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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What about domestic schools, health care, homeless folks, everything else *this* country needs? As an American taxpayer, I don't like my money going to support an unexplained war. I urge anyone who would like an explanation as to the "official" reason we are occupying Iraq to please demand an answer from "President" Bush at: president@white-house.gov

*James Walker Studabaker
Eugene*

ILLOGICAL SPEWS

I am sick and tired of listening to the mean-spirited people in Eugene, and to the entire cabal of god-fearing, anti-humanists in this country trying to force their dangerous, narrow-minded, illogical views on the rest of us.

The rabid responses of these people to such a minor issue as the mayor's refusal to attend a prayer breakfast is beyond belief, if it were not true.

To those folks criticizing the mayor on this ridiculous, low-priority issue, I have some thoughts for you to chew on. If Mayor Piercy is expected to attend this prayer breakfast, then as mayor of *all* Eugene, she should be expected to attend a Secularist Breakfast, an Anarchists' Breakfast, and a Wiccan Prayer Luncheon.

Regarding the first, an estimated 10 percent of the American population is composed of secularists. Many others who don't declare themselves secularists are nevertheless rare participants in the church/religious arena. This is a sizeable minority that is, by definition, ignored at all mayor's, governor's, and national prayer breakfasts.

Furthermore, there is a misconception that secularists are value-free. In fact, we secularists have deep-feeling values. Few of us are hedonists. We value the planet we were born on, and we value other humans and life forms that we share this planet with. We have no post-life agenda. For us, this is "it" — and we try to make the most of it.

I sympathize with Rabbi Yitzhak Husbands-Hankin. However, humans being humans, there will always be someone left out at these events, and hard feelings will al-

ways be on display among the many religious groups. The key instigators are the ones who feel that their particular religious group is the only one that has a direct line to God.

If a person practices The Golden Rule in his or her life and treats our planet Earth with respect, a rewarding afterlife will surely be experienced by those looking for one.

*Robert Simms
Eugene*

PEDESTRIAN ETIQUETTE

Eugene is in full bloom, and more people are out walking. It seems a good time to pass on a friendly reminder of pedestrian etiquette. Since I have been walking the streets of Eugene homeless as part of my seventh year University Militant Pedagogy, or as Jon Young (4/7) states, "an imposed education rights/discriminatory gulag," I have learned a lot about how to walk safely using pedestrian etiquette.

Use common sense. Non-verbal gestures and body language work well to communicate your intentions. When approaching an intersection, do not automatically advance to the edge of the curb. About 20 feet from the intersection, I stop (become mentally present), look (assess the approaching intersection), and listen (become cognizant of the activity around me). I stand back near the light pole that has the sidewalk control.

Before I advance into the crosswalk, I get eye contact from the motorist nearest to me, smile, and advance across the street when I feel safe to do so. Sometimes this person is making a right hand turn into traffic and I have to wait to advance out into traffic. It helps reduce motorists' stress at an intersection if I stand still, wait for the light to change, and gain eye contact with the motorist before I cross the street.

In general, be courteous. When elderly and young children are present, be considerate and call out as you come up behind them, so as not to scare them. When passing, call out. This keeps them from being startled. Enjoy walking the streets of Eugene, use common sense, pedestrian etiquette, and be safe.

*Denise Foster
Eugene*

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