

SMUG ADDICTION

Caroline Cummins exhibits foolish pride in her article "Fuelish Pride" (12/23). Smug biodiesel car owners and their supporters are ignoring the real problem: their addiction to cars.

All cars — hybrid, electric, biodiesel or gas-guzzling — contribute to urban sprawl; all cars demand asphalt-paved roads and parking lots; and all cars require polluting and resource-depleting industries for their production and upkeep.

Peter Gelman sums up the situation in *Oregon Cycling Magazine* (April 2003): "Soon we will see traffic jams of automobiles that don't use oil as fuel; so what? A vision of millions of Americans driving even solar-powered cars is a vision of people disunited, solitary, debt-ridden, obese, and bleary."

*Robert Simms
Eugene*

DISMANTLE BASES

Even many of those who opposed the war in Iraq from the beginning feel that the U.S. owes it to the Iraqis to maintain a military presence until Iraq is "pacified." This argument (sometimes expressed as "we won't cut and run"), would have merit if it were accompanied by plans that would allow the Iraqis to prepare for real freedom.

Such plans should include an admission that the contracts giving control over resources and reconstruction to foreign investors were made illegally and should be nullified at a specified date (an occupying power has no right to sell or lease the resources of the occupied country); the plans should include a deadline for dismantling the 14 U.S. military bases in Iraq, and they should include a date for pulling our troops out.

True, Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi has begged the U.S. to keep its troops in Iraq. However, there is no evidence that Allawi represents the will of the Iraqi people. More importantly, now that we have reached a point where neither the Iraqis nor our young soldiers can tell friend from foe, the U.S. military in Iraq has itself become a destabilizing force.

We cannot undo the mess we made in Iraq, but without plans for reparation as outlined above, neither the Iraqis nor the rest of the world will believe that the U.S. cares about their welfare or about democracy in the Middle East.

*Jette Foss
Eugene*

JUST ONE THING

After reading the interview with Mark Harris (12/23), I can only think of one



thing to say: Without racism, we'd have no need for diversity trainers.

*Jim Johnson
Eugene*

A FEW MORE THINGS

Mark Harris (12/23), like many black

people including Jessie Jackson, is in the Race Industry. They can only talk about race and nothing beyond. It is their livelihood. Of course there is racism in Eugene, but the tiny population of black people in Eugene blows everything out of proportion.

The black community in Eugene is the most self-segregated community that I have ever seen. They don't participate in the whole community of Eugene, and they only get upset when a member of that industry, e.g. Cortez Jordan, cries about racial profiling. Black people are being killed in Portland and Harlem, not Eugene.

*Jerry Harris
Portland*

PUZZLING

Thank you, *EW*, for one of my most enjoyable Christmas presents, though perhaps not intentional. I love diagramless crossword puzzles. In the 12/23 issue you laid out this week's Jonesin' Crossword clues with last week's grid. It took joyful hours to guess the answers and reconstruct the grid. Yes, *EW*, at least two of the best things in life are free!

*Jim Wood
Eugene*

EDITOR'S NOTE: We love messing with our readers' minds, though this time it was indeed unintended. Did anyone actually attempt the puzzle? What's a five-letter word for "roofing goo"?

SUBJECT TO PERSECUTION

Regarding the Viewpoint on wild wolves by Jeff Long (12/14): As a biologist who appreciates the ecological value of wolves in their natural habitat, I would like to offer my counterpoint to the position that wolf populations should be artificially established in Oregon. My concern has to do with whether this would be in the best interests of the wolves.

While nature lovers such as Jeff Long and I enjoy hearing and seeing wolves on our outdoor excursions, the unfortunate reality is that persistent fear, ignorance and prejudice regarding wolves remains despite efforts to educate the public. Consequently, wolves will continue to be persecuted.

Much of the wolf's original habitat in Oregon has been lost to logging and ranching, limiting the size of the territory in which they can hunt without encroaching upon lands that have been claimed by humans. When wolves encounter humans or their livestock, they are likely to become the victims of hate crimes. Let's face it. They will be shot, trapped and poisoned, regardless of any laws that have been enacted to protect them.

Long gone are the days when the Pacific Northwest was a pristine wilderness and wolves played an important role in the ecosystem. Declining populations of top predators such as wolves, grizzly bears and mountain lions parallel the growth of human populations and the consequent destruction of natural habitats. More adaptable predators such as coyotes and black bears have not been as adversely impacted by human population growth. In fact, when humans alter the environment, they may create new opportunities for some species such as rodents and the coyotes that prey upon them. Associating coyotes with widespread livestock predation does them an injustice similar to what has been inflicted upon mythologized wolves and sharks.

It is a misrepresentation of facts to state that wolves are important to Oregonians. From what I can tell, most Oregonians are perfectly happy to limit their experience of wolves to the Discovery Channel. Armchair naturalists may enjoy the image of wolves roaming free in Oregon, as long as those wolves don't end up in their backyards.

For those of us who desire a more personal encounter with wolves, hiking and camping in the Canadian Rockies offers that opportunity. Let's not perpetuate our anthropocentric tendencies by thinking only about what we as nature lovers would like. Instead, let's focus on what would be best for the wolves.

*Mike Skolnick
Veneta*

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