

Change of focus at Port

Thank you all who voted for a working Port of Astoria. Hopefully now the new Port of Astoria Board will again be issue focused not ad hominem driven. The results looks like an outcome for a community-run agency, not a lobbyist-run buddy system.

DAVID R. ISAACS
Astoria

Grain Fest fun

Recently all six classes of fourth grade at Lewis and Clark Elementary School went to the Columbia River Maritime Museum for an all-day field trip entitled "Grain Fest," where students explored stations that involved boats and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) activities, learned that grain is imported and exported down the Columbia River, and even learned how to bake bread.

The Astoria Lions Club cooked and served lunch for more than 175 people. King Arthur Flour "Baked for Good," provided baking kits including flour, yeast, a bread scraper and a recipe book, all in a bag so that students could go home and bake bread to be donated to a charity. All of this was provided at no cost to the students or school.

The fourth-grade team at Lewis and Clark Elementary would like to send out a sincere thank you to Nate Sandel, the education manager at CRMM, for organizing such a meaningful and fun day. Also, thanks to all of the volunteers and parent chaperones who made this day happen.

JENNY BERGMAN
EMILY BOUCHER
DIANA LILLEY
MATTHEW KAMEL
JANELLE WAGNER
JORDAN MARTIN
Teachers, Lewis and Clark
Elementary School
Astoria

A skewed perspective

In America, dogs kill an average of 31 people every year, 4.5 million people are bitten and about 68 people are blinded by a parasite in dog feces. Yet Gearhart allows owners to take their dogs out to local playgrounds, parks and athletic fields, and let their flea-carrying critters crap where our children play. We should ban dogs to preserve the safety and quiet residential nature of our community.

Instead, the city is obsessed about four proposed video poker machines to be hidden in a back space of Gearhart Crossing. No one will see them unless they play them. They are legal. They actually benefit the local community monetarily. They will have zero impact on anything except the pub owner's bottom line. These machines will never crap in a city green space. They will never bite, kill or blind anyone.

Our city leaders need some perspective.

Recently I read that my friends and relatives who visit me with their RVs are forbidden from parking in my driveway for more than four days. What's next? Perhaps a census of private residences matching rooms with occupancy and any residence with an extra room will be charged a room tax for whenever a friend or relative visits? The police will watch our driveways looking for cars that don't normally park there.

Let's get serious. No one is going to support a ban of dogs in Gearhart. There are more important things to focus on, including pressing infrastructure issues and actually paying attention to the development that is occurring.

We've watched a structure go up, no posted permits, operating heavy equipment and hammering well before 8 a.m., amateurs falling trees including knocking down a power line, unsupervised burn piles, etc. It's an operation that has demonstrated a disregard for the neighbors and regulations of any kind, while the city has turned a blind eye.

Meanwhile, the council spends hours focusing on legal poker machines hidden in a business, and whether or not someone is spending a night or two in RVs parked on private property.

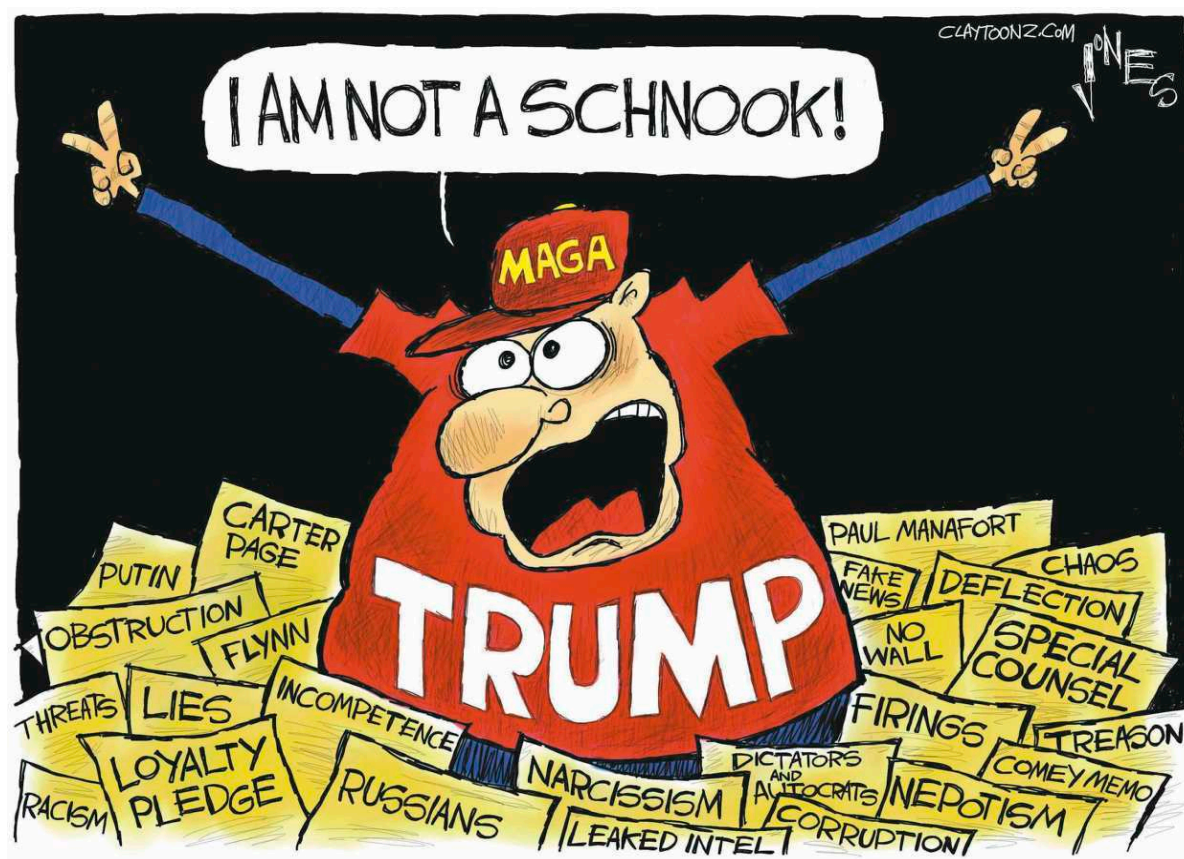
Unbelievable.

BILL GRAFFIUS
Gearhart

Fuel for thought

I have recently become interested in an uncertified-by-Oregon wood burning stove. Research has shown that this stove is expected to come up to standards required by stoves equipped with catalytic converters. Of course, there is no way to get it certified. I am supposed to destroy it and recycle the cast iron, acquiring documentation and expense along the way.

There is no such thing as magic. Fuels for wood burning stoves and automobiles are hydrocarbons. As



one might expect, the hydro part of these compounds is water, and the carbon part is carbon. When they are burned, they turn in to water, don't try to drink it until mother nature has done her thing, and carbon compounds, mostly carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. There are many contaminants in wood, diesel and gasoline. They, too, survive the burning process.

A catalytic converter essentially tries to burn the fuels more completely. Probably it does something along these lines — when it is new. Unfortunately, catalytic converters quickly lose their ability to do the job they are reputed to do, and they are expensive to replace. Some of you probably have found this out already.

Every atom or molecule of gasoline, diesel or wood that is burned becomes part of the emissions, unless it is an atomic reaction. To more completely burn the fuel, the catalytic converter needs — guess what? More fuel. The catalytic converter is supposed to do its job at higher temperatures. Higher temperatures are not something one needs in either a wood burning stove or an internal combustion motor. Many folks have already found this out, the hard way.

We are sacrificing more fuel to more completely burn fuel. More pollution is the end result. The end product in catalytic converted stoves and automotive vehicles is hopefully less carbon monoxide and more carbon dioxide. Carbon monoxide, as pointed out by aficionados of catalytic converters, is a poison gas.

Carbon dioxide, we are led to understand, is causing global warming, and is threatening to exterminate human and most other animal life on this planet.

There are many experts in this field who would compromise their expertise, education, morals and name by lying.

There is no magic.
BENJAMIN A. GREAVES
Seaside

Mr. T and temptation

We are witnessing an interesting phenomenon in our public life. One in which the newly elected president decides how he will conduct himself, and how much he will be inconvenienced by the demands of his office.

In times past, it was considered obligatory that the president-elect provide the people with full disclosure of his assets and liabilities, and rather than raise the specter of partisanship in his business dealings, place all tangible assets in trust until his term of office expires.

This was expected, because it would be considered both bad form and ungentlemanly to use the highest office in the land as a profit making enterprise. That was, until Trump. Apparently Mr. T has never seen a conflict-of-interest that he doesn't like, unless it is one from which he will not profit.

Divestiture was not instituted solely to deprive Donald Trump from his share of whatever spoils are laying around, but is an attempt to keep the president's attention on the considerable affairs of the country, which he is obligated to address.

We, the unwashed, feel that being in charge of the richest and most powerful country in the world is quite enough for one man, and if done properly, leaves no time for other considerations. In fact, if done to the fullest extent necessary, it would leave no time for sleep. This may seem a bit harsh, but our country and the world are facing some of the most demanding and crucial times in history.

Decisions made by this president in concert with other world leaders will determine how well we address the rapidly burgeoning world population, and how we manage an

ever-shrinking supply of both food and water to sustain it. These are not easy questions, but bear directly on how well and how long we can continue our presence on this planet.

Mr. Trump, at first blush, would not seem a prudent choice for such an undertaking. I am truly sorry that is all we have to offer at the moment, but the people have spoken, and we must all bear the consequences, be they good or bad.

Maybe the Tooth Fairy lives after all.

JACK GUYOT
Astoria

Mar-a-Lago concerns

In 2015, Trump said he would "rarely leave the White House because there's so much work to be done." Now, he is golfing and visiting a Trump-branded property every few days. I'm deeply concerned with Trump's taxpayer funded trips to Trump property Mar-a-Lago. Here's why:

Trump is putting taxpayer dollars directly in his pocket by visiting his properties so frequently. The Secret Service has spent tens of thousands of dollars on golf carts alone at Mar-a-Lago, and that's the tip of the iceberg.

While Trump spends our tax dollars at Mar-a-Lago, he's also hosting high-profile meetings with foreign heads-of-state there, like the prime minister of Japan. Talk about a photo op for his own property.

After election day, Mar-a-Lago Golf Club doubled its membership fees to \$200,000. That's a lot of money in Trump's pocket.

Nobody should be allowed to profit from the presidency. I've had enough. It's time for our representatives in Congress to stand up to Trump's abuse of power and waste of taxpayer dollars.

Trump's trips to Mar-a-Lago have already cost \$25 million. That's enough to pay for over 2 million Meals on Wheels.

If Congress continues to sit on its hands, our representatives should be held accountable for their complicity to Trump's corruption. I'll remember their inaction when I step into the voting booth.

MEGAN POWELL
Hillsboro

Science is bipartisan

In a show of bipartisan commitment, Congress voted to increase the National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget by \$2 billion. Oregon Health and Science University is deeply grateful to our entire Oregon Congressional delegation for recognizing that NIH funding allows for life-saving scientific discoveries that improve the health and well-being of all Oregonians.

OHSU scientists rely heavily on NIH funding to carry out life-saving scientific research, and to make that research available for the benefit of patients across the entire state of Oregon. Over 50 percent of OHSU's patients come from outside the Portland metro region, and many of these patients are receiving treatments and cures that would have not been possible without NIH funding of research discoveries that happen in the lab. NIH funding also helps OHSU train the next generation of research scientists, while working to ensure that scientific discoveries benefit urban and rural America equally.

Cuts to NIH would also have an economic impact to the state of Oregon. Besides funding university research, these dollars create jobs and foster new businesses that spur economic growth. Simply put, cuts to NIH would have a ripple effect across the entire state.

We know that the president's budget has proposed cuts to NIH, and we in Oregon are fortunate to have members of Congress like

Reps. Suzanne Bonamici and Greg Walden and Sens. Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden who stand up for science and the promise of cures.

JOE ROBERTSON, M.D.
President, Oregon Health &
Science University
Portland

Emergency planning?

There has been an emphasis in this county in the last couple of years for people to be prepared for earthquake and tsunami evacuation. A plan to move schools to high ground in Seaside was approved. On the other hand, construction in high risk areas continues with the blessings of the county and cities.

The plan to establish Life Flight at the airport, where the ground is alluvial and extra conductive of earthquake shock, plus the elevation being 11 to 15 feet, and in the tsunami inundation zone, makes me wonder how much planning was done.

It is important that in the upcoming catastrophe that emergency responders, such as Life Flight, be safe and on the job, and not in a pile of twisted debris. However shovel-ready the site, is it the right choice, considering the risk?

DAVID FITCH
Astoria

Water pollution

In response to "New England confronts little-known, messy legacy of mining" (The Daily Astorian online, May 13): I am among many of Maine's citizens who feel betrayed by the Natural Resources Council of Maine (NRCM) and other environmental groups who have rallied around a mining bill, LD 820, which allows the pollution of ground water, inevitably leading to pollution of surface water.

What LD 820 does allow is shaft mining with monitoring wells 100 feet away, so that when the inevitable contamination occurs, it will be too late. This does not prevent arsenic in our water, it only lets us know when it has occurred.

And there is no "fix" when it happens. LD 820 does nothing at all to address public health. The financial assurances in LD 820 only cover property damage, not sickness caused by the water and air pollution from an inevitable mining failure. We need to stand up to the mining interests and the legislators who back them and say no. Our health and our aquatic resources are too precious.

KATHY CERICK
Atkinson, Maine

The play's the thing

The Coaster Theatre and director Sheila Shaffer have produced a sophisticated, wonderful, fun play, "Barefoot in the Park" (May 5 to 28), the best play I've ever seen live. It's a profound serendipity of life story we can all relate to, hilarious lots of times, and perhaps, like Phyllis Diller, it's also right up to the edge of risqué.

The actors are perfect in their roles, the cast has chemistry and timing, and they are just satirically "shake your head — oh I've done that" funny. I hope the Liberty Theater will consider presenting this play with this director and cast.

Astoria would love it, and go away smiling and satisfied with life itself.

TERESA EPSTEIN
Ilwaco, Washington

Voter pamphlets

Open letter to the Clatsop County Commissioners: I concur with Laurie Caplan's May 16 letter to the editor in The Daily Astorian, "Voting in the dark"; we need a voter information pamphlet for every election. It took untold hours researching

back issues of the local papers and websites to gain even partial knowledge necessary to vote with confidence on a fraction of the proposed choices. This is a necessary and essential service to promote participation in democracy. Please make it standard practice.

FRANK ERICKSON, M.D.
Seaside

Rescuing cats, humans

Our local animal resource and rescue group receives many calls about animals living, along with their caregivers, in often-squalid conditions. These situations are anything but isolated, and most often have two things in common.

One, the caregiver is usually mentally ill, and two, in nearly every case, neighbors were aware that animals were sick and dying, and of the conditions the person was living in, but were unable to get help, or unaware of how to do so. In one case, we removed 65 cats from extreme neglect, and were told by the property owner that over 165 more were buried on the property. He asked us if we knew why they might have died. He did not see the connection.

Over the last two months, we pulled another 22 cats from one of the worst environments we have ever seen. Not only the cats, but also the person, were living in horrific conditions no human or animal should ever be in. Also recently, there is the case of the 42 cats that were found in the van in Warrenton, and taken in by the Clatsop County Animal Shelter.

If you know of a situation like this, please reach out for help. If the person isn't able to see the harm they are doing to the animals, they most likely aren't taking care of themselves, either. There are a number of places to call, and while resources in our area aren't numerous, there are some good places to start.

Fortunately, by working with a network of fosters, shelters, sanctuaries and special needs rescues, we have managed to save over 90 percent of all the animals we have rescued from these unfortunate situations.

If you would like information on how to help a person or animal at risk, please contact us at riversong-foundation@yahoo.com for a list of places to start.

In the meantime, if you are thinking of getting a new pet, or even if you aren't, please consider reaching out to adopt one of the many cats in our foster care, or at the shelter. They need you.

RITA SMITH
Hammond

Rental changes

A group of Short Term Rental (STR) owners are in the process of attempting a voter initiative on the November ballot which would significantly alter many of the provisions of the STR regulations adopted by a unanimous vote of the Gearhart City Council in September, after a long period of input from the public. Since they are now in the signature gathering process, it is important for voters to understand the major changes that would be made if the initiative was passed.

- Twenty-four-hour representative and neighbor notice: This change would eliminate neighbors being given the owners' and their representatives' contact information, and the requirement that the representative respond to the vacation site within 30 minutes.

- Parking: This change would eliminate the requirement that there be one outside parking place per bedroom on the property.

- Septic capacity inspections and cesspool prohibitions: This change eliminates the requirement of the property owner to demonstrate the existence of a working septic system.

- Remove the limitation on the number of STRs: This would lead to unlimited rentals throughout Gearhart.

- Increase the maximum occupancy: Currently, occupancy is limited to two persons over the age of 2 per bedroom. This change would allow two persons per bedroom, plus an additional three persons over the age of 12, and an unlimited number age 12 and younger. There is no residential septic system in Gearhart designed to handle this occupancy load.

The city's complete Short Term Rental ordinance is available on the city website or at City Hall, and a copy of the STR owners voter initiative is also available at City Hall. Please take the time to look these, and get a clear understanding of this, before you consider signing in favor of getting this initiative on the ballot.

DIANNE WIDDOP
Gearhart