

How will the new cigarette tax affect you or people you know? Let us know.

# OPINION

editorials, letters, commentary and perspective

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## Police, cameras go together

■ **OUR OPINION:** Cop Watch and the EPD have their deficiencies but are still integral to citizens

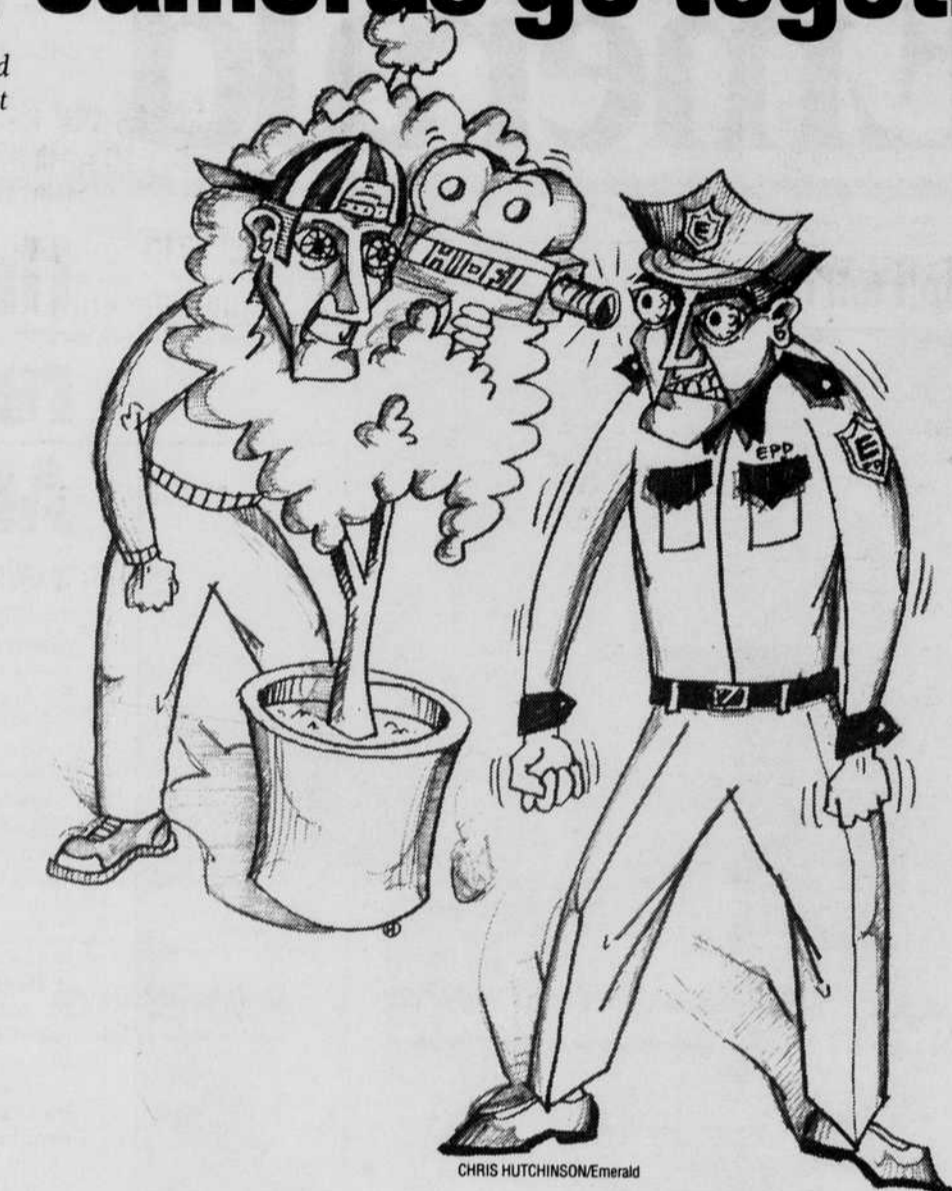
An organization dedicated to filming police as the officers work seems like a good idea. All groups need accountability, and not just by themselves. An outside party keeping tabs on the Eugene police department will help everyone involved, right? The police department is made aware of any improprieties, and citizens are kept safe from any inappropriate police tactics. It's a perfect system.

The EPD doesn't think so. After watching some recent videos shot by Cop Watch, an Eugene watchdog group, the police department had less than favorable words for the organization's tactics. Many officers don't believe Cop Watch is being fair in their coverage. Instead, they believe the organization is very selective in their editing of the tapes and, in turn, loses valuable context.

We believe these concerns are warranted. With numerous tapes full of police activity, it can be tempting to display only controversial or exciting material. And during actual filming, it's all too easy to tape only certain parts of an event and leave out integral circumstances that would greatly affect the reasoning behind the officers' behavior.

Cop Watch needs to be aware of these potential problems. In their quest to expose police misbehavior, they may be misbehaving themselves.

However, many of the group's claims are valid. The police are not perfect. In fact, their actions can be just as conspicuous as their camera-toting adversaries. Several Cop Watch representatives have been harassed or even arrested by officers for trespassing. And while having a camera in your face can-



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

not be enjoyable, the officers' actions toward the filmmakers are highly questionable.

Cop Watch no doubt exists for a very good reason. Some police critics say many recent police actions have been arguably over-aggressive. Cop Watch serves a valuable function as a citizen informer.

They are willing to be where the average citizen is not.

And regardless of their dubious methods, the police are unquestionably necessary as well. A few isolated incidents should not overshadow that fact.

Cop Watch and the police department will obviously never be

friends. Actually, they probably hate each other. But despite their differences, they need to respect the other's reason for existence and — most importantly — be fair.

*This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board.*

### LETTERS

#### Connections lacking

Your story on Garden Burgers was long on quotes but a mite short on explanations (*ODE*, Nov. 21). You reported that some farm workers want better wages and conditions from some farmers, but you didn't tell us who or where they are. You wrote that there is a boycott against NORPAC Foods, but you didn't tell us what their relationship is to the farmers. You say that there is a boycott against Wholesome and Hearty Foods because of "ties" to NORPAC, but you don't describe those ties.

I realize that your focus was on MEChA's rally, but you left the impression that they are advocating some half-baked secondary or tertiary boycott. MEChA deserves a better explanation of their rationale. And it wouldn't kill you to ask NORPAC, et al., for a response before you publicize a boycott against them.

Charles Munger  
 Computer & Information Science

#### Drugs tougher problem

I appreciate very much the coverage devoted to the acupuncture treatments for smoking cessations at the University Student Health Center (*ODE*, Nov. 22). It was an honor to provide this service in a facility that has a national reputation for its very high standard of care delivery.

However, I would like to address one unfortunate inaccuracy that this article contained. While many cigarette smokers are successful in quitting after three acupuncture treatments, this is not the case for the treatment of drug and alcohol addiction.

At the Chrysalis Drug-Free program at White Bird Clinic in Eugene — and in dozens of other locations around the country — acupuncture is used as an adjunctive therapy for the treatment of drug addiction. Clients in these programs are encouraged to enroll in appropriate support groups, take part in counseling and attend classes on impulse control and stress management.

Acupuncture can provide fairly immediate relief from many distressing physical symptoms associated with drug withdrawal, but is only one component in a successful recovery program. Additionally, recovering addicts generally attend acupuncture sessions for weeks or months, unlike the three-day treatment smokers receive in my private practice.

Acupuncture treatment — along with a comprehensive drug treatment and education program — is available at White Bird to students at sliding scale fees. For more information, call 683-1641.

Student smokers should also be aware that support groups for smoking cessation are offered every term at the Student Health Center. These groups offer many effective strategies and helpful resources for would-be ex-smokers.

Tom Williams, L.Ac.  
 Eugene

## Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. A member of the Associated Press, the Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union. The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

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

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.