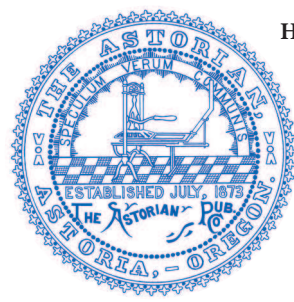


THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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OUR VIEW



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Soldiers from Camp Rilea witness a groundbreaking ceremony for a new armed forces monument that will stand in Warrenton near the post office.

Honoring veterans one thing we can always agree on

In the deeply polarized society of America 2017, there is one thing every resident of the North Coast can agree on.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our nation's veterans.

The community gatherings and activities this week and this weekend honoring Veterans Day on Saturday give us pause to thank the men and women who donned the uniform and served the United States with honor.

The roots of the commemoration date back to 1918 when The Great War, later renamed World War I, ended with an armistice at 11 a.m. on the 11th day of the 11th month. It is ironic that author H.G. Wells and President Woodrow Wilson both labeled it "The War to End All Wars." Both did so correctly suspecting even more carnage was to come.

There are 18.8 million U.S. military veterans, including 1.6 million women, according to the most recent statistics from the Census Bureau. More than 9 million of those are 65 or older. There are less than 800,000 still alive from World War II, 1.6 million from the Korean War and 6.7 million from the Vietnam War era. More recently, we have added vets from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and other strategic missions around the globe, including Africa and Syria.

Today is not the time to examine the reasons that number is growing. We can argue with why politicians — most of whom have not served in uniform themselves — send our soldiers, Marines, airmen and sailors off to wars. But we cannot argue with the commitment of these men and women fulfilling their duty with every breath they take. We must support them in every way possible.

Serving in the military is a selfless act. For all those who serve, it is an acknowledgment that they are part of a larger whole. They adopt the regulations of their branch of the service, embrace its traditions, and put their personal lives on hold. In doing so they make a pact with the nation that they and their families will not be abandoned if they come to harm. We must care for them when they return broken, either in body or spirit. It is a debt we should never shirk.

Looking for a definition of a veteran some while ago, we came across one that seems appropriate about why we should say "thank you" — not just once a year on Veterans Day, but on every day of the year.

"A veteran is a fellow citizen who at one significant point in his or her life made out a blank check payable to the United States of America for any amount up to and including their life."

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 350 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone numbers. You will be contacted to confirm authorship.

All letters are subject to editing for space, grammar and, on occasion, factual accuracy. Only two letters per writer are printed each month.

Letters written in response to other letter writers should address the issue at hand and, rather than

mentioning the writer by name, should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil and people should be referred to in a respectful manner.

Submissions may be sent in any of these ways:

E-mail to editor@dailyastorian.com; online at www.dailyastorian.com; delivered to the Astorian offices at 949 Exchange St. and 1555 N. Roosevelt in Seaside or by mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Broken promise

I saw the scar to the Doughboy. I dare say I'm glad of it; though "glad" is a failing of language. There's a symbolic truth, a sardonic poetry, a purpose from the netherworlds, if one is tempted toward such twilight hopes and thinking.

Being a biped (reluctant in winter, eager in summer), commonly on two wheels, and frequenting Three Cups Coffee House, I pass the Doughboy regularly, what pained visions come to me when I do.

I see young men, from the farm-lands, hamlets, villages, and from robust industrial cities too — these lungs accustomed to smoke and sooted air, but still the poison gas will choke the life out of them. I see so many boys, who merely wear the bodies of young men — perhaps that's why they weren't called Doughmen — taught to butcher one another, and for no great principle.

This was World War I; its cause, just the blundering avarice of men and empires; the callousness of kings and power, who would gamble millions of lives for more; always more. It's a war of good people being turned against good people and setting the world on fire.

I pass by the Doughboy, and wince at the screams of mothers and fathers, but mostly of young men in the trenches, all the hope and promise of their lives vanishing. It hurts to pass by it; what hurts more, is I can only think of one fitting tribute to the Doughboy, and that's an end of war, an end of golden clowns saber-rattling; but how far away that tribute seems now.

We live in an era of perpetual warfare, where the machine of war, seems to have no master. The honor we should give the fallen isn't another statue; it's peace. It should be at least long deliberate thought, a national consensus before we decide to, or continue to, butcher another people.

So the Doughboy, I think, should be broken, for we've forgotten them, and broken something far more precious — our promise.

MICHAEL ALEXANDER MILLER
Astoria

Political scandals

I agree with E. Robert Nassikas about Harvey Weinstein; he's (Weinstein) a low-life ("Another Democrat falls," The Daily Astorian, Oct. 20).

I just wish Nassikas would get on his computer. He should check political sex scandals in the U.S. in the last 27 years (1990-2017): From Wikipedia, 28 Republicans and 12 Democrats. Now who has hot pants?

In my opinion they are all low-lives.

JOYCE HOFFMAN
Warrenton

Time to impeach

Fellow Democrats, I have a bit of information that might interest you, and possibly get you excited and motivated. I surely hope so.

I watch CNN quite often. One day recently as I was watching, an ad came on, and I perked right up. It's about a grassroots effort to oust our so-called president, started by an average, everyday American citizen. I thought, wow, finally a possible way to get rid of our big-mouthed Twitter-abusing commander in chief. I am totally behind this person, this American citizen, who has the guts to go on TV and promote his movement.

Let's face it. President Donald Trump is on a path to a lot of the world hating us. He's going to

throw the U.S. in a war (I wonder with whom — could be anybody) and his ideas for health care and tax reform are a big joke. It's time all of us sane and responsible citizens do something about it.

This new "reality show" of Trump's is going to kill us, one way or another: medically, financially or even bodily. Now is the time to act. Not tomorrow, but today. It's the right thing to do, if not the decent thing, to save us and our country.

Please join the rest of us American citizens who care about our future and our country's future, and go online and sign the petition. The website is www.needtoimpeach.com

GARY KOLASINSKI
Seaside

Kneeling for equity

My kids and I stand with hands on hearts when the anthem plays in my house. I understand the anger over the "take a knee" protests in the NFL, because I used to feel the same way. But in all the news about this, I haven't once heard a player say that they are intending to disrespect our soldiers. These are well-paid athletes with little to gain and lots to lose. They keep trying to tell us what their intention is.

Think intent doesn't matter? That they're disrespecting the flag and that's all there is to it? Many people don't know that in Germany, the Nazi salute is punishable by up to three years in jail. If you were to visit Germany and wave in a manner too similar, you could well find yourself in front of a judge, and as a rational adult, you would make the case: "I wasn't trying to glorify Nazis for Pete's sake, I was just waving ..." You should expect this defense to hold water because intent matters.

Search online for "gestures in other languages," and read the differences in body language between our country and others. The middle finger isn't what you think it is in China. Then come back and try to understand the protests. The knee during the anthem isn't what you think it is here, either.

The issue we discuss shouldn't be whether or not to allow protests in the NFL, and the outrage we feel shouldn't be over some athletes kneeling during the anthem. The real issue is that there is verifiable evidence of widespread racial injustice in our country, and the real outrage is that so many of us have chosen to focus on the gesture, not on this evidence.

It's easier to feel patriotic anger than it is to have a tough talk about race relations, but these athletes are also fellow Americans, and they are risking everything to say, in an uncomfortably powerful way, "Something isn't right in our country."

BRIAN ROBINSON
Oregon City

Autumn in Astoria

I can't let it go. All seasons have their beauty, but to me autumn in Astoria and along the coast is special. I feel this is a time when many people have a new awakening, and perhaps a new hope.

These months, as the climate changes, seem to be that of renewed energy where people are moving faster, and anticipating the rush and excitement of the approaching fall holiday season. Good or not, by September Christmas is already in the stores.

Autumn is on time in Astoria. I remember in the south, although the will to begin autumn was there, the climate didn't fully cooperate until

December. In my old days, people would wear their new, and old, fall clothes in September, no matter the temperature outside.

I've always felt it was extraordinary to live here. This is a town of unique history and character. A place often so beautiful that I can get lost in time. The sunsets are always great, but in autumn, with the shorter days, the vivid changing colors of trees and other vegetation, the extra chill, the days and sunsets are magical. The magic of colors, climate and change.

I feel even the foggy, rainy, glum-looking days, of which there can be many, are part of the magic. Most of the people on the coast do not let the weather bother them. We work, run and play as usual. It is our existence, and even our pride. It is autumn in Astoria.

NORM HOOGE
Astoria

Let customers park

Earth to businesses and employees and landlords operating in the Astoria downtown business district: We have a large competitor opening soon to the south of us. Typically, when they open, more than 100 small businesses fold in a matter of months.

Weekly, I have noticed that owners of some businesses downtown, and sometimes employees and renters, park nearby most of the day. We are not perfect, and we forget, etc. But going forward, can we all at least abide by the two-hour parking rule that currently exists?

Somewhere around 1990, the Astoria downtown association produced a study showing that each parking space in downtown Astoria was worth \$500 in local commerce. What would that amount be with inflation?

Let us band together within our small business community, and at least not shoot ourselves in the foot, and enforce the current parking requirements.

JOHN D. SAMP
Astoria

Keep HIT suspended

The editorial, "Responsible steps needed to restore health care predictability" (The Daily Astorian, Oct. 24), was on point. For small business owners like my members, health care can be a huge part of costs, and it's vital that Congress acts to maintain market stability.

The first step Washington state Sen. Patty Murray and Congress should take to keep premiums low and markets stable: Continue the suspension of the Health Insurance Tax (HIT), which is set to return in 2018 unless Congress acts.

If the HIT were to return, it's estimated that more than 100 million Americans would face \$22 billion in premium increases, including small businesses and seniors.

In fact, in Washington state, small business owners and their employees would pay an additional \$449 annually for family coverage.

That's why the bipartisan National Association of Insurance Commissioners has urged Congress to delay the HIT, along with some of the other steps you mentioned in the editorial.

Small businesses already face enough pressure — we simply couldn't afford the additional costs that would come from HIT. As Congress moves to stabilize the insurance market, it should also continue the suspension of the harmful tax.

LARRY STEWART
Executive director,
Washington Association
of Neighborhood Stores
Vancouver, Washington