

# Remembering a trailblazer in Gearhart

Arriving in the South County in May from the East was like landing in a different world.

One of the first people to capture our attention was John Duncan. Who was this Santa Claus figure wearing short pants and orange Crocs? He sat at the council meeting next to Mayor Widdop and had the calm and placid demeanor of the Buddha.

The topic was a fence ordinance. Everybody else wanted a fence ordinance. Duncan didn't see the need and said so. "We still have the international building code. We would have something in place."

He was not only one or two chess moves ahead, he was three or four. He said that an ordinance without a permit requirement made no sense. "Without a permit requirement in the city we have no way of tracking what is going on," he said. "The original updated ordinance had a permit in it, and the council decided they didn't like it and took it out."

In a subsequent meeting he masterfully navigated a street vacation — a homeowner's request to remedy a century-old surveyor's error. They wanted relief from the city to help them set their maps straight.

Duncan knew councilors needed to make things right, but he

## SEEN FROM SEASIDE

By  
R.J.  
MARX



When no one else had the answers, John Duncan did.

made sure the city didn't give away the store. He pressed for an easement that would preserve city utility access and limit potential building size on the site — important concessions that will benefit all residents.

He was among the leaders calling for a new and safer firehouse and emergency center in Gearhart, and volunteered to serve on a committee to make that happen.

Duncan seemed to embody everything we like about the state: big man, big heart, independent and love of the outdoors.

Duncan — or "Dunc" as his old friends called him — hung out at the Pacific Way every day it was open, and he was glad to enlight-

### A 'path' to his memory

The city of Gearhart has set up a memorial fund in honor of City Councilman, John Duncan.

The proceeds of this fund will be used to complete the extension of the ridge path through the wetland areas. Councilman Duncan used his engineering skills and the help of volunteers over the past several months to make this dream of former Mayor Kent Smith a reality.

If you would like to make a donation, checks may be made out to the City of Gearhart. Please reference John Duncan on the memo line.

en his audience, in a good way. When he said I wrote a good story in the Daily or the Signal, it meant he had read every word and every punctuation mark. It meant a lot.

In his spare time Duncan led a small, homegrown crew to reclaim the city's beloved Ridge Path, the former Indian trail crossing through backyards and side yards.

No matter how old you are, you feel like a kid on the Ridge Path. From its earliest days, the path was a shaded cross-through from town to Little Beach. The path was overgrown in places, impassable,



BETTY SMITH/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Hundreds of friends and mourners came to Gearhart Monday to remember John Duncan.

even. Despite ill-health, Duncan and his volunteer army traipsed through mud, brambles and elk poop with loppers and saws.

He worked so long and with such pride that other volunteers would have to plead fatigue to convince him it was time to quit for the day. He was out working on the path two days before his death, and at the Gearhart Homeowners Association luncheon the day before. No irony ever lost on Duncan, the homeowners association themselves had conceived and nurtured the path.

Gearhart needed John Duncan. He was elected in 2014 in the midst of a growing political clash leading to a failed recall election of Mayor Dianne Widdop.

When no one else had the answers, he did. Widdop, councilors, the city's manager Chad Sweet looked to him for guidance and so did the city attorney.

The flags were at half-mast in Gearhart this week, and that was appropriate, for his loss doesn't only bring sorrow to his family. It makes us all too aware of what we as a community have lost as well.

## Scene and Heard

CLAIRE LOVELL

# Many questions yet remain about Lewis and Clark

On Aug. 13, Gary and I went to the Seaside Library to hear a presentation on Lewis and Clark by Gary Moulton. Mr. Moulton, an important Lewis and Clark historian, was well-versed in his topic, having been working with their journals for 20 years. There were lots of interested people on hand, several having questions about the famous exploration from our early history. There are different versions of this story, some true, some perhaps more fanciful. Legends do tend to gather moss as they roll along. For instance, did Lewis kill himself or did he not? I never learned how he

died. Anyway, it was nice to share an experience with my son besides mealtime.

I hadn't seen any Steller's jays in a while till one arrived on the 15th outside my kitchen window. He was all scraggly and greenish looking. Perhaps he'd just had a bath and yet he flew confidently to the plastic gutter and had a refreshing drink. Usually when the birds see me, they fly away screeching. Could you blame them? But this creature just went on with his drinking and gargling for a while. It was great — then a quick adios. For all of that, his patch of blue brightened my day.



CLAIRE LOVELL

Sometimes I walk down the railroad path to town to shop. It works pretty well for me to get my exercise, but it can be tiring. There are

lots of "older" people in this town. Why can't there be a small bench at strategic spots all over the place? There's not much respite in leaning against a lamppost a few seconds, which is something I do to make it more tolerable. Besides, someone might get the wrong idea, ha. I've considered sitting on covered utilities but someone could poke me with a nightstick and tell me to move on. Another of my vexations along the route is the quick light at Broadway and Roosevelt. It's impossible to get across the street before the walk signal has gone to a steady hand. Sheesh. I look forward

to resting a minute or two in the bus shelter, though often it's full. There are only two seats anyway. How come? Because it's certainly big enough for four. It has not trash can either, so people are beginning to drop their junk wherever it leaves their hands.

We're sorry to have lost our friend, Jessie Wallace after so long a time. She died at home on Aug. 10. Jessie had been failing for the last few months and had spent some time in the hospital. Breathing was difficult, causing her to be on oxygen for relief. She was involved in area schools — mostly

in P.E. for several years and was an active member of our church as well. Known by members of the United Methodist Church as a terrific pie and jelly maker, she also sewed many banners for which she will always be remembered. They represent the special seasons of our church calendar year. We have been blessed with Jessie's fellowship and offer sympathies to her children Dennis and Kristi, and to her many siblings.

### Laugh Lines:

I wish the buck really did stop here. I sure could use a few of them.

## Obituaries

### Eleanor Morehouse

May 6, 1929 — Sept. 1, 2015

Eleanor Morehouse, 86, of Astoria, died Tuesday, Sept. 1, 2015.

She was born May 6, 1929, in Winfield, Kan., to Richard and Esther Smith.

She married Leon Morehouse June 10, 1947, in Portland, Ore.

Mrs. Morehouse was a homemaker, and she enjoyed collecting. She was interested in child care, and was a foster parent.

She is survived by three sons and their spouses, Jody Morehouse of Astoria, Robert and Mary Morehouse of Heppner, Ore., and Korry and Michelle Peterson of Benton, Wash.; a daughter and son-in-law, Janice and Jon Martin of Gearhart; and



ELEANOR MOREHOUSE

17 grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by three sons, Ron, Jim, and Ray Morehouse, and her husband, Leon Morehouse.

No service is planned.

## News in Brief

### Participate in 'Giving Back'

The Daily Astorian will be producing a Giving Back publication in October designed to give area nonprofits, and the corporations that support them, a platform for exposing their mission, and their fundraising needs. This will be a resource designed to provide a guide that will include contract information for volunteering as well as for charitable giving. Contact Betty Smith or Holly Larkins at (503) 325-3211 or bsmith@dailyastorian.com or hlarkins@dailyas-

torian.com. Deadline is Oct. 2.

### City to hold 'Hood to Coast' workshop

The City Council will conduct a workshop on Monday, Sept. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Seaside City Hall, 989 Broadway, Seaside to discuss the Hood to Coast Relay.

This meeting is handicapped accessible. Call (503) 738-5511 for special accommodations to participate in this meeting.

## Correction

Due to a reporter's error, Alie Zagata was identified as the Seaside High School Associated Student Body

president in a Seaside Signal article Sept. 4. Zagata is the senior class president for ASB.

## Letters to the Editor

### Floating LNG idea

Having a liquefied natural gas terminal in an earthquake/tsunami zone? It just sounds crazy. Building a LNG terminal with tall and wide tanks is a challenge even in a geologically stable area, but now imagine a large concrete tank, having a footprint hundreds of feet across sitting on a sandy fill sitting on a fault line. You know, like Warrenton.

Think of a shallow wading pool filled with water. Now go and try to move that pool — like an earthquake would. Even if it does not break, the liquid spills out. But notice the rubber duck. It hardly

moves and is quite safe. Now consider an LNG ship for storage. Large strong ships, with massive refrigerated spheres, currently cross the wild oceans and safely maintain the LNG in liquid form.

I propose we consider using multiple large LNG tankers as the storage method for a LNG terminal. This would require multiple docking boxes with gates that would buffer a tsunami surge of 80 feet. The holding boxes would flow in water at a controlled rate, and empty out again as the tsunami inrush subsided. The land would shake and settle, but the ships would float in their isolated tubs, protected from

the debris. The water levels inside and outside of the box would remain close, so the box would not become a dam holding back an 80 foot wall of water.

Transport vessels would come in and be filled from the stationary tankers or simply be exchanged. As LNG demand may change, the mooring piers could be repurposed or filled with several LNG vessels. This allows for the dynamic adjustment of a costly facility.

In the changing world economy, our country may choose to be an exporter of LNG or a receiver of LNG, or both at the same time. If

the world wants us to be an exporter of LNG now, we would design, fully permit and approve, a bidirectional facility, but only build the export side. This would lower the initial cost and would allow the profit to offset an import build later.

Our nation has to get practical about LNG. We have it, it's clean, and the world will pay for it. We should maximize LNG for all of our own industries — leave occasional wind and solar power for the lobbyists and, unfortunately, government subsidy parasites.

Roy Hackett  
Seaside

# Thirst-quencher



R.J. MARX/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Olivia Laird did a brisk business in Gearhart Saturday, Sept. 5, selling lemonade and Rice Krispies treats.