

Local news is key

Just sent off another one of those checks, the ones for my local newspaper. Why do I do this? Why with all those other sources of news, why do I indulge in my local newspaper? Simply put, there is no other source of local news. How else would I keep up on "As The Dam Turns," who said what in "Port Pontifications" or how many times a sequel to The Goonies has been proposed?

Seriously, this may sound trivial, but I live here. I do not live in Portland. Local Portland news does not inform me of local coast issues, local political races, local car crashes or local elk herds' movements. I need to know these things. Local issues affect my daily life and daily decisions. Having local information is important to me.

If I (and my neighbors) do not buy the local paper, it will at some time discontinue circulation. We all benefit from having access to a local newspaper. Thus on behalf of my neighbors, and myself, I have sent off another one of those checks.

KATHLEEN ADAMS
Hammond

Volunteers needed

We are looking for a few good volunteers. Volunteers who like to interact with people from all over the world. From countries like Austria, South Africa, Canada, Iceland and many more. States like Colorado, Florida, Maine, New Mexico and New York. Volunteers who like to talk about our glorious history, i.e. Lewis and Clark, Peter Iredale, The Astoria Column (in case someone asks, it is 164 steps to the top and, of course, back down) or where to find the local laundromat, car wash or liquor store.

Where is such a place you ask ... the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Warrenton Museum, located in the parking lot across from Ross Dress for Less. Currently, the "tourist center" is open seven days a week from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. We need volunteers for Fridays and Saturdays.

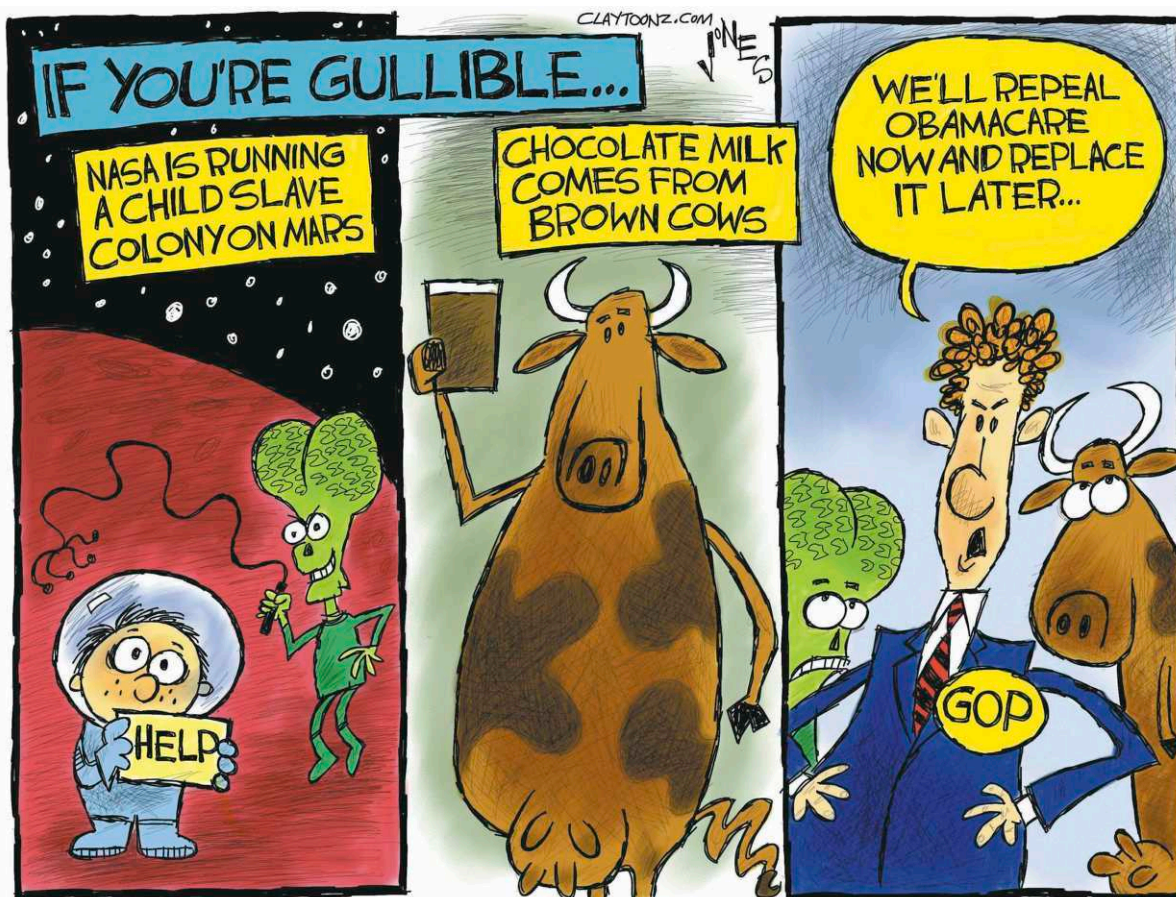
Come and visit Diane Collier at 143 S. Highway 101 in Warrenton, or you can call her at 503-861-1031 on Mondays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

DIANE COLLIER
Warrenton

Off the streets

A troubled man tells others that he'd like to cut your head off. This is the kind of thing that tends to be disconcerting; save when the degenerative arthritis in your neck is piercing in its pain, then it doesn't seem such a bad idea. I won't mention his name, here, but he's homeless and a Trump supporter, and at times loathes me and my "Stop Trump," sign.

I don't really blame him. Trump is offering a lovely siren song to many devalued and dejected people, and the left tends to bury people in shame and guilt. We forget that sometimes what we hunger for most is a narrative in which we're the good guy, the hero, not some



youth telling us everything we believe is wrong, and we're killing the planet.

"Make America Great Again," what it means to so many, is part of something great again, have a chance to think of yourself as great again; the myth we try to teach every kid, which life beats out of so many.

Now it seems to me that if I was a Trump supporter I'd want to help this fellow whose life has been ruined by liberals. Or if I was a bleeding heart liberal — oh, that's right I am — I'd want to help this man off the streets; see to it that he at least can get a good night's sleep.

It seems to me that's how you make America great again, regardless of whether you're in the blue tribe or red tribe.

There are plenty who know whom I'm talking about. It's not hard to discover if you don't, and if you can't, you can always choose to help another. If only it were as easy to trip over one's own conscience as it is the homeless in America.

M. ALEX "SASHA" MILLER
Astoria

Kudos to Orwell

In 1946, English novelist George Orwell warned Americans that the poor old English language was "in a bad way." Today his 5,000-word essay "Politics and the English Language" remains prophetic.

Orwell bluntly claimed that the English language had become stale, pretentious, confusing and vague, anesthetizing part of the reader's brain, making coherent thought and debate difficult or impossible.

Orwell grappled with the political consequences of imprecise language, such as that currently unleashed by Donald Trump's adviser Kelly Anne Conway, who characterized Press Secretary Sean Spicer's lies as "alternative facts."

Subsequently, many Americans have searched for ways to deal with the Trump administration's prideful ignorance and continued willing-

ness to deceive us.

Orwell advises us that when people in power are reluctant to own up to uncomfortable truths, both large and small, they lean heavily on euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. That, I submit, describes Trump to a "T."

His public statements are riddled with clichés, ostentatious wordiness, and just about every other linguistic foible I can imagine.

Trump uses a select group of vague words to explain what he thinks is wrong with America, diminishing our trust in government, the media, politicians, numbers and facts.

Right now, someone is learning from Trump and Orwell. "All issues are political issues," Orwell wrote, "and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia."

Trump knows that and his followers do, too.

The frightening manipulation of language by Trump's alternative-facts people is likely to continue, and it will likely get worse as Trump's many scandals and investigations into his possible obstruction of justice and conflicts of interest continue.

The dirty secret about "Politics and the English Language" is that, despite Orwell's claim that his main concern is clarity, what he really cared about was the beauty of language.

It's vital that those of us who value clarity and beauty of language remain on guard.

Pick up a copy of Orwell's pocket-size book, "Why I Write," and read the last 19 pages, still scarily relevant.

ROBERT BRAKE
Ocean Park, Washington

No need to reinvent

Someone needs to put the Republicans on a bus north. It's all quite simple. There's no need to reinvent health care. Everyone in

Canada has excellent health care. The hospitals and clinics and doctors and nurses are very good.

Just ask them how they are doing it and they will gladly share.

How wonderful it would be to live in a country that cares for the poor and the middle class instead of worshipping and subsidizing the rich on the backs of our citizens.

MARY TANGUAY WEBB
Astoria

Whose quality of life?

The supporters of David Townsend's initiative to repeal Gearhart's existing short-term rental ordinance and replace it with their own version claim in their recent mailer it is necessary "to maintain the quality of life for our city."

Whose quality of life is maintained by allowing an unlimited number of vacation rentals in residential neighborhoods throughout the city?

Whose quality of life is maintained by allowing nine people over 12, plus an unlimited number of children under 12 in a three-bedroom house?

Whose quality of life is maintained by not requiring rental owners to provide on-site parking to help alleviate parking congestion on narrow city streets?

Whose quality of life is maintained by not requiring rental owners to demonstrate that they have a functional septic system capable of handling sporadic use by large numbers of occupants?

Whose quality of life is maintained if overworked septic systems fail at an ever-increasing number of rental units lead the Department of Environmental Quality to mandate a citywide sewage system that, over time, will be paid for by all property owners?

Whose quality of life is maintained by not requiring rentals to be inspected by the local building official, the only inspector permitted by law to evaluate life safety conditions?

Women move, world improves

By GAIL COLLINS

New York Times News Service

Good news has been in such very short supply lately. Beyoncé did have twins.



Joey Chestnut set a new record at the Coney Island hot-dog eating contest. Kentucky sold a billion dollars in lottery tickets for the first time ...

OK, here's a real one: Women's involvement in politics seems to be skyrocketing — they're doing everything from petitioning Congress to planning their own campaigns. Groups that help prepare women to run for office are reporting an unprecedented number of website visits, training-school sign-ups and meeting attendance.

Everything is going to get better! There'll be more bipartisanship in Congress, more rationality in foreign affairs and better government on the state and local levels. Corruption will drop, voter satisfaction will soar, and never again will the governor of a major state spend a holiday sunbathing on a public beach that's closed to the rest of the public due to a budget crisis.

All right, we're only totally positive about the last one.

Still, more gender equality in politics is a great goal. While there have been some really terrible, truly awful women elected to public office over the years, as a group women seem to

be better at working with others. For instance, female senators have regular bipartisan dinners in Washington. There was a time when this would not have been a big deal, but in the current climate it's akin to Nixon in China.

Women also tend to bring a mood of reform, since they're often coming from the outside.

"It's the women who in many ways feel — if you're not at the table, you're probably on the menu," said Debbie Walsh at the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University.

The center runs training programs for female candidates in perpetually scandal-prone New Jersey, and their success is proof of the theory that voters will turn to women when they feel the political status quo is horrible.

"When we started, New Jersey was in the bottom 10 for women in the legislature," said Walsh. "Now, it's 14th from the top. Indictments have been very, very good to us."

Progress on this front is not necessarily guaranteed to last. The center's ranking of state legislatures puts Wyoming last in the percentage of women, which is extremely sad for a place that calls itself "the Equality State" because it was the first to give women the right to vote. Wyoming does have Dick Cheney's daughter Liz in the U.S. House of Representatives, and you will have to decide for yourself whether you think that is a good plan.

Cathy Connolly, who's a state

representative and professor of women's studies at the University of Wyoming, says the legislative schedule was set up to accommodate ranchers: "We work around the clock for 40 days one year and 20 the other in the dead of the winter. ... It's disproportionately retired men."

But even Wyoming is looking for a leap forward. Connolly is co-chair of a women's caucus that is — of course — bipartisan. ("Its only goal is to recruit more women and be supportive of each other when we serve.") She feels that same surge of interest, "and it is wonderful."

Women have been setting record-breaking web traffic at Emily's List, which supports pro-choice Democratic women's campaigns. Stephanie Schriock, the president, thinks the motives run from "fear of slipping backward" after Hillary Clinton's loss to a sense of solidarity engendered by the marches after Donald Trump's inauguration. Now the visitors are stoked and looking for information on how to run for anything "from school board to the U.S. Senate."

(If you're reading this piece and thinking at this very moment that you might want to jump in, I should warn you that running for the U.S. Senate is not really the place to begin. But if you're wealthy, famous and want to find a male incumbent who's truly worthy of being chased out of town, Ted Cruz is up for re-election in 2018. Just saying.) Right now, Democrats seem to



Wikimedia Commons

More women are showing interest in running for office.

be having much more success in recruiting women than Republicans are. Some experts think it's because when female Democrats donate money they tend to target female candidates, while, on the Republican side, gender doesn't seem to matter at all that much.

Think about this, Republican women. If Senate leaders hadn't appointed just 13 men to that special health care bill-writing group, the bill would have been better. This is a fact based on the evidence that it could not possibly have been worse. If this sudden interest in putting

Whose quality of life is maintained by not requiring rental owners to provide for the trash created by their guests over a weekend to be safely stored until trash pickup day?

It seems that the only people whose quality of life will be maintained are the out-of-town investment property owners behind this initiative. The don't seem to realize that degrading the overall quality of life in Gearhart will eventually degrade their own properties, as well as the rest of the town's.

I urge the council to reject the initiative, place it on the ballot and allow the voters of Gearhart to vote it down in November.

DIANNE WIDDOP
Gearhart

Climate control

I am just trying to figure out what global warming is all about. I did my own investigating, and discovered the culprits are two main greenhouse gases called natural and man-made sources. For example, if dinosaurs (natural) didn't die, cave-men didn't build fires (man-made), and the industrial revolution (man-made) didn't happen, we might still be living in the ice age. Natural sources, we can't do much about. The real question is, hasn't the world always been warming since the ice age to this present age?

However, man-made sources we can do something about. Americans are making every effort to reduce global warming, such as reforesting, wind and solar power solutions, complying with federal and state regulations, just to mention a few.

The No. 1 solution comes with a very huge resistance, so you better sit down for this one. Stop driving your automobiles. Every gallon of gasoline used emits 20 pounds of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. An average car emits 6 tons of CO2 per year. Add up all the CO2 emissions from automobiles in America, and that number becomes astronomical. That would make a difference in so many ways.

The real problem with global warming, I believe, are those who are politicizing this issue. They seem more interested in getting rich than solving the problem.

Whenever I listen to them or read their stories, it all boils down to three things: your vote, advancing their political careers and money. So, you'd better be very sensible about how you support these politicians and this issue, or you could wind up unemployed, with no money, or even worse, walking.

Let us use our own knowledge regarding climate control, and let us start doing things in our own lives, and around our homes, to address this issue and get it under control. It really does boil down to you and me.

If you should see those who constantly promote global warming selling their beachfront properties, cars, boats, airplanes and moving to Antarctica, then worry. Until then, live wisely and be happy.

God bless America.
RAYMOND GARDNER
Warrenton