

NEEDED CHANGE

In recent years, we as a community have been witness to the shameful sight of peaceful protesters violently treated by police in riot gear, and to the chilling scene of the Whiteaker neighborhood being invaded by tanks and its residents hauled from their beds in their underwear, with bags on their heads like abused prisoners of war.

We have witnessed the “Southtowne beat-down,” the Cortez Jordan incident, the terrorizing of our hardworking immigrant community and the targeting of our communities of color. We have learned that members of the EPD sexually assaulted women residents for years with impunity. The city of Eugene is now facing 14 lawsuits stemming from sexual assaults by police officers on our residents, lawsuits that will cost us, the community, millions of dollars.

Adequate systems of accountability could have prevented these alarming events from ever happening. Unlike more than 100 communities that already have external systems for police review, Eugene has waited patiently for years for our police department to police itself, and during that time many residents of our community have suffered injustices and harm that can never be measured or repaired.

The system for external police review that Measure 20-106 will establish is desperately needed. Only through becoming more accountable to the community can our police department begin to reestablish credibility and trust among the residents it is sworn to protect and serve. Please join me in voting yes on Measure 20-106.

Maria Paladino
Eugene

BAD EXAMPLE

Two articles pertaining to housing appeared in the 10/27 *Eugene Weekly*. The first discussed the profits of home builders, using Toll Brothers as an example. The second detailed residential developments in the south hills.

Toll Brothers does not build homes in Oregon, is traded on the NYSE, and owns subsidiaries that sell everything from insurance to broadband Internet. Using Toll Brothers to gauge the profits of a local builder who constructs six homes a year is silly. By contrast, a discussion about building in the south hills is very appropriate. The Home Builders Association (HBA) of Lane County paid LCOG for a slope analysis of the remaining buildable residential lands within the Eugene-Springfield urban growth boundary. Currently, one out of every five acres of vacant residential land is on slopes greater than 25 percent. Given our restricted land supply, we need to build in the south hills. However, the HBA very much agrees that it needs to be done responsibly.

Alan Pittman stated in his article that “building costs in labor, land and materials increased comparatively little” over the last year. Mr. Pittman is wrong. The cost of both land and materials is rising substantially each year. Also, the local building market is very competitive for skilled construction workers and the amount of money they can demand has increased accordingly.

We have a land supply problem. Until we engage in a serious discussion about it, we are simply encouraging more long commutes from outlying communities.

Roxie Cuellar
Director of Government Affairs
Home Builders Assn. of Lane County

RUSHING SPEED BUMPS

More citizen involvement is needed with the Sorrel traffic calming project. Our neighborhood was promised three meetings on traffic calming devices. After the last meeting, the city decided to go ahead with speed bumps. Since the second meeting, many of us neighbors have had a chance to discuss the speed bumps, which they decided on. We as a group were looking forward to the third meeting to vote.

We were shocked to learn the city decided not to meet again because we feel they learned there was building dissent amongst the neighbors in opposition to the speed bumps. The city knew a third meeting might mean the speed bumps would be voted down. Only 23 people voted for the speed bumps.

If city government is truly for the people, then why are they in such a rush to install the speed bumps? There must be more than a thousand people who live in this neighborhood, yet the city is satisfied with the input of 23 angry people. Is the city concerned that if everyone in the neighborhood was properly informed, that the outcome of the vote would be different? Especially since 90 percent of the people have no clue what a traffic calming device is. People are not informed as to the risks of speed bumps: spinal cord injury, slow emergency response, wear on personal and commercial vehicles, motorcycle and bike accidents, etc.

Why is the city so eager to spend \$30,000 before year-end? Maybe there is a surplus of money and if it is not spent this year, they cannot ask for more next year. When is this type of wasteful spending going to end? Why doesn't the input from the whole neighborhood matter, since this will affect the whole neighborhood? Why can't the meeting be held on a Saturday when working people can attend? Ninety percent of the attendance from the last meeting were elderly and retired people, and several of those people don't even drive! A Saturday meeting will be much cheaper than the next upcoming ballot for one measure (police review). Why can't \$400 stop signs be tried first and save the taxpayer \$29,000? Why do thousands of citizens have to be punished because a few people speed?

Why can't the police enforce the traffic rules like they do after the Ducks games and post the numbers in the newspaper? What is so hard about being responsible with the taxpayers' dollars?

Nolan West
Eugene

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN

by Shannon Wheeler



FRIENDLY FIRE

Just remembered why I rarely read your paper anymore. Your readers' selection of Jeff Luers as best activist shows how misguided they are. To glorify a serial arsonist, as your paper has done, goes against what I thought were supposedly “progressive” ideals you claim to represent.

He committed a stupid and dangerous crime (I should say crimes, plural, but I'll follow your lead and brush those aside), tried to avoid taking responsibility for it, lost, and now has inexplicably become a martyr to the “progressive” set. Seems like most people who intentionally set property on fire either a) outgrow it, or b) get in trouble for it and pay the consequences.

Luers, who apparently can't find better ways for expressing his anger than torching what he doesn't like, doesn't like how the world works. Now we are supposed to feel sorry for him. I hope he never gets out of prison, because if he ever reads this letter (or has one of his followers read it to him) he will likely not agree with it, find my house, and torch it. Who cares who gets killed or what damage is done — destruction of other people's property is justified and acceptable here in Eugene. Hey, it's just freedom of expression, according to neo-progs (or to soften up his crime, let's call it “dissent,” as you have — it sounds cleaner. Or how about “friendly fire”).

My only problem now is, I don't agree with the radical right for their shoot-em-up-if-you-don't-like-'em mentality, nor do I agree with you for your slash-and-burn, avoid responsibility values. Time to look for a new party. Way to go, Eugene progressives!

Todd Stout
Eugene

BATHROOM DEBATE

To some people, this looks reasonable: Because there is a fear that heterosexual males will attack girls and women in bathrooms, transgendered persons must make sacrifices.

These arguments are predictable. Typical of any hierarchy, it's difficult to hold people on the top accountable for their effects on lower groups, so the people in the lower groups must keep busy adjusting and being inconvenienced, cleaning up after the higher

people, picking up the pieces that fall, and making things work, no matter what problems and havoc higher people create.

So, because heterosexual males-born-male (the top here) attack females, then transgendered persons (the lower group here) should carry around a special card or forgo their right to legal protection against discrimination?

These hierarchical dynamics are not limited to our current bathroom debate. Relief resources after Katrina go to the wealthier white people, while the poorer people of color are left to their own devices. The military recently announced a new sexual assault prevention program which only focuses on helping women and does not mention any programs for men.

I wish the people who are so concerned for the safety of girls and women would put their efforts into solving the real problem — the facets of our culture that create so many heterosexual males-born-male who attack females.

Charlotte Behm
Springfield

BIGGER ISSUES

Lee Warner (10/20) has a problem with anti-Semitic slurs. Well, so do I. In fact, I fully support all of the Semitic-speaking peoples — the majority of whom are Arabs. I also support the Hebrews.

Individuals have their own sensitivities to perceived oppressions; groups, hopefully, have a stronger constitution, and are not so easily bothered by truly insignificant slights. For example, I would like to think that blacks are confronting issues that are much more important than allowing themselves to get bogged down in the bias of their “loving watermelons” (hey, who doesn't love watermelons?).

I would also like to think that the Jewish community can rise up against Ariel Sharon and his even-worse-than-Bush policies. But I'm still waiting for the condemnation of Sharon's despicable wall and his government's horrible treatment of the Palestinian people from those who should know better.

The Jewish people were once known for leading the way in social change, i.e. civil rights in this country. Now their sole purpose seems to be supporting Israel.

Many of us think alike about the things