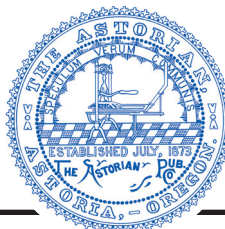


# OPINION



# the Astorian

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## WRITER'S NOTEBOOK

# A glimpse of a quieter world

Many of us have mixed emotions about the pending resurgence of tourism. While some local institutions and businesses — notably museums and hotels — have suffered without tourist dollars, automobile traffic has been diminished; there is less of a seasonal crush.



STEVE FORRESTER

On the North Coast, the rise of tourism is one way of summing up the past few decades. There were tourists 30 years ago, attracted by a world-class maritime museum, the winter outpost of Lewis and Clark and the Pacific Ocean. But the inventory of restaurants was slender, and the hotels we now take for granted — Canary Pier, Elliott and Commodore — were only concepts inside the heads of their developers. Even the Holiday Inn Express, the Comfort Suites and Hampton Inn & Suites had not arrived. The cruise ship phenomenon was also years away.

What's happened to the tourism sector in our region is a smaller, mirror image of what's happening globally. The New York Times described the attitudes and concepts generated by tourism's implosion in a special section titled "A Year Without Travel." One of the section's articles, "When the tourists come back to Hawaii," is about the divergence of opinion among people in Hawaii as they look ahead.

One element of the Hawaii story resonates with Astoria's tourist infrastructure. Making a community attractive to tourists can make it attractive to residents. Our burgeoning restaurant scene, for instance, plays to the benefit of both demographics — residential and tourist. The Astoria Sunday Market has a similar appeal.



Taylor Balkom

The sandcastle contest can bring large crowds to Cannon Beach.

*THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF A COMMUNITY — ITS STREETS AND ROADS, ITS PARKING INVENTORY — IS SOMETIMES MUCH SMALLER THAN WHAT'S REQUIRED BY AN ONSLAUGHT OF TOURISTS.*

The carrying capacity of a community — its streets and roads, its parking inventory — is sometimes much

smaller than what's required by an onslaught of tourists. One extreme example of this is one of the world's

great attractions — Venice. In the absence of cruise ships, during the coronavirus pandemic, Venetians have realized the environmental and lifestyle benefits of not enduring an avalanche of visitors. As a consequence, the city is considering metering cruise ship tourism. Hawaii has similarly discovered that metering hikers on the trail up Diamond Head greatly improves the experience and the environment.

Three places in the Columbia-Pacific region have been overrun. Cannon Beach on various event weekends has gone beyond its carrying capacity. The Hood to Coast Relay has afflicted Seaside in a similar way. The Long Beach Peninsula on some holiday weekends goes from a resident population of about 10,000 to 40,000. Because the peninsula has three north-south roads, counting the beach, it approaches being impassable. Some 20 years ago, Long Beach showed restraint that Seaside has failed to muster, by rejecting the possibility of adding Hood to Coast to an already-packed mid-August schedule.

The Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce's recent decision to curtail big Goonies events may be viewed as a moment of sobriety in the face of a reliable cash flow. All tourist-related activities must be weighed in light of their benefits and costs to local people and our economy. This becomes ever more true as some festivals and other attractions struggle to attract enough volunteers to remain viable. We should always encourage activities that generate passionate support and reassess those that do not.

Visitors can enrich a community. But there is also the comfort of the silence when they leave.

Steve Forrester, the former editor and publisher of *The Astorian*, is the president and CEO of EO Media Group.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Unhealthy forest practices

Long ago, the foothills of the Coast Range were covered with a thick blanket of old trees. Today, all you see along the Coast Range are patches of green, with the rest void of trees.

Much of this land is now owned by large commercial timber companies who plant trees and harvest them about every 25 years. They lower costs and increase their profit by aerial spraying of herbicides and other chemicals to stimulate the rapid growth of these trees, and also by using heavy equipment to reduce more expensive labor costs.

Finally, after the land has been clearcut the slash is burned, creating a smoky haze which can be seen from Astoria along the north face of the Coast Range.

Oregonians have been unable to stop these practices, but now, legislation has been introduced in the Senate (Senate Bill 335) that could lead to more sustainable management of Oregon's public and private forests.

Equally important, this bill also allows for a more balanced composition on the Oregon Board of Forestry by increasing the number of members who have an interest in promoting sustainable forestry.

Please contact your Oregon Senate and House members and urge them to end the destructive and unhealthy forest practices by passing SB 335.

CAROLYN EADY  
Astoria

### Terrible

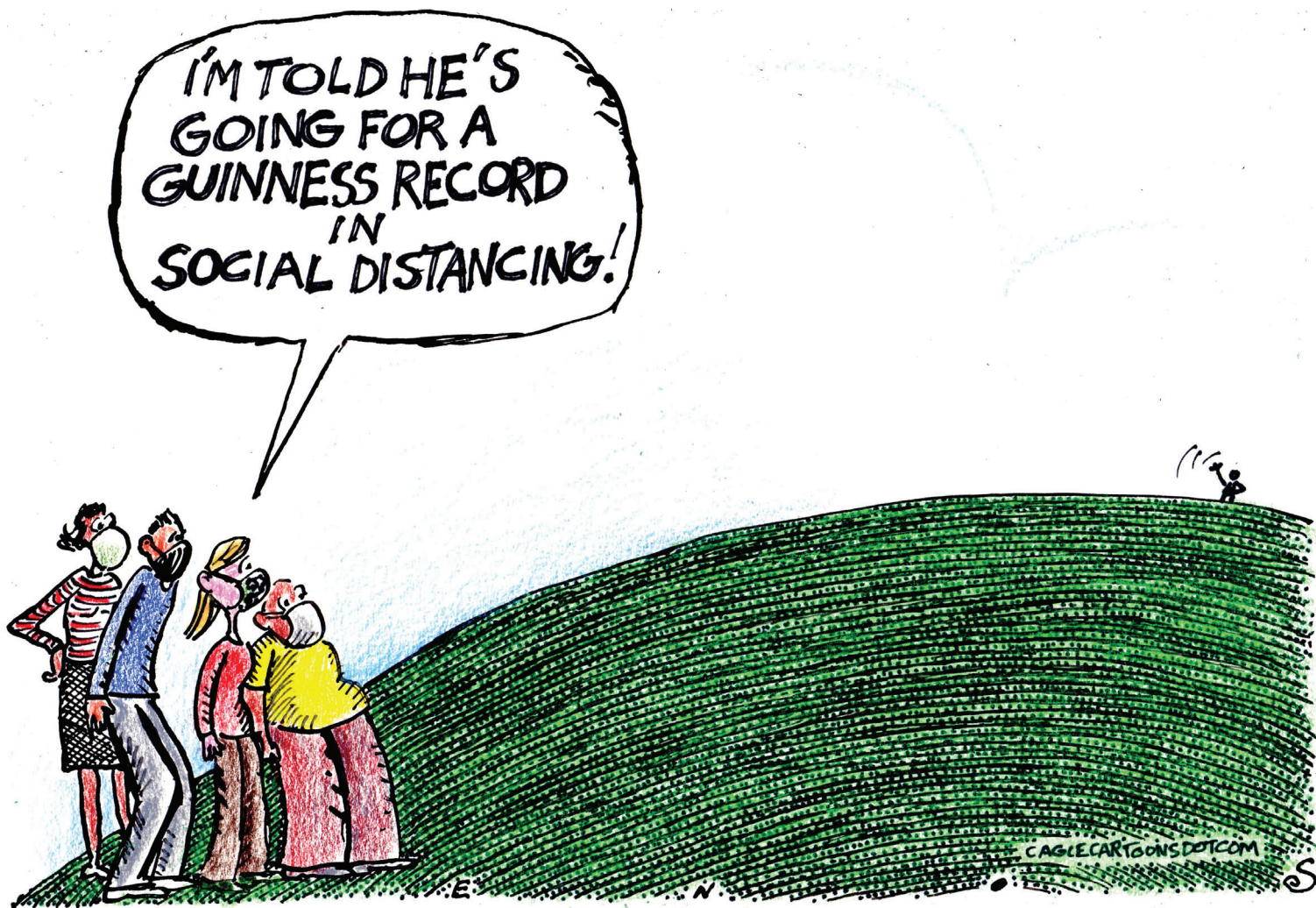
Overturning of the jury's decision by the appellate court in the Kirk Caze case has been terrible for our community.

Caze did real damage to a lot of people in the community. He prowled our neighborhood for a couple of years after the first reports to the sheriff's office. The victims, known and unknown, and the community, are worse off for this development in the conviction of this perverted individual.

I understand he has been held on different federal charges, which brings some hope for a more just outcome for all those involved through the years.

It does not create an ounce of relief for victims here, and what they have to endure as a consequence of his perversions. Neither does it add to the justice system's appearance of fairness for these young victims.

If there is a successful trial, there is some solace perhaps, but hollow for our families at the coast. More worrisome is the outcome. While we are provided



## 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.

assurances that the federal case is strong, we had the same assurances from Clatsop County. That leaves the outcome in question for any of us who have been through this already.

If ever released, puffed up with charisma and a false but real sense of intellectual superiority, and without any moral compass, he will surely be out on his nighttime prowls.

I hope the appellate court thought long and hard on their decision. It has been terrible for the victims that Caze admitted he hurt in his final address to the court in Astoria.

JIM CASTNER  
Warrenton

### Great opportunity

I have lived in Cannon Beach for 20 years, and was drawn here by its stunning beaches, diverse tide pools, rocky habitats and wildlife. I've been a volunteer community scientist monitoring nesting birds every summer for several years.

I'm so happy that visitors come here to enjoy this place, but as visitation increases, I'm deeply concerned about the impacts. Challenges facing inhabitants of the rocky shores are growing, and I've seen firsthand the disturbance of species of conservation concern, like our emblematic puffins and black oystercatchers.

We have a great opportunity right now to help. Oregon's Rocky Habitat Management Strategy is being updated. As part of this process, the public has been asked to submit site designation proposals.

The North Coast Rocky Habitat Coalition submitted two proposals for Chapman Point and Ecola Point, recommending that these areas be designated marine conservation areas. These proposals include smart, practical measures that balance ecological protection and public access. Many in the community have already embraced these proposals.

Haystack Rock gained status as a marine garden in 1991, and it has been a great success story — balancing protection with site access. Let's follow that up with new designations to help keep our community so special.

The Rocky Habitat Working Group has tentatively approved these proposals with several recommended changes, which can be accessed at bit.ly/3mo61GB

The working group will reevaluate these proposals soon. Please consider sending a comment in support no later than April 15 to TSP.Comments@state.or.us. Talking points may be found at fb.me/northcoastrockyhabitats

TABEA GOOSSEN  
Cannon Beach