

It's official: Elmira to be Dead again

Staging a concert shouldn't be this difficult.

Everybody knows about the problems local fans have had getting the Grateful Dead to play Autzen Stadium in recent years. Opponents of the band claimed the annual summer concerts resulted in excessive noise, large unruly crowds and a general sense of chaos.

Funny, but the above-mentioned characteristics can be applied to an annual fall event — Duck football games. Of course, Grateful Dead foes don't complain about that.

Must be all the tie-dye.

Anyway, the Lane County commissioners last Wednesday, in a 3-2 vote, approved a mass gathering permit for a two-day Grateful Dead concert in Elmira this August.

The public hearing in which the matter was decided was not without its poignant moments.

Concert opponents brought up the traditional complaints: safety, fire, sanitation, etc. However, backers of the concert apparently proved to county commissioners Jerry Rust (a longtime Dead supporter), Steve Cornacchia and Jack Roberts that those concerns had been acknowledged and that steps have been taken to see everything will go smoothly.

Grateful Dead fans don't fit these people's ideal world image, so they react accordingly.

So it looks as if the concert will go ahead as scheduled, but the sour aftertaste of the whole debate lingers. Why is there so much difficulty in scheduling the Dead?

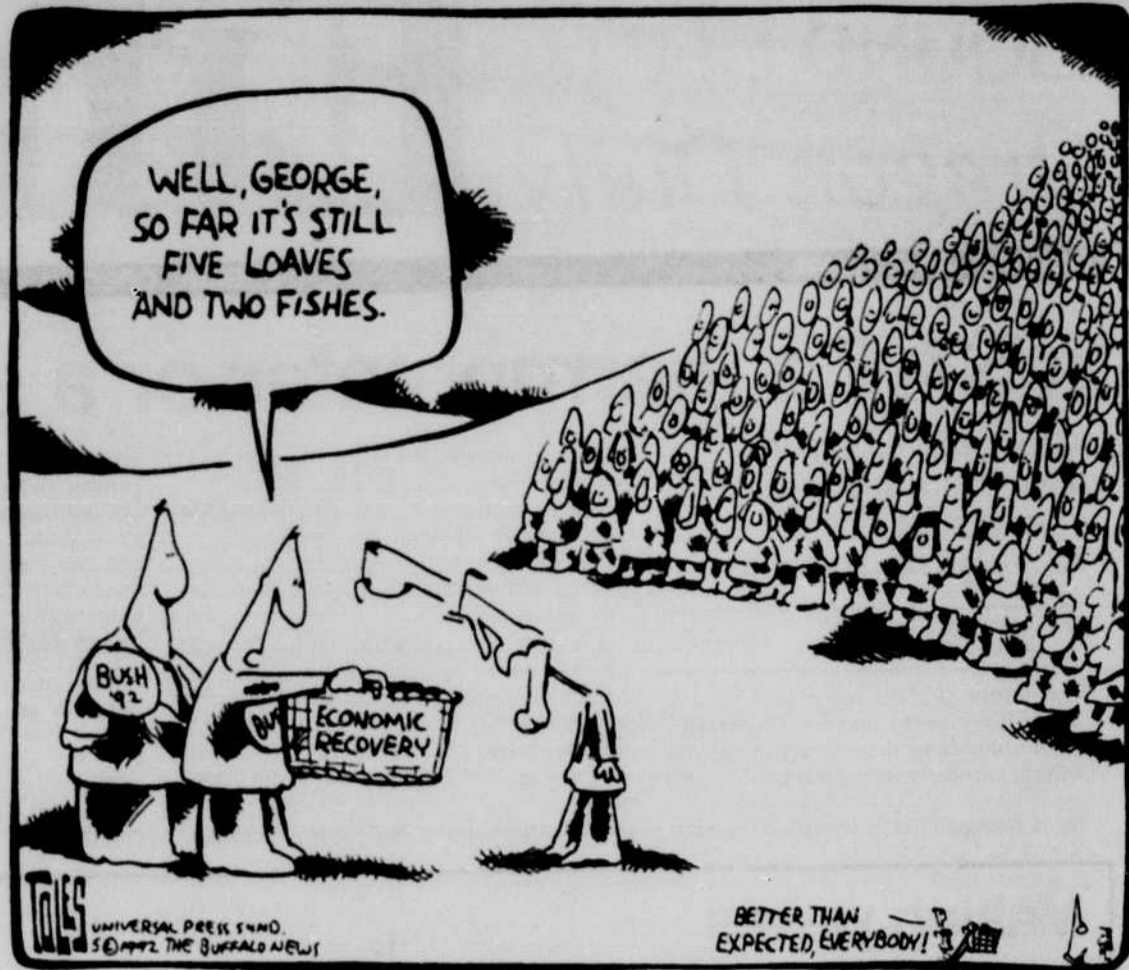
Is it the large crowds? No. The concert is expected to attract 40,000 fans on each of the two days. The home football contests top that number almost every game. Lane County, the home of a rather large university and all of its sporting and cultural events, is no stranger to big crowds.

Is it the people, the "Deadheads," who follow the band wherever it goes?

You betcha.

Lane County, for all its supposed and professed tolerance, is exactly the opposite. Case in point: Springfield's Measure 20-08. Some local residents view anything out of their narrow "norm" as strange, weird and a threat. Grateful Dead fans don't fit these people's ideal world image, so they react accordingly.

But for now, this round goes to the tolerant people. You don't have to be a Dead fan to realize the band clearly has a following in the local area. If all the conditions for a mass gathering permit are met, there should be nothing preventing the concert from continuing.



LETTERS

No help

On May 1, a group of University students came to Roosevelt Middle School to protest the suspension of 11 Roosevelt students who left campus to protest the Rodney King decision.

These University students couldn't comprehend that those suspensions were not an attempt to prevent the students from expressing the outrage we all felt at the trial's outcome, but instead was in response to the students' safety. Our principal offered to march with these students after school so they could protest with some adult guidance. Instead, those students chose to leave campus, and, as a logical consequence for that decision, each received one-day suspensions. Protest is a right and a choice. What is significant is that there are consequences for making that choice and still choosing to protest.

We have a serious concern for our students' safety. They are not adults and, as was the case Friday, they can be easily exploited and manipulated by others. We have already had two students hit by cars in front of Roosevelt this year. These University students encouraged our students to sit in the middle of the street. University students ran through the building shouting and banging on classroom doors, calling names and inciting our students to break windows. This frightened a great many of our students.

The public, which supports the public University, saw University students act destructively with little sensitivity or understanding.

Have their actions really helped fight racial prejudice and improved our community relations?

**Robert Rubinstein
and 31 staff members
Roosevelt Middle School**

We're special

It's obvious political intimidation is the only explanation as to why students were arrested

for protesting their rights. They will have criminal records and may face a prison term.

Our rights as protesters are too important to be taken from us. It just makes me sick that the government comes here and harasses us so much, trying to get us to conform and take responsibility for our actions.

Take responsibility for our actions? The government just doesn't understand. Don't they know who we are? Don't they know that we are not accountable to the laws they hold? We are not U.S. citizens, we are part of the "Anarchist's Association of Protesters at the University of Oregon," and no one can tell us what to do.

**Allen James
Student**

On trial

A couple of weeks ago, Brian Hoop and Carlos Arias were arrested and charged with destruction of federal property. Many students gathered to protest. The protesters may believe that Hoop and Arias should not be punished because their cause was just. We disagree. People have the right to protest injustice, and even commit illegal acts as a form of civil disobedience. However, people who commit civil disobedience must respect two principles.

First, these acts should focus attention on the issue and not on the individual committing the act. African-Americans protested segregation laws by breaking them. Their arrests focused attention on those unjust laws because news agencies could not report their arrests without describing the laws they broke. Those acts disseminated knowledge of racism and injustice.

By contrast, news agencies could (and did) report about broken windows at the Federal Building with little or no mention of the Rodney King case, because the laws against destruction of federal property have little relation to racism. Thus, people who damaged the Federal Building focused atten-

tion on themselves and not their cause.

The second principle of civil disobedience is that individuals accept responsibility for their actions, including legal consequences, of their actions. We cannot expect others, including agents of the government, to behave responsibly if we do not. If Hoop and Arias broke the law, they should be tried. They may feel the judicial system is flawed and unjust (it certainly was in L.A.) but their own actions have placed them in its path.

**John R. McQuaid
Mathew J. Traxler
Graduate Students,
Psychology**

Final test

Regarding Measure 20-08, it is just the beginning of understanding. As with any new law until it is in force, we have no idea of the problems that will arise. Now the work begins. I personally saw so much hatred and anger the Wednesday morning after the measure's results were published, that it made me wonder, just what is really happening?

As a Christian, I can tell you what my plans are for today, tomorrow and ever after. There will be many days I will fail or be discouraged. There will be days I may disappoint you, but I do know that God, my God and yours, loves us all the same. He gives you and I the same choices, and we are the only ones responsible for the choice we make. We can't expect freedom from hardships, or pain, or special consideration for our choice. This is our test in life.

I have gay and lesbian friends and our friendship goes beyond our differences, we respect each other as human beings. I treat them the way I would like to be treated. Our friendship does not hinge on conversion.

Love is the greatest gift of all, and we don't even have to fight for it, what a simple solution.

**Vicki Travis
Staff**

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