

Thanks to police

It seems not a week goes by these days without reading a disturbing headline about an incident of police violence and the resulting disconnect between police and the community they ostensibly serve.

Against this national scene of mistrust, it's heartening to see our very own Astoria Police Department open their doors and their arms to us, the citizens in the community they serve. For the past several weeks, every Wednesday night, I, along with several other community members, attended the Citizens Police Academy, an opportunity to learn about life on the "thin blue line."

The Academy included presentations, open forum discussions and hands-on training (including an eye opening "use of force" simulation). At all times, our questions were welcomed and answered candidly — a model of community involvement and transparency that other government agencies can learn from.

If you have an interest (or healthy skepticism) about how police operate, and why they do what they do, I encourage you to participate in the next Citizens Police Academy. You'll learn a ton, have a surprising amount of fun, and leave realizing that our police officers aren't a "blue line" at all, rather they're our friends and neighbors who share our same passion for making our community a better place.

I want to recognize and thank Chief Brad Johnston and the entire Astoria police force — from patrol and dispatch, to investigations and records — for walking the talk and practicing real community policing right here in Astoria.

MICHAEL ANGIETTA
Astoria

Sen. Johnson cares

Open letter to state Sen. Betsy Johnson: Thank you, Betsy Johnson, for your responsiveness and

On my third reading of the article regarding the mass resignation of the Astoria Music Festival's board of directors, I finally realized with relief that both Artistic Director Keith Clark and the Astoria Music Festival are viable; the board of directors have abdicated over "unresolved differences" between them and Clark. It is sad that such differences have led to such drastic actions ("Music Festival directors resign in dispute," *The Daily Astorian*, July 21).

There is irony in this scenario. Linda Magee, who had been brought aboard as a consultant, had been try-

ing to "professionalize" the festival and to make it more like other performing nonprofit organizations; to alter the structure and leadership, and to smooth out the differences between our local organization and that of others.

Excuse me, but to put out a public press release that causes harm to the festival, and chagrin to its Artistic Director Keith Clark, is at the height of unprofessional. Such tactics smack of small mindedness, duplicity, and unconscionable behavior.

Keith Clark has given 13 years to the Astoria Music Festival, has brought audiences and musicians and

celebrities and international stars to our town, has generated a volunteer program that has engaged dozens and dozens of our citizens, has been a catalyst for our music education, and has given us years and years of spectacular music. We are indebted to him and his view of the future for the festival. May he find board members that he can work with in harmony.

I am counting the weeks... 43 ... until the opening of the 14th Season of the Astoria Music Festival in June.

CELIA TIPPIT
Astoria

Spirit and soul of AMF

boat complicates containing those spills.

Lastly, speaking of fuel, those interested in this dream need to understand how much cost per operating hour is involved, and once again: Larger boat, larger expense.

I saw a brand new Tesla sports car the other day I would love to have, but alas ... you get my point?

SAM DEVEREAUX
Astoria

Rethink the ferry

With regard to the ferry "available" to add color to Astoria's waterfront, a few thoughts: I owned and operated six old wooden boats for over 30 years, and from 27 to 72 feet in length, most of them built in the 1920s (one newer, 1939). That being said, I feel qualified in my following statements.

If some citizens want to take this on, more power to them, and I hope they have funding with deep pockets. If, on the other hand, this is noise to get all of us involved (public monies), it is a very, very bad idea. Old wooden boats require constant maintenance; the larger the boat, the larger the expense, and a ferry is a very large wooden boat.

Then there is the pollution potential, with inadvertent oil/fuel spills, which in these modern times of regulations can be very expensive, and a wooden

boat complicates containing those spills.

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SAM DEVEREAUX
Astoria

River vistas

In regard to the Bridge Vista Plan letter, "Silent majority?" (*The Daily Astorian*, July 3), I support Mayor Arline LaMear, and council members Zetty Nemlowill and Russ Warr. In my informal survey, I found many people are satisfied with the vote.

I do find it disturbing that many alders and various shrubs along the Riverwalk, across from the Mill Pond town homes, have been cut on the river side to enhance the view. Everything that's left over on the bank will end up in the river. Whoever cuts them needs to pick it up and haul it off.

Yet I can't enhance my own river view. I can't cut the scrub trees, blackberries and huge high laurel — that have not been maintained for several years now — growing across the street

from me on a property that is on a very long short sale.

DIANE FINUCANE
Astoria

Service dogs only

Recently, in Fred Meyer, a woman with a dog in each arm was in the produce section grocery shopping. Placing her hand under the dogs' butts to support them, she then touched fruits and veggies. The dogs were not service animals.

It isn't the first time I've seen dogs in the food section, and previous complaints to management changed nothing. I'm not sure how many people want to buy produce after a woman has been holding her dogs under their butts, and then touches produce, but I sure don't.

A while back, while waiting at a glass repair shop in Warrenton, I went next door to the restaurant/espresso shop. A woman was sitting up at the food counter with her dog. After sitting a while visiting with the employee, she told her dog, "stay," and left the dog unsupervised while she went into the restroom. A woman came in with her 2-year-old daughter, and as soon as the

little girl saw the dog, she headed right over to him and grabbed him, which could have been disastrous.

Recently at Costco, a woman was grocery shopping, touching meats, fruits, etc. while holding a dog that was not a service animal. When I complained to the manager, he said they are not allowed to ask if it is a service animal or not.

I have my food handler's card and have for many years, and know that having animals in food establishments is a clear health code violation. When I called the Health Dept. to report Costco, they told me that every business is allowed to ask, "What service does that animal perform?"

In order to park in a handicap parking spot, vehicles must either have a handicap sign hanging on their mirror, or have a special license plate. Otherwise they are fined, and the vehicle can be towed. Service dogs (or working dogs) need to also display a sign saying "service dog" because that dog must be focused solely on the person they are looking after, and cannot be distracted by people petting it, talking to it, etc.

Not just any car can park in a handicap spot, and not just any dog is legally allowed into stores that have food.

Many people are allergic to dogs. Many have been bitten by dogs and are afraid of them. Many don't want to listen to them bark. There is a time and place for animals, and shopping is not one of them. Dogs shed, they have dander, and many have fleas.

When businesses are more willing to cater to the one person who is pretending their dog is a service dog, rather than following health code regulations that are there to protect everyone, it doesn't speak well for that business.

LAURA RAY
Naselle, Wash.

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