

TAKE BACK THE EC

Another failed attempt at privatization — no, not Social Security. I'm writing about the Eugene Celebration. Remember the old days when the music was good and the entry fee was easy? It isn't just the rain that has ruined our city's annual fete.

I propose that our city take back the Celebration. What did it cost us to run this treasured event in those good old days? The city's \$150,000 start-up loan to privatizer Downtown Events Management Inc. equals about a buck a citizen. We can afford it!

For lessons in good music and affordable fun, just look north to the little town of Albany that brings in national-class music each summer for a donation. Or look south to powerhouse Roseburg for more of the same. Where's our civic pride? The answer may lie with corporate sponsors, and I'm sure we have a few businesses in our second largest Oregon city that would be happy to help. But you gotta ask!

In the Hollywood film, *Field of Dreams*, the hero was told that all he had to do was build a baseball field and the players would come. Let's not outsource this job! Instead, as a community, let's build a Eugene field with good music at an affordable price and celebrate once again.

*Benton Elliott
Eugene*

LISA'S GIFTS

Last week (3/15) at the dedication ceremony for the Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza, Lisa Ponder was briefly mentioned as the engraver. I would like to further acknowledge Lisa for her great contribution to our community — her skill and artful eye, her wonderful recommendation of having Wayne Morse's actual signature engraved onto the plaque below the sculpture and the countless hours of work involved in engraving 50 wall plaques and 700 granite pavers. To learn that she made a donation to us of all this work deeply touched my heart. I know I speak for so many when I say "Thank you, Lisa."

*Nancy Wallace
Eugene*

OFFENSIVE CARTOON

In your March 3 issue Lance Sparks wrote a article about Hunter S. Thompson. The graphic cartoon illustrated by Michael Bachus offended me. Surviving my younger brother's suicide by gunshot was traumatic for myself and our family 24 years ago. While Hunter's lifestyle was extreme, ultimately his choice to leave in such a violent manner is distressing for those of his surviving family members and friends. And I pondered how despairing or depressed he must have been living in these times. This dark comedic "mind blowing" visual humor, while it expressed Hunter's style, was ultimately hurtful and inappropriate.

At some point we must ask ourselves how



can we help, how can we understand, how can we become a community, a nation that encourages life, supports creativity. This cartoon didn't do that for me. It hurt.

*Amanu/Sue Simons
Brownsville*

GOODBYE GONZO

I've been thumbing through the last few issues of *EW* in search of some respectful form of goodbye for our man Hunter Thompson. All I've seen is a brief article on his "tragic" suicide, mingled with some stories of his recreational drug use, right in the

KUMBAYA Dammit BY ROBERT RIBE

Instrument for Change

Remembering John Baldwin

I first met and befriended John Baldwin at a conference in 1982, and got to know him well when I joined him at the UO in 1988. I gained great respect for John as he tirelessly lead me and other members of the faculty in nurturing the UO environmental studies program to adulthood, against many obstacles. I have spent more stimulating and pleasurable time in John's office than any other member of the faculty. I succeeded him as director of the UO Institute for a Sustainable Environment (which he founded) in 1999.

John's first book was a pioneering phenomenon. It was all about environmental planning back when there was no such thing. It was politically incorrect to have another kind of public planning, back in the early 1980s, even to address widely recognized problems. Only UC Berkeley had dared to create a small program in environmental planning. No other school would. Only secure and courageous practicing planners would call themselves "environmental planners." John published the first full text in the field. As much or more than anyone, he helped legitimize it, and provide the framework for professional environmental planning. Now there are lots of schools and people who are and do what he first clearly described.

The project in the irradiated landscape around the Chernobyl accident that John spearheaded was also a pioneering phenomenon. It happened in the period between Perestroika and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Until that time the relationship between the Soviet government and its people was largely one of distance and distrust. John toured the region with Russian scientists, talking to people. They took maps and shared them with people who were suspicious and even fearful at first. Previously, anyone with maps who asked questions had been someone with information and power, i.e. the KGB or something like that. John's project may have created the first instance where this relationship clearly changed in a big way. You can imagine the diplomacy and persistence John must have employed to make this happen. He was an instrument for a profound change in Russia and he had testimonials to prove it. That was what he wanted his life to be about more than anything else.

John's best work for the last 20 years was largely out of sight to his colleagues at UO. He devoted himself to international work. I suspect he might be the best ambassador to the whole world our university had. He developed warm, constructive relationships with government officials and leaders of non-governmental organizations in many countries on every continent.

Perhaps John's greatest asset as a teacher was his pedagogical honesty. He was an advocate for the environment, and he taught classes that explicitly engaged values that his students cared about. Whether he was teaching a lower division class of 300 stu-

dents or a graduate seminar of seven, you never got the impression he was pulling any punches or pushing any agenda less than the greatest social good. He described very difficult and challenging problems, but his enthusiasm and optimism rubbed off on the students. They could learn to address the problems with the same spirit. Many students consequently gained undying affection for John.

For many years I took turns teaching land use planning with John, and team taught that class with him. John showed me how to teach little things like zoning and the theory of land regulation and problem solving in the context of the whole of history and the whole of the world.

He was a kind of glue that helped strengthen the international environmental movement by force of the esteem and friendships he garnered. He volunteered to join and work for key organizations, organize and speak at major and minor meetings, and deliver workshops in environmental policy and impact assessment to foreign governments. He stayed in close touch with many environmental leaders from all over the world. He didn't seem to be subject to jet lag. His energy and optimism and social-diplomatic skills never lessened no matter what the time zone. I often entered his office only to interrupt a gregarious, interesting phone conversation with some far-away activist or scholar.



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John was preparing to teach marine biology for the Semester at Sea program when he died. He had never taught that before. In fact, John taught more different courses, spanning a wider range, than anyone I know at the UO. He could do that, and they were all successful, well subscribed classes.

His favorite subject to teach was public and environmental health. His life and career were guided by a keen sense of how frightfully delicate and vulnerable the life of the earth and all its inhabitants is. Once, when I met with him soon after one of his vigorous and victorious squash or racquetball games, he told me he expected to live a very long time. It's so sad that John's own delicate, still-youthful gift of life proved so inexplicably, catastrophically frail.

John Baldwin died at home March 7, 2005 of a blood coagulation disorder. He was 54. Dr. Robert Ribe is a professor of landscape architecture and director of the UO Institute for a Sustainable Environment.