

MEANINGLESS LABEL

In his letter ("Being Gay is a Choice," 6/10), Steve Twede tells a story of a friend who "elected to leave" the gay lifestyle (after "many years"). First, would he please define the buzz phrase "gay lifestyle"?

There may be a perception that this must include things like unsafe sex with multiple partners, but in reality "gay lifestyle" is about as meaningless as "straight lifestyle."

As for the issue of choice, people like Mr. Twede seem to think homosexuality is simply a behavior, but as with heterosexuality there's a variable drive behind it. People can be somewhat flexible in their sexuality, but most have a preference that is curiously magnetic, and hardly a choice.

The fact that a percentage of gays (or perhaps bisexuals if they can truly switch) at least *try* to be "straight" doesn't change this. Some gay people who are hammered with negativity might try to bury those feelings, but with how much success and at what cost to their mental health if they fail? And how many *heteros* have been successful at repressing *their* sexuality? But then, gays are nothing like pure and natural straight folk like Mr. Twede, right?

Ryan L Newburg
Eugene

ART FOR THE AGES

I say thank you to Annie Kayner ("Real Artists Don't Play Games," 6/10) for her straight up letter on an ugly situation in Eugene. It seems that many fail to realize how much goes into real Art. Art and craft-work, as Tom Blodgett says, are divided by an abyss. Art is Art and nothing else.

I had the privilege to study under Tom Blodgett. His work is proof of a lifetime of study and labor. But, for reasons including those highlighted by Annie Kayner, he works virtually unnoticed under the weight of those who forgot just how important Rembrandt and Van Gogh are. It seems that Eugene operates on a contradiction; People are so ready to accept everything as art, but are likewise unwilling to pay art prices for it. As Annie alluded to, you can't find art at Wall-Mart. It takes mature human beings to see the value of a real artist.

I write this as an invitation to all those who understand the importance of the financial support needed for an artist to continue his work. Blodgett has lived and worked in Eugene for decades, yet he is kept a secret. To those who look to be thrilled, come to his studio and see for yourself. His work sets a standard, and standards are essential for growth. There is art for the ages right here and now.

Michael James
Elmira

REAL ARTISTS

Hey Annie, get your gun and shoot yourself in the foot, because you have already put

it in your mouth (6/10). Yes, real artists do attend openings and First Friday Art Walk. Real artists don't consider all galleries as "blood sucking." Real artists recognize the crafts and the lesser arts. Real artists can sometimes pick up some cheap material at the Wal-Mart that you hate so much. It's great that you have been in seclusion for 40 years, because it is quite evident that you are not a real artist.

Jerry Harris
Eugene

EMPTY BLOCKS

What makes a great neighborhood? It's not the price of the housing or the home owner/renter ratio. It's a very special place where neighbors know each other, celebrate together, share resources (from vegetables to trucks), cherish the children, and provide "eyes on the street" at all hours of the day and night. Such is the livable neighborhood where the Eugene Faith Center is situated.

Recently Faith Center neighbors were informed of the Center's expansion plans; only two days after that the trees started coming down. Next up is the removal of one and a half blocks of affordable rental housing, to be replaced by a large parking lot. This space will be used on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. The rest of the week it will be, well, one and a half blocks of empty parking lot. If money allows, a youth center will be built where five of the homes once stood, but according to Pastor Thomas, that could take as long as two years.

When asked by concerned neighbors if shuttles from the fairgrounds or carpooling would alleviate congregation parking needs, we were told that the congregation doesn't like shuttles. I pray The Faith Center will reconsider their immediate plans to remove the homes before they complete the permit process and have raised the funds they need. I also pray they work with the neighborhood for an equitable design solution that balances private property rights with the common neighborhood good.

Paula DeBell
Eugene

PERILOUS STRETCH

Gag me with a spoon! Week after week adoring fans flock into the Bijou, wildly applauding the faux-spiritual film *What the #\$*! Do we Know?* For me, a workaday physicist far removed from the genius category, the whole concept is atrocious, riddled with misconceptions and reflecting a popular trend to extend quantum physics from the submicroscopic to the macroscopic world, tapping the perilous machinery of analogy and metaphor.

The highly credentialed, babbling scientists and spiritualists are clearly there to hawk their latest books. The Heisenberg uncertainty inherent in the behavior of ultra-


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