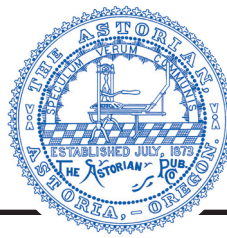


OPINION



the Astorian

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Founded in 1873

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GUEST COLUMN

Protect ocean habitats from climate change

The Oregon Coast is iconic for its craggy cliffs and rugged beaches.

Oregonians from across the state travel to our coast to fly kites and build sandcastles on our incredible beaches, or hike on the rocky cliffs to get a good view of the gray whales as they migrate. But future generations may never enjoy these experiences if rising sea levels and warmer oceans leave Oregon's coast unrecognizable.

That's why I was excited to see bold new proposals for conserving our ocean and combating climate change in the

Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act, introduced by U.S. Rep. Raul Grijalva in the House recently, co-sponsored by Oregon's U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici and U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer.

This bill proposes a bold agenda that will reorient America's relationship to our oceans, recognizing the important role our coastal waters play in our cultural imagination and in the life-support systems of our planet.

Protecting ocean habitats can have major benefits for species and ecosystems that are already at risk from climate change.

These safeguards are essential because ocean life has already felt the impact of warming waters. Scientists estimate that 90% of the rise in global temperatures have been absorbed by the ocean.

Here on the West Coast, we've watched as purple sea urchins have decimated kelp forests to the south, as their main predator — starfish — died in droves from a disease made worse by warming waters. And with these changes comes the risk of the extinction of whales, fish and coral that have swum in our seas for millions of years.

But if we protect these natural spaces from direct, destructive human activities, such as commercial fishing



A dying sunflower star afflicted with sea star wasting disease.

Ed Gullekson/Science Advances

PROTECTING OCEAN HABITATS CAN HAVE MAJOR BENEFITS FOR SPECIES AND ECOSYSTEMS THAT ARE ALREADY AT RISK FROM CLIMATE CHANGE.

and oil drilling, ocean life can bounce back.

For Oregon, one of the best ways to ensure future generations can continue to enjoy a vibrant nearshore is to give key ecosystems breathing room to adapt to a warming world. The Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act would do that by committing the U.S. to protect-

ing 30% of our oceans by 2030 from destructive human activities.

Equally as important, this legislation can play a role in combating climate change by protecting or restoring kelp, seagrass or mangroves that help keep carbon out of the atmosphere. Pound for pound, these underwater areas are more effective at trapping carbon than

forests on land. If we can restore these ecosystems, they can help us reduce the amount of carbon in our air, making it easier to stave off the worst effects of global warming.

For our children and grandchildren's sake, we must act now. That means making our voices heard so that our congressional leaders join Rep. Bonamici and Rep. Blumenauer in supporting the Ocean-Based Climate Solutions Act and to help ensure that our oceans both thrive and continue to play a role in fighting climate change.

Celeste Meiffren-Swango is the director of Environment Oregon.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Foolish

Folks shouldn't be elated yet because the media says Joe Biden won. And, at Joe Biden's peril, he all too hurriedly assumes he's president-elect.

President Donald Trump hasn't publicly produced evidence fraudulent conduct stole the election. But such a massive fraud takes more than three weeks after an election to investigate and gather evidence.

All of the election litigation and recounts thus far involve mishandling and isolated fraudulent conduct within a state. No court has yet considered President Trump's claim of massive nationwide fraud.

It seems to me foolish to reject that claim out of hand.

It's worth noting the computer company charged with tabulating votes in the so-called battleground states has lawyered up and refused to testify before the Pennsylvania Legislature about claims of voter fraud.

It seems to me it's in the best interests of the country to shine a bright light on the way our 2020 votes were cast and counted. No matter whether Trump or Biden is finally declared the winner, it's essential that the election complied with the Constitution.

For if our leaders aren't chosen as provided under the Constitution, freedoms guaranteed by that document will also eventually disappear.

DON HASKELL
Astoria

Come together

I keep hearing these are unprecedented times. They really aren't. We, as a country, have faced many wars, famine, disease ... the challenges throughout history have always been present.

How we handle them is the key. No matter what side you are on, left or right or somewhere in between, this is the time in our history to come together as Americans, as the proud people that we are.

This is the time to set aside our differences, and sit down and talk calmly about what we are doing as individuals, families and a country. This is the time to hold our governing officials accountable for the jobs they do for us.

This is not the time for war. We do not need to be at war with each other. Whom does that really serve? Think about it.

I keep hearing people say that a civil war is coming. Really? Is that going to

help? I think not. I think people are losing sight of what is really important: Each other. Coming together as family, friends and neighbors who care about one another and want to heal the wounds that have been spread throughout our country.

Please stop and think about the legacy you want to leave to your loved ones. All of this anger is truly ugly, and it does not serve any positive purpose. Look for good things you can do in your little corner of the world.

If we all do that, and keep trying to help and support each other, we will be

victorious.

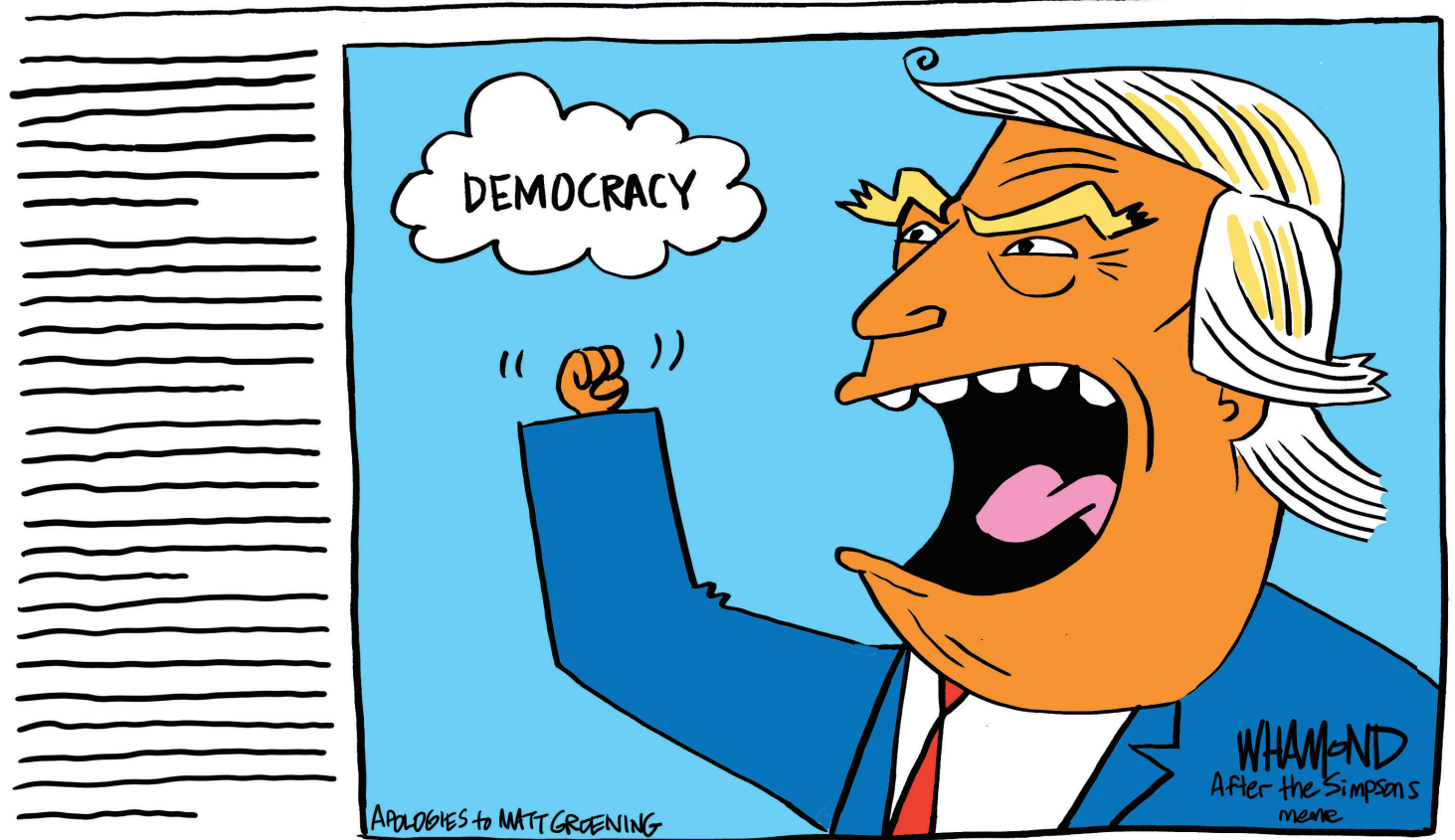
MARY HADREAS
Astoria

Thinking positive

After spending my Thanksgiving home, in Astoria, this year, I texted my family the following message:

"This Christmas I will be celebrating from Astoria. Now, there are four weekends until Christmas. Each week I will be sending a theme package to each house-

OLD MAN YELLS AT CLOUD



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 should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil. Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at bit.ly/astorianletters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR., 97103.

hold. Enjoy, send pictures, and let's be safe.

"Themes: Nov. 28, "Food, or is it?" (footnote: Gully's Butcher Shop had strange jerkies); Dec. 5, "Play or Stress" (footnote: Purple Cow Toys fit the bill); Dec. 12, "Laugh!" (to be determined); and Dec. 19, "Santa's choice, naughty or nice?" (to be determined).

"Don't be looking for Amazon packages, etc. All shopping will be done locally. Our wonderful downtown needs support more than ever."

My first packages went out Saturday. Maybe this idea could work for you. Thinking positive, and thinking safe.

JO LUMPKIN-BROWN
Astoria

Perfect

Thank you for the extraordinary page in Weekend Break on Nov. 21, reproducing Noel Thomas' beautiful painting of red leaves. It was perfect. Everything about it — the picture, the text, the layout and typography — was carrying an expression of gratitude.

ROBERT ADAMS
Astoria