

## Mouth makeover

Four and a half years ago, I moved to Clatsop County via Seaside and managed to find work in the service industry, which was nothing short of miraculous, considering December is a very difficult time for many restaurants in Seaside.

Soon after, I read my first Mouth of the Columbia review. It concerned a restaurant in Seaside, and ended with the Mouth stating something to the effect that there was no reason for any local to go eat in Seaside, because the restaurants were nothing but tourists traps serving bad food.

I couldn't believe that a local restaurant reviewer would write such a scathing review, affecting the financial well-being of an entire industry in a tourist-based town during the slowest part of the slow season, or that a community newspaper would print that review.

Since then, years have gone by, and every week brings yet another review by the Mouth. During this time, the Mouth has switched mouths several times. This Mouth seems to write only for self-gratification, testing the limits of the language with pompous and absurd restaurant critiques.

Reviewing eateries that have just opened, reviewing restaurants that are obviously struggling, reviewing vegetarian options in sport bars, reviewing drive-through coffee shops, reviewing the patrons of a restaurant with a condescending tone, reviewing servers in derogatory fashion, reviewing the decor with arrogance, reviewing the food and suggesting alternate preparations or ingredients according to the Mouth's preferences, reviewing known "bad" restaurants and then complaining that they are bad restaurants ... why? Why is the Mouth published?

The Mouth's reviews are like kicking a dying dog. A struggling or new restaurant cannot afford the Mouth's cutting and harsh criticism. The jagged and ripping critiques seem out of place with the tone in rest of *The Daily Astorian*, a forward-thinking, pro-community newspaper.

I am not suggesting eliminating the Mouth of the Columbia altogether. Neither am I suggesting to make every review a glowing review. However, mindfulness of language and awareness of the repercussions and people affected by the Mouth's reviews are desperately lacking in the column.

The Mouth, and the editors of *The Daily Astorian*, need to think beyond the Mouth. Our community is not being served by the Mouth. Only the Mouth is being served by the Mouth.

Please consider changing the tone of the Mouth of the Columbia. The snarkiness and smarminess of the column don't fit in with *The Daily Astorian*, with our tourism, with Clatsop County, and with the well-being of our community.

SHARON COLLYER  
Astoria

## Asking a favor

As you may be aware, Vintage Hardware, in the old Englund Marine building, has been given 90 days to move out to make way for a Mo's restaurant.

The Englund Marine family and employees are just the best, and are such a great asset to Astoria. The investment in the new Englund store has proven to be a less good business decision because of the lack of follow-through on the marine industrial park by the city and the Port.

The Englands certainly have a right to sell their property and use their assets to best advantage, but I hope some arrangement can be worked out to keep Vintage Hardware, a renter, in such an ideal location for the type of business asset it is to the downtown area, and a benefit to their customers.

The Englund family is often asked to donate services and the time of their employees. They have done so, and we Astorians appreciate all that they have done. Here we are again, asking the



## Celebrate the nation's independence proudly

When you greeted others over the holiday weekend, you should have wished them a Happy Independence Day. We do not celebrate the Fourth of July, as it is not the holiday. We celebrate Independence Day, the memorial of the birth of our nation. Please remember why this is an important date and celebrate what makes our country great: It's freedoms.

I feel at times, that as a country, we have become apologists for our own independence. In the vein of severe political correctness, we have diminished our own pride for being great. I, personally, refuse to shrink into obscurity. My pride for our country runs strong, and I express it with ferocity. I will not diminish the fact that we have the grandest celebration of the season on the fourth day of July to celebrate who we are as a nation.

If anyone finds offence in this, I would

have asked them to kindly stifle their opinions until the celebration wanes. It is our right and privilege to show that we are a great nation and to stand together in strength and unity. It is not offensive in its own nature, and it does not serve to demean others by its own expression.

We do not travel to other lands and ask other nationals to reserve themselves, or restrain their celebrations in order to appease our feelings. I would never expect them to. We do not rail at the site of a national ensign waving in the breeze over a foreign capitol. I would never imagine that. So let us not see others in that way as they visit our lands. Let them see us for what we are — a proud nation standing together to celebrate the creation of a new country, in a new land.

MATTHEW STOLBERG  
Seaside

Englands for some accommodation. I feel selfish in asking, but I hope an alternative can be found.

Mo's is a successful business and has a following for travelers. The local restaurants, already challenged by the economy, will be hurt by additional competition from a chain operation. A new food service operation will require a large makeover of a historic waterfront building. Vintage Hardware uses the building as it is. Parking for a high volume restaurant is not available in the Englund location, and will displace parking access to all of the surrounding businesses and the museum.

Vintage Hardware is a unique establishment in Astoria. Mo's is just another restaurant. Please urge the Planning Commission to reject another chain restaurant, displacing a valuable business in Astoria.

CARROL and ROY  
HACKETT  
Astoria

## Wonderful show

We are so lucky to have had a magnificent performance July 3 in our Liberty Theater. The concert, with the North Coast Jazz Ensemble and North Coast Symphonic Bands' program, "American Heroes," with soloists Andy and Rachel Becker, was like watching "The Capital Fourth Annual Concert" in Washington, D.C.

The slide show of the bridge and the light show were great added features.

I hope all those talented performers know we appreciate their dedication and time spent putting a show like that together, and all the time in rehearsal, to give us a masterful and delightful evening. Thank you.

A. DIANE FINUCANE  
Astoria

## Christian values

In the past few months I've been reading letters in *The Daily Astorian* Open Forum column about Judeo-Christian values and the founding of this country. Must I point out that nowhere in the Declaration of Independence or

the Constitution does it specifically mention the god of Abraham, nor does it mention Jesus Christ?

I only wish that certain individuals who spout "Christian values" could pull themselves away from listening to the hate monger Michael Savage's radio talk show for a few minutes, and actually read the Bible, so they could learn what Jesus really taught. Jesus summed up the law with the words "so, whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

At least one of your readers believes that John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 because that was the same year that prayer was removed from the public school system, so I'm sure he also believes it was divinely ordained "manifest destiny" that justified taking land from the Native Americans. If you think this is what Christ taught, you are sadly mistaken.

On Aug. 6, 1945, the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb over Hiroshima, and a few days later dropped another over Nagasaki, killing at least 100,000 people and leaving a million homeless. Jesus said, "But I say to you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those that hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6: 27, 28).

Few people practice true Christian values (Mother Teresa comes to mind), let alone countries. This nation was founded and built on blood, sweat, and many tears. Not Christian values. For those who believe, that kingdom has yet to come.

ELLIS DEE  
Portland

## WWJD?

I cannot recall the last time I felt such a feeling of loathing in my heart as when I read the letter from Gary Mauro in *The Daily Astorian* ("Orlando and truth," June 24). Is this really the way he defines Christianity? Such a total intolerance of humanity's differences that he uses scripture to justify the Orlando massa-

respect, compassion and love as we would with our closest. Even Mr. Mauro's bigotry must be tolerated, as distasteful as that is.

Perhaps it is time that he review the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

ROD DAWSON  
Seaside

## Remodel thoughts

More thoughts on our Astoria Library: I saw the options for the library's future, and at first I thought Option E was best, but after much consideration, I think we really need to ignore the "big buck spenders" and go out to the commercial remodeling folks state-wide.

My opinion, as a retired contractor, is that the amount of money quoted for things like a roof re-do are way off base. We must hire a non-local person to research the true costs involved. Unless this happens, our library will lose support.

I personally think our existing building has good "bones."

DICK DARBY  
Astoria

## Please donate

The Bob Chisholm Community Center in Seaside is in the process of raising \$80,000 for the Main Hall Refresh Project.

The building is an essential part of our community and we are keeping the beautiful glulam beams, as well as the tongue in groove ceiling. This old girl desperately needs updated lighting, flooring, wall coverings and window treatments, so she will be able to accommodate the next generation of events, meetings, classes, parties and weddings — big or small.

We are reaching out to our generous community for their help. Your donation is tax-deductible, and checks can be made payable to Sunset Park & Recreation Foundation, P.O. Box 514, Seaside, OR 97138. Donors of \$500 or more will have their name engraved on a bronze leaf on the Donor Recognition Tree

that will be permanently displayed in the main hall after the renovation.

I have had the privilege of serving on the nine-member community center commission since 1991, with our last update to the building in 1995. This building deserves to be a compliment to our community and the surrounding rental facilities.

Please stop by today and see what is in store for this grand old building, and thank you in advance for being a part of such an exciting project.

PIPER O'BRIEN  
Seaside

## Library reality

Much has been said about the building of a new library in Heritage Square in downtown Astoria, and how it will be more cost effective than a renovation or expansion of the current library.

Presently there is not enough money in the library budget to staff the existing library appropriately (currently closed on Sunday and Monday, and open 41 hours per week), and add more books and resources to the shelves. How, exactly, is a building of a new "cost effective" library going to produce the primitive funding to provide these essential necessities, plus pay for the added costs of a larger building?

I request our rational and forward thinking city council members seek succinct definition in the financial budget of building and the added operational costs of a new library before considering a motion to approve. More consideration is needed, as a good business plan does not include the words "hope," "or" and "if."

Let us not create a library that may become another empty building in downtown Astoria with the "hope" of someone developing it into a restaurant or brewery. As I see it, we can currently afford the hole that is in Heritage Square until all budgetary dreams have been addressed.

JAMES B. RANDALL  
Astoria

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