

BLOWN AWAY

We are completely blown away that developers Conner & Woolley would refuse to develop the nearly three blocks of property they already own if they cannot acquire the dozen small pieces of property they do not own.

This puts an unbelievably unfair amount of pressure on those small business owners who have managed to keep their businesses afloat in a less-than-bustling downtown Eugene. For what Conner and Woolley are essentially saying is that if they do not sell to them it is the business owners' fault that downtown redevelopment is at a standstill.

Frankly, it seems to me that Conner & Woolley are the hindrance to downtown redevelopment. In the 10 years that we have lived here (four of them in downtown) it is their property that has sat vacant, surrounded by established independent businesses that are thriving. Perhaps the city should use its eminent domain power to condemn Conner & Woolley's vacant property and find buyers who are willing to redevelop the last three blocks of prime real estate in downtown without any successful businesses.

Kimberly Harper
& William Kennedy
Eugene

WHAT IF IT FAILS?

Those who want a vibrant downtown should consider the likelihood that the proposed subsidized Whole Foods store may not prosper. If it does not prosper, Whole Foods will close the store and leave Eugene. What a financial mess and eyesore that would create. A failed, subsidized Whole Foods could be the worst thing to happen to downtown Eugene.

Here's three points that make me think Whole Foods will fail. 1) Eugene natural food buyers have shown resistance to chains — look what happened to Wild Oats. 2) Eugene residents have shown resistance to shopping downtown — look at all the vacancies. 3) The Market of Choice new stores, especially their upcoming new south store, are strong competitors, with better locations and more customer loyalty.

Subsidizing a large national chain, Whole Foods, is too risky, and the cost of failure too high. Let's tell the city "no" to subsidizing Whole Foods.

Steve M. Brown
Eugene

SMELL THE NAPALM

Memo to city council people who think "stealing" private property or running Kiva out of business for the likes of Whole-Wal-Mart-Foods is a good idea: Please quit your day jobs and go join the Carlyle Group in Iraq. Why mess around with small potatoes when the gravy train is rolling big time in the Middle East? Get the hell out of puny Eugene, go soak yourself in some real oil, and get to smell the napalm in the morning. Fulfill your dreams.

And about that WEP thing that won't die, let me tell you that you already have road maintenance issues in Eugene that you can't afford. Go out and look at the

streets. Are you kidding me? You need another roadway that you can't afford to resurface in timely manner? Our Massachusetts roads are all dying because of the Big Dig, which infused billions into the one project, but sucked the life out of every other roadway project. The overruns are killing us financially, and potholes are the major feature of every other road in the state. The feds stuck us with the overruns, and they will stick you with them too.

The real bottlenecks in west Eugene are the intersections anyway. It doesn't matter how many people from Veneta can get into west Eugene. What are they going to do when they get there? Will there be shorter or longer lines of cars at those intersections on 7th? It's a pipe dream dreamt up by the same fox guarding the Iraqi Hen House and Big Dig Hen House in Massachusetts. Federal money for local projects is not a boon — it's a curse. It creates thieves and liars and a wedge of control that they will use against you later.

Paul LeBlanc
Beverly, Mass.

BLUES BABY

I don't generally read the Letters to the Editor section of *EW*, but for some reason I happened to look through it in the 1/26 edition. I came across the note from J'nene Wade concerning her and her husband's meeting at a Back Porch Blues concert at the WOW Hall in October 1991.

I was the bass player at that time for BPB and believe it or not, I remember the show we did that night. The vibe in the hall was especially good — the crowd was mellow, but very into it. Particularly memorable was "Stormy Monday," which, for whatever reason, was so deep in the pocket that it was in our shoes.

We had a lot of really meaningful moments as a band. J'nene's mention of us in relation to herself, her husband, children and grandchildren is truly, truly an honor. It is the deepest kind of reward, and I want to extend on behalf of Whit, Sheila, Jeffrey and myself our heartfelt thanks for allowing us to play a role, however small, in your lives. Ain't nothin' but the blues, baby. Feel it in your soul.

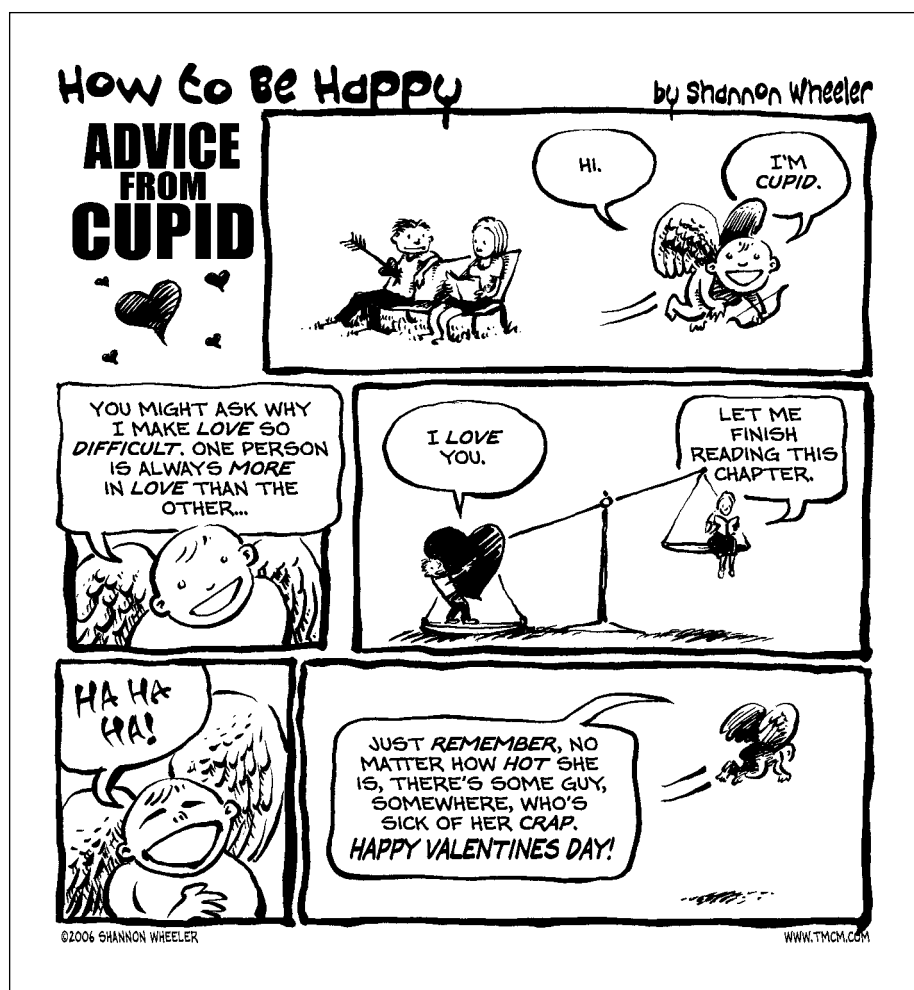
Jonathan Wei
Eugene

WAR AT HOME

Let us, as Americans, improve our democracy. Freedom is a blessing, however absolute freedom can be like absolute power: It can corrupt absolutely. On one hand we have limitless opportunity; the downside is less order, and more crime. The criminal element in this country has had a field day. They rampage through our nation's streets preying on innocents like vultures. This must stop for real progress to succeed. We need a new social contract, and a new united conscience.

At least some crime is based on poverty, despair, and lack of opportunity, but most is the result of criminals thinking they can get away with it. Let's unite and declare war on both crime and human misery.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the last four years have produced less deaths



on both sides than in just six months on our own nation's streets. Our own homegrown rapists, child molesters, inner-city gangs, racist groups, murderers and robbers represent more of a threat to us than al Qaeda terrorists could ever dream of. Let's demand action, and not let government bureaucrats use the excuse of budget concerns to prematurely release repeat violent offenders from jail. Most average citizens cannot afford electric fences and elaborate security systems for protection. Yet we pay the bulk of the taxes and we have more votes as well.

Let's create a better nation for ourselves before we attempt to revolutionize the world.

Tom Bush
Eugene

AN INSPIRATION

Last week, thousands of mourners waited for hours in freezing rain at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church and the state capitol rotunda to pay their respects to the "first lady of the civil rights movement," Coretta Scott King, who died Jan. 30. President Bush and former President Clinton led the list of dignitaries at memorial services.

Coretta Scott King was much more than a devoted wife and partner of a celebrated civil rights leader. She traveled throughout the globe on behalf of peace and nonviolence, racial and economic justice, minority rights, religious freedom, the poor and homeless, educational opportunities, nuclear disarmament and ecological sanity. She helped found dozens of organizations advocating social justice, received honorary doctorates from over 60 colleges and universities, and authored three books and a nationally syndicated column.

Coretta Scott King was also a vegan, who eschewed all products of animal suffering, including meat, dairy, eggs, leather, and cosmetics containing animal ingredients or that were tested on animals. Her strong belief in peace and nonviolence extended to the violence perpetrated against

billions of innocent, sentient animals in America's factory farms and slaughterhouses. Her passion for justice extended to the most downtrodden living beings on the planet — the animals bred, abused, and killed for food, fur, research and entertainment.

Coretta Scott King truly practiced what she preached. And for that, I salute her.

Edward Newland
Eugene

PREDATOR NATION

Back in 2001, Bush should have taken a look at the idea that nobody wins a war, and therefore those who put the most into it are likely, in the end, the biggest losers. "The end of tyranny in our world," as well as terror, can be expedited by bringing the troops home and cutting nuclear and other defense domination and empire industries back, at least until they're comparable to other countries. Become a leader in peace, harmony and sustainability industries instead.

Bush's problems didn't originate with him or his cronies, but with capitalism. They just took the bait too boldly. By capitalism I don't mean free enterprise, and it's much too simplistic to talk about replacing it with socialism. Both individual freedom and government control of major economic forces are factors in any viable culture. Capitalism is about the means by which the rich get richer, which is now far beyond any resemblance of wealth proportionate to contributions. Capitalism typically measures "productivity" by the GDP, which is actually a measure of money exchanges, the welfare of the rich and waste-fulness. Wealth can always buy political power, so there's some question if we've ever had true democracy.

When the lion lies down with the lamb, what does the lion eat?

When a nation comes to depend on predation, how can it afford peaceful times?

Dan Robinson
Eugene