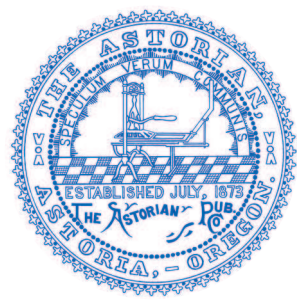


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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OUR VIEW

State Senate deserves credit on records reform

Oregon state senators should be praised for overwhelmingly passing a bill last week that sets a deadline for public bodies to respond to public records requests.

Senators passed the bill 29-0 and it is now being considered in the House. If passed there, it would set a precedent and close a beginning chapter of ongoing records reform in Oregon because governmental bodies effectively have had an unlimited time to respond to requests. Oregon is one of few states that doesn't have a deadline.

The bill was a product of a task force that was convened by Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum as part of overall public records reform to increase transparency and accountability. The bill requires public bodies to respond to requests within five days and furnish records within 10 days or provide a written statement why the request can't be fulfilled. If an agency doesn't respond within the deadline, it is considered a denial and the requester can then appeal to the Attorney General's Office.

The legislation also directs the Attorney General's Office to catalogue the state's 550 public records exemptions, so it can be searched by the public. Comparatively, the federal Freedom of Information Act has only nine exemptions.

Rosenblum said the task force "heard loud and clear that our public records laws are in need of reform." She said the bill is a step that "begins to address the confusion created by 40 years of piecemeal exemptions to laws originally intended to promote transparency."

State Sen. Lee Beyer, D-Springfield, pointed out the legislation can prevent public agencies from "sitting on public records requests for a long period of time to avoid disclosing something."

The House should move quickly to pass the bill, and Rosenblum and the task force should continue efforts to push additional records reform legislation to eliminate exemptions.

Rosenblum, the task force and state senators deserve credit, and state representatives will too when they follow through. Together, they should look at the passage of this bill as the beginning of a new chapter, not the conclusion of the book itself.

It's time to limit the Antiquities Act

It's probably not high on the list of priorities, but we'd like to see Congress revise the Antiquities Act to give legislative oversight to the creation of national monuments.

The Antiquities Act of 1906 has been used by presidents starting with Teddy Roosevelt to create national monuments.

The authority comes with few restrictions. The president, "in his discretion," can designate almost any piece of federally owned land a national monument for "the protection of objects of historic and scientific interest."

Although the act makes mention of protecting historic and prehistoric structures, there is no statutory definition or limit on what may be found to be of historic or scientific interest. Presidents have used the act to preserve wild areas.

It's easier than establishing a wilderness area, or a national park — both of which require congressional approval — but can impose similar restrictions on how the land can be used.

Local residents and their elected representatives have no say in the process. At least, they don't in 48 states.

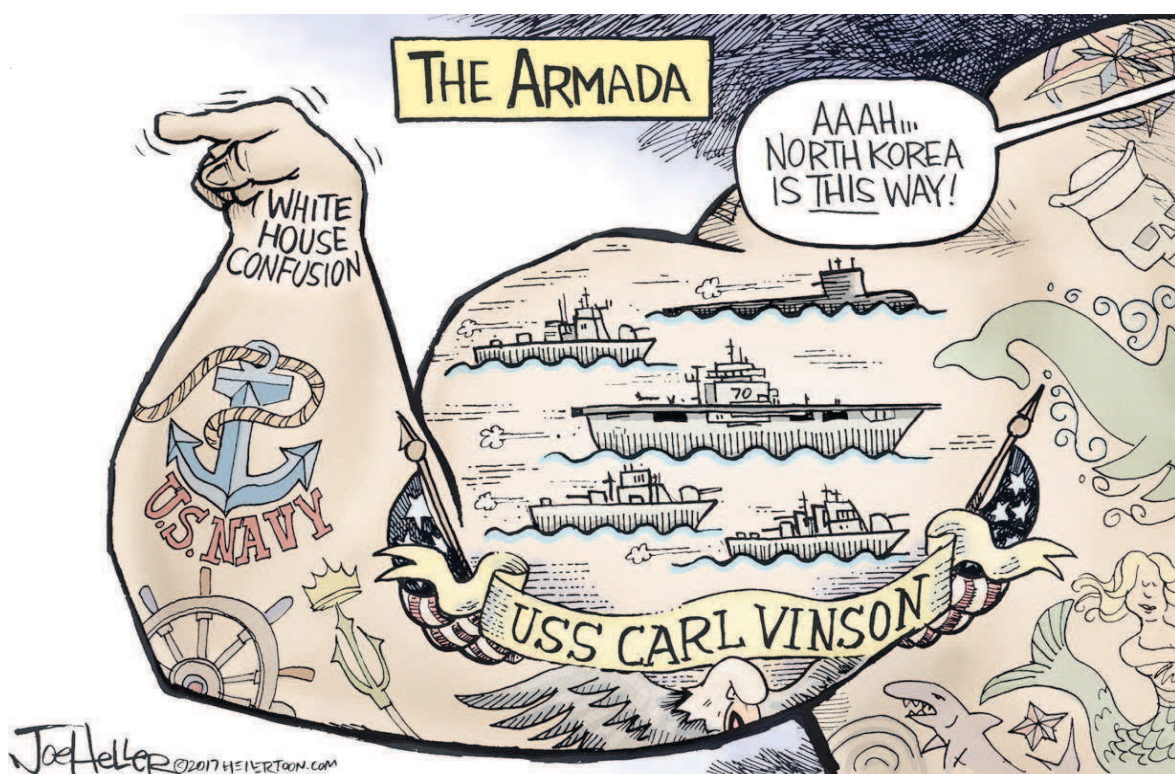
The creation of the Jackson Hole National Monument by President Franklin Roosevelt in the 1940s so rankled Wyoming pols that when legislation was proposed to merge most of it with Grand Teton National Park the Congress amended the Antiquities Act to prohibit the president from establishing monuments in that state without its approval.

After President Jimmy Carter created 56 million acres of monuments in Alaska, Congress amended the act to require it also approve Alaskan monuments of 5,000 acres or more.

We would not argue that the Antiquities Act has not preserved legitimate cultural treasures. We might not have the Grand Canyon in its current state had TR not protected it by making it first a national monument.

But that was a different time. The restrictions that can be placed on ranchers and timbermen throughout the West by these declarations require oversight.

They should have at least the same consideration afforded the people of Wyoming and Alaska.



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Cannon Beach 'still pretty gnarly' after all these years

By R.J. MARX
The Daily Astorian

On April 11, Cannon Beach city councilors enthusiastically endorsed a resolution that "embraces, celebrates and welcomes its immigrant and refugee residents and their contribution."

The policy is aimed to keep the roles of local and federal government clear and enforceable, rather than framed as a resistance to federal deportation practices.



City councilors passed a motion to hear the resolution at the next council meeting, which was met with a round of applause from an audience of about 30 people.

Why is this an introduction for an email Q&A with author Ursula K. Le Guin?

Because only a month ago, the part-time Cannon Beach resident Le Guin posted an impassioned plea for the nation's immigrants, a strong rebuke to the Trump administration's immigration policies.

"Becoming a sanctuary city isn't just a matter of words," Le Guin wrote in a March blog post. "It takes real commitment, long and steady resolve, and determined hope, to resist and keep resisting the politicians and interests that seek power by supporting those shameful policies, and the misguided citizens who imagine they will gain profit or status from them."

Cannon Beach's most celebrated author is and has been a voice for the disenfranchised and oppressed throughout her career. In 2014, she was awarded the National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. She is nominated for a 2017 Hugo Award for "Words Are My Matter: Writings About Life and Books, 2000-2016."

To Le Guin, literature and political action are one and the same. At 87, when she could rest on her laurels — she doesn't. Her unyielding political voice keeps her on the front lines.

Be it sanctuary cities, the uniqueness of her Cannon Beach fictional twin city of "Klatsand" or her outer realms of Kirien, Anares or Earthsea, Le Guin celebrates the soul and the human imagination.

From her home in Portland, Le Guin granted a rare opportunity of an email interview to share her views of art, Cannon Beach and her life among the crows.

Q: Rex Amos tells me I should start by asking you about crows and your love of them. Is that a love of Cannon Beach crows or all crows, and what do they teach?

Cannon Beach crows. Here in Portland they have displaced most of



Jack Liu/Submitted Photo

Ursula K. Le Guin speaking at the University of Oregon in Eugene in 2013.

the small birds in our neighborhood, which is disturbing.

But the crows I got to know in CB I knew personally, and wow, what personalities! For years one couple brought up their annual child in the big spruce across the street from us. The whole process was fascinating, from the spring courtship (much purring and beak-clattering) of the couple rejoining after the winter flock broke up, through the silent time when the infant is very small and vulnerable, to the noisy time when the infant is as big as its parents and spends half the time yelling "Food! Feed me before I fall out of the nest from starvation and die! Aaarghh!" and the parents yell back reassuringly, "Coming, darling! Hang on!"

Le Guin celebrates the soul and the human imagination.

Q: In Searoad's Klatsand, there is a fictional Cannon Beach referred to in passing. Does Klatsand supplement Cannon Beach on the map or are they imaginary doppelgangers?

I mentioned Cannon Beach in one of the stories so that people would know that Klatsand is NOT (quite) CB. Klatsand has a lot of elements of CB, but it also has bits of Seaside and Manzanita and Nehalem.

Q: What were your first impressions of Cannon Beach?

Loved it from the start. Way, way back, in the '60s. It was a little artists' hideaway town. The sculptor Joe Police was mayor. There were no megamansions owned by out-of-state millionaires, no big ugly cement walls on North Beach, it had its own hardware stores and indie drugstore and Osborne's excellent grocery. It was more self-contained and a good deal, well, gnarlier.

But it's still pretty gnarly, thank goodness.

Q: At what point did you become aware of the city's seismic risk, and how did it impact you?

They've been telling us we are going to fall into the ocean one of these days, for the last 50 or 60 years. I believe them.

Q: Do you see metaphor in the tsunami?

I see total terror.

Q: If Cannon Beach made one civic move to create a better world, planet, utopia, what would it be?

I believe that healing a planet or anything else begins, and often ends, at home. So, my answer is: Keep people with a sense of civic responsibility and the local ecology in charge of the town, people who take the long view and will stick to their guns about controlling "development." When a town hands itself over to Realtors (as Portland has been doing lately) it begins losing everything that makes people want to live there.

Q: Last week, Cannon Beach voted to put a motion adopting inclusivity before the council at their next meeting. Do you think such a resolution would make sense in Cannon Beach, and if so what would you like it to say? If not, what would be a better alternative?

I am glad to know that Cannon Beach is considering adopting an immigrant inclusivity resolution, and hope the City Council passes it unanimously.

It is unfortunate that our current federal government, by attempting to enforce policies that deny the very principles our republic is founded on, makes such a resolution necessary. But it is good to see that Americans still refuse to be bullied into declaring any element of our communities inferior, unwelcome, or illegal — that we still "declare these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

¡Nadie es ilegal!

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

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?

100 words for 100 days of Trump

The Daily Astorian

Saturday marks 100 days of Donald Trump's presidency.

To mark the occasion, we're asking readers to submit 100 words on the president's first 100 days. Whether it's about the man, his policies, his approach to the office or his accomplishments, we'd like to share your take.

Email your thoughts to news@dailyastorian.com or drop them off at the Astoria office at 949 Exchange St. or the office in Seaside at 1555 N. Roosevelt. Please include a phone number and city of residence so we can verify your identity.

The deadline is Friday at noon. And be concise — 100 words goes fast.



AP Photo