

This morning while in line for a large mocha at Dutch Brothers coffee kiosk, I was greeted by the coffee barista with the message that the woman in the car just pulling away had already paid for my coffee. A coffee goddess! Did I know her? No. She just did it to be kind. Believe me, she made my day. I did the same thing for the woman in the car behind me. I like to think it just kept going that way all day long.

The other thing I witnessed was an obviously alter-abled couple trying to cross an intersection at a signal. She was in a wheelchair and he was using a walker. When they reached the curb the man stumbled and fell onto the sidewalk. It was clear he couldn't get up by himself and she was unable to help him. Before I could pull across with the intention of getting out to help him, another vehicle, a big SUV, had stopped, and the woman driver got out to help. A pedestrian also was hurrying to help this man recover his feet. Simple acts of kindness, but they brought a bright spot in my day.

Each of us can do this, brighten the day for someone else. Let's try it.

Geneva Miller  
Eugene

**JUVENILE FANTASIES**

Jeffrey Luer's sentence is harsh, but not unjust. I've read much about the care Luers tried to take when he set fires. But the law treats arson like drunk driving: as an inherently reckless crime. Wide-ranging negative consequences are probable regardless of one's diligence. That's why the drunk driver who reassures us that he tried to be super-extra-careful just misses the point. Similarly so for Luers.

Nor is this a debate about whether arson should be treated more severely than other crimes. Oregon voters decided that in 1994. Rather, given his conviction for arson, did Luers receive an unjustly harsh sentence? Well, he received the minimum sentence allowed under Measure 11. That's hardly evidence for unjust treatment.

I assume that many support Luers because they endorse his aims. However, we have good reason to discourage any violent expression of any political belief. Violence breeds more violence, and it's best to nip it in the bud. It doesn't matter if someone burns cars in the parking lot of an SUV dealership, an African-American church, or an abortion clinic — a sentence like Luers' is justified for any unrepentant, politically motivated arsonist.

The left has been losing elections. The environment has suffered for it. It won't help to revel in juvenile fantasies of violent revolt. Association with the likes of Luers will only alienate the anti-arson segment of the electorate — a fairly large majority. What may have a chance of saving us is straightforward:

the long and difficult work of winning elections again. His supporters should spend their time on that cause instead.

Colin Klein  
Eugene

**SUDS SERVICE**

Well I guess those feminists at the Bikini Carwash aren't eco-feminists or they would be thinking about where all the soap suds go when you wash a car in a driveway. Where they go is down the gutter, down a pipe, and directly into Amazon Creek with no treatment whatsoever. Soapsuds in a creek wreak havoc with the ducks, fish, tadpoles, water bugs and other wildlife which lives there.

For those who care about aquatic wildlife, the alternative is to go to a commercial carwash, where the soapsuds go into the sewage treatment plant. Or at least wash your car on the lawn where some of the soapsuds will break down in the soil. Better yet, leave your car dirty. The blinding glare of a shiny clean car is one of the worst road hazards!

Sharon Blick  
Eugene

**CAR BALK**

I'd like to respond to the comments made by bicyclists regarding safety in the streets. My bicycle has been my main source of transportation for 15 years — the last seven years of which I have committed to being car-free by selling my car and choosing only pedal power to get around. I save thousands dollars a year, have reduced my medical costs significantly, and have more peace of mind than most car owners.

I pedal defensively and always wear a helmet. Bicyclists sharing the road with motor vehicles is dangerous. It is all part of the challenge, but the challenge here is much less than in other areas. Riding a bike in downtown Eugene is tame compared to bicycling down Market Street in San Francisco during rush hour, dodging buses, electric trains, and road hazards such as rail tracks and grates. The adrenaline high from that ride will leave you screaming in terror.

I think the writers of these letters are unnecessarily critical of Eugene. I have lived in areas where car drivers deliberately try to run me off the road, throw things at me (my cycling friend was hit in the face with a dirty diaper), and policemen who have told me to "get a car." I am grateful that the drivers in Eugene are far more considerate than what I've encountered in other areas. They just aren't as observant as I'd like.

I am very much in favor of Critical Mass and hope its presence in Eugene continues to grow. However, I am not in favor of bicyclists who are critical and unappreciative of this very bike-friendly area. We have a system of bike paths here in Eugene that is enviable.

There are many things bicyclists can do to



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