

OPINION

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THE DAILY ASTORIAN

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OUR VIEW

Do we need a replica Goonies house?

What does Astoria's Goonies house have in common with Abe Lincoln's boyhood cabin? Both are examples of humble dwellings that have taken on outsized symbolic importance.

Unlike the Lincoln cabin in Illinois, which is a replica — the original is said to have been used for firewood after being displayed at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago — the actual Goonies movie setting continues to attract visitors to the site it occupied long before the filming of the 1985 cult classic.

In fact, we don't need to look all the way east to Honest Abe's cabin to find a close corollary to the Goonies house. Just a few miles away from it, the replica of Fort Clatsop — or perhaps actually a replica of the replica that burned down in 2005 — attracts thousands of visitors. Even closer at hand, the far less-famous Astoria Customs House is a replica of the actual structure, which was built in 1852.

These comparisons are relevant in light of perennial complaints about Goonies fans intruding into the 38th Street neighborhood where the movie

house is located. Many of Astoria's steep old streets only barely manage to accommodate the access and parking needs of residents. When Steven Spielberg made "The Goonies," production activities were a short-term novelty and inconvenience. Little did Spielberg or the neighborhood realize the story of a plucky band of treasure-hunting kids would spark a playful decades-long love affair between fans and all things Goonie.

While it may seem to Astorians that this phenomenon must surely someday run its course, "The Goonies" has amazing staying power. Daily Astorian reporter Katie Frankowicz's story last week about continuing efforts to resolve conflicts between fans and residents quickly became our most-viewed article of the month. On a more positive note, Astoria's popular Oregon Film Museum really owes its existence to this one movie — more than to all the others, including "Free Willy" and "Kindergarten Cop." "The Goonies" plays a significant role in Astoria's economy and mystique.

As our story indicated, manag-



Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

Blue tarps cover the face of the Goonies house in 2015.

ing friction between fans and residents depends in part on consistent patrols and enforcement of parking restrictions. If a Goonies sequel is ever made — and Hollywood loves trying to capitalize on proven successes — much thought will have to be devoted to planning not only for filming impacts, but for an inevitable resurgence of attention for the story's original settings around Clatsop County.

Returning to the subject of replicas, it is remarkable that entrepreneurs haven't recreated the Goonies house set in a more convenient location, stocking it with photo backdrops, fake doubloons, an actor costumed as Sloth, and belly-revealing T-shirts.

Negotiating licensing agreements would take some creative legal foot-

work, but fortunes have been made on smaller premises than this. And if private industry can't manage it, perhaps the envisioned expanded film museum will incorporate a convincing house replica, luring fans away from the original where they are less than welcome.

For all of its well-earned reputation as a place with a commitment to remaining genuine and connected to its hardworking roots, Astoria remains more than a little starstruck. It's fun for such a small city to have such a big connection to the movies. We must continue exploring ways to make the most of this linkage, while finding better ways to politely play host to new generations of movie fans.

LETTERS

Astoria is natural habitat for deer

The "grumpy old man" (his words, not mine), who wrote the opinion piece suggesting that we relocate Astoria's deer, omits some inconvenient facts ("Deer belong in the wild, not in Astoria," The Daily Astorian, Aug. 22).

Lewis and Clark chose to winter on the south side of the Columbia River because the area had abundant deer and elk they could hunt. This is their natural habitat. Settlement of the area, and no doubt years of indiscriminate poaching (even within the city limits of Astoria) eventually drove deer out of their preferred territory.

The deer have returned to Astoria because once again, we have driven them from their habitat. The vast majority of Clatsop County's forests are in the hands of timber corporations that clearcut and spray with toxic herbicides. The relative toxicity of garden and lawn chemicals doesn't come close to the toxicity level of the chemicals they spray. Deer and elk are in municipalities along the North Coast by virtue of their own survival instinct.

My wife and I don't use chemicals on our plants, and use only organic fertilizers. We have found that inexpensive bird netting keeps the deer from eating our roses and other flowers. This year a doe gave birth to twins in our back yard, and a few years back another doe spent her last few days in our yard before dying there.

Maybe the writer could try the bird netting, and show some compassion for wild-life humans have robbed of their natural environment.

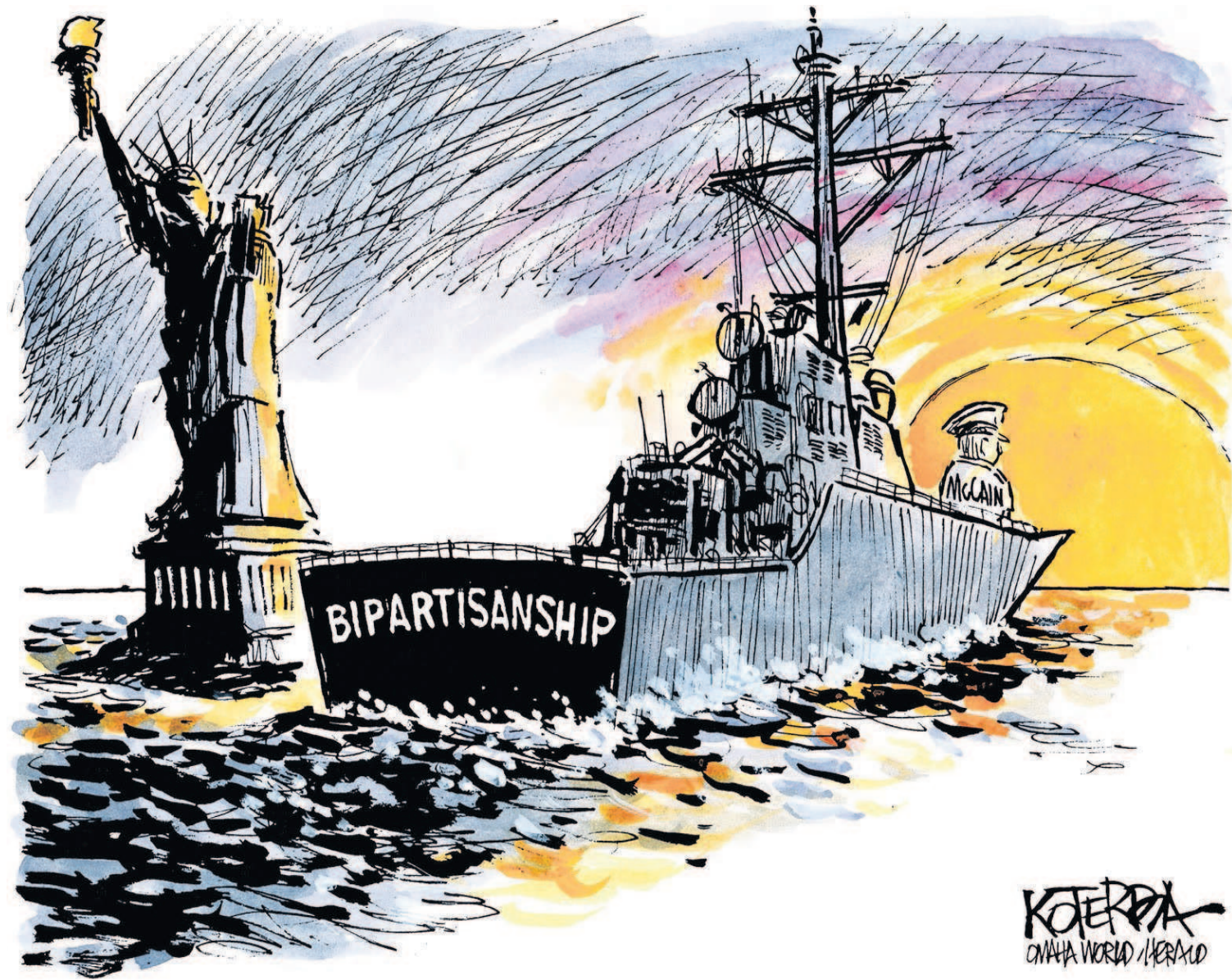
ROGER DORBAND
Astoria

Citizens deserve voice in county decisions

As a candidate for District 3 county commissioner, I would like to see a more robust citizen participation process in county government. Citizen input should be early and often in forming county policies and delivering programs. Recent Clatsop County initiatives in two areas illustrate my point.

There is no more important function of government than to formulate its budget. Government budgets are complicated. Revenue comes from various sources, often with tight strings attached. Citizens are skeptical when the budget process includes only staff analysis and input.

The county's 2018-2019 budget was brought to the commission with exactly one day of citizen input, one eight-hour day, where the appointed budget committee members were asked to review the entire bud-



get with little opportunity to have meaningful input.

The county missed another opportunity to engage citizens in the design and operation of a new jail. Although I support the need for a new jail, when the jail proposal was unveiled to county commissioners last spring, there had been no citizen input. Such engagement would have benefited from citizen ideas and would have made the proposal a stronger sell on the November ballot.

Citizens deserve an earlier voice in county decisions.

PAMELA WEV
Astoria

Award Oval Office to 2016's second-place finisher

I solemnly swear this letter is intended to be bipartisan, written by a political independent and lifelong sports fan.

In the world of sports, which most Americans follow to some degree, if not idolize, when the race winner is proved to have

cheated by enhancing their chances of performing better than nature would have dictated, any prize won is awarded to the next finisher.

Let's be clear. In the Olympic Games, the world's biggest, brightest stage — and that involves nearly every country on the planet — when the first-prize winner is proven to have won by violating the rules, the gold medal is then awarded to the second-place finisher, no matter how long it takes to prove the cheating. Duh, sort of makes sense.

This is not theory, or "next time." It has happened repeatedly, and with increasing frequency in Olympic history. Recently, most of one country's athletes were banned from even participating in the Summer Olympics for breaking the rules. Isn't it ironic today, that country was Russia.

The Electoral College is, in reality, the opinion of a small number of people, since the delegates can mostly vote however they want, despite the will of the majority of voters. Huh? Legal, but nonsensical.

Maybe it's time to start applying some sense, and go back and present the Oval

Office to the second-place finisher from 2016. That is, if it's proved that the apparent winner acted illegally.

You might find out who your Congress person is. Just in case.

CARL DOMINEY
Astoria

Show same respect to Drafall as Jones

The editor's biases are showing. On Aug. 16, the Daily Astorian ran two headlines on the front page: "Jones enters Astoria mayor's race" and under it, "Hairdresser to run for Astoria City Council." The first headline used a widely known candidate's last name; the second merely used a possibly less well-known candidate's occupation. The juxtaposition is telling.

David Drafall was extremely candid about his personal life. Show him the same respect shown to Bruce Jones.

RALPH E. McNEES
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