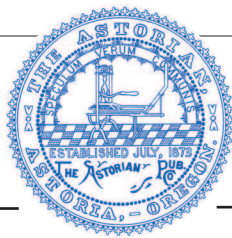


OPINION

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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

GARIBALDI — The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Station Tillamook Bay celebrated its 100th anniversary in style.

"Over the last century, thousands of people have been saved by this station. I can tell you that their enthusiasm for operations was inspiring," said USCG Master Chief Petty Officer Charles Bowen.

The station held boat tours, tours of an HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter, tours of local fire department and EMS vehicles and a search-and-rescue demonstration Friday.

Scientists working with the Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council said the state has set an "unreasonable timeline" for establishing a network of marine reserves.

In a memo sent to the Council Thursday, members of OPAC's Science and Technical Advisory Committee said the November deadline to select ocean sites doesn't leave enough time to ensure sound science.

Their concerns echo those of some North Coast leaders who have protested the rapid pace of the selection process, still set to begin April 1.

The Lady Washington's clothes are raggedy.

That will never do, especially since she's set to lead the way for nearly 30 other unique vessels at the Tacoma Tall Ships festival in June.

The Hawaiian Chieftain, the Seaport's other tall ship, also needs a new set of sails.

"The Lady Washington is the official tall ship of the State of Washington," said Les Bolton, executive director of the Seaport. "If you're the official ship of state, representing your state, your county, your community, you shouldn't show up with patches on your knees."

They're fixtures of the North Coast skyline.

Now the state wants to make their tree-lined habitat a fixture of the Saddle Mountain Natural Area.

Two privately owned peaks that adorn the signature slopes of Saddle Mountain are in line for acquisition by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department.

50 years ago — 1968

The federal Internal Revenue Service has issued an invitation for bids to purchase the eight-story John Jacob Astor hotel and its contents to satisfy a federal lien of \$6,230 against the property.

Notice of invitation was received Monday for publication. Bids are to be opened March 27 at 10 a.m. At Room 203, Astoria Post Office building.

Up for sale are the building itself, the furnishings of 125 rooms and 16 apartments, the Fur Trader bar, Trapper cafe and coffee shop, with all their contents.



An undated photo shows the re-enactment of an historic encounter. Shoalwater and Chinook tribal members approach the Hawaiian Chieftain, where they take a 'hostage' off the ship before escorting the Chieftain and Lady Washington, left, to port in Grays Harbor.

The IRS several weeks ago seized and locked the building, owned by A.M.I. Corporation, for non-payment of social security and withholding taxes.

Approximately 100 sport cars entered the Mountains to Sea Sport Car rally and Gymkhana over the weekend.

Checkpoint 1 was hardest to find during the rally race that took drivers west from Portland to Newberg, down the valley and around Baldy Mountain, over to a point near Tillamook, up the Trask River along secondary roads into Nehalem and finally on to Seaside. Several cars missed the first check point entirely, others spent too much time looking for it but according to Bob Kraushaar, and Linda Atkins, Seattle, driver and navigator of the winning car in the navigational race checkpoint 1 was a sign reading Newberg — 8. However, it turned out to be 8 — Newberg. The young couple were in the second car to leave the starting point at Lloyd Center at 10:32 a.m. and crossed the finish line at exactly 4:05 p.m. Saturday afternoon, with a total of 100 points.

The city parks and recreation commission is proposing that the budget committee provide an item of \$10,000 for next fiscal year to repair four vertical cracks in the Astoria column.

The figures may be revised downward, depending on a cost estimate to be made by Homer Tunks, city engineer.

Tunks said that the cracks have existed for many years and have not affected structural strength of the column. They eventually could do so, he said, if water leaking into them should continue to cause rust in the reinforcing steel inside the concrete wall.

75 years ago — 1943

Forest Glenn Hogg, Astoria man who had been listed as missing since the fall of Corregidor, is now being held as a prisoner of war by the Japanese in the Philippines, according to a letter from the navy received by his mother, Mrs. Mary L. Hogg, 593 Franklin Avenue.

An eight-man squad of Astoria High School basketball players, challenged as no previous Astoria team by the whole Oregon high school athletic fraternity in the Fishermen's try for their third successive hoop title, left today for Salem to ready for their first game Thursday against Salem.

Fire of undetermined origin discovered at 5:30 Friday afternoon, resulted in an estimated \$150,000 physical damage to the Astoria-Warrenton shipyards plant and probably an additional \$100,000 indirect loss to the company.

That the fire loss was not complete and the industry wiped out without a trace is due to the fire fighting efforts of the men of the coast guard, stationed in Astoria and at Point Adams, H.A. Roberts, general manager of the company said today.

A determined Pendleton High School team from the Eastern Oregon wheat country administered a 34-33 defeat to the powerful Astoria "Flying Fishermen," champions for the past two years.

The victory scored in the dying seconds of the game after an uphill battle all the way, gave Pendleton third place honors in the tourney and pushed Astoria to fifth.

SCRATCH PAD

'The Vagina Monologues' as a living document

Erve Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues," the revolutionary theater piece that detonated in mid-1990s New York City and was staged at Clatsop Community College last week, plays a full emotional scale, ranging in tone from stand-up to therapy session, confessional to human rights advocacy.

One monologue is about a lawyer-turned-dominatrix who helps other women find their "power moan," another is about a girl in a Bosnian rape camp.

Vaginas, in a sense, become characters in the show — which begins light-heartedly, posing such questions as, "If your vagina got dressed, what would it wear?" — before they are subject to violence. We come to know them, love them, then see them brutalized. The monologues, based on dozens of interviews Ensler collected, read like dispatches from a private, uncertain world, and we are cast in the role of witness bearers.

As a man, I am acutely aware that I must tread carefully here. My instinct is to shift the subject to ground I'm better qualified to write about: stagecraft, storytelling devices, effectiveness of performance. But, of course, that would miss the point of the "Monologues," which is to give voice to the abundance of experiences — heartwarming, heart-breaking, hilarious and horrifying — that involve vaginas. Indeed, these experiences take place because the speakers have vaginas, and however high my consciousness is raised, I can only understand these experiences indirectly.

Mindy Stokes, who leads the college's women's studies faculty and directed the show, said the play's reason for being, in



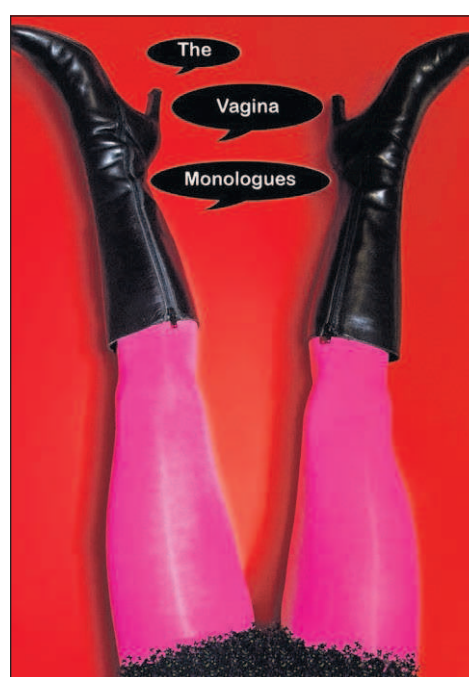
Clatsop Community College
Mindy Stokes, the director of Clatsop Community College's Lives in Transition Program and women's studies faculty, is the director of 'The Vagina Monologues.'

part, is to make it easier to talk about these experiences.

"Twenty years ago, people weren't used to hearing the word 'vagina,'" she told me after the play. "If you can't say the word 'vagina,' then you can't say what happens to them."

If you can't say the word, you can't talk about rape, she said. "You can't talk about sex crimes."

Stokes' production, starring a cast of college students, staff and local feminist activists, was performed in Clatsop's Royal Nebeker Gallery. The small venue (which, as it happens, was decked out in the "Au Naturel" nude art exhibit) heightened the intimacy between speakers and spectators, as if we had been allowed into Ensler's interview room. I watched fellow showgoers



laugh with recognition, gasp with dismay, learn something they didn't know before. (Proceeds benefit The Harbor, an organization that supports survivors of domestic and sexual violence.)

I read the "Monologues" for the first time last year, though highlights ("Who needs a hand gun when you've got a semi-automatic?") had already entered my brain by osmosis. It's a script I wish I'd encountered as a teenager, while my views of women were being subtly shaped by sophomore sitcoms and crude media personalities — views I had to drill out of my head as an adult for the same reason my dentist drilled the mercury fillings out of my teeth (to steal an analogy from Bill Maher): to keep the toxicity from spreading and doing permanent damage.

If some of Ensler's monologues feel slightly dated — I'm thinking, for instance, of the one where the c-word is shouted as a way to reclaim it — well, that's to be expected. The conversational landscape has changed. If it's no longer startling to hear the word "vagina" uttered so often in such a short time frame, we can probably thank Ensler for that.

But several monologues sound as if they could have been composed yesterday, sometimes depressingly so, as they reckon with childhood molestation, female genital mutilation, rape as the spoils of war and the blaming, shaming and stigmatizing of victims.

Stokes, who has mounted several versions of the show, pointed out that, in the #MeToo era, the monologue "My Short Skirt," a piece about what a short skirt means — and doesn't mean — resonates anew. It used to be normal, she said, for skirt length to be invoked as a rape defense.

"The No. 1 predeterminate to being raped is being female," Stokes said. "Not anything that you're wearing — not if you're drunk, not if you're high, not if you're wearing a short skirt."

"My Short Skirt" was, in fact, not part of a show that Stokes directed in 2013. For each V-Day (Feb. 14) — a worldwide movement, now in its 20th year, that Ensler founded to end violence against women and girls — the prescribed set changes.

"The Vagina Monologues," a friend pointed out, is a kind of "living document," built to respond to cultural changes, amended and reinterpreted in the light of current needs. As the basis for an ongoing dialogue, it can stay ahead of the curve — thought-provoking, transgressive, powerful and brave.

Erick Bengel is *The Daily Astorian's* features editor.