

with getting around using only muscle power. I do my best to show up on the last Friday of every month to show the public that there are bikes sharing the road, so be careful!

I feel like it's the least thing I can do to make Eugene a safer city for my daughter to grow up in.

Robin L. Harris
Eugene

NO-BID NO-BRAINER

Dan Carol implies in his recent *EW* column (3/2) that I am advocating a false choice between local business and national retailers. While I personally prefer local, owner-operated retailers when offered a choice, I agree that no Eugenean should be prevented from voting with his or her dollars for the retailers who will thrive in Eugene.

However, we may not have that opportunity if the retail choices are determined by an interfering city political establishment. We should be allowed to choose among the competitors who succeed because they provide superior value and personal service to their customers; and that requires a level playing field where national retailers are not directly and indirectly subsidized by the city.

In the case of the Whole Foods deal, the city:

- Fast tracks the project by, for example, entering into a development agreement and awarding no-bid contracts.
- Undertakes to build a \$6.7 million dollar parking structure adjacent to the development.
- Rehabilitates storm water lines at an estimated cost of \$250,000.
- Agrees to a dubious land swap with the developer.
- Shares the cost of redirecting EWEB's steam tunnels (\$600,000).
- Shoulders the expense of street improvements to assist access to the Whole Foods store.

Our mayor and council would have done all of these things without even holding a single public hearing, but for the surprise discovery that a public hearing is required when awarding a no-bid contract to build a parking structure.

My friends in the whole foods business have competed successfully with national whole foods retailers, and with national chain grocers that sell whole foods. I have never heard them complain about it. I don't think any local whole foods store has received a nickel from the city. On the contrary, they pay their taxes without complaining, keep their profits in our local economy and contribute to the community in many other ways.

National retailers are not the real issue. The real issue is the unfairness of the city entering into a special deal with a developer to benefit a huge national retailer at the expense of all of its competitors.

Dan's fears are unfounded. He will al-

ways have plenty of national retailers where he can spend his dollars. If we let the invisible hand of the market work, we will also have local retailers to choose among as well.

Paul Nicholson
Eugene

A RAY OF SUNDANCE

Regarding the dialogue of giving a parking garage to Whole Foods grocers downtown: My thanks belongs with Sundance.

I was sick for a year with a cornucopia of symptoms: losing 20 pounds in 10 days, followed by another 20 (against my will); a prostrate swelling so much I couldn't sit down; GI system, well, very shitty. I could go on and on. I am better now.

My feeling is that these cascade of symptoms were triggered by salmonella from a case of raw almonds we purchased at a national chain food and supply wholesale warehouse, who later recalled the almonds — too late for me.

A number of times in that year, I thought I would die. However a benefit emerged; learning about healthy eating, cleansing, environmental toxins and food supply contamination.

When I was too sick to put the effort into preparing a healthy meal, the Sundance raw-food bar provided a remarkable rejuvenative, their extensive and modern section of nutritional and herbal supplements assisted in the internal cleansing necessary for my recovery. Could a national chain grocer provide this same attention to product merchandising and food quality? Perhaps.

Yet if the city gives Whole Foods a garage they should do so for Sundance, or at the least build a sky-bridge from the VLT parking lot.

Thanks again, Sundance.

David Brendah
Eugene

PIMPING TOBACCO

What are you thinking? *Are* you thinking?

I'm referring to the advertising insert in the current issue (3/2) of *EugeneWeekly*. Just because it's "additive free" and "earth-friendly" doesn't make American Spirit cigarettes any more socially or otherwise acceptable than the worst corporate brand of smokes, that is unless people can think of a use for them *other* than smoking! It's shocking to see a self-labeled progressive voice blandly pimping itself for tobacco. Not to mention the sex advertisements in the back pages that have become increasingly blatant and degrading.

With these decisions, you are effectively advertising the low regard you have for human health and dignity, not much of a progressive message to be sending your readers. Do us a favor and start charging 50 cents an issue instead of providing a "free" product that is so ethically compromised.

Jennifer Rowan
Eugene



"I believe humans get a lot done, not because we're smart, but because we have thumbs so we can make coffee."

-Flash Rosenberg

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