

Staff picks

BEST WAY TO RUIN A PEACEFUL HIKE:

This one goes out to all of you who shatter our fragile moments of communion with nature by yammering away, loud as hell and oblivious, on local nature trails. We love tromping through Spencer's Butte and Mount Pisgah hearing nothing but the sounds of birds, insects, wind and our own breath. What we DON'T want to hear echoing through the trees is your booming voice telling your buddy about a co-worker's chronic nose-picking. Or worse, your voice on a *cell phone*, jabbering about stocks. Shut up already! See how un-peaceful you make us?

BEST SUMMER NIGHT:

They may not win every time, or even catch every ball that heads their way, but the Eugene Emeralds provide the best summer nights in town. Nothing can beat drinking beer (your choice of watery Miller or tasty Steelhead) and heckling your favorite and least favorite players. Once you leave with lesions on your vocal cords, you know you've played a part in America's pastime.

BEST CAB DRIVER:

We call him Number 63. He is deserving of recognition, but for now his assigned number alone will do. Piloting a Toyota Previa Minivan with the skill of a Formula 1 driver, he zigzags through alleys, down one-way streets, and between hordes of pedestrians and bicyclists. But that's not why he's the best. Number 63, employed by Oregon Taxi, has a raucous sense of humor and isn't afraid to show it. It's entertainment with the price of admission, and admission is only \$2.50 a mile.

BEST HARMLESS GIGGLE AT HUMAN FAILURE:

"Seeking roommate: be *conscious* ...". One must wonder if these people are being specific in this way because their previous roommate couldn't pay rent due to their debilitating coma.

BEST LOOK INTO YOUR FUTURE (IF YOU'RE A 20 SOMETHING PARTY ANIMAL):

Mac's at the Vet's Club has friendly bartenders, low covers, cheap beer and live music every night. It also has the highest concentration of men and women who should've stopped acting like hot young things about a decade ago. Glance around the room and you'll spot Jordache jeans, Izod shirts and lots of Aquanet. A night there is enough for anyone entering their 30s to rethink their nightlife.

BEST REASON TO SPEND \$3.75 EVERY MORNING:

We are not morning people. We don't like talking to *anybody* in the morning. Except the baristas at Full City's High Street location. We like them.

They're friendly, but not *too* friendly. They call us by name on accident, even though we've never really met, officially. They remember our drinks and they are saints when weird people storm in and yell at them. Sometimes, when we're really grumpy, the combination of a soy Café Vienna, Jeff Golden on the radio and a friendly Full City barista makes (almost) everything better. Really.

BEST WAY FOR A DAILY PAPER TO CHECK OUT A NEW PUZZLE WITH A FOREIGN-SOUNDING NAME:

Wait and see how popular sudoku is in the local weekly rag.

BEST WAY TO EVALUATE ENVIRO VOTING RECORD OF STATE LAWMAKERS:

Visit www.olcv.org for the Environmental Scorecard. Note Farr got 13 percent, Barnhart

proval of George Bush from the floor of the Silva after the Eugene Symphony opened its season with the "Star Spangled Banner". So far, one unhappy letter, one approving to the *R-G* editor.

BEST WAY TO MAKE BIG BUCKS IN THE SAND AND GRAVEL BUSINESS:

Give money to politicians who love sprawl and the West Eugene Parkway, and/or get appointed to head a state gravel regulatory board.

BEST PLACE TO DRINK FOR FREE:

As repulsive as we find most students in the west university neighborhood, their weekend parties are a great way to score a free drink or two. Just arrive with a sense of humor, a "too crazy to *not* be believed" story, and a name of someone who is probably at the party ("Dan" seems to work well). The key is to be natural, and always engage anyone who approaches you with a story. If you give them a chance to question your right to party, you'll be out on your ass, so stay lively. Bonus points to any party crasher who steals a toothbrush or other toiletry.

son. We're watching, but we're missing the commentary. Why? Because *American Idol* is blaring from the other TV. "Can we, um, hear the basketball game?" we ask the bartender. He shrugs, unconcerned. He has to leave *AI* on, he says. Boss' orders. We look incredulous. We *are* incredulous. The guys next to us at the bar are incredulous. Is this guy just covering for his own obsession, or what? But we can't leave now. Next time, we're going to Pegasus. Mmm, pizza.

BEST WAY TO LOSE YOUR SELF ESTEEM IN A SPLIT SECOND:

It's Snow White's stepmother's mirror in reverse: You walk into the ladies' room in the Indigo District, and you suck in your breath (and stomach) and think, "Who's the squattest of them all?" It's like being in a wacky, evil funhouse: Suddenly, everything is much, much wider than it was mere moments before. This place didn't win "Best Singles Bar" for nothing, so give us a break, OK? Take a cue from the mirrors at Banana Republic. Damn, we look good in *everything* there.

BEST PLANNING OXYMORON:

Sustainable growth

BEST BOONDOGGLE:

The proposed West Eugene Parkway. Won't solve the traffic problems. Will bisect the West Eugene wetlands. Will cost ever-increasing jillions.

BEST UNDER-APPRECIATED PUBLIC SERVANTS:

Dear cheese stewards at the Willamette Street Market of Choice: You are loved. You're nice, and you leave us alone when we just want to browse, in search of a hunk of cheese that costs less than we make in an hour (we shan't mention those prices). And when you put little tasty bites of cheese out for us to nibble, we love you even more. We get to try new things, things we'd never otherwise think of taking home with us. That baked brie with the cherry preserves was especially nice. More, please?

BEST USES FOR EUGENE'S PARKING METERS:

Boat anchors, hitching posts, living room lamp posts, jousting poles, polo mallets, pole dancing, back scratchers, boot dryers, coat trees, reusable Christmas trees, VW bumpers, self defense, hurricane wind vanes, demolition mallets, egg timers, two-bit sex timers.

BEST WAYS TO SPEND MONEY SET ASIDE FOR A NEW COP PALACE:

Homeless shelter, city swimming pool, sensitivity and conflict resolution training for cops.

BEST WAY TO KEEP COMPETITION OUT OF CITY ATTORNEY CONTRACT BIDDING:



95, Holvey 88, Ackerman 65, Prozanski 83, Walker 92 and Morrisette 75.

BEST ALTERNATE AMATEUR ETHNOGRAPHY:

Always had a hankering to play Margaret Mead and observe a foreign, yet fascinating culture firsthand? You don't have to travel to Botswana or Sri Lanka to do this, dear friends. Just rent a plastic kayak at Alton Baker and cruise the calm estuaries of the Willamette. On the shrouded shores, hidden deep within the brush, are makeshift huts and camps, where some of Eugene's alternative livers make residence. This is a sunshine activity no doubt, so plan ahead, and you too can document the rituals of those who make homes on the shores of the mighty Willamette.

BEST POLITICAL STATEMENTS TO SHAKE UP OUR ARTISTIC SENSIBILITIES:

First, the Kronos Quartet violently screeching its way through the "Star Spangled Banner" as an encore in the Bach Festival. Lots of unhappy faces leaving the Silva. Second, the woman who shouted her love of America and her disap-

BEST EVIDENCE OF LIBERAL HYPOCRISY:

We're sure we're not the only people getting a chuckle out of cars with a "Live simply, so that others may simply live" bumper stickers. Be honest with yourself: Do you really think that driving to work is living simply? Just as food preparation isn't simple if done with a food processor, three knives, a microwave and a Dutch oven, neither is a mode of transportation that involves 16 moving valves, four cylinders and various pumps and tubes. Here's a better bumper sticker, "Live easy, and others might simply live."

BEST WAY TO SAVE MONEY ON DEVELOPMENT PLANNING:

Submit a half-assed plan to the city or county and let them spend hundreds of staff hours tweaking it for you at taxpayer expense.

BEST FLAGRANT DISREGARD FOR CUSTOMERS' DESIRES:

Max's. Thursday night. Early spring. The Ducks are losing, like they did too often last sea-