

Anti-Hyundai activists go to bat for amphibian

■ **OUR OPINION:** It would be funny if it weren't true

Sshh, Hyundai. You'll wake the frogs. Anti-Hyundai activists are at it again. Surprise.

After months of trying to block the building of the computer-chip factory in west Eugene, these awareness-heightened folks are protesting the nighttime excavation and construction work that Hyundai has been approved to do but has never done.

That's right. They're upset about an activity that was approved by the city in December but has never happened.

Apparently, the mere thought of bulldozers and backhoes keeps the 2.5 people living around the site up at night. Not to mention, of course, that such under-the-cover-of-darkness digging will disrupt the sleeping and mating habits of various birds and tree frogs.

It's such great fortune that Eugene has only one moral/ecological/economic crisis at a time so that these reason-fighters can drift from Amazon housing to police brutality to hunger striking to blocking logging roads to saving the love-deprived amphibian without having to prioritize the myriad of injustices heaped upon the unsuspecting working class by the military-industrial complex.

Please. Eugene activism is so self-conscious that it crosses the line into idiocy. Every event in this city invites controversy. While it's rewarding to live in a community that cares about its environment, erecting blockades to every tiny decision or motion made by the City Council

gets very tiring very fast.

More important, this what-are-we-protesting-today mentality creates a general malaise among non-protesting city residents. When every miniscule event becomes an issue, the average citizen finds it difficult to get his or her dander up about the big problems. Activism becomes the status quo and blends in with the obituaries and business news.

For all of the talk in this town about working together and finding common ground, it doesn't seem to happen very often. We just debate and demonstrate until one side gets tired enough to concede — more pointless than productive.

The fact is that like it or not, Hyundai is going to build a plant here. What, then, is the point of making it difficult and expensive for them to do it? Do these activists really think that protesting night excavation will stop the construction? How ridiculous.

No construction company can build something that big without causing a little chaos. Doing it at night will minimize traffic tie-ups and affect the least amount of people.

A final word to the conspiracy theorists and professional agitators: When you're angry about everything, it's impossible for the people you're trying to influence to determine what is important to you.

They only hear your mouth, and your message is lost. If you pick your fights more carefully, you may get something more than a story in the local paper that makes you look more silly than saintly.



Remember love on this day of hearts

*'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all'*
- Alfred Lord Tennyson

There are those who say that romance is dead — that true love does not exist — that those who believe in it are naive, optimistic, romantic fools. "Prove it," they say. Prove that something such as true love exists, for it is the stuff of fairy tales. But there is not so much for one to prove to another as there is to prove to one's self.

Yes Virginia, true love does exist. It is just not that easy to find. Or rather, for it to find you. The cynics are far and many and will scoff haughtily at such a thing.

But the cynical are of two types — those who have never experienced such a thing, or those who have and lost the one they loved so dearly and then become bitter by the anguish. They then go bitterly about, preaching how love does not exist and never has; all the while trying to sooth their wounded hearts.

After all, misery does love company. To see if true love does exist, simply look around you. Spy that elderly couple who have grown old together, whose bodies are old, but spirits are as young as the day they met. Just look at the twinkle in their eyes. What else could it be but love (no it is not sunshine reflecting off their cataracts).

Look at the people you have known for many years who decide to spend the rest of their lives together. (Congratulations Josh and Marce). They have no other reason to do it than their love for each other.

What else do two people need? Everything will fall into place. I know that true love exists because I, too, have been blessed by an angel and have had the fortune of experiencing it.

Valentine's Day is often the time to complain, bitch and moan about how much of a farce this day has become. No longer is it a day of celebrating love, but a day that the stock dividends of florists and greeting-card companies go through the roof. The corporate half of that argument may very well be true, but does that ruin the entire occasion? It is unlikely that someone would allow another individual to ruin his or her celebration of something, much less a corporation.

Then there is the major problem of expectations, which, unfortunate as they are, can ruin just about anything.

But the biggest problem is that people treat the day as if it were some magical cure-all for the problems of their relationships. Flowers, dinner, theater and a passionate night of love-making will never solve love's obstacles in the long run. Especially when it is done only on February 14.

Communication (as we have all been told a

million times, but never do) is what will ultimately get you through relationship problems. Then, go crazy with everything else.

Being romantic on Valentine's Day is not original. Anyone with half a brain could see that action coming a mile away. Be spontaneous. Yes, it requires a good amount of effort on your part, but that smile upon her face will make it worth it.

Make her positively glow. If she is worth your love, then she is worth everything that you can give to her of yourself.

And I am talking about true love here, not some puppyish infatuation or, "I really like you a lot." The true love that makes you tremble and get weak every time she smiles at you. The true love that makes your heart ache in longing for her when she is gone and leap with joy when she returns. The true love that makes you feel at peace whenever you are in her arms. The true love that causes you to walk around all day with a stupid grin on your face. The true love that you can always feel but can never quite explain.

Few find it, and even fewer find what it truly means.

Life is too short to be a cynic. Who says being a romantic at the core means that you are now some sissy "sensitive '90s man" weenie? Just because you like to read Shelley, Keats and Byron does not mean that you have to give up beer and football with the guys. It just means that you can read.

Live on the edge; wear your heart on your sleeve. Serenade the window of a fair maiden. Give flowers to the next girl who strikes your fancy. Act like the fruit that you always wanted to be deep down inside.

People might laugh, but it will probably brighten their otherwise dreary day. So live this day of Hearts and Roses to the fullest. Recite poetry to that special someone or just someone off the street. Play Cupid. That's right, run around in tights shooting people in the ass with your magic arrows of love.

If you are twitterpated, then act like it. Spend this night with her, and every other night, in wild abandon — as if it may be your last. (It probably won't be, but hey, why take that chance.) And just remember, the cynic will often grow old and bitter and ultimately leave his sad, wasted life alone and unremembered.

That is no way to leave this precious thing we know as life.

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