

OPINION



the Astorian

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Founded in 1873

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GUEST COLUMN

Let's work together on salmon

The Billy Frank Jr. Salmon Coalition is looking forward to another year of working together to accomplish responsible management through responsible leadership.

We formed the coalition of tribal, state and local policy leaders, sport and commercial fishermen, conservation groups, scientists, business and others following the inaugural Billy Frank



LORRAINE LOOMIS

Jr. Pacific Salmon Summit in March 2018. Our goal is to return to the kind of cooperation that has always been the key to natural resources management in our region.

Earlier this month, we presented our priorities at the second Salmon Summit. They include

restoring and protecting disappearing salmon habitat, enhancing hatchery production and management of seal and sea lion populations.

We are advocating for expanding salmon habitat by supporting protection of streamside habitat through uniform, science-based requirements across the region. That means creating healthy streamside buffers with plenty of mature trees and vegetation that keep water temperatures low, stabilize riverbanks and contribute to diverse in-stream habitat for salmon.

We are working to revise habitat standards in the state's Growth Management Act and other land use protection guidelines from one of no net loss to one



The Cowlitz Tribe is coordinating a project that will re-create more natural conditions on the South Fork Grays River in southeast Pacific County.

of net gain. We know that we are losing salmon habitat faster than it can be restored and that the status quo does not lead to salmon recovery. We also advocate for a statewide permit tracking system to create transparency, accountability and efficiency in tracking land use decisions.

Healthy habitat is critical for both naturally spawning and hatchery salmon to sustain their populations. Until habitat can be restored, hatcheries remain key to salmon recovery. The Billy Frank

Jr. Salmon Coalition supports increased state, federal and other funding to provide for increased salmon production and maintenance of state, federal, tribal and nonprofit hatchery facilities in the region.

We also support increased hatchery production in key watersheds to produce salmon for Indian and non-Indian fisheries and contribute to prey availability for southern resident orcas based on the latest science.

We know that predation by pinnipeds, such as harbor seals and California sea

lions, on both adult and juvenile salmon is out of balance and slowing salmon recovery significantly. Harbor seal populations in the Salish Sea alone have grown from about 8,500 to nearly 80,000 in the past two decades. It has been documented that seals and sea lions are eating more than six times the number of salmon harvested by fishermen.

Our coalition is developing recommendations to maintain stable seal and sea lion populations that won't undermine salmon recovery efforts.

As a first step we are calling for an assessment of the status of pinniped populations in this region to determine the optimal sustainable populations of harbor seal and sea lion stocks that won't slow salmon recovery. If need be, we support lethal removal of problem animals in Puget Sound similar to efforts on the Columbia River.

There are no more easy answers when it comes to salmon recovery. Those got used up a long time ago. What we are left with is hard work. We can only be successful if we work together to do what we agree is necessary, then speak that truth together to everyone who lives here.

The Billy Frank Jr. Salmon Coalition was developed to honor Billy's legacy by connecting the best in all of us to face the challenges before us and do the work needed to maintain the health, wealth and culture of our region.

Lorraine Loomis is the chairwoman of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unwarranted

This letter is in support of Tiffany Mitchell. The use of a recall petition in this case is unwarranted. Recall is a means of removing an official due to misconduct. The petitioners allege no misconduct by Rep. Mitchell. They want to remove her from office because they don't like how she voted on issues.

If we recalled every official who cast a vote we don't like, our system of representative democracy would break down. In a democracy we rely on elections, not recalls, to remove from office people with whom we disagree.

KYLENE QUINN
Astoria

Politics at its worst

Too many folks these days mistakenly say an impeachable offense is anything a majority of the U.S. House of Representatives says it is. If politics were all that mattered instead of the Constitution, all presidents could be easily removed at any time with just a majority vote by political opponents.

The Constitution says the president "shall be removed from office on impeachment for, and conviction of, treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors." The words "other" and "high" mean the president's conduct should be as serious as treason and bribery, which are federal crimes. At the very least, therefore, an impeachable offense should rise to the level of a federal crime.

Former President Bill Clinton lied about his sexual activity to a federal judge. And told others to lie when they were under oath. Both are federal crimes, and he was impeached. But a majority of senators decided Clinton's lies under oath about his sexual escapades weren't serious enough to remove him from office.

Former President Richard Nixon committed federal crimes having nothing to do with sex. Nixon resigned because he knew he faced certain impeachment and conviction by both Republicans and Democrats in Congress.

All Republicans in Congress oppose impeachment. Democrats aren't showing in any way President Donald Trump committed a federal crime.

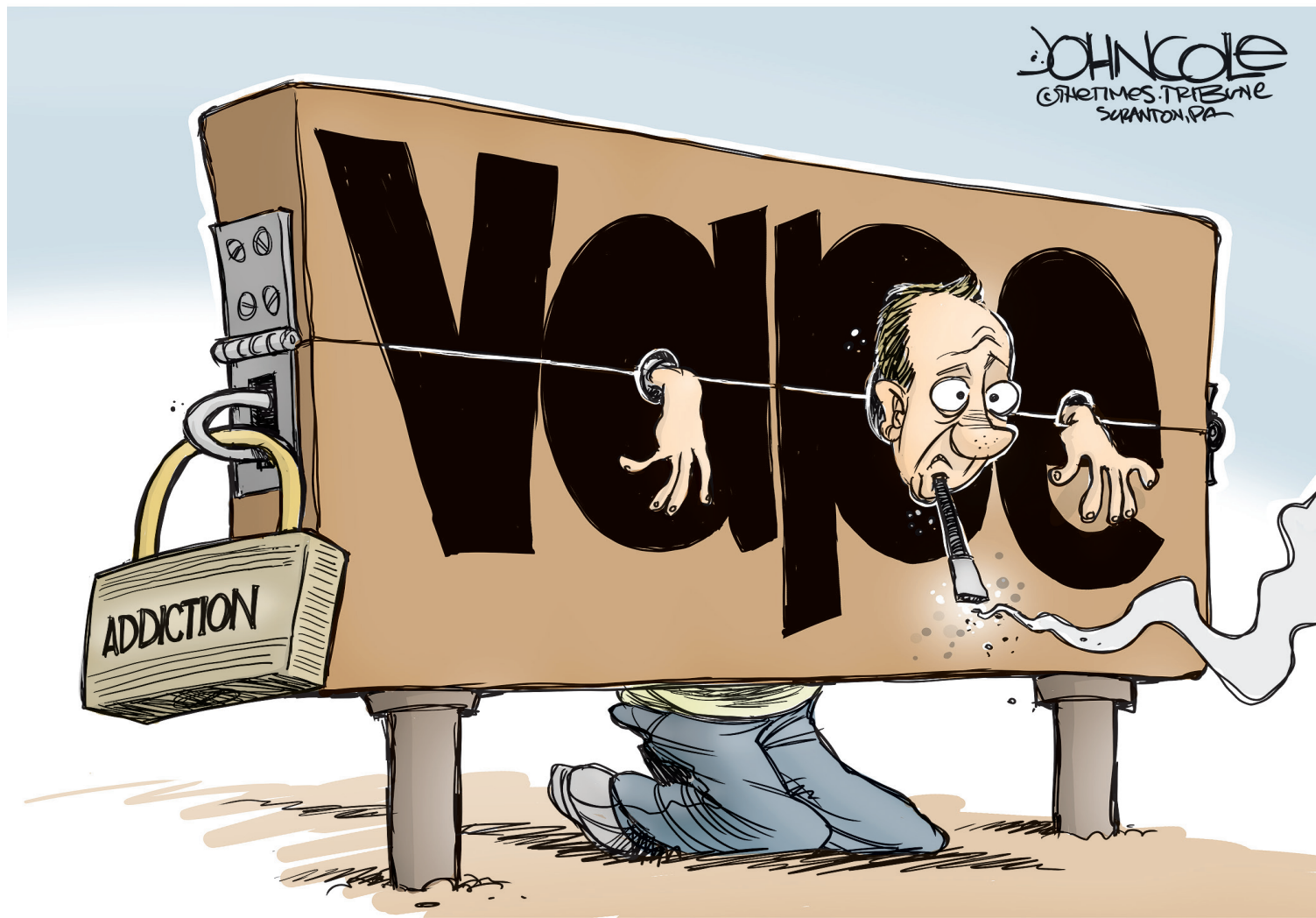
Democrats are disgracing themselves and the country by casting aside the Constitution to run a political campaign in Congress with taxpayer money. Trying to impeach President Trump without criminal conduct is politics at its worst.

DON HASKELL
Astoria

Act now

It appears that another government shutdown is being threatened.

The only branch of this nation's military that does not get paid during a government shutdown is the U.S. Coast Guard. This is because they are under the auspices of the



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.

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U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and not the Pentagon.

During last year's shutdown, HR 367 was introduced in the House and S. 21 was introduced in the Senate. Both were referred to as "Pay Our Coast Guard" bills. Both had widespread bipartisan support.

Unfortunately, both pieces of legislation died of neglect when the shutdown ended. Neither Nancy Pelosi nor Mitch McConnell ever brought them to the floor for a vote, and no one raised their hand and asked, "Why not?"

Anyone who lives on any coast or any major waterway of America understands and appreciates the importance of the Coast Guard's mission. They look out for us, they keep drugs off our streets and shipborne commerce flowing. It is time for us to be there for them.

I'm calling on everyone who reads this letter to do what I did today — write and call your elected representatives. Demand

action. Be it snail mail, email, a tweet or phone call, do whatever works best for you. If enough folks add their voices, they will understand they cannot ignore this issue.

It is unconscionable that we are in this position — again. Solutions have already been studied, legislation written and passed through committees. The time for Congress to act is now, before another shutdown.

BILL GRAFFIUS
Gearhart

Counterproductive

I am writing with reference to an article in The Astorian, "Warrenton wants water equity" (Nov. 13), in which it is mentioned that "Mayor Henry Balensifer ... has established the new mantra 'Warrenton for Warrenton.'" This is an extremely dangerous point of view for the mayor to propose,

and I hope that the county commission and leaders of other municipalities in the county speak up strongly against it.

It is certainly not good for the citizens of Clatsop County, regardless of how Mayor Balensifer might think it plays to his image within his own narrow constituency. The issue at stake here — and it is an issue of great importance, urgency and long-term impact — is how will future land development take place within Warrenton and the adjacent areas within its zone of planning influence.

The simple fact is that nearly all the developable land remaining within Clatsop County is located in or around Warrenton. Evidence to date suggests that the land planning and development process within Warrenton and these surrounding areas has been, at best, haphazard, and, at worst, chaotic. To prevent future land development within Clatsop County, i.e., Warrenton and its environs, from following these harmful precedents, leadership that looks beyond narrow self-interest is mandatory.

I urge Sen. Betsy Johnson, the county commissioners, the county manager and Mr. Balensifer's colleagues within Clatsop County to educate him on why "Warrenton for Warrenton" is a most unwelcome and counterproductive slogan, and should be abandoned as soon as possible.

BARRY L. PLOTKIN
Astoria

Vote Marie

Quite simply, Marie Yovanovitch for president.

MARY TANGUAY WEBB
Astoria