

Voices In My Head: Visual Assaults

By P. J. O'Leary

Have you ever noticed how men of a certain age and body type cinch their pants well above their navels? When I say well above, I mean just barely below their pectorals. This is, I think, a proper response to the ravages of gravity. Get all that where you want it-below the belt. I say this with the assumption that the above mentioned men are also wearing a shirt. Have you seen that guy on the Leaf Guard commercials on local TV? He's got the high belt thing going on but at least he's sporting a nice Vanheusen.

I'm drifting toward a point which I make in the interest of service

and delivery employees everywhere. If you come to the door, for the love of all that is good and holy, would you please put on a shirt? Seriously! Nobody, besides perhaps your heat seeking cat, wants an eyeful of that. I'm speaking on behalf of working people everywhere who are routinely exposed to completely unprovoked displays of massive upper body male flesh. Most people who aren't in our line of work have no idea how frequently these visual assaults occur. I'm just saying that if you wouldn't go to the bank in upper buff please don't stand there and sign for a certified letter or a FEDEX package in that state of undress. I can assure you that we can spare the

fifteen seconds it might take for you to become adequately attired.

Many young women these days suffer from body perception issues which are unfairly foisted upon them by an image focused society. Men are not quite so introspective. Most women will never know the bliss provided by properly applied apathy. Way too many men not only don't care what their bodies look like, but they're more than willing to share the spectacle with you. "It's me, in 3D, you're welcome."

"Why not just look away?" you might say. Let me first say that some of these guys are wide-screen editions, so they pretty much command your entire

line of sight. Secondly, like an off the cuff conversation with Joe Biden or a Jeopardy appearance by Sarah Palin, it's very difficult to avert your eyes from an impending train wreck. Fascination with cringe worthy events is an unavoidable element of human nature.

Let's face it, Male Pattern Upper Nakedness is probably not a problem which can be solved by research grants or telethons. You can throw money at the problem but in the end you cannot make a man wear a shirt in his own home if he is unwilling to do so. I guess all that I can do is accept the shirtless male reality and try to be grateful when they're wearing pants.

What You Need to Know About Oregon LNG *continued from page 8*

much product this pipeline carries, this pipeline will move almost twice as much natural gas in a day as the entire state of Oregon moves right now – it's the state's entire consumption of natural gas, times two. If you look at other places where there have been incidents or problems – where someone has hit a pipe with a piece of construction equipment, where there's been land movement, where there's been erosion or corrosion – all those risks are in the absolute forefront with this proposal because this is some of the most rugged areas in Oregon's Coast Range.

The pipeline is thirty-six inches and is being built as a Class 1 pipeline which is significant because that is determined by population density and is the lowest classification. It also determines the inspection rate for the

pipeline.

VV: What is Columbia Riverkeeper doing to help local citizens with these LNG projects?

DS: The project sort of speaks for itself the way it's proposed, so right now we're just trying to get people informed about the basics of what it's about: a huge gas pipeline, a huge terminal, the idea of exporting natural gas, the huge potential risk to all the streams and rivers that will be crossed by this project and the public safety risk to the people living around it.

People have been asking the right questions. It was brought up over and over at the DEQ meeting here in Vernonia about landslides that we all know about that occur in the area. The pipeline goes right through some of those same areas. It's really encouraging

to see local people getting up to speed quickly in these new neighborhoods that are going to be impacted.

This project has to be proved – there are people who have to make a decision on this, including Governor Kate Brown. She's heard about this project in the past and is aware of it—this won't be new to her. The idea that this is still happening is sometimes surprising to people after all the initial controversy around LNG projects in this state.

Wherever people are coming from on this, they need to be aware that their voice can be heard. People in the state of Oregon will be making decisions on this. At the federal level the Federal Regulatory Commission (FRC) generally approves these projects. In cases where LNG terminals have been turned down in the past, they've been turned down at the state level. It's very important that everyone who feels disempowered by something this large realizes that Oregon can say no to this, and Oregon has said no to this before in the very recent past. Oregon turned down the Bradwood project and denied it under the Clean Water Act because it didn't meet the standards of the state. It posed such a threat to degrading water quality and salmon habitat.

The precedence is there, it's just a question of whether we can create a platform for all these voices to be heard.

VV: How have local citizens been effective in the past in opposing LNG projects?

DS: People in Forest Grove and Molalla self-organized and got together to talk

about the issue and got engaged. What we're trying to do is get the word out to all the places that would be impacted by the terminal, by the pipeline in Oregon, even by the pipeline in Washington. A lot happens when people have a chance to look at maps, see where the project goes, and talk to other people.

What has been really effective in other communities is people communicating with each other, getting organized and going to their City Councils and asking them to weigh in; going to their elected officials at the State level and making sure their voices are heard. These community groups form and they keep each other informed about upcoming meetings, changes in the project – it's a way for people to get information that is useful and reliable.

Meetings are often not well noticed. This is just good old fashioned democracy – people getting together when someone is making a decision and packing the hearing and telling them in a respectful and detailed way why Oregon LNG is a bad idea. It's been happening for ten years and it will keep happening for as long as it needs to happen. And the credit for that goes to the people – the farmers, the fishermen, the forest owners – the people who took it upon themselves to ask, "How is this going to impact my community?"

A local activist group, Vernonia Against LNG, will be hosting an informational meeting Thursday, March 12th, 6:00 PM at the School Commons. Anyone concerned about this issue is encouraged to attend.



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