

OPINION

the Astorian

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A question

The other day a friend asked if we will see domestic (white American) terrorists in solitary confinement at Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba alongside foreign (nonwhite) terrorists.
Short answer: “When pigs fly.”
R.D. SMITH
Gearhart

Publicly affirm

I’d like elected leaders like state Rep. Suzanne Weber, state Sen. Betsy Johnson and our Clatsop County commissioners to publicly affirm their commitment to democracy, the rule of law and free and fair elections.
I say this because the Oregon Republican Party seems determined to continue spreading lies about the election and the insurrection. Some of them, like Clatsop County Republican Chairwoman Lisa Lamping, were in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6.
No matter what they say, the 10 Republican U.S. House members who voted to impeach President Donald Trump are not traitors to their country, they are patriots. No matter what they say, the people who mobbed the U.S. Capitol were actual Trump supporters, not part of a “false flag” operation.
No matter what they say, election laws in swing states were not illegally changed. The Trump campaign made that claim in dozens of court cases, and lost. Enough is enough.
Our elected officials, especially the Republicans, need to publicly call for an end to this nonsense and a return to respect for our democratic values, including our free and fair 2020 elections, in which both Democrats and Republicans were elected.
GENEIA JAMESON
Seaside

Extraordinary gratitude

A note of gratitude from the Driftwood Restaurant & Lounge: As we round out our 76th year in Cannon Beach, we recognize the last several months have been extraordinary.
In this extraordinary time, we have extraordinary gratitude. For the city of Cannon Beach for their tireless efforts in allowing businesses like ours to remain open. For their prompt decisions and flexibility to use the space we have and for their assistance in navigating new and challenging protocols.
For our community, our loyal locals, loyal visitors and the Chamber of Commerce — our deepest thanks for your support, patience and steady stream of takeout orders.
We are truly grateful to be a part of this community — our success is your success, and we look forward to the next 76 years knowing whatever happens, we’ll handle it together.
JORDAN MAIER
Cannon Beach

Continuing threat

President Joe Biden is rolling up his sleeves and getting to work. He wants to end this pandemic and help us return to normal. I hope the Republican Party will get out of the way and let that happen.
So far, what we have seen from Republicans in Congress is continuing support for former President Donald Trump, whose lies about the election many of them supported.
Few Republican leaders have had the good sense and courage to condemn his incitement of the attack on the U.S. Capitol, even when they saw firsthand the death, destruction and terror that caused. Of course, some Republicans in Congress participated, helping spread the lies and enabling the insurrection.
The Oregon Republican Party has continued spreading these lies about the election, and last week adopted a resolution reaffirming their support of the conspiracy theories.
These Republicans are not just creating a distraction from the work we need to get done. They are a continuing threat to our democracy. They need to retract their lies and admit responsibility. Only then can we move forward and return to normal.
KATHLEEN MACDONALD
Seaside

Risk factor

Regarding “County to remain at extreme risk for virus” (The Astorian, Jan. 28): This article repeats, in detail, the plea made by Clatsop County business people and politicians for decreased restrictions on indoor dining and drinking. They say they have not seen any scientific evidence that indoor dining and drinking contributes to the spread of COVID-19.

One major risk factor is inadequate ventilation. We don’t keep all the doors and windows open in the winter. Very small droplets can accumulate in a closed area, like smoke. They can travel further than 6 feet away.
There have been superspreader events documented of one person in a restaurant infecting multiple people downwind of them. I doubt many local venues have the specialized ventilation systems required to prevent this.
They claim there’s no difference between indoor dining and drinking, and the usage of indoor lottery terminals, which is allowed. But there is a difference: You can wear a mask while operating a machine; you can’t while eating and drinking.
Another risky activity associated with dining out is talking. Talking generates smaller droplets, especially talking loudly, which people tend to do when dining out — especially when drinking. This gets back to the ventilation issue. Those who work in these venues are constantly exposed to these risks.
There is so much scientific evidence for an increased risk with indoor dining that I can’t list it all in the space allowed here. If county business people and politicians haven’t seen it, they haven’t been looking.
MARGARET MURDOCK
Gearhart

Science and outrage

Recently there were a couple of leading letters to the editor that were very interesting. It would be even more interesting if we questioned our politicians’ COVID-19 response using the same criteria as to the landslide. Check out Florida.
It would also be interesting to apply the same moral outrage of the U.S. Capitol rioters to the rioters who attacked federal buildings and killed many people over the last year.
Question authority. Question bias.
ROBERT LIDDYCOAT
Seaside

Responsible action

Here is a copy of the email I sent to State Rep. Suzanne Weber:
“When the Oregon Republican Party issued a resolution proclaiming the Cap-

itol riot as a false flag operation, you and the other Republican state legislators were quick and unanimous in rejecting that resolution.
“I am very grateful to see such responsible action. You and your colleagues are providing an excellent example for other Republicans in other states and in the federal government. Thank you.”
Please feel free to express your own appreciation to Rep. Suzanne Weber at oregonlegislature.gov
CHERYL CONWAY
Astoria

Truly pioneers

I enjoyed reading Ron Baldwin’s piece, “Highway to the future” (The Astorian, Jan. 30), on exploring U.S. Highway 30’s early history. In the late 1940s, after the war, and through the 1950s and 1960s, the most dramatic highway improvements were made.
I remember traveling with my folks on Highway 30 to Portland, a four-hour trip on the old Oregon Motor Stages, where barf bags were provided, like the airlines do. In high school, in the early 1950s, several classmates made good college money working the big summer project that replaced the Bugby Loops, just east of the Bradley Wayside.
Sadly, that raft of improvements ended just 7 miles east of Astoria, due to a quiet reluctance of several early influential Astoria merchants who did not want folks away from downtown shopping. That 7-mile stretch of distinctly sharp curves, just out of Astoria, is the last of the original alignment of Columbia River Highway, from The Dalles to Astoria.
As Baldwin points out, in 1914, and into the early 1920s, these early highway developers were truly pioneers with vision.
BOB WESTERBERG
Astoria

Support our theaters

Thank you for mentioning the Save Our Stages Act in the editorial “Keep our nonprofits in mind” (The Astorian, Jan. 28).
The Save Our Stages Act was passed to provide financial assistance to theaters. Unfortunately, it inadvertently excludes community theaters, whose actors are volunteer, as opposed to paid, performers.
If you like to see productions by the

Peninsula Association of Performing Artists, Astor Street Opry Company, Tillamook Association for the Performing Arts and the Coaster Theatre Playhouse, you will be disappointed to know that they are not eligible to apply for this relief funding.
As Save Our Stages is currently written, it requires that performers be paid. Thus, it excludes community theaters whose performers are volunteers who are contributing to their community, and having the opportunity to practice their passion.
Our community theaters’ budgets have been decimated at this time, as ticket sales have been obliterated due to health restrictions. Grant revenue, such as through the Save Our Stages Act, has become even more important to preserve their future ability to provide artistic and cultural venues for our communities, and contributing to our local economy.
I have written to U.S. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, bill sponsors Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Sen. John Cornyn, as well as Rep. Suzanne Bonamici and Sen. Jeff Merkley and Sen. Ron Wyden. Please write your own letter in support of our community theaters.
I would welcome sharing details and quick links to make it easy for those wanting to join in advocating for assistance for our cultural venues. Email me at eifxcm@gmail.com, and I will reply with details and links.
TITA MONTERO
Seaside

Huge victory

In a huge victory for our communities and our climate, the Washington Department of Ecology has taken a protective step for our region by denying the shorelines permit for the world’s largest cracked gas-to-methanol refinery.
Doomed from the start, this project would have produced massive amounts of harmful greenhouse gas emissions, and would have been a threat to the health and safety of our communities for decades.
We know this decision was not taken lightly. Ecology executed a thorough and research-based decision. The evidence of potential harm is overwhelming and ultimately, Ecology saw this project for what it really is, a green-washed disaster waiting to happen.
I applaud Ecology for doing the right thing and for envisioning a safer, healthier future for Washington and our region. Our communities and future generations are depending on moving away from dirty energy. As the climate crisis worsens, we need bold leadership such as this if we have any chance of building resilience and moving forward toward cleaner sources of energy.
Washington deserves a better vision for our future than dirty, dangerous fossil fuel projects. Finally, we can move past this ill-conceived idea toward cleaner, more sustainable energy sources. We are at a critical point, and what we do now matters. Thank you, Ecology, for stepping up and protecting our chances for a safer, healthier future for generations to come.
LINDA LEONARD
Kalama, Washington

LETTERS WELCOME

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