

PERSPECTIVES

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On-line edition: www.dailyemerald.com

DAMN THIS TRAFFIC JAM

The Ferry Street Bridge's endless reconstruction has become a Eugene staple

Eugene is known for many things — the original Saturday Market, trees, track and field, greenness, pollen, microbrews, activists, drugs, rain, hippies and, of course, the University and its aura and accomplishments. But what is the first thing that strikes any out-of-town visitor en-

tering Eugene from the usual direction?

As one veers off the Beltline and toward the city center, it is impossible to miss.

It is incessant — at least since I've been in town — and slower than a Sunday afternoon.

What, you ask?

You should know, but perhaps you've become so used to it that you forget.

I'm talking about the tangled web of construction that engulfs any automobile as it purrs into town.

The Ferry Street Bridge seems to be a graveyard of construction parts with cones here, steel beams there and other parts everywhere that either never move or are quickly replaced.

And each time I roll by, nothing much appears to be getting done.

Sure, there are work-

ers outfitted in hard hats and neon orange vests, but only one of them seemingly works while the others stand around watching and shouting encouragement like they're on the bench at a basketball game.

When I return to Eugene years down the road to visit my old undergraduate stomping grounds, I fully expect to drive into town and find the Ferry Street Bridge still "under construction."

Anything else would be shocking. In fact, I would probably think I was entering the wrong town for a confusing moment or two.

Then I would shrug it off as a sign that times have drastically changed in Eugene since I was a Duck.

Maybe the problem is that the University has hired away all the productive construction workers in town to build the new law school and add on to Esslinger.

Whatever the case, it seems slightly ludicrous to me that those two projects will be completed light years ahead of the Ferry Street Bridge.

Yeah, the bridge's reconstruction has become as much of a Eugene institution as Frog, The Glenwood Restaurant and Spencer's Butte.

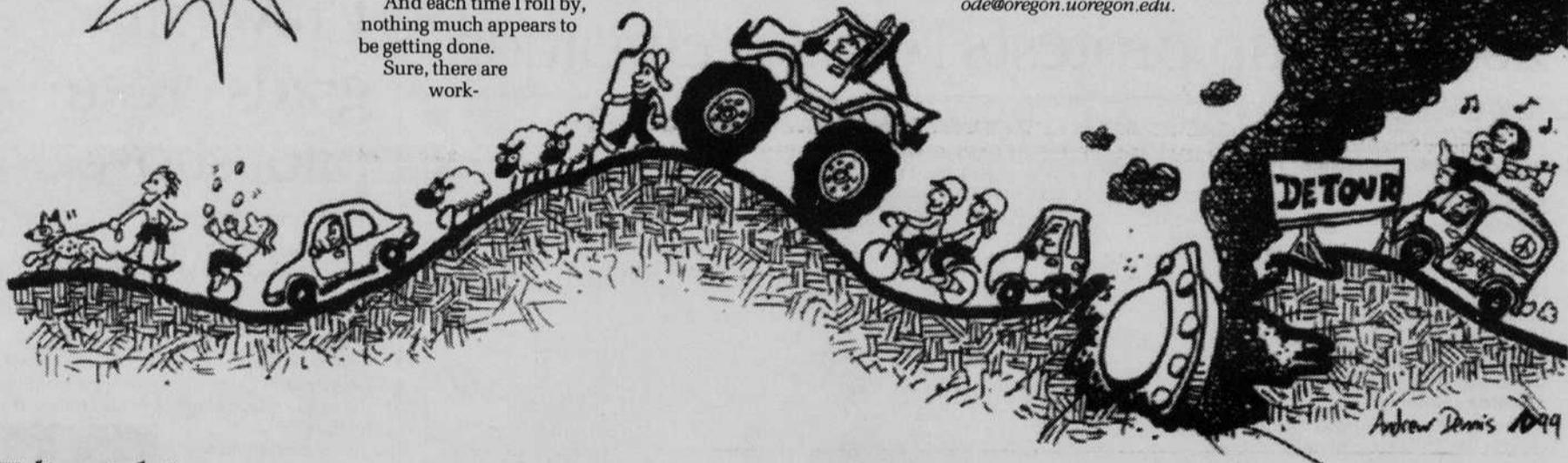
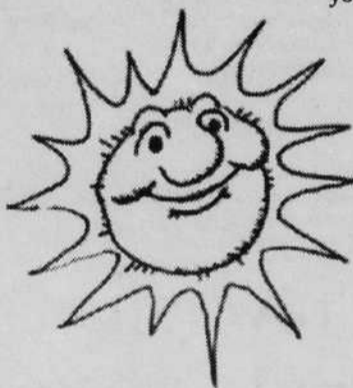
Oh well — it makes for a great tourist distraction, doesn't it?

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Opinion



Tim Pyle



Editorial Cartoons



<p>Oregon Emerald</p> <p>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 in Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union. The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.</p>	<p>NEWSROOM — (541) 346-5511</p> <p>Editor in chief: Tim Pyle Associate Editors: Jack Clifford, Mirjam Swanson Reporters: Sara Jarrett, Sara Lieberth Webmaster: Broc Nelson Paginators: Broc Nelson Photo Editor: Catharine Kendall</p>	<p>ADVERTISING — (541) 346-5511</p> <p>Becky Merchant, director Melissa O'Connell, Van Nguyen, advertising assistants Rachelle Bowden, Brian Diamond, Dan Hageman, Jesse Long, Adam Rice, advertising sales representatives</p> <p>CLASSIFIEDS — (541) 346-4343</p> <p>Trina Shanaman, manager</p>	<p>BUSINESS — (541) 346-5512</p> <p>Judy Riedl, general manager Kathy Carbone, business supervisor Melissa O'Connell, receptionist Roni Goldbeck, Michael Higgins, John Long, distribution</p> <p>PRODUCTION — (541) 346-4381</p> <p>Michele Ross, manager; Tara Sloan, coordinator</p>
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