

# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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## Water under the bridge



Compiled by Bob Duke

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

### 10 years ago this week — 2007



The Daily Astorian/File Photo

The USS LCI 713, which was moored at Astoria's Pier 39 as recently as September, now sits at the Red Lion "Thunderbird Dock" west of the interstate bridge in Portland. Rough Astoria weather meant that restoration efforts were often a matter of one step forward, two steps backward and necessitated the move to calmer waters farther up the Columbia River.

The LCI 713 survived combat duty in World War II, but the harsh elements on the Lower Columbia River have proven to be a tough adversary.

The vintage landing craft, one of the last of its kind still afloat, was recently honored with its acceptance into the National Register of Historic Places. The National Park Service designation recognizes sites and structures associated with "events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history" and that "embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction."

The designation recognizes the 713 was exemplifying wartime ship-building techniques "that emphasize simple, rugged and cost-effective construction."

**The U.S. Coast Guard has classified a Sunday call for help as a hoax after determining the victims in distress were likely just children playing with a radio.**

No helicopters or boats were launched, but authorities did waste at least an hour determining whether the mayday call was for real, said Bob Coster, civilian search and rescue controller at Coast Guard Group Astoria.

A male child reported he was on a sinking vessel at about 9:50 a.m.

"We'd had children playing on the radio all morning," Coster said. "Apparently, they'd gotten ahold of some small marine radios and were playing Army."

A bill launching a study of the proposed Columbia-Pacific National Heritage Area gained approval from the U.S. House of Representatives Monday.

The feasibility study is the first step in the creation of the new heritage area, which supporters envision stretching from Cannon Beach up the Long Beach Peninsula, and upriver to Cathlamet, Washington.

### 50 years ago — 1967

Tourists, vacationers and local residents in search of recreational opportunities and facilities, especially during the approaching summer season, can find no area with more to offer pleasure-seekers than Astoria and Clatsop County.

The Lower Columbia region is abundant in historical treasures and natural beauty and resources which provide countless recreational opportunities for everyone.

Northwest Aluminum Co. is actively exploring possibility of establishing a \$142 million aluminum facility in Oregon, employing 1,000 Oregonians with an \$8 million annual payroll.

This was announced Wednesday afternoon from Gov. Tom McCall's office.

The Governor's Office said plant location in Oregon is subject to financing and engineering studies "but as of this time Astoria is the key prospect."

Gov. Tom McCall added that Astoria seemed to be "far and away" the prime choice.

**The motel that caused the controversial so-called "dry-sands" bill in the Legislature — Surfsand motel in Cannon Beach — established its private enclosure on the beach Thursday.**

Motel manager Gordon McRea said logs were placed Thursday. They extend about 60 feet seaward from the seawall in front of the year-old 31-unit motel.

The logs were put on the dry sand in the same location last summer to allow a place where guests could use the beach privately. The result is now echoing through the Capitol in Salem and up and down the coast and Willamette Valley.

Pieces of metal found by treasure digger Tony Mareno at Neahkahnie turned out to be iron with some minor impurities, according to a spokesman of the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. Mareno, of Salem and the father of seven, said last weekend he believed the metal spike and L-shaped tool to be of either platinum or silver with an iron alloy.

Mareno said he is sure the legendary Spanish treasure is to be found on the beach at Neahkahnie where he has been digging for two weeks.

### 75 years ago — 1942

"This day saw an appearance of a spacious harbour abreast the Ship, haul'd wind for it, observ'd two sand bars making off, with a passage between them to a fine river ... The river extended to the NE as far as eye cou'd reach, and water fit to drink as far down as the Bars, at the entrance. We directed our course up this noble river in search of a Village."

So John Boit, supercargo on the ship Columbia, describes the discovery of the mighty River of the West, ever since known as the Columbia, 150 years ago today. The discovery was commemorated at a luncheon held today at the Astoria Hotel.



## A Republican death wish

By CHARLES BLOW

New York Times News Service

The obscene spectacle of House Republicans gathering last week in the Rose Garden to celebrate the House's passage of a bill that would likely strip insurance coverage from tens of millions of Americans, while simultaneously



serving as a massive tax break for the wealthy, had the callous feel of the well-heeled dancing on the poor's graves. Republicans had painted themselves into a corner. For seven years they had incessantly defamed the Affordable Care Act as nothing short of a dispatch from the devil. They told their constituents that they had a better plan, one that provided everything people liked about the ACA and eliminated everything they didn't.

As President Donald Trump claimed in January, "We're going to have insurance for everybody." He continued, "There was a philosophy in some circles that if you can't pay for it, you don't get it. That's not going to happen with us."

That, like so much else coming from these folks' mouths, was a lie.

The bill passed by the House eliminates popular features like guaranteed price protections for people with pre-existing conditions, by allowing states to apply for waivers to remove these protections. Instead of universal insurance coverage, regardless of whether one could "pay for it" as Trump promised, the bill would move in the opposite direction, pricing millions out of coverage.

The ACA had made a basic societal deal: The young, healthy and rich would subsidize access to insurance for the older, sicker and poorer. But this demanded that the former gave a damn about the latter, that people genuinely believed that saving lives was more important than saving money, that we weren't living some Darwinian "Hunger Games" of health care where health and wealth march in lockstep.

Once again, the party that is vehemently "pro-life" for "persons" in the womb demonstrates a staggering lack of empathy for those very same lives when they are in the world. What is the moral logic here? It is beyond me.

Let's cut to the quick: Access to affordable health care keeps people alive and healthy and keeps families solvent. Take that away, and people get sick; run up enormous, crippling debt; and, in the worst cases, die. It is really that simple.

People may conveniently disassociate a vote cast in marbled halls from the body stretched out in a wooden box, but make no mistake: They are linked.

In House Speaker Paul Ryan's feckless attempt to defend this moral



AP Photo/Evan Vucci

President Donald Trump talks to House Speaker Paul Ryan in the Rose Garden of the White House Thursday after the House pushed through a health care bill.

abomination of a bill during his floor speech last week, he said, "Let's give people more choices and more control over their care."

But this so-called restoration of choice would be in practice, for many, a sentence to death.

Republicans like the Idaho congressman and House Freedom Caucus member Rep. Raúl R. Labrador deny this most basic of truths. Labrador said last week at a town hall, "Nobody dies because they don't have access to health care." It was a stunning expression of idiocy.

**People may conveniently disassociate a vote cast in marbled halls from the body stretched out in a wooden box, but make no mistake: They are linked.**

According to a 2009 study conducted by Harvard Medical School and Cambridge Health Alliance, "nearly 45,000 annual deaths are associated with lack of health insurance," and "uninsured, working-age Americans have a 40 percent higher risk of death than their privately insured counterparts."

An analysis last month by the Center for American Progress estimates removing price protections for pre-existing conditions would mean that "individuals with even relatively mild pre-existing conditions would

pay thousands of dollars above standard rates to obtain coverage."

Republicans are likely to pay dearly for this outrage. Nate Silver expressed his thoughts in a piece headlined: "The Health Care Bill Could Be A Job-Killer For GOP Incumbents," pointing out that the Republican bill is even more unpopular than the Affordable Care Act was when it was being debated, and if Republicans face the same electoral backlash that Democrats faced, "it could put dozens of GOP-held seats in play." Silver acknowledges that there are "mitigating factors" that could soften the blow for Republicans, but conversely adds, "There's even a chance that Republicans could suffer a bigger penalty than Democrats did."

On Friday, The Cook Political Report changed its ratings in 20 districts "all reflecting enhanced opportunities for Democrats" and pointed out:

"House Republicans' willingness to spend political capital on a proposal that garnered the support of just 17 percent of the public in a March Quinnipiac poll is consistent with past scenarios that have generated a midterm wave."

Not only is the bill unpopular among voters, it's also unpopular in the medical establishment. As The New York Times reported on Thursday: "It is a rare unifying moment. Hospitals, doctors, health insurers and some consumer groups, with few exceptions, are speaking with one voice and urging significant changes to the Republican health care legislation that passed the House on Thursday."

Whatever eventually comes of the bill, the death threat it poses for many Americans may well be a death wish Republicans have just issued for their own careers. As House Democrats sang as their Republican colleagues made their self-immolating votes: "Na, na, na, na, hey, hey, hey, goodbye."

### LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian. We do not publish open letters or third-party letters.

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 and verbal verification of authorship. 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. Discussion should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters referring to news stories should also mention the headline and date of publication.

The Daily Astorian welcomes short "in gratitude" notes from readers for publication. They should keep to a 200-word maximum and writers are asked to avoid simply listing event sponsors. They

must be signed, include the writer's address, phone number and are subject to condensation and editing for style, grammar, etc.

Submissions may be sent in any of these ways:

E-mail to editor@dailyastorian.com;

Online form at www.dailyastorian.com;

Delivered to the Astorian offices at 949 Exchange St. and 1555 N. Roosevelt in Seaside.

Or by mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103