

Airbnb fails to meet rental standards

No longer a mom-and-pop, starving-student operation, the Airbnb Community is a \$30 billion global company.

At the time of this writing, according to a March 2017 study conducted by CBRE Hotels' America Research, 40 percent of Airbnb's revenue is driven by multi-unit owner/investors. These are people who buy and rent out entire dwellings and then also rent out two or more properties — people for whom this is clearly a business and not simply a way to make ends meet or to supplement a fixed income.

Over the last years, Seaside, Astoria, and Cannon Beach have experienced the effects of this unregulated dynamic dramatically eroding the livability and small business environment in our towns.

The proliferation of Airbnb's unlicensed, unregulated "illegal hotel" operations extracts profits from our communities.

This proliferation broadsides local law-abiding owner/operators, negatively impacts neighborhoods, zoning ordinances, regulatory compliance and tax revenues.

Airbnb inventory consumes residences that otherwise could be available as affordable housing for local families.

This consumption also perpetuates "urban creep," forcing unnecessary development.

Consequently, Airbnb impacts our natural environment, such as the 40-unit Wahanna complex that was approved proximate to a wetland area based on the need for more affordable housing.

If Airbnb complied with existing ordinances and if Seaside had monitored its activity, illegal Airbnb housing might have been available for families to rent and the wetlands would not have been an issue.

Did this factor into the equation when making the decision to approve the new complex?

GUEST COLUMN
CYNTHIA MALKOWSKI



Failing to agree to operate in a transparent way, Airbnb also appears not to comply with short-term rental regulations, licensing, tax, zoning laws or any other public health requirements.

When Seaside (or Clatsop County) tacitly turns a blind eye, this creates an unfair playing field that disadvantages those of us who live here and who create jobs by participating in our community.

We are the ones who have to make it through winter.

Airbnb, in an attempt to maintain secrecy and unfair advantage, approached Seaside with its own contract called a voluntary collection agreement, which it wants the city to sign.

This is like a stranger approaching you to ask if you want some candy.

The terms imply that taxation and licensing will somehow be addressed, yet the city will not have access to the information it needs in order to verify overnight stays and the number of Airbnb properties.

The contract would allow Airbnb to be audited once within a 48-month period, prevent transparency by failing to disclose the addresses for neighbors to know who is next door, side-step licensing requirements and be exempt from a tax look-back. Wow.

If Seaside inks this contract, we should all be able to have those same terms.

A March 2017 report entitled "Airbnb Agreements with Local and State Tax Agencies" demonstrates the following:

- Unjustified favoritism for Airbnb and its lodging operators,
- Improperly ceding tax authority to Airbnb,

- Granting huge benefits to third-parties who have not signed the agreements,
- Unfair treatment of other taxpayers, businesses and citizens,
- Violating standards of transparency and democratic governance,
- Undermining compliance with tax and regulatory laws
- Spreading undesirable precedents through laws patterned after the agreements.

Our municipalities must insist on the same ground rules that govern the rest of us, which include voluntary disclosure agreements, not VCAs, that require entities to pay taxes, hold proper licensing, and open books for audits.

Our municipal leaders must enforce compliance as a condition for Airbnb doing business within the city limits of our town.

In addition, according to Seaside's two-year strategic goals plan, our leaders must move quickly to define the parameters and enforceability of VRD/STR permits. How much is too much?

In the meantime, until this goal is clearly accomplished, instead of approving VRDs by the handful every month as has been the trend, I request the following in order to protect our community:

- A directive to all entities such as Airbnb, Vacasa, Flipkey, VRBO, Homeaway, to cease business within the city of Seaside until such time that they demonstrate that they abide by the same rules as our other compliant businesses.
- A moratorium on any more VRD/STR licensing, until the city is able and willing to define its goals and the means of enforcing these goals

An overture on the part of the city to assure advocates of local businesses, affordable housing and land conservancy that our concerns regarding the threat by illegally operating entities will be substantively addressed.

Cynthia Malkowski is general manager of Arch Cape Inn & Retreat.

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OBITUARIES

Michael William Knop May 3, 1958 — May 13, 2017

Mike, the Wheel, was born in Detroit, Michigan, on May 3, 1958, and died in Central Oregon on May 13, 2017.

After high school, Mike started his journey to the West Coast with stops in Denver, Colorado, and Kennewick, Washington.

Mike met Barb in Denver — thanks to Barb's twin sister — in the summer of 1982, when Barb was on vacation and needed a golf partner. The couple came to Cannon Beach for the summer of 1983, and never left. Mike and Barb were married on the beach in Cannon Beach on June 30, 1984, with all members of their immediate families in attendance. Mike was a painting contractor in Cannon Beach.

Mike's side of the family in-

cludes: his father, Bill; brother, Larry and Barb No. 2 (Amanda, Alex); sister, Jane and Ken Bridge (Christopher and Roxanne, Sara and Joe and Josh); brother, Phil; and Aunt "Joe" and the camping cousins, Kris (Tim), Kate and Kelly (Doug). He was preceded in death by his mother, Irene.

Barb's side of the family includes: brothers-in-law, Jim and Marianne Eggers, (Nathan, Rachel, Brooklyn, Courtney), Steve and Di Eggers, (Emily and Michael, Kelly, Stephanie), Phil Eggers, Joe and Lori Eggers (Jacob, Zach); sisters-in-law, Margaret Zerr (Michael, Cassandra), Katy and Jeff Eucker (Adam, Alyssa), Mary and Tom Davis (Anna), and Patty and Dana (Nicole, Melanie,

Zach); a niece, Jennifer (Jon) Johnson; and 12 great-nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his father and mother-in-law, Stew and Patricia Eggers; brothers-in-law, Fred Zerr and Paul Eggers; brother and sister-in-law, Alden and Tina Thomas; and a niece, Allison Thomas.

Mike and Barb were extremely lucky to have had two wonder dogs. Boomer was the first dog, and Zoomer followed. Boomer and Zoomer were a big part of Mike's heart.

Mike requested a party, and his party will be held on Saturday, June 10 (Belmont Day) at Cheri's Café in downtown Cannon Beach, starting at 2 p.m. To honor Mike's life, do not buy flowers, but rather plant some-

thing permanent. Mike would want you to wear casual, colorful clothes to his party. Mike believed in living life to the fullest, chasing dreams, placing bets, cherishing and cultivating relationships, enjoying hobbies, learning something new every day and reading.

It was important for Mike to live in paradise, catch and release and spend quality time with friends, especially at Cheri's. Horse racing, brewing beer, cooking great meals, baseball, hockey and fly fishing were Mike's favorite pastimes.

Hughes-Ransom Mortuary and Crematory is handling the arrangements. Visit the memorial tribute at www.hughes-ransom.com to leave a message or sign the online guest book.

Auditions for 'Alice in Wonderland' for Clatsop youth

The time has come for all young theater lovers in Clatsop County to take a trip to Wonderland.

During summer, all local grade-school children have the opportunity to take part in a production of "Alice in Wonderland (and Back Again)," written by Randy Wyatt and based on the books by Lewis Carroll. The play

will be directed by Seaside resident Katherine Lacaze.

Auditions will be held at 5:30 p.m. Friday, June 9, at the Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A in Seaside. The play features dozens of fun roles, large and small, including Alice, the Queen and King of Hearts, the Mad Hatter, the White Rabbit, and flowers, soldiers and ju-

rors galore. No prior acting experience is necessary.

Rehearsals will take place in Seaside a couple times per week from mid-June to August. The performances are scheduled for Aug. 18, 19 and 20 at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.

The program is being provided to children for free, thanks to support from the

recreation district and a grant from the Clatsop County Cultural Coalition.

Organizers also are looking for community volunteers to help with costumes, set design and stage management. For more information or audition requirements, contact Lacaze at 503-741-5668 or find Alice Comes to Seaside on Facebook.

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