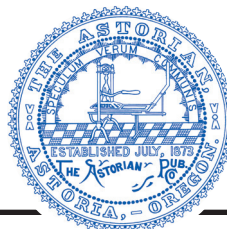


# OPINION

editor@dailyastorian.com



# the Astorian

Founded in 1873

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## OUR VIEW

# Columbia Forum a cultural asset

**C**olumbia Forum is a remarkable cultural asset for the communities of the lower Columbia River but may be overlooked, particularly by those who have moved here in recent years.

Celebrating its 30th season, Columbia Forum was started in 1989 as a way to provide our then-remote area with access to interesting speakers, including many from the “outside world” who would otherwise be unlikely to make public appearances here. Its guests have included our region’s top writers, artists, politicians and newsmakers. Documentary filmmaker Ken Burns and top historian Stephen Ambrose headlined Columbia Forum during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial period, while more recent guests have included Vanity Fair magazine contributing editor Buzz Bissinger, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of “Friday Night Lights” and other books.

Patrick Webb, of Long Beach, Washington, a retired managing editor of The Astorian, said he has always enjoyed going to the Columbia Forum because of the variety of topics that broadened his and the audience’s education.

Webb recalls that Knute Berger from Seattle’s Crosscut online news magazine was among memorable journalist speakers. Oregon Congressman Peter DeFazio’s expert dissection of the astonishing things he uncovered in the federal budget was a true eye-opener, Webb said. An important aspect of the Columbia Forum is the opportunity to engage in conversations with people like Berger, Bissinger and DeFazio — getting to ask them questions in a



Danny Miller/The Astorian

The audience at a Columbia Forum presentation by journalist Nigel Jaquiss in 2017.

thoroughly relaxed setting.

The 30th season is shaping up to include a roster of compelling guests.

- It starts Tuesday with Phil Mote, former Washington state climatologist and current head of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute at Oregon State University. He’ll be speaking about some of the many myths surrounding climate change with candor that will be illuminating to everyone, no matter what their opinions may be on the subject.

- November’s guest will be Tom Hallman, Pulitzer Prize-winning feature writer for The Oregonian and part-time resident of the Long Beach Peninsula. Hallman has remarkable gifts for telling the stories of ordinary people in ways that enrich his readers’ lives. His talk may elicit tears and laughter, and will certainly leave attendees grateful to live in the region where he practices journalism.

- In January, the forum hosts Seaside native Karl Marlantes, author of “Deep River,” a novel deeply grounded in the immigrant experi-

ence on the lower Columbia. This will be Marlantes’ second time at Columbia Forum, where a discussion of his award-winning 2010 “Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War” was one of that season’s most popular and memorable events.

- February’s talk features Columbia Forum co-founder Steve Forrester discussing his section of the forthcoming history “Eminent Oregonians.” Forrester will highlight his multiyear study of Richard Neuberger, who in 1954 became the first Democrat to win a U.S. Senate seat from Oregon since 1914, and the first Jewish Oregonian to ascend to such a lofty office. Forrester’s landmark effort explores previously unknown facts about this amazing politician, journalist and author whose life richly deserves to be honored by today’s Oregonians.

- In March, Tom and Sherry Eckardt of the Oregon Psilocybin Society will speak about the Psilocybin Service Initiative, an effort to legalize the therapeutic use of “magic mushrooms” in the state. In widely

## COLUMBIA FORUM

For dinner reservations, to become a member or be added to the contact list:

**Call:** 503-325-4955

**Email:** forum@dailyastorian.com

**RSVP:** By Friday

**E-ticketing:** <https://tinyurl.com/Columbia-Forum-Tickets>

**Reservations are not required** if you want to attend the talk but not have dinner.

publicized news, including on CBS’s “60 Minutes” earlier this month, psilocybin is gaining acceptance as a powerful antidepressant and tool for enriching mental wellness. This program may stir special local interest in light of our area’s quiet underground reputation as home to some of the world’s most potent psilocybin mushrooms.

These and other Columbia Forum guests yet to be finalized promise to make the 2019-20 season a perfect time discover this unique program, or become active in it again.

Anyone may attend individual talks for \$15, or \$35 with a delicious prediscussion dinner provided by Chef Chris Holen at Baked Alaska. Columbia Forum members attend lectures for free, or \$25 including dinner. Individual memberships are \$60; couples \$95.

Columbia Forum is sponsored by The Astorian, Coast River Business Journal, KMUN, Cannery Pier Hotel and Spa, Craft3 and Oregon State University’s Coastal Oregon Marine Experiment Station. CRBJ/Chinook Observer Publisher and Editor Matt Winters is this season’s host.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Lie

It seems that it is getting harder and harder to lie for this president.

MONICA TAYLOR  
Astoria

### Smear campaign

Corporate media has waged a smear campaign against presidential candidate Tulsi Gabbard, claiming she is a Russian asset and an Assad apologist. Hillary Clinton has jumped on that bandwagon, smearing Gabbard and also Jill Stein, 2016 Green Party presidential candidate, as Russian assets.

In response, Gabbard called Hillary “the queen of warmongers, embodiment of corruption and personification of the rot that has sickened the Democratic Party ...” Yes, I voted for Jill Stein in 2016, because Hillary is exactly that, much like Donald Trump.

In the Oct. 15 Democratic debate, Gabbard called U.S. intervention in Syria a regime change war. Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg claimed U.S. involvement was only about defeating ISIS, but eight years of reports from journalists prove them wrong. In 2011, the CIA began arming the al-Nusra Front, jihadist rebels linked to Al Qaeda, to join the Syrian rebels in fighting the Assad government.

In 2017, Congresswoman Gabbard, who sits on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, visited Syria for a fact-finding mission to understand the conflict. After returning, she sponsored the Stop Arming Terrorists Act because the U.S. is arming dangerous terrorists in Syria, whom we should be fighting.

Gabbard is standing up to the military-industrial congressional complex by speaking out against wasteful regime change wars. These wars are not about defending our country. They are about U.S. imperialism. It is despicable to smear Gabbard, who served in Iraq in the Army National Guard. The U.S. corporate media manufactures consent with lies and propaganda.

MARK ROLOFSON  
Gearhart

### Navigating the negatives

I guess that it’s only natural for most of us to have a time when our spirits are down. Perhaps a pain that won’t

## 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 mentioning 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.

go away, a troublesome relationship or any difficult situation we may be in. It traps us into thinking, “There’s no way out.”

The psalmist gave us a clue to a solution. He said, “O my God, my soul is lost down in me,” and then, “therefore I will remember thee.”

No so matter what you may be going through, never, never give up. Remember the living, loving Lord that promises, “Lo, I am with you always,” and that we, by his grace, are given the strength to go through, overcome and be more than conquerors in all that we face.

JIM BERNARD  
Warrenton

### Heroes

On Oct. 10, I fell down in the Columbia Memorial Hospital parking lot. To say “thank you” and “my profound gratitude” are inadequate words for those who immediately helped me.

The people I remember are the woman who secured the emergency room staff, the man who moved my car for the gurney, those who helped get me onto the gurney,



KUPER

## WHERE TO WRITE

- **State Rep. Tiffany Mitchell** (D): State Capitol, 900 Court St. NE, H-285, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1432. Email: rep.tiffnymitchell@oregonlegislature.gov. Web: oregonlegislature.gov/mitchell

- **State Rep. Brad Witt** (D): State Capitol, 900 Court St. NE, H-374, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1431. Email: Rep. BradWitt@oregonlegislature.gov. Web: oregonlegislature.gov/witt

- **State Sen. Betsy Johnson** (D): State Capitol, 900 Court St. NE, S-209, Salem, OR 97301. Phone: 503-986-1716. Email: sen.betsyjohnson@oregonlegislature.gov. Web: oregonlegislature.gov/johnson. District Office: P.O. Box R, Scappoose, OR 97056. Phone: 503-543-4046. Astoria office phone: 503-338-1280

- **U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici** (D): 2231 Rayburn House Office Building, Washing-

ton, DC 20515. Phone: 202-225-0855. District office: 12725 SW Millikan Way, Suite 220, Beaverton, OR 97005. Phone: 503-469-6010. Web: bonamici.house.gov

- **U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden** (D): 221 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510. Phone: 202-224-5244. Web: wyden.senate.gov

- **U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley** (D): 313 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510. Phone: 202-224-3753. Web: merkley.senate.gov

- **Port of Astoria:** Executive Director, 10 Pier 1 Suite 308, Astoria, OR 97103. Phone: 503-741-3300. Email: admin@portofastoria.com

- **Clatsop County Board of Commissioners:** C/O County Manager, 800 Exchange St., Suite 410, Astoria, OR 97103. Phone: 503-325-1000.

all those who stayed with me, Emily Briendine, Dr. Shannon Berry, the other emergency room staff and the wonderful nurses.

To all: Thank you!

SALLY HUGHES  
Astoria