

MORE FRANKEN-FOODS COMING

I am a food service professional. I am a certified executive and master pastry chef. I am currently employed as a food and beverage director locally. I have studied nutrition, and though I do not hold a certificate in nutrition, needless to say, it is not only an interest, but an avocation. I have spent nearly 30 years in the food service business. I am passionate about both good nutrition and good food.

I have spent most of my adult life honing the skills I need to present fresh, seasonal, farm-to-table foods in both a nutritional and appealing way to enhance people's enjoyment and lives.

Last week the FDA decided that yet another "Franken-food" could be "safely" consumed. To say that I am disappointed would be a severe understatement. Once again, as in so many times in the past, the FDA has caved in to political pressures and dollars from special interests. That this is not the first time does not lessen the impact of the decision they have made. In the interest of political capital and whatever other perks they've been offered, they have offered the health and well-being of not only the people of this country, but indeed the world, to those whose only real interest is themselves and their own enrichment. Consumers have become no more than an afterthought with a wallet.

The animals tested were first generation animals and their offspring. It does not take much intellect to realize that *these* animals are entirely too expensive to end up on someone's dinner table. No, it will be their offspring for many generations, harboring not only an extremely monochromatic genealogy, but unknown mutations, diseases and possible viruses that at this point we cannot even imagine.

Further, the FDA has decided that there is no need for the public to be informed when they are eating genetically modified (which are now on our grocers' shelves, and unless we eat our own open-pollinated, organic foods, most probably in our pantries) and cloned foods. How is it that the legislators in New York in their infinite wisdom have created a law that bans trans-fats in restaurants because "people have a right to know what they are eating," and yet the FDA is ready to foist questionable foods on the world at large without so much as letting them know that what they are eating is from genetically modified and cloned plants and animals? What happened to the "right to know what we are eating"? I for one would like to make my own studied choice. How can I be expected to trust the FDA when they have so often proven that they cannot be trusted?

Outrage is almost an understatement when I look at the serious miscarriage of the mission to keep our food stream safe. From now on, I'll just figure "FDA" stands for "For Dollars Alone." The FDA should take a hard and serious look at what they are planning to do to the safety of the world's food — and so should we.

Iain L. Stuart
Springfield

STAGE HANDS MAGIC

I want to thank *EW* for their wonderful article (1/4) about the IATSE (stagehands union) members who work backstage at the Hult. I had the pleasure of working firsthand with that crew when I stage managed Willamette Rep's production of Woody Guthrie's *American Songbook* and OFAM's *Crazy for You*.

I've traveled to about half the states in our great country on tour with shows in the 1970s and 1980s — playing some of the biggest and most famous venues, and I have never met a crew as professional and dedicated as the crew we have here at the Hult. In just a relatively few hours, they build and learn the rhythm and timing of an entire show. Lights, sound, sets, costumes, props and makeup — everything you see, they touch and apply their magic.

The touring shows from New York City come in with a skeleton crew. They rely on the local union members to execute the set changes, hang and focus the lights, mix the sound, iron, stitch, sew and dress the actors.

The next time you're impressed with a show at the Hult and you see those folks, usually dressed in black, emerging from the alley between the theater and the parking lot, you might stop and say "good show." They had as much to do with giving you an exciting theater experience as the soprano who sang the lead.

Carol Horne
Eugene

BROWN EUGENE

Eugene's newest slogan — that it is the "number one green city" in the country — is a wild exaggeration that makes ecological policies more difficult to achieve. Perhaps the city government is the greenest in Lane County although Eugene emits more pollution than the other cities combined. Eugene is number one for formaldehyde (from plywood glue), particulate pollution and pollen — our air is only clean when it is raining. Amazon Creek is polluted with lawn chemicals and industrial waste, and the city may allow its headwaters to be smothered with more subdivisions.

Several other Oregon towns are ahead of Eugene. Hood River banned more big box stores, a law upheld by the Oregon Supreme Court in 2002. In contrast, Eugene is welcoming more big boxes such as Whole Foods (on Highway 99) and Lowe's (in west Eugene wetlands).

Portland has a task force to look at peak oil impacts, something Eugene has not adopted.

Even Washington, D.C., a city not known for environmental policies, now mandates that all new commercial buildings must use "green" features.

This slogan is similar to the embarrassing claim to be the "World's Greatest City of the Arts and Outdoors."

Legal prohibitions are much more effective than public relations at preventing pollution.

Calling Eugene the country's most green city is similar to Al Gore's film *An Inconvenient Truth*, which had great rhetoric yet neglected to discuss Gore's promotion of NAFTA, the WTO, energy deregulation and a huge expansion of the interstate highway system.

The inconvenient truth is that the shadow government (corporations and the military industrial complex) did not want to deal with



climate change and peak oil because the solutions are inherently decentralized and would require relaxation of centralized power control systems.

Mark Robinowitz
Eugene

ROGUE AGENCY

The Oregon Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is attempting to destroy tens of thousands of acres of Oregon's last ancient forests west of the Cascade mountains as well as the nation's largest ancient forest roadless area on BLM lands, the Zane Grey. The Zane Grey roadless area adjoins the Rogue River Wilderness in southwest Oregon.

In southern Oregon alone, the BLM has currently prepared more than 30 timber sales, with more under way, that would decimate or degrade tens of thousands of acres of ancient and native forest in the Rogue, Umpqua, Applegate and Illinois River watersheds.

This corrupt and rogue agency has been convicted by federal courts of breaking the law nearly a half dozen times in the last 36 months over its mismanagement of forest lands in western Oregon. Yet no one is punished except those who try to uphold the law.

To add insult to injury, the Oregon BLM is attempting to throw out the Northwest Forest Plan as it pertains to their 2.6 million acres in western Oregon to please their Oregon timber baron masters. This sham is being called the Western Oregon Planning Revision (WOPR; learn more at www.oregonheritageforests.org).

The only thing that may be able to stop the BLM is citizen pressure placed on Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne via Sen. Ron Wyden and Congressman Peter DeFazio. Tell them that this must be stopped to protect threatened salmon, wildlife, future wilderness and recreation and to help curb global warming.

Shannon Wilson
Eugene

FORD'S FALLACIES

As most daily papers persist in giving us lies about the supposed presidential qualities of Gerry Ford, they ignore his main role as a manipulated pawn of the Republican power structure. His pardon of Richard Nixon was

no act of courage but a blatant response to pressure of the GOP to remove some of the onus from the first in a series of terrible presidents it nominated.

Ford's unfortunate "insights" are reflected in his having placed in high positions two architects of today's criminal invasion of Iraq: Dick Cheney as his chief of staff and Donald Rumsfeld as his secretary of defense (war).

His pardon of Nixon becomes more of a travesty as it encourages gullible Americans to tolerate illegal actions of George Bush, puppet on the strings held by the same two reprobates who once guided policy for Ford.

It is essential — if our children are to have an understanding of justice that punishes law-breakers in high places — that Bush and Cheney be impeached. Then they and Rumsfeld should be extradited to be judged by the World Criminal Court in The Hague.

George Beres
Eugene

SAVAGE ADVICE

Savage Love is not exactly my idea of "words of pure wisdom." Perhaps that's a play on words. Surely this rag can find something of more value to the masses than Mr. Savage's advice to others' sexual woes and worries. It's offensive. I'd like to see it go bye-bye.

Tracy McGeehan
Eugene

WHY I DISLIKE ARSON

OK, let's play ping-pong, Randy (letters, 12/28). First, thank you for giving your point of view on my comments regarding the "eco- arsonists," but I wish you took the time to read me better; one of my first sentences mentioned my disapproving with violence, "especially in the form of arson." Maybe I should have explained more why I don't like arson: It doesn't accomplish anything, it is gratuitous and pollutes, so, in the case of the eco-arsonists, it wasn't smart, I give you that.

Now, there is a BIG difference between the eco and pro-lifers. Every time I read or heard about arson perpetrated by pro-lifers, they hope they are going to torch someone, especially the doctor and his assistants, if possible ... PRO-life, yeah right! Don't you remember the guy who tried to murder a doc-