

OPINION

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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 — 2008

A Gearhart man has been arrested in connection with the theft of the bronze Sacagawea statue from Fort Clatsop last weekend.

"It's cut up into lots of little pieces," Clatsop County Sheriff Tom Bergin said of the statue. "There's nothing left of it. It's completely destroyed."

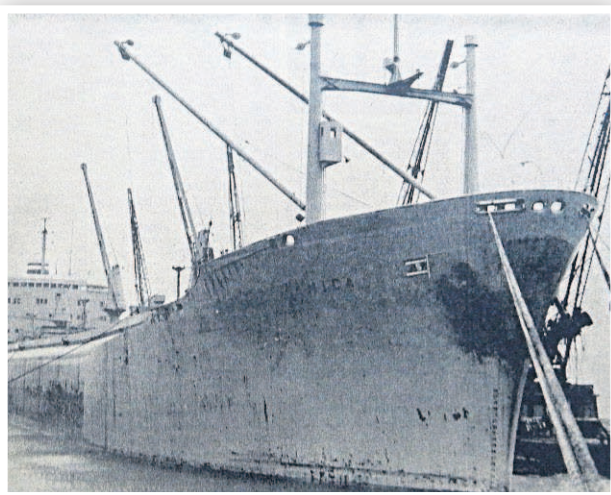
On Sunday, Marcus D. Bologna, 42, joined three Bend residents who were arrested after the statue turned up at a Central Oregon scrap metal dealer.

Astoria's biggest vulnerabilities in a major earthquake could be threefold: communications, fuel for emergency vehicles and backup generators, and disruptions in water lines.

Those were the key issues that emerged during a summit by a panel from the American Society of Civil Engineers. Members of the nonprofit group toured the region over the weekend to investigate the performance of critical infrastructure during the early December storm, which toppled essential systems throughout Clatsop County like dominoes, severing access to communities outside the North Coast.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski believes liquefied natural gas could be one "bridge" that keeps Oregon energized until renewable sources come on line.

At a meeting of the Associated Press News Executives of Oregon in Salem, the governor clarified his position on LNG, which has stirred debate as three terminal proposals and four pipeline projects in the state make their way through the federal permitting process.



The 21,000-ton Norwegian freighter Amica.

Port of Astoria leaders have grown to fear the month of February. And they're not alone.

As Feb. 1 draws near, public agencies and private companies alike are reminded that there's only one month left to complete maintenance and construction jobs in the Columbia River.

It's the shortest month of the year, and for those who are trying to finish dredging projects, it goes by fast.

50 years ago — 1968

Fire flared through the main woodworking shop building of Astoria Marine Construction company, leveling it and doing damage estimated at \$100,000. The loss was about half covered by insurance. Five fire departments managed to confine flames to the one building, saving a machine shop about 15 yards to the northeast and the large buildings and shipways built for Navy minesweepers production in World War II.

One of the greatest new pieces of equipment in law enforcement is how Sheriff Carl Bondietti described some television equipment his department recently acquired.

Bondietti said the equipment, including a camera, some recording tape, audio recorder and a viewing screen, is useful primarily in recording evidence and interrogations of suspects.

A basic use is for drunken driving suspects.

The Norwegian freighter Amica, of 21,000 gross tons, is due at the Astoria port docks to begin loading the largest single log cargo ever loaded on the Columbia River — more than 8 million board feet for Japan. The Astoria longshoremen are expected to load the huge cargo in eight days, with the Amica scheduled to sail February 9.

Negotiations between Salem treasure hunter Tony Mareno and the State Corporation Commission probably will be settled by late this week.

A state official said after talking with Mareno by telephone that "both sides" appear near agreement. Indications are that percentages offered by Mareno to persons aiding in his search for the legendary Neahkahnie treasure will be listed as a security sale and the securities will have to be registered with the corporation commissioner.

Mareno said he would resume his hunt on the northern Oregon coast at Manzanita once the legal issue is settled.

75 years ago — 1943

JUST TO KEEP THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The Astoria Marine Construction company was the first going shipyard on the Lower Columbia River in World War II. A going concern long before that the yard was quickly transformed into a wartime operation for construction of Navy minesweepers. An original contract for four ships was later supplemented by a second contract for eight. Then came successive contracts for many tugs and sub chasers. This expansion just didn't happen without cause. The reason is found in performance, speed and reliability.

ASTORIA MARINE CONSTRUCTION CO.

A Coast Guard disbursing office for all personnel among the myriad Coast Guard facilities between the Columbia River and the California line will open in new offices on the ground floor corner of the Commodore hotel in Astoria February 1, under direction of Lt. (j.g.) C.V. Rudolph, disbursing officer, it was announced.

The office will be a branch of the Coast Guard headquarters financial office in Seattle. From Astoria will go out all funds paid to Coast Guard personnel, including pay checks, travel mileage vouchers, and some funds for clothing purchases as well as clothing itself.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Love living here, thank you very much

Many editors — myself included — believe in being an open book to the communities we serve. We are public figures. Transparency is a good thing.

The hosts at Coast Community Radio apparently believe that too. Joan Herman ("Perspectives") and Donna Quinn ("Talk of Our Towns") have interviewed me on the air recently about journalism and other topics. I was joined on Quinn's show by Kari Borgen, who is my boss and the new publisher at The Daily Astorian.



JIM VAN NOSTRAND

They asked great questions. Here are some of the answers.

Why Astoria?

Both hosts were very curious about why Kari and I, who have decades of experience in journalism, chose to move to a small community like Astoria.

For me, it's a homecoming of sorts. I was born at Hanford (insert "glow in the dark" jokes here), attended high school in Coulee Dam, graduated from Eastern Washington University and started my journalism career at small weekly newspapers in Stevenson and Lebanon. I served in the Oregon Army National Guard and brought my troops to train at Camp Rilea. My family frequently vacationed on the North Coast.

I left Oregon in 1990 and worked at news organizations in Pennsylvania, California, Washington, D.C., and Washington state. When the opening presented itself at The Daily Astorian last summer, I applied enthusiastically, without a moment's hesitation. My name had been under consideration for other jobs back East, but my wife and I really wanted to stay in the Northwest. I had often dreamed, when I was a young reporter, that I'd like to work here. Now I'm the editor. Funny how life works out sometimes.

Kari has family roots in Eastern Oregon that go back five generations. She grew up in Baker City and after working at daily newspapers in Montana, Idaho and California had the opportunity to serve as the group publisher of the newspapers in her hometown and La Grande for many years. Like me, she desired a small-town lifestyle and always wanted to live on the coast. This is a great place to live and work.

Both of us believe strongly in community journalism. We enjoy the direct relationship with our readers that you don't get in bigger cities.

The final factor for both of us was the opportunity to work for a family-owned company, the EO Media Group, which doesn't believe in cutting its way to profitability and invests heavily in the 10 communities it serves in Oregon and Washington state.



Jim Van Nostrand

Relaxing on an empty beach at Arch Cape is one of the perks of living here.



Lisa Van Nostrand

This curious critter is a regular visitor to our front window in Astoria.

says she loves you, check it out." It may sound trite, but it's a truism in this line of work. We are regularly harangued from all sides by people whose jobs depend on spinning the truth.

I've mentored hundreds of young journalism students over the years, and the first thing I tell them is to be prepared to be lied to on a daily basis. The second is that no matter what you write, every word will be filtered through the lens of a reader's particular world view. We can't do anything about that. All we can do is report as fairly and objectively as we can.

Even "objectively" seems to be a fungible concept among many people nowadays. Some major news organizations profess to practice so-called "advocacy" journalism on behalf of the left and the right. They believe that it's OK to report with a point of view, as long as they're transparent about what that point of view is.

I don't subscribe to that concept. I've been a registered independent my entire life and have voted for both Republicans and Democrats. The Daily Astorian's news reporting will be as impartial as it can possibly be in an impossibly polarized world.

That doesn't mean we don't have opinions. We have an editorial page, as most newspapers do. We express those opinions there and invite readers with different views to write letters to the editor (up to 250 words) and guest columns (up to 1,000 words). We ask only that the discourse be civil, without insults or name-calling. To pitch an idea for a guest column, email editor@dailyastorian.com.

LISTEN TO THE INTERVIEWS

Perspectives podcast: bit.ly/perspectives-jim
Talk of Our Towns podcast: bit.ly/jim-kari

What's changed at the newspaper?

Steve Forrester and his successor, David Pero, both held the dual titles of editor and publisher. At most newspapers, those are two separate jobs. Now they are separate jobs at The Daily Astorian, as well.

Kari is the publisher, meaning she is responsible for all of the newspaper's operations. She's focused on the business side, growing revenue for the company and driving success for our advertising partners. We provide work for nearly 80 people when you include employees, contractors and freelancers.

As the editor, I report to Kari and lead the newsroom. I also manage the editorial page. Derrick DePledge has been promoted to managing editor as part of the reorganization.

Two of my goals are to increase our digital

readership and to focus as much as we can on enterprise journalism. The latter means stepping back from the chaos of daily news and digging deep into issues that are important to our readers. Examples include the housing crisis, jobs, tourism, homelessness, natural resources and the environment.

We are open to your ideas about what's important to you. I've only been here since August; Kari since December. Send us a note anytime at editor@dailyastorian.com.

What is real news?

The newspaper's core values haven't changed. First and foremost is that our news stories are professionally curated and sourced by talented reporters who care deeply about the integrity of their work.

I believe in the old saying, "If your mother