

**Support our parks**

We, the Astoria Parks, Recreation and Community Foundation, are proud of the parks, facilities and programs that exist in our thriving community. Our nonprofit seeks to support Parks with events that raise money to fund scholarships for our community members who need financial assistance.

Parks is responsible for green spaces, facilities and programs which feed the health and well-being of our community. They maintain places where individuals and families, who are both residents and visitors, can appreciate Astoria and be active.

Parks encompasses some of the most beautiful, historical and educational sights and programs in our area. They also employ some wonderful people who care for our community from our youth to our elders.

This upcoming week, at 7 p.m. Monday, the City Council is making some vital decisions affecting the future of Parks funding. It is with this in mind that our organization is reaching out to you, our community, to ask you to show your support to keep Astoria Parks and Recreation alive and thriving.

You can do this by contacting your city councilors via email or phone, attend the City Council meeting, visit [astoriaparks.com](http://astoriaparks.com) for more information and, most importantly, spread the word that Parks needs our support now.

TRACY ERLING  
Astoria

**Parks shortfall**

The latest fiscal report showed the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department exactly on budget. The adopted 2017-18 budget gives them a \$100,000 increase. Yet they are \$475,000 over budget, right now? I asked how this happened in a letter, and in a letter to the editor in the *The Daily Astorian* ("Fee is wrong," June 30). And no reply in any way.

On Facebook, City Council member Cindy Price posted a misquote about "people too lazy to do their research." I did the research, and I still want to know:

1. Why does Angela Cosby not have to balance her department's budget?
2. Where did the shortfall come from?
3. What will stop future city councils from extorting more money from water/sewer ratepayers for other nonessential departments?

I feel like lawsuits and recall petitions should be next. These people are not listening.

This can only happen in a liberal town where people trust the government not to abuse their power. In any town in Idaho, this would be a nonstarter. Congrats Dems, for rolling over to a blatant abuse of power, and lack of managerial competence.

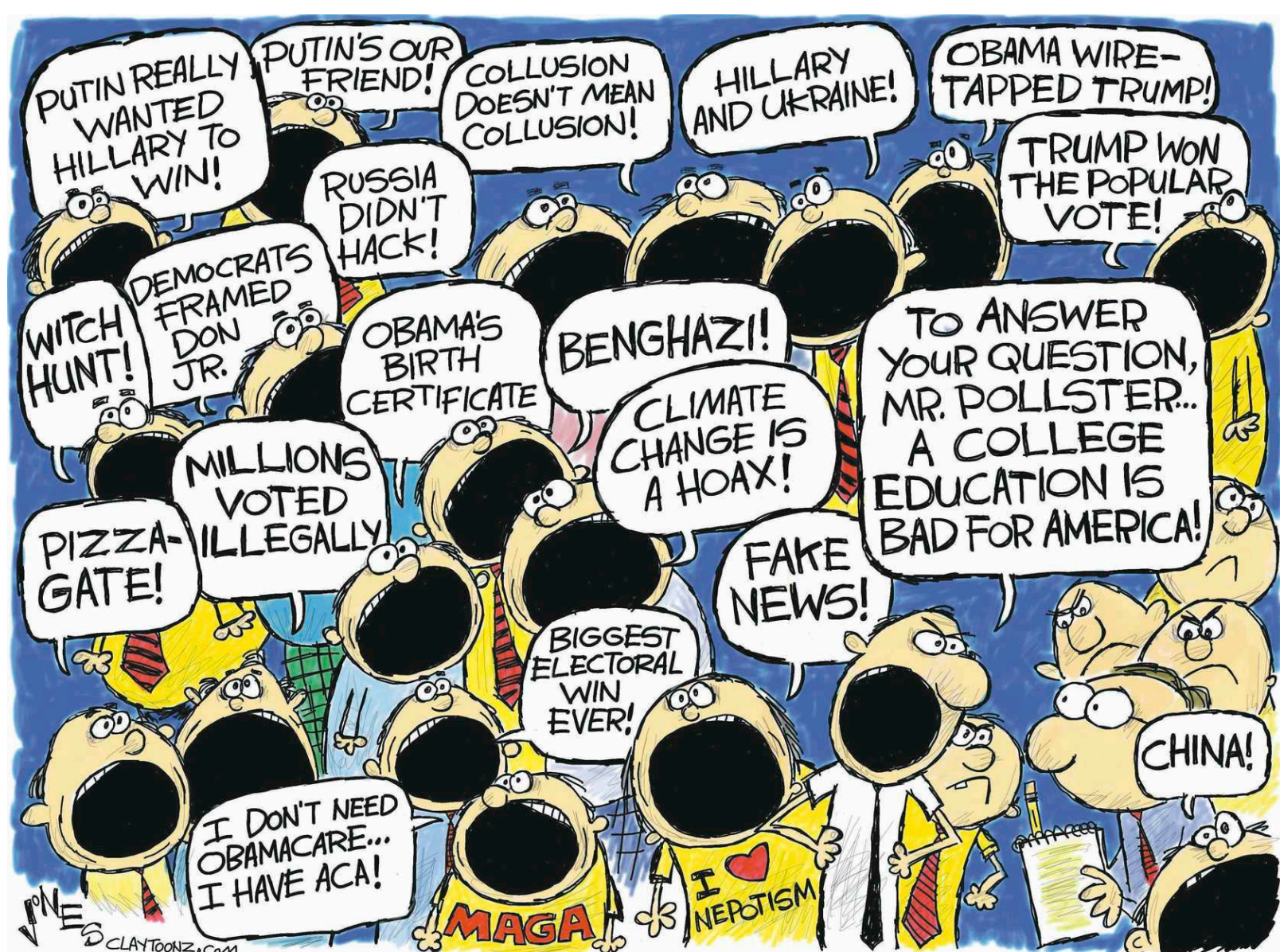
If you ask, I will pay. If you extort, you have an enemy for life. City Councilor Bruce Jones is top of the list. The buck stops with the director of the department, Angela Cosby, for her budget. What you are doing is as undemocratic as you could possibly do.

There should be a microscopic investigation of the Parks & Recreation Department, and how they spend their resources.

ROGER LINDSLEY  
Astoria

**Johnson gets things done**

Sometimes good projects get stalled, and architects, land use



specialists and attorneys can't get them going again. In the case of the Wallooskee-Youngs salmon habitat restoration project on Youngs Bay at its confluence with the Wallooskee River, the project was 90 percent completed but became hung up on the rocks for nearly two years. This complex project to restore about 200 acres of prime salmon habitat involved local contractors, Indian tribes and local, state, and federal agencies.

When all seemed lost, the parties made one last effort to bring in a well-respected negotiator. She is better known as the State Senator for Columbia, Clatsop, and Tillamook counties — Sen. Betsy Johnson. Though she has a law degree, it is the panoply of skills and tools that Sen. Johnson brings to a problem that makes her a truly great senator, mediator and outstanding cheerleader for her senate district. Her Rolodex of key local, state and federal officials, her articulateness, her ability to distill a complex problem to its bare essentials, and her tireless efforts to coax and cajole parties back to the bargaining table, are simply unmatched.

Sen. Johnson just gets it done. As a result, this multimillion dollar project to restore salmon habitat in the Columbia estuary is now in full operation. You can view the restoration project from the Astoria Column parking lot. Thank you, Sen. Johnson.

BRIAN B. DOHERTY  
WILLIAM L. RASMUSSEN  
Miller Nash Graham & Dunn  
LLP  
Portland

**Romantic musical**

Dear Friend: I must tell you about a wonderful romantic musical I just saw. The Peninsula Association of Performing Artists' (PAPA) new production of "She Loves Me" opened July 7 at the historic Fort Columbia Theater. I was not familiar with the show, but that turned out not to matter at all. Everything about the production was charming, stylish and very, very entertaining.

Anyone who does know the show will recognize why I used "Dear Friend" in my introduction. In a "boy meets girl" with a twist, the star-crossed lovers don't even know each other's names, only communicating through letters filled with their deepest hopes and dreams.

Set in a perfume shop in the 1930s, the show touches on all the confusing aspects of the human condition of romantic love. You're sure to recognize yourself and your loved one in the universal themes. Take your sweetie for a date night. You'll be glad you did.

MARK SCARBOROUGH  
Seaview, Washington

**Terrific presentation**

What a fabulous cast at the Peninsula Association of Performing Arts for "She Loves Me." We saw it opening night at Fort Columbia in Washington State Park. Thank you for the great write up in the Coast Weekend by Marilyn Gilbaugh ("She Loves Me," July 6).

The performers were well prepared, enthusiastic and professional in their presentation. They were young and older and terrific. The play is a high spirited musical, and they did just that, with excellent voices and dancers.

We recommend it. It is showing weekends through Aug. 6.

KATHLEEN and JIM  
HUDSON  
Hammond

**Preventing gun tragedies**

Awaiting Gov. Kate Brown's signature, SB 719 will empower family members of the mentally ill, and also law enforcement, to prevent gun tragedies. The family or officer who observes a person showing risk of harm to themselves or another by using a gun, may petition the court to issue an "extreme risk protection order." The order could include intent on suicide or domestic violence. The judge must find the "evidence clear and convincing."

According to Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, there are more fatalities in Oregon each year from firearms than from motor vehicle crashes or unintentional poisonings. Gun violence is a public health problem that deserved legislative action. Thank you, Oregon legislators, for passage of SB 719.

JUANITA PRICE  
Astoria

**No toxic highway**

The *Daily Astorian* ran an editorial on June 26, "Chemical plant fails the sniff test," about the perils of using our beautiful Columbia River to haul hazardous chemicals, such as methanol, from the proposed plant upriver in Kalama, Washington. On July 6, the *Astorian* ran an editorial on shipping oil on the Columbia, "Oil-by-rail project carries too much risk." Thank you to the *Astorian* for spotlighting these issues.

On July 7, an oil tanker ran aground near Skamokawa, Washington, carrying millions of gallons of witches' brew including ethanol, glycol and oil. Fortunately this did not result in catastrophe since none of the cargo leaked into the river.

Think this an unusual occurrence? Think again. In the last year there have been four other groundings on this stretch of the lower river. Luckily, no environmental harm was reported for any of these cases. How much longer will our luck hold?

It is time we call a halt to these disastrous proposals upstream which use the Columbia as a "toxic highway" to transport products overseas. Our global economy promotes the depletion of our natural resources to the highest bidder, driving up prices for Americans and endangering our environment — including the river which offers us a livelihood — just to fill the pockets of others.

The Columbia is much more valuable than to serve as a "highway" of hazardous products.

JOHN GREEN  
Gearhart

**Voter misinformation**

In reviewing the June 7 Gearhart City Council minutes (<http://bit.ly/2tGYd7m>), I found some inaccurate information being given out in regard to voter registration.

In response to a question asked by Gearhart resident, Susan Spring, regarding the procedure for changing one's voter registration, City Manager Chad Sweet Sweet stated, "There are some tests done such as how long you have been registered, where the title of your car is mailed and where you receive your taxes."

When attempting to open the Pacific Way Cafe, John Allen was faced with the same issue from the city. Judge Thomas Edison ruled against the city, costing Gearhart a great deal of money. The sooner the flow of foggy and misleading information being fed to the residents of Gearhart from its City Hall is stopped, the better.

Per Cameron Moore, Clatsop County manager, "A person must have a valid Oregon driver's license with an address in the county. If they do not have an Oregon driver's license they can provide the last four digits of their social security number and a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or other government documents that show their name and address which must match the residence or mailing address submitted on their voter registration card.

"A person's residence must be the place in which habitation is fixed and to which, when a person is absent, the person intends to return. Some factors to consider in determining residence include:

- Where a person receives personal mail.
- Where a person is licensed to drive.
- Where any immediate family members of the person reside.
- The address from which the person pays for utility services.
- The address from which the person files federal or state income tax returns.
- A county elections official may inquire at any time into the validity of the registration of any elector."

HAROLD T. GABLE, DMD  
Gearhart

**Bungled collusion is still collusion no matter how you spin it**

By CHARLES  
KRAUTHAMMER  
*Washington Post Writers Group*

WASHINGTON — The Russia scandal has entered a new



phase and there's no going back. For six months, the White House claimed that this scandal was nothing more than innuendo about Trump campaign collusion with Russia in meddling in the 2016 election. Innuendo for which no concrete evidence had been produced.

Yes, there were several meetings with Russian officials, some only belatedly disclosed. But that is circumstantial evidence at best. Meetings tell you nothing unless you know what hap-

pened in them. We didn't. Some of these were casual encounters in large groups like the famous July 2016 Kislyak-Sessions exchange of pleasantries at the Republican National Convention. Big deal.

I was puzzled. Lots of cover-up, but where was the crime? Not even a third-rate burglary. For six months, smoke without fire. Yes, President Donald Trump himself was acting very defensively, as if he were hiding something. But no one ever produced the something.

My view was: Collusion? I just don't see it. But I'm open to empirical evidence. Show me.

The evidence is now shown. This is not hearsay, not fake news, not unsourced leaks. This is an email chain released by Donald Trump Jr. himself. A British go-between writes that there's a Russian government effort

to help Trump Sr. win the election, and as part of that effort he proposes a meeting with a "Russian government attorney" possessing damaging information on Hillary Clinton. Moreover, the Kremlin is willing to share troves of incriminating documents from the Crown Prosecutor. (Error: Britain has a Crown Prosecutor. Russia has a State Prosecutor.)

Donald Jr. emails back. "I love it." Fatal words.

Once you've said "I'm in," it makes no difference that the meeting was a bust, that the intermediary brought no such goods. What matters is what Donald Jr. thought going into the meeting, as well as Jared Kushner and then-campaign manager Paul Manafort, who were copied on the correspondence, invited to the meeting, and attended.

"It was literally just a wasted 20 minutes, which

was a shame," Donald Jr. told Sean Hannity. A shame? On the contrary, a stroke of luck. Had the lawyer real stuff to deliver, Donald Jr. and the others would be in far deeper legal trouble. It turned out to be incompetent collusion, amateur collusion, comically failed collusion. That does not erase the fact that three top Trump campaign officials were ready to play.

It may turn out that they did later collaborate more fruitfully. We don't know. But even if nothing else is found, the evidence is damning.

It's rather pathetic to hear Trump apologists protesting that it's no big deal because we Americans are always intervening in other people's elections, and they in ours. You don't have to go back to the '40s and '50s when the CIA intervened in France and Italy to keep the communists from coming to power. What about the Obama

administration's blatant interference to try to defeat Benjamin Netanyahu in the latest Israeli election? One might even add the work of groups supported by the U.S. during Russian parliamentary elections — the very origin of Vladimir Putin's deep animus toward Hillary Clinton, then secretary of state, whom he accuses of having orchestrated the opposition.

This defense is pathetic for two reasons. First, have the Trumpites not been telling us for six months that no collusion ever happened? And now they say: Sure it happened. So what? Everyone does it.

What's left of your credibility when you make such a casual about-face?

Second, no, not everyone does it. It's one thing to be open to opposition research dug up in Indiana. But not dirt from Russia, a hostile foreign power that has repeat-

edly invaded its neighbors (Georgia, Crimea, Eastern Ukraine), that buzzes our planes and ships in international waters, that opposes our every move and objective around the globe. Just last week the Kremlin killed additional U.N. sanctions we were looking to impose on North Korea for its ICBM test.

There is no statute against helping a foreign hostile power meddle in an American election. What Donald Jr. — and Kushner and Manafort — did may not be criminal. But it is not merely stupid. It is also not wrong, a fundamental violation of any code of civic honor.

I leave it to the lawyers to adjudicate the legalities of unconsummated collusion. But you don't need a lawyer to see that the Trump defense — collusion as a desperate Democratic fiction designed to explain away a lost election — is now officially dead.