

WHAT ABOUT VETS?

I am writing to say how offended I am by the fact that you did not recognize Veterans' Day in any way. The soldiers who fought and died to protect the affluence and freedom that you take upon yourselves as a right were not honored in this magazine, and you should be ashamed.

You may not agree with all of the decisions that were made by the government and military, but you must remember that these soldiers fought and died to protect the United States, the country that we all live in. You can argue policy decisions, but you cannot ignore the safety that has been given to us throughout history by the U.S. military. The soldiers who have fought for this country need to be recognized and thanked for the sacrifices they have made to protect us. I urge all others to write letters of support to *EW*, with the optimistic idea that they merely forgot about Veterans' Day. I cannot believe that they would omit mention of Sunday's Veteran's Day Parade on purpose; and it must be merely coincidence that the cover story in *EW* for the week of Veterans' Day is about a Muslim holiday.

Do not forget that the freedoms that we take for granted were fought for and died for by American soldiers.

Michael King
Eugene

BALLFIELDS VS. ENVIRONMENT

We have truly come to a fork in the jogging trail at Amazon Park. Do we spend \$550,000 of park bond measure on two high tech ballfields (nine in the area already), unscreened stadium lights (198 and counting), and sports tournament parking?

Or do we opt for the restoration alterna-

tive — park beautification with native plant screening, channel naturalization, and connection to the Spencer Butte to Fern Ridge corridor?

Ballfield advocates complain of occasional "scheduling conflicts." Maybe so — we all have bad hair days — but what about the rest of us getting an occasional sunset or enjoying tranquility at a real park, when do we schedule time for that?

Parks planner Andrea Riner says "our job as planners is to say yes to everything." Yet willy-nilly juxtaposition of conflicting uses (noisy tournament vs. calm of nature) can only lead to park dysfunction.

Ballfields aren't exactly ballfields any more. They are excavated, drained, fertilized, sterilized, delumped, and otherwise manicured to meet technical specifications for high intensity use by narrow (need I say paying) constituencies.

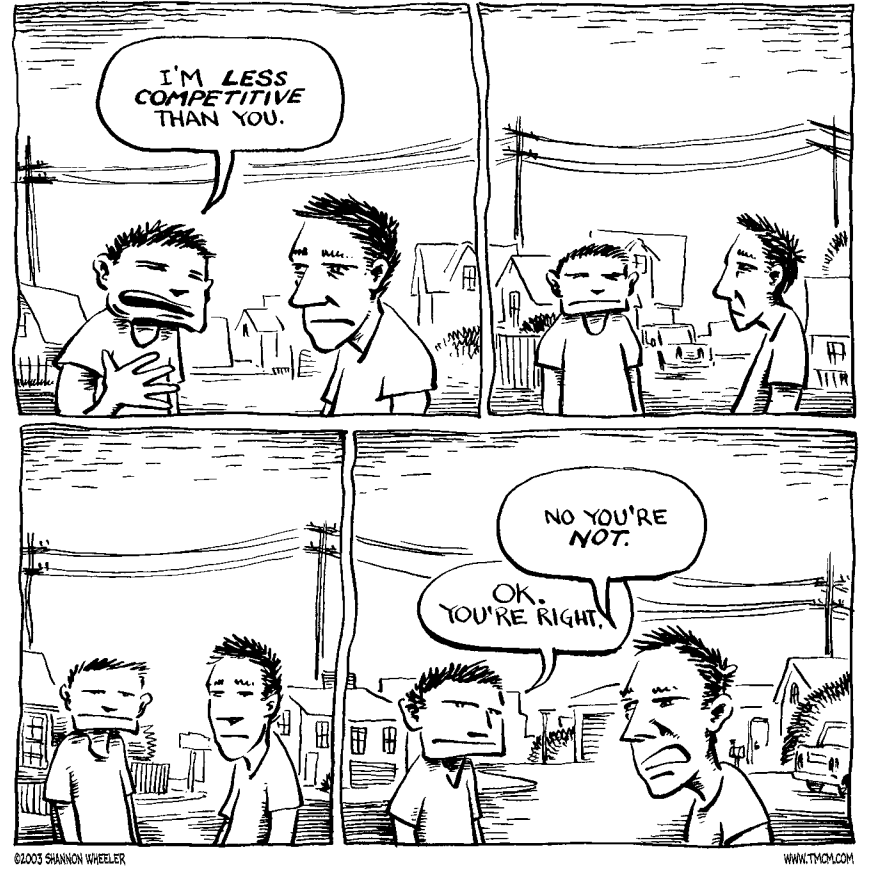
We can't keep chipping away at the park and still have a park. The bus station, overflow pool parking, stadium lights, plastic hockey rinks — try to have it all and you end up with nothing. Please attend a 7 pm Nov. 20 public meeting at Hilyard Community Center. Contact Citizens for a Natural Amazon at 513-8151 or see www.cyberdyne.com/~tom/03/natural_amazon.html

Tom Pringle
Jocks for the Environment
Eugene

PARADISO LOST

Café Paradiso melted in the hands of the OLCC; they succumbed to the ever-present ageist ways of society. Café Paradiso was given the option of dividing their facility into two sections, one for those over the legal drinking age and one for those who aren't or closing their doors to the under-21 crowd. They chose the

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



latter, turning away the under-21 crowd on Friday and Saturday nights after 8 pm.

What did I do after I was turned away from seeing WYMPROV! on Friday night? I headed over to Cozmic Pizza at The Strand and saw a stellar performance by Son Mela'O. At The Strand it is understood that music should be experienced by all, not just those over 21.

Support The Strand and every other business that recognizes the desire for all-age venues and encourage those that don't to start.

Stacy Borke
Eugene

ENCROACHMENT

No other park in the city has as much as Amazon Park. Amazon is highly developed to meet the need of organized sports. The park has four tennis courts, three groomed baseball fields, four soccer fields (built or co-built), basketball courts, two in-line skating rinks, two sand volley ball courts, and the only outdoor swim facility. Much of this is used only three months of the year. I am not against ball fields but would like to see equal monies go toward the natural elements of the park.

This park has seen a huge amount of in-

Kumbaya Dammit BY DAN CAROL

Which Horse to Ride?

Looking D nominees in da mouth.

So, as long as we're talking regime change in Washington, D.C., I guess we need a candidate, huh?

Personally, I have a simple view on which person we should nominate to face Bush. I call it the "anyone but Lieberman" program. A conservative Democrat, Sen. Joe Lieberman is a nice enough person. His message, however, on issue after issue, is simply: "I agree with President Bush but I could do it a bit better." My message to Joe: how about you do us a favor and run as a Republican, *against Bush*, instead.

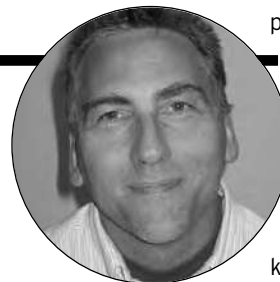
Beyond that, we've got a pretty decent field of eight men and women. Like 1992, one of these candidates will emerge from the slashing and burning of the primary season — tan, tested and ready to beat Bush. Remember that Bill Clinton, at this time 12 years ago, was just a small state governor with big hair. Now he's The Big Guy.

So, for those of you just starting to engage, let me offer a few candidate selection criteria I often use. Maybe it can help in your initial siftings.

Hope vs. fear: I like candidates who offer up big ideas and big dreams, with confidence. George w. Bush, by contrast, will be selling fear and Homeland Insecurity. Our nominee has to offer a different formula, and if you've ever read this space before you know I am a big fan of a moon mission/crash energy independence program (www.apolloalliance.org is one).

Of the current field and campaign so far, special mentions go out to Howard Dean for his new college tuition plan, John Edwards for his spin on the American Dream (he's the son of a textile worker) and Dick Gephardt for getting the ball rolling with a big ambition, expensive health care proposal.

To litmus or not? Lots of people like to use issue litmus tests to make their choice. Since all the candidates are pro-choice, the key litmus testers out there are probably going to be gun control, tax policy and Iraq. Me, I am gonna give Gephardt, Edwards and John Kerry a pass for voting for the Iraq war resolution and still heartily support them if they get the Democratic nomination (hey, I have witnesses whom I grumbled to at the time but done is done). Similarly, I also understand why Dean has positioned himself



pro-guns, as Vermont is a rural state, and think the brouhaha about his anti-Medicare comments was overblown. I'm fine with Dennis Kucinich finally coming around to a pro-choice view after years as pro-life. So my litmus test on litmus tests is simple: No litmus tests! We can reinstate them after Bush is back in Texas.

Foreign policy credentials: After 9/11 — and with two unfinished wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — national security know-how matters. Give an edge to Gen. Wesley Clark and Vietnam veteran Kerry; they both wore a military uniform. Those are some nice colors to flash at Bush come the time for face-to-face debates. Dean loses points here against some of the field — he's been bragging a lot that he is the commander of the Vermont National Guard — and that doesn't quite have the right ring to it. But hey, you never know — four of the last five presidents were governors.

Extreme makeover needed? Sorry to my Kucinich-loving friends, but the guy literally looks like Mo from The Three Stooges. Gephardt is no better off: a solid citizen he, but a new voter's first impression is "no eyebrows." Do these things really matter? You bet they do. Because (get over it already) surface impressions are what this country is all about! So Dennis and Dick have serious image work ahead before I think they can snare the affections of the average, marginal, disinterested, surface-minded voter. A related note to Kerry: Lose the "I know how to ride a motorcycle" schtick. Work on your smile instead.

Don't forget likeability: Is your candidate someone most voters would like to hang out with at their kitchen table or have a beer with? Likeability is huge — it explains why conservative Ronald Reagan and liberal Paul Wellstone both won political office against the odds. Among the current crop: Carol Moseley Braun is smart — and sweet. Edwards has a bit of that Kennedy charm. Al Sharpton has the best one-liners. And Bob Graham? Uh, well he dropped out last month cuz no one liked him. Sorry Bob.

Ready to dig in for a more in-depth look at all the candidates? Check out www.vote-smart.org for a comparison shopping guide. If you feel passionate about one, get busy. The primary season is around the corner. If you're like me and just want to beat Bush, check out www.JoinTheBushwhackers.com. We're always cooking up stuff and could use the support.

Dan Carol is a Democratic political strategist and a founding partner of CTSG (www.ctsg.com), a progressive consulting firm based in Eugene, Ore., and Washington, D.C.