

Voices: Not everyone buys into the Never Again message

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One of those survivors, senior Emma Gonzalez, has become the face of Never Again. She entered the national spotlight after a fiery televised rally speech following the shooting and through her active social media presence. She played a leading role in organizing the national march.

Her personal appeal among those who support the cause can be seen in Astoria, as well.

Alea Bone, a Portland artist, painted a portrait of Gonzalez for "Fierce," an exhibit at RiverSea Gallery. The exhibit, which runs through April 8, is intended to showcase female empowerment during Women's History Month.

Bone's acrylic-on-wood portrait — titled "Brave One" — depicts Gonzalez staring forward intently. She said the 63 bottle caps that surround her represent school shootings that have taken place in the U.S. since 20 children were shot at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut in 2012.

Bone, a parent of a high schooler, has often incorporated gun violence into her artwork.

"Every time something happens, I feel like I need to respond in some way. I was so inspired by her, and the first thing that came to mind is she's fierce," Bone said.

The portrait also includes a halo surrounding Gonzalez's head.

"I wanted to illuminate her, like the spotlight is on her right now," Bone said. "She's like an angel. A lot of people are looking to her image as a symbol of this new, political rising at the schools, and it's amazing."

As she began to promote the painting in February, a high school friend told Bone that her husband knew Gonzalez's father.

"I was like, 'Whoa, what are the chances?'" she said. "It's crazy how small the world is sometimes."

Other solutions

Not everyone buys into the Never Again message.



Azaria Damghani creates a sign for Saturday's Rally for Our Lives event in downtown Astoria.

Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian



Students from Astoria High School planning to attend the Rally for Our Lives event on Saturday make signs.

Jim Hoffman, chairman of the Clatsop County Republican Central Committee, said he opposes gun control measures and believes they would be ineffective. Instead, he pointed to other solutions, such as having an armed resource officer at every school.

"We've got to do something. We all agree," Hoffman said. "I would actually support something that would stop it."

He noted that most high school students — including those in Astoria — did not participate in the walkouts.

"I think, for the most part,



Elias Harold works on a sign for a rally planned for Saturday in downtown Astoria.

a parent or teacher has put this in their head. I don't think they did this on their own," Hoffman said. "Absolutely they should want change, but

they should become educated on the issue. They should get more than just one side of this."

Elias and Suzanne Har-

old met with Indivisible North Coast Oregon — the local chapter of a nationwide progressive activist organization — ahead of the walkout last week. The Harolds' called gun violence an "epidemic" that has been addressed by other developed countries through gun control.

"I had to figure out what sort of thing would catch people's eyes and how to phrase most things," Elias Harold said of his role in the walkout. "We were trying to keep it away from anti-gun and focus more on, just, saving student lives. But part of that is by having some amount of gun control."

Suzanne Harold recalled the safety drills she led when she worked at Warrenton Grade School.

"That hits home to me, when you're trying to coach 8-year-olds to be silent for 10 minutes to avoid a tragedy," she said. "Shame on us for making them have to be the ones to stand up."

Astoria rally

The rally in Astoria on Saturday will be held on Eighth and Commercial streets from noon to 1:30 p.m. Indivisible North Coast Oregon will host the event along with local students.

When the march and rallies end, it is unclear where the national conversation on guns will turn.

"Quite frankly, I don't think it'll have a whole lot of effect," Hoffman said. "I think it'll have some, but not a whole lot."

Elias Harold said he hopes the connections made at the national march — his first involvement in a large-scale demonstration — will help legitimize student opinions on gun violence.

"As a kid, it is harder to, sort of, be respected sometimes and for our opinions to be heard," he said. "So I think, for how many of us are bunching together, to have our voices heard, to be a little more respected and when we need to make a stand, for other people to understand where we're coming from and to listen to us."

Trust: Taskforce would oversee the restoration

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building at the South Tongue Point campus, if it can raise an equal match within the next several years. The college must also own the property or hold a 99-year lease to access the funds, Zahn said.

At a recent board meeting, the college's President Christopher Breitmeyer said the college will likely modify its original plan with the bond funding and bring back a different proposal for approval by Legislature. The strategic plan will inform the college about the needs of the campus.

"Anything that happens, we still have to do facilities maintenance to the maritime building," Zahn said. "It is starting to decay from a standpoint of leaks in the roof, particularly with wind-driven storms."

While the college prepares to purchase the land under its campus, the Columbia Land Trust is

closing in on two grants — one federal and another state — worth \$1.2 million to buy 90 acres south of Liberty Lane.

Dan Roix, conservation director for the land trust, said the group has heard its federal grant application with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for \$920,000 is competitive and likely to be funded. The land trust will likely hear back within weeks on a \$340,000 match from the state Watershed Enhancement Board, he said.

After the purchase, the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce would oversee the restoration of the land — much of it historical dredge spoil deposits — into off-channel salmon and wildlife habitat. The land trust would then transfer ownership of the property to the college to be used as a living laboratory coupled with future environmental science programs.

Cormorants: 'This situation at East Sand Island demands a full and public review'

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the island studying the birds for the Corps.

Daniel Roby, a professor at Oregon State University who led research teams on East Sand Island, said in a letter submitted during a public comment period when the management plan was still being drafted that the Corps ignored the studies it funded on the island to come to very different conclusions than researchers. He said the Corps exaggerated the risks of using types of nonlethal management techniques and downplayed the risk and uncertainty of killing the birds.

At the time the Corps was drafting the cormorant management plan, the agency emphasized the lethal option over others, saying methods such as limiting the nesting area, hazing birds off the island or luring them to other locations were risky. Such actions could disperse the birds throughout the estuary, driving them farther upriver where, with fewer prey options, they might pose more of a threat to young migrating salmon, Corps spokespeople said.

The Audubon Society of Portland argues this is what is happening now. When the birds abandoned East Sand Island in 2016 and 2017, the number of cormorants using



Steve Ringman/The Seattle Times

Double-crested cormorants on East Sand Island may get a reprieve this year.

the Astoria Bridge and other bridges as alternative nesting sites swelled.

"This situation at East Sand Island demands a full and public review," Sallinger wrote. "Federal agencies have spent millions of public dollars pur-

suing a strategy that has precipitated the collapse of the largest double-crested cormorant colony in the world, potentially increased rather than decreased predation on listed salmonids and put the Western population of dou-

ble-crested cormorants (at risk.)"

There are an estimated 45,047 breeding pairs in the Western double-crested cormorant population today, down from an estimated 76,306 in 2016.

'Anything that happens, we still have to do facilities maintenance to the maritime building.'

JoAnn Zahn

Clatsop Community College's vice president of finance and operations

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