



EDITORIAL

Leadbetter name change long overdue

The hanging rebel of eastern Tennessee deserves no honors

Honoring Confederate generals in this day and age might seem to be a peculiarly Southern embarrassment, but there is a prominent example in Washington state.

Like most people, Danville Leadbetter was a person of many parts, not a cartoon villain. As a lieutenant, the West Point graduate from Maine was an early associate of the U.S. Coast Survey, which undertook the arduous task of charting our nation's entire coastline for the first time. In 1852, West Coast survey leader James Alden renamed the northern tip of Pacific County's peninsula Leadbetter Point in recognition of his assistant's labors. (Uninspired by its understated beauty, an earlier English explorer had simply labeled it Low Point.)

Slaves and hangings

Leadbetter went on to serve in the U.S. Army in the Deep South, for example overseeing construction in 1858



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Confederate Col. Danville Leadbetter ordered the hanging of these "Unionists" in Tennessee after they were "tried summary by drum-head court-martial" for allegedly burning a bridge in support of the U.S. Army. Passersby were encouraged to abuse the corpses. Leadbetter's name lingers on, attached to a Washington State Park.

of a stupendous, nearly 200-foot lighthouse at the mouth of Mobile Bay, Alabama. While there, he developed an affinity for southern living and stayed on after resigning from the Army. He and his wife, the poetically named Delphine Euphrosine Kennedy, invested in a large cotton plantation in Mobile, according to a sympathetic summer 1969 article by a distant Leadbetter relation in the Pacific County *Sou'wester* historical quarterly. Neither is listed as a slave owner in the 1860 Slave Schedule, but plantations and slavery were inseparable.

Leadbetter sided with the Secessionist Movement — "economically and emotionally committed to the Southern cause," the *Sou'wester* reported — and eventually rose to the rank of brigadier general.

In late 1861, irregular Union volunteers in northeastern Tennessee — acting on orders explicitly approved by President Abraham Lincoln — began a campaign of burning railroad bridges in the Confederate-occupied region. Confederate Secretary of War Judah Benjamin ordered: "All such as can be identified as having been engaged in

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EDITORIAL

Covid reaching deeper into our rural communities

A popular cut-and-paste Facebook post has made the rounds among those who continue denying the seriousness of the covid crisis. In essence, it asks whether the poster's Facebook friends personally know any covid patients. If there isn't an outpouring of positive responses, the implication is that the worldwide pandemic is an exaggerated conspiracy.

Although case counts are climbing, it remains true that test-verified covid infections in Pacific and Clatsop counties remain comparatively low. In the seven days ending this Monday morning, Pacific County logged the equivalent of 45 news cases per 100,000, compared to a statewide rate of 75. Clatsop County had the equivalent of 30 new cases per 100,000, compared to 55 statewide. Both are in the middle third in our states when compared to other counties.

However, scientific statistics and public health officials attest to the fact there is widespread and growing local transmission of the virus. The mayor of Long Beach, peninsula volunteer Joe Paliani, retired Astoria Library Director Bruce Berney, well-known Astorian Peter Roscoe — among others — have all caught covid. Berney succumbed to it. This disease is not made up or played up.

Contrary to some social media posts, face masks are a safe and effective way of stopping most viral transmission. We all should be wearing them in public. For purposes of protecting vulnerable loved ones, we each should assume we have the virus and behave accordingly. Maintain a minimum of six feet of physical separation from anyone we don't live with. Sanitize hands often and avoid touching our faces. Don't fall for claims about "miracle cures"; there are none.

THE MAYOR OF LONG BEACH, PENINSULA VOLUNTEER JOE PALIANI, RETIRED ASTORIA LIBRARY DIRECTOR BRUCE BERNEY, WELL-KNOWN ASTORIAN PETER ROSCOE — AMONG OTHERS — HAVE ALL CAUGHT COVID. BERNEY SUCCUMBED TO IT. THIS DISEASE IS NOT MADE UP OR PLAYED UP.

If anything, evidence for these measures has done nothing but strengthen as the pandemic wears on. To get to the other side of this outbreak — alive and well, with loved ones alive, and with our economy salvageable — requires following these often-repeated precautions. There is an understandable human need for companionship, but this is not the time to be going to social clubs or hanging out in other settings where we may be exposed to air contaminated with viral particles.

In late July, Paliani recounted his increasing onset of serious symptoms: "my body ached all over; my neck muscles were taut and tired. My entire body muscular system seemed to be flooded with something like flu symptoms, accompanied by an overwhelming feeling of weakness in every muscle of my body. ... I was exhausted every minute of every hour of every day, just being in a wakened state. I have a chronic cough, and my rib cage muscles hurt. My lungs feel like they're made of lead."

Paliani wore a mask and rubber gloves when socializing. "But 90 percent of the others around me wore no masks. Of course, with all the knowledge I now have about how not to contract the virus, in retrospect, I simply would not have risked being around other people the past two weeks."

We must all learn this lesson. This is an easy virus to catch. It can kill you, or you can pass it on to somebody else who it may sicken or kill. Stay home as much as you can. When out and about, wear a mask over your mouth and nose.

If you don't yet know someone with covid, you soon will. Make sure it isn't you.



ELEMENTARY MY DEAR

Cartoon? Musical? Reality show? Take your choice!

By SYDNEY STEVENS
Observer columnist

I'm not a fan of reality shows. Certainly not shows like "Survivor" or "Big Brother." I find them stressful and scary and much worse than real reality — or whatever you call the reality we try to live through with grace and purpose on a daily basis. Or that's how I used to feel. I'm not so sure now. I think we are actually living in a reality far scarier than those television shows. For one thing, there's no off-button. And for another, there don't seem to be consistent rules.

I understand that in the television reality shows, there are often hidden cameras keeping track of the contestants' every move. But so are there in real life these days. Cameras lurk at stop lights and convenience stores, in hotel rooms and vacation rentals, at National Parks and public recreation areas.

And now there are "consequences" for speaking your mind, for worrying about your privacy, for disagreeing with authority. Yes, this reality show we wake up to every morning has become confusing. Worse, for some it has become deadly. Really? Yes, it's a reality.

Maybe a change of channels would be good — our real-life channels, I mean. Perhaps we could make this 21st century into a musical, instead. Something jazzy and upbeat like "Cabaret" — the 1972 movie version with Liza and Joel. But wait! Aren't we already in it?

That sinking feeling

With what's happening in our cities around the nation (at least two of them being uncomfortably close to home) I feel a lot like I did when I first



SYDNEY STEVENS PHOTO

Pinky and The Brain are cartoon characters. Any similarity to actual persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

saw Cabaret all those years ago. You know... that sinking feeling that while you've been enjoying yourself, the world around you has been going off in that proverbial handbasket. And the companion thought, "Is it too late?" Or the other companion thought — "Which part of all this have we been enjoying?"

In case you've forgotten, "Cabaret" is set in the seedy underbelly of early 1930s Berlin at the infamous (though fictional) Kit Kat Klub. The movie is a metaphor for political developments as Weimar Germany transitions into Nazi Germany. At first, we are struck by the glitz and glamor of it all but, gradually, the movie becomes darker, more menacing, building to the most moving song in the show, "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," sung by the sweet-faced Nazi youth. Is it happening again, only this time are we right in the midst of it all? Is it already too late, as it was for Sally and her friends?

And, if we're not in the middle of 1938 in the Weimer Republic with its decadent excesses and its "Look over here! No, over here!" distractions... if not in that movie, maybe we're in

a television cartoon. Pinky and the Brain comes to mind. Every episode began with this bit of dialogue:

"What are we going to do tonight, Brain?"

"Same thing we do every night, Pinky. Try to take over the world."

Metaphors abound

Of course, they always fail. They are lab mice, after all. Lab mice that have been genetically enhanced and reside in a cage in the Acme Labs research facility. Brain is self-centered and scheming, while Pinky is good-natured but somewhat dim-witted. Surely an accurate metaphor for some of our current leadership.

In each episode, Brain devises a new plan to take over the world which ultimately ends in failure: usually due to his own arrogance or overconfidence, the impossibility of his plan, Pinky's bumbling, or just circumstances beyond their control. Frequently, Pinky comes off as the more thoughtful of the two, regardless of his limited thinking skills. (I'm not sure that part of my metaphor applies to our current real-life cartoon.)

I'm unabashedly partial to "Pinky and the Brain" for all sorts of reasons, the most important of which is that my son Charlie Howell was a writer and producer for the show. Plus, he won an Emmy and an Annie and I don't know what-all else. Moms are always last to know.

But, mostly, cartoons are fun. I wish we were in a fun reality. Not a nightmarish one. Not a Big Brotherish one. Not one where our leader might as well be a genetically altered lab mouse but without any fun or cleverness to the plot at all. But... maybe we could at least end this episode with a song. An upbeat one, please!

Time to paint the house



COAST CHRONICLES
By CATE GABLE

Our bodies, ourselves

But before we get to the real house, let's take a metaphoric detour. House/home is a such a useful image for aspects of where we are right now. First, there is our ultimate "home" — our body, which since the turning of the new year has been endangered by a microscopic and deadly virus that the current administration first tried to pooh-pooh, then lie away, and now has simply ignored.

But how well our body-homes are suited to defend themselves to the virus is a hot topic these days. One interesting data point is that some doctors think Vitamin D deficiency may play a role in how severe a virus bout might be if you get the disease. And small clots throughout the body's organs and tissues may be responsible for the damage to organs, neurological functions (like taste and smell), and other strange symptoms that are cropping up.

In these days of pandemic and thoughts about illness, I've taken a deep dive into the massive and magnificently written book, "The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer," by Siddhar Mukherjee. (It won the Pulitzer Prize for general non-fiction in 2011.) I've had it on my bookshelf for a couple years but just couldn't get into it until last week. True, it's a book about cancer, not about covid-19, but Mukherjee's careful and articulately written detail about how disease, cells, chromosomes, DNA and RNA work together has given me an amazing view into these homes we walk around in all day and sleep in all night. Our bodies are the elegant and unlikely culmination of billions of years of biological engineering. In recent years, medical researchers are discovering more information about how these systems work. We've come a long way from blood-letting.

At first I thought, "Jeez, Cate, couldn't you have picked a slightly more upbeat book to get you through these terrifying days of plague?" But sometimes the world just lays items at your feet and you walk the path before you. The book is brilliant. I highly recommend it if you have any interest at all in the fascinating workings of the body. It's certainly not your typical "summer reading" title — but, hey, this isn't our typical summer either.

Where we live

The second definition for "home" is, of course, where we live — this stunning and beautiful location at the edge of the sea, at "the end of the world." I'm sorry to say but I'm pretty damn angry with our so-called county leaders who opened us up to the thousands of out-of-towners over the



TONY WEBSTER PHOTO

The Equality House, a rainbow-colored house in Kansas, pretty much covers the spectrum when it comes to selecting a paint color.

Fourth of July weekend. It's true some of these revelers came and respected our home — but many trashed it royally. I wonder what our businesses reaped in profit and whether it's worth the exchange for the dramatic uptick in the number of covid cases we now have and the burden to our environment?

I've been watching for months the daily count sent out by the Washington Department of Health (www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus); these numbers are arranged by county and include positive cases and deaths. We're still not close to the more dramatically affected counties like Yakima or King counties; but it's worth noting that our numbers more than doubled in July. Jerry Phillips is the first mayor of any city in Washington state to have tested positive; and the poop report shows that the number of (mostly unaccounted for) virus cases is probably in the hundreds.

This means the virus is spreading now at a community level — whereas before we had a very small number of cases, boosted up slightly by a couple outbreaks at fish packing houses across the river. We all know that our capacity here for treating the virus — hospital beds, respirators, doctors, etc. — is minuscule. Anyone really sick will need to be transported elsewhere.

And now, friend and community booster Joe Paliani has the virus and bravely posted a note to all in Facebook about his symptoms. We wish for him and Charlotte that his case is a light one, and that Joe returns to his lively quirky self soon.

And for our county — we are left with the most basic virus-defense tools now since even our testing and contact tracing capacity is limited: wear a mask, wash your hands, socially distance and/or stay home if you can. Please be guided by the advice of medical practitioners and not by those peddling divisive political misinformation. We must all commit to keeping ourselves and other community members healthy.

Four walls and a roof

Now for the care and feeding of my four-walled house. It's hard to believe but the summer is waning; we're at least halfway through and, though it's sad to think about, the days are getting shorter. But, shorter or longer, these days of covid have meant lots of extra

time and no clear motivation for how to make use of it, at least for me, until a few days ago.

I'd lived for a couple seasons with failed seals on double pane windows until early this spring when my windows got replaced. We left the job of unpainted trim and surround caulking for better weather. Then the virus hit and everything normal came to a screeching halt. Floating in a non-specific miasma, I sort of forgot about the next house project until, suddenly, yesterday morning I woke up and said to myself, "OMG, I've got to paint the house!"

Choosing a color to paint your house is like trying to name a boy band with an unruly group of six opinionated musicians. And once you open up the world of paint possibilities — well, you immediately see the problem: Aurora Brown, Lemon Verbena, Pinecone Hill, Pottery Wheel, Lunar Surface, Shitake Comstalk, Thatched Roof, Incognito ... in my next life I'd like to be a paint-namer (these are akin to the folks who name roses). What do these paint companies do? — throw a series of random nouns and adjective into a hat and take turns pulling out combinations?

Anyway, for my guiding principle I decided on "distinctive but not wacky" and went about trying to figure out what that meant. I now have six or seven little swatches of color painted onto the side of my house. I've driven around the neighborhood surreptitiously taking photos of houses I like and noticing a lot of houses about which one can only say, "There is no accounting for taste."

On the other hand, the incredible variety of color combinations in our community is surely an example of the vast uniqueness of human thought and freedom. Paint choice is a great representation of our differences; and, yet, the fact that we all mostly get along in our little hamlet is endearing. I'm still noodling over my choices and, surprisingly, I have wandered into an entirely new folio of tones consisting of Tin Foil, Dolphin Fin, Night Club, and Intellectual (really, what color is an intellectual?). I'm counting on another month and a half or so of good weather while I decide.

In the meantime, I hope you're all safe in your homes, glad to be living in our amazing community, and grateful for the gift of a healthy body.

ANIMAL SHELTER REPORT

Sweetheart Coconut is the Pet of the Week

By CORY MCKEOWN
For the Observer

Coconut came to the shelter in late May, along with her four tiny kittens. They went together to a loving foster home, and once they got old enough, her kittens were adopted.

She is a petite snow-white beauty with cute pink ears and golden eyes. Coconut is a young girl, about 2 to 3 years old, is active but out of the ram-bunctious kitten stage.

Her foster mom describes her as "extremely sweet" and "super affectionate." She loves petting but does not like to be picked up, not unusual for cats. When visitors go into the Kitty Playroom, she often goes running up to them hoping for attention. She gets along OK with most cats and has been introduced to dogs.

As Pet of the Week, Coconut's adoption fee has been halved to just \$27.50 and she is fully vetted, including spayed, chipped, flea-treated, and wormed. She will make someone wanting an affectionate kitty a wonderful companion.

Because the shelter is still open only by appointment, we ask that people interested in adopt-



JOYCE LANG PHOTO

Coconut

ing one of the shelter pets like Coconut visit our website beachpets.com or Petfinder, complete an application, and send it to us electronically. Staff reviews applications, and once an application is approved, the interested adopter will be contacted, and arrangements made to meet the pet in person.

Kitten Palooza still happening!

We have had some wonderful adoptions with our kittens, but we still have more hoping to find their loving forever homes. If you are interested in adopting, please view the available kittens on our website beachpets.com and follow the instructions for adopting as stated above.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

County commissioner contest is pointless

The "debate" between Dan Driscoll and Frank Wolfe, candidates for Pacific County commissioner seems pointless.

Driscoll provides praiseworthy performance as Oysterville Sea Farms owner and Wolfe has provided praiseworthy service as District 2 commissioner over the past eight years. Both should simply stand in place, sparing us ongoing diatribes.

ROBERT BRAKE
Ocean Park

Follow the facts, not flock mentality

If you are familiar with terms and events such as indentured servitude, genocide, the holocaust, then you should recognize one of the common elements: Subjugation.

Subjugation cares not

about your political affiliation, or socioeconomic status. It's sole purpose is to bring you under control.

If you don't see even the slightest element of subjugation in action under the current circumstances and activities in our nation and around the world, then you need to take the blinders off. Likewise, we need to take the muzzles off and start asking a lot of very serious questions and settle for nothing but indisputable, factual, accurate and consistent answers that come from real scientific data, not manipulated models and conjectures of a few talking heads.

All political parties are culpable and working in lockstep with the handlers of this event, which has little to do with our health and wellbeing, and everything to do with a major reset of wealth, power and control around the world, which is certainly affecting our health and

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LETTER OF THANKS

Community comes through for covid sufferer

As many of you know Joe tested positive for the virus with symptoms. We are so grateful to the Health Department and to our friends in the community for their concern and caring and offers of

assistance to us at this trying time. Myranda Heckard and Amanda Berube from the Health Department made our transition from the positive result to isolation very easy. Shelly at Willapa Harbor Hospital was helpful and consoling. Amanda has been with us every step of the way and every day checks on us. Howard Chang has been in constant contact. So many of our

friends have offered to assist us with shopping, post office pick up, dropping off supplies, including the Peninsula Senior Center. Although the list is long, a special thank you to Dixie Wood, Michael Goldberg, Kathy Condron, Kathie Smith, Leah Gonder and Nanci Main.

CHARLOTTE and
JOE PALIANI
Ocean Park

Leadbetter

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bridge burning are to be tried summary by drum-head court-martial, and, if found guilty, executed on the spot by hanging. It would be well to leave their bodies hanging in the vicinity of the burned bridges."

Commanding Confederate forces in the area, Leadbetter complied with apparent relish, ordering alleged Union guerilla fighters strung up following a brisk kangaroo court. An article about the event states, "He gained renown in the North when he ordered the members of the rebellion [against the Confederacy] to be left hanging for four days after their execution."

Leadbetter afterward gushed, "The execution of the bridge burners is producing the happiest effect. ... Insurgents will continue for yet a while in the mountains, but I trust that we have secured the outward obedience of the people."

Some might call this terrorism. Facing near-certain prosecution for taking up arms against the United States — and perhaps for war crimes — Leadbetter slipped into exile in Mexico after the Southern defeat, soon after dying in Canada in September 1866.

Confederate in Pacific County

Leadbetter Point slumbered in mosquito-bitten obscurity for decades, few if any giving thought to who Leadbetter was, why he was memorialized with a geographical name, or why he might not deserve to still have that recognition.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission acquired 1,732 acres of the point between 1958 and 2005 through 10 separate purchases and exchange. The park was formally named on Oct. 21, 1974, according to an official history.

The peninsula was book-ended on its south end by Fort Canby State Park — named for one of

Leadbetter's Civil War opponents, Union Gen. Edward Canby, who lost his life in 1873 while trying to peacefully settle a conflict with the Modoc Tribe near the Oregon-California state line. In the 2003 run-up to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, the parks commission renamed the popular destination for its most famous geographical feature, Cape Disappointment.

North of Leadbetter State Park, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Leadbetter Unit of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge also inadvertently pays tribute to the hanging rebel of Eastern Tennessee.

Time for a change

It's time — actually it's a century and a half overdue — to walk away from Gen. Leadbetter. There's no indication he ever repented of profiting from the plantation system, fighting on its behalf, betraying his nation, or hanging patriotic countrymen who were formally serving the Union cause. His long-forgotten suc-

cess as a nautical surveyor here in no way makes up for his dastardly deeds on the other side of the century.

Deleting Leadbetter's name may elicit squeals about political correctness or not sugarcoating history. In fact, it is correct — politically, morally and historically — to strip this particular scandal-blackened name off a landmark, park and refuge that bask in the glorious Pacific Ocean air and light. Yes, scattered descendants of Confederate refugees made their way to the Pacific Northwest. But we have no reason to remember — far less honor — a man who betrayed our nation to the cause of white supremacy. Let his name linger on as a Wikipedia entry, not as the moniker of a place cherished by birdwatchers, beachcombers and wandering wolverines.

What should it be renamed? The obvious answer is to turn to our friends in the Chinook Indian Nation. What was it called in the centuries before arro-

gant English-speaking sea captains and chart makers drifted by? If that name is lost to the tragedies of time, there is no shortage of appropriate Chinook heroes to honor — perhaps Charles Cultee, whose singular voice and astounding memory saved an entire civilization's folk wisdom from slipping into extinction. Or perhaps a more modern Chinook hero should be memorialized — slain U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens instantly springs to mind.

For the modest cost of replacing some signs and updating websites, we can go from honoring the clunky and reprehensible Leadbetter to a bright name grounded in the rich history and heritage of our own place. As we learned during the 2018 campaign to change Jim Crow Creek, Jim Crow Hill and Jim Crow Point in Wahkiakum County to Harlow Creek, Beare Hill and Brookfield Point, the renaming process is not without hurdles. But this is a change worth avidly pursuing.