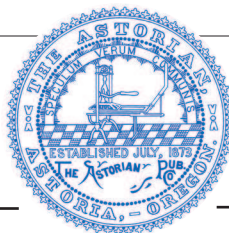


OPINION

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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

The newest Coast Guard rescue boat debuted at Station Cape Disappointment, where crews plan to push her to the limits in the Graveyard of the Pacific.

A large audience including Coast Guard personnel from Kent, Washington, Yorktown, Virginia, Astoria and Cape "D" gathered at the docks for the grand arrival of the new response boat, Medium, making sure the prototype — the second delivered so far and the only one on the West Coast — was settled in at her new home.

Kris Daehler had set the wheels in motion for a new form of transit in Astoria.

With a city permit in hand, a new shop downtown and three pedal-powered taxis in his garage, Daehler planned to launch Astoria Pedal Cab service this month.

But don't expect a ride too soon.

Five insurance agents produced one quote, and the cost was higher than what Daehler plans to make off his business this year. A similar business sputtered in Seaside as it battled for a place on the road.

Even with a national move toward alternative modes of transportation, starting up an eco-friendly business like Astoria Pedal Cam remains an uphill battle.

After a meeting with city of Newport leaders and two airlines, Port of Astoria Executive Director Jack Crider said Cape Air of Massachusetts was the obvious choice to provide passenger service between the coast and Portland.

"Certainly as far as experience and their aircraft they were definitely ahead," he said.

But the selection may be clouded by complaints about the process from a third airline.

An attorney for Portland-based SeaPort Airlines attended the meeting. SeaPort, which flies between Portland and Seattle, was included in the request for proposals but never submitted a proposal.



2008: The Coast Guard response boat Medium leaves the docks of Station Cape Disappointment carrying 17 personnel on a test drive. The new boat was brought to Cape D for testing in some of the challenging conditions around the mouth of the Columbia River.

50 years ago — 1968

When the trial of the Astoria bridge suit started April 2, it was estimated it would last about four weeks.

Four months and four days later, Marion County circuit court observers are saying it might not be finished until late September.

Attorneys and judges say it probably is Oregon's longest trial in history.

The State Highway Commission is suing the DeLong Corp. of Brooklyn, N.Y., for \$5.3 million. It claims that DeLong abandoned its contract to construct 32 piers to carry the bridge across the mouth of the Columbia River from Astoria to Megler, Washington.

The idea of including Highway 30 from Portland to Astoria in the federal interstate-defense highway system has been pushed by local interests almost from the start of the interstate system, but with no luck so far.

The idea is far from dead, however.

Last year Sens. Wayne Morse and Mark Hatfield introduced legislation to include this 95-mile segment in the big federal system. Now Sen. Hatfield has informed the Astoria chamber of commerce that a conference committee in congress has approved a \$21 billion measure to continue the interstate-defense system and add 1,500 miles to its present 41,000 authorized miles.

A locked room in the basement of the Clatsop courthouse bulged, piled high with gambling devices and other paraphernalia seized by more than 30 law enforcement officers in raids of taverns and private clubs throughout the county.

Officers, in two-man teams under the direction of District Attorney Frank J. Coumont, raided 15 establishments from 9:30 a.m. until noon. The Clatsop County raid was in concert with others in Multnomah, Marion, Clackamas, Columbia and Washington counties. Target of the gambling crackdown was a tab-pull gaming board that constitutes a lottery, according to Coumont.

Thirteen slot machines, two electrically operated pinball machines, one crap table and numerous tab-pull boards were netted in the county, largest of any county raid.

75 years ago — 1943

A proclamation by Gov. Earl Snell closed Oregon beaches to the public during the hours of darkness.

The regulation was in conformance with a request by the western defense command. The army and coast guard maintain constant patrol of the coast, and the unrestricted use of beaches has made their work difficult, it was explained.

Gov. Snell's regulation declared that, "In an area in the state of Oregon on the Pacific coast, between the mouth of the Columbia River and Oregon-California boarder and extending 10 miles inland during the hours between sunset and sunrise the building of outdoor fires, the use or manipulation of flashlights, flares, or other devices in a way that might assist or guide enemy forces, loitering or moving about on the beaches shall be a misdemeanor and punishable for same as provided by statute."

Washington beaches have been closed to public use since March 7, 1942.

Walney Wallace, Astoria boy home on furlough from training for overseas duty, told a tale to warm the hearts of all baseball fans. He attended a doubleheader in Philadelphia on Sunday, Aug. 2. The Philadelphia Athletics were pitted against the Chicago Cubs.

Young Wallace left the field early and as he walked along the outside of the field fence he was arrested by shouting. Before he could look out as the shouts told him to, he was hit with a hard whack on the back.

Then before he had recovered from the daze of the shock, he was seized by policemen, a baseball was thrust in his hand and he was escorted to Philadelphia's dugout. There the ball was autographed by the players and by Connie Mack, manager for the Athletics, and given to the Astorian.

OTHER VIEWS

Excerpts from newspaper editorials around the state.

The (Roseburg) News-Review, on transgender students and bathrooms

It's hard being an adolescent. We all remember the insecurity, the embarrassment of bodies run amok, the struggle for identity, the jockeying for status.

Using the bathrooms and locker rooms at school is just one more reminder how awkward it is. It would be nice if adequate stalls without gaps were available to shield everyone, male or female, going to the toilet, or changing or showering.

But dudes have been managing with the urinals for quite awhile now, and there are usually stalls available for the extra-modest student.

So we couldn't help but raise our eyebrows when we read in his attorney's letter that a young man called "T.B." was feeling "tremendous anxiety" because a transgender student who identifies as male was using the same bathroom he was. T.B.'s mom is suing the Sutherlin School District, calling out the transgender student, Tyler, and seeking to bar him from using the boys' bathroom.

Poor Tyler. He has found himself on the cutting edge of the culture war in a small town where the battles can get vicious. He was born with female genitalia but identifies as a boy. He's a member of a small minority, and one that has a much more credible claim to anxiety, not to mention depression and other ailments, largely as a result of the discrimination, bigotry and hatred they face on a daily basis.

Because let's be crystal clear. The victim in this situation isn't T.B. It's Tyler.

The director of Basic Rights Oregon called this case an example of "bullying by lawsuit." We agree.

There was a time when white people didn't want to share bathrooms with African Americans.

There was a time when it wasn't legal in most of the country for two members of the same sex to marry each other.

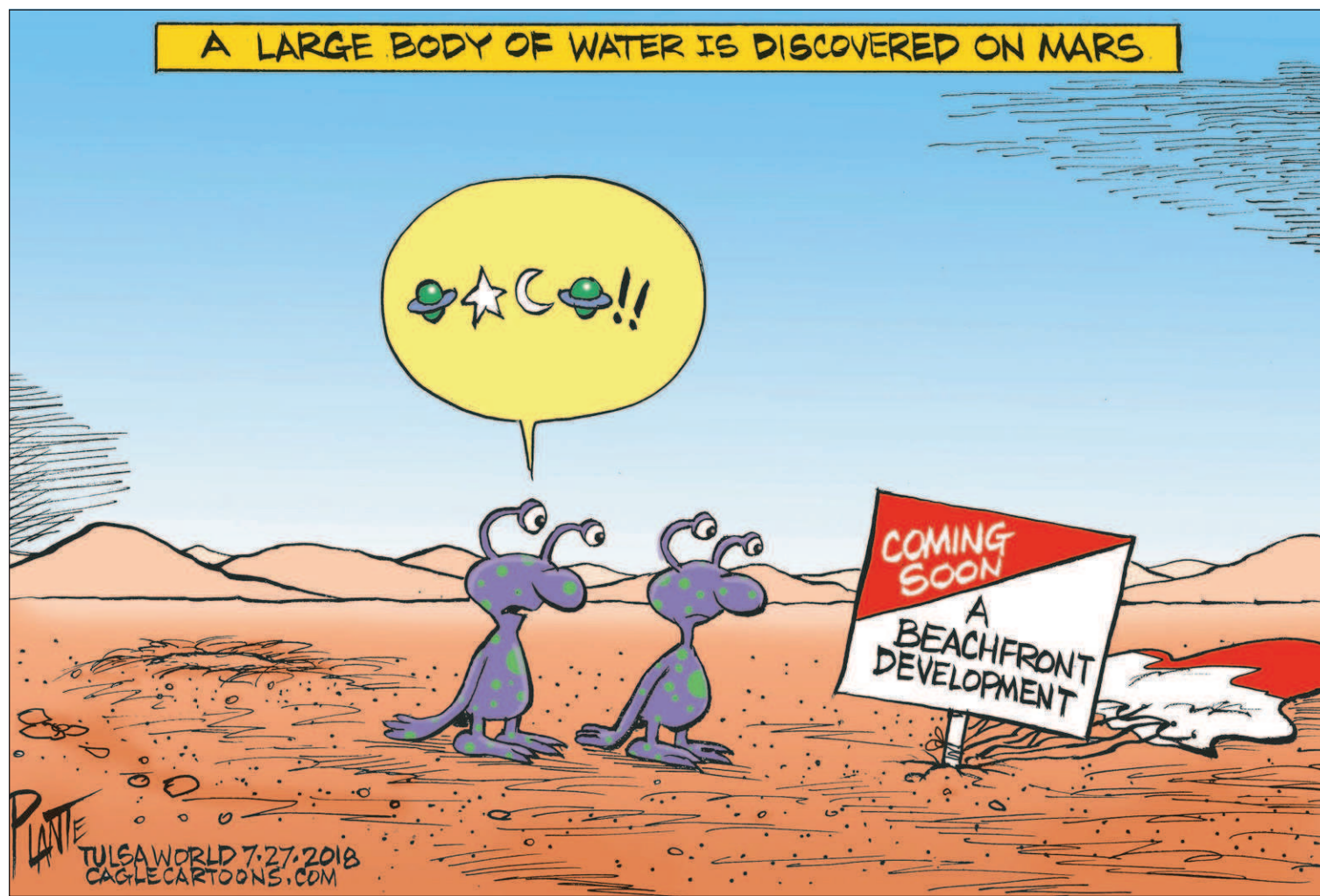
Then, most people just got over it. ... Until they found somebody else to pick on.

The Yamhill Valley News-Register, on RV dwellers

McMinnville is in the process of learning something every parent discovers: It's easier to issue orders than force compliance.

So it is with the number of homeless RV dwellers the city is trying to evict from Marsh Lane and Dustin Court.

The city can assess all the fines it wants. But if it isn't prepared to evict RV occupants by force or tow an occupied RV — which most would agree is out of reasonable proportion —



it could well face a protracted stalemate.

As Police Chief Matt Scales acknowledged, "The city would not be towing RVs with people still inside of them. That goes without saying."

Understandably, residents of the two affected neighborhoods long ago passed the point of frustration. They won't be satisfied until the offending encampments have been cleared and can't understand why the city is having such a tough time with the task.

Do Waco, Ruby Ridge and the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge ring any bells? How about the more recent protest encampment at ICE headquarters in Portland?

The fact is, people resistant to moving on are hard to force out. Escalation to the use of force can quickly produce disastrous results.

The RV dwellers are in desperate straits. Barely scraping by, they don't regard pulling up stakes and moving on as a viable option.

We see no advantage to anyone in moving them downtown to church parking lots, as some have suggested. That simply promises to inflame a different neighborhood, one that has already borne more than its share of the homeless burden, because of earlier olive branches extended by downtown churches.

If they can't gain access to alternative housing, the RV dwellers want a hassle-free place to

park their rigs. That's the bottom line for them, and by extension then, for the city.

The (Medford) Mail Tribune, on guns and dementia

People with dementia who own guns pose a threat to themselves or others, but removing their access to firearms can be easier said than done. As is often the case with guns, there is no simple answer, no piece of legislation that will remove every risk. Instead, family members must be prepared to take responsibility.

A recent report from Kaiser Health News laid out the problem in detail, including accounts of a retired police chief in Oregon who accidentally shot his wife while handling his guns, and an Idaho man who shot his son-in-law in a fit of rage.

Those are anecdotes. The available data suggest there will be more.

While the rate of dementia is decreasing, the number of people over 65 is soaring. And a 2017 survey found that 45 percent of those have guns in their household.

What the NRA and other gun-rights advocates routinely argue is that existing laws should be fully enforced before new ones are adopted. Federal law already says people declared not competent to manage their own affairs may not

purchase or own guns. But merely being diagnosed with dementia does not count.

Oregon is one of a handful of states that has adopted so-called red flag laws, which allow law enforcement or family members to seek a court order to temporarily seize guns from people who pose a threat to themselves or others. That requires family members to take legal action against a loved one who may resist their efforts. That's not an easy thing to do.

A better approach would be to address the issue early, when the person's dementia is first diagnosed. Families can draw up a "gun trust" that spells out how firearms will be transferred to family members as the affected person's dementia progresses — essentially an advance directive for guns. If the discussion happens soon after the diagnosis, and the gun owner cooperates, that can make the process easier.

Doctors, too, should routinely ask about guns in the home when they discuss a diagnosis of dementia with patients and their families. But violence prevention researchers say doctors are more likely to discuss driving than guns. That's not acceptable.

Yes, we know: Driving is a privilege, and gun ownership is a constitutional right. But both can become deadly in the wrong hands, and people with advanced dementia should not have access to either.