

OPINION



the Astorian

editor@dailyastorian.com

Founded in 1873

KARI BORGEN
Publisher

DERRICK DePLEGUE
Editor

SHANNON ARLINT
Circulation Manager

JOHN D. BRUIJN
Production Manager

WRITER'S NOTEBOOK

Astoria's historic buildings are our high card

There are many examples of what brings a small town back from atrophy.

One unheralded factor is that men and women with what I call the carpenter gene who show up. These are people who see opportunity in the town's historic housing stock. And they have the ability to repair, remodel and refurbish a residence or commercial property.



STEVE FORRESTER

That's happened in Astoria over the past 30 years. And that is what's celebrated in the annual Dr. Edward Harvey Historic Preservation Awards given by the Astoria City Council.

Among this year's honorees were Theodosia Woods for the restoration of her Italianate-style residence, the Merwyn Apartments and Lucien Swerdloff, director of Clatsop Community College's historic preservation program.

Harvey was one of the founders of the Oregon State University Seafood Lab in Astoria. His avocation was historic preservation. He started marking Astoria's earliest historic homes with medallions in the late 1960s. Many of those markers remain visible. Harvey did this even before the national preservation movement that Jacqueline Kennedy would spark with her saving Grand Central Station in New York City.

I had the good fortune to meet Harvey at a Boxing Day party in Astoria in the 1970s. Also there that evening was



Lissa Brewer/The Astorian

The Alderbrook home of Theodosia Woods received a Dr. Edward Harvey Historic Preservation Award.

Rolf Klep, founder of the Columbia River Maritime Museum. Both of these men exuded the passion for their causes.

The Merwyn's rebirth was nothing short of miraculous. This much abused and neglected building had defied more than one prior attempt at restoration. Astoria is fortunate that the Portland nonprofit Innovative Housing Inc. made the Merwyn the object of its energies and funding.

Clatsop Community College's historic preservation program has been an

avenue to careers for students. Describing Swerdloff's role, the historian John Goodenberger says, "Lucien is able to see the big picture of the importance of the historic preservation program, while seeing all the working parts needed to create it. One of his many talents is his ability to manage all the parts — classroom lectures, hands-on workshops, students, adjunct faculty, administration, local craftspeople, community partners — and do so seemingly effortlessly."

THE HARVEY AWARDS ARE A REMINDER THAT ASTORIA'S HOUSING STOCK AND ITS COMMERCIAL AND CHURCH ARCHITECTURE ARE THE VERY CORE OF THIS TOWN.

Historic preservation has been one of this newspaper's core values for decades. When the drive to acquire and restore the Liberty Theatre took root in the 1990s, The Astorian contributed money at a key, early moment and the newspaper absorbed the administrative costs of the nonprofit Liberty Restoration Inc.

Over the decades since Harvey's ethos took root, there have been several significant restorations that brought back decrepit properties. Some of the most notable were the Hotel Elliott, the Judge Guy Boyington Building and the Astoria Column. Also there have been a bevy of residential restorations.

The Harvey awards are a reminder that Astoria's housing stock and its commercial and church architecture are the very core of this town.

Steve Forrester, the former editor and publisher of The Astorian, is the president and CEO of EO Media Group.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Corporate forestry

Oregon's current logging practices, the Oregon Forest Practices Act, are perfect for the timber corporations. This law is far weaker than Washington state or California laws that protect water supplies, fish and wildlife and reduce landslides. Steep-slope logging, road building and logging near headwater streams is standard practice here in Oregon. The taxes the timber corporations pay (or lack thereof) are great, too.

This has left rural communities with a huge hole in their budgets, resulting in failing water infrastructure, unrepaired roads, low funding for schools and inadequate health care. Over the last few decades, multinational timber corporations and Wall Street have bought up huge areas of Oregon's forest lands while good paying forest jobs disappear.

What can Oregonians do to change this? Adoption of the habitat conservation plan is only a beginning. Responsible forest stewardship will safeguard clean water and recreational opportunities and protect wildlife, including our salmon and steelhead, which are threatened by these practices. By revising logging regulations, Oregon can revitalize rural communities, recover commercial fisheries and strengthen our outdoor economy.

Let's work together to keep our forests alive and thriving for many generations to come. We are caretakers of the planet, only borrowing it from our grandchildren. As my beloved father used to say, "Always return something in better condition than you found it."

SHERYL BOS
Astoria

Fan the flames

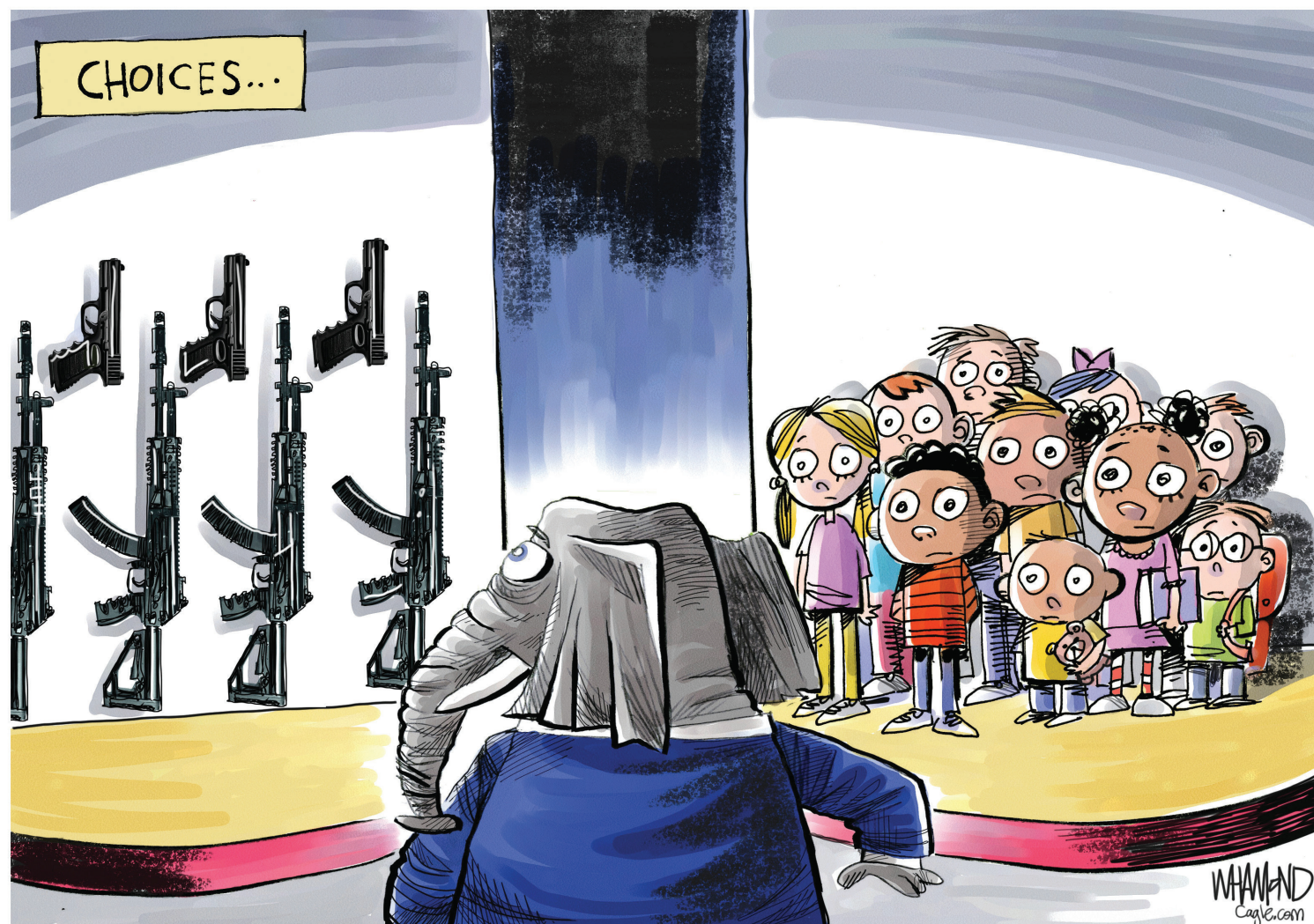
Dave Bergquist, I read your letter (The Astorian, May 24), and was surprised it was put into print, but nonetheless you were provided an avenue to express your opinion. Mine follows.

Why don't we just leave your big a**hole in your brain, where it needs to remain. In the face of a 2 to 1 defeat, you're so unhinged you actually, with some twisted thought process, have elected to ignore a very biased and delusional six-year process, and defend the indefensible.

Your very poorly written and highly demeaning comments simply mimic a long list of rude and snarky comments of the "yes" group, all of which preceded your snarkiness. By piling your attitude on top of the existing "yes" vote attitudes, it serves only to fan the flames of disunity in an already divided community.

Further, your comments will be remembered in the context of future and renewed fire station efforts. You have managed to offend the vast majority of Gearharters with your words, and have chipped away at the compassion most of us hold for first responders.

Your words indicate to me you fashion yourself quite a creative writer, but to me



LETTERS WELCOME

Letters should be exclusive to The 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 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 should refer to the headline and date the letter was published. Discourse should be civil. Send via email to editor@dailyastorian.com, online at bit.ly/astorianletters, in person at 949 Exchange St. in Astoria or mail to Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR., 97103.

Out of touch

There have been times in the past where I have been proud to call Betsy Johnson my state senator. In fact, she visited my classroom more than once, and hosted my class at the Oregon State Capitol. She introduced us to then-Secretary of State Kate Brown, and gave our class a copy of the Oregon Blue Book.

However, as was evidenced by her public interview at the TEDxPortland, she is out of touch with the values of the majority of Oregonians. Her stance on guns, after the tragedies that have occurred these past few weeks, is not only out of touch, but is neolithic.

She should abandon her run for governor. The right has their candidate in Christine Drazan. The left, of course has Tina Kotek, and as Johnson drifts further and further to the right, her effect on the progressive voter is almost nil. I know she lost my vote years ago, when I realized she put guns ahead of people.

The other day I saw a woman wearing a hat that said "Guns, God, Trump" from top to bottom, and I couldn't help but think about Johnson's candidacy. While she has gotten a lot done as senator — and I commend her for that — her drift to the far right of the political spectrum has made her a liability to this state.

And, yes, while she may be a "daughter of Oregon," who will put up "one helluva fight," that won't be enough for voters in the fall.

DON ANDERSON
Astoria

you're a verbal bully who enjoys shocking people. So let's recap: You and your supporters received a stinging defeat, and you need to take yourself and your big a**hole back to Astoria, where you are apparently appreciated more than in Gearhart.

Once you do so ... please don't come back!

JACK ZIMMERMAN
Gearhart

Tired

Are you tired of the two-party system that keeps failing all of us? For over 25 years, I've fought hard to hold our so-called elected officials accountable. The Democrats and the Republicans do nothing except fight each other.

I was at a City Council meeting in Seaside when they passed the homeless camping ordinance. What a disgrace that was. I challenged them to fix the problem, and

not just put a Band-Aid on it. What did they do? Just put a Band-Aid on it, and passed it down to the next group.

We have basically three different categories of why someone would be homeless. No. 1 is the cost of rentals; No. 2, they just don't want to work; and No. 3, they have mental health issues.

Each county should have a mental health clinic to assess why each person is homeless, and give them the help they need. Not just a camping spot.

The ones who just don't want to work — they should be given 24 hours to leave the county.

Let's fix the problem, not just do the feel-good thing. If you're as tired as I am, and want to see real solutions, join us as we start the Constitution Party in Clatsop County. We need real leaders who will stand up for us, the ones who pay the taxes that they like to spend.

JAMES HOFFMAN
Gearhart