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OUR VIEW

Without refs, the kids don’t play

Age, cost, abusive fans cause officials to quit

An old magazine cartoon, published to highlight a certain nationality’s famed politeness, featured a fan calling to a referee, “I recommend you see an optician!” Likely just about every sports enthusiast has heard considerably worse comments from the sidelines.

It is surely no surprise that people who step forward to train to become a sports referee or umpire often drop out within a short while.

Teena Toyas, dean of transfer education at Clatsop Community College, was Oregon official of the year in 2017. She serves as North Coast commissioner for three high school sports in addition to refereeing games. For her, the specter of poor fan behavior is a factor as she works year-round to recruit and train officials.

Toyas administers basketball, soccer and volleyball; the shortage of officials is dire because of the number of schools served.

For basketball, for example, her North Coast Officials Association covers seven middle schools (including Ilwaco, Wash.) and six high schools: Astoria, Seaside, Warrenton, Knappa, Neah-Kah-Nie and Jewell. Multiple contests scattered around the region make scheduling a challenge when several teams play home games on the same nights.

City leagues and competitive/recreational sports programs inject further complexity. Officials commit to a code of conduct that prevents them from accepting a more lucrative assignment if they have already committed to work that day for another league or program.



The Daily Astorian
From left, Teena Toyas, Patrick Webb and Bruce Holt prepare to referee a high school soccer game at Broadway Field in Seaside in 2012. Toyas regularly appeals for more people to step forward to be trained.

‘We’ve made calls for civility on this page many times, especially in the last three years where national politics has polarized the country. It seems reasonable to extend that plea to youth sports.’

A recent Astoria clinic to initiate new officials for the basketball leagues around our region resulted in two dozen newly qualified referees smiling for the camera after their training.

We commend them for stepping up. Whether they stay to provide officiating skills for any considerable period may depend on the behavior of those attending their games.

Jack Folliard, executive director of the Oregon Athletic Officials Association, said in recent years almost 1 in 5 Oregon officials registered with his association have dropped out.

Some hang up their whistles because of age or medical issues; others find the cost of uniforms and gas to travel to far-away venues isn’t offset by game fees. But the main reason is “fan behav-

THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING?

For more information, contact Teena Toyas at officiallyteena13@msn.com or 503-440-0221.

ior,” Toyas said. “(Officials) just don’t like getting yelled and screamed at, and blamed for their kid failing and everything else.”

The Oregon School Activities Association, which oversees high school sports, works hard to instill the values of sportsmanship in all its players, coaches and other participants. “No cheers, comments or actions shall be directed at one’s opponent or at contest officials. Derogatory or unsportsmanlike language is not allowed,” its policy reads.

Before significant contests — including playoffs — field or gym announcers will read part of the policy that stresses that coaches, players and officials make judgment calls which should be respected.

We’ve made calls for civility on this page many times, especially in the last three years where national politics has polarized the country. It seems reasonable to extend that plea to youth sports.

No one wants to be that embarrassed kid whose parent is loudly berating the referee.

Recruiting, training, mentoring and rewarding youth sports officials is tough enough. Fitness, concentration and confidence have to be developed by mentoring and experience. At some point, age, health and financial issues take their toll.

We hope North Coast fans don’t contribute to that by poor behavior. The bottom line is simple: Without officials, the kids don’t play.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Holiday season will be gone before you know it

Hey! The holiday season is here. It’s here whether you are ready or not. I feel most people are excited, although we seem to have so much to do. Actually the holiday season is the same as it has always been — and we got through it even though we complain that we are not going to do this much next year. We, however, usually do.

Anyway the town lights and other decorations are up. Many were up before Halloween, but now everybody is getting serious. It’s in the air. Get those Christmas cards and start looking for last year’s decorations.

As I said in my letter to the editor last season, I feel this is also a good time to reflect on your year and look at where you have been, as well as what you want for the coming days. One can also reflect on the season itself and how you want it to be. The days will be gone before you know it.

The holiday season is a great time of year for most — not all. It is a festive time and, for many, a religious time. People of faith seem to come together.

So walk the streets, peer into the shops, breathe the air and try to relax and enjoy. It’s the holiday season. I’m sure there are many other places, but here it’s wonderful having Christmas trees and deer around you, and having the smell of burning fireplaces by the sea.

NORM HOOGE
Astoria

Reason should prevail for homestay regulation

We support the perspective of John Ginder about homestay regulation in Astoria (“Homestays part of what makes Astoria great,” The Daily Astorian, Nov. 27).

It seems that in any discussion of short-term rental policy, the confusion between those folks who rent rooms in homes they occupy, vs. vacation rental of unoccupied dwellings, inevitably arises. A friend and fellow senior living alone nearby us depends on her occasional income from BNB rental of a bedroom in her home. She plays by the rules regarding licensure, taxes and fees. She now talks of abandoning her small enterprise.

We do not have thorough knowledge of the new regulations regarding homestay lodging in town, but discussion with her, and reading

Mr. Ginder’s letter, indicate that those who provide supervised, licensed, short-term rental of an unused bedroom are being regarded in a catch-all with those renting otherwise unoccupied homes as vacation rentals, often to large numbers of people unsupervised for long periods.

Why our friend should be gouged with additional taxes and fees, and for such things as mandatory inspections, along with those providing often long-term vacation rentals is beyond us, and we would hope that reason may prevail in the city in applying these regulations.

GREG LAVIN
ROBIN RODGERS
Astoria

Why would climate conditions surprise you?

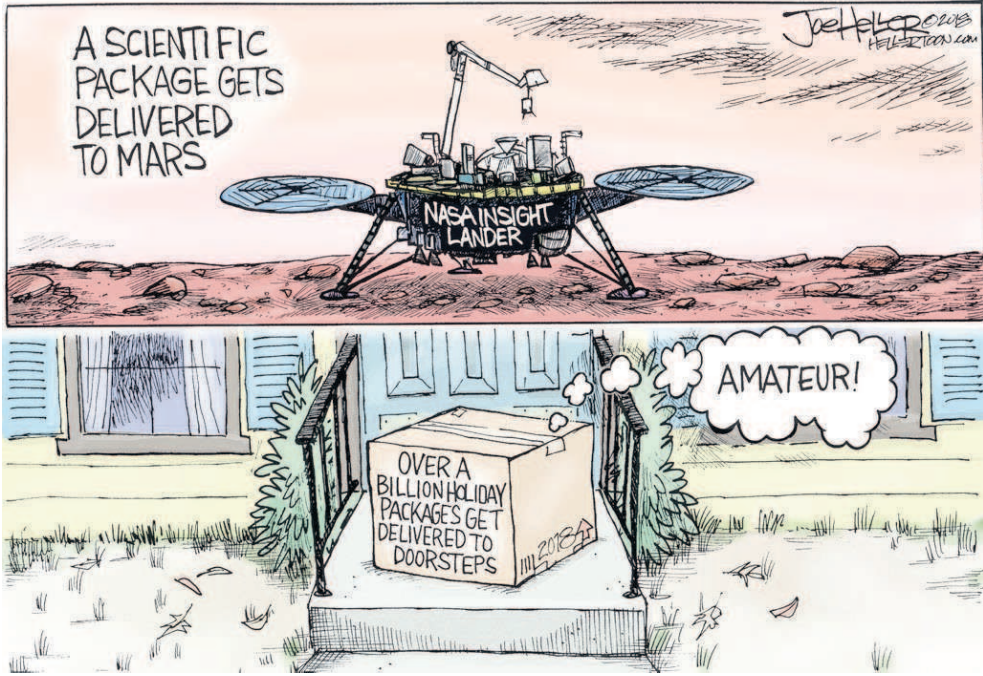
The Daily Astorian dueling opinions regarding a carbon tax were not surprising to see in our paper, with all the discussions going on about climate control — “Pro-Con: Is carbon tax the right way to fight climate change?” (Nov. 30).

Mr. Kenneth Richards’ argument (Pro) provided no solutions or alternatives other than more taxes that will never solve the carbon emissions problem, ever.

Mr. Kyle Isakower’s (Con) was excellent. He mentioned alternative fuels and their benefits to reducing carbon emissions and six other pollutants. He also came with facts and continued solutions to reduce carbon emissions, with not a single word mentioned for more taxes. His industry hopefully will solve this emissions problem.

Why would climate or emissions conditions surprise you? It’s been happening forever like the ice ages, floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, fires, tsunamis, drought, famines — if you haven’t noticed, the Earth is angry. You need to figure out what your part is in this crisis. It’s possible nature, or the environment, can never be controlled?

Before you know it driving, or maybe even owning an automobile, in major cities could become against the law. These people would have to rely on government mass transit systems for their transportation needs. This, or something like this, will be the plan for the future, because of the nature of automobiles in resolving the fossil fuel emissions problem in America.



Wonder how all this will end up? Forgive, me for thinking like this, but it would be easier getting onto Highway 101 (if the plan works).

RAYMOND GARDNER
Warrenton

Amend state constitution to limit campaign contributions

As The Daily Astorian article stated, Michael Bloomberg, former New York City mayor, did indeed contribute \$1.5 million opposing Measure 103, banning grocery taxes, but that only tells part of the big special-interest money story in this contest (“Oregon ballot measure would ban future taxes on groceries,” Oct. 31).

A check with the Oregon OreStar reporting system found that the campaign supporting the ban on grocery taxes was totally from corporate interests, totaling almost \$5 million. Let’s name some of the names:

- American Beverage Association — \$3 million
- Costco — \$330,000
- Oregon Soft Drink Political Action Committee (PAC) — \$50,000
- Albertson/Safeway — \$785,917
- Fred Meyer/Kroger — \$780,917

Oregon is the Wild West when it comes to campaign contributions/expenditures, because it has no limits on contributions in either candidate or measure elections.

It does not have to be this way. We could

follow the example of Multnomah County, where voters approved limits on campaign contributions in candidate elections a couple of years ago; almost 90 percent of voters voted ‘yes.’

We hope to take the next step with a 2020 statewide measure amending the state constitution to allow limits. Learn more and sign the petition at heor.weebly.com

DAVID DELK
Astoria

Thanks for your vote of confidence

I would like to offer a heartfelt thank you to the many people who helped get me elected to the Astoria City Council, Ward 3, on Nov. 6. First, to all who cast ballots for me, I am humbled and honored by your vote of confidence. To my old and new friends who donated time and money, thank you.

To my wonderful campaign team — Chairwoman Laurie Caplan, Wendela Howie, Mary Jackson, Pastor Bill Van Nostran, and Sue Zerangue — you made my first run for public office actually fun. I will never forget your support and encouragement.

And to my husband, John Gaasland, who jokes that he is the man behind the woman, thank you for supporting me as I undertake this adventure. I truly could not be doing this without you.

JOAN HERMAN
Astoria