

I said, "Are you saying *The Register-Guard* won't let me use the word menopause?" In a small, quite voice she said, "Well ... yes ..."

Since when is a normal phase of a woman's life considered vulgar?

Linda Overstake
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ms. Overstake tells us the ad did run — under the "help wanted" classification.

TIME FOR DEBATE

Prior to becoming a psychologist, I taught U.S. history. Now I wonder if any of my students remember what they learned about the founding of this nation. How many Americans remember specifics about our Constitution and Bill of Rights?

Debates and discussions have been important in the American way of life. In the three years prior to radio and television, debates happened on a local level and common people were able to participate. During the presidency of Andrew Jackson, seventh president of the U.S., common people were so involved he has become known as the president of the common people. Other presidents have traveled great distances to debate issues. Henry Clay, a U.S. congressman from 1811 intermittently until 1825, was known for his great debates. In state legislatures there have been many historic debates.

Now we have new challenges and we should remember the Bill of Rights has served us well for many years. New legislation such as the USA PATRIOT Act (UPA) is too new to have been studied and debated. Yet many people react as if there is an attack on the government if questions are asked. There should be great debates in state legislatures as well as at the federal level.

How many citizens have read the UPA? It is time to discuss both the Bill of Rights and the UPA. These discussions should take place immediately. I do not believe these discussions are partisan politics. Cities, counties and some states have placed the UPA on their agendas, and many cities have now developed a response to this slam-bang piece of legislation that was passed in the wake of 9/11. Hopefully, a mix of liberals and conservatives will come together to study the ramifications of the UPA. There should be a great debate in Oregon now.

Charlotte Higgins-Lee
Eugene

FOREST FOLLY

Over the past week I was lucky enough to spend time in two of Oregon's beautiful wilderness areas. The towering ancient trees are astounding to view and stand near. Swimming in the cool, clear river water is a priceless experience.

I'd love to hear that the president came to Portland to present a forest plan to save what's left of our precious old growth forests — and to possibly expand our wilderness boundaries. A plan that would protect other species would work well for me. Heck, he could even take my breath away by proposing that Mt. Hood be made a national park.

Any other plan, especially one that increases logging, is pure folly. For a better, more beautiful world,

Albert Kaufman
Portland

TRACK BUSH BACKERS

EW correctly quoted me (8/21 news brief, "Bush's Oregon Trip"). My only concern is that my writing that yelling at George Bush is

a "waste of time" — extracted from a longer letter — could be misinterpreted to sound as though I'm protective of the larcenous appointed head of state. He is deserving of all the public criticism that can be thrown at him.

In so doing, we have to take care not to allow those behind the scenes — who dictate what the dunderhead does — to escape detection. They are the ones who perpetuate our national folly. The same applies for some wealthy citizens (fortunately, not all of them) who prop up Bush policies by paying \$2,000 each in Portland to hear him speak.

We need to make note of who they are so we will be able to recognize them in our midst. They know where I stand by what I write. Were it available (maybe it is through the Elections Commission?), the list of donors — which is public record — ought to be published. It's simply a good democratic precept of putting your name where your money is.

George Beres
Eugene

SEEDY BUSINESS

In your Morsels section under "Banana Blowout" (7/31) you report about the fungus (it's called black sigatoka) currently decimating banana yields.

Some quick Googling reveals that this is due to the insurgence of this fungus into Brazil, which is the fourth largest producer of bananas. However, it was claimed that the banana "is a fruit without seeds or pollen."

I know that bananas do, in fact, contain seeds and that the flower itself contains more. I Googled for "banana seeds" and got 10 pages of hits.

Perhaps the real issue is that "obtaining improved banana varieties takes time because the life cycle of the tree lasts longer than a year, slowing the process of evaluations, cross-pollinations and verification." (www.tierramerica.net/2003/0223/iacentos.shtml)

Just thought you'd like some feedback.

Justin Gopindra Hammigan
Eugene

NOT IN OUR LIFETIME

When I first moved to Oregon from the Midwest, I was in awe of the size of the trees in this state. After two years here, I am still awestruck by the power and the untouched natural beauty of the forests here. That is why I do not understand how the people here can, for the most part, remain silent as the Bush administration logs off the "old growth" national forests here. This loss is a tragedy for the state of Oregon and the people of this country.

These national forests are our heritage and they are being threatened with little regard for life that exists within them. Like the rainforests of South America, do we really even know what is being destroyed? This issue is more important than money; it is about our health and the health of our children.

There are some groups fighting to protect these old growth forests in the courts. Cascadia Wildlands Project (www.cascwild.org) is one. Their victories have been temporary. They need more political and financial support.

Forget the saving the rainforests of South America. We have our own rainforests here in Oregon that need saving. If a butterfly flapping its wings can influence world climate, what effect will logging off thousands of acres of 700 year old trees have? We don't know. But there is one thing that we do know for certain, once these forests and the envi-