

## Don't sign petitions

Our freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution are being whittled away by the liberal Democrats. Are we once again to allow the liberals to take away our freedom to choose?

Presently the voters of Clatsop County choose the Port of Astoria's commissioners from a slate of prospective candidates. Both petitions that are being presented, if passed, will take away our freedom to choose whom our Clatsop County Port commissioners should be. The Port is an important source of revenue for the whole county, not just Astoria or Warrenton. We should be allowed, as a county, to choose who these people are who will be the administrators of this public service, the Port of Astoria.

Dianne Widdop, mayor of Gearhart, proposes that the governor of our state appoint the commissioners — apparently, she believes the voters are not intelligent enough to make good decisions or the right decision.

Larry Taylor who is the chairman of the Democratic Party of Clatsop County, believes that, again, the voters need help, so we should divide the county up into districts. If this passes, you will only be allowed to choose a candidate from your small district, not the whole county.

Will we allow the liberal Democrats to take away our freedom to choose? It is up to you, Clatsop County voters, to stop them now. Don't sign the petitions. Read them, be informed, by all means, but think of what you will give away if either proposal passes.

KAREN CUSTER  
Seaside

## Money madness

It's springtime in Astoria, the economy has improved, and the smell of money is in the air. It's an intoxicating scent to development zealots, some of whom would drastically alter the profile and demographic of our fair city. And all for the sake of the one thing valued above all else: Money.

H.L. Menken said, "When somebody says it's not about the money, it's about the money." In the present circumstance, if they say it's about jobs and the community, it's about money — money that will make rich developers and investors richer, and will ultimately drive up our property taxes, displace old established businesses, fill our sidewalks with strangers and destroy the small-town atmosphere that most of us love.

A case in point is the proposal of Great Ocean Capital Holdings LLC CEO Huy Ying Chen, who recently arrived in town with a broad vision that would have made John J. Astor giddy. In maturity, it would include an international airport and a 30-acre visitor center that he likens to San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf.

The ingredient missing in his vision is an understanding of what community and livability mean. Is he aware that most resident San Franciscans consider Fisherman's Wharf a crass tourist trap, and avoid it like the plague?

The first phase of Chen's proposal, creation of a privately owned shipping port at Tongue Point, is most seductive because it promises jobs in the relatively short term. The purchase of North Tongue Point is particularly attractive to the Port of Astoria, because it would allow the Port respite from an onerous lease and compensation.

The danger of allowing a conglomerate of Great Ocean investors to plunk down \$220 million on the first phase of their project is that it gives them tremendous leverage to develop the rest of their vision. Political and economic leveraging is the norm whenever big money from outside of the area is allowed to get a foothold. Witness the gyrations and duplicity that have resulted from the Port of Astoria's autocratic decision to open the door for Westerland Log Handlers to export logs to China from Astoria's waterfront.

When dealing with those who want to bring Fisherman's Wharf to Astoria, or wish to rebrand Astoria and make it more like Mississippi Ave-

# Mayor explains dog park postponement

Dear Friends of the Dog Park, As you know, at the April 6 City Council meeting, we voted to delete our goal of supporting the building of a dog park here in Astoria for this fiscal year. This decision was not made lightly, and I'd like to explain the reasons behind our decision.

City Council goals are a road map for what the council believes we should work on for the year. They are developed by the City Council to provide direction to the city staff for how we want them to use their time and money. A goal should be attainable, or should at least show some progress during the fiscal year. Due to staffing and financial limitations, we knew this goal was unattainable for now, so we asked that it be deleted.

Parks and Recreation Director Angela Cosby has spent many long hours trying to develop a dog park. As you know, the search for a site has proven extremely frustrating. Site visits, community meetings, meetings with the Dog Park committee, phone calls, etc., have brought us no closer to find-

ing a site. We thought we had at least a temporary site at John Warren Field, but we found out the site was going to be used for the Combined Sewer Overflow staging area.

You may remember that during the Eighth Street CSO project, all the supplies and equipment were stored at a lot at Eighth Street and Irving Avenue. This time the work is being done on 16th-18th streets, and the construction company needed a staging area closer to their job site. We may still be able to use John Warren Field as a temporary dog park at the completion of the CSO project, but it won't be this year. If we were able to use that field, it would make start-up costs far less. There's already established sod and also some fencing we could utilize. Ms. Cosby has estimated that, should we find a site and have to develop it from scratch, the start-up costs would be about \$200,000 with annual maintenance costs of between \$16,000-\$20,000. The city simply doesn't have that kind of money.

The Parks Department is going to be working on a Parks Master Plan this

year, trying to determine what the community wants most in terms of parks and recreation services. If the dog park rises to the top, the Parks Board may decide we need to push for the dog park and perhaps eliminate some other services. I do know that many of the Parks Board members have questioned the development of any other facilities until we can properly maintain the parks that we have.

Our decision to remove the dog park from city goals is not to shut down the idea. We have said that, due to staffing and financial reasons, the Parks Department should no longer pursue this goal during the fiscal year 2015-2016.

One suggestion might be to investigate developing a dog park independently of the city. We seem to have run out of options for land owned by the city, but maybe a private owner would donate some land, and you could build the facility with private funds. I'd be happy to donate to the cause!

ARLINE LAMEAR  
Mayor of Astoria

nue, as was suggested to the business association by their visionary for hire, the motto should be "go slow and keep the door bolted."

Even innocuous-sounding proposals, such as the enterprise zone, should be looked at with a jaundiced eye, especially since it requires partnering with the bungling and self-serving Port of Astoria.

ROGER DORBAND  
Astoria

## Excellent lifeguards

According to the Center for Disease Control's Injury Prevention: Lifeguards have always provided first aid as well as rescue. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and general first aid training are standard requirements for most lifeguards. In addition, many lifeguards are now both trained and certified to use advanced lifesaving tools such as the external defibrillator and potable oxygen.

During spring break, Astoria Aquatic Center Manager

Pam Pearce held a training session, open to public viewing. She is a hard worker and takes her job seriously. After all, how many aquatics managers do you know who lap swim during the week? Why does she do this? Rather than run the pool a guard short, she stands in for guards who don't show. That doesn't happen too often.

Guards who are either slothful, unreliable, or irresponsible are let go. No nonsense with her, and her teenaged guards a step up to the plate because of it. They have adult responsibility, and they know it. One of their lead guards is only 17, yet he's applying to be a fireman. These "minors" are making things happen in their lives, and in our community. Too young, you might say? Well, our grandparents went to war at that age. Ask them if they think it's too young to lifeguard.

Most of these guards are on the swim team, and swim miles each week. And it shows. There were three stations around the pool that night. All the guards rotated to all the stations to

demonstrate different rescue scenarios. They demonstrated their abilities to rescue an active drowning victim, an inactive drowning victim, a submerged victim, a victim with a broken neck, victims that weren't breathing, and victims whose hearts had stopped.

They exhibited knowledge on how to use advanced lifesaving tools ... the external defibrillator and portable oxygen just as the CDC states they should. I am impressed in a positive way. I am grateful for these professional lifeguards who provide a safe environment at our pool.

DANE JACONETTI  
Hammond

## Orcas wanted

Just a comment on the sea lion problem in Astoria and Newport: Rather than us humans constantly trying to find a way to reduce the sea lion population, why not bring in a few orcas, since they are the sea lions' natural predator and a most tasty delicacy?

I hear SeaWorld and other marine entertainment parks are being pressured to release these wonderful mammals back into the wild. Astoria could be a great location to host such a rehabilitation project, and never worry about what to feed them, either.

Just a thought.  
THERESA ROBERTS  
Pacific City

## Dig safe

Spring is in the air, and gardeners in Astoria will soon start working in their yards. If that work includes digging, NW Natural reminds you to first call 811 — the Utility Notification Center — to locate underground gas and other utility lines.

This is a free service and it's not only a smart thing to do to help prevent damage, it's the law. Once you call, a technician will visit the property within two business days to locate your gas and utility lines.

If a gas line has been accidentally damaged, remember

to: "Smell. Go. Let us know." If you smell rotten eggs or hear a hissing sound, immediately leave the area on foot and then call 911 and NW Natural's 24-hour emergency line at 800-882-3377.

Be safe this spring and be sure to call before you dig.

TERESA ACCUARDI  
NW Natural community affairs manager  
Astoria

## Stop the sea lions

Unfortunately, there has been a record-setting invasion of California sea lions this year. These mammals are not only loud and obnoxious, but they are not letting fishermen get to their boats, and harming other tame animals. Without any state help, there needs to be a stop. These animals are a danger to society, and before something really bad happens, there needs to be change.

It is just a matter of time before an adult or little kid goes running down to the dock and gets bitten or maybe even worse. These sea lions are a nuisance to Clatsop County because of their diet; they are killing salmon, which are essential to the Columbia River fishermen and the ecosystem. If we do not put a stop to these killers, it will get more out of hand than it already is.

TYSON BURNARD  
Astoria

## A valuable part

I believe a boatyard at the Port of Astoria is an integral part of this community, and ought to be preserved and improved by our Port, not dismantled.

The Port should honor its commitments to the fish processors, Englund Marine, and the other related industries which have pledged to be a part of the Port complex, and have put their moneys on the line to do so. The boatyard is a valuable part of this infrastructure and community.

Shame on the Port for even considering dismantling this facility.

JOSIE PEPER  
Astoria

# CLATSOP CASA THANKS YOU!

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Celebration for 2015 at the BRIDGEwater Bistro was a successful and enjoyable event, funding advocacy for a year for up to 20 more children who need a CASA! Thank you to our generous sponsors, donors, and volunteers. You truly are making a positive difference in children's lives.

## Special Thanks To:

Ann & Tony Kischner

Chef Geoff Gunn & the BRIDGEwater Bistro Staff

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Dave Drury and Todd Pederson – Basin Street NW Duo

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