

Miller wants speed to pay city's bills

Six months ago, the Eugene Police Department adopted a new motto: "Preserving Citizens' Rights, Lives and Property." Nowhere in this credo does it mention scoring a few bucks for the city.

But last month, Eugene Mayor Jeff Miller proposed expanding the city's police traffic team by adding three officers and two part-time file clerks. The cost of this expansion would be covered — and then some — by the extra citations issued by the enlarged force.

Miller has made much of the sudden disregard for basic rules of the road that has mysteriously afflicted automobile drivers in these parts. It seems that we have all forgotten the simple things, like stopping for red lights.

We certainly haven't seen Eugene's streets turning into something from *Death Race 2000*, but we did notice that the city hopes to net a tidy \$34,500 through the expansion and the expected 50 percent increase in traffic tickets it will bring.

Expanding the traffic patrol will cost the city \$153,000 annually; the 5,000 traffic tickets written by the three new police officers is expected to bring in \$187,500 a year.

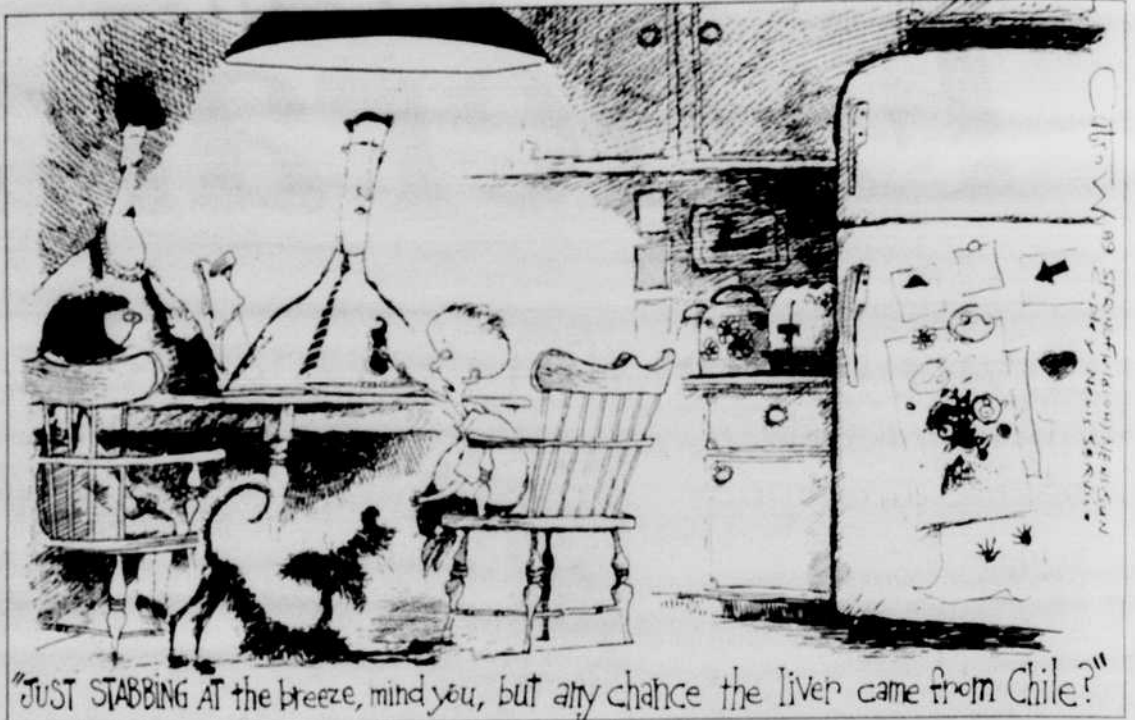
Miller exaggerates the seriousness of minor traffic offenses to cover the city's monetary interest in the matter. Police officers dedicated only to finding motorists committing minor infractions certainly could turn in a large list of offenders (who of us out there is a perfect driver?), but the five officers currently on patrol do an adequate job maintaining order on the city's streets.

In plain terms, under the expansion, Eugene will become a speed trap. It's a well-known tactic associated with small towns and big police officers as a way to bilk unwary motorists and pad the town's treasury. The city's liberal atmosphere doesn't deserve this red-neck mentality.

To our mind, the creation of revenue for a city should not be a priority of a police force. That duty properly belongs to taxation bureaus; the police force has more important problems to take up its time.

The speed trap raises other ethical questions as well. Is there a conflict of interest in having our police for sale? Is it proper to generate "criminals" out of otherwise respectable citizens — who pay twice with fines and higher insurance premiums — to put money in city coffers? As a means of taxation, is the traffic citation a fair and equitable system?

Our answer to the first question is "yes," the second and third are both "no." Miller should drop the planned expansion of the traffic force.



Skeptical voters balk on overdue library

For now, we'll have to live with it where it is. The library is staying put.

But it is unfortunate that mail-in voters chose Tuesday to reject — and by a large margin — the proposal to build a new public library as part of a downtown office tower to be constructed by Pankow Development Co.

The cost of building the library would have been paid for through the property taxes generated by the office tower and other reserve funds of the downtown urban renewal district. On paper, therefore, the library would have been self-supporting.

The voters, however, had enough concerns about what happened if Pankow didn't pull its weight. The library rejection comes despite the "100 percent support" of Eugene Mayor Jeff Miller.

It also comes despite the fact the library's current West 13th Avenue location is now wholly unsuitable.

Clearly, something has to be done. But opponents of the proposed library successfully shot the measure down by attacking its attachment to a private business concern and the complicated finances involved in building it. The marriage of an office complex and a public library in such a fashion is a very new idea that has been tried in only a

few cities in the country.

Although we'd like to assume Eugene is also such a forward-thinking community, the library proposal didn't sit well with those concerned about where the money would come from. The proposed library would have been an experiment, and critics argue that Eugene can't afford to experiment right now.

But this experiment was the very beauty of the library proposal. If Eugene is to have a library worthy of it, a creative solution must be found. Miller admits, "We don't have any money to build a library. That's the point I was trying to get across" in support of the proposal.

The mayor is right on this issue. The failure of the library proposal should not be the end of the matter, however. Perhaps there is another ingenious way to solve the city's library woes.

The Pankow tower project itself will go ahead; the building is to be located at the intersection of West Eight Avenue and Olive Street. It might be a couple of floors shorter than previously planned. Now, work also must continue on efforts to relocate the library. Supporters must stay in the hunt for a means.

Letters

Inconsistent

Cary Stephens complains that he is tired of hearing cries of racial and sexual discrimination, and that he believes the attack on Myrna Bobb was motivated by frustration over a parking place and nothing more (ODE, March 8).

His conclusion is inconsistent with the fact that the same man attacked Ms. Bobb on two separate occasions, and apparently knew enough about her to be waiting for her the second time. While Ms. Bobb described the man as of Euro-American background, Mr. Stephens said his skin was "as dark as hers."

It is suspect when someone describing himself as a witness to an incident does not report what he knows to the proper authorities when such information is sought from the public, but instead accuses the victim of fabricating the incident. Mr. Stephens puppets some of the last outrageous sentiments of Ronald Reagan when he states "... groups like NASU ... need incidents like this to capitalize on ... to instill the fear of racism so key to their existence."

And the worldwide Jewish conspiracy made up the Holocaust in order to garner world sympathy.

Mr. Stephens magnanimously concedes that he does not condone the "... very abusive behavior and racial derogation" the man displayed toward Ms. Bobb, but continues to trivialize the incident in terms of racial or sexual discrimination. "Racial derogation" is racism, Mr. Stephens, and until we can all come to the conclusion that there is zero tolerance for racism on this campus, I hope you'll continue to hear a whole lot more about it.

Marlene Drescher
Eugene

Faith

What are we here for? I'm responding to Bert Tryba's letter "Pulsar" (ODE, March 6). I can confidently say I am a Christian. And I know this — it is impossible to prove that God exists.

But we as humans are imperfect. We make life easier with advanced machines, and then

pollute our own planet with CO₂. And if we die in an accident, are we really in total control of our own destiny? It is, also, impossible to try and prove there is no God.

You can say "look at the fossil record," and I would say Pasteur proved water molecules suddenly become one-cell life forms. The stars may come from one point 20 billion years ago, but there is this burning question — "How can something come from nothing?"

Quantum mechanics won't help us understand an infinite God in our three-dimensional world. But He still became flesh (three dimensions) as Jesus Christ. The answer is to accept Him as Lord. He demonstrated God's love for us, if we will just accept it.

Every answer science uncovers leaves two new questions. God's infinite wisdom provided that we cannot prove or disprove His existence — that depends on faith.

Mr. John Clayton spent more than five years trying to disprove God. He finally decided there was too much design in the universe to be an accident. To Bert and anyone looking for

(scientific) answers: God loves you. Maybe by studying His creation, you'll see how magnificent He is!

Curtis Barville
History/English

Old growth

The recent environmental conference held at our law school triggered many emotional thoughts within my mind. As a lifetime Oregon resident, the issue over protecting our ancient forests struck me as one of paramount concern. I have seen the leftovers and remnants of Oregon's intense logging onslaught firsthand on hundreds of trips to our coast and Cascade Mountains. Unless one knows where to look, all one will find are clearcuts and second-growth timber.

Throughout Western Oregon, old-growth forest has become the exception, where, before

European settlers arrived, it had been the rule. Now, it is estimated, only 9-10 percent of what once was ancient forest still is ancient forest. Today the majority of the pristine ancient forests lie on land controlled by the Forest Service — public land. The vast majority of the big trees that had been on private land are long gone.

What makes me so angry is that the timber industry wants to continue to rape, de-nude and destroy an increasing percentage of our old-growth heritage! The real crime is that the government is letting them do just that.

The timber industry has taken a lion's share of a public resource. I say that they've already cut an unfair portion. Let the loggers be happy with the 90 percent they've already forever taken from us.

Andrew Swanson
Biology

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified.