

OPINION



the Astorian

editor@dailyastorian.com

Founded in 1873

KARI BORGEN
Publisher

DERRICK DePLEGGE
Editor

SHANNON ARLINT
Circulation Manager

JOHN D. BRUIJN
Production Manager

GUEST COLUMN

Healthy rivers and a healthy economy

Seven years ago, when the ocean temperatures in the Pacific were in a periodic cooler cycle, NOAA Fisheries reported the most productive decade of fish runs since record keeping began at Bonneville Dam in 1938.

“The success of this fall Chinook run reflects the region’s commitment and the collaborative spirit that has made it possible,” said Paul Lumley, the executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission at the time.



ALEX MCGREGOR

Warmer ocean temperatures and discouraging returns followed. Cooler waters recently have brought some improvement. The collaborative spirit and commitment remain vital. Breaching the dams won’t get us there with consequences dire for our farms, our communities and our ability to provide bountiful crops to feed a hungry nation and the world.

Farmers have worked hard to meet the challenge of producing bountiful crops while reducing waterborne soil erosion 85% and helping improve air quality, too — reducing wind-blown dust sixfold and reducing stubble burning 22-fold.

Moving what we now move by the Snake River waterway would require 5 million more gallons of diesel fuel. Expensive, to be sure, but even more costly to our environment. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s emissions lab reports that tugs produce 80% to 85% less hydrocarbons than trains or trucks, far less carbon monoxide and nitrous oxide, too.

Railroads cannot handle the load they have today, much less several million more tons of crops and nutrients



Salmon passing through the fish ladder at the Bonneville Dam.

Associated Press

to nourish them. We’d be asking that of our rail system should the lower Snake River dams be breached. Deputy Agriculture Secretary Jewel Bronaugh describes a system in disarray: “Increasingly unreliable railway service is pushing American farmers and ranchers to

the breaking point. ... When railroads charge unreasonable rates and provide poor service, farmers struggle to make ends meet, consumers pay higher prices at the grocery store and the United States becomes less competitive on the global market.”

Scientists at the NOAA Fisheries Science Center, in a peer-reviewed 2021 study, warn of the biggest challenge salmon face — potential future losses of 90% of the fish at sea from long-term warming of the ocean.

“It’s horrendous,” lead author Lisa Crozier stated. “I wish I had a magic answer ... but it’s the reality of where we are right now with the amount of CO2 we have pumped into the atmosphere.”

We can, and must, do better than that.

The substantial investment Congress made in its infrastructure package for salmon offers hope — \$2.8 billion for habitat restoration, hatcheries, culvert replacement and most importantly, research.

With survival through the hydro-system already high, fisheries ecologist Crozier puts “more faith in actions like improving coastal habitat, reducing species that both prey on Chinook and those that compete with them for resources, including more abundant hatchery salmon and steelhead, and slowing climate change.”

We agree with her that “the goal is for people to come together and look at holistic solutions.”

By doing so, we can make real progress through science, hard work and a shared goal to help our iconic Northwest fish while keeping our economy strong. Working together we can build upon a shared commitment and collaborative spirit, as Paul Lumley of the Inter-Tribal Fish Commission put it several years ago.

As I noted at the outset, we can have healthy rivers and a healthy economy. We should accept nothing less.

Alex McGregor is a rancher, wheat grower, former college professor and chairman of The McGregor Co. He is based in Colfax, Washington.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A scenic drive

Astoria is a town on the edge of our American continent. A town that is surrounded by ocean on one side and mountains on the other.

The main artery going east to Longview, Washington, and Portland is U.S. Highway 30. I think how many times over the years have I, and others, traveled this road.

Starting in downtown Astoria, many vehicles seem to get so anxious to get through town, almost like the starting gate at a race track, gearing up to make the run up curves and down curves, turning as they go.

The speed warning signs are a nuisance. I do heed the warning signs, admittedly going a little faster here and there, but no matter, I am tailgated most of the time, the worst stretch being from Astoria to Knappa. Aside from an ambulance or rushing to a hospital, I wonder what the hurry is. I guess we just like to go fast.

There are many beautiful drives, but to me this is one of the best. From the winding road, to the fields of trees and other vegetation, this is a wonderful sight for the traveler who sees it for the first time.

What a bucolic experience, if you take the time to enjoy.

So the next time, I will try to remember my thoughts and appreciate this road, this beauty — like a perpetual spring.

NORM HOOGE
Astoria

Come to realize

I’ve come to realize that 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week cable news is doing more harm than good.

Live stories with limited information are contorted into hours, turning into a contest to see who has the largest vocabulary, and who can show the most emotion; presenting inaccurate information (there is a need to be first) and turning broadcasters into instant experts in an unlimited number of disciplines.

Sometimes less is more. There was a time when news lasted an hour or two in the evening.

RICHARD DILLON
Warrenton

Turn your lights on

I do not understand why some people drive their automobiles with their headlights turned off. It does not cost any more money to turn them on.

I was driving the black pickup truck that pulled in front of your car on a late Saturday morning from Camp Rilea while you were driving south on U.S. Highway

101.

I have had a valid driver’s license since 1961, and have just one traffic ticket, in 1970, and no accidents.

I was wearing my polarized prescription glasses, and looked first to my left and saw no vehicles coming, then looked right seeing two, far down the road. I then looked back to my left and again, seeing no moving cars, and I drove onto the highway to turn into the middle turn lane.

I intended to sit there while the two cars coming from the south passed by. Out of the corner of my eye, I found a vehicle coming from the north, I stepped on the gas and I think we missed by perhaps a foot or so. My truck does not have side air bags so if you had hit me broadside, I probably would not be writing this letter and you probably also would not be feeling so good.

The only thing that I can tell you about your vehicle is that you did not have any light turned on. Today has been a dark, wet, misty day, and your car was invisible to oncoming traffic.

Please, turn your lights on.

CHUCK MEYER
Astoria

Thoughtful praise

The Thirsty Growler: Astorians gather to celebrate craft beer” in the June 2 edition of Coast Weekend mentioned the lush, flowering grounds of the historic downtown Flavel House Museum.

The beautiful revitalized gardens are the work of the newly organized Flavel House Garden Society. We have volunteered over 500 hours since last July to give the community the lush, flowering historic grounds to enjoy.

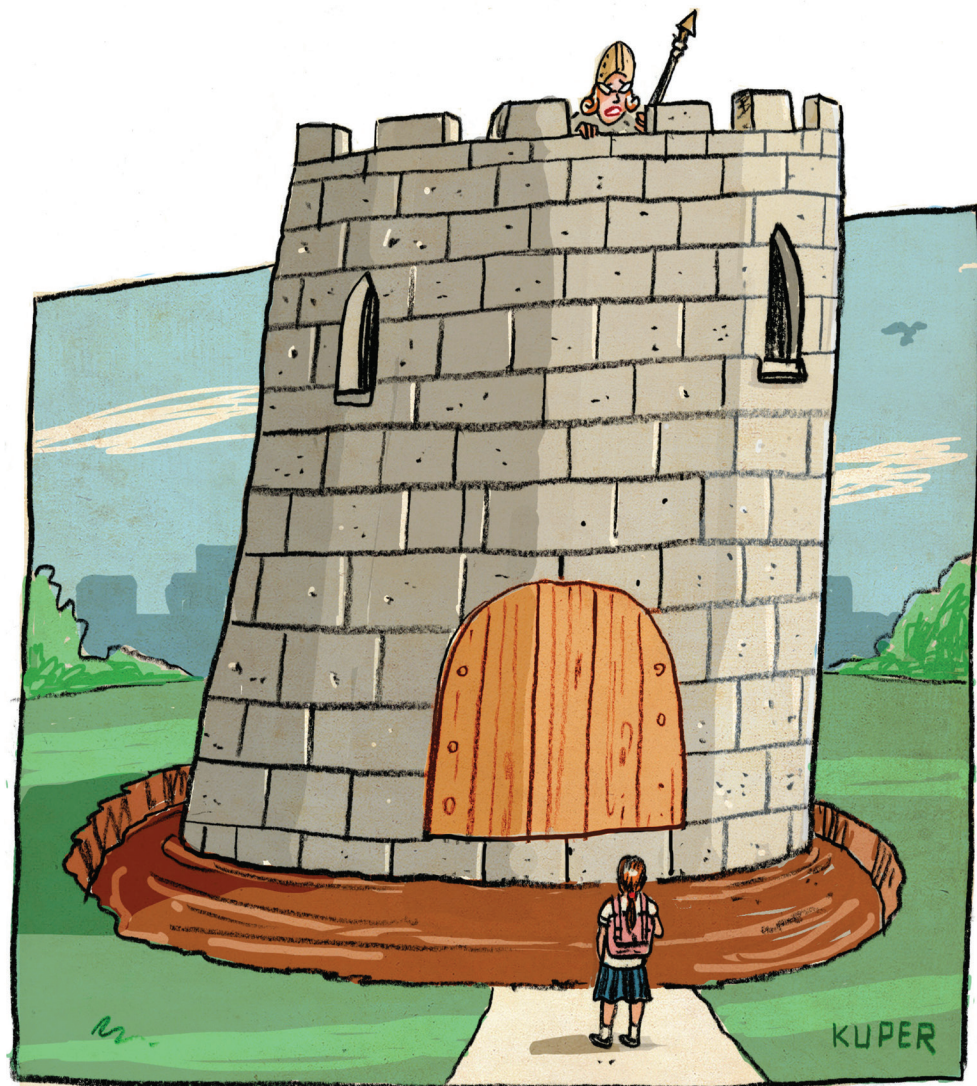
If readers or craft beer festival attendees want to help us continue to improve the Flavel House Museum gardens, we encourage you to stop by the Carriage House with a donation so we can continue with our vision. Or, consider joining us on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. to garden.

Thank you to William Dean for the thoughtful praise — we appreciate it.

PAMELA HOLEN
Astoria

It’s cool

I read Chuck Meyer’s “I checked” response to Kevin W. Swanson’s “Three thoughts” letter with some interest. At the same time I was reading Meyer’s letter, “I checked with several of my friends, and none of us had much to complain about, with the possible exception of the price of gasoline,” the local ice cream wagon, complete with cheesy music, came by my house.



“First, I’ll need to see your hall pass.”

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.

As I purchased two Klondike cookies and creme and one Mrs. Fields bars, I noticed an “Inflation Donation” sign on an obvious tip box. I gave the young lady driving the musical cart a 20 spot for the \$12 worth of ice cream and said, “It’s yours,” as I walked away.

Swanson claims most Americans are worse off, and Meyer says the opposite. Given that the local ice cream lady is soliciting “inflation” donations, I would have to agree that Americans, at the ground level, are a wee bit worse off than last year.

Last year, I was able to buy my favorite

ice cream bars without a sign pumping me for gratuities due to poor economic conditions. Considering the variable conditions required to purchase and distribute ice cream bars at a profit during times of high fuel and ice cream prices, I’d say a complaint can arise.

I find my ice cream delivery person can be quiet and humorous about the obvious pain involved in today’s economy. I just hope all citizens can actually “check” as to how their neighbors are doing.

MATT JANES
Jeffers Garden