

EUGENE'S TREASURES

Dear residents of Eugene: I recently spent four months in your city visiting my sister. I arrived in time to see the fall colors and said good-bye just as spring was starting to warm the air and flowers were emerging.



I want to acknowledge some very special places and people in your city beginning with the staff of your wonderful library. I've been living in Thailand for three years where I can only trade one book for another. You have a truly fantastic library with a helpful and informative and friendly staff. A big thank you to the entire library staff.

Next, the staff of the FOOD for Lane County 8th Avenue dining room. I volunteered there for a few months and cannot praise enough the other volunteers and paid staff. Day after day with care and love and fun they put together hot meals for 80 to 120 people. Thanks, Tracy, for keeping it all together.

I recently heard from my sister that the bus drivers went on strike. I hope they got what they wanted because they are a wonderful group of drivers. I've been on buses throughout Thailand, California, Oregon and Arizona. The Eugene drivers are among the most friendly and helpful that I've encountered. Often a driver would call a rider by name and in return many people would say "thank you" when leaving the bus.

I volunteered with the Feral Cat Coalition helping with their bi-monthly spay/neuter program. I believe the entire organization is staffed by volunteers. They do a fantastic job and deserve a very big thank you!

Finally, I hope you all realize what a treasure you have in the Fern Ridge Wildlife viewing area. Many times I went there to watch the birds, sit by a pond and enjoy the quiet of the wetlands – although I do not think hunting should be allowed in this sanctuary. I only hope that the voters of Eugene reject any development-hugging wannabe scum-bag politician who would even hint at selling off this precious jewel of an urban escape.

I'm living in Bangkok and would give my last baht for a quiet walk in nature. Thanks Eugene. I'm looking forward to my next visit. In the meantime send me some coffee from Dutch Brothers and a bottle of wine from Sundance wine shop!

Linda Hall
Bangkok, Thailand

WORDS TO DIE BY

Live and let live, live and let die. Ah yes, people often ask me here in Eugene, "What is life? What is the nature of a life, of a human? What is the purpose?" And I say that it is many things. However, the most propitious use of a human life is to serve other living things that we happen to share life with on the surface of this planet.

And they ask, "What is service? What does it mean to serve?" And I say that service is the act of, or life-long endeavor of offering assistance, help, aid, accommodation, or support to another living thing. To serve is to assist, supply, provide for, attend to, or be of use to.

We, as a people are a team here on the surface of the planet Earth. Therefore, to serve only oneself throughout the duration of a lifetime is counterproductive to the "team" effort, and will only bring sadness, despair, and failure in the end. Like it or not, we are not islands; we are part of a singular organism, a singular system.

I am not of any one particular religion. However, down through history, every great religion has had one top-shelf rule, one prime-directive, and this is true — it varies little from religion to religion. This precept, in all, basically instructs a person to do things to other people that this same person would appreciate being done to himself or herself. What this truth states is to serve other living beings, and to be served by other living beings, always in the most possible of positive ways. The alternative is what creates a living hell on Earth, ultimately, for both the giver and the receiver.

Let me conclude with a 75-year-old quotation from Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman:

"Human life consists in mutual service. No grief, pain, misfortune, or broken heart is excuse for cutting off one's life while any power of service remains. But when all usefulness is over, when one is assured of an unavoidable and imminent death, it is the simplest of human rights to choose a quick and easy death in place of a slow and horrible one."

Terry Heintz
Eugene

DON'T DELAY US

What a tragedy and abuse of political power that Terry Schiavo's case ended up in federal courts (and the Supreme Court!).

Oregon's Rep. Earl Blumenauer said it best: "What people need to think about is how they would feel if Tom DeLay or some other politician decided to second-guess your doctor, or your husband" (or your wife or parents). The last person I'd want to decide whether or not I live or die is someone with



the ethics of Tom DeLay!

Fortunately, I and many others in our community have already done what we can do to keep legislators, governors, congressmen, and presidents out of our family's private, personal decisions at the end-of-life.

We've completed our Advance Directive for Health Care — the legally enforceable document that spells out the type of care we desire when we are near death and cannot speak for ourselves.

Save your family from the agony of having to decide when to remove a feeding tube or "pull the plug." Get a free Advance Directive form from the hospital, your doctor, or on the web from: www.seriousillness.org/lane. Then complete it (no lawyers required), copy it, and distribute it to your family members, your doctor, and both local hospitals. Don't risk having a politician or judge decide the end-of-life care you receive.

Todd Peterson
Springfield

GET ON THE BUS

For years they told me there was no regular bus service to get from Eugene to the coast. Now I discover there's been one for years!

Porter Stage Lines (344-6265) in Eugene, with offices in Bend and Coos Bay. Departs every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas, 7.30 am and 1.15 pm Coos Bay, then goes Reedsport, Florence, Eugene (arrives 3.50 and 9.50 pm), Sisters, Bend, Burns, Vale and Ontario, where it departs 9.15 am and returns.

Nice chunky little white buses and mini vans with quirky old fashioned uniformed drivers. What does this mean? Leave the car at home!

Take your bike on the bus to Bend and ride! (easier if it's a Eugene's own folding Bike Friday of course). Go to the coast when you're getting cabin fever! Save fossil fuel! The journey is \$23-\$25 one way, (\$25 if you buy it via Amtrak).

The company is so small they rarely advertise. They say if they get more traffic they can make prices more reasonable. I hope you publish this in the name of support mass transit and the sense of community it fosters.

The car has done enough damage to this society — on all fronts.

Lynette Chiang
Eugene

BUY DISTILLERS

Do you know anyone who drinks water straight from the tap? I don't, and I see bottled water everywhere I look. For me, fluoride will just be another one of those nasty things left in the bottom of my distiller after I clean the local tap water. John Proctor (3/31) suggested EWEB buy fluoride treatments for the poor instead of dumping it in the water supply. I suggest they buy water distillers for the poor.

Greg Daugherty
Eugene

TAKING CHANCES

Privatizing Social Security would remove the safety net to keep future generations from possibly becoming destitute. Today millions of seniors, two thirds of older Americans, depend on their Social Security payments for basic living expenses. It has been a successful retirement program with a minimum administrative cost. How can we trade this for a "chance system" that demands high administrative fees — 10 to 30 percent higher? Private accounts are expensive and chancy, just ask my friends and relatives.

Changes can be made to ensure Americans that our Social Security system continues for future generations. It can be strengthened with adjustments such as removing the cap on the amount of wages taxed to support Social Security and including all

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