

Reasonable regulation

Vote “yes” on ballot Measure 4-188 to reasonably regulate Gearhart vacation rentals. Contrary to representations made by Gearhart citizens, and even its mayor, vacation rentals will still be regulated for safety issues and septic issues under Measure 4-188.

The measure requires home inspections by licensed home inspectors. Licensing is regulated by the state of Oregon. Ballot Measure 4-188 simply allows the vacation rental applicant to choose a licensed home inspector. Additionally, Gearhart didn’t get over-run with vacation rentals in the first 100 years of unregulated vacation rentals, and it won’t in the second 100 years.

The city, with all its lengthy research at taxpayer expense, during 2015-2016 didn’t identify any more rentals than eventually applied for permits by the October 2016 deadline — only 84 out of 1,600 homes.

Over-restrictive vacation rental ordinances will force rental homeowners underground. Many cities along the Oregon coast, across Oregon and the U.S. regulate vacation rentals, even Las Vegas — a city from which some very new Gearhart citizens fled, allegedly due to vacation rentals.

At the public hearings on the City Council’s ordinance, experts in the vacation rental business testified that in locations where ordinances are too restrictive, homeowners needing or desiring to rent on a short-term basis go underground. An unintended consequence of the City Council’s ordinance is just this: unpermitted, uninspected and possibly unsafe homes.

Ordinances are only as good as the ability to enforce them. The city has failed to regularly and consistently enforce its existing ordinances regulating garbage, septic, parking and appearance of properties, and now its increasing its responsibility to regulate an ordinance that is misguided and over-reaches. Measure 4-188 will be more manageable, requiring enforcement of existing ordinances and adding enough additional regulation to preserve homeowners’ rights and balance the interest in public safety.

I helped draft ballot Measure 4-188, and I’d be delighted to talk with anyone to go over a line-by-line comparison of the city’s ordinance and Measure 4-188. Make the best choice for Gearhart by voting in favor of Measure 4-188.

KATHERINE SCHROEDER
Gearhart

Some stand out

It’s been a rough week for this country, but there were three heroes who stood out.

The first is the Mayor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Carmen Cruz. She stood waist deep in flood waters crying and begging for help for her people. She wasn’t interested in politics, she was trying to save the lives of Puerto Ricans. She was strong, and brave, and would not be shut up.

Secondly, Air Force Lt. Gen. Jay Silveria, of the Air Force Academy, lectured the young cadets in his charge not to be racist or sexist, and suggested it would be a good idea that they “get out” if they held those prejudices, as there was no place for them at the academy. He spoke of the values of our country, and encouraged them to be good Americans.

Thirdly, Tucker Benedict, a freelance writer who wrote a stirring open letter to President Donald Trump that can be found on the internet.

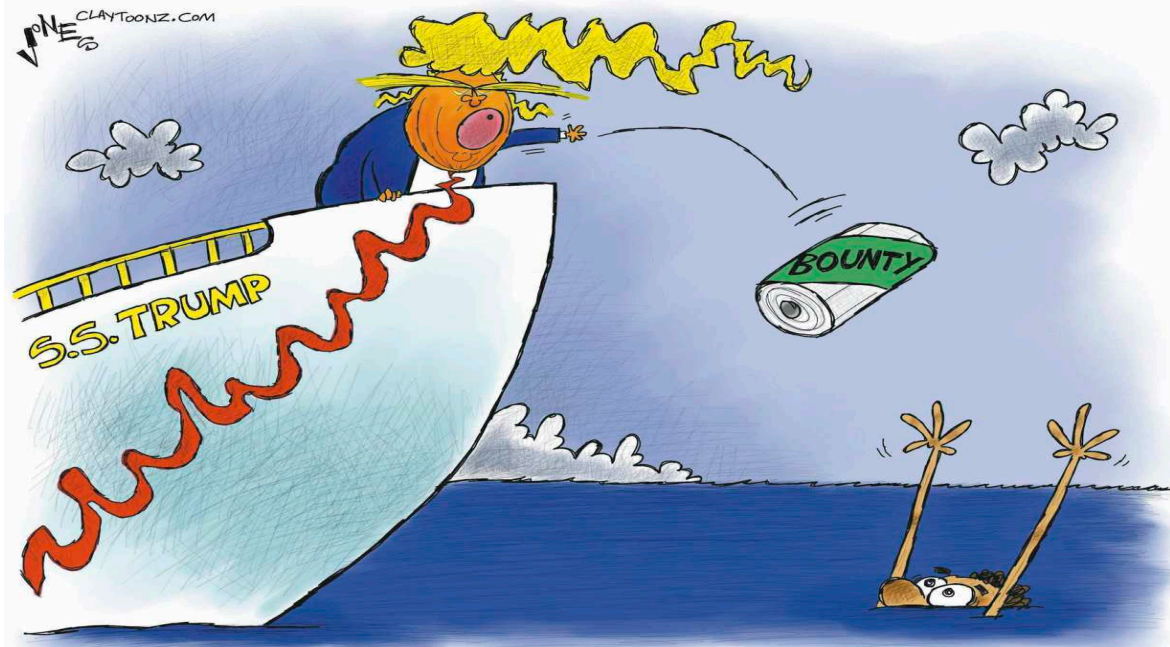
Hooray. Hooray. Hooray.
MARY TANGUAY WEBB
Astoria

Pink is a reminder

My story is different from Laura Snyder’s (“Breast cancer? Think more than pink,” The Daily Astorian, Sept. 29). I am a breast cancer survivor and remain “cancer-free” almost 11 years later. I know that the cancer could rear its ugly head again. There’s no way to ever be certain; no ability to claim “cured.” But, I have no problem with “painting the world pink” every October.

I agree that awareness is not the issue it once was, yet I am frequently amazed by the misinformation I hear. It seems to me that people are not really aware of breast cancer until they are touched personally; until a loved one has been diagnosed with this horrible disease. Then, the research and education begins — they become aware.

The mortality rate for breast cancer is decreasing. And yet according to BreastCancer.org, 252,710 women and 2,470 men in the U.S. will be diagnosed with some form of breast cancer in 2017. Yes men, you are not immune. The fact that 20 to 30 percent of those with early-stage breast cancers will get metastatic disease is scary. But, that also means that 70 to 80 percent of those early-stage cases



will not. Early detection and early intervention remain key.

That is why I like to see all the pink. It starts conversations. It reminds women to get that mammogram they’ve put off. It presents people with multiple foundations to support — Dr. Susan Love Research Foundation and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center are both excellent. I agree that people need to check into how much of that money is funding what projects vs. lining someone’s pocket. Fordcares/Warriors in Pink donates 100 percent of the net proceeds.

Yes, The Susan G. Komen Research Foundation is a behemoth. But, in addition to research, it funds education, services and treatment. Women in this area who are uninsured or underinsured have received mammograms free of charge, and some medical and travel expenses reimbursed, thanks to Komen.

MARCIA FENSKE
Astoria

‘Let’s Log It Fast’ Bill

While many of us are still grieving the fires in the Columbia River Gorge and the loss of a treasured forest, others are using the event as an opportunity to rush through a “salvage logging” bill. The bill would fast-track clearcut logging of National Scenic Areas, while suspending environmental protection laws and restricting public comment and legal action.

Ironically, Oregon Rep. Greg Walden, calls his bill the “Scenic Columbia Gorge Restoration Act 2017” (HR3715). Here are some of the highlights of Walden’s approach to “restoration.”

- The bill specifically targets National Scenic Areas, including the Columbia River Gorge, for post-fire logging, which typically includes clearcutting areas up to 10,000 acres.

- The Secretary of Agriculture would be legally required to propose logging within 30 days after a fire, regardless of how much information is available on the effects of the event.

- HR3715 allows the Secretary of Agriculture to utilize a “categorical exclusion” to avoid environmental analysis of the area affected by the fire.

- The bill allows the Secretary of Agriculture to “self consult” on whether logging may harm salmon or other endangered species. No further scientific review is required. Please research Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue to get the full implication of this.

- HR3715 makes no mention of genuine restoration — such as stabilizing roads and trails, preventing erosion and protecting streams and wildlife habitat — or of requirements regarding native species use in re-planting, or the impact of logging on soil compaction.

- The bill reduces or eliminates public review and input. Now, I wonder why.

If you feel that the Columbia River Gorge deserves a thoughtful restoration that considers the natural forest habitat, please contact your representatives and senators.

GWENDOLYN ENDICOTT
Nehalem

‘It’s about the money’

Foresters for the city of Astoria have long maintained that logging in the Bear Creek Watershed is being done to improve the forest rather than for the money. Why, then, is the amount of revenue generated for the city by logging in the watershed always mentioned when that practice is discussed by the City Council or the Public Works Department? In the words of H.L. Menchen, “If they say it’s not about the money, it’s about the money”

In addition to learning how much the timber companies make on the harvest, it would be interesting to know if the net revenue for the city includes: deductions for the percentage of their forester’s salary that is devoted to planning and supervising the harvest; other public works sala-

ries for employees involved in preparation for the harvest; cleanup afterwards and road maintenance; and office time handling the business costs involved, including keeping statistics for the 52-page Bear Creek Watershed Forest Management Plan.

Speaking of that document, in spite of the current city forester’s stressing the importance of forest management in a time of climate change, the management plan doesn’t even mention those words. Nor is climate change mentioned in the Bear Creek Hydrology Management Plan because, even though water quality is touted as the No. 1 priority in the watershed, no such document exists.

The latest scientific data confirms that clearcutting in a watershed is a bad practice. But our forest management plan allows for clear cutting, as well as cutting large older trees. Both practices are counterintuitive in maintaining high water quality, or mitigating (dare I say the words?) climate change.

Shouldn’t the City Council call for a revision in the forest management plan that eliminates these two practices, in favor of occasional thinning rather than a yearly harvest? It’s time for the city to wean itself from the revenue stream generated by logging in the watershed in deference to its primary function of providing us with clean water.

ROGER DORBAND
Astoria

Gearhart is not for sale

It’s time to send a loud, clear message: “Gearhart is not for sale!” The California resident and political strategist, David Townsend, Joy Sigler and our District 2 Clatsop County Commissioner, Sarah Nebeker, are behind Measure 4-188.

This measure is also known as the “repeal and replace” initiative. Their group is not a grassroots organization. They want unlimited short-term rentals with virtually no city regulation on their businesses. The measure has also cost the city of Gearhart \$10,000 to put on the ballot this November. If approved, Measure 4-188 will require that any changes be put to a popular vote, costing \$10,000 for each ballot measure.

The Daily Astorian recently ran a front page headline titled “Clatsop County ready to tackle vacation rentals” (The Daily Astorian, Sept. 26). It also ran a series of articles covering what all communities in Clatsop County consider the No. 1 issue in our area, housing for full-time residents. Measure 4-188 directly impacts housing available to full-time residents in Gearhart.

We find ourselves in Gearhart defending our City Ordinance 901 that regulates short-term rentals in our R-1 and R-2 zoned residential neighborhoods. It took over two years to craft. There was extensive community input, and it was passed into law by our elected city council representatives. The regulations were reviewed by the Land Use Board of Appeals, and were upheld.

Measure 4-188 is not in the best interest of Gearhart and its full-time residents. We need to vote “no” on Measure 4-188 to keep Gearhart a residential community.

BETTY SMITH
Gearhart

‘Gearhart is Gearhart’

I recently read Gearhart’s ballot Measure 4-188 online, as well as letters and op-eds written by Gearhart Mayor Matt Brown (“What Gearhart repeal means,” The Daily Astorian, Sept. 22) and David Townsend (“Other side of rentals,” The Daily Astorian, Sept. 29), all addressing short-term rentals in Gearhart.

Measure 4-188 will gut laws that the city of Gearhart approved to regulate short-term rentals, after hundreds of work-hours were invested in public meetings; those short-term rental laws were planned in great detail, and debated from all sides to provide adequate safety, health and tax/revenue issues for both vis-

itors and city residents. Those laws were a fair compromise to establish a responsible cap on the number of short-term rentals in Gearhart Residential-1 and Residential-2 zones.

In Mr. Townsend’s letter there are apparent plans to use Measure 4-188 to pocket short-term profits from his property in Gearhart, and help his friends do the same. Short shrift was given to the detail that Measure 4-188 in no way restricts anyone from renting their property for more than 30 days.

Mr. Townsend’s letter was actually an enlightening experience, because it helped me understand the definition of a “true Gearharther.” I paraphrase James Beard, Gearhart’s icon: A true Gearharther loves Gearhart simply because Gearhart is Gearhart, the jewel of the Oregon Coast. A true Gearharther would never exploit Gearhart for profit.

What was also clear in Mr. Townsend’s letter was his self-centered position that the property rights mantra should protect him and his plans. My family lives in a house in a Gearhart neighborhood zoned residential R-1. Passage of Measure 4-188 would allow commercial businesses and out-of-state corporations to surround my home with motels. Where is the respect for my property rights?

Mayor Brown’s letter lifted my spirits, and showed me that he is a true Gearharther. He loves and values Gearhart for what it was, what it is and what it will continue be, only if we residents stop and reverse the commercial exploitation of our semi-rural, residential R-1 and R-2 neighborhoods.

All of my comments here are solely my personal opinion.
RD SMITH
Gearhart

Vote ‘yes’ for Gearhart

I favor fair and reasonable regulation of short-term vacation rentals in Gearhart. A “yes” vote on Measure 4-188 will improve the city’s current overly restrictive ordinance by:

1. Preserving an important property right for all Gearhart homeowners. Currently, the city’s ordinance allows homeowners who were granted short-term vacation rental permits before year-end 2016 to be the only properties that will ever be allowed to rent short-term. This will reduce property values in the community now, and in the long term. Measure 4-188 would allow any homeowner to rent, assuming they apply for a permit, agree to comply with current regulations covering septic, fire safety, garbage pickup, parking, noise restrictions, property management oversight, etc., that apply to all property owners in Gearhart, and pass all inspections required.

2. Providing fair and reasonable regulation of short-term vacation rentals. Contrary to what Gearhart Mayor Matt Brown stated in a letter that compliance with “no septic regulations” will be the case (“What Gearhart repeal means,” The Daily Astorian, Sept. 22), Measure 4-188 instead requires short-term rentals to abide by all the same requirements that any Gearhart homeowner must follow regarding noise, parking, septic, garbage pick up and residential appearance, just like those listed in the new current city ordinance.

Similarly, the measure will not “get rid of state-certified inspections for fire and life safety.” Instead, it allows homeowners access to a larger pool of certified inspectors for qualified, timely service.

3. Encouraging homeowners to openly engage in the permit application process. Measure 4-188 will make our communities safer because homeowners will be more willing to consistently comply with regulations.

Vote “yes” on Measure 4-188.
PAGE KNUDSEN
Gearhart

Don’t change livability

I am in favor of safe, fair and reasonable regulation of short-term

rentals in Gearhart. That is why I am voting “no” on ballot Measure 4-188 this November. I believe the short-term rentals ordinance, unanimously passed by the Gearhart City Council, is fair in every way.

Fair means open, transparent conversations followed by decision-making based on the needs and desires of the community. Fair means copious research, acquisition of factual information, communication, listening, compromising, evaluating, monitoring and tweaking.

Fair means upholding Gearhart’s comprehensive plan by retaining a low density residential community while allowing all current short-term rental owners the opportunity to continue to rent their homes safely fairly, and uniformly. The current short-term rental ordinance meets all these criteria.

In contrast, ballot Measure 4-188 is not safe, fair or reasonable. It is not safe to have an unlimited number of renters 12 years of age or less. It is unreasonable to assume unlimited numbers of youths and children have a lesser impact on a septic system. It is not fair for Gearhart taxpayers to foot a nearly \$10,000 special election bill.

Finally, it is not fair or reasonable for the two chief petitioners to compromise the safety, livability and taxpayers’ money so their children can afford to keep a family home by renting their inherited “gift” to transient visitors.

Know all your facts so you can vote reasonably and fairly.
SUE LORAIN
Gearhart

No more rentals

When the proponents of Gearhart Measure 4-188 — on the November ballot to repeal and replace city law regulating and limiting transient rentals — claim that their measure will “protect property rights,” they mean their right to rent their homes on a short-term (usually weekends, or less than 30 days) basis — in other words, to conduct an illegal commercial business in a residential zone.

When we bought our home in Gearhart, we relied on our own legal right to live in a zone that was dedicated to residential use — a zone where commercial use, like turning a home into a motel, was illegal. When the city grandfathered the 84 existing short-term rentals last year, it was an act of kindness and compromise. It put a stop to the growth of an illegal industry heavily promoted by outside vacation rental agencies (Vacasa, Oregon Coast Vacations, etc.); at the same time, the city allowed those who were already renting illegally to continue, as long as the property did not change hands.

In a town that already has an R-3 residential zone for around 200 legal short-term rentals, we now hope to see a gradual decline in the number of short-term rentals permitted by compromise in our R-1 zone. The idea that out-of-state, absentee owners can advocate violating residents’ rights by allowing every house in town to become a short-term rental — sacrificing community for profit — is nothing short of outrageous.

Gearhart, vote “no” on Measure 4-188.
PENNY and RICK SABOL
Gearhart

Making a difference

Alfred Mann, who died in 2016, certainly made a difference. In his lifetime he founded Spectrolab, Helioteck, Pacesetter, Minimed, Bioness, Quallion and Mankind. All of his inventions benefited society. Minimed, which makes insulin pumps, was sold to Medtronic in 2001 for \$4 billion. Alfred Mann also started Mankind, and put \$1 billion of his own money into the business.

Diabetes is a terrible disease, which my wife and I have witnessed through our delivery of meals on wheels. In 2015 the FDA approved Mankind’s drug Alfrezza for inhaled insulin. There were conditions on the drug.

Today the FDA signed off on revised labeling for Alfrezza. The updated label includes study data that describe the time-action profile by dosage strength, showing the first measurable effect starts in 12 minutes, peaking at 35-40 minutes, then returning to baseline after 1.5 to 3 hours for the four unit and 12 unit cartridges, respectively. There is also an eight-unit cartridge.

Alfrezza is taken before meals. According to Mankind CEO Michael Castagna, many people with diabetes have a hard time maintaining the proper base of insulin. They are either too high or too low. Alfrezza will help maintain the proper dosage of insulin, and once taken is out of a person’s system in 1.5 to 3 hours according to the FDA label.

TERRY J. SMITH
Warrenton