

OPINION

editor@dailyastorian.com



THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873

KARI BORGEN
Publisher

JIM VAN NOSTRAND
Editor

JEREMY FELDMAN
Circulation Manager

DEBRA BLOOM
Business Manager

JOHN D. BRUIJN
Production Manager

CARL EARL
Systems Manager

OUR VIEW

Cancer center fundraising deserves praise

It's difficult to express in words the devastation that a cancer diagnosis inflicts.

First, there's the emotional roller-coaster — am I going to die? Can I beat this? What have I done to deserve this? How will I support my loved ones?

That's followed by the physical toll of surgery, chemotherapy and drug treatments, which can reduce a person to a shell of their former self and make it difficult to get out of bed, much less work and carry on a normal life.

And then there's the financial burden. The costs of modern health care often drive patients to bankruptcy and destroy nest eggs built with a lifetime of careful saving. For those living paycheck to paycheck or lacking adequate medical coverage, the impact can be even more catastrophic.

For decades, cancer patients from the North Coast dealing with all of this had to travel inland for specialist care,

including chemotherapy, adding gas, meals, time and stress to their burden. Friends or family members had to drive them to Portland or Longview, a minimum of 50 miles and often almost 100 miles each way.

While the hardworking staffs at our hospitals in Astoria, Seaside and Ilwaco have been able to provide quality care for many kinds of serious ailments, much specialist cancer treatment had been beyond their capabilities.

Fast forward to today.

Cancer care is available right here in Astoria.

The CMH-OHSU Knight Cancer Collaborative with Oregon Health & Science University opened in Astoria in October.

The treatment facility and specialty clinic cost \$16 million, \$13 million of which came from bonds.

That left \$3 million to raise from donations.

As reported last week, the Columbia Memorial Hospital Foundation hit that target in a remarkable grassroots effort.

How that happened is a commendable story that does this community proud and deserves thunderous applause.

Former Astoria Mayor Willis Van Dusen helped lead the way, spending hours using his contacts from business and civic life to ask for support. Columbia Memorial CEO Erik Thorsen, Dr. Jeffrey Leinassar, foundation board chairman Michael Autio and foundation executive director Penny Cowden were key players, too.

They began back in May 2015. They just kept asking and asking until the job was done, using all their considerable powers of persuasion.

More than 700 people donated and a large sum was raised from smaller donations. Such projects, however, need big benefactors, and several families and businesses stepped forward. The 15 top

donors gave more than \$50,000 each.

It was especially creditable that hospital staff members pitched in, too. Perhaps more than any other group, they realized the value of what they were supporting.

Now administrators expect about 3,000 patients to be treated each year at our region's first cancer therapy center.

That's 3,000 of our neighbors and loved ones stricken by all forms of cancer who will have the opportunity for crucial treatment close to home.

The foundation's successful campaign must rank as one of the North Coast's most significant success stories of recent years.

They saw a need. They identified others who stepped forward.

They asked and the community gave generously.

To all involved, please accept our thanks. You have truly done something to make a difference in people's lives.

PUBLISHER'S NOTEBOOK

Getting to know the community

Connect the dots.

It's a phrase I've used often when describing how what appears to be random, unrelated information creates a complete picture when connected.

I joined the Daily Astorian as publisher on Dec. 1, and had only ever visited here once before. However, my husband and I have always vacationed on the central Oregon coast and hoped to someday move to the ocean. Since we've been here, we find that we have connections we hadn't expected.



KARI BORGEN

The office coordinator at The Baker City Herald, my last newspaper, was born and raised here. Our Daily Astorian classified representative, Danielle Fisher, graduated from Baker High School, as did her mother, Sharon, who was my sister's classmate.

We sold our old boat to a man from Portland who moored it at Hammond. (Yes, we wish we still had that boat now.) A couple we met in Seaside has a friend who recently bought a house near my husband's family ranch in Baker County. A Daily Astorian letter writer shared that she also graduated from Baker High School.

Of course, many I've met have business or professional connections in common. It's not a small state, but we all get around.

Oregon newspaper circles are small, and former Daily Astorian managing editor Patrick Webb and I had served on the Associated Press News Executives board at the same time. When I was cleaning out my desk drawers at the Baker City Herald to move here, I found a postcard Patrick sent years ago of the Astoria Column. Ironic that the picture had stayed in my desk drawer until then.

A friend and fellow publisher in Crescent City and Brookings retired last



Kari Borgen photos

In 2015, daughter Laura Borgen (art at left) and AVA artist in residence Stirling Gorsuch (art at right) shared gallery space at OSU.

year, and sent me a book — Peter Stark's "Astoria." That was months before I applied for this position. Who knew?

On opening an issue of Coast Weekend last month, I was pleasantly surprised to see that Stirling Gorsuch had been chosen as the Astoria Visual Arts artist in residence. Stirling shared senior art show space with my daughter Laura, a fellow Oregon State University fine arts grad.

Perhaps most unexpected, in reviewing a Daily Astorian map of voting precincts in a recent issue, I was stunned to see a "Chadwell" voting precinct. Chadwell is my maiden name, and not a very common one. My dad can't remember any family or connections to Clatsop County. But certainly my new home and my genealogy are somehow tied together in a way I can't yet explain.

Taken in addition to the welcome

from people I've met here, the comfortable small-town vibe and familiar daily newspaper routines, the random dots have become lines connecting us to our new home.

Daily newspaper routines

What happens within our walls at The Daily Astorian offices on Exchange Street is a mystery to many of our readers. Most people know that we have reporters and editors and a team that runs the printing press. Plus, the office staff who you call for a subscription or classified ad. And, of course, our business partners who deliver the newspaper to you — our carriers. As editor Jim Van Nostrand pointed out last week, between staff, correspondents and carriers we provide work for more than 80 people here.

What do they all do? I'll use this column to share some fun facts every month.

Design is outsourced — to us

The ad design team for the EO Media Group, serving 10 newspapers, is located here in Astoria.

Information for an ad to be published in John Day, for example, is sent to our team in Astoria, which creates it and sends it back to be composed with their news pages and printed. It's our good fortune to have a talented group of designers employed here to share.

But it's not just us ...

The Daily Astorian press and mail-room crew prints and assembles nine weekly or bi-weekly and two monthly newspapers in addition to The Daily Astorian five days a week.

... it's you ...

Hundreds of our subscribers read The Daily Astorian — all of it (news, advertising, classifieds, crosswords) — without newspaper. Their subscription is for access to the e-edition and website, available 24x7 online. It's our fastest-growing subscriber segment.

... and me

One of the first questions I get when I introduce myself as publisher is "What does a publisher do?" My role here at the Daily A is publisher and revenue director. In a nutshell, I'm the general manager and sales director.

As a business, our goals are to create professional, credible journalism and information products that reflect our community values and interests. When we do that, we gain more readers and subscribers. More readers buy more products from our advertisers. Advertisers have more money to buy more advertising to reach more customers. We all prosper.

So, the better I know our community and local businesses, the better I'm able to make all of those things happen. Have ideas on how you think we can improve? Let me know — kborgen@dailyastorian.com.

Husband Kerry and springer spaniels Brutus and Brody on a December walk on the beach.

