

Leave Dead alone to perform for fans

Well, the Grateful Dead are due back in Eugene in late July for two shows, and as they say themselves, "Wherever we go the people all complain."

Right after the shows were announced (the Dead's first visit since 1988) members of the city government began to express concerns about having the Dead and their seemingly limitless number of followers gracing the streets of our sweet town.

In recent years the Grateful Dead have been blocked from numerous concert halls around the nation due to an increasingly negative reputation. The usual complaints range from badly behaved concertgoers, to vending that cannot be taxed, to people urinating on lawns, and excessive arrests.

While some of these concerns are valid, such as the arrests, that can cost a city a great deal of money to process, others are found at most rock concerts. Unfortunately for the Dead, they have had more than 20 years to develop their renowned reputation.

Over the past few years, the Dead have made extensive efforts to curb these problems. When concert tickets are sold through the mail, the Dead send letters with the tickets asking people not to sell clothes, jewelry, etc. at concerts, to behave themselves and to remember that if they don't, the Dead may not be asked back to the town again.

On the other hand, there are many towns that are more than happy to open their doors to the Dead and company. In addition to their devoted audience, the Dead are also known for bringing a lot of money to the towns they play in. Eugene is no exception.

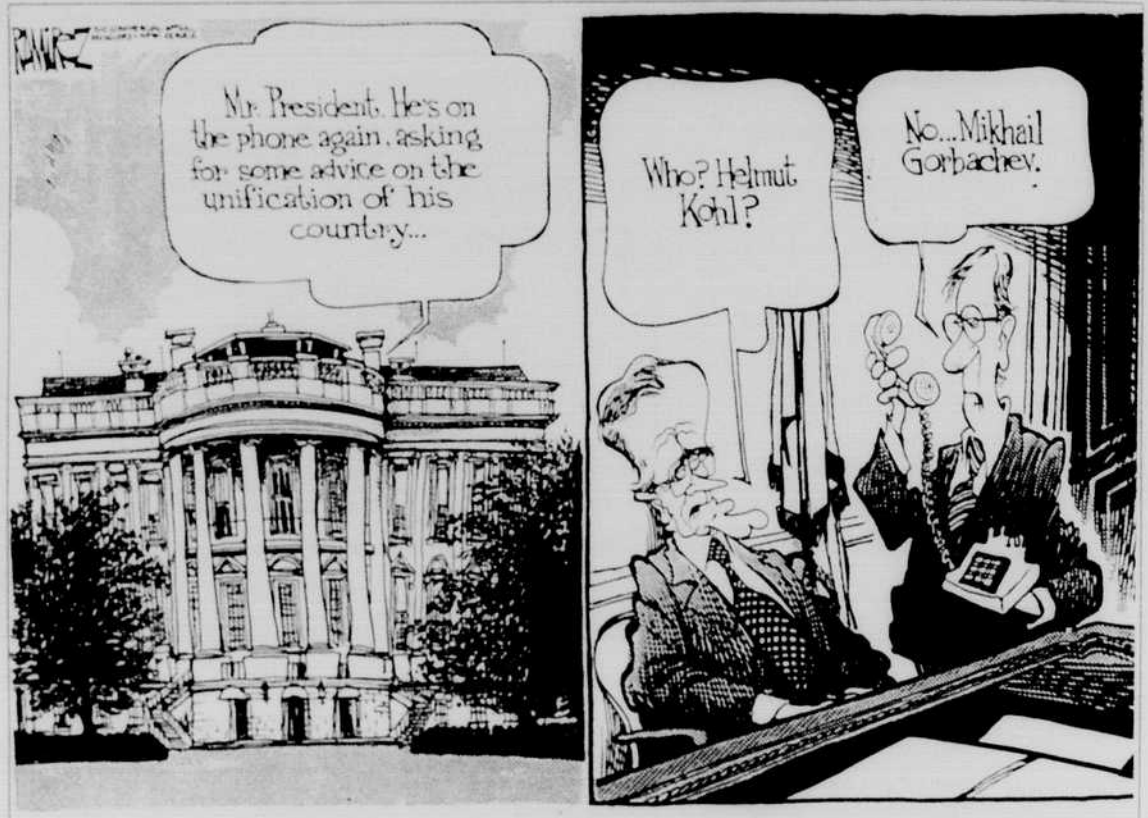
The last time they were here, about \$5 million was dropped in Eugene. That was only for one show. Imagining what kind of revenues we will be looking at with two shows.

Local hotels benefit greatly from the concerts. When the Dead are in town, hotels from here to the coast and as far north as Salem are all booked. Even now, some hotels are filled up for that weekend; some were booked weeks ago.

People who rent hotel rooms pay a guest tax which goes into local government. The city may complain that it incurs extra cost for Dead concerts (extra police patrols and court and litigation costs), but to be realistic, a lot of money comes into the town, including hotel taxes.

Local restaurants, specialty shops and the Saturday Market all do very well when the Grateful Dead come to town. And local store owners and employees who interact with the fans say they are "nice people" and they haven't had any problems with them.

Perhaps the only real problem is that people just don't like the Grateful Dead and their fans, which is fine. But you cannot deny 60,000 or more people from a couple of enjoyable afternoons just because you don't like them or their music.



Field burning measure needs support

If Oregon State Sen. Grattan Kerans has his way, field burning will be no more.

The topic has a special place in Kerans' platform. It is a subject he kept in the public's eye during the 1989 Legislature and has continued to plug away at ever since.

Field burning is the practice in which grass seed farmers torch their fields to clear them after a harvest. It is cheap, effective and quick. The farmers' lobbying group, the Oregon Seed Council, has worked overtime to prevent any sort of anti-field burning bill from being passed.

Although the OSC stymied Kerans' efforts in 1989, he has organized a signature campaign to put a measure on the November ballot which would phase out and eventually ban field burning.

If passed, the bill would start a five-year process. By 1991 the number of acres burned would be reduced by 50 percent. In 1995 grass seed farmers would be required to either stop burning altogether, or find a more acceptable method, such as burning with propane.

Kerans' measure deserves full support. Right now, 225,000 acres of grass seed are burned in the Willamette Valley every year. Over 20,000 tons of pollution are released

annually into the atmosphere. Everybody remembers the tragic August 1988 accident in which seven people died when smoke from an out-of-control grass seed fire blew over Interstate 5. Such an accident should not have happened and should be prevented from occurring in the future.

Despite what the OSC and other critics would have you believe, Kerans is not out to "get" the grass seed industry. He is trying to stop a major form of air pollution. Field burning is not the only way to clear fields. The alternatives may not be as financially attractive, but they are better for the environment.

The proposed measure will not ruin the industry. Grass seed is important to the state, which is why Kerans' measure has tax credits and breaks for farmers who switch to cleaner methods of field-clearing. Also, grass seed chaff (the part farmers burn) can be used for livestock feed, as is now done in Japan and other countries. Either way, the grass seed industry will survive.

Kerans' ballot measure has fewer than half of the 6,400 needed signatures. Find a copy of the measure and sign it. Then support it in the November election. Otherwise, tons of pollution will continue to be dumped into our atmosphere.

Performance

William Moore's commentary (*ODE*, May 17) is based on two unproven premises: First, that "God" exists as something other than a "fictional reality" (like "Batman"). Second, that the Decalogue and the Bible are the revealed law of "God." Moore erroneously assumes we will make the "leap of faith" with him. His argument makes many false claims.

Each society and culture evolves its own moral and ethical code based on its circumstances and needs. There are no moral absolutes! The Golden Rule: "Do not do unto others that which you would not have them do unto you" is the most universal "natural" understanding assuring maximum social peace and progress.

Some passages of the Bible contain beauty and wisdom. Given the horrors ignorant zealots inspired by the Bible have committed, it merits ridicule.

Clearly the Bible has had artistic and scientific impact. Absalom's rooftop copulation with his father's concubines (II Samuel 16:20-23), while certainly not an original performance, was doubtless an early production of what became *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Scientists should ask the devout to arrange a musical audition for "God" as suggested: "Wherefore my bowels shall sound like an harp for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-haresh." (Isaiah 16:11)

While prudence recommends an outdoor performance, it is possible the devout would in-

sist on the Hult Center. Scientists will recognize possibilities for investigation of hydraulic laws and chemical phenomena provided by a "force" exerted from an "all-powerful, all-present, supernatural being" in a closed building. If Oregon's divinely anointed were required to attend this command performance in full regalia, one supposes the loss of the Hult Center would be a small price to pay.

Chemists and health professionals could obtain valuable experimental data studying the "Odor of Sanctity" (remotely, of course) which would imbue the devout in attendance. The prospect that some "scientists" on staff might also be lost should not be considered triage. One could fondly, but philosophically, bid them

adieu at a pre-concert party!

Bert Tryba
Eugene

Parking

I am concerned over the newly proposed parking structure on Alder Street. I feel the University campus already has entirely too much automobile traffic. I am including me. When I drive to campus I park about a mile away because I really can't afford to park at a meter and I'm usually going to be on campus more than two or three

hours anyway.

I'm not complaining; I enjoy the walk to school. I feel too many people drive around the campus area when they could be biking, walking or using the bus system. Each student already pays money to be able to use LTD and I think it is a great service.

Environmentally, there are already way too many cars in Eugene. Let's not scrap the tennis courts just so we will have one more parking structure and one more excuse to lead a sedentary life.

Stacie Olson
Health Education

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community.