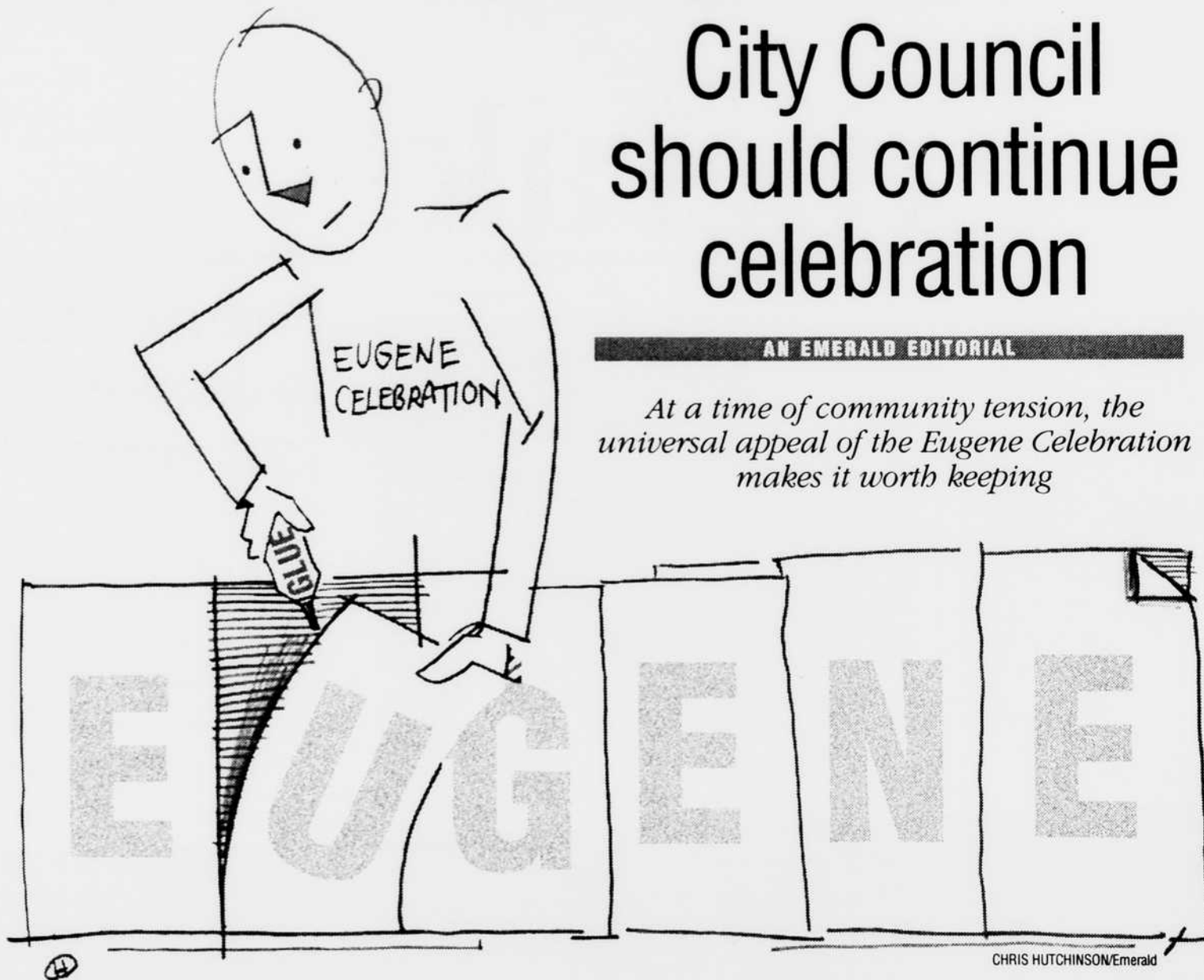


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City Council should continue celebration

AN EMERALD EDITORIAL

At a time of community tension, the universal appeal of the Eugene Celebration makes it worth keeping

Thumbs

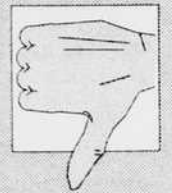


To Multnomah County's school funding ballot measure:

After years of state measures pushing the burden of school funding onto the individual homeowner, the voters of Portland and areas east have a chance to reduce class sizes by increasing business taxes. This would finally make companies pay for the services they benefit from.

To Oprah:

The talk show host won a legal battle against the beef industry when a jury rejected claims she defamed beef. Unfortunately, when the judge tossed out a related "veggie-li-bel" claim, an opportunity for the courts to reject such laws as unconstitutional was missed.



To Senate Republicans:

The GOP is trying to block approval of Clinton's nominee for ambassador to Luxembourg because the man, who is from San Francisco, is openly gay and has been somewhat active in gay rights. The nominee has agreed to resign membership in gay rights organizations and even abandon his lover in the States. Nevertheless, Republicans are still fighting against approval. Not only is this morally offensive and politically destructive, but it is also foolish — it's Luxembourg, after all.

Considering the size and nature of the Eugene community, people here seem to have a tough time getting along.

One need only name a few of the dozens of recent events that suggest strife to illustrate what we mean — the June 1 incident, fall term's "riots," the Skinner Butte cross controversy.

There are a lot of problems at the root of these and numerous other kinds of conflict in the Eugene community. Solving all of these would require reevaluating the way city government weighs the interests of businesses and community activists and the degree to which business owners view other members of the community as adversaries.

We certainly don't want to suggest those problems can be circumvented by holding a party. Nevertheless, we still think the Eugene Celebration is important to the Eugene community, especially during a time of particular strife.

The City Council hasn't yet moved to dismantle the celebration, but current plans for its continuation are shaky at best. In a meeting last week, the council voted to continue the event if an outside group could be found to help with funding and management.

The council's concerns about both these issues are understandable, especially fears about finding money. The city's financial situation is tight after a series of property tax reduction measures.

Despite that shortage of cash, however, Mayor Jim Torrey is still pushing for a daytime curfew and has consistently backed putting money into policing. The former idea is a massive waste of money and city resources, while the latter, no matter how necessary, is meaningless without community building and social change.

The other concern — that the organizational structure in place is ineffective — is legitimate. If the city wants to fix this, however, it should

work to fill empty committee slots and give clear backing for the event. As things stand now, those who are still planning for the celebration don't know if their work is going to waste.

In order for the celebration to occur, it needs several things from the city. Most important is confirmation that the event will take place. This can allow planners to solve some of the other problems that have plagued the celebration in the past.

Additionally, the celebration committee needs to tackle cost overruns that have occurred in earlier years. While funding from an outside group might help, the key is to allow current planners a chance to figure out what went wrong.

We aren't opposed to the idea of an outside group lending support and guidance. What bothers us is that, in the absence of such a group, the council appears prepared to let the celebration die. Torrey has already advocated not holding it this year because of organizational diffi-

culties.

Instead of relying on an outside group to take on a difficult job at this late stage, the council should pledge support for the event — thus allowing preparations to take place — while searching for outside parties to help in future years.

If the celebration lapses for one year, it becomes unlikely that it will return in future years. Moreover, it makes it difficult to recruit outside support for an event that has suddenly lost much of its history.

We know that the celebration isn't the key to community togetherness and that some people have lost interest in it during recent years. Nevertheless, we still believe that with solid backing from the city and some degree of organizational restructuring, the event can, and will, play a positive role in improving community relations.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nation divided

In Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night to ask him, "What shall I give thee?" Solomon responded with a request for an understanding heart to judge God's people and discern between good and bad.

When two women fighting over a baby came before Solomon, he showed his God-given wisdom by giving the baby to the mother that argued to keep it whole and denying it to the woman that agreed to divide it.

Who is it that would prefer to divide our society, our nation? Conservative Republicans or the supporters of our president? Who is it that would destroy the Office of the Presidency rather than let

another control it? Conservative Republicans or supporters of the president?

Bill Clinton isn't the one that forced his sex life into our face; the conservatives have.

The record support of the president reflects the wisdom of God and King Solomon.

Patrick Clancy
 Eugene

One standard sufficient

If you do not wish your wife to cheat on you, you could:

- 1) Treat your wife as a human being, fairly, with love and respect; or
- 2) Kill every other man in the world so she can't cheat.

Those who wish to create security for America by bombing all the brown-skinned Third World nations who develop "weapons of mass destruction," which we have had for decades, are grasping for the impossible. Has America, France or Britain ever treated Arab peoples as human beings? We condemn Saddam Hussein for human rights abuses, yet we publicly finance the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from their own homes.

If we wish for security, we had better not make the Arab world even more angry at us by slaughtering even more Iraqi civilians. We should have one standard for the treatment of human beings, not two.

Christopher Calder
 Eugene