

OPINION

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OUR VIEW

Great choices for Astoria council

Astoria is blessed with a plethora of riches in the Nov. 6 election.

Not only do we have two excellent mayoral candidates, as we noted Friday, but we also have four smart, enthusiastic and capable candidates for two City Council seats.

David Drafall, Roger Rocka, Joan Herman and Ron Zilli would all make outstanding city councilors. Unfortunately, we can only elect two of them.

We hope that the two who don't win will remain engaged in the public life of the community. We suspect that will be the case.



Roger Rocka



David Drafall

Ward 1: Rocka vs Drafall

Rocka and Drafall are both longtime city residents, but say they didn't meet until after filing for office.

They have only nice things to say about each other. They both have a history of service to the community.

They aren't far apart on the issues, either. They worry that the waterfront

is slipping out of locals' control. They want to change city zoning to reflect the will of the people. They want to do something about the choking traffic. Neither has a solution for the housing shortage or homelessness.

The winner will take City Councilor Zetty Nemlowill's seat representing the western corner of downtown, Uniontown, some Port of Astoria property and some of the South Slope neighborhoods overlooking Youngs Bay.

Rocka brings a business background, both as the longtime owner of a successful dinner theater in California, employing 50 people, and as executive director of the Astoria-Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce from 1994 to 2004. He jokes that the business community listens to him despite his liberal political views.

Drafall brings a unique perspective as a longtime hairdresser at a Uniontown salon. It's a truism that if you want to know what people are talking about in any town, ask the barber.

He promises to be an unabashed advocate for the people of his ward. As a small example, he will "fight, yell and scream" to get parking on Bond Street, he said.

Another consideration is that Rocka plans to serve only one four-year term. Drafall says he's in this for the long haul.

Rocka said institutional memory is important to an organization, and we

agree. However, Drafall's daily contact with customers assures feedback and accountability from his constituents.

We are impressed with Drafall's fire and passion, which in our opinion gives him the edge in the race.

Our choice: Drafall



Ron Zilli



Joan Herman

Ward 3: Zilli vs Herman

Ron Zilli and Joan Herman also just met, though both are longtime city residents. They say they made their decisions to file independently and aren't running against each other.

Zilli has served the public for 25 years in the Oregon Department of Forestry, currently working as the state's field operations and policy manager.

He is also a 30-year veteran of the Navy and Navy Reserve, retiring as a master chief petty officer. His military service includes several overseas deployments to the Middle East and Africa.

He describes himself as a details and numbers guy, with lots of experience

in developing public policy, analyzing complex issues and involving the public in decision-making processes.

"If you want something done, give it to a busy person," he laughed.

Herman is a retired businesswoman, newspaper reporter and educator who serves on the city's Planning Commission. She hosts two programs for Coast Community Radio, including a public affairs show, and serves on the station's board of directors.

She is also active in the progressive group Indivisible North Coast and is a familiar sight at public events around the city.

Herman describes herself as socially progressive, fiscally conservative, a hard worker and good listener, who relishes studying issues and talking with people.

"As we grow and change, it's important we don't lose sight of what makes our community special and unique," she said.

Whoever wins will replace City Councilor Cindy Price, whose four-year term in the downtown Ward 3 seat ends this year.

Of the two, Herman has been more active in local city issues, and offered more specifics about them when talking with our editorial board.

She is the classic example of the selfless citizen activist. Her work on the Planning Commission has been commendable. We believe she's earned the chance to serve on the City Council.

Our choice: Herman

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Measure 102 will help our communities

People who work on the Oregon Coast should be able to afford to live on the Oregon Coast. But ask any new arrival where they are living and watch for the reaction. From Astoria to Brookings, nurses, first responders, fisherman, shopkeepers, teachers, office workers and tradespeople are no longer able to afford local neighborhoods.

As representatives for nearly half our coastline, we hear the impact that housing affordability has on families, seniors, workers, and the local businesses that need those workers. We joined our colleagues in the Oregon Legislature in voting nearly unanimously to refer to voters a measure that will make it easier and more efficient to build affordable housing — Measure 102.

Measure 102 will remove an outdated restriction that prevents affordable housing bond dollars from being used in partnership with nonprofits and affordable housing developers. This will give a boost to smaller cities and towns who otherwise might not have the ability to carry out an affordable housing bond.

This measure includes added safeguards, requiring local governments to complete annual audits and to publicly report spending of bond funds. If Measure 102 is approved, bond funds will be treated just like other funds for affordable housing, within a strong system of accountability that ensures residents with low incomes are being properly served.

Not only is taxpayer investment protected, but Measure 102 will make your tax dollars go further, by allowing access to new funding sources. Please join us in voting yes on Measure 102.

REP. DAVID GOMBERG
REP. DEBORAH BOONE
Salem

Has Barber earned new term as Seaside mayor?

Has Jay Barber earned a new term as our mayor? A look at the numbers:

In June 2017, I lobbied Jay Barber in an effort to persuade him to not sign an agreement with Airbnb. Despite having hard data, including a Harvard study that specifically outlined negative effects on affordable housing, Jay Barber signed an agreement with Airbnb.

Jay Barber sits at the mayor's desk and on the board of Helping Hands. City data demonstrates Barber's failure to regulate vacation rentals that rob us of family housing and drive up rents. I now see working poor sleeping in a derelict house in my neighborhood. This cuts to the bone.

From Helping Hands: Before Barber's last two years, 90 percent of clients were

post-corrections; now, only 19 percent. Before two years ago, 4 percent were children; now 10 percent. Before two years ago, 8 percent were seniors; now, 18 percent. Overnight emergency shelter has exponentially spiked.

Barber's mayoral policies are creating the end result that drives our vulnerable citizens into the arms of Helping Hands. While touting his prolific fundraising abilities for Helping Hands, this is like a toxic chemical plant raising money for cancer victims. Let this sink in.

Jay Barber moved here with a presumably securely funded retirement. I wonder if he understands what it means to struggle to raise a family, to earn a living, and to try to create a retirement plan in our town.

Can we trust Jay Barber for another term?
CYNTHIA MALKOWSKI
Arch Cape

Vote Smith for Gearhart City Council

We support Kerry Smith for Gearhart city councilor for these reasons:

- Kerry is a very good listener, willing to listen to his constituents, and act upon their suggestions.

- He has special expertise in water issues, and is very concerned that Gearhart has good, clean water.

- Kerry has lived in Gearhart for over 33 years, has deep roots here, and understands the issues facing our community.

- Kerry has run a successful remodeling and construction business, and knows the problems facing business.

- He was instrumental in constructing a very fair and equitable solution to the short-term rental issue.

This is why we support Kerry Smith for Gearhart city councilor.

JUDITH and JAKE REDEKOP
Gearhart

A chicken? Really?

What the editor or publisher of this paper deems as newsworthy amazes me. On Oct. 17, there was the annual "Community Leaders" tour. As the very short paragraph buried on page 3 of the Oct. 18 paper stated, the theme of this year's tour was "Working Forests — More Than Just Trees" ("A walk through the trees," The Daily Astorian).

The tour was attended by many of the candidates running for public office in the upcoming election, as well as some current officials and members of the local environmental community. I'm confident that at least some of these people would have comments, both negative and positive, regarding the tour and the current state of forest management. Forest management is an important

issue to most Clatsop County residents.

Instead of being featured as an important subject, it was on page 3. Front page news was ... a chicken ("This is Evelyn, Miss Fancy Feathers," The Daily Astorian).

BUD HENDERSON
Knappa

Bunnies not a 'problem'

Boo hoo! Talk about First World problems. If bunnies are the biggest issue in Cannon Beach, then we are one lucky community. Is it really worthy of so much news coverage? ("No easy solution for Cannon Beach bunnies," The Daily Astorian, Oct. 12)

Yes, there are lots of bunnies. However, they are nothing like rats. They are not aggressive, they don't attack garbage cans and spread litter over the street, and they don't live in your house.

Many of us who actually live here love the bunnies. They are cute and friendly, and they brighten our day. Moreover, a properly constructed fence will keep them out of your garden and yard.

So instead of complaining about our furry residents, why don't you just relax and be grateful you have a home in one of the most beautiful places in the world.

LISA KERR
Cannon Beach

Women on the ballot can make a difference

Unhappy with the current situation in our country or community? Change is possible with informed citizens. Don't complain, vote. At one time, half of the U.S. citizens could not vote. "Time is up."

There is still wage discrepancy, environmental issues, education for kids, affordable housing and preserving what is Astoria to be worked on locally. Vote. Join me in voting yes on 4-197 to improve building safety in local schools. Educated kids are our future.

Voting is a privilege, and a responsibility. We are standing on the shoulders of women who came before us, who campaigned for women's suffrage for almost 100 years; many were jailed, some died before it became a law in 1919. Vote. This midterm election can turn the tide. We have willing women on the ballot who can make a difference in politics as usual.

I have met and talked to candidates Pamela Wev for Clatsop County Commission, Joan Herman for Astoria City Council, Dulcye Taylor for mayor, Tiffany Mitchell for state House District 32, and incumbent candidates Suzanne Bonamici, Betsy Johnson and Kate Brown. These women have a background in public service and a history of volunteerism and are committed to the citizens of Clatsop County and Oregon.

We need new voices, new views, and the experience to work collaboratively preserving what is uniquely Astoria, including our waterfront, as well as disaster planning. These candidates will propel Astoria into a future that residents and tourists can value. Your vote counts.

LaREE JOHNSON
Astoria

Downtown merchants should focus on customer service

Open letter to Astoria downtown merchants: I hadn't been into the shops for quite a while, and decided it would be fun to spend a lovely fall day exploring my downtown again. However, I went into several shops where the clerk/owner/manager never bothered to greet me.

I was so disappointed and dismayed. Was it because it wasn't cruise ship day, and I wasn't taken as a tourist with money ... and because I was dressed in my casual walking clothes? Not an answer.

In these days of so much online shopping competition, and stores disappearing from our downtown, it seems that customer service should be at the top of the list, no matter the day. I know the stores, though few, that I'll visit again.

Come on Astoria, you can do better than what I received — or should I say, didn't — that day.

ROBIN RODGERS
Astoria

County jail is not inhumane

The current jail is not "inhumane" by any reasonable standard. It definitely has some shortcomings as far as comfort is concerned, and the food was much better years ago, when it was cooked on site in the local jail kitchen.

If this measure fails to pass, the sheriff and his deputies will continue to do a great job of keeping our county safe.

Murder, child abuse, drunk driving, domestic discord, mental illness, drug violations, robbery, burglary, stalking, etc., etc. — it's all out there, and one jail, one criminal justice system is supposed to address it all.

A large number of people in jail are waiting for a trial and sentencing in an over-subscribed court system, or waiting for mental health evaluations in an underfunded, undermanned mental health system, or failing parole and probation requirements. The state wants to house more state prisoners in county jails, and the federal government wants the counties to do the job of federal immigration authorities.

No wonder people are confused about whether to vote for a new jail.

THOMAS DUNCAN
Astoria