

# OPINION

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# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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## OUR VIEW

# Voters' pamphlets have a cost, but a huge benefit

Ever picked up your ballot, looked through the list of candidates and wondered who to vote for?

If so, you are not alone.

When given a choice between Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton or a third-party presidential candidate, it's likely that you'll have an opinion.

But what if you live in an area of Clatsop County with an elected sewer board or fire district commission? You might know some candidates — after all, they are your neighbors. But they may just be names.

One way to help remedy that is a voters' pamphlet.

On even-numbered years, Clatsop County puts together a useful publication that highlights candidates and the issues on your ballot. Often this is inserted in the Oregon Voters' Pamphlet, one of the most valuable inventions this state has ever known.

Starting in 2001, Clatsop County also provided voters' pamphlets in odd-numbered election years, which didn't include primaries or general elections for state and federal candidates, at a cost of more than \$5,000. But it discontinued the practice two years later because many candidates — apparently leery of fees and paperwork — did not submit information for inclusion.

These odd-year elections feature school boards and the Port of Astoria, which will always be featured in The



The Daily Astorian

Election workers count ballots in the Judge Guy Boyington Building in 2016.

Daily Astorian and on local radio. But unless there is a controversy, the smaller boards and commissioners are unlikely to rise to any prominence and may just have their names listed in print in the week before an election.

Some engaged citizens want to change that. The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners seems close to a consensus that it's a good idea — for just about every election.

Melissa Ousley, Mary Beth Cottle and Andy Davis spoke at a recent county meeting about their experiences, going

door to door in recent campaigns and discovering residents were uninformed about grassroots races. Tiffany Mitchell, George McCartin and Laurie Caplan weighed in with their support, too.

Commissioner Lianne Thompson agreed, saying that an involved and informed electorate provides the impetus for candidates to step forward to serve their communities.

The discussion gave us cause for optimism. This revival of interest has County Manager Cameron Moore and Clerk Tracie Krevanko reviewing how

to make it happen. Krevanko has many years experience with elections in her prior job with Washington County, which will benefit the North Coast when this is implemented.

The price tag varies according to the scale of the election, and by Oregon law the costs are passed on to the agencies whose board members are being elected. In addition to their filing fee, candidates can opt to pay extra to have their photo and supporting materials published in the pamphlet.

American-style democracy is the greatest successful experiment in the history of Western civilization. It's admired around the world for its openness.

But informed and engaged citizens are essential for this system to flourish. And, as speakers pointed out at the discussion last month, voting is a learned habit (and a good one).

It comes with a cost, of course. But we believe every dollar spent in this area is an investment in two important assets: displaying transparency in government and creating informed voters. Both will always be crucially important to the civic well-being of our nation. Apathy, reflected in low voter turnouts, is never healthy.

Commissioner Kathleen Sullivan summed it up best: "We are at a point in our democracy that we really need to do all we can to encourage voters."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Filled with joy at Trump's State of the Union address

After watching the State of the Union address, I was filled with joy. Finally, I saw a president who wants our country to be stronger, bigger, and better for all citizens of this great country. Not just some.

When President Trump said he wanted all veterans to have better medical care, Conservatives stood up and applauded; Democrats stayed seated.

When President Trump announced that African Americans, and Mexican Americans, have had the lowest unemployment rate in the history of our nation, Conservatives applauded; Democrats scowled.

When President Trump introduced four African Americans who lost their two girls to gang violence, both killed by illegal MS-13 gang members, Trump said we have to do better to make sure illegal immigrants like these are not allowed to stay in our country. Conservatives applauded; Democrats again stayed seated, and scowled.

When President Trump announced he wanted drug prices to drop, Conservatives applauded; Democrats stayed seated, and scowled.

When President Trump announced all the companies that are expanding, and putting more people to work, like Apple, which is spending billions, and hiring 20,000 people, Conservatives applauded; Democrats ... well you get the picture. They scowled some more.

I have to wonder what happened to make so many Democrats so bitter. Come join me and help make Clatsop County great again.

JIM HOFFMAN

Chairman, Clatsop County Republicans  
Gearhart

### Time to walk the hill again

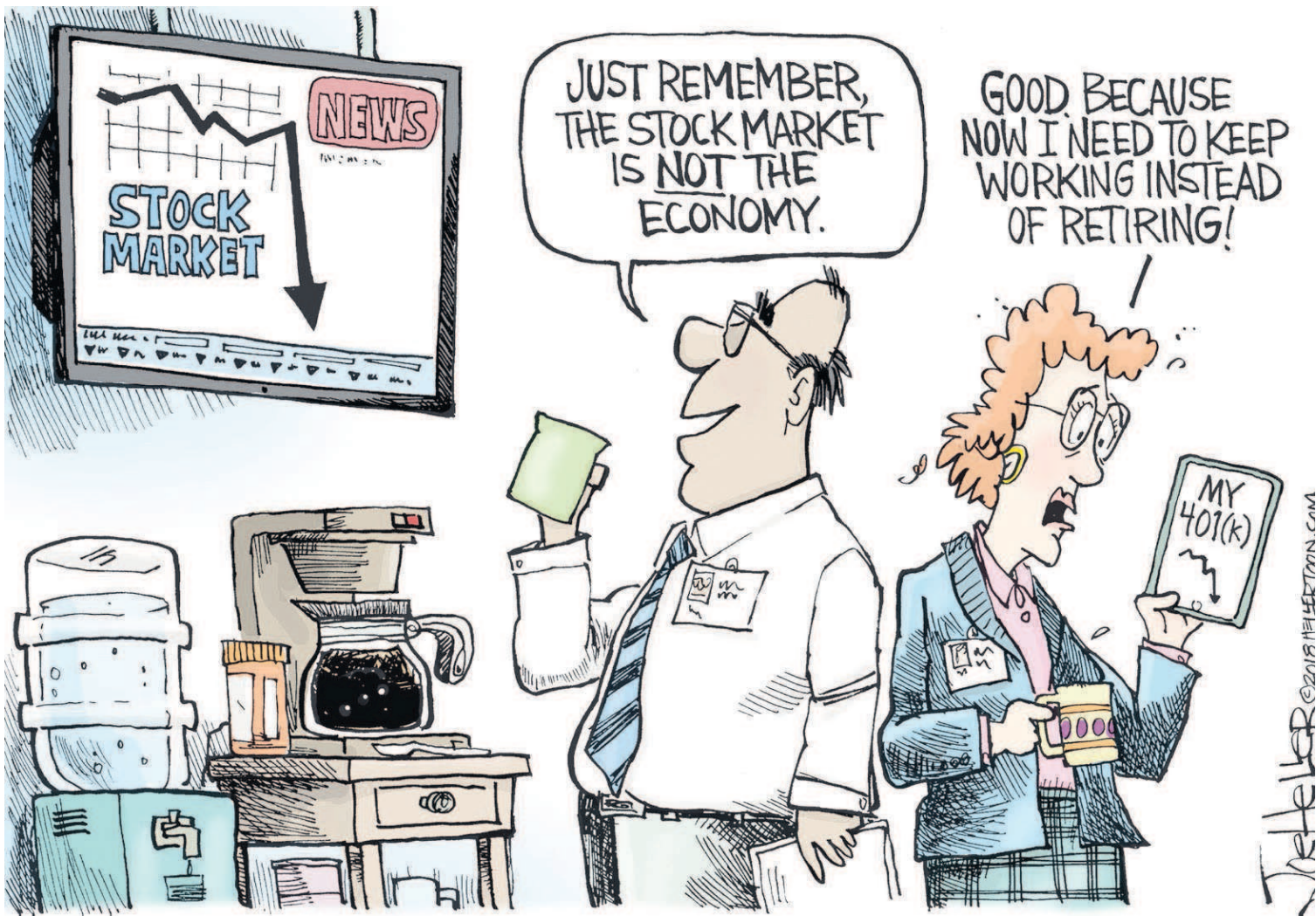
My wife and I walked up the hill from West Niagara Avenue to Lexington Avenue, then up Lexington toward the top, with a view of Youngs Bay.

We did this often — when I could walk. After five years of doing physical therapy and my exercises, walking stopped after a bone-on-bone right hip just wouldn't work anymore. That's my story.

So I went to my doctor, who told me I was an ideal person for hip surgery and replacement with an artificial prosthesis. He said my surgery was a piece of cake, I guess, compared to most other orthopedic surgeries. I thought to myself, "you mean compared to brain surgery?" Anyway, trying to do the smart thing, I agreed. It was time, if I wanted to walk the hill again.

The surgery was done, and after two weeks on a walker, then a cane, and then hobbling around, I could actually sit without pain. A piece of cake? Well, I will leave that up to the reader. But, you know, I feel good. After surgery, being human, I thought at points that I will never get better. But I am better.

Now it's four weeks post-op, and except for



## LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar, and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are allowed 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. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at dailyastorian.com/submit\_letters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or 1555 North Roosevelt in Seaside, or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103.

an ache here and there, I feel great. I am walking straight, and already have made walking trips around the area and downtown. And guess what? I am going to do the hill soon. Thank you, doctor.

NORM HOOGE  
Astoria

### Thank you for supporting Warrenton Community Center

The Warrenton Community Center Advisory Board held a Breakfast with Santa at the Warrenton Community Center on Saturday, Dec. 16. The breakfast was a great success, and we want to thank the community for their awesome support. We served 274 individuals, of which 133 were kids who enjoyed seeing Santa and having their pictures taken.

A special thanks to all our great volunteers, and to Starbucks Coffee in Warrenton, Pig 'N Pancake, the Veterans of Foreign Wars 10580 and VFW Auxiliary Detachment 1228, Lektro Inc., McCall Tire Center, Columbia River Bar Pilots, Warrenton Fiber, Maddox Dance Studio, Ocean Beauty Seafoods, Warrenton Deep Sea, Columbia Memorial Hospital Urgent Care, Warrenton Kia, Ocean Crest Chevrolet Buick GMC and Super Market.

A special thanks goes to the Pig 'N Pancake staff who cooked the pancakes, to Santa for dropping in, and the volunteers from the senior citizens group who served our breakfast and washed our dishes.

MEL JASMIN  
Chairman, Warrenton Community Center  
Advisory Board  
Warrenton

### Politicians should side with unborn children

Regarding the editorial "Abortion is a woman's choice" (The Daily Astorian, Jan. 23), it is not "settled," as this year celebrates the 34th year of National Sanctity of Human Life.

As for it being a legal procedure, legality is a matter of law, which changes all the time.

As for Roe v. Wade settling anything, there was strong opposition on the Supreme Court when the decision was made. For example, Justice Byron R. White wrote, "I find nothing in the language or history of the Constitution to support the court's judgment."

As for the right to an abortion being based on the 14th Amendment, your readers should review how this controversial amendment came about. Under military intervention, several states were not allowed to send representatives to Congress until they first ratified it. While other states (Oregon being one) voted for it, only to rescind their vote.

With nearly 60 million children having been aborted — people needed in our labor force, new minds in business, government and academia, plus the additional tax payers — politicians should be on the side of the yet-to-be born children.

And rational people should be on the side of life, for if we cannot protect the most vulnerable, then heaven help the sick, old, and crippled.

BILL WILLIAMS  
Ontario