

**Mayor's column for
The Beacon
Published on 7/13/06**

I've decided that it's time to make Beacon columnist John Owen honorary mayor. I haven't as yet decided which city he'll be mayor of, but I'm giving it a lot of thought. Late each Thursday afternoon when The Beacon is dutifully delivered to City Hall, I wait eagerly to read his column. I never am quite sure whether he'll be writing about Howard Schultz (of Starbucks fame) and me, or the latest issue before the City Council. Lately, he's been providing me with restaurant reviews and recipes. I always thought he was "just a sports reporter," but he's gone through some kind of "reporter change" operation! He is fixated on food of all kinds. I gain weight just reading his columns.

I suspect that The Beacon made him an offer he couldn't refuse to broaden his horizons. Money talks! We all know that newspaper people are more highly paid than elected officials. And frankly, where would reporters be if they didn't have "interesting" statements from local politicians? Or maybe what isn't said becomes much more interesting! I've considered whether he really doesn't do it for the money and if he gets "paid" what I do for writing these articles. I'm positive that it's more of a recreational opportunity for him.

I was thinking after his recent restaurant reviews and tips on where to buy clams and mussels, not to mention how to save half-open bottles of wine, that I would create a new position in the City for him: Culinary Attaché to the Mayor. How could I go wrong? He could schedule all my meals, whether eating out or dining at home. Perfect! My wife would love it. I'm crazy for garlic and he seems to put that in every recipe he shares. And an added benefit is that he could also be my food taster, a position I've been trying to fill since that whole La Connor food-poisoning thing went down.

But after he came back from Venice, he started in on that "3rd Avenue canal" idea for Edmonds. And I feared that he may have had too much red wine while on vacation. I became convinced of it when he proposed the "use tax" on all clothes dryers in the city. However, he clearly is innovative, so I began to rethink where I could use his genius in city government. I knew that all hope wasn't lost when he said, "Some spoilsport is going to start collecting signatures on an initiative petition to block construction" on his 3rd Avenue canal. Apparently he really does have a handle on local government!

After I read his column last week, I became seriously worried over his mental health. He was writing about the Edmonds City Council meetings. Clearly the man is not well! The Council and I go to great pains to offer good behavior in front of the cameras (most of the time) and he's begging for controversy and acrimony. I suppose that is what makes for good television, now that I think about it. Maybe he's on to something. I guess I'll check on the channel 21 ratings and see where we are ranked these days. And, of course, we are only a few months away from the beginning of the 2007 campaign season, so he shouldn't have to wait too long. But this kind of thinking eliminates him as a candidate for any City Hall public relations job.

I don't have a Vice Mayor, but he seems like too nice a man to get involved in that sort of thing anyway, and since we have no gambling or strip clubs, I know I'd just find him hanging out in restaurants or searching for herbs in some poor unsuspecting citizen's garden. No, he doesn't have the qualifications for that job either.

I guess maybe the "honorary" title is going to ultimately be his lot in city government. I'll continue to put some serious thought into what city should bestow that honor upon him. I'll

check with my fellow South County mayors to see if they'll take him. In the meantime, I think I have a plan.

I think he should just continue what he's doing. Informing us of all the good things we are so fortunate to enjoy here in Edmonds. And at the same time poking fun at all of us so we don't ever take ourselves too seriously. Thanks, John, for reminding us why we are so lucky to live in this great community. Oh, and by the way, drop the canal idea. I've already received 1,000 signatures against it!