

LETTERS TO THE EDGE

One quiet Tuesday in February, I sat reading in my shop, Sometimes a Great Lotion. Three teenage girls came in and started trying on some of our most expensive lingerie. It was obvious they were trying to hide what was going in and out of the dressing room. One girl left, but I confronted the other two. There were five empty hangers in the dressing room and one on the rack. I told them to give (the goods) back and I wouldn't call the police. They ran. I called the police, and Officer Hatch arrived in less than five minutes. Before long he discovered that the girls were in town with a group from their private ski academy. They were packing up their vans outside of The Waves Motel, but the girls were nowhere in sight. Soon they showed up, and Officer Hatch called me to come and identify them.

I have trouble standing up to people, but he backed me up 100%; and after a half-hour of trying to break them down, we got back the \$150 worth of merchandise from my shop.

In the process, one of their instructors also found a bag full of jewelry. A couple of days later, the girls returned stolen merchandise to El Mundo for Women, Maggies, I believe the Criterion, and who knows where else!

Since that time, I have told many people what happened. I always mentioned that I was grateful to Officer Hatch for holding his ground even when it seemed like the girls would never quit lying.

What I discovered is that Officer Hatch is well liked by the citizens of Cannon Beach. He seems to have a good sense of when to go for a bust or when being felt as a presence is more appropriate. People also seem to see him as a member of the community rather than a separated "Big Brother" figure. Like many people in Cannon Beach, I have had my frustrations with our police. However, this incident has reminded me that they are also here to protect us and I am grateful.

Jennifer Myers
business owner

Dear Beloved Rev. Billy & The Upper Left Edge --

For a while now, we've been trying to think of an event or circumstance that has been truly out of the ordinary, off-the-wall fun, inspirational, socially and politically meaningful and counter-cultural.

Sounds nearly improbable. But what we came up with was the Oregon Country Fair, a yearly gathering of people into a variety of art, dance, theatre, crafts, music, social and environmental concerns.

We love going to the FAIR. It is original, has a social conscience and is void of crass, mass commercialism. But the rest of the year it's back to (semi) normalcy. (Salons also put us to sleep.) We think the idea is too good to occur in a single event only once a year, (unless there are other smaller local festivals or gatherings we're unaware of). It would be nice to carry on this spirit locally and into other times of the year.

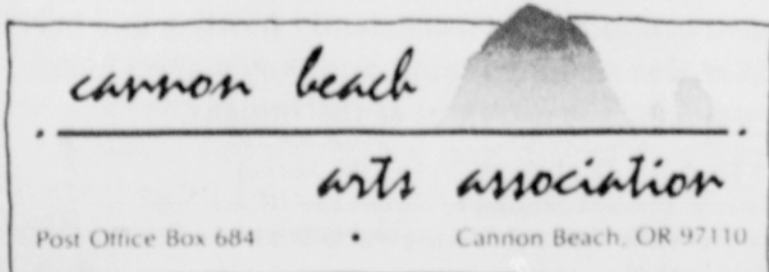
We don't have grand ideas of organizing on a big scale or throwing a major event, but we would like to form a network(s) of people with creative ideas of smaller gatherings.

We're located in the forested foothills of the Coast Range, halfway between the coast and Portland. We could imagine a network of networks of people between these areas.

Upper Left Edge readers who are interested in this idea can write to:

Carol Jean and Don
HCR-61, Box 75-K
BANKS, OR 97106

Thanks,
Don and C. J.



10 UPPER LEFT EDGE MAY 1993

Dear Policy Makers:

I am writing this letter in response to a disheartening experience I had while visiting the Oregon Coast in Gearhart, Oregon. Although the incident described in this letter is but a part of the environmental degradation we are facing on a global scale, there are several important differences. It is happening right here at home, and it is easily remedied.

My wife and I recently traveled to the fabled Oregon Coast, anxious to see and hear its beauty and to refresh out spirits in its vastness. We carried with us that wonderful anticipation that soon we would be walking along a clean sandy beach with the great Pacific Ocean spread out before us.

We began our trek through the beach grass and over the dunes to the beach. As we neared the top of the last dune, I could hear the roar of the ocean and feel its dampness. We hastened our pace to arrive at the spectacular ocean view we knew awaited us.

What we saw, instead, were cars. And car tracks. Everywhere. It was as if somebody had turned the beach into a parking lot. All that was missing was the supermarket.

I was devastated. Of all the places I was certain would be unmarred by the noise and pollution and ugliness of cars -- it was a beach on the Oregon coast. But there they were. Cars full of people looking for a place to picnic, pickups towing horse trailers looking for a place to ride, and four wheelers tearing up the dunes -- all apparently mindless of the irony of their very presence.

How can this be? Cars are bad enough on the highway, where they drip oil and belch out the pollutants that are darkening and destroying our atmosphere. Why are they allowed here in this beautiful but fragile place where they can do much greater harm and are so utterly unnecessary?

For those members of the Oregon Coast tourist industry who read this letter, until the cars are banned from the beach you can forget about my dollars. I will be spending them on postage for more letters like this one, which I hope will in turn keep more people away from Gearhart's automobile befouled beaches. For those policy makers reading this letter, please take immediate action to correct this unfortunate situation. Oregon should not have to suffer cars on its beautiful sand dunes and beaches.

Sincerely,
James L. Olmsted



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Okay, I've got this idea, how we can save the world, no really!..... is anyone still reading? well, I don't know if I would be, I've heard it before and so have you. If we don't save the whales or the Ozone or stop the Nukes or recycle the garbage we are going to be history, and if we do do all those things it still won't be too good I've done my share of in the street and in your face and in the system, and the only person who made total sense was Denis Hayes (the guy who founded Earth Day, was in the Carter Administration and has impeccable Environmental Credentials). He said until we solve the population problem, all the other problems will just multiply.

Grim, huh? There are just too many of us. (There isn't really a 'them'.) And if we can't make a rational decision to control our population, then Nature, human and physical, will bring our numbers down. Our old favorites War, Pestilence, Famine, and Disease will make up our future. Still Grim. But I really do have a small idea. And since it is my idea, I would like to start it on my Birthday, June 2. To wit:

That June 2 1993 shall be UNBIRTHDAY! (we're still working on the name, okay?) And on this day throughout the world, no one shall conceive a child. Through whatever means each shall decide; abstinence, safe sex, bestiality, I don't care, (really I don't); that is your own business, but no conception! Okay, so around March 2, 1994 or so the World Population takes a dip. A small one true, but I can imagine the planet taking in a quick gulp of breath, a momentary pause. The normal deaths occur and our headlong mathematical rush to destruction hiccups, and moves on. But we would notice, and maybe June 2 1994 we could go for a week of not making more of us? A month in '95, the Summer of '96? If we could take a whole year and do something else other than reproduce -- Wow! I'm not saying don't have sex! But if your religious beliefs prohibit you from having sex for any purpose other than reproduction, and prohibits birth control methods, well, you might have to consider it a spiritual quest, a sacrifice for the betterment of all. Just think, no conception, no abortions. The whole planet working on a problem in all the different ways possible. And things beginning to get better for everybody, more space, less pollution, more awareness. So what do you say, World, for my Birthday either do it carefully, or keep it in your pants. Thanks. And tell a friend soon; we don't have much time to get this started.

Billy