

Gearhart repeal

I have received a lot of questions on the short-term rental repeal and replace ordinance that will be on the ballot this fall, which is financed by a political firm out of California and a vacation rental management corporation. I want to be perfectly clear on what Measure 4-188 will mean for the residents of Gearhart.

A yes vote will allow unlimited short-term rentals in our single family residential zones, no septic regulations, and will get rid of state-certified safety inspections for fire and life safety.

A no vote will continue our current laws which include: a balanced and responsible cap allowing all short-term rental owners to continue to rent, adequate septic regulations to protect neighbors from high commercial use, and certified safety inspections mandating legal fire escapes to keep children, families and visitors safe.

Our current laws also allow citizens to rent multiple rooms or their entire homes for 30 days or more at any time, and allow funds from short-term rental permits to go toward our police and fire departments, through proceeds from our general fund.

I campaigned last year on keeping Gearhart the quiet residential community we all know and love. As your mayor, I made a vow to protect our citizens and I will continue to fight along side you. Our residential property values, quality of life, and sense of community are at stake.

With a no vote on Measure 4-188, we have the opportunity to end the divisiveness, keeping Gearhart from becoming an investment property community that would allow outside corporations to buy unlimited properties on any neighborhood street.

Please contact me any time, and I will go over our current law next to the repeal and replace ordinance with you, line by line. I won't try to convince you how to vote, but will give you the facts so you can make the best choice for our future.

MAYOR MATT BROWN
Gearhart

Gearhart = residential

The word community has many definitions, as it can refer to people, birds, insects, animals and such. To us, the word refers to a group of people with a common interest, living in one town, in a picturesque seacoast village, known for its friendly residents.

When we decided to buy property in Gearhart in March, after looking at several coastal towns in Oregon, we thought that we had found that little picturesque seacoast village, and were looking forward to becoming one of the friendly residents.

We were not wrong. Within one week, we knew the names of all our neighbors, because most stopped by and introduced themselves. Since it was springtime, many of them were working diligently in their gardens, and by the time summer came, their homes could have won prizes in House and Garden magazine.

"Oh yes," I said to my husband, "this is the place where we will happily spend the rest of our years." Unfortunately, in our opinion, a dark cloud lurked on the horizon, attempting to destroy our Shangri-La.

We were extremely knowledgeable of the term short-term rental, before we moved to Gearhart, and referred to it as the neighborhood monster: a creature large, ugly and frightening, which destroys residential communities. For those who have never experienced living in a community with short-term rentals, this neighborhood monster will damage and destroy any neighborhood if let loose on the streets.

We experienced the effects of this neighborhood monster while living in Las Vegas. We had to keep our doors locked at all times because of robberies attributed to transient renters. We witnessed increased garbage on the streets, people not picking up after their pets, multiple vehicles parked in neighborhoods where it was mandatory to keep your cars in the garage, and several noise violations, all due to this neighborhood monster.

Our community laws meant nothing to the short-term renters, as they were on vacation and did not care to respect the community. Worse yet, many property owners were not nearby, so these short-term renters did as they pleased.

Out of all the coastal communities, we chose Gearhart because it has an ordinance in place regulating short-term rentals. We implore the voting residents to keep it this way. Do not invite neighborhood monsters into Gearhart. Let us keep Gearhart residential. Please vote no on Measure 4-188.

MALCOLM and JENNY
BARBIER BRUCE
Gearhart



More on watershed

Logging vernacular is rife with euphemisms. Under adaptive management, clearcut masquerade as thinning. My favorite term is applied ecology, wherein a run-of-the-mill clearcut mimics a cataclysmic event, such as the eruption of Mount St. Helens.

To this skeptic, the removal of non-native and disease-prone trees would imply Douglas fir are not endemic to the Bear Creek drainage. Poppycock. I would submit that the harvest targeted Douglas fir for removal because this specie had been infested, and its annual growth stunted by Swiss needle cast. Also, by pure coincidence, the Douglas fir are the highest value tree in any watershed.

Of course, all this is unadorned conjecture on my part, because I will never learn all the facts by reading The Daily Astorian, where it was reported with unblinking guile that the "thinning" really wasn't about the money ("Astoria keeps close eye on timber in Bear Creek watershed," The Daily Astorian, Aug. 29).

Also, many thanks to Bud Henderson for his letter, "Watershed thinning" (The Daily Astorian, Sept. 15). In a few paragraphs, I learned more about the Astoria watershed and growth and volumes as these measures apply to commercial harvests than I did in the entire article of Aug. 29. I have been called by many names, but never a casual observer.

GARY DURHEIM
Cannon Beach

Support DACA

President Donald Trump's recent action to phase out the Deferred Action for Children Arrivals (DACA) program was a heartless way to use these 800,000 young people as a political bargaining chip. They must now live with the extreme anxiety of not knowing whether or not they will be deported from the only country they have known, while waiting to see if Congress will pass legislation to grant them a protected status.

Although 16 state attorneys general have filed a challenge to his action in a federal court, giving five reasons why they think the original DACA program was constitutional, other legal scholars have given them a less than fifty-fifty chance of being successful.

That is why it is so important that citizens who support these young people, 95 percent of whom are working or going to school, and who will be a significant boost to our economy, urge Congress to pass the Dream Act (S 1615/HR 3440) promptly.

CAROLYN EADY
Astoria

Unintentional harm

In response to "Pope blasts climate change doubters: cites moral duty to act" (The Daily Astorian, Sept. 11): Pope Francis is right to be concerned about the moral aspects of climate change. However, he is unintentionally encouraging the greatest moral travesty of all.

Across the world people are suffering due to the effects of dangerous climate change. Yet aid agencies are unable to secure sufficient funds to help them because: Of the more than \$1 billion spent globally every day on climate finance, only 6 percent of it is goes to helping vulnerable people adapt to climate change today. The rest is spent trying to stop climate phenomena that might, or might not, happen in the distant future.

As demonstrated by dozens of open letters and other public lists, many experts do not agree that we face a man-made climate crisis. Consider our Climate Scientists' Register (<http://tinyurl.com/2es3rqx>) which, in only a few days in 2010, attracted over 100 expert endorsers to the statement: "We, the undersigned, having assessed the relevant scientific evidence, do not find convincing support for the hypothesis that human emissions of carbon dioxide are causing, or will in the foreseeable future cause, dangerous global warming."

By promoting the belief that we know we can control earth's climate merely by reducing our carbon dioxide emissions, Francis is unwittingly encouraging governments to put more importance on the possible problems to be experienced by people yet to be born than the real problems people are suffering today. That is the real moral issue that should most concern His Holiness.

TOM HARRIS
Executive director, International
Climate Science Coalition
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Disrespecting redheads

Shame on Natalie St. John for writing a discriminatory and disparaging comment against children with red hair. In her article "Hot rods roar: End-of-summer car party mostly safe, successful" (The Daily Astorian, Sept. 13), in the "Younger, wilder" section of the article, she talks about the different classic cars, describing the pristine, well taken care of cars. Then she talks about the cars that are jalopies, and old rusted-up dented classic cars, commonly known as "rat rods," and refers to those cars as "the redheaded stepchildren of the hot rod world."

Why is it that people continue to use this outdated and racist phrase against people with red hair? Its wrong and demeaning to make disparaging remarks toward anyone because of their hair color, skin color, race, religion, weight, gender, etc. Everyone deserves to be treated with kindness and respect and compassion.

I am the proud wife to my husband, who has strawberry blond hair, and mom of my son, who has red hair, and they are both amazing people. It broke my heart when my husband and son read the article — thinking they were going to be reading an article about the hot rod show in Long Beach, Washington — only to read it and have a discriminatory slur against them, just because the color of their hair.

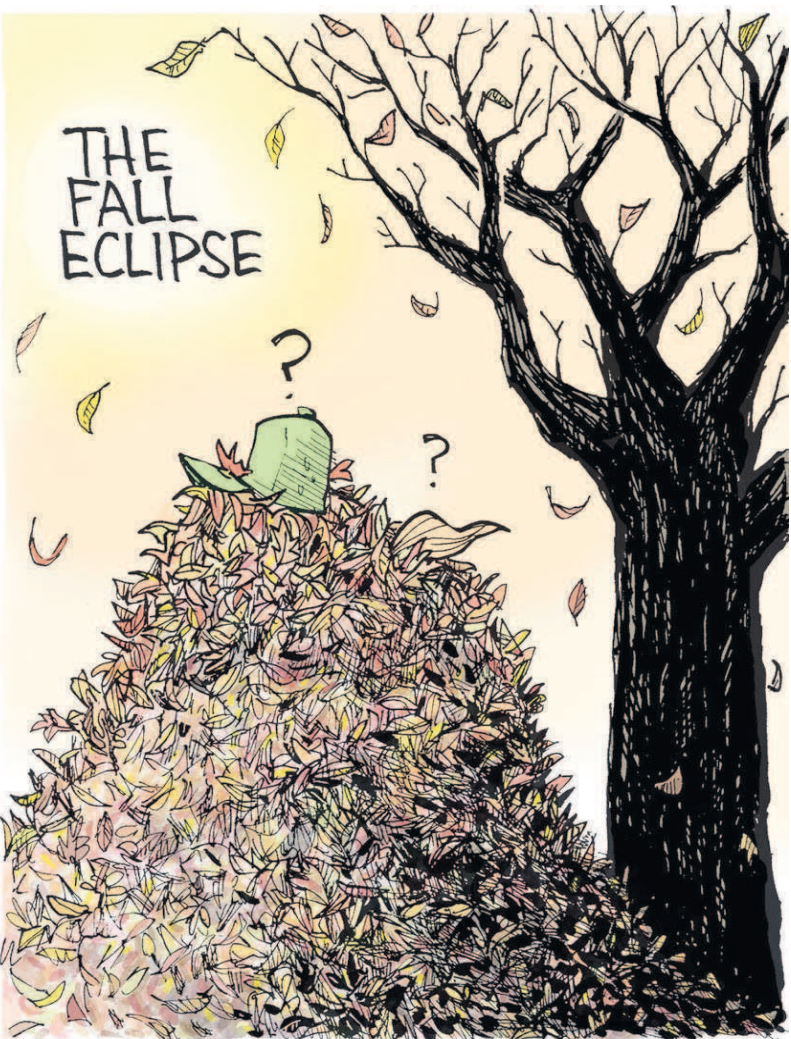
Shame on The Daily Astorian for allowing their writers to write discriminatory slurs against others because of the color of their hair, and to think it is all right to insinuate that if you have red hair that you're a "stepchild," and that you're not considered a valuable person in society, and that people with red hair are like the jalopies and damaged cars of society.

If people tried to lift up all human beings, instead of tearing them down, the world would be a better place to live. Instead, Natalie St. John and The Daily Astorian chose to tear others down in the article that should have been fun.

KINDWYN HOGE
Seaside

Shine on solar power

In response to "Glimmer of light for solar power" (The Daily Astorian, Sept. 12): Solar Power International began on Sept. 10 in Las Vegas with a panoply of



participants and technology in the industry. Over 20,000 attendees, 700 booths and 19 countries displayed its availability.

Solar works in Western Oregon and Washington. The physics of photo voltaic cells have advanced so rapidly, that even with overcast, they transmit power. Computer controlled, tracking and developments from the U.S. space program have morphed into the business. Solar arrays, like Shoals Technology Group, can now track the sun, increasing cell collection.

Many companies have "plug and play" units, so solar cell assembly, transformer and inverter functions are combined with batteries in a seamless interaction. Some of those businesses are ABB Group and LG.

Making it easier for the construction industry is Quick Mount (<http://quickmountpv.com>), securing safe secure mountings of solar displays.

Other developments come in the make up of batteries. Eliminating the use of cobalt, a nasty child labor industry, these new lithium, iron and phosphate battery technologies offer high power and energy density, excellent safety performance and extensive life cycling. Companies such as SimplPhi and others are leading the field.

The sun is our new energy system.
PAMELA MATTSOON
McDONALD
Astoria

Sobering documentary

The new Netflix documentary "Heroin(e)" is a sad and sobering film, but one I believe everyone must watch. I served on a grand jury a few years ago as an alternate one day here in Astoria. Five of the seven cases we heard were for heroin possession. I'm certain that since then the problem has grown exponentially.

There are many layers to the onion of this tragedy. Bad parenting, lack of parental discipline or boundaries, lack of a quality education or skills for good jobs in small and large cities. This creates a need for government entitlements of all kinds, and way too many people with no moral code of conduct nor a belief in any form of a higher being. Drug addiction can consume anyone from any background, but without these issues being honestly addressed people are more likely to fall prey to addiction.

Anyone who thinks pot legalization, or lax laws for possession of other controlled substances are a good thing live in a bubble, are in denial and don't consider the dark side of this crisis. Legalizing marijuana was the first small step into the rabbit hole. Legalization will have long-term effects on future generations, especially young children — it's a mathematical certainty. For people with addictive personalities, not all of course, pot is a gateway drug.

The human costs are heartbreaking, but the financial costs are just as staggering. One of the emergency medical technicians said in the film that if left unchecked, it could bankrupt the entire U.S.

Colorado, Oregon and Washington may believe that the tax revenues created by legalization of marijuana are a risk verses reward scenario, but eventually that will run dry with higher dropout rates, criminal activity, increased incarceration and drug rehab costs and sky-high entitlement spending.

There are no easy answers. Long jail sentences may not be the answer, and of course drug rehab funding

must increase, but enabling people and not having any consequences is no remedy either. We must begin to condemn drug use, just as we have cigarettes, or Astoria could follow in the same footsteps of Huntington, West Virginia, in "Heroin(e)."

JEFF JACQUES
Astoria

Voting is the answer

I've been a member of the Indivisible North Coast Oregon movement in Astoria since its inaugural meeting earlier this year at the First United Methodist Church. As someone who isn't a huge fan of the current president, I was inspired by the idea of "resisting" the new administration's agenda. I was optimistic that maybe — just maybe — a grassroots group of real people with shared ideals could somehow fight to protect our democracy and values if we all just banded together and shouted loudly enough.

Now, eight months into the new administration, I still found myself feeling powerless. I'd gone to meetings, rallies and hounded my members of Congress, but the threats were (and are) still there. After some thought, it finally occurred to me that my high school civics teacher was right: Yelling isn't the answer. Silence is. In fact, the real answer is the very easiest, and something our country is woefully inept at: Voting.

While our Canadian neighbors have had an average turnout of 70.7 percent since 1867, Americans have forgotten that voting is the only way to exercise individual power in a society. It's a right people fought and died for, that racial minorities have only had since the 1800s, and that women have had for less than a century. Though the presence of the Electoral College has discouraged many, the truth is that the election could have ended differently had more people only shown up to cast a ballot.

National Voter Registration Day is Tuesday. And though the nearest election isn't until 2018, this is an issue we need to discuss now. I would implore everyone to take Tuesday as an opportunity to register, if you haven't already. Talk to your neighbors, friends and family in other states about voting. Impress upon them the importance. It's a lot quieter than yelling, and way more effective.

TIFFINY MITCHELL
Astoria

Teeing off on women

Violence against women is a widespread, tragic reality in this country, and the numbers are staggering. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 in 4 women will experience physical and/or sexual violence during her lifetime. The resulting physical and psychological scars left by this abuse brand these women forever.

For those of you who are chuckling or even guffawing at President Donald Trump's re-teeing of "Trump's Amazing Golf Swing," a doctored video featuring Trump teeing off, and his golf ball slamming Hillary Clinton squarely between her shoulders and dropping her to her knees, please substitute your daughter/wife/mother/grandmother/sister in Hillary's stead.

If this optic leaves you mind-blind and still in the throes of hysterical laughter, comedian Kathy Griffin has just the video for you. Google it. It's a real knee slapper.

KATHLEEN ZUNKEL
Warrenton