

Meanwhile, taxpayers are subsidizing billions of dollars to the private lending industry, which could be applied to student aid programs. This is the single biggest cut to student aid in history. I urge our members of Congress to restore funding to student aid.

Kira Lebsack
Corvallis

BEHIND THE COUNTER

In response to Alissa McLaughlin's complaints (8/18) about poor customer service in our city: I would first like to say that as an employee who works hard to serve with a smile, I am offended at her generalizations about people in the service industry in Eugene. Some of us do work hard (at a wage that barely pays the bills!) to give good service and McLaughlin completely disregards us.

After working more than four years in food service, I have come to believe that many customers are too far removed from what it is actually like on the other side of the counter. Many people either never have worked in service, or have forgotten how hard the job can be sometimes. I would also like to add that while there certainly are a number of good tipplers in Eugene (thank you!), many people don't feel the need to leave a tip. This may be related to the difference that McLaughlin found between our city and other bigger cities where people tip better.

I am not complaining about the tips I make, only asking McLaughlin and other unhappy customers to examine this often overlooked aspect of the service industry. McLaughlin wants change in Eugene, and I suggest that this change can be achieved if she and other customers begin appreciating those of us who do work hard to make them happy instead of complaining and generalizing about negative experiences they have had.

Lora Bailey
Eugene

IGNORANCE IS BLISS

We've grown accustomed to the violence, bloodshed, death and gore. Two thumbs up for this movie. They say that in time we'll win the war. Two thumbs up, it's alright, they said, it had to and still has to be done. After all, we've got an OK from the White House, the Congress, most of whom have never been fired upon.

So two thumbs up, just keep on drivin', ignorance is bliss. Regardless how the oil is acquired, as long as we get our fix.

Art Vilums
Eugene

WAR ON ERROR

Searching questions on the fourth anniversary of 9/11: Are we fighting a war on terror? No, we're fighting a war in error. You

can tell it's a war in error because in a true war, a specific and unchanging goal is declared, a meticulous outfitting and deployment of troops is undertaken, contributions and restraints are mandated such as: 1) Gas rationing and other conservation measures. 2) A war effort on the part of citizens (e.g. bonds to buy, Red Cross work to support.) 3) A suspension of month-long presidential vacations.

Moreover, you can tell it's a war in error because Bush cannot answer Cindy Sheehan's question, "Why did my son die in Iraq?" without honestly confessing that her son died for nothing more than the greater power and glory of George Bush, who appears desperate to immortalize himself as a war president. Honest confessions of error being out of the question, Bush roves about the truth, speaking with forked, loose, and stubborn tongue: it deceives, accuses without evidence and wags in only one direction.

Democracy is swallowed up by such a tongue, and so, alas! is America. A new Uncle Sam is at the helm: Uncle S(elf) A(nointed) M(essiah).

This new Uncle SAM makes enemies unthinkingly and globally, in turn promoting terrorism the same way. He has no respect for "them" and no desire for peace. Unlike his real namesake, George, he knows nothing of a "policy of humanity," let alone a policy of truth. His America the ugly is driven by greed, arrogance, and barbaric practices. It is an America in which national fears have been converted into a fearsome, vengeful nation whom none dare challenge.

Bush will undoubtedly go down in history. The question is: Will he take America with him?

Maxine Sheets-Johnstone
Yachats

HELPFUL LABELS

If you believe people can become "mad," "crazy" or "mentally ill," then by any commonly accepted definition of these terms all living beings fit, from womb to tomb, 24/7. This is neither bad nor good. But it's true. Science understands that none of us has a grip on reality. To think, to live, to exist we are all literally on the edge of the same darn boat.

I read with interest that Jon A. Young (8/25) is committed to advocacy for those who are diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities. Thank you, Jon. I agree we all need respect, good jobs, equality and more. However, I'd encourage Jon and others who would like to help those of us with psychiatric labels to please re-consider using the phrase "mental illness." Please don't say we all have a "disease."

Many of our members define their problems and differences biologically, but many of our other members passionately define



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