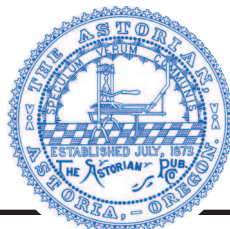


OPINION



THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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Founded in 1873

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Reports exaggerated of newspaper's demise

The report of my death was an exaggeration," Mark Twain famously proclaimed in an 1897 letter to a newspaper reporter who had inquired about rumors of his failing health.

That metaphor seems appropriate in the wake of the recent announcement that The Daily Astorian will change its print publication frequency beginning May 6 to three days a week — Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday — and deliver newspapers via postal carrier.



JIM VAN NOSTRAND

Many anxious readers have called to express their concerns. *Is the newspaper in bankruptcy? Is it going out of business?*

No and no.

We are being proactive in adjusting to the financial challenges facing all local media companies today. It's expensive to distribute a newspaper. The savings we will achieve through these changes position us well to continue delivering news to your doorsteps, your computers and your mobile devices well into the future.

Our parent company, EO Media Group, is locally owned, debt-free and committed to community journalism. As Publisher Kari Borgen recently wrote, we have invested in a new press tower that allows us to feature more color throughout our pages. And our printing press continues to serve other newspapers around the region, with even more print business likely headed our way.

Not cutting news

First and foremost, we are not cutting news staff.

We plan to offer just as much local news in print three days a week as we now offer in five. That means thicker newspapers, with more sections and in some cases more features.

We will continue to run a digital-first newsroom, posting breaking news online as it happens. We recently revamped our website at DailyAstorian.com to optimize the mobile reading experience and offer more video capabilities, among



John D. Bruijn/The Daily Astorian

Daily Astorian press crewmen Carlos Anaya, Clark Verd, Carl Earl and Jim Stanovich push out an old 2-1/2 ton black ink only press unit after removing it to make room for a new full-color 4-high tower.

other upgrades. We're also working on a news app that will offer push notifications if you'd like to be alerted when breaking news happens.

Reporters are the indispensable life blood of any news operation. We have a talented, award-winning staff that works hard to keep you informed on what's going on in your city, your county, the

region and the state capital.

Many other newspaper companies are bleeding their newsrooms dry, cutting reporters, photographers and editors to maintain profitability, pad the corporate coffers or satiate the shareholders. Most of those companies are run by people who don't live in the local communities in which they publish. They couldn't

MORE ONLINE

Listen to Kari and I discuss the upcoming changes with Joan Herman on her Perspectives show at Coast Community Radio: bit.ly/da-changes

Watch video of the new press tower in operation: bit.ly/da-press-tower

care less whether the City Council is covered, the election results are reported or if local officials are held accountable.

Thankfully, that's not the case here.

We want to put the best news product in your hands as we possibly can. We believe passionately in our mission statement, which says in part, "We are committed to reporting and distributing local news and information because a well-informed public keeps our communities strong."

What do you like?

We have a lot of work to do in the coming weeks. It's not unlike a jigsaw puzzle, reassembling the pages into a new structure that makes sense and feels familiar. Where will the comics go? What days should certain weekly features appear? What new features should we consider adding?

If you have thoughts you'd like to offer, please send them to editor@dailyastorian.com.

We will continue to place local news almost exclusively on our front page, with regional and national news inside. Most news and sports will live in the A section, with most features in the B section. Coast Weekend will continue to publish Thursdays. The Seaside Signal will be inserted on Saturdays, rather than Fridays, in the Seaside area.

One sure-to-be welcome improvement for local sports fans is that high school football and basketball games played on Friday nights will be reported in Saturday's newspaper. You won't have to wait until Monday for that news in print anymore.

Jim Van Nostrand is editor of The Daily Astorian.

Water under the bridge

Compiled by Bob Duke

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers



10 years ago this week — 2009

As often as weather permits, a dozen workers wearing orange rain coats and hard hats waded into massive stacks of logs along U.S. Highway 26. They saw the logs down to firewood-length rounds and stack them on a trailer.

The wood is then hauled to Clatsop County Sheriff's Office substations in Jewell and Knappa, where it can be split and stored.

The crews come from Clatsop County's Department of Corrections. They are made up of people on programs in the jail and residents of the county's Transition Center. And not only are they paying off their debts to society, they are providing essential heating fuel for the needy and making two Oregon highways safer for drivers.

Astoria residents have been quick to react to the possibility that the costly Astoria Aquatic Center should be closed.

With the Aquatic Center's subsidy at \$420,000, City Manager Paul Benoit has recommended closing the facility as a way to help fill a million-dollar gap in the city's budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1. The city's budget committee begins deliberating later this month. The final decision will be up to the City Council, but Mayor Willis Van Dusen has promised that members will listen to public input.

The future of the Naselle Youth Camp is still uncertain.

Washington state Senate Democrats released their proposed budget Monday morning. In a surprise move, the senators rejected Gov. Chris Gregoire's proposal to close the camp and want instead to close or convert the 120-year-old Green Hill juvenile prison in Chehalis.

However, Washington state House Democrats released their budget wishes Tuesday and went along with the governor's initial plan to keep Green Hill open and close Naselle.

50 years ago — 1969

A 15-star, 15-stripe flag of the sort flown over Fort Clatsop by the Lewis and Clark party will be sent by an Astoria woman to Rep. William Hungate of Mis-



The Daily Astorian

2009 — A Clatsop County work crew cuts logs collected along U.S. Highway 26 in Elsie into fireplace-size chunks. Following winter storms last December, the state decided to make wood from hazard trees available for firewood.

souri, the state where the expedition began.

Mrs. Love and other members of the American Legion Auxiliary made such a flag for the replica of Fort Clatsop, built in the 1950s.

She was awaiting more materials to start making more flags, one for each state the Lewis and Clark party passed through on its way to the Pacific, she said.

Gillnet landings on the Columbia increased almost eight-fold between 1963 and 1966. The number of coho returning to hatcheries to spawn increased from about 50,000 fish in 1961 to more than 250,000 in 1967. The ocean troll catch off Oregon climbed from just over 2,000,000 pounds of coho in 1961 to about 8,000,000 pounds in 1967. Sport boat catches of coho near the mouth of the Columbia have risen from under 100,000 fish in 1961 to nearly 300,000 fish in 1967.

Work stopped at 8 a.m. today at the Port of Astoria on the loading of three ships, it was learned from Rees Williams, assistant port manager, when longshoremen (ILWU Local 50) refused to work with cranes operated by members of Hoisting and Portable Engineers Local 701. He said the work-refusal was in sympathy with Portland longshoremen because of a similar dispute there yesterday.

What happened to the sailing ship Tonquin, out of Astoria (1811), which remains one of the greatest mysteries of Northwest history, may be solved soon, depending on the success of an expedition from Portland next month.

Edmund Hayes, president of the Oregon Historical Society and a blue water yachtsman, will lead an underwater archaeological search for the Tonquin, which was presumably sunk off Vancouver Island, B.C. after leaving Fort Astoria 150 years ago, April 10.

75 years ago — 1944

The Navy is well under way on construction of a 100-man laundry at the Astoria naval station on the north end of pier two and will shortly begin work on a \$200,000 cold storage plant on property deeded to the Navy by Clatsop County east of Portway, Captain J.D. Barner told the Astoria chamber of commerce directors Friday.

An early-morning fire Sunday burned to the ground a large wooden hangar and an undisclosed number of combat airplanes at the naval auxiliary air facility, Clatsop County airport.

The blaze broke out shortly after 6 a.m. Sunday, presumably starting among smaller shop rooms along the big hangar's side. It quickly roared out of control, fed with gasoline and oil, and after shortly more than one fiercely-burning hour, reduced the huge building to a smoking mass of ruin.

Ensign Wayne M. Erickson, youthful naval reserve flier picked from his life raft 20 miles off the mouth of the Columbia River after his medium-sized plane was forced into the sea, was rescued by Ralph Mason on the fishing boat Foster, it was learned today.

The Navy's "eight ball" left Clatsop County hands this month, according to Hal "Sinbad the Sailor" Eustis, the area's naval recruiter. The "eight ball" is a trophy awarded monthly by the Oregon Navy recruiting headquarters to the lagard in its Wave procurement program.

"I got the trophy," Eustis explained, "for being outstanding in getting no Wave applicants during February. But in March I got four applications." He said The Dalles' crew has won the "eight ball" three months, while Corvallis has received it once.

February was the first month the Astoria office took the trophy and Eustis emphasized he's out to make it the last. "In all seriousness, the Navy does need Waves," he said.