

notices it, or that nobody cares.

Ken Warren
Eugene

CAR-NAGE & BIODIESELS

U.S. traffic deaths in 2003 totaled 43,220; injuries, 2,890,000. Cost of highway crashes to society: \$230.6 billion per year, about \$820 per person (from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration). Cost of traffic law enforcement, lost land, road construction, road repair, wasted resources in manufacturing cars, social disintegration, etc. not included. The aforementioned only samples issues omitted by the panacean *EW* "Fuelish Pride" (12/23).

To the liberal's rebuttal of "Yeah, but biodiesel's a step in the right direction," I preemptively say NO! Alternative cars only distract from real solutions to Earth's scourge — as much the "right direction" as concentrating on opening Band-Aids for a severed leg.

If citizens don't start discussing the wider social implications of technological choices, we'll all start talking like the *EW* biodiesel interviewee: "The only problem is that I ride my bike less." Excellent primers for said discussion are *The Whole and the Reactor* (Langdon Winner) and *Asphalt Nation* (Jane Holtzky) — and going car-free for a week.

Wil D. Hormann
Corvallis

EXCELLENT?

I have a few concerns regarding Lane Transit District. How can a bus strike be pro-

viding "excellent services" which is a quote from Ken Hamm from the "Rider's Digest" of Sept. 19, 2004? Mr. Hamm's "promise." What does that really mean?

What type of management would not negotiate a respectable contract for its employees, thus causing added stress for bus patrons in the middle of winter? No other relief is provided for the 10,000-plus individuals who depend on LTD, implying that LTD would rather save money for its new Bus Rapid System, which has a higher priority over maintaining current bus schedules and meeting the needs of the public.

Is LTD a public-oriented service? If current services are not adequately funded, how can there be long-term funding for a "new" bus system? This implies that regular bus service will continually be cut in order to bring in a new bus rapid system. How can this be "excellent" service?

Or is this new bus rapid system like the electric buses? How many times have the electric buses been painted? Twice! Where are the electric buses today?

Bus patrons need actual physical, reliable transportation, not buses that sit in the bus yard collecting dust.

Valerie Harris
Springfield

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