

fear that causes to erect barricades?

I was walking past the picket line on the 10th and stopped briefly to talk to your struck employees. My impression is that you have nothing to fear. They are good folks. The guys I met all possessed professional and personal integrity: they are skilled tradesmen and, because of their work, unseen friends, good neighbors and upstanding community members.

Did these integrities cause you to hire them in the first place? After meeting these pickets I'm willing to bet that if something untoward happened on their watch and in your parking lot they would do the right thing and stop it. After all, they are not goons, they are good people.

EWEB, I am also a rate payer. That your workers have been without a contract for six months is inexcusable. That you are quibbling over health benefits is understandable; it is a popular arena for employee employer conflict these days. But EWEB, your market is Eugene. Use something other than the standard business model for drawing your lines in the sand and, dear God/Goddess, naming your battle. Trust your employees. Deal from a position of good faith. Defy popular business models and do what is right for not just your customers but your employees too as happy employees do better work. Above all, re-evaluate your posturing and resolve the dispute to the benefit of your community.

Lowell Noennig  
Eugene

## SHINE ON

To the person who stole the light off my bicycle on July 14: May its light show you a path to generosity, love and kindness.

Paul Gordon  
Eugene

## SEARCH FOR MEANING

I think it was in the movie *Cabaret*, Liza Minnelli's character, a wildly stressed out singer, invited her boyfriend to see one of the places that were special to her. It was where trains ran by and was noisy. She showed him that if one waited until a train was really, really close, one could scream at the top of her lungs and no one would hear. She moved over and invited him to try it. It was her present to him.

I was at Sunday's Oregon Country Fair, when the realization hit me that what I was really looking for was just such a place. Not a place to relax, not a place to listen to fine music, which the fair has in abundance, but instead a place to let out my intense ... well, what she was letting out.

Her country, Germany, was about to be taken over by murderous war criminals, her life was a desperate struggle to find meaning and in her heart she knew it was all downhill from there. Lives were individual battlegrounds, wars to survive.

To paraphrase Bruce Springsteen, my country is in ruins, my eyes don't see glory but despair, and I see the future as, not a present, but a disaster. There is no "we" anymore in my country. Maybe there never was. I doubt my need to scream is an isolated one.

Hugh Massengill  
Eugene

## SPINNING COMPASS

Yesterday (7/10), I heard an interview with a U.S. military interrogator from Iraq. I was shocked, slapped in the face with alarm at the realities of which he spoke. The soldier replied in monotone yet straightforward explanations of the techniques of torture i.e. vicious dogs

snarling and barking close to the blindfolded faces of prisoners, sleep deprivation on top of forced positions held for hours, and worse, much worse.

The military interrogator spoke of his and his co-patriots' loss of their moral compass due to the deviant nature of their work, and their own isolation from friends and family. "Loss of moral compass." These words shook me and reminded me of people's loss of values through isolation and propaganda and the resulting suffering through torture of innocents throughout history including my own people's suffering in the holocaust.

Who is lowered by torture in the pursuit of information? The torturer sacrifices his own humanity. If we allow torture are we a nation that is losing our moral compass? In the terrorizing of those captives and behind every act of torture is the body of people of each nation who condone it by their silence.

A military doctor on the same show stated that suspects are more likely to lie, to say anything to stop being tortured and just as likely or more likely to give information if the interrogation is carried out with a modicum of humane treatment and dialogue.

Torture of another being is terror. Are we fighting terror or embodying it? If the U.S. tortures suspects, are we a light among nations? A beacon of freedom and justice? Or are we a fallen nation, lost without a moral compass, fallen to a place of sadistic depravity of other horror-rendering nations throughout history?

Richard Gross  
Deadwood

## READ MY SIGN

Sign, sign, everywhere there's a sign. Go this way, go that way; will you read my sign.

YARD SALE signs. You post them around town; take time to take them down. I have seen them nailed to the trees in Amazon Park.

Please don't litter. Do your duty and retrieve your signs you put out; this includes lost animals, events and etc.

Virginia Redig  
Eugene

## TURKEY OF A TAX

Voters beware. The powers that be are about to pull a fast one. The county commissioners have a nifty plan to put an income tax for individuals and businesses on the November ballot. They say it will be capped at 2 percent. Have you ever known a tax that remained capped at its original level?

*The Register-Guard* in a recent editorial said that the people pitching this proposal shouldn't bother wasting time or resources trying to reach voters who are hopelessly misinformed or unalterably opposed. Well put me down as both then I guess, because I don't want to pay an additional tax for the pleasure of seeing more resources mismanaged by those powers that be. Anyone who's a renter in this county should also know that this tax would primarily hit you, as the current proposal provides a rebate to homeowners for 75 percent of the proposed tax. No other county in Oregon has such a tax, which means those other counties somehow are able to manage their finances without resorting to an income tax.

There is a crisis in Lane County, but it's a crisis of inadequate leadership, lack of imagination and abysmal management by those elected to represent the people of this county. Voters should tell them where to stuff this turkey.

Jeff Innis  
Eugene

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