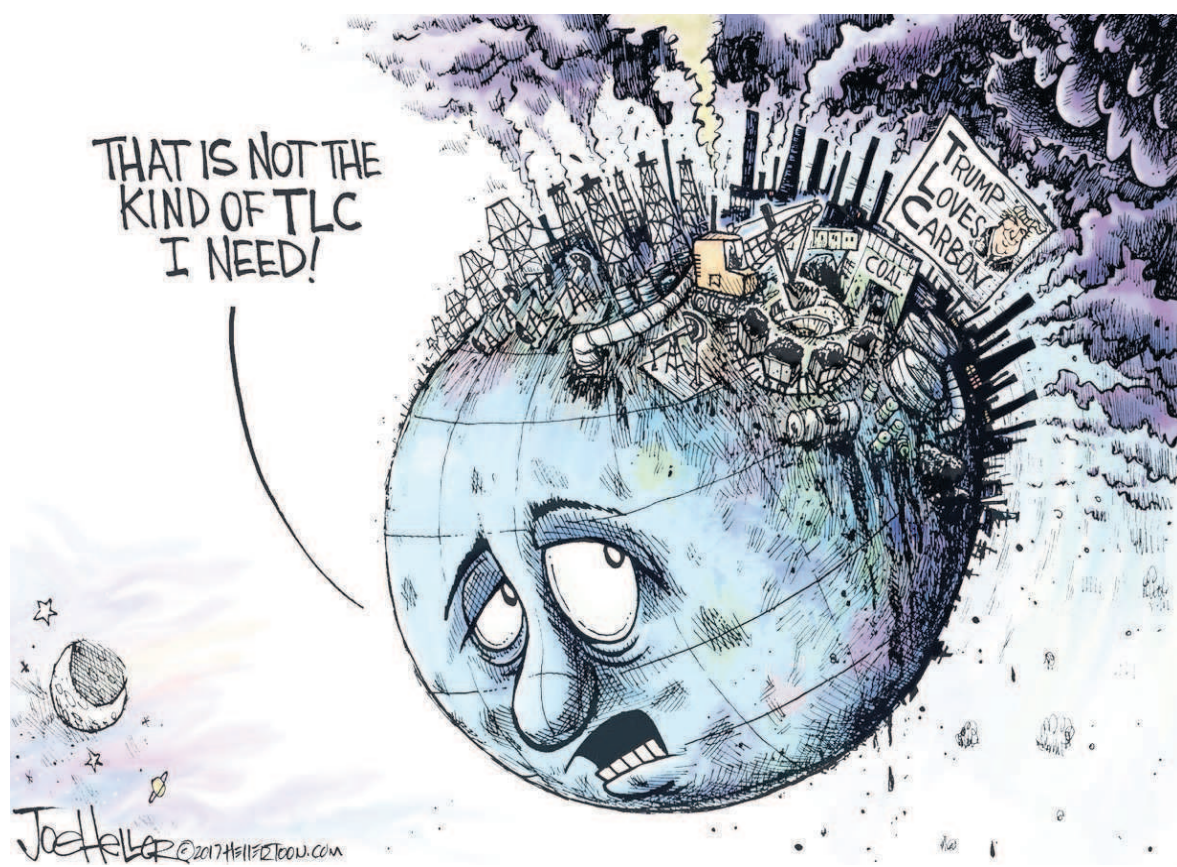
## CALLOUTS

This week's Callouts go to:

• The federal **Wildlife Services** agency, which is using an indiscriminate, controversial trapping method. Earlier this month the federal agency accidentally killed a wolf in Wallowa County with an M-44, a cyanide-based trap that shoots poison into the mouth of a canine. The traps are intended for coyotes. Just a week later, a family dog was killed by an M-44 in Idaho, and a young boy who was nearby was injured when the trap went off. Trapping is difficult work and saves the lives of many animals by culling those causing a problem. But the M-44s are also a problem, especially for a state that has an increasing wolf population and has spent a lot of time and money working on their recovery. Placing something in the woods that indiscriminately kills canines is not smart, and the trapping methods need to be updated with newer, more ethical technology than using an M-44.

### Suggestions?

Do you have a Shoutout or Callout you think we should know about? Let us know at [news@dailyastorian.com](mailto:news@dailyastorian.com) and we'll make sure to take a look.



# The winding road to single-payer health care

By CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER

Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON — Repeal-and-replace (for Obamacare) is not quite dead. It has been declared so, but what that means is that, for now, the president has (apparently) washed his hands of it and the House Republicans appear unable to reconcile their differences.



Neither condition needs to be permanent. There are ideological differences between the various GOP factions, but what's overlooked is the role that procedure played in producing the deadlock. And procedure can easily be changed.

The House leadership crafted a bill that would meet the delicate requirements of "reconciliation" in order to create a (more achievable) threshold of 51 rather than 60 votes in the Senate. But this meant that some of the more attractive, market-oriented reforms had to be left out, relegated to a future measure (a so-called phase-three bill) that might never actually arrive.

Yet the more stripped-down proposal died anyway. So why not go for the gold next time? Pass a bill that incorporates phase-three reforms and send it on to the Senate.

September might be the time for resurrecting repeal-and-replace. That's when insurers recalibrate premiums for the coming year, precipitating our annual bout of Obamacare sticker shock. By then, even more insurers will be dropping out of the exchanges, further reducing choice and service. These should help dissipate the pre-emptive nostalgia for Obamacare that emerged during the current debate.

At which point, the House leadership should present a repeal-and-replace that includes such phase-three provisions as tort reform and permitting the buying of insurance across state lines, both of which would significantly lower costs.

Even more significant would be stripping out the heavy-handed Obamacare coverage mandate that dictates what specific medical benefits must be included in every insurance policy in the country, regardless of the purchaser's desires or needs.

Best to mandate nothing. Let the customer decide. A 60-year-old couple doesn't need maternity coverage. Why should they be forced to pay for it? And I don't know about you, but I don't need lactation services.

This would satisfy the House Freedom Caucus' correct insistence on dismantling Obamacare's stifling regulatory straitjacket —



AP Photo/Evan Vucci

**President Donald Trump listens in the Cabinet Room of the White House on Wednesday. Sixty-two percent of Americans turned thumbs down on Trump's handling of health care during the initial weeks of his presidency, according to a poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. It was his worst rating among seven issues the poll tested, which included the economy, foreign policy and immigration.**

without scaring off moderates who should understand that no one is being denied "essential health benefits." Rather, no one is being required to buy what the Jonathan Grubers of the world have decided everyone must have.

**As Obamacare continues to unravel, it won't take much for Democrats to abandon that Rube Goldberg wreckage and go for the simplicity and the universality of Medicare-for-all.**

It is true that even if this revised repeal-and-replace passes the House, it might die by filibuster in the Senate. In which case, let the Senate Democrats explain themselves and suffer the consequences. Perhaps, however, such a bill might engender debate and revision — and come back to the House for an old-fashioned House-Senate conference and a possible compromise. This in and of itself would constitute major progress.

That's procedure. It's fixable. But there is an ideological consideration that could ultimately determine the fate of any Obamacare replacement. Obamacare may turn out to be unworkable, indeed

doomed, but it is having a profound effect on the zeitgeist: It is universalizing the idea of universal coverage.

Acceptance of its major premise — that no one be denied health care — is more widespread than ever. Even House Speaker Paul Ryan avers that "our goal is to give every American access to quality, affordable health care," making universality an essential premise of his own reform. And look at how sensitive and defensive Republicans have been about the possibility of people losing coverage in any Obamacare repeal.

A broad national consensus is developing that health care is indeed a right. This is historically new. And it carries immense implications for the future. It suggests that we may be heading inexorably to a government-run, single-payer system. It's what Barack Obama once admitted he would have preferred but didn't think the country was ready for. It may be ready now.

As Obamacare continues to unravel, it won't take much for Democrats to abandon that Rube Goldberg wreckage and go for the simplicity and the universality of Medicare-for-all. Republicans will have one last chance to try to convince the country to remain with a market-based system, preferably one encompassing all the provisions that, for procedural reasons, had been left out of their latest proposal.

Don't be surprised, however, if, in the end, single-payer wins out. Indeed, I wouldn't be terribly surprised if Donald Trump, reading the zeitgeist, pulls the greatest 180 since Disraeli dished the Whigs in 1867 (by radically expanding the franchise) and joins the single-payer side.

Talk about disruption? About kicking over the furniture? That would be an American Krakatoa.

## LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 350 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone numbers. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two

letters per writer are printed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Disclosure should be civil and people should be referred to in a respect-

ful manner.

Submissions may be sent in any of these ways:

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