

## College supports art

I have been pondering Rhonda Grudenic's letter published in *The Daily Astorian* on May 1 regarding the importance of art as part of a school's curriculum ("Art changes lives"). At first I appreciated the writer's supporting that importance. However, I am compelled to write on behalf of my dedicated colleagues at Clatsop Community College who do put a high priority on art.

I work as the dean of Transfer Education at the college, including the arts, and am also the college's institutional researcher. While true that in the spring of 2012, the college reduced the size of its full-time faculty by 67 percent (40 to 27), and one of the two full-time art instructors retired, section offerings in the Art Department went from an annual average in 2011-2012 of 21 classes per term to 18 classes per term in the following year. In the current year, the college offered an average of 19 classes per term.

In addition, the college and its dedicated art faculty continue to support a world class teaching gallery, featuring five exhibitions per year, including the internationally known Au Naturel and a cultural art exchange from New Zealand. The college's level of support for these activities has not declined since the financial challenges of 2012.

What has changed is student enrollment. In the 2012 academic year, there were an average of 129 enrollments in art classes per term. In the current academic year, the average enrollments per term is 101. This decline is not significantly different from the college's total enrollment decline over the same period.

These facts suggest that Grudenic may be aiming her barbs at the wrong target. The strained condition of the arts in the college, and in Oregon's schools generally, can be directly linked to the state's retreat from support of one its core responsibilities, public education.

Years of a state government that has difficulty saying no to interest groups have spread the state's resources so thinly that Oregon recently was ranked second to the lowest (49th) among the 50 states (recently improved to 46th). K-12 education has been similarly squeezed to the detriment of the visual and performing arts, the lack of which may arguably contribute to the challenges of teaching basic skills, as Grudenic points out.

Please realize that your community college, while struggling with limited resources, is not responding to the detriment of art offerings. And I can assure you that our art faculty remains committed to providing a quality experience for students seeking one.

I am writing this on my own time and not as a representative of the college. The opinions expressed are my own and do not necessarily represent those of the college.

THOMAS GILL  
Astoria

## Vote Jan Horning

In the upcoming election on Tuesday, May 19, there is a very important contest: For Position 5 on the Astoria School Board.

In May 2013, the majority of the current board voted down a proposed school-based health center at Astoria High School that would have provided lab services, screenings, preventative health, primary care, mental health services, educational material and counseling.

It is important to remember that there are young people in our area who have an especially hard time getting access to services due to homelessness, abusive home situations and other factors. They are the ones who desperately need the extra help that our community can provide.

# Special cruise guests visit Astoria

On May 5, Norwegian Jewel cruise ship passengers Victor and Tedra from Germany, who belong to Lions Clubs International, came to Astoria specifically to exchange their local Lions Club flag with Astoria's local Lions International Club.

They stepped off the bus in downtown Astoria and immediately met my husband, Cruise Host Lenard Hansen, who happens to belong to the Astoria Lions Club. He took the couple to the local Lions Club meeting/lunch, which just happened to take place at the same time.

There, Victor and Tedra were introduced to the Astoria club, and the Astoria Lions received the German Lions Club flag, and the visiting Lions couple received Astoria Lions Club mementos in exchange. Present at the Lions Club lunch were the Scandinavia Court members who also met and talked with the visiting German club members. After the meeting Lions Club member Norm Davis, also a Cruise Host, took the couple sightseeing around Astoria before taking them back to their cruise ship later that afternoon. The German couple expressed repeatedly that this visit to Astoria "made their whole trip," and stated that they would definitely be visiting Astoria again.

It is not unusual at all to experience this



Photo by Leonard Hansen

From left, German Lions Club members, cruise ship passengers Tedra and Victor, who were visiting Astoria for the day, are pictured with Astoria Lions Club President Nancy Lockett.

type of event as a volunteer cruise host with visiting cruise ship passengers. Many of us have similar-type stories of such events that take place, and our visitors share with us over and over how much a visit to Astoria has meant to them.

It's very humbling and satisfying to play a part in helping to make a cruise

ship passenger's "dream come true" while they visit Astoria. We receive thousands of sincere thank yous from our guests, and I want to share this experience with our awesome community, who help make our visitors' time in Astoria so special.

CINDY HANSEN  
Warrenton

I support Jan Horning for Position 5 on the school board. She is a special education teaching assistant, taught at Cannon Beach Preschool and worked at Astoria Middle School for 11 years. She served on the Olney School District Board, the PTA, Boy Scouts and other community organizations.

Her platform includes improving the graduation rate, promoting science, engineering and mathematics education and resuming dialogue on a health center.

If you feel strongly that the needs of Astoria's children come first, vote for Jan Horning.

ELIZABETH MENETREY  
Astoria

## Choose Talamantez

Joe Talamantez is currently serving Warrenton students as a member of the school board, and he is also active with community youth as a baseball and wrestling coach. He is dedicated to supporting excellence in classroom learning and teaching, as well as bringing respect and cooperation to the table as a board member. He has the qualities and integrity which make him the best choice to represent parents and the community on the Warrenton School Board. Joe Talamantez deserves your vote.

CHRISTINE BRIDGENS  
Warrenton

## Warren right for job

I have known Dennis Warren for decades, having worked with him at Warrenton High School for 15 of those years. He not only was a dedicated teacher and coach, he welcomed the responsibility of leadership for his union, serving on the negotiation team.

After retirement, he served on the local school board, and during that time his service convinced me he truly had a heart for not only the students of Warrenton, but of the whole community. He was the founder of People Energizing Oregon Promoting Literacy and Education (PEOPLE), a college scholarship for students. One of the prerequisites was that the successful candidate would be responsible for giving back volunteer time to the community. This creative rationale convinced me he would be an excellent candidate to again serve our community as a school board member. You can be sure he will earnestly research a project or problem prior to make a decision. He brings the kind of independent voice we need on our school board. He has my vote.

BARBARA BALENSIFER  
Warrenton

## Still amazed

My car keys, complete with two remotes and house keys, were lost for four days, and I was the only one in my home who could drive.

I was out at Alderbrook walking our three dogs when I got a phone call from the Astoria Library. They told me that my keys had been found and were at the Sheriff's Office, but that I should stop by to get the phone number of the man who had found them.

I did so, and was given the name of John Beale, and my car keys, a bit worse for wear. John said that he had found them three blocks from our home on the street near his apartment. He took them to the sheriff, where Andrea Kennet saw my library card, and called the library to get a name.

John Beale could have seen my keys and left them or tossed them. He took them to the Sheriff's Office where they could have thrown them in the lost and found. Library staff could have done nothing. But I have my keys and remotes, and I am supremely appreciative of good people who go the extra mile

for someone they don't even know. I still have no idea how they got there. Thank you, good people.

JAN MITCHELL  
Astoria

## Nothing good about pot

What is good about marijuana? In my opinion, really nothing. But I have to say those folks who are living next door to a friendly neighbor who is growing the stuff and smoking it, will now be able to get away from the second-hand smoke by going to their local smoke-free park. Crazy, is it not? Second-hand smoke is hurting many people, especially children. This additional contributor of cancer is now going to triple in strength, and the nonsmokers will have to suffer even more. Great world we live in.

On top of that, check your future utility bills. For growing marijuana, there will be an increase in water and electric

that is sure to be shared by all of us. The environmental downsides are obvious. I am not a doctor, and know little about how many medicines can do to a person. I served in law enforcement for 30 years.

I have seen the results of what can happen when a person starts out small in marijuana, and goes on to heroin and/or other illicit drugs. It is not pretty. Family, friends, society all suffer.

MEL JASMIN  
Warrenton

## Visit garden designer

As the designer of the Garden Of Surging Waves and the Concept Master Plan for the Heritage Square, I am very glad that this urban garden has been well liked by the community in the past year.

Time flies and this coming May 17 will be the garden's first anniversary. The Sierra Club has invited me to con-

duct a "tour with the designer" at the garden around 11:30 a.m. on this very special day. Please feel free to share the following link about the outing with the North Coast community: <http://bit.ly/1R66Heg>

SUENN HO  
Portland

## No pot shops

Open letter to Seaside City Council: To me, there is no good reason to allow marijuana dispensaries in the downtown core of Seaside. Broadway should be off limits, since there are many other locations that could be used without making it so visible to family visitors to Seaside. This is a tourist town, and we have no medical clinics in the downtown corridor.

As far as I am concerned there does not need to be one here at all, but that has already been decided for some unknown reason. Pot — really, why do we need to find another reason to make people stupid? Granted, there is lots of money involved, so that must be the reason. Money talks.

Being under the influence does make you out of your mind. It may dull the pain, but many of these folks do not take it for the pain, but to just dull their mind. There may be medical reasons to take it, but even more just do it to get high.

So we let the medical shops open, and then the recreational shops follow shortly. There are studies at colleges about all the harm pot is doing to the grades of the students. They cannot concentrate or retain anything in their pot-filled minds. Colorado businesses are complaining about their employees not doing their jobs, or even showing up for work, due to the excess pot use.

I realize there is nothing I can say or do about this, but being a downtown business owner, I feel I should at least be listened to. Please don't hurt our reputation by allowing pot shops in the downtown. We are already looked down upon for stuff that has happened in our past. Don't let pot shops in the downtown add to that reputation.

M. DIEBOLT  
Seaside



# ENERGY COSTS TOO HIGH? TRY LOOKING AT IT IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT.

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