

## Wildman suggests reusing plastic



By Isaac Soper  
Arts & Culture Editor

Oil and food prices rise everyday. Soon, without food stamps and gardening, the lower middle class won't be able to afford to drive to and from work. As the Earth becomes more and more polluted and people can no longer work or eat, corporations try to convince the American populace that everything is going to be okay.

We can't conceive of life without oil. In the age that we live in, no longer is wood or metal the basis for which things are manufactured; oil is the medium in which all is created by man. Our food is wrapped in it, our cars are built out of it and run on it even our clothes are made with it.

Most plastics are made with oil, and due to the non-stop increase in oil prices (which may rise significantly, or lower slightly on an oil baron's whim), corporations have begun to try and convince us that we can lower oil prices and save the Earth by redesigning the creation of plastic. By breaking down certain foods, namely corn, scientists can create plastics. We have designed fuel that can be used in our automobiles out of food as well; fuel that we used to use for our bodies, fuel that multitudes of people are lacking worldwide.

Instead of looking for more sustainable options for powering our cars, we continue to confirm our allegiance to the oil companies by using their—now corn-based—gasoline and oil. Wow, we sure figured out the oil crisis on that one. Short on food and oil? Now you can drink the new corn-based gasoline and put it into your car—it's got electrolytes!

The disadvantages of oil-powered cars can be easily seen, and yes, there are definite disadvantages to hybrid cars as well as fully

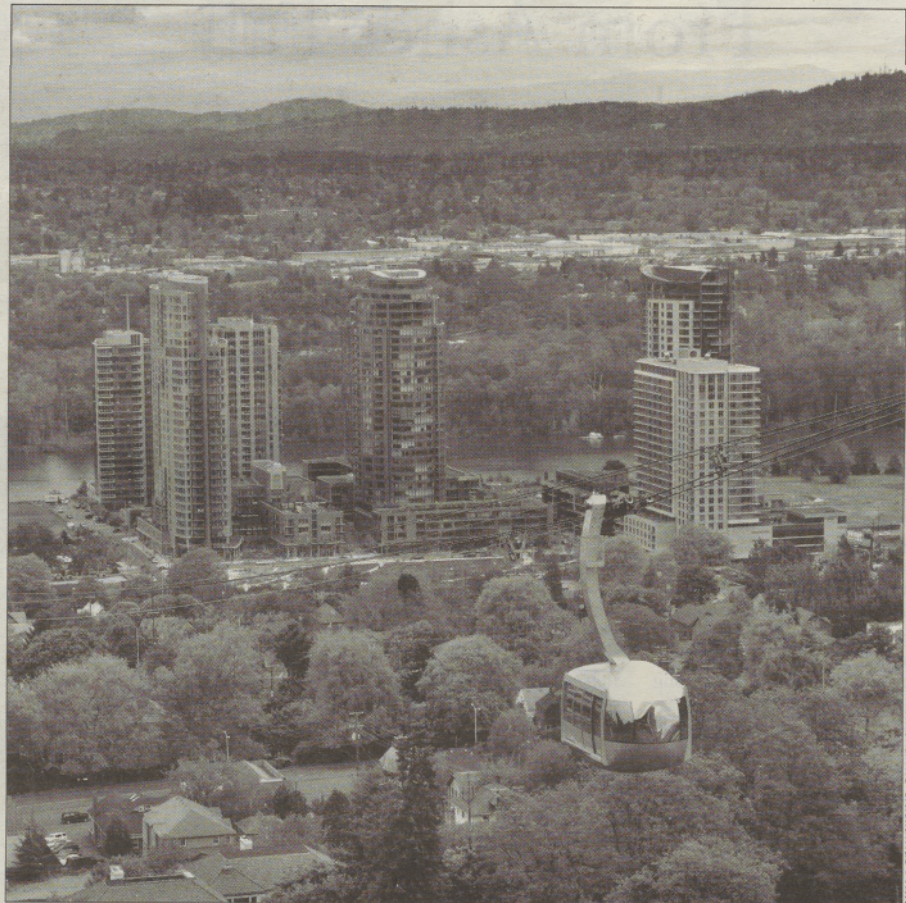
electric cars. Why aren't we looking into other sources of fuel? Water-powered cars were first patented in 1935, using the properties of electrolysis (separating hydrogen and oxygen from water molecules).

Normal plastic takes about 1,000 years to biodegrade, under normal conditions. When I say "normal conditions," specific things come to mind, let's say, outside, and between 30 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Remember that. Biodegradable plastic, which is commonly made out of cornstarch or other plant-based materials, is used in many new disposable utensils and water bottles. You are supposed to have a warm, fuzzy feeling when you throw these bottles away. Did you know that if you put a "plant-bottle" in the ground, a tree will grow?

Biodegradable plastic "under normal conditions" will, at least according to the companies that manufacture them, biodegrade in much less time than regular plastics. "Normal conditions" for biodegradable plastics differ from what you and I consider "normal." "Normal" to them means between 140 and 300 degrees Fahrenheit. That's normal, for let's say, the surface of Mercury in the dead of winter. Under the normal conditions of Earth, they will biodegrade in about 999 years. Saving the planet one year, or let's say, one starving child at a time.

It can be assumed that the typical process of recycling plastics is a process that is harmful to the environment. What about reusing the plastics opposed to "recycling" and remanufacturing them? Many plastics, especially containers, could simply be washed, sanitized and reused. Even germaphobes (properly titled mysophobes) can use dishes that have been sanitized.

Instead of wasting food on creating new plastics and gasoline, it seems as though we could solve at least a few of our environmental problems by looking at them from a different perspective. If we recycled plastics that are already created better and worked on making truly environmentally friendly sources of powering our vehicles, it would be a step in the right direction.



Brad Heineke The Clackamas Print

The Portland Aerial Tram takes passengers from OHSU to the South Waterfront. This is one of the stops on the 4T Trail that loops in Portland, starting at the Oregon Zoo.

## Trail explores Portland sights

By Brad Heineke  
Photo Editor

4T = T + T + T + T. The most elementary of algebraic functions, right? However in Portland, 4T = Trail + Tram + Trolley + Train. Portland's 4T is a hike growing in popularity. It's an eight-mile loop that traverses some of the unique highlights of the Rose City via the Southwest hills, with a great combination of nature and urban scenery.

It specifically includes a hike from the Oregon Zoo up the Marquam trail, to the city's highest point at Council Crest, then on to three of P-Town's unique modes of transport: the Portland Aerial Tram, the Portland Street Car (trolley), and TriMet Max (train) back to the zoo. There were great views of the city, the Willamette, bridges and the Cascade Range.

Start the hike at the Oregon Zoo. Nearby is the Washington Park Max station, highlighted by Les AuCoin Plaza. Signage for the 4T hike was immediately visible. Walk across the overpass of Highway 26, turn left onto the shoulder of the freeway on ramp, then down about halfway to the well marked trailhead of the Marquam trail.

The trail hike portion covers three and a half to four miles depending on the chosen route. It is very well marked at all trail crossings and provides reassurance with helpful signage along the route. It took two and a half hours with many brief photo stops. Hiking time could range from one and a half to three hours depending on whether you take the urban route, Forest Trail or combinations of the two. I can't imagine bypassing

the trail. It is a beautiful gem of a forest filled with ferns, blooms, birds and a wide variety of trees. The trails are well groomed but can be muddy after rains. The trails and signs will lead you across a couple roads until you have reached Council Crest with its large lawn and circular observation area. It offers sweeping views including Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Adams and Mt. Jefferson.

Leaving in the direction you came from leads to signs continuing our loop, back down the forest trail to the Marquam shelter, and Oregon Health Science University campus with its buildings, which are precariously built inside a small canyon and its two flanking ridges is quite interesting. This is the longest suspended pedestrian bridge in North America at 660 ft. It connects OHSU with the VA Hospital and with glass sides gives a thrilling view.

Following the 4T signs a few hundred yards brings you to the Peter Kohler Pavilion, which is the upper side of the Portland Aerial Tram. If you haven't yet enjoyed the Tram, this loop provides a great opportunity to experience this fun yet simple ride and city feature, with the free ride down; the \$4 fee is only charged when riding up. The high suspended view has slight dips and lifts, as you glide down 3,300 feet to the South Waterfront district, which are very interesting.

The street car stops adjacent to the tram approximately every 15 minutes. Take it northbound for a cool ride along this waterfront area with its newer high rise condos. It then turns west up and through the PSU

campus. About 20 minutes of sightseeing later get off at 10th and Yamhill which is the Multnomah Central Library stop. Pioneer Courthouse Square is just four blocks east from here. When ready to depart downtown and return to the Oregon Zoo, you will go one block north to Morrison, at which the Beaverton and Hillsboro Max lines run.

Board the Blue or Red line Max toward Beaverton or Hillsboro. After it stops at Jeld-Wen Field and Goose Hollow, it will soon enter the three mile long Robertson tunnel. Exit at the only stop in the tunnel, Washington Park. This is the deepest train station in North America. There is a great geographic timeline and a drilling core sample displayed here. You can take the elevator 260 ft. back up to the Oregon Zoo to complete the eight-mile loop.

It's hard to beat the 4T for a fun and affordable day. Enjoy great scenery, grand viewpoints, fun rides, and much more for as little as a \$2.10 Max pass. There are detailed directions and loop maps online, but the excellent signage will truly lead your way.

**Name:** 4T Trail  
**Location:** Portland (starts at the Oregon Zoo)  
**Type:** Groomed and marked trails  
**Length:** Eight miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy/Moderate  
**Equipment needed:** Boots, water, money for max ride

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