

OPINION

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THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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OUR VIEW

Worth a dime

While there are plenty of things that divide Oregonians, there are three pillars that unite us.

We speak, of course, of no sales tax, no self-pumping at gas stations and the Bottle Bill.

They're so ingrained in our unique Oregonian culture that it seems fundamentally wrong when we're visiting another state and see that extra line at the bottom of a receipt adding to our purchase total, or pull into a gas station and wait a beat before realizing we're going to have to climb out and work the machine ourselves. Perhaps the most egregious is when we see friends who don't know any better toss a soda can into the garbage, or drive down the highways of other states and see aluminum, plastic and glass littered alongside the road.

A sales tax would undoubtedly stabilize this state's unpredictable economic cycles and give us a good case for lowering the income tax rate. Self-serve gas has proven to be non-apocalyptic in much of rural Oregon. But our famous Bottle Bill, which set up the country's

first beverage recycling deposit system in 1971, should be enshrined as one of our state's greatest achievements.

Nine other states have followed in our footsteps since 1971, creating an incentive to recycle one-use containers rather than pitching them in a trash can, gutter or wildlife habitat.

The Oregon Beverage Recycling Cooperative redeemed 1.3 billion containers in 2017 alone, according to Peter Spendlow of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. An increase from 5 cent deposits to 10 cents in April 2017 has helped increase redemption numbers. The redemption rate was 59 percent in January through March of 2017, then 82 percent in April through December.

The return rate for non-Bottle Bill states is about 28 percent, according to the online Bottle Bill Resource Guide.

Distributors, who receive the initial deposit and pay it back at the end of the cycle, came out ahead at \$25 million in unreturned containers. But the big win is that the incentive of a dime did what it was supposed to and got us back



E.J. Harris/East Oregonian

Cubes of crushed cans stand on a pallet in the back of a BottleDrop facility.

into the habit of returning our cans and bottles.

Overall, Americans are sloppy recyclers. We're not alone in that trait, but we're bad at sorting before we drop off and, because of the mess we leave, much of the world's refuse is no longer accepted at processing centers in China. That's bad for the world, as material that can be reused is instead piling up in landfills.

Bottles and cans are unique in that

they are easily sorted, and a targeted campaign provides a greater return on investment than other materials.

As a bonus, the deposits have also become an effective fundraising mechanism for nonprofits.

So whether you return your cans and bottles yourself, donate them to a charity or give them to a neighbor kid looking to make a few bucks, the daily effect of the bottle bill is what you don't see — litter and waste in our state.

LETTERS

Restaurant reviewer should get different job

We are very upset over the destructive review someone wrote about Galletti's in Long Beach ("The Mouth: Galletti's Spaghetti House misses some Italian pillars," Coast Weekend, Aug. 2).

Firstly, it is a spaghetti house, not a fine restaurant.

Secondly, we eat there several times a month and the place is packed, and we think the food is delicious.

Thirdly, people almost always ask for a box to take some food home because there is so much food.

Fourth, there is a good menu. There are many choices and specials.

Fifth, there is a good wine selection.

If it is as bad as your reviewer says, why is there so often a waiting line? Why do I hear people raving about the food?

We are really upset this person could not write a balanced review. I think you might review your writer's judgment. This is a small town, a small restaurant family run and we think it is great — so do a lot of other people.

I have lost confidence in that section of the paper. I wonder who wrote the article. I am sad to think many people will not even try Galletti's now because of that article, and it's their loss. If I didn't know better, I would avoid it, thinking your reporter knew what he/she was talking about.

But he/she is "out to lunch" and should get a different job. Sorry to be so harsh, but it needs to be said.

BILL and JANET CLARK
Long Beach, Washington

Time to accentuate the positive side of things

There is a lot of unpleasantness going around, and without a concentrated effort on our part it will grow.

1) "Helmet" John (Wedell): Such a nice man — yet some people seem to think that his cluttered lifestyle is not what they want to see. Put your relative in this picture. Would you have them treated so badly?

John is a gentle man who lives in a world we know little about. He doesn't beg you for money, he doesn't yell at you on the street. I am glad to see John back, and he deserves our compassion.

2) Stacked rocks along the riverfront: Someone seems to see these as a danger and intentionally destroys them. They bring me joy, and I like the calmness and joyful use someone has seen with plain river rock. It is all in the perception.

3) Astoria Co-op: The concerns voiced about the building of the new Astoria Co-op totally baffle me. Here is a local group working hard to better our community with an alternative to the big box stores when it comes to food shopping. The Astoria Co-op staff have addressed how the issue(s) will be handled, and some are still not satisfied. The Astoria Co-op is locally owned and

operated. The monies stay in our community. The alternative would be less desirable. The Astoria Co-op is a win-win for our community.

Perhaps it is time to accentuate the positive.

CINDY PEAKE
Astoria

Mueller, Americans will arrive at truth

Maybe I can agree with President Donald Trump — this is a "witch hunt." If Mr. Putin is the "Wicked Witch of the East," I wonder if Mr. Mueller might identify the "Wicked Witch of the West."

I have faith that Mr. Mueller and my American friends will arrive at, and believe, the truth.

DAVID SKARRA
Hammond

Need respect and dignity for all people

It's now past day 555 in the Trump White House, and over 4,200 lies and mistruths have been attributed to this man. I learned at an early age that a liar thinks you're dumb enough to believe their words.

Trump's disciples are being deceived by the man they worship hook, line and sinker. He continually lowers the standard of the

office of the president through careless words, lies and a bully pulpit mentality. While ignoring the plank in his own eye, he berates and calls those who do not believe him losers; there sure are a bunch of us.

I'm ashamed and sickened by the division and bigotry that has been emboldened by the president. I do not look at the flag the same as I have in the past, this five-time draft dodger has denigrated the flag to represent his white minority. He has brought much more shame on the flag than those he calls names in the National Football League.

I have no pity for a man who has brought this negative attention on himself since coming down the escalator in June 2015 with his disparaging words. Mr. President, you can pave the streets in gold, give me a seven-figure pension and a job for everyone, but you don't understand: It's not a great America without respect and dignity for all people.

Some say I should shut up and cook, but I will never apologize for what is good and righteous.

PAUL FLUES II
Astoria

Don't believe the propaganda

Examine the propaganda. Be familiar with propaganda/advertisement techniques. The military taught recruits the elements of propaganda to strengthen them

against brainwashing when going into combat in the Asian theater.

Some techniques are "big lies/little lies" (Hitler), "good guy/bad guy," and "tell the people they are being attacked, denounce those who object as unpatriotic, and you can take the country to war" (Hitler's right-hand man, Hermann Goering).

Look up propaganda on the internet. Look at Russia's historic and prolific use of propaganda. Now, in the U.S., there are 13-plus initial Russian indictments, six guilty pleas, two imprisonments and two ongoing trials.

Plus, there is the bipartisan statement by the Senate Intelligence Committee, released July 3, that the studies by the FBI, NSA, military intelligence and the Justice Department are solid, and conclusive that Russia interfered in the 2016 election to help get Trump elected. It is too late to honestly/honorably choose to continue to believe the "big lies" that Trump and Putin are trying to pull off.

Americans do not want to live in a totalitarian America. The present moral decay reminds me of Nazi Germany: the state propaganda, the manic speech of propaganda, the mass of people who choose to accept the state propaganda, the denial, lies, divisive hate, visceral cruelty, and attempts to dehumanize groups. These lead to the ultimate chaos and destruction of a nation.

MONICA TAYLOR
Astoria

LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The Daily Astorian.

Letters should be fewer than 250 words and must include the writer's name, address and phone number. 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 allowed 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. Letters in poor taste will not be printed.

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