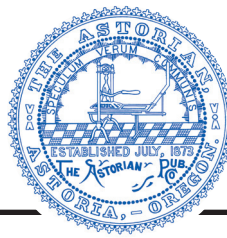


OPINION



the Astorian

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OUR VIEW

Rich history key to Warrenton's future

Closure last month of the Warrenton Visitor Center and Museum at Youngs Bay Plaza generated a strong response on social media, with well-deserved appreciation lavished on volunteer Diane Collier, who has stepped back from an active role as unofficial city historian.

"Diane will be missed, she was very instrumental in archiving much of Warrenton/Hammond's history. Let's all never forget what she has done and saved," a fan wrote. Another said, "Thank you, Diane, for a job well done and hope a new museum is opened soon to preserve Warrenton/Hammond history."

Collier and a small team of other dedicated locals wrapped up operations after the city determined the building had inadequate utilities and that it wouldn't be cost effective to upgrade and maintain it. It's clear from reader comments that a good many were unaware there even was a museum tucked into the visitor center, which thousands passed every day but relatively few visited.

Our story noted that tracking the city's history has tended to be an old person's game. The historical society disbanded quite some time ago, Collier said, and her corps of volunteers operating the visitor center dwindled to three.

Lack of interest in history in general, and local history in particular, is a perennial regret among those who better understand its importance. As one



Edward Stratton/The Astorian
Diane Collier filled the Warrenton Visitor Center and Museum with a treasure trove of old photos and other mementos from Warrenton and Hammond's history.

reader remarked, "The future and now are fine but the past is where we are from and how the future is formed. What a shame to lose this."

There's a decent chance that at least some of the extensive collection can be displayed somewhere downtown. A new repository for all these lovingly assembled photos and other materials would go a great way to avoiding what too often happens in such cases, with archives dispersed or destroyed when the people who assembled them pass away.

Lewis and Clark National Historical Park has a narrow central focus that it does well. But it is no substitute for the kind of passion Collier exemplifies.

Fort Stevens State Park has a local historical component, but with those substantial exceptions,

Clatsop County's remarkably content-rich northwest corner has tended to hide its light under a bushel — an old-fashioned expression for being too humble.

Not only has Warrenton become a regional shopping destination and ever-growing residential area, it has some of the richest history on the coast. With its amazing architectural legacy, Astoria gets more of the glory, but Warrenton has every reason to be extremely proud.

Perhaps because it is more unassuming and has tended to be highly supportive of new development, Warrenton doesn't do enough to emphasize its amazing industrial history — its gateway status at the entry to the Great River of the West, its many centuries of Native American heritage and its nearly countless fascinat-

ing residents and visitors.

Getting people into historical museums can be challenging. Local museums have a deserved reputation for being static, dusty and water-stained. But with imagination and public support, this need not be the case. Imagine a Warrenton museum with a strong online component that actively draws upon the area's whaling heritage, its many shipwrecks and heroic rescues and colorful mix of ethnicities plying intrinsically fascinating trades like commercial clamming, salmon fishing and pioneer logging.

The Chinook Indian Nation's plans for Tansy Point, soon starting with an interpretive kiosk and eventually expanding into a cultural center, can jump-start a better understanding of native history, folklore, art and culture that will enrich all residents' appreciation for this splendid place.

There is so much else to also celebrate in Warrenton's history, content that has great social and economic value. Other communities around the U.S. have enhanced their reputations as cultural destinations on the basis of less than Warrenton has to offer.

In cooperation with the national and state parks, Warrenton can and should make more of its past. Learning from Collier and other representatives of her generation, the city and its citizens would be smart to listen and act upon the wisdom of building a future that is well grounded in an ever-present love for what came before.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tiffany Unity

Support Rep. Tiffany Mitchell, and encourage the citizens of House District 32 to do the same. She is being attacked for taking a measured and reasonable stance on how Oregon could address the issue of climate change.

Unfortunately, some are trying to distort her vote as being an attack on the timber industry. It is far from it. In fact, Rep. Mitchell fought for the exemptions that minimized any economic impact on local businesses.

But let's be frank about what is really going on here. The timber industry is falsely painting Rep. Mitchell as an enemy of timber. This is an industry that has for years become used to favored treatment in Oregon.

But now, in their drive to reduce costs and maximize profits, it has fought environmental protections, avoiding paying its fair share of taxes and reduced jobs through automation. The timber industry, while very valuable, should not be treated with kid gloves anymore.

The referendum on Rep. Mitchell has already taken place during the election last November. She won, and timber's candidate finished a distant third. The people have spoken.

Don't fall for the corporately-sponsored recall effort. It is an effort to erase your vote.

BRYAN KIDDER
Past chairman,
Clatsop County Democratic Party
Astoria

Interesting subject

The campaign to recall Rep. Tiffany Mitchell should be an interesting subject to Clatsop County voters.

As a very active Democrat for 65 years, it was difficult for me to leave the party. The Clatsop County Democratic club refused to allow me, a registered Democrat, to speak to the club regarding my candidacy for county commissioner.

Rep. Mitchell is a direct outgrowth of this type of political organization, but she deserves to be heard, and I attended several of her voter outreach meetings.

I have tried to communicate with her about issues that concern rational, informed Clatsop County resi-

dents. These issues relate to positive approaches which should be taken by Oregon to attack global warming and the lack of Cascadia emergency preparations. To date, no response.

I believe she is a caring person who wants to do a good job, but is totally unequipped because of her limited experience base to do the job. I further believe that despite her best efforts, her positions on issues will be compromised by the pressure which is exerted by the individuals and organizations who bought her election.

In my opinion, we need representatives in Salem like Sen. Betsy Johnson, who have the experience and strength to make rational choices for the future. Unfortunately, the recent history of the Oregon Democratic machine, of which Rep. Mitchell is a bought-and-paid-for part, is just as fatally flawed as the chaotic Oregon Republican mess.

Rep. Mitchell, whom I commend for her service, has demonstrated to me that, unfortunately, she is not that person.

JOHN DUNZER
Seaside

Helping students succeed

According to a 2019 U.S. News and World Report, one third of Oregon's high schools are in the bottom quarter nationally. Only one high school is in the top 100 high schools nationally. Only a handful are in the top 1,000.

Education Week ranked Oregon No. 34 in 2019 in school quality nationally: "Due in large part to low funding and

subpar student achievement, Oregon's public school system is worse than that of most states."

Our children deserve so much better. Rep. Tiffany Mitchell agrees, and it is thanks to her strong support of the Student Success Act that all of Oregon's children will see significant improvement in the quality of education. One of the best things about the Student Success Act is that each school will be able to prioritize funds for their particular needs.

Few would disagree that providing children with a good education should be a priority of the state. It's good to see we have a representative in the state House of Representatives who recognizes that, and worked to make it happen.

RUSS MEAD
Seaside

Unnecessary recall

Last November, we elected Tiffany Mitchell to represent us for House District 32. I voted for her because she represents my values on many issues in the state legislature, including education, healthcare, our environment and jobs.

We live on one of the most beautiful coasts in the world, and we must protect it. It makes economic sense to preserve our forests, beaches and scenic views. Tourism on the Oregon coast brings in \$2.1 billion, with \$197 million in spending on the North Coast. Small businesses and local workers benefit from tourist traffic.

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The 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 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 mention-

ing the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at dailyastorian.com/submit_letters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or 1555 North Roosevelt in Seaside, or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103.

The economy of Clatsop County employs over 17,000 people. The timber industry employed approximately 440 people in logging and lumber and wood products manufacturing in our county in 2017. It's an important industry with good-paying jobs and a long legacy in our community, but the number of jobs are decreasing.

The industry must change to be sustainable for workers and the environment. Rep. Mitchell defends all of our livelihoods, not just a vocal 2%.

Follow the money, and you'll see that timber executives are behind the push to recall Rep. Mitchell. They are subverting our democratic process. Rep. Mitchell was fairly elected, and we get to vote again in 2020.

An unnecessary recall wastes time and taxpayer money, which could otherwise be spent to address important needs in our community. Don't disrespect our democracy and the will of voters by supporting this recall.

MELISSA OUSLEY
Warrenton

Leadership

I want to thank Rep. Tiffany Mitchell for her leadership in recognizing that we must do everything we can to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and move our economy to one based on renewable energy like solar and wind.

There is a lot of dark money pouring in from outside her district to try to deny climate change, and undermine her efforts. We owe it to ourselves, though, to continue to work with Rep. Mitchell to make sure the North Coast is not left behind in the global efforts to avert the climate crisis, and move our economy to renewable energy.

Thanks to Rep. Mitchell's work, the state Department of Energy will offer rebates to people who install solar for their homes. Higher rebates are available for moderate- and low-income customers and low-income service providers.

Encourage your local governments to install solar on public buildings; there are tax credits available. We cannot only begin reducing greenhouse gas emissions but also create renewable energy jobs.

KATHLEEN MACDONALD
Seaside