

Unifying Gearhart

There are two positive outcomes occurring in Gearhart as a result of Ballot Measure 4-188, which would repeal and replace the city ordinance that regulates short-term rentals.

The first outcome is that we are experiencing the unified voice of all Gearhart residents, coming together to defeat this measure. A dialogue has been opened with all our residents, regardless of where they live. We are aware we share a common goal to maintain the quality of life in the low-density neighborhoods.

The second outcome is that this ballot measure will give our residents the opportunity to voice their approval of the successful Gearhart ordinance regulating vacation rentals. Residents, by their vote, will be able to show their support of the unanimous decision of our elected officials that enacted a fair and well thought out vacation rental law.

All of us in Gearhart need to work together to protect our community from a group of outside investors with deep pockets. These people would like nothing better than to turn Gearhart into their version of a resort community, with basically no enforceable regulations managing an unlimited number of rental dwellings. Their goal is to increase their rental investment income at a cost to all of us who call Gearhart home.

Please vote no on Ballot Measure 4-188 in November. Keep Gearhart residential.

DIANNE WIDDOP
Gearhart

A way with words?

I taught college courses in public speaking, political communication and American public address for 47 years, appreciating the eloquence of Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan and Barack Obama.

But now I face the mind-boggling task of understanding the garbled rhetoric of Donald Trump. How do I decipher his remarks, often unencumbered by the thought process and featuring nouns and verbs that seem estranged?

How can I understand those strange scary quotes Trump so often uses to distance himself from his words, or his tendency to contradict himself twice or more in the same sentence? Tough job. Consider just a few examples of TrumpSpeak.

Grading his first 100 days as president, Trump claimed: "I would say communication would be a bit less than an A, because I don't think we've gotten the word out what we've done, because I think we're so busy getting it done, that we're not talking about it." (April 27, <http://politi.co/2oRnCas>) Huh?

Referring to a New York Times interview of July 19, 2017: "(The New York Times) don't write good. They have people over there, like Maggie Haberman and others, they don't — they don't write good. They don't know how to write good." (<http://politi.co/2ahdz7V>)

Yet the Donald did allow veteran political correspondent Haberman and two other New York Times writers to interview him. Slam dunk.



Finally, consider this doozy from Trump, interviewed by NBC anchor Lester Holt on May 11 (<http://nbcnews.to/2pCaG8H>): "When I did this now I said, 'I probably, maybe will confuse people, maybe I'll expand that, you know, lengthen the time,' because it should be over with, in my opinion, should have been over with a long time ago." Dazzling.

What could account for Trump's garbled syntax and convoluted meanderings? A short attention span, his obsession with winning, his effusive braggadocio, cognitive decline, or perhaps a sometime-stoner mind? Who knows?

To me, Trump's like an ordinary barstool speaker, which makes him seem "authentic" to ordinary people. But is an articulate American president no longer necessary? Has Trump lowered the bar that much?

Stay tuned.

ROBERT BRAKE
Ocean Park, Washington

Three wise monkeys

Regarding the connection between the dwindling rental housing stock in Seaside to prolific short-term vacation rentals, the Seaside City Council remains willfully blind to the impropriety or the consequence of such commercial activity in residential areas.

"Who's going to enforce more restrictions? We don't have the staff," bursts City Councilor Dana Phillips ("Wanted: Long-term rentals in Seaside," The Daily Astorian, July 19). Who needs any restrictions where zoning laws have no efficacy?

Seaside is a tourist free-fire zone. The city is addicted to its lodging tax revenues, and now it appears to rely on Airbnb to police itself and to collect the city's lodging tax revenue ("Seaside inks tax deal with Airbnb," Seaside Signal, June 20). Be my guest. On the honor system. See no

evil, hear no evil, speak no evil ...

GARY DURHEIM
Cannon Beach

Thanks, Coast Guard

Another instance of the U.S. Coast Guard being there when we need their help. Thank you to the U.S. Coast Guard, Sector Columbia River, for their service to our nation — and to our community. Particular thanks to the crew of the cutter Alert, who recently are helping at the Ocean View Cemetery to clean up the grounds, and the graves of our loved ones.

Special thanks to those crew members who reset six grave markers belonging to my paternal Carruthers family members, whose graves date back to 1917. Under the direction of the cemetery's maintenance supervisor Jonah Dart-McLean, all of those six markers, which were listing at 45-degree angles, are now on even keels.

Sincere thanks from our family to the crew of the cutter Alert for a heavy-duty job well done.

CAROL CARRUTHERS
LAMBERT
Hammond

Helping those in need

A few leaders and neighbors of the First United Methodist Church have shared their opinions that the Astoria Warming Center should not be near them. Thankfully, most of us have roofs over our heads and money for our needs. If we need mental or other medical care, we can obtain those services.

If this rich U.S. had a real commitment to end the ravages of prejudice, poverty and illness, we could. But we don't. Instead, too few volunteers with too little financial support attempt to provide temporary shelter for too many needy citizens. I am thankful for their efforts, and I know our homeless are

most grateful.

Instead of finding fault with the warming center, make an effort to help out.

SARA MEYER
Astoria

High cost of not thinking

Contrary to the information in the letter "Criminalizing dissent" (The Daily Astorian, July 28), dissent in America is not yet on the legislative chopping block. And we can have a peaceful, easy feeling our way to the next parade/protest.

According to Congress.gov, the 115th U.S. Congress, S. 720 tries to relegate opposition to the U.N. Resolution of March 24, 2016. It would prevent opposition to protest in the form of having countries divesting and breaking contracts with our ad hoc allies. In other words, it refers to not participating in totalitarian led boycotts of our NATO or other allies, were that to be held in order of the resolution's restrictions.

The Social Security Act Pension Fund lost \$3 trillion between 2001 and 2012 to pension dollar removal to cover trickle-down deficits. People, like most taxpayers, now have their tax dollars paying off the credit interest and bonds on those parcels withdrawn. Nothing like having to pay for our Social Security twice. I choose not to wear the world on my shoulders, but like to adhere to the fairness of freedom of choice and dexterity of thought, especially when it comes to social justice.

Speaking to the making special provisos, by the way, U.S. Sen. Mike Enzi, R-Wyoming, was instrumental when the Senate created a noncompetitive agreement for health insurance companies in predominantly rural areas. This allows a number of insurance companies selling treatment service policies to singlehandedly manage the sale of health treatment services in those areas.

Most of this anti-corruption shel-

tering (waiver) from monopolistic practices was superimposed into the Affordable Care Act (embedded). Thus when you hear the exchanges are failing, it somehow infers there is more than a company or two in those areas. It is built-in obsolescence, and the trickle-down management has refused to fix the problem for the last seven years, as they continue to blame the Obamacare product.

So, we can continue to freely and openly continue the spirit of friendship with our friends and allies, and ask further who pays the high cost of not thinking. Medicare Part D, anyone? They've been promising a bond fix for years, too, but that's really another name for tax reform. And the climate change disbelievers will be even more expensive.

DAVID R. ISAACS
Astoria

Grim thinking

I was thinking about Donald Trump yesterday, and wondering: Are we ever going to do anything about this guy and his shenanigans? And then I thought, what the hell, climate change will take care of everything, anyway.

And thinking about that grim and depressing issues, I thought about North Korea. Maybe we'll have a bomb or two go off. What would be the effect of that on climate change? Wouldn't that slow it down a little?

So I looked up nuclear winter — the effects on the planet if we set off a bunch of nuclear bombs. Depends, of course, on how many we set off, but in order to slow down climate change significantly, maybe 100 or so would do it, causing probably three years of nuclear winter, where crops fail and worldwide and famine ensues. Not to mention the dire effects of the bombs themselves.

So I thought to hell with it, and had another glass of wine.

FRED LUNDIN
Astoria

Once again, the guardrails hold

By CHARLES
KRAUTHAMMER

Washington Post Writers Group

WASHINGTON — A future trivia question and historical footnote, the spectacular 10-day flameout of Anthony Scaramucci qualifies as the most entertaining episode yet of the ongoing reality

show that is the Trump presidency. (Working title: "The Pompadours of 1600 Pennsylvania.") But even as the cocksure sycophant's gob-smacking spectacle stole the show, something of real importance took place a bit lower on the radar.

At five separate junctures, the sinews of our democracy held against the careening recklessness of this presidency. Consequently, Donald Trump's worst week proved a particularly fine hour for American democracy:

(1) **The military says "no" to Trump on the transgender ban.**

Well, not directly — that's insubordination — but with rather elegant circumspection. The president tweeted out a total ban on transgender people serving in the military. It came practically out of nowhere. The military brass, not

consulted, was not amused. Defense Secretary James Mattis, in the middle of a six-month review of the issue, was reportedly appalled.

What was done? Nothing. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs simply declared that a tweet is not an order. Until he receives a formal command and develops new guidelines, the tweet will be ignored.

In other words, the military told the commander in chief to go jump in a lake. Generally speaking, this is not a healthy state of affairs in a nation of civilian control. It does carry a whiff of insubordination. But under a president so uniquely impulsive and chronically irrational, a certain vigilance, even prickliness, on the part of the military is to be welcomed.

The brass framed their inaction as a matter of procedure. But the refusal carried with it a reminder of institutional prerogatives. In this case, the military offered resistance to mere whimsy. Next time, it could be resistance to unlawfulness.

(2) **The Senate saves Sessions.**

Trump's relentless public humiliation of Attorney General Jeff Sessions was clearly intended to get him to resign. He didn't, in part because of increasing support from Congress. Sessions' former colleagues came out strongly in his defense and some openly criticized the president's shabby treatment of

his first and most fervent senatorial supporter.

Indeed, Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, warned Trump not to fire Sessions because he wouldn't get another attorney general — the committee's entire 2017 schedule was set and there would be no hearings to approve a new AG. That was a finger to the eye of the president. Every once in a while, the Senate seems to remember that it is a coequal branch.

(3) **Senate Republicans reject the Obamacare repeal.**

The causes here are multiple, most having nothing to do with Trump. Republicans are deeply divided on the proper role of government in health care. This division is compounded by the sea change in public opinion as, over seven years, Obamacare has become part of the fabric of American medicine, and health care has come to be seen as a right rather than a commodity.

Nonetheless, the stunning Senate rejection of repeal was also a pointed rejection of Trump's health care hectoring. And a show of senatorial disdain for Trump craving a personal legislative "win" on an issue about whose policy choices he knew nothing and cared less.

(4) **The Boy Scouts protest.**

In a rebuke not as earthshaking



AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster

President Donald Trump waves to the crowd after speaking at the 2017 National Scout Jamboree in Glen Jean, W.Va., in July. The Boy Scouts are denying a claim by Trump that the head of the youth organization called the president to praise his politically aggressive speech to the Scouts' national jamboree.

but still telling, the chief executive of the Boy Scouts found it necessary to apologize for the president's speech last week to their quadrennial jamboree. It was a wildly inappropriate confection, at once whining, self-referential, partisan and political.

How do you blow a speech to Boy Scouts? No merit badge for the big guy.

(5) **The police chiefs chide.**

In an address to law enforcement officials, Trump gave a wink and a nod to cops roughing up suspects. Several police chiefs subsequently reprimanded Trump for encouraging police brutality — a mild form, perhaps, but brutality still.

Press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders said it was all a joke. Nonsense. It was an ugly sentiment, expressed coyly enough to be waved away as humor but with the thuggish undertone of a man who, heckled at a campaign rally, once said approvingly that in the old days "guys like that" would "be carried out on a stretcher."

Whatever your substantive position on the various issues involved above, we should all be grateful that from the generals to the Scouts, from the senators to the cops, the institutions of both political and civil society are holding up well.

Trump is a systemic stress test. The results are good, thus far.