

WHOLE FOODS' RECORD

I am a former Whole Foods Market employee and Alan Pittman's article on the chain's plan to build in Eugene was of great interest to me. During my sophomore year at Eastern Michigan University I worked as a cashier at the chain's Ann Arbor store. Whole Foods was a great place to work! I was paid fairly, had affordable benefits available to me and a great work atmosphere.

The population of Ann Arbor is similar to that of Eugene and the Area has supported WFM as well as a co-op and numerous small natural foods markets and restaurants for several years. Wild Oats, who owned the former Oasis Market, is WFM's biggest competitor and our local markets managed to stay afloat while they were in town.

While WFM is a corporation, they are very involved in the communities where their stores are located. They provide a great deal of education on the benefits of organic and natural foods, sell lots of local products and even pay their employees for time spent volunteering for non profits.

While I can't say I agree with the need for a \$9 million subsidy, especially to provide more parking (I never have a problem parking downtown) I don't pay taxes in Eugene so I don't get a say in the matter. However, people need to look beyond the fact that Whole Foods is a for-profit corporation and look at their track record in the communities where they are already in business.

Myndi Pierceall
Springfield

CRANK IT DOWN

Attention Eugene band members, club owners and promoters. If you want more support for our fantastic local music scene, I have two suggestions. 1) Turn the music down and invest in good sound guys; and 2) Start your shows earlier and on time.

I wake up at 6 am (OK, 6:30 after hitting the snooze button twice) and work a hard, physical and noisy job all day long. The last

thing I want to do at night is pay money to go to a show at 9 pm that actually starts at 9:45 or later (I guess I'm not the only one hitting the snooze button). And then I end up yelling at my friends in order to have a conversation.

Obviously, each venue and band is different. But in general, the overwhelming volume and disregard for punctuality end up turning some people away. Maybe you are OK losing that business; you can't (and shouldn't try to) please all the people all of the time. But if you want more support for your business and your craft, consider some simple changes: turn it down, and start on time.

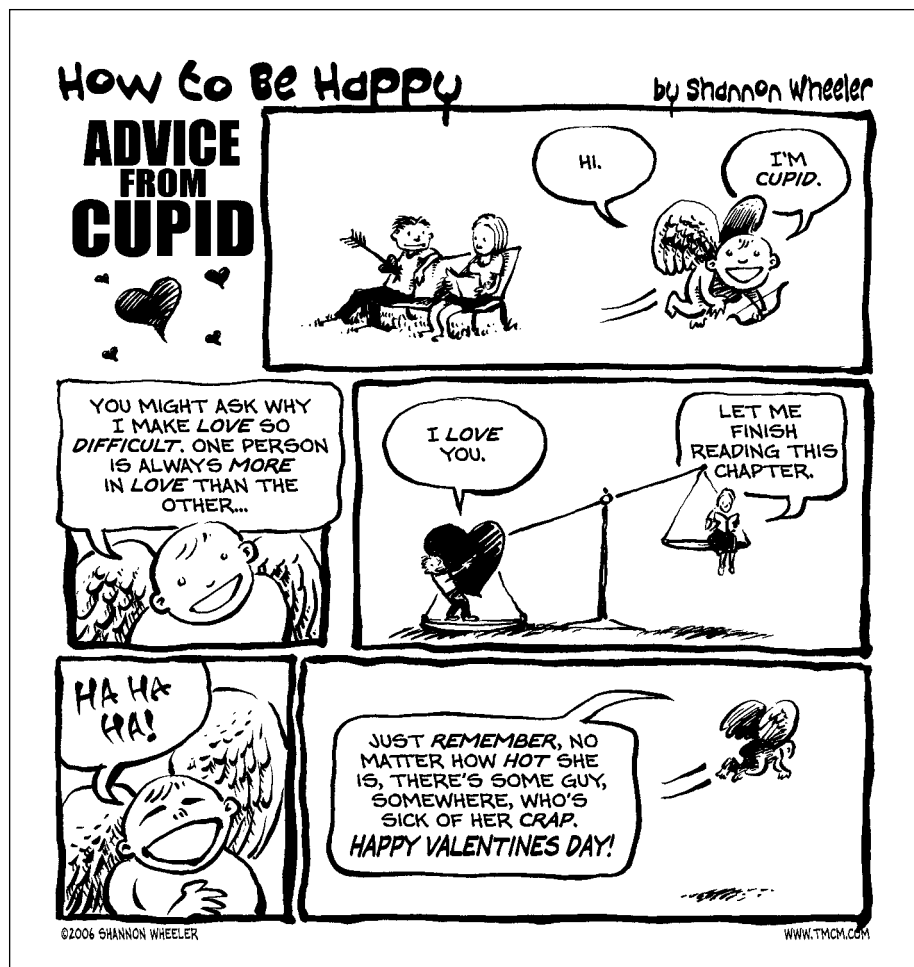
Nic Porter
Eugene

DEVELOP NATURE

"Shoot, shovel, and shut up." This is the ridiculous premise that conservatives use to justify the gutting of the Endangered Species Act. The argument goes that if we pay developers to do what they would like to do, then they are simply going to shoot an endangered species, bury it, and then keep the whole thing a secret. Please, let's provide developers with a reward just so that they won't break a cardinal law.

If you are in fact one of those *wonderful* people who would do such a thing, then I can only say that justice will eventually catch up with you, and I hope the punishment is just as swift and ruthless as your action. Just because you think you *own* the land and that provides you with the *right* to do what you damn-well please to it doesn't mean that this is, in fact, true. In fact, one never *owns* the land, and no, we cannot do what we damn-well please to it. These people don't seem to understand that every action we do has some kind of consequence, and sometimes those consequences are severe.

Why don't we just take away the last place on Earth that this species can survive, let alone prosper. No wait! I'll solve the problem: Let's just tell this hapless toad that it can



and should move someplace else. We need this land to build one more house, bridge or mall.

Scott Peterson,
Eugene

WHOLE-HEARTED FOODS

Whole Foods is one of the finest corporate citizens on the planet. They are even the nation's largest investor in wind energy credits, an undeniably green company. While I favor patronizing locally owned businesses as much as possible, Whole Foods would be a tremendous addition to our community. I think the council should proceed with the project.

Harry Norman
Eugene

CHOCOLO-HOLIC

Earlier today I went to a Campfire Girls' benefit called "A Chocolate Affair." I really didn't think I would go, mainly because of the \$15 fee just to get in the door. However, I knew that it was for a good cause and there was CHOCOLATE. Yes, I admit it — I am a chocoloholic. I forked out the \$15 and, even though it was a fairly small event, I still had a very enjoyable time. I had a few samples of chocolate treats, including some strawberries I dipped under the chocolate fondue fountain — absolutely delicious!

Thanks to Euphoria, as they had donated the chocolate for that. I could have had 10 (or more) dipped strawberries or angel food cake, but luckily my willpower is strong enough to not embarrass myself.

viewpoint

BY JULIA FOX

Merchants of Misery

Time to rise up against slavery at home and abroad.

West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin called for all coal-mining companies to shut down for safety checks after two more miners were killed in separate accidents. These deaths brought to 16 the number of mining-related fatalities in West Virginia since Jan. 2. The request from Manchin was "voluntary." The governor continued, "I am asking miners and management at every coal operation to do the right thing."

I am able to understand the meaning of this statement in the context of my own experience. I grew up in West Virginia. I returned to teach as a professor of sociology at the UO and was the director of the Oral History of Appalachia. While I lived in West Virginia, I worked with the coal miners and members of the community to struggle against all mining practices including mountaintop removal, strip and deep mining.

To speak out against the coal corporations means being subjected to death threats. Those in the front lines who are living with the daily assault of the machinery, were subjected to greater harm than those of us who lived further away or could find relative insulation with the cover of academic "status." However, even as a professor at Marshall University, I received daily calls from the coal corporation representatives and administration, saying, "Didn't you know that the university had a deal with the coal companies to never make a disparaging comment about any mining practices?" I said, "Please send me a copy of the agree-



ment in triplicate, and by the way, fuck you!"

The coal corporations are true believers and think that they have been doing the right thing. This translates into continuing to put miners at risk for the sake of profit. What this means is the continuation of business as usual as the merchants of misery destroy the mountains of West Virginia, the ecological biodiversity and persist in the chemical warfare against the people.

The public relation experts will call this economic development and the creation of jobs. These apologists include the university professors, media, public schools, religious organizations and environmental organizations. In addition, of course, most social scientists in my field of sociology. This is no different from my experience as an instructor at the UO. Many sociology professors were apologists for such corporations as Nike. Check out endowed chairs at the UO.

I do not really think Gov. Manchin meant that the miners should do the right thing by taking matters into their by own hands. Of course, he was not suggesting that the coal miners break the chains of the system of slavery. This would mean refusing to participate in suicide missions by entering the deadly mines. This would mean smashing the machines of destruction.

The miners must stop collaborating with the enemy that destroys the environment, the people living in the West Virginia and killing their own families and children.

It is choice to be free or slaves. I believe it is time to rise up and choose life, not death.

Julia Fox is a former instructor of sociology at UO. She recently competed a master's degree in special education and is working with children with disabilities.