



Senior Moments

with Emma Edwards

What are your epoch moments?

The following words covered almost an entire wall of an Astoria medical office where I was waiting to have my toes X-rayed: "The development of the steam engine marked an important epoch in the history of industry." There also was a drawing of a steam-powered machine.

I'm not sure about you, but it has been a long time since I've heard the word epoch or thought about the marvels of the first steam engine. Yet we refer to what would be epochs nearly every day.

We may say, "That happened before our house remodel" or "That occurred when all our kids still lived under our roof." Periods of time. Epochs.

The word is defined in the Oxford Dictionary of English as "a particular period of time in history or in a person's life," such as the Victorian epoch. Its origin was first recognized in the early 17th century and has been applied to defining moments or periods of time ever since.

Memorable epochs or periods of time (in no particular order) from the last couple of centuries:

The steam engine.
The locomotive.
The telegraph.
The telephone.
Internal combustion engine.
Rifle.
Ironclad ships.
Electricity/light bulb.
Photography.
The cotton gin.
And, more recently:
Nuclear power.
Microwave oven.
Satellites.

Vacuum cleaner.
Airplanes.
Cell phones.
Computers.
Penicillin.
Television.
The internet.

How many of us define periods of time as "before we moved here or there"? Or maybe before little Anthony was born was when we did this or that.

Perhaps, in conversation, the husband may correct his wife when she is relating a story and say something like "No, dear, that happened the year the Tigers last won the World Series, which was in 1984!" Whereas her memorable epochal events may center around the births of their children.

The simplest definition of epoch is "an event or a time that begins a new period or development."

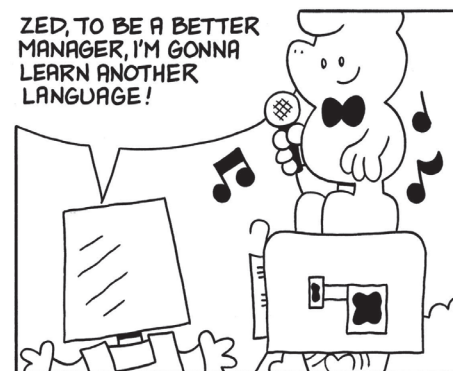
And "defining periods," of course, can differ with ethnicity, location and age. It is a period of time that is very important in one's life or in local or world history -- a period that is important or memorable.

I found the Charles Dickens' quotation I was looking for. Yes! It is the opening line of "A Tale of Two Cities."

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom; it was the age of foolishness. It was the epoch of belief; it was the epoch of incredulity. It was the season of light; it was the season of darkness. It was the spring of hope; it was the winter of despair."

What is your favorite epoch in life?

ZED by Duane M. Abel



Mayor's Message

by Henry Balensifer III



Vacation rentals -- a bane or a boon?

Vacation rentals.

This is probably the most misunderstood, desired, and reviled of land uses currently in Warrenton.

Some want to consider them as second homes that generate revenue while they live somewhere else. Some hate having, essentially, a small motel next door and dislike not knowing who their neighbor is.

Still others think the owners are exacerbating the housing crisis by reducing potential housing stock.

In short — there's not a shortage of opinions on the issue.

Vacation rentals are the commercial use of an entire house for short term (less than 30 days). When the house is not being used as temporary lodging, it is not occupied by the owner nor a long-term tenant.

Vacation rentals are an allowed use in commercial zones. With the exception of grandfathered properties, they are not allowed in residential zones.

This is not to be confused with home-stay lodging, which is when the property owner lives in the house and

rents spare rooms for lodging purposes. Home-stay lodging is allowed, with a permit, in residential zones.

Why are you reading about problematic vacation rentals in the papers lately, then? Because the city recently held an owner accountable for failing to meet the standards they claimed they would abide by.

The city gave existing vacation rental owners a year to register and comply with new safety and livability standards. By the start of this year, the commission codified what specific vacation rental properties were grandfathered, who owned them, and made it so they could not transfer the grandfather status; should ownership transfer, it would revert to residential use.

There were 11 properties

registered as vacation rentals in residential zones. As of today, there are eight, with a potential for that to be reduced to seven next month.

Two were removed from the registry due to sales. Most recently, one was revoked for multiple code violations.

To date, Warrenton, Gearhart, and Astoria have taken steps to reduce residential vacation rental properties. Clatsop County is considering a pilot program for controlling the loss of housing units as well.

In the short term, the goal for Warrenton is to protect neighborhood peace.

In the long term, it is to ensure available housing is not being taken offline and to give our children a chance to remain living here should they wish.

Special columns in The Columbia Press

Every week: Senior Moments with Emma Edwards

Week 1: Financial Focus with Adam Miller

Week 2: Here's to Your Health from CMH

Week 3: Off the Shelf by Kelly Knudsen

Final week: Mayor's Message by Henry Balensifer