

Officials' neglect

Vis-à-vis the selection and supervision of city of Astoria department heads: The buck stops at City Manager Brett Estes, Mayor Arline LaMear and the members of the City Council. It stretches credulity to believe that none of these officials were aware of the devastation of the Police Department by Chief Brad Johnston ("Assessment: Astoria Police nearing crisis under former chief," The Daily Astorian, Aug. 14). Were they so intimidated by him that they paid no attention to citizen complaints, or more seriously, the complaints of officers in the department, a number of whom gave up and left for greener pastures?

While it does not excuse the neglect on the part of city officials, at least they were able to obtain the services of a seasoned police chief, while an extensive search is conducted to fill the position permanently. It is hoped that City Manager Estes will set up panels to interview the finalists.

In the end, we need to find a person of high integrity to serve and protect the good people of Astoria; a person who has the ability to restore stability and proficiency to the police department.

GEORGE McCARTIN
Astoria

Love and differences

A boy had a paper route, and every day, on his route, he had an encounter with a bully. The bully would call him names. The bully would throw rocks at him. The bully would do what bullies do.

One day the boy knocked on the bully's door. The bully was surprised and sure the boy was there to tell on him. The boy told the bully he had a new paper route, and that the bully should try to get his old paper route, before someone else.

That bully was my dad, Gordon Dee "Mike" Miller. He died Aug. 6.

My dad shared this story, and how he liked to think that's what Jesus was like: No matter how many stones you threw at him, there he was knocking on your door trying to offer you all he could.

Decades ago, I was in college and my dad ran for the college board. Some professors asked me about my father, whether he was a good choice for the board. I told them, "No."

It was easy to say, then. My dad didn't believe in evolution. He didn't accept the empirical evidence, and the enormous amount of work, thinking and sacrifice that went into establishing the sciences.

Now it pains me: to have stood opposed to some of his hopes.

My last message, from my father, was him wishing a happy birthday, and giving me every contact number and address he had. He was only in Seaside. He had been deathly ill, and I hadn't gone to see him.

Trump's election has forced my conscience to take sides, where I don't want to. I cannot give love to one part of my family, why they preach hate to another part, and while that hate genuinely threatens others lives and welfare. Yet ...

My father, as an angry boy, stabbed a crochet hook into his mother's leg; as a young man, he did worse, but the distance he traveled, in his moral journey — point A to point B — was far more than most.

It's not just Jesus who loved him.

MIKE MILLER
Astoria

Never again

As a resident of Astoria, I am appalled and ashamed the Astoria Regatta committee allowed the truck flying a Confederate flag to be allowed in the parade. I can't imagine what a tourist, not knowing anything about Astoria, left thinking about our little town.

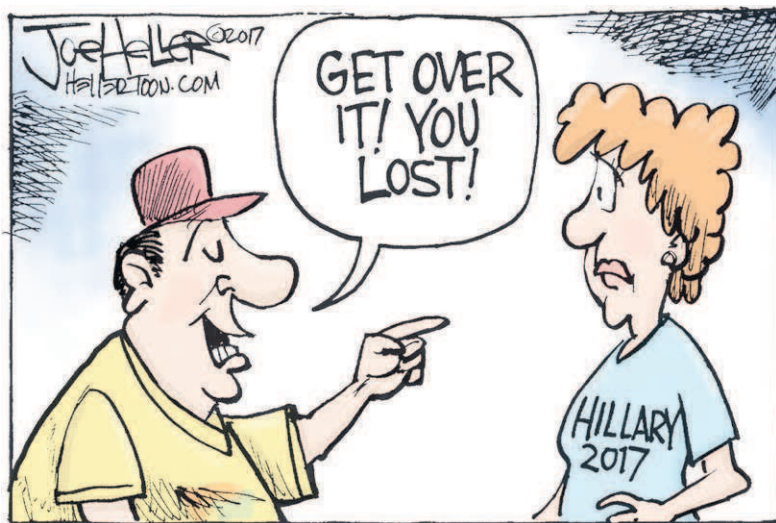
Don't get me wrong, I honor the First Amendment. If Nazis want to have a parade in downtown Astoria, and get the necessary permits etc., they have that right, just as I have the right to boo them as they march past me.

A parade, such as the Regatta's, should not allow any political, religious or any other personal beliefs or opinions in the parade. I will never attend a Regatta event as long as this is allowed to happen. We the people deserve a promise this will not happen again.

LAURA RUSSELL
Astoria

Respect for veterans

I was visiting Astoria over the weekend, and took in the Astoria Regatta parade. This parade was very beautiful, and I don't remember seeing the Confederate flag. To me, the Confederate flag is an important part of U.S. history, a



LETTERS WELCOME

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very bad time for this country, to be so divided that family and friends ended up fighting against each other. The really sad part about the Confederate flag is that people have now turned it into a race issue. They think and feel that it represents white supremacy. For those who have let this offend them: Instead, defend what the Confederate flag is: a big part of the American history.

What really got me, was where I was, I have never in my life seen so many disrespect the American flag and the veterans when they went through. By this, I mean very few stood to remove their hats. I was taught to respect the colors and veterans of this country. These are probably the same people claiming to be offended by the Confederate flag.

I have many family members who have fought in many of the wars this country has been involved in, and to disrespect the American flag, the veterans, and what they stand for, is worse than the Confederate flag being in your parade.

I look at all the good and bad in people, and what I saw on Saturday, in my book, was a lot of bad in people for the disrespect they showed the American flag and the veterans. The veterans of this country are why we have the freedoms we do, so please, people who were at the parade, show some respect and quit complaining about the Confederate flag. Let us teach future generations how to respect others and American flag.

Just remember there is good and bad in all, it doesn't matter the skin color; what I saw on Saturday was a lot of bad and disrespectful white people.

PAM SMITH
New Auburn, Wisconsin

Growth plan needed

On Aug. 7, The Daily Astorian story, "Port seeks to protect airspace," reported that Gary Kobes, the Astoria Airport manager, stated that the Airport Advisory Committee is preparing to submit zoning changes for unspecified areas around this airport to the Warrenton City Council.

The story stated that the airport is seeking to manage airport safety more effectively than possible under existing zoning. It was indicated that there is concern for trees located around the airport, height of buildings and potential lighting problems that they feel are out of their control at this time, and want to request zoning changes.

Future potential zoning changes would allow them to have the final decision-making authority for any development in an area that they wish to produce an overlay zone to

enhance their ability to manage the flight approach pattern to the six potential runway landing patterns.

The story appears to imply that the state Department of Aviation has developed a formal plan that is suggested, but not mandated, for all airports in Oregon, and that residential development in landing pattern areas around airports should not be allowed.

The potential size of the unknown overlay size the airport advisory commission is working on currently causes me great concern, since the city of Warrenton is growing rapidly. Retail chains such as Walmart, Fred Meyer, Home Depot and Costco have identified Warrenton as prime locations for their operations, in anticipation of further rapid growth in the future.

The city of Warrenton is required by Oregon law to have an Urban Growth Boundary that would provide for growth in the next 20 years. This boundary is supposed to be calculated every five years. However, I do not believe there has been a formal actual calculation for at least the past 10 years.

Because most recent growth has been happening very quickly, it appears to me that a new growth plan needs to be conducted, and should be paid for by the Astoria Airport Advisory Committee, as they are the ones who want a zone change.

SCOTT WIDDICOMBE
Warrenton

A few questions

The media industry is made up of many separate entities, many of them competitive. The Trump idea that all of these competitive entities have conspired to create a fake image of a disgusting and dysfunctional leader is the reaction of a narcissistic paranoiac.

I like to think of each of the media as a mirror, and since each of the mirrors is reflecting similar images the truth revealed is that the "president" really is incompetent, grotesque, a purveyor of hate and fear, a child who lashes back at everyone who opposes his way. Tape recordings of the president's lies confirm his mental illness.

As we enter "the beginning of the end," I hope that the investigative arms of the different media can answer what the possibilities are:

1. If the Special Counsel Robert Mueller finds collusion with the Trump election team and Russia, and the team is found guilty, then will the election be null and void? Will all of Donald Trump's executive orders and nominations be void? Will there be a special election or will Paul Ryan become president for three years?

2. If Trump is found guilty of obstruction of justice, will he be impeached and will minion Vice President Mike Pence become the new emperor?

3. If Congress finds Trump to be incompetent, and a threat to the safety and security of the nation, will he be impeached, and the executive orders remain, along with his appointments?

There was never a day in the Obama presidency that I did not feel safe. I have not felt that way since. I miss having an intelligent, articulate president.

DAVID FITCH
Astoria

Remove Trump

Donald Trump has been president for just a bit over 180 days, and has done little or nothing in that span. Congress, in its reluctant good sense, has denied the newly elected leader of the free world unsanctioned freedom, and he has in turn displayed total ignorance of the methods and nuances of political stewardship.

His Cabinet is still undermined, and many departments are still leaderless and adrift. He is slowly learning that foreign policy and domestic policy are real, but has yet to figure out what they have to with him. While he keeps himself amused by pressing all the funny buttons on his desk, we have to wonder at what we have allowed into our lives.

The time is right to take matters into our own hands, and demand that the Congress do its duty and remove him from the presidency. We, the people, by the power vested in us by our Constitution, have the duty and obligation to restrict or remove any person or ideology that threatens free exercise of that right. That is what democracy is all about.

If, in the course of our national affairs, an institution or individual attempts to act in opposition to that sacred precept, it is the right and duty of the citizens to reject that person or proposition, and assert their inalienable right to self-government and self-determination.

During no time in his tenure has he or his gang of cronies shown any aptitude for coherent policy, and the moment has arrived to pull the plug before they can stumble their way into an armed conflict in the Middle East, or some other equally inglorious enterprise.

To submit to any more of his ineptitude and childishness will lead to no good end. The best way is to act quickly and unequivocally. Impeachment is the only course left to us, and it is one that should be started as quickly as is possible.

The prospect is not pleasant, but it must be done before Mr. T can get us into serious difficulty, both domestically and in the larger world. To delay is to court disaster, and only provides an opportunity for something reckless or foolish, neither of which affords much room for favorable outcomes.

We know all we need to know. What we need now is the will to act.

JACK GUYOT
Astoria

Thanks for editorial

Thank you so much for your balanced and comprehensive editorial on the needle exchange program ("Needle exchange pilot a sensible action," The Daily Astorian, Aug. 14). The rationale for this program is complicated, and some-

times difficult to explain. This is not about morality. It is about disease prevention.

JEAN HOOGE
Astoria

Put racism behind

When Jay Pitman of the Sons of Beaches says that they fly the Confederate flag with respect to all our veterans, he seems to be forgetting that our military is not just white men ("Second thoughts on a divisive symbol," The Daily Astorian, Aug. 15). Men and women of color, gay people and transgender people bravely leave their homes and fight for our country. To intentionally use a symbol of racism and hatred is ignorant at best, and hateful and disrespectful at worst.

I hope that the Sons of Beaches will humbly learn about the struggles people of color face, historically and today, and honor veterans of all kinds by putting their racist symbols away forever. Let's show the world that Astoria is better than this.

LIBBY LAWRENCE
Astoria

Flag of oppression

The sun was out and the parade route was lined with people from all over anticipating the Astoria Regatta Grand Land Parade on Saturday. Cars and floats passed by, clowns and bands marched by. It was a perfect day until it was not.

A convoy of super trucks passed, many with flags firmly attached — true Americana, until one looked closer. Was that a Confederate flag flying loud and proud from one of the trucks? This, on a day when tragedy was unfolding thousands of miles away in Charlottesville, Virginia? How was this allowed to happen in our town, a town that prides itself on inclusiveness?

The entrant, Sons of Beaches, has and continues to fly Confederate flags, and according to the Regatta it was not on the vehicle when they were in the staging area or they wouldn't have allowed it in. So you have to ask yourself: What message is this group sending to the community? Why the Confederate flag?

This flag carries so much baggage it needs to be relegated to museums, not flying in parades. It conjures up images of men in white sheets and crosses burning in the southern nights, nights of terror and murder — a symbol of man's oppression of fellow man. It has no place in modern 21st century society.

I don't know much about Sons of Beaches. I hear they do good deeds, and are helpful community members, but by flying that flag, on that day, one can conclude otherwise. The Regatta has distanced itself from this. I hope that the Sons of Beaches will rethink their displays to preclude this hateful symbol of a troubled past.

I know it was hurtful most of all to persons of color, and their children, because this symbol is an affront to all they have achieved, and a painful reminder of a past when they were judged as less than by the privileged white ruling class.

The Regatta is a time of fun and festivities that has a long history in this community. I hope that symbols of this kind will be eradicated from our community, so we can all feel a part of this glorious Astoria.

TONI LEANCE
Astoria