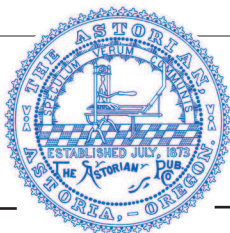


# OPINION

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# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873

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## OUR VIEW

# Hood to Coast can be a boon to our region

**M**ention the Hood to Coast Relay around Seaside and surrounding areas and you will receive a strong reaction. It's an annual event that few are indifferent about.

It began in Oregon in 1982, but it wasn't until 1989 that Seaside became the finish line. Teams of sponsored runners and walkers from around the world take part in a relay from Timberline Lodge on Mount Hood to the coast. Although the organization that runs the race is a for-profit group, it raises enough money to donate significant amounts to worthy causes. Last year, the race gave \$730,000 for Providence Cancer Center.

For the good folks at the Seaside Chamber of Commerce, it's a major fundraiser whose revenue — \$30,000 last year — allows staff, leaders and members to do such positive work year-round to enhance the business climate and promote the resort.

The relay turns the eyes of the state and region on Seaside, generating more publicity than money could buy. In general, television news coverage is positive, focused on tales of personal achievement and fun times on the beach.

But some residents along the 198-mile route, and many year-round Seaside residents, have viewed it as a week-end-long nightmare.

Eighteen thousand runners and their support crews put enormous pressure on the region. Coastal areas like ours delight in attracting visitors to enjoy sparkling summer weekend events.

When problems occur, it is invariably because communities have exceeded their "carrying capacity." Organizers of the Cannon Beach sandcastle contest and the kite festival in Long Beach,

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Jeff Ter Har/For The Daily Astorian

Sunny skies provided a backdrop for the 2017 Hood to Coast.

Washington, for example, have learned tough lessons from squeezing too many people into a narrow space. In 2002, Long Beach responded tepidly when the relay explored relocating its finish line there, realizing the south Washington coast was already at its limits in late August.

Years ago, one major Hood to Coast mistake was too few portable toilets along the route, causing some unpleasant cleanup issues; that has been addressed. But the extraordinary traffic congestion, plus instances of unruly

behavior, have frayed tempers more than any other annual event. Back in 2015, some 87 merchants demanded changes — many wanting the race to go elsewhere.

That's why we are greeting with cautious optimism the news that Seaside City Council has signed a five-year deal with race organizers. It calls for the race to pay the city \$25,000, plus additional costs of police, fire and public works crews' time, with 5 percent increases each year. It provides a toll-free phone number for complaints the week before and after the event.

What gives us cause for hope is the manner in which this agreement was reached; some negotiating, like City Councilor Randy Frank, were among the race's most ardent critics.

We're crossing our fingers. But be warned: Aug. 24 and Aug. 25 will be a busy time on the entire North Coast. There will be extra traffic; downtown Seaside and highways 101, 26 and 30 will be choked. Restaurants will be hopping; hotels will be full.

But, if all goes well, Seaside's city, chamber and some other worthy organizations can benefit greatly. And, hopefully, participants will enjoy North Coast hospitality so much that they return with friends and families to boost our economy further.

Let's hope this deal — and the increased awareness of the priority to tackle any problems head on — will mean we'll all be applauding rather than grumbling when the teams make their way home Aug. 26.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Help lessen trash in our community

I'm so troubled by all the trash I see all over town. I regularly exercise on the Riverwalk and walk downtown. The worst I've seen is around the Safeway property, which I've called about on occasion. Besides just trash, I see bags of pet waste left behind. Come on folks. Take pride in your town. Can we come up with ideas for cleaning up the trash? I have seen people picking up trash around the Maritime Museum. Can we offer tokens that can be turned in for food/drink to the homeless, or to anyone interested in picking up trash? There would be guidelines and amounts to pick up for numbers of tokens. Maybe college students could get tokens to use in the college bookstore.

I'm one person trying to come up with ideas to rid our beautiful area of the great amount of trash I see, and trash that I know ends up in the river. Join me by adding your ideas, as well as helping in whatever way you can to lessen the trash in our community.

ROBIN RODGERS  
Astoria

### Remembering Rev. King's assassination

Fifty years ago, my husband was employed by the State Department and we were in Warsaw, Poland, when the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis. I thought it would be of interest to readers that in their grief and respect, the Poles lined up for days at the embassy to bring flowers and sign a memorial book. It was an amazing sight.

MARY TANGUAY WEBB  
Astoria

### Think of trees when you vote

John Orr is the Democrat for whom to vote if one is concerned about the restoration and protection of Oregon's forests. Orr has cared deeply about forests for many years, and as a lawyer, is experienced enough to be an effective advocate.

Orr's only serious opponent is Tim Josi, who represents the interests of the timber industry, and can be expected to support more of the

same clear cutting and spraying that have made our region a place of which to be ashamed.

Please think of the trees when you vote.  
ROBERT ADAMS  
Astoria

### Elect Orr to state House

I grew up with John Orr. Passionate and indefatigable — on the tennis court or the kangaroo court of youthful discussion about politics, music, or virtually any other subject — and now, with the benefit of wisdom and moderation which come from additional life experience.

If we are not always in perfect agreement on conclusions or actionable approaches, he always holds a strong position, vigorously, with intelligence, reason, and facts to back it up. John is a born and raised advocate, and now listens just as well as he speaks — a hard-won maturity. In my view, he will make a fine representative if you are anywhere close to where he stands.

John is a voracious reader and a student of history. So, it's not just the issues of the day that arouse his passions, but also deep-running, archetypical human outlooks and conditions.

He supports me, and he has my support. I encourage anyone to engage likewise with John Orr, and elect him to the Oregon State House.

DAVID GRAFF  
Providence, Rhode Island

### Let's give everyone the ballot

Martin Luther King Jr.'s advocacy to eliminate voting restrictions was captured in his "Give Us the Ballot" speech. His call to end voting restrictions culminated in the Voting Rights Act. In Oregon, we have made voting easier than King could have imagined, with mail-in ballots and automatic voter registration. Oregonians were the first in the nation with automatic voter registration for any resident who is at least 16 years old when they obtain or renew a driver's license or permit or identification card.

But we can do better. Many Oregon residents may not receive ballots because they moved or changed names and need to update their voter registration. There are still Oregonians who are not registered to vote.

You don't need a driver's license or identification card. You can register using the last four digits of your Social Security number or a bill

### Trump orders National Guard to Mexico border...



or other document with your name and current address. To vote in the May 15 primaries, you must be registered to vote by April 24.

One more thing: Even if you are registered to vote by April 24, you can't vote in the primaries unless you are registered with your party. Go to oregonvotes.org to register or update your voter or party registration. Or visit your county elections office.

Eighty eight percent of Oregon's voting age residents were registered to vote for the November 2016 elections, up from 77 percent in 2008. In 2018, let's give everyone the ballot.

LAURA ALLEN  
Seaside

### Vote Wev for county commissioner

We are so lucky to have Pamela Wev running in the upcoming Clatsop County Commissioner District 3 election. I am impressed with her listening skills and open, honest, and civil discourse. But more importantly, I like her views, which encompass the environment, small businesses and unions. She is the perfect combination of the best qualities of the other candidates running for the position. Her energy, knowledge, and appreciation of our part of Oregon is the kind of attitude that can get things done. Meet her, if you can. She might convince you, too.

KITTY PAINO  
Astoria

## 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. Disclosure should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

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