

Use the Merwyn

The Astoria Public Library is situated between Duane and Exchange streets off 10th Street. The Merwyn Hotel is between City Hall and the library on Duane. The library shares a wall with the hotel. An interior door could be installed in the shared wall between the library and the hotel.

By remodeling the hotel into an additional facility for the library, and installing a street door off Duane, the Merwyn Hotel could become the Astoria Public Library Annex.

JEAN H. JOHNSON
Warrenton

Vote McIntosh

Judge Philip Nelson is retiring in January after 24 years on the Clatsop County bench. Dawn McIntosh is the best person to fill his shoes.

Dawn was born and raised in Banks, and attended Willamette Law School. She has been a trial attorney for 24 years, 12 years as a prosecutor for Multnomah and Clatsop counties and 12 years in private practice handling civil and criminal matters in Clatsop County and throughout Oregon. As a trial attorney she has earned the respect and endorsement of judges, attorneys and clients. No other candidate possesses Dawn's experience in the courtroom.

Dawn is well versed in both criminal and civil law, she is intelligent, and is a tireless worker. She is the most qualified candidate to succeed Judge Nelson. I enthusiastically endorse Dawn, and urge everyone to vote for her when ballots come out later this month.

BLAIR
HENNINGSGAARD
Astoria

Dig safe

April is 2016 National Safe Digging Month. Now that the sun is shining, many homeowners will be digging into do-it-yourself projects. Whether planning to install a fence, mailbox or plant a garden, NW Natural reminds you to call 811 before you dig.

Calling 811 two business days before starting a project to locate underground utilities is not only the safe thing to do, it's the law. Unfortunately, the majority of pipeline damage is due to a homeowner or contractor digging without the proper locates done in advance.

No damage to a pipeline is too small to report to NW Natural, even a dent or scratch could compromise the system. If you smell rotten eggs, see or hear gas escaping, leave the area immediately and then call 911 and the NW Natural 24-hour emergency line at 800-882-3377.

Remember to keep our communities safe and call before you dig.

TERESA BROWNLIE
NW Natural Community
Affairs
Astoria

Vote yes

Perhaps someone from *The Daily Astorian* should have talked to craft distillers in Clatsop County before declaring that we oppose the initiative to allow liquor sales in Oregon grocery stores ("Liquor initiative has a dirty little secret," April 5). I strongly support it, and so do other craft distillers here.

The initiative is simple. It will allow Oregon consumers to buy liquor in grocery stores that already sell beer and wine, just like consumers in most other states. It ends the post-Prohibition era state distribution monopoly that creates hurdles for many Oregon craft distillers, hurdles Oregon craft brewers and wine makers don't face.

The editorial argued that craft distillers would "lose their access to a statewide retail network." In fact, under the current system, small distillers can't compete on a level playing field with large manufacturers because the state controls our pricing, distribution and sales. The initiative will allow us to set our own prices, and sell direct to local stores and restaurants, instead of forcing all our distribution through the state warehouse.

The editorial claims there's something hidden in the initiative because it doesn't address

Protect programs, forests

It is important for all of us here in Clatsop County to take into account the full economic, social and environmental benefits we enjoy from our state forests when considering joining Linn County and other Forest Trust Land counties in their lawsuit against the state.

Clatsop County, more than any other Oregon county, relies on funds from sustainable active management on state forest lands. Those funds do not only allow the county to carry out critical mission components, such as public health and public safety, they also support valuable community institutions such as the Port of Astoria, Clatsop Community College, our Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District (SEPRD) and many more. It is the community that is at the heart of this issue, as programs like the

recreation district's have lost an untold amount in potential funds, due to management decisions made by the Board of Forestry.

SEPRD has been serving the community since 1969. It has always been our goal to meet the needs of an ever-changing demand for quality aquatic, recreational, youth and senior oriented services and programming and we are proud of the role we play in keeping our community's kids safe, our residents healthy and our seniors engaged and active.

From the beginning, securing adequate funding to cover our program and facility/equipment needs has been a challenge. We do not live in a wealthy community and cannot get by on usage fees alone. The funds we receive from state lands are, therefore, incredibly

valuable. Any increase in the amount and stability of those funds would be a huge win for community organizations like ours and would allow us to meet the needs of the people of Clatsop County without having to raise fees and/or taxes.

Sustainable forest management that will shape our county can, and should, go with sensible conservation measures that preserve our forests. Protect the forests, but also protect the social/community institutions upon which we all rely. Directing the state to fulfill its obligation to manage state lands for the greatest value for counties like ours is the right step.

SKYLER ARCHIBALD
Executive director, Sunset Empire
Park and Recreation District
Seaside

state liquor revenues. It's ridiculous to suggest that the legislature would allow tax-free liquor if the initiative passes, and give up more than \$200 million a year that supports state and local budgets.

The Office of Legislative Counsel assured legislators in February that they have time in 2017 to determine the best method for replacing liquor revenues when the state is out of the liquor business. Whatever method they choose, it will be more transparent and accountable than today's system, where liquor revenues are determined by unelected political appointees instead of elected lawmakers.

The initiative would help craft distillers like me. I encourage people to join me in signing the petition and voting yes in November.

LARRY CARY
Owner and craft distiller,
Pilot House Distilling
Astoria and Seaside

Astoria needs both

Regarding the editorial "Workforce housing may cause Astoria discomfort" (*The Daily Astorian*, April 7): Weighing work force housing with performing arts groups is like comparing apples to oranges. Astoria needs both for great livability. There have to be other solutions for affordable housing without demolishing the local performing arts community.

Even the Portland developer who made an unsolicited offer to buy the Clatsop Community College (CCC) property at 16th Street and Franklin Avenue indicated intent to preserve the Performing Arts Center (PAC) as a community center, while incorporating affordable housing at other locations on the site.

The CCC Board members who voted to deny the offer were sensible in their decision to protect the PAC, the college and the community's best interests. While the offering price was not revealed, it must have been low and probably didn't take into account the Estey organ in the auditorium, or the magnificent stained glass windows that are sitting under wraps in the chancel.

Performing arts groups have not been using the PAC rent free "for decades," as the editor claimed in his comments. Music, theater and dance were once part of the curriculum at CCC, and their faculty was housed in offices at the PAC. Partners for the PAC pay \$1,819 monthly for the use of the building, while the college controls scheduling.

The PAC is no different than a historical home in Astoria built in the 1920's and needing maintenance. Big projects do not need to be done all at once, but can be prioritized. Partners for the PAC and the preservation classes at CCC have already started on the windows. Once the fate of the PAC is stable, perhaps other community groups will rally to support and update it.

Local nonprofit performing groups are not "hogs at the trough" as portrayed in a recent editorial. They have been doing the college and the community a service by providing members performance opportunities and audiences affordable local cultural events.

Not everyone can afford to travel to Seattle for the opera or Ashland for Shakespeare theater or San Francisco for the

ballet. Local performing arts group whose members include your family, friends and colleagues offer quality affordable cultural opportunities here in Astoria.

It's not an either-or situation. Astoria needs affordable housing and the community benefits from a performing arts center and healthy performing arts groups. They can coexist and both offer something that makes Astoria a better place for all. We should be looking for solutions that benefit both interest groups and not calling for demolition of the existing community performance center and debasing local performing groups that are trying to sustain it.

JANET BOWLER
Astoria

Not the answer

I feel compelled to respond to Roger Dorband's letter ("Disastrous lawsuit," *The Daily Astorian*, April 1). While I'm not sure a lawsuit is the best way to resolve the issues raised by some of the Oregon Forest Trust counties, it is a fact that since the 2001 Forest Manage Plan (FMP), the Oregon Department of

Forestry has not upheld their fiduciary responsibilities to the trust counties.

A major reason for this is that the term "greatest permanent value" was changed. "Value" originally meant income to the counties. It was redefined in the 1990s to include recreation, habitat, etc., which have resulted in millions of dollars in lost revenues to these almost exclusively rural county governments, schools, fire departments, and other taxing districts. It is obvious to me that we can have all these benefits and harvest public timber at increased and sustainable rates.

I was a member of the Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Team in the early 2000s, and was not surprised to learn that Big Creek in Northeast Clatsop County was selected as a "sanctuary stream" for wild salmon and steelhead stocks. This selection was made, in large part, because of the excellent aquatic habitat available in Big Creek and its tributaries.

The Big Creek watershed is almost entirely privately owned, intensively managed commercial timberland. The

area also holds healthy populations of big game species and non-game animals and birds. While providing habitat for these creatures, along with recreational opportunities for the citizens of the Northwest, this forest has provided a large portion of the raw materials for local sawmills, which provide high paying jobs at mills and hundreds of jobs.

It is indeed unfortunate that the federal government has chosen to withhold funds from Oregon. I feel this was a political decision, not one based on any science. Many entities, including the federal government, want to force the state to adopt untested prescriptive regulations rather than sound, science based policies to "protect" that which is already protected by Oregon's Forest Practices Act.

Yes, recent clearcuts are unsightly to some, but if one wanted to observe a truly "massive" clearcut, one needed to be in Clatsop County in the 1920s and 1930s, when virtually all forest land was clearcut. Almost all timber in the county is second or third growth.

Regarding the "crowded tree" statement: Yes, the FPA

MORE TO SAY

Turn to Page 8A for more letters from and about the region.

requires two trees or snags over a certain size be left for each acre harvested. With an average clearcut size of around 70 acres, 140 trees are left, in addition to any left for stream or wetland buffers, I don't think squirrel overcrowding is an issue.

BUD HENDERSON
Knappa

Doesn't serve

Five or 10 years ago, I would have been an enthusiastic supporter of a measure to privatize liquor sales in Oregon. When traveling to states like California, it seemed that the selection of spirits was much better than here, and the prices much lower.

Since then, however, the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC) has significantly increased available brands and bottlings, and provided opportunities to special order items not ordinarily stocked. Prices have stayed competitive, particularly because no sales tax is added on.

The privatization initiative in Washington state has been a great lesson in how not to increase selection and reduce prices for the consumer. After it went into effect, Washington buyers swamped Oregon's liquor stores near the borders because prices and selection had degraded so much.

The revenue currently generated by OLCC sales is considerable, and without it the state will necessarily look elsewhere or deliver a major hit to state and local services. The big grocery chains and big box stores will be the ones getting all that revenue, and customer selection will suffer considerably. This measure does not serve Oregonians at all.

JEFF FRANE
Portland

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