

LETTERS

Letters from Page 4A  
Community needs

When I learned that the Gearhart grocery store, from which I live around the corner, was to become a brew pub, I was delighted. I immediately relived, in memory, the afternoons and evenings my wife, our three grandchildren and their parents enjoyed in the brewpubs of Portland — the world's best beers, the inexpensive, tasty fare, and, best of all, the kid-friendly atmosphere and menus. The high-spirited conviviality, for all ages, is not often matched in commercial enterprises of any kind.

Then I thought of the summers-to-come: outdoor tables under a blue sky, following or preceding a day on the beach, many people with families and others without enjoying the center of our beautiful town, with the prospect of the vast majesty of the Pacific Ocean but a block or two away. Who could not be cheered by such a tableau of multi-generational human gaiety?

"A handful of residents," that's who, I learned from R.J. Marx in The Daily Astorian ("Residents fight Gearhart brew pub plans," March 30). And they attire what is nothing more than their personal disfavor in the garb of concern for the "needs" of the community, as if any person, or "handful" of persons are qualified to decide what are my needs, or my neighbor's or my neighbor's neighbor's.

And, if it is really "needs" we are talking about, what community "needs" more than a fire department, a police station and a post office? And what individual "needs" more than a glass of water, a bowl of soybeans and a waterproof jacket in winter? Who needs a dog, or a car, or a church? I don't.

Shall I go then, through legal channels and attempt to have them banned from the city of Gearhart? And if each of us persuaded the authorities to ban everything we either disliked or had no use for, what would remain? A pretty picture Gearhart would be then, wouldn't it?

Louis Sargent  
Gearhart

Brew pub will add to Gearhart community

Every town needs businesses that help build a sense of community. You may not like brew pubs, but they fall into that category. Places where locals can get out of the house, not have to cook, watch Oregon sports teams on TV, have a couple of beers, get some food, and be around a lot of fun people. This is what Molly Lowenberg, the owner of the Gearhart Grocery store, is proposing. What is the problem?

Those who would rather have Molly's business fail than add a little life to the town's core are shortsighted, and completely off base. I'm guessing these people have a net worth in the millions, have bypassed their local grocery store for years to save a few bucks, and now scream when a business plan has to change.

The proposal for the Gearhart Grocery is perfectly reasonable, and will add to the community. Those opposing it, I guess, can build a wall and have Seaside pay for it.

Jim Spurr  
Cannon Beach

Grandfather rentals

We vacationed in Gearhart several years ago as a

family, and fell in love with the quaint little town. One of the reasons we could purchase the home in Gearhart was because we could operate it as a short term rental to help with the expenses, but our long term plan is to spend much more time there once we are retired. The recent developments by the Planning Commission and the City Council have us very concerned.

First of all, we acknowledge that change is unsettling for everyone. We also believe that the efforts to reduce or eliminate short term rentals are not personal attacks, and as we express our views we hope that folks will understand that this is not personally targeted at anyone.

We understand there are currently 85 short term rentals in the Gearhart area. It is proposed to reduce those to 35. That seems drastic, in our opinion. Our proposal is that the existing operators be grandfathered in, since this was a valid use of the properties at the time of purchase. Reductions would happen organically over time.

Since short term rentals are a historic use in Gearhart, they should be allowed to operate as viable businesses without arbitrary or punitive restrictions. By arbitrary and restrictive, we mean that if a home moved from short term rental to another use, would the outcome be better, or worse, or no change?

For example: If there were extra landscape maintenance required for short term rental, would the non-short term rental use (the desired outcome) be better, or worse, or no change? In the case of landscape maintenance the outcome would be no change, at best, and likely worse.

So a landscape requirement would be judged arbitrary and punitive by this criteria. Many of the proposed ordinance items are of this nature. It would seem that it would be better, for the neighborhood, to have a house occupied by approved renters than to have the house sit vacant.

We are appealing to a voice of reason and fairness to all involved. We are a part of the community by being a property owner and part-time resident. We want to operate harmoniously, making it a win/win for everyone.

Mike and Janet Cranston  
Beaverton

Vote for McIntosh

Judge Phillip Nelson is retiring in January 2017 after 24 years on the Clatsop County bench. Dawn McIntosh is the best person to fill his shoes.

Dawn was born and raised in Banks, Oregon and attended Willamette Law School. She has been a trial attorney for 24 years, 12 years as a prosecutor in Multnomah and Clatsop counties, and 12 years in private practice for civil and criminal matters in Clatsop County and throughout Oregon. As a trial attorney she has earned the respect and endorsement of judges, attorneys and clients. No other candidate possesses Dawn's experience in the courtroom.

Dawn is well versed in both criminal and civil law; she is intelligent and is a tireless worker. She is the most qualified candidate to succeed Judge Nelson. I enthusiastically endorse Dawn and urge everyone to vote for her when ballots come out later this month.

Blair Henningsgaard  
Astoria

# Gearhart Planning Commission underestimated anger over rentals

I believe that everyone within the city of Gearhart, including the City Council, the city staff and residents, has been surprised by the increase in short-term rentals and the impact on the city.

I also believe the City Council has underestimated the anger and frustration experienced by many residents regarding this issue.

The change came lightning quick. It can be traced to the use of the Internet, professional marketing companies, investors entering the market and unfortunately a change in peoples' attitudes.

In 1994, the city adopted a comprehensive plan with a clear vision for the future to preserve the low density, semi-rural character. The plan states, "The city will recognize the importance of the city's neighborhoods and the need to protect them from negative impacts of the transient rental property and to discourage increased levels of traffic and similar disruptions."

Contrary to the policies in the comprehensive plan, the Planning Commission is considering a proposal to amend the city's zoning ordinance to allow short-term rentals in neighborhoods now zoned R-1 and R-2. The intent of the zones is to protect residential neighborhoods from commercialization and direct businesses into areas zoned for commercial use. The comprehensive plan outlines seven specific uses for R-1 and R-2 areas and short-term rentals aren't among them.

So why have short-term rentals been allowed to exist, and in some recent cases take over our residential neighborhoods? That has happened because for many years the city has turned a blind eye to their existence, though they

GUEST COLUMN  
TERRY GRAFF



are clearly for commercial gain and not expressly permitted as an outright use.

The proposal the Planning Commission is considering would fly in the face of the intent of the comprehensive plan and its policy to protect the neighborhoods. I am not aware of any analysis or discussion by the Planning Commission regarding the impact such an amendment would have on the property values in such neighborhoods.

Common sense tells me that it would be more difficult to sell your home if it is next to a short-term rental.

Another option the city might consider is a proposal to amend the zoning ordinance to ban short-term rentals in neighborhoods zoned R-1 and R-2.

The Planning Commission is also considering restrictions on short-term rentals should the zoning be changed. These restrictions would include limits on occupancy, minimum stay requirements and a cap on the number of short-term rentals allowed.

The question becomes would the proposed restrictions be enough to stem the tide of renters flooding into Gearhart on a typical summer day? In order to answer that question, one only need look at the number of short-term rentals currently operating in the city.

City staff has been tracking those numbers the best they can, and as of November of last year there appears to be 85. These are not properties owned just by residents of Gearhart. Seven

appear to be owned by residents, but others are owned by people living in California, Minnesota, Arkansas, Hawaii and Georgia.

The city also tracks the number of people being advertised to occupy each of those 85 short-term rentals. Based upon those numbers, on any given night, there could be 751 additional people staying in the rentals.

Consider the traffic. The city's septic system could be a whole other problem.

Some may argue that the rental market never reaches capacity. Even at 90 percent, the numbers are still significant.

Unless the Planning Commission and the City Council can pass very strong restrictions on short-term rentals, which would completely protect the residential character of its neighborhoods, I cannot support amending the zoning ordinance to include short-term rentals in areas now zoned R-1 and R-2.

I believe that we all understand that the issue is very divisive and that there will be very strong opposition to any controls whatsoever. That opposition will come from professional marketing companies, investors who bought property just to rent, homeowners who now see they can make large sums of money by renting property that they have never rented before, and from people who think that since they own a property they can do anything they want with it.

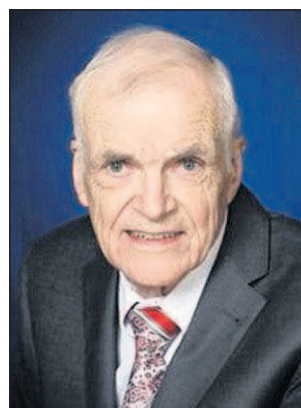
However, the Planning Commission must keep in mind that the primary obligation is to put controls in place that carry out the intent of the Gearhart comprehensive plan.

Terry Graff serves on the Gearhart Planning Commission.

## Patrick Joseph Doyle

March 12, 1934 — April 10, 2016

Patrick Joseph Doyle was born March 12, 1934, in Spokane, Washington, where he was educated in the local Catholic schools. After high school he entered the Jesuit novitiate, remaining with the Jesuits 11 years without ordination, and obtaining a bachelor's degree from Gonzaga University.



Patrick Doyle

He began his teaching career at Bellarmine High School in Tacoma, Washington. After leaving the Jesuits, he moved to Astoria, Oregon, where his brother-in-law, Joe Nerenberg, offered him a job as a salesman at Hildebrand's Furniture Store. There he met his wife, Rose Marie Lyons, a high school teacher and librarian at Star of the Sea. They were married, June 13, 1966.

After their first child was born they moved to Gearhart, where Pat took a job at Gearhart Grade School. For the next 14 years he taught in all the grade schools in the Seaside School District, and in the summer worked in construction for local builders.

He then decided to follow his father's footsteps and become a cross country trucker. After three years, he concluded he needed to be home with his family of (then) nine children. He took a job as resident adviser at Job Corps, and then as a teacher, for the next 13 years. He ended his professional teaching career at the Oregon Youth Authority, where he taught until his early 70s.

Pat and Rose Marie raised 12 children, and were generous in sharing their large home in Clatsop Plains with others needing shelter and guidance. Pat was also a respected Bible teacher in the local Chris-

tian community.

Pat is survived by his wife, Rose Marie; 12 children, Jon Doyle of Omaha, Nebraska, Lt. Col. (Ret.) Lewis Doyle of Portland, Oregon, Marty Doyle of University Place, Washington, Christian Doyle of York, Pennsylvania, Sister Della Marie Doyle, TOR, of Tallahassee, Florida, Amy Elizabeth Schmitt of Beaverton, Oregon, Alicia Davis of Riverton, Utah, Dr. Peter Doyle of Fort Drum, New York, James Doyle of Gladstone, Oregon, Natalie Duffy of Warrenton, Oregon, David Doyle of Portland, Oregon, and Patricia Nguyen of Minneapolis, Minnesota; two sisters, Irene Trier of Ryderwood, Washington, and Maureen Schauble of Spokane, Washington; 30 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

A funeral Mass will be held at Our Lady of Victory Catholic Church in Seaside at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 16, preceded by a rosary at 10:30 a.m. A reception will follow in the parish hall.

An online guest book may be signed at www.OceanViewAstoria.Com

Memorial donations can be made to www.students-forlife.org or www.franciscansisterstor.org

## Spiritual group meets at the library

This month, a new group will hold authentic spiritual conversation meetings every Sunday from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. at the Seaside Public Library.

but not religious, agnostic and atheist are welcome.

For more information, email info@cgifellowship.org, or call 916-307-9790. Seaside Public Library is at 1131 Broadway.

All faiths, including spiritual

## Memorial

Saturday, April 16

FULMER, Wayne Calvin — Memorial at 3 p.m., Seaside Elks Lodge, 324 Avenue A in Seaside. Fulmer, 64, of Seaside, died in Portland.

Hughes-Ransom Mortuary & Crematory in Seaside is in charge of the arrangements. Visit www.hughes-ransom.com to share memories and sign the guest book.

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