

Water under the bridge

Compiled by Bob Duke
From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2009

This month, biologists made an exciting discovery on a tributary of Washington’s Grays River: thousands of chum salmon were swimming through a marsh that used to be pasture.

It didn’t take the fish long to find the site after Columbia Land Trust breached a dike in 2004 and installed two large culverts to allow water back into the 45-acre Kandoll Farm property, near Rosburg, Wash.

Now, juvenile chum are flooding in along with four other species of salmon.

“There are fish all over the marsh out here,” said Curtis Roegner, a biologist for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Hammond, who has sampled fish at the site since the breach. “This year is amazing because of the numbers of chum. We usually catch 300 the whole season. This time we caught 300 on one tide. It’s truly astounding.”

Unemployment rates on the North Coast and across the state continued their upward march last month.

As statewide unemployment hit 12.1 percent, Clatsop County’s seasonally adjusted rate reached 10.1 percent in March — higher than it’s been since the mid-1980s and more than double the March 2008 rate of 4.7 percent.

The hardest-hit industries are those tied to the housing market, including logging, wood products manufacturing and construction. In Clatsop County, food manufacturing and retail trade also lost jobs last month.

50 years ago — 1969

Members of the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 701 began Saturday morning picketing the two street entrances to the Port of Astoria, and



2009 — Gary Johnson, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory research scientist from Battle Ground, Wash., stands atop two large culverts installed in 2004 to restore the diked pasture at Columbia Land Trust’s Kandoll Farm property. The culverts allow for fish passage and the free exchange of water and nutrients between the marsh and the Grays River system.

are using a boat to picket the slip entrances. Local 701 has been supplying the crane operators but this job was recently taken over by the longshoremen.

Russ Joy, Local 701 business manager, said today the crane operators want to “publicize the fact the Brady Hamilton Corp. did wrongfully discharge the crane operators at the Port of Astoria.”

Crown Zellerbach’s plant at Wauna was struck at 8:50 a.m. today by the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulfit e and Paper Mill Workers and the United Papermakers and Paperworkers, which, at the Wauna plant, involves about 525 persons, according to Jack Brown, CZ public relations man.

When Capt. Karl E. Skovgaard of Svendborg, Denmark, visited the Astoria area this week, he did what most tourists do. He went to Clatsop Beach, where a British sailing vessel lies buried in the sands she ran aground on 63 years ago.

The Peter Iredale?
No. The Galena.

Both four-masted barks built in the same Scottish shipyard, the Galena and the Iredale, were lost within a month of each other on the same fateful beach half a world away.

Most people now remember the wreck of the Iredale because her bones still jut out of the sand at Fort Stevens State Park – while her “sister” ship, long since dismantled to the sandline, lies forgotten under a dune in Surf Pines.

But Capt. Skovgaard has better reason to remember

the Galena.

He was on her when she was wrecked Nov. 13, 1906. An 18-year-old seaman, he made his way inland with other crew members to the home of Josiah West, who cared for the survivors while they awaited news of a ship to return them to England. Now 80 years old, and retired from a lifetime spent at sea, he returned this week (by plane, this time) to visit with the daughter of Josiah West, now Mrs. Harold See of Clatsop Plains, with whom he has exchanged letters for 63 years.

75 years ago — 1944

Letters addressed to the Astorian-Budget’s household arts department, ordering patterns, are no particular novelty as a usual thing. Scores of them arrive every month. But one that comes in the mail this week attracts real attention. The letter, via air mail, is from a Mrs. Francis Beatty of Astoria, Ill., a Midwest post office few citizens of John Jacob Astor’s old town here on the Columbia River probably knew was on the map.

People of Seaside and Gearhart have been waiting for weeks for the return of a famous visitor — Mrs. J.J. Pressman, or Claudette Corbert, diminutive brown-eyed actress of Hollywood fame, and now at last she is here. (Miss Colbert was here for a short time about a month ago, but her presence was not widely known.)

Miss Colbert is here to join her husband, Dr. Pressman of the Navy medical corps, who is soon to go aboard a Kaiser carrier as flight surgeon. She is making her home at the Gearhart hotel and will be here until he leaves.

Local post office authorities are having a bit of difficulty today in delivering a piece of mail that obviously came from a German prison camp addressed to Mr. Columbia River, Astoria, Oregon, U.S.A. Emile Grand is the name of the sender of the folder and the point of origin of the letter is apparently Lager-Bezeichun, Stalag II-A, believed to be a concentration point for German prisoners in the mountain country of Austria.

Neither Mr. Columbia River or any one by the name of Grand is listed in Astoria directories.

A special Eagle award court honoring Louis Wright, ex-Sea Scout now in the U.S. Navy, was the main feature of the Sea Scout dance Saturday night at the Odd Fellows hall.

Young Wright was the fifth Astorian to receive this award, highest in national scout work, during this year.

LETTERS

A growing concern

In the past few years the transient rate has grown tremendously. It seems like everywhere I go in Astoria, I see the transients walking around downtown and on the Riverwalk.

Astoria is a place of beauty and history; it’s hard to enjoy the beauty on the Riverwalk and downtown when you feel unsafe. I have a growing concern for the safety of all citizens who enjoy visiting Astoria’s treasures — including the Riverwalk, and the soon-to-be-built Scandinavian Heritage Park — along with the reputation of Astoria.

The Scandinavian Heritage Park will be a wonderful asset to Astoria because of our area’s deep-rooted Scandinavian history; it will also keep Oregon’s North Coast Scandinavian heritage alive. The park will create more tourism to our area, but with the transient problem, will our Scandinavian Heritage Park be unsafe and unclean for locals and tourists?

How can we help these areas be safer for all?

KOURTNEY TISCHER
Astoria

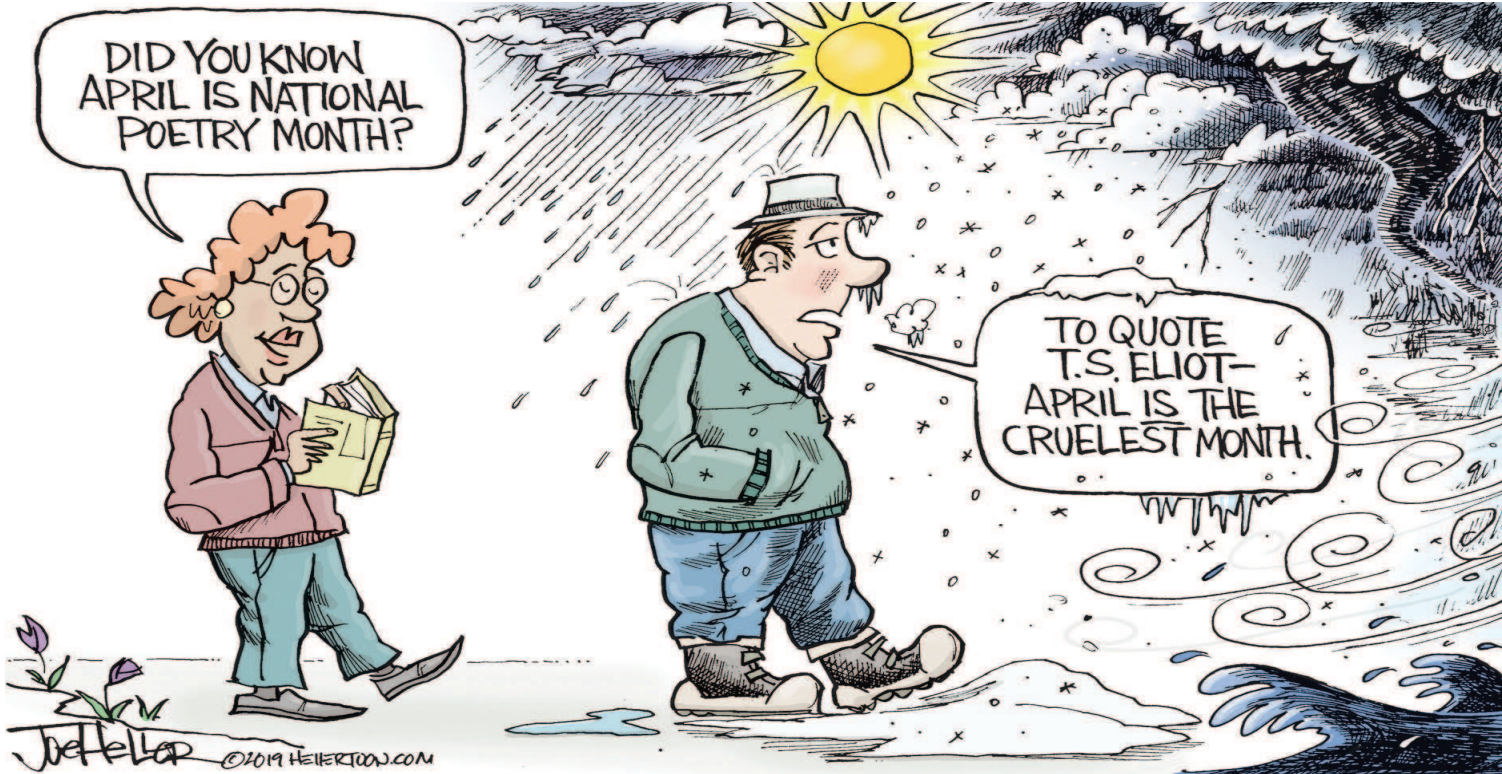
Ban plastic bags

In celebration of Earth Day, I encourage our North Coast communities to ban plastic carryout bags. Manzanita has already passed an ordinance that prohibits retail businesses and restaurants from using these bags.

Wheeler and Bay City have banned plastic carryout bags. Ordinances passed in Gearhart, Tillamook, and Seaside would also require businesses to charge for paper carryout bags. The idea is to help businesses cover the cost of paper carryout bags, and encourage consumers to bring reusable bags for their purchases.

Numerous other Oregon cities have banned these plastic bags including Portland, Bend and Salem. As coastal communities, we have a responsibility to protect our fish and other marine life and their habitat from the plastics that break down into small pieces called microplastics. Microplastics leach toxins that are contaminating oceans, beaches, estuaries, rivers, and even our air.

Animals mistake the plastic pieces for food. We’ve all read the stories of marine animals found with large amounts of plastic pieces they have ingested. In fact, hundreds of thousands of marine animals die each year from plastics. There is no question microplastics are contaminating our fish and water resources on which we depend here on the coast.



SOLVE, an organization that has removed millions of pounds of trash from Oregon’s beaches, reports plastic bags are among the most common plastic litter. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality supports a ban on single-use carry out bags. Let’s take this positive step for the Earth, and ban plastic bags.

RUSS MEAD
Seaside

Delighted about pond

When the North Coast Auto building suddenly disappeared recently, and opened the view to our lovingly-restored train station, I was thrilled, but immediately tempered my excitement with the thought that it would surely be replaced by another business blocking the view.

There I was delighted to read that the Columbia River Maritime Museum has purchased the property and plans to install a small park with a sailing pond (“Grant money will help build Maritime Museum pond,” The Daily Astorian, April 16).

As a child I never had access to a sailing pond, but I read books like “Stuart Little” and others that described them, and made every kid want to make a boat and launch it. There is a famous one in New York City where Stuart nearly drowned, and many others around the country. In Astoria, flat ground is at a premium, and to devote a piece of it for project like this says a lot to me about our town.

My only caveat would be that this pond would sit very close to a busy roadway, I have some concern about safety and noise. I would be inclined to locate the pond just to the west of the train station, a section of

the museum’s vast parking lot that is seldom, if ever, used, looking out on the river where bigger boats pass to and fro all day.

In any case, I’m happy that our historic train station now stands revealed, and that our children will have a chance to sail their own boats down by the river.

JOSEPH STEVENSON
Astoria

Mechanization not at fault for timber reductions

I read with some interest the letter regarding drones in timber harvest operations (“Drones will outlast us,” The Daily Astorian, April 16) and would like to respond to some of the misinformation.

The writer would like to blame mechanization for all the reductions in timber industry employment over the last few decades; this is simply not true. Mechanization had nothing to do with the nearly total elimination of significant timber harvest on federal lands in the West.

True, mechanical harvesters have eliminated some of the timber falling done by “cutters” in the past, however the writer ignores the fact that many lives and injuries have been saved by having these machines do a portion of the work.

Labor costs haven’t been reduced by having drones string lightweight rope to assist in placing cables across long distances, frequently across younger timber stands or streams. This activity only allows the rigging crew to get to the work of logging sooner.

“Boots on the ground” are certainly not a thing of the past. It reduces damage to stream buffers or younger timber stands. In

one of the first episodes of “Ax Men,” J.M. Browning used a helicopter, at approximately \$2,400 per hour, to accomplish the same thing.

In my long career, I wore out a couple of pairs of cork boots and several pairs of White Ox gloves working in the rigging, setting chokers, pulling strawline (haywire) and other associated tasks alongside the crews. If I stayed on the landing, it was to insure that logs were the proper lengths, and that the right logs were going to the right mill.

BUD HENDERSON
Knappa

Pass HB 2020

It is time for Oregon to transition to an economy built on clean energy, rather than polluting energy. The path to this new economy is now in the state legislature: House Bill 2020, the Clean Energy Jobs Bill.

This bill will create many jobs, clean air and renewable energy. It will put a price on climate pollution and reinvest in local, and especially rural, communities. The threat of climate change on farmers, foresters, fisheries and families requires urgent action.

Independent economic analysis given to the state Legislature predicts HB 2020 will grow the economy and create tens of thousands of jobs. This is the right path forward. Let state Sen. Betsy Johnson and state Rep. Tiffany Mitchell know you want them to pass HB 2020. Mitchell is already on record for her support.

KERRY GRASEE
Gearhart