

Saadat: Overt forms of discrimination may be resurfacing

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“And it changes the way we think of the dynamic and, perhaps, our approach to making a change.”

Pleased that she lived long enough to see progress toward civil rights and equality and the election of President Barack Obama, she cautioned that some of the overt forms of discrimination in the past, such as poll taxes that kept many blacks from voting, might be resurfacing in trends like tougher voter identification laws.

“Why do you want to keep people from voting? Who wants to keep people from voting? What is the outcome of that for the individual, for the collective, and for the entire unit — the government?” she asked.

“If you’re not asking yourself these questions. You should. You should. It’s important.”

Saadat also said protests over the Ferguson shooting and sim-



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The crowd listens to a speech by Kathleen Sadaat Friday at the Judge Guy Boyington Building.

ilar unrest in cities across the United States and the world are driven by some of the same social inequalities that influenced

the civil rights movement.

“When I say movement, I want you to envision hundreds and hundreds of people all across this

country singing, praying, marching, determined to make a difference. Somebody got them out of their chairs, out of their living

rooms, out of their kitchens,” she said. “And people said ‘no more.’

“That feels to me like some of that’s in the air right now.”

The Clatsop Community College appearance was presented by the Lower Columbia Diversity Project and the college’s Isms, Obias and Us Committee. An evening event at the Judge Guy Boyington Building was presented by the Lower Columbia Diversity Project.

Organizers are also planning to honor King with a candlelight walk through downtown Astoria tonight at 5:30 starting at the corner of 12th and Commercial streets.

At the Friday evening event, Saadat spoke of King’s emphasis on what he considered the triple evils of poverty, racism and militarism and the need for all people to work together toward the “dream of a beloved community.”

She preached against cynicism. “Don’t let go,” she implored. “Hold on. Don’t let go.”

Emily Carlson, 21, a Clatsop

Community College student, said it was moving to hear from someone who had faced discrimination firsthand.

“Hearing it from the heart of somebody that experienced it, it’s really meaningful,” she said.

James Sherman, 19, who serves in the Oregon Army National Guard and is involved with the Tongue Point Job Corps, said Saadat’s perspective is something he is not used to hearing from his fellow soldiers.

“I kind of got another person’s point of view,” he said.

Saadat said after the community college appearance that the value of speaking about race and equality with audiences in places such as Astoria, which is predominantly white, is “getting people to think.

“If they choose to think, they will,” she said. “And, perhaps, because they’ve been in this room together, they will find one or two people here with whom they can talk about these issues.”

Trial: Defense attorneys claim possibility of death penalty requires additional time to prepare

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Alana Smith and her father, Gregory Smith, have both expressed a desire to have the case tried as soon as possible and not to delay the case another year. Preferably, they would like the trial this summer or no later than winter.

“The defense is essentially arguing that their need to prepare trumps any right of the victim to a speedy trial,” Marquis wrote.

The dispute over the trial date will be brought up at the next scheduled hearing 2 p.m. Thursday in Clatsop County Circuit Court before Judge Cindee Matyas.

Smith’s defense attorneys William Falls and Lynne Morgan filed a written response last week to Marquis’ motion for a “date certain” for the trial.

Falls and Morgan claim the possibility of the death penalty requires additional time to prepare Smith’s defense.

Smith, 40, of Goldendale, Wash., pleaded not guilty Aug. 12 to aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder. Smith is accused of drowning her 2-year-old daughter Isabella Smith and cutting the throat of Alana Smith in Room 3302 at the Surfside Resort.

Smith’s defense attorneys cite a 429-page law journal from Hofstra Law School that argues defense attorneys are allowed more time in cases involving the death penalty.

Marquis said he has not decided if he will pursue the death penalty.

In his response, Marquis admits the law journal does summarize some American Bar Association guidelines for pro-

viding effective defense council. However, he questions parts of the law journal that he says, “urges the highly controversial use (not known by the state to be allowed yet in Oregon) of so-called Defense Initiated Victim Outreach.” A DIVO defense team member reaches out to victims, survivors and family to help the defendant minimize responsibility for the death.

“The state is at a complete loss to understand what relevance a highly partisan article authored by many well-known defense lawyers and frequent defense expert witnesses stressing the need for mitigation investigation has to do with the trial setting,” Marquis wrote.

Another reason Falls and Morgan give for delaying the trial is they are both already scheduled for trial this year in two aggravated murder cases

in Clackamas and Multnomah counties.

“Defense counsel have pointed out they each have one other major case scheduled now. I would point out that my co-counsel, Ms. (Dawn) Buzard is co-counsel in TWO aggravated murder cases (including this case),” Marquis wrote. “The state’s point is that the ability to work on a single case at a given time is in fact a ‘luxury’ few lawyers enjoy.”

Smith’s defense attorneys also said they do not yet know who they intend to call as witnesses and what evidence they intend to introduce in trial because they are in the very beginning of preparing this case for trial.

From Sept. 4 to Dec. 8, Marquis has provided almost 2,759 pages of police reports, 36 separate CDs and DVDs, 853 pag-



Associated Press file

Jessica Smith is escorted from Clatsop County court after a hearing in her murder trial, Oct. 7, 2014, in Astoria. At the left is one her attorneys, William Falls. Smith is charged with aggravated murder and attempted aggravated murder, in the drowning death of her 2-year-old and cutting the throat of her teenage daughter.

es of photographs and detailed copies of the defendant’s statements to the defense counsel.

Marquis suspects in his filing that the defense is delaying as a “trial strategy.”

The defense’s proposed tri-

al date of 2016 would be more than two years after the incident.

“The need of the victim in particular to know WHEN she might be required to give testimony against her own mother is no small matter,” Marquis said.

McDowell: ‘I take charge in anything I do’

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McDowell’s back on deck now as a section leader of other student deckhands.

“I’m very strong-minded,” she said, crediting the trait to her grandmother. “I take charge in anything I do.”

She interned with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the Port of Portland’s dredge Oregon for about a month, dredging around Sand and Miller islands in the lower Columbia upstream from Astoria.

“I dealt with the same thing

there as I did here,” said McDowell, adding that she once again earned respect through her work.

Many women at Tongue Point get their Ordinary Seaman designation, said Montero, as it can already get you a good chance at job and is easier than going for the more all-encompassing Able Bodied Seaman (AB) certification McDowell said she’ll be getting the middle of next month.

“It’s patience,” she said. “I’ve seen two females here get fed up, say they didn’t want to do it anymore.”

Between 95 and 97 percent of all graduates get jobs after leaving Tongue Point Job Corps, said Montero.

McDowell wants to help transport people and equipment across water. She wants to start as an oiler, whose main job is lubricating the engine, with Edison Chouest Offshore, a global marine transportation company based in Louisiana. Her ultimate goal is with the Military Sealift Command, which provides transportation for the Department of Defense.

— By Edward Stratton

Gift: ‘The Westport community has been a good neighbor to us for the past 50 years’

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million, DEQ allowed the land to be donated in 2013 and the process was completed in December, topped with the celebration Friday.

“The Westport community has been a good neighbor to us for the past 50 years and since we weren’t using the property, it made sense that we donate it to the county so a nice facility could be created for the community to use,” Vice President and Mill Manager Steve Francoeur said.

At the Friday event, Clatsop County Parks Manager Steve Meshke laid out some future plans for the donated property, which include an existing recreational boat launch and private fishing dock. With ownership, the county can formally pursue grant funding to complete its Westport Corridor and Community Plan. The county’s proposed plan outlines improvements to the boat launch and park area and access to the Westport Ferry landing.

The plan relies on possible funding.

Meshke said he will submit a grant application to the Oregon State Marine Board by a March 31 deadline to fund improvements to the boat launch parking lot, possibly add restrooms and to help with the permitting process.

Once that is secured, funding will be sought for paving the parking lot and building a



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Georgia-Pacific Wauna Mill Vice President and Mill Manager Steve Francoeur speaks at a celebration to recognize the land donation that opens the door for a new Westport park. After a lengthy process that started in 2004, the mill completed the donation in December 2013.

new boat launch. Eventually, plans will move toward building new trails and rerouting Plympton Creek back to its original channel.

“In March, we will have something to at least get the parking lot cleaned up and start the permitting process,” Meshke said.

Lower Columbia River Council Watershed Coordinator Margaret Magruder — who is spearheading the effort to reconnect Plympton Creek with its historic channel, which could have a positive impact on fish habitat — said Friday she is seeking letters of support for possible grants.

State Senator Betsy Johnson, D-Scappoose, who attended the celebration event, assured the room that she

would gladly sign a letter of support on state Legislature letterhead.

“This, in my view, is another chapter in what I consider outstanding corporate citizenship,” Johnson said. “I think this is going to have regional ramifications when this gets known as a boat launch and as such an attractive amenity. You are going to attract visitors from all over the place.”

Kristi Ward, spokeswoman for the Wauna Mill, grew up in Westport and said the donated property presented a real opportunity for the local residents.

“If the community gets behind this, they can do whatever they want with it,” Ward said. “The sky is the limit on this project.”

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