

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:

- Organizers of the **United Way of Clatsop County's Day of Caring** and the 150 volunteers who braved the elements last weekend to help with maintenance and beautification projects at nonprofit organizations across the region. The projects included landscaping and outdoor work at the Armory in Astoria, prepping the raised beds at the Seaside Community Gardens along U.S. Highway 101, getting Camp Kiwanilong ready for summer campers, and the Astoria High School's Art Club's painting of a mural at the Clatsop Regional Food Bank. The Home Depot Foundation provided funds for some of the projects, with the local store aiding with materials and manpower, while Subway, Fred Meyer and Costco provided sandwiches, water and snacks for the volunteers.

- Cannon Beach Public Works Director Dan Grassick**, who retired from public service this week after serving the city since 2013. City Manager Brant Kucera credits Grassick with water, wastewater and parks master plan development along with improved maintenance within the street overlay program. Kucera said Grassick has been "a very important part of Cannon Beach," and Grassick said he enjoyed his work with the city and that he will be focusing on his family in retirement.

- Astoria Council 1707 of the Knights of Columbus**, which recently donated \$2,100 to Special Olympics. The donation was the result of the council's annual Tootsie Roll Handout and Special Olympics Drive at the Fred Meyer store and the generosity of the store's customers. The money will be used to fund the activities of the region's Special Olympics athletes.

- Seaside High School boys basketball coach **Bill Westerholm** and senior player **Jackson Januik**, who were named this week as the state's 4A Coach of the Year and 4A Player of the Year. The Gulls won their first ever state championship, and for Januik it was his second consecutive year being named 4A Player of the Year. Seaside senior **Hunter Thompson** was named honorable mention all-state. On the girls team, which also had its best ever year by finishing third in the state, senior **Maddi Utti** was named first team all-state.



Bill Westerholm



CALLOUTS

This week's Callouts go to:

- The **Oregon Government Ethics Commission**, for its ruling this week involving a state law intended to shut the "revolving door" of lawmakers leaving the Legislature and immediately becoming lobbyists. The commission, despite a contrary legal opinion from the Legislature's lead attorney, ruled the law didn't apply to Peter Buckley, who left office as a state representative in January and now works part time for Gov. Kate Brown as her budget adviser. The law, enacted in 2007, made it illegal for lawmakers who leave office to lobby in the Legislature before at least one full legislative session concludes, and the governor's advisers customarily register as lobbyists. The Governor's Office initially said the job might involve lobbying the Legislature and the matter was referred to the Ethics Commission to resolve. The commission, after ruling in 2009 that the law didn't apply to statewide elected officials lobbying on behalf of their agencies, upheld that interpretation by a 7-0 vote in Buckley's case saying that as a budget adviser he is a state official and exempt from the lobbying ban. Brown's spokesman Chris Pair said Buckley will register as a lobbyist, but the governor doesn't expect him to lobby during the current session. Ironically, Brown was a sponsor of the bill in 2007, and ethically it shouldn't matter whether a former legislator is working for the governor, a state agency or a private business or industry, it should be consistent with all lobbyists being treated the same.

Suggestions?

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

COMING NEXT WEEK

We make our endorsements on the bond for the Astoria Regional Airport and for the Port of Astoria Commission races in the May special district election. We also publish your 100 words for 100 days of President Donald Trump.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Rohne for Port seat

I urge the election of Dirk Rohne to the Astoria Port Commission. The Port Commission oversees the management of assets worth more than \$40 million, generating over \$10 million of income. Commissioners also are entrusted with a \$700,000 property tax levy.

Dirk is a family man who owns and operates a 200-acre dairy farm in Brownsmead. He has served with distinction on the Clatsop County Commission and the Clatsop Community College board. He is active in the Brownsmead Grange and Knappa Water Association, and serves as a volunteer firefighter.

We deserve the hard work, intelligence and independence that Dirk will bring to the Port Commission.
 BLAIR HENNINGSGAARD
 Astoria

Wingard for CCC board

I have witnessed the career of Patrick Wingard through his time as a planner for the county and for Warrenton, often in not-so-easy times. Now, he is a strong and collaborative participant on the Clatsop Community College Board, and also works on the North Coast dealing with land use issues. He knows the area and its educational needs.

Patrick has worked to make the CCC Board transparent in its actions; pushing to keep the college as a place that is inclusive and accountable. He is supportive of faculty as active members in the development of plans and programs that affect them. Most of all, Patrick wants to expand choices and opportunity for everyone, and be active in creating programs for disadvantaged or under-represented community members.

Patrick Wingard considers the long-term consequences of present actions; pushing to keep the college as a place that is inclusive and accountable. He is a problem-solver and consensus builder who works to put the needs of CCC's students first. He has worked for us and deserves your vote.

JAN MITCHELL
 Astoria

Thanks firefighters

The Knappa Fire District Board of Directors would like to thank the Knappa Fire District Volunteers for all of their hard work and dedication throughout 2016. Last year was a very busy year, totaling 486 calls for service. Our volunteers spent 2,724 individual hours responding to these calls.

The trend continues, as this year has started out busier than last year. The volunteers have responded to 136 calls for service through March of 2017.

Thank you for a job well done.
 PAUL OLHEISER
 Fire chief, Knappa Fire District

Rushing dune decision

On April 13, the Gearhart Planning Commission ignored pleas from several Gearhart citizens to postpone passing an ordinance allowing the clearing of vegetation on two 60-foot swaths of the Gearhart dunes, beginning at the Necanicum estuary and extending northward. We are two of the citizens who encouraged the commission to postpone passing the revised ordinance until after a Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST) led citizen committee could study and recommend action.

We are also two of the many Gearhart residents who enjoy walking the dunes and observing the wildlife that resides there. We have observed 45 species of birds on our walks, as well as elk, deer, coyote, bats, bees and butterflies. Quiet walks in this area including enjoyment of the wildlife is greatly enhancing our quality of life and the "Gearhart" experience. It is an experience that is readily accessible to all, visitors and residents alike.

The amount of allowed clearing being proposed — a minimum of 60-feet plus at both the Neocoxie right of way and the fire road — will alter the habitat to the detriment of the wildlife utilizing the vegetation for foraging and breeding and therefore greatly reduce viewing opportunities. This is not a small amount of clearing. These animals will need to move elsewhere to meet their needs. The Birdy Beach Path, named by local school children, will no longer live up to its name.

The city of Gearhart has hired CREST to form a volunteer citizen's committee to develop a dune management plan including dealing with vegetation issues. At the time of the Planning Commission meeting, this committee had not met for the first time. It does not make sense to finalize a revised ordinance before the citizen committee is allowed to study the issue.

Rushing the process has the potential for damaging results. The Gearhart City Council will be considering the revised ordinance on May 3. We certainly hope citizens who have concerns for this issue, show up to let the council know their feelings and thoughts and we

hope the council makes the wise choice of waiting for an alternate plan that melds citizen safety and quality of life issues.

MARGARET and JOHN
 GREEN
 Gearhart

Life Flight support

Most folks, including my husband and I, are dubious about requests to increase taxes. But the May ballot has a bond issue involving Life Flight that we'll definitely vote for.

Life Flight was not based at the airport until May 2016. Before then, all flights started in Longview or Aurora. That meant an excruciating wait for help. And every minute counts with a heart attack, stroke or life-threatening trauma.

Life Flight's helicopter hangar is now a quarter mile away from crew quarters. That separation wastes precious minutes in response time. With state grant help, Life Flight will pay for a new 80-foot by 96-foot hangar to accommodate crew quarters for a pilot, nurse and paramedic, as well as a helicopter and airplane. Having everything at the same place means a much faster response time when minutes count.

At no other airport does Life Flight pay for roads, water and sewer lines to hangars they rent or own. Nor does any other tenant at the airport. The Port doesn't have the money for those improvements, which is where the bond measure comes in. And while the Port's doing all the work of bringing in new sewer and water lines for Life Flight's new hangar, it plans to prepare adjacent land for future commercial tenants.

FAA requirements for separation of helicopters and airplanes are quite strict. Present hangar areas are already crowded with a mix of Coast Guard and private aircraft. Just ask any Coast Guard helicopter pilot about it, and you'll likely get a polite earful. Thus, Life Flight's new hangar will be at the south end of the airport, away from busy Coast Guard aircraft.

And in case you hadn't heard, the Port's bond issue is supported by the county's hospitals, the Chamber of Commerce, as well as Astoria, Warrenton and Clatsop County governments.

If the bond measure is approved, a property owner will pay another \$12.88 for every \$100,000 in property value. If you own a house assessed at \$200,000, you will pay around \$25 a year for three years. That's a small price to pay to save a life that could be yours. Please vote.

CAROL HASKELL
 Astoria

WHERE TO WRITE

- U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D):** 2338 Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C., 20515. Phone: 202-225-0855. Fax 202-225-9497. District office: 12725 SW Millikan Way, Suite 220, Beaverton, OR 97005. Phone: 503-469-6010. Fax 503-326-5066. Web: bonamici.house.gov/
- U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D):** 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Web: www.merkley.senate.gov
- U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D):** 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244. Web: www.wyden.senate.gov

- State Rep. Brad Witt (D):** State Capitol, 900 Court Street N.E., H-373, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1431. Web: www.leg.state.or.us/witt/ Email: rep.bradwitt@state.or.us
- State Rep. Deborah Boone (D):** 900 Court St. N.E., H-481, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1432. Email: rep.deborah_boone@state.or.us District office: P.O. Box 928, Cannon Beach, OR 97110. Phone: 503-986-1432. Web: www.leg.state.or.us/boone/
- State Sen. Betsy Johnson (D):**

State Capitol, 900 Court St. N.E., S-314, Salem, OR 97301. Telephone: 503-986-1716. Email: sen.betsyjohnson@state.or.us Web: www.betsyjohnson.com District Office: P.O. Box R, Scappoose, OR 97056. Phone: 503-543-4046. Fax: 503-543-5296. Astoria office phone: 503-338-1280.

- Port of Astoria:** Executive Director, 10 Pier 1 Suite 308, Astoria, OR 97103. Phone: 503-741-3300. Email: admin@portofastoria.com
- Clatsop County Board of Commissioners:** c/o County Manager, 800 Exchange St., Suite 410, Astoria, OR 97103. Phone: 503-325-1000.