

Hyak Maritime

We are writing to voice our support for the recently announced sale negotiations of North Tongue Point involving Hyak Maritime and Washington Development Co. ("Port poised to leave North Tongue Point," The Daily Astorian, Aug. 2) The opportunity to see a premiere tug and barge company like Hyak Maritime taking the reins and ownership is good news, and we embrace and welcome them to Clatsop County.

Our relationship with Hyak goes back almost 20 years, and with this pending sale, WCT Marine & Construction Inc. is looking forward to a permanent location and relationship with Hyak to continue our business operations of repairing and constructing vessels.

We wish to commend the Port of Astoria Commission for taking fast and definitive action to allow this sale to proceed at last Tuesday's commission meeting. The decision to relinquish control by the Port is welcome news. When a port can lead the way for private industry to prosper, we all win.

Please join us in offering full support for Hyak Maritime and welcoming them to Clatsop County.

CAROL TORISTOJA
President, WCT Marine &
Construction Inc.
Astoria

Brave opposition

I have never seen a guiltier acting or guiltier-looking man than President Donald Trump. It's like watching the guilty brother on "The Sopranos." And who would've believed a Soprano episode where the family was hooked up with the Russian Mafia? We'd have said, "Naaaaa, that's too crazy; that couldn't happen."

I am seeing a lot of good, brave opposition springing up in the country, though, and that gives me a lift. Adversity often brings out our best; maybe we'll survive this and the country will rise to the occasion. Hoorah for both U.S. Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden.

JOSEPH WEBB
Astoria

Answer in wilderness

From Vietnam, Watergate and Irangate, through Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria, we read daily about the poor judgment of our elected officials. Barbara Tuchman, in her book, "The March of Folly," poses the question well: "Why do holders of high office so often act contrary to the way reason points and enlightened self-interest suggests? Why does intelligent mental process seem so often not to function?"

I found the answer, not in the confines of some Washington think tank, but on the edge of a wilderness river in Northern Idaho while fishing with my old trapper friend, whom I fondly called Guru Charlie. I was haranguing him with all the international and domestic corruption just as he cast a grasshopper fly upstream. Looking back at me, he yelled, "Scandal to the jaybirds! The world ain't round, it's crooked!"

REX AMOS
Cannon Beach

Quick stamp of approval

On July 25, I and several others spoke at the Port of Astoria Commission meeting to express our grave concern as to the safety and prudence of relocating the Shoot-

Sorry, Vice President Pence, you are doomed

By FRANK BRUNI

New York Times News Service

The other day, from the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C., you heard a howl of such volume and anguish that it cracked mirrors and sent small forest animals scurrying for cover. Vice President Mike Pence was furious. He was offended someone — namely, my Times colleagues Jonathan Martin and Alexander Burns — had dared to call him out on the fact that he seemed to be laying the groundwork for a presidential bid.

Problem No. 1: His president is still in the first year of his first term. Problem No. 2: That president is Donald Trump, who doesn't take kindly to any glimmer that people in his employ are putting their vanity or agenda before his. Just ask Steve Bannon. Or Anthony Scaramucci. They were too big for their britches, and Trump snatched

their britches away. The Times report put Pence in similar peril, so he pushed back with an operatic outrage that showed just how close to the bone it had cut. When a story's actually wrong, you eviscerate it, exposing its erroneous assertions without ever breaking a sweat. When it's a stink bomb at odds with your plotting, you set your jaw, redden your face and proclaim it "disgraceful," never detailing precisely how.

That was Pence's route. And his rancor, I suspect, reflects more than the inconvenient truths that Martin and Burns told. It's overarching. It's existential. On some level, he must realize that he's in a no-win situation. Without Trump he's nothing. With Trump he's on a runaway train that he can't steer or brake. If it doesn't crash, Trump can scream down the tracks straight through 2020. If it does, Pence will be one of the casualties.

So why has Pence formed a political action committee, the only sitting vice president ever to do so? Why is he taking all these meetings, building all these bridges? I guess

ing Stars day care facility onto Port property. Along with concerns of high volume truck and general industrial traffic, we felt there were also significant liability and insurance issues.

The newly elected commission didn't even give us the courtesy of a discussion. After we presented, there was an immediate motion to approve pending conditional use approval from the city planning department, as if the Port had no skin in the game, despite the facts it's their building, on their property.

Never once were the words safety, liability, tsunami inundation zone or insurance spoken. Just immediate action. This was a mockery of the entire process.

Commission meetings will now be short, efficient and really a waste of everyone's time; merely a formality. My prediction is that if staff and the director want it, they will get it 100 percent of the time, no matter the merits. The stamp is cut and the ink pad is full.

CHRIS CONNAWAY
Astoria

Columnists over the top

Steve Forrester was right on when he wrote there's "gridlock and deep enmity between the polar ends of the political spectrum ..." ("Smith covered Congress when it accomplished big things," The Daily Astorian, July 31).

There's no doubt journalists today foster much of the enmity Forrester refers to. For example, in my lifetime there have never been such vicious and personal attacks by New York Times journalists against a duly elected president.

The New York Times was the grand master of print media when I was growing up. It's now floundering in its blind inability to see why so many voters reacted to the Establishment, and what's happened to the country. And the Times' well-known columnists appear unable today to rationally discuss governmental policy like they used to. Rather, they increasingly resort to vicious personal diatribes and over-the-top name-calling of the president.

As the president famously asked about the uncontrolled influx of ille-

gal immigrants: "What the hell's going on?" The same question can be asked of journalism today.

I find it hard to believe The Daily Astorian approves of all the vicious name-calling and personal claptrap emanating from New York Times' columnists. Indeed, it even warns readers it won't print letters to the editor with language like that. So why does The Daily Astorian continue to print columns by New York Times journalists who write such viciously personal diatribes about the president of the U.S.?

DON HASKELL
Astoria

Tongue Point potential

At the Aug. 1 Port of Astoria Commission meeting, a proposal presented by Bob Dorn, co-owner of Hyak Maritime, was supported by a near unanimous vote of the commission. By relinquishing the Port's lease and allowing the sale of Tongue Point to Hyak Maritime, I am confident that Astoria, and all of Clatsop County, will see new and positive development of the Tongue Point site.

Operating at Tongue Point for the past four years, WCT Marine & Construction already has had a big impact. Under this new ownership, and with the experience of Hyak Maritime in the marine transportation business, it is very exciting that more of the potential everyone recognizes at Tongue Point now has a very real chance of being realized.

I encourage everyone to support this exciting development, and wish to thank the Port of Astoria for all of the support that they have given J & H Boatworks Inc. during the past eight years, and for the courageous vote to support Hyak Maritime and WCT Marine & Construction.

TIM HILL
J & H Advisors Inc.
Astoria

Paving paradise

Don't it always seem to go, they don't know what they've got 'til it's gone ..."

I have lived in Jeffers Gardens for nearly two decades, and have worked on the North Oregon Coast since 1986. I came to this area from

my hometown of Portland to get away from the rush-rush of the big city, and now I find that the rush-rush of the big city has come to me.

I spend a great deal of time on U.S. Highway 101 between Astoria and Seaside, and find that traffic patterns are now resembling traffic patterns of the Portland area I left behind.

"With a pink hotel, a boutique and a swinging hot spot ..."

After crossing the drawbridge over the Lewis and Clark River, I must now deal daily (including Sundays) with dump trucks depositing dirt excavated from an area near the new Walmart, and depositing the spoils onto the side of airport hill.

Navigating through this fiasco, my next encounter with coastal "progress" is the ongoing extension of the area east of the food bank near the turnoff to Warrenton. And, just a minute or so past this, is the sprawling asphalt of the North Coast Business Park, including the soon-to-be Walmart. I am not looking forward to the second (or third) set of stoplights I must deal with in order to access U.S. 101 to Seaside. "They took all the trees, and put 'em in a tree museum ..."

Heading south to Seaside, I've been watching the bulldozers level sand across from the truck weigh station to make way for scores of units, with the ensuing residents clogging the highway each day. And when finally arriving in Seaside, I note the hillside to the east the dwindling number of trees, being replaced by roads and houses. This has added up over the past 31 years to a point where this summer on U.S. Highway 101 at times does, indeed, resemble a parking lot.

"They paved paradise and put up a parking lot." (Joni Mitchell, 1970)
MATT JANES
Jeffers Gardens

Poor access to fair

During the Clatsop County Fair, I attended both as a volunteer and visitor. I was overwhelmed by the amount of vendors that took up space around the fair buildings and a portion inside. The programs, animals, awards and assistance provided by the staff and volunteers

were really great. Many visitors and participants were happy with the overall outcome of this event, I'm sure.

Several older and disabled visitors were truly upset about the total lack of parking for disabled vehicles, and/or access to dropping off people at the lobby entrance. In front of the fair building where the entrance was located, vehicles were not allowed anywhere because of vendors taking up all spaces in the parking lot.

Visitors displaying disabled cards in their vehicles were turned away at the entrance, as there was no room to drive through, or for the unloading of disabled people. There were no signs showing the general public where to go to park for disabled. No disabled signs were observed anywhere at the fair. There should have been accessibility, as required at any state fair or public festival.

During the 2016 Fair, when we worked as volunteers, six disabled parking stalls were observed adjacent to the fair lobby entrance. Due to a fire equipment display/game needing room, five of the disabled parking area were blocked off. They did, however, have enough open area that allowed vehicles to stop at the lobby entrance.

Because we received three complaints about the disabled parking, contact was made with two different security/gate volunteers, who were asked where the disabled parking was located. The answer was parking is in the lower lots, and people would be transported up the hill. This would still not get the disabled to the lobby entrance. We do know that several vehicles had been allowed up a back road on the south side of the fair building, and that some disabled were assisted with unloading.

We like the county fairs, and are glad to volunteer when we can. This year's event, though, seems to be about money. There were too many vendors, and too little space. We hope that 2018 will allow our seniors and disabled to be able to have better access, and to enjoy their fair.

MELVIN and ELIZABETH
JASMIN
Warrenton



frustrated. He was offended someone — namely, my Times colleagues Jonathan Martin and Alexander Burns — had dared to call him out on the fact that he seemed to be laying the groundwork for a presidential bid.

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there could be some imaginable future in which Trump falls and Pence is left standing strong enough to soldier on. But mostly he's in denial, and he's living very dangerously.

Many Republicans wonder if Trump will remain in the picture and viable in 2020. He could implode — even more than he already has, I mean. He could be run out of town, one way or another. He could stomp off. The scenarios are myriad, and to prepare for them, Pence indeed needs an infrastructure and a network of his own. But there's simply no way to assemble those without looking disloyal to Trump and courting the wrath of alt-right types who know how to go on a Twitter jihad.

Other would-be successors to Trump aren't in the same bind. They don't owe Trump what Pence does. They never pledged Trump complete allegiance. Gov. John Kasich of Ohio, whose unofficial 2020 campaign commenced even before Trump's inauguration, can raise money, stage news conferences, take up residence on CNN and pick apart Trump's proposals all he wants. It

won't endear him to Trump's base, but it won't make him a marked man.

U.S. Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska can style himself as a humble, homespun remedy to Trump's cupidity and histrionics. U.S. Sen. Tom Cotton of Arkansas can take a calibrated approach, more hawkish than Trump on foreign policy but eager to link arms with him on immigration.

Pence, though, is squeezed tight into a corner of compulsory worship. And despite his behind-the-scenes machinations, he has done a masterful job of appearing perfectly content there.

In news photographs and video, you catch other politicians glancing at the president in obvious bafflement. Not Pence. Never Pence. He moans. He beams. It's 50 shades of infatuation. Daniel Day-Lewis couldn't muster a more mesmerizing performance, and it's an unusually florid surrender of principles.

I'm not referring to policy and the fact that before he agreed to become Trump's running mate, he blasted Trump's proposed Muslim

ban, tweeting that it was "offensive and unconstitutional," and fiercely advocated free trade. I'm referring to Pence's supposed morality.

He trumpets his conservative Christianity and avoids supping alone with any woman other than his wife, then turns around and steadfastly enables an avowed groper with a bulging record of profane sexual comments.

He publishes a testimonial, "Confessions of a Negative Campaigner," in which he invokes Jesus while vowing never to repeat such political ugliness in the future, then turns around and collaborates with a politician whose ugliness knows no limit.

No wonder he wants and expects a reward as lavish as the White House itself: He sold his soul. But I don't think he studied the contract closely enough and thought the whole thing through.

There's no political afterlife in this equation, just the loopy, mortifying limbo in which he and so many of Trump's other acolytes dwell.

Maybe the howling is cathartic. Won't change a thing.

