

Chair of the Energy and Environment Committee. Another member of the committee is Springfield Rep. Terry Beyer. Beyer toured our facility so she could have a better understanding of the impact of NextStep on her constituents. Call, email, send snail mail and let your legislator know you support reuse before recycling!

Lorraine Kerwood
 Founder & executive director, NextStep Recycling

SAVE THE PLANET

Capitalism doesn't work if you don't include all of the costs in the price of goods, and we all know our vital resources are being gobbled up by corporate interests at low prices only to keep prices low. The burden of the cost's missing elements is placed on the future, and for our own future benefit, it is time to feed the future. If we as a body of laws have chosen to allow corporations to partake of our resources at unrecoverable rates, we must end up making laws taxing ourselves to recover those resources. Taxes on environmentally damaging practices seem to be an obvious answer, or how will we replenish our resources? I say it is time to tax one of the major polluters on the planet, the animal products industries. Take away an animal products based diet, and you will accomplish more for the environment than taking away oil, gas and coal combined (someone wake up Al Gore!). People can live much easier and healthier without animal products in their foods than they can live without transportation and electricity. No doubt health insurance would be cheaper too. Starting locally is one excellent way to go as the money tends to stay local, and I hear we have a majority of county commissioners who are willing to make the tax move to save us from future failure.

Greg Daugherty
 Eugene

TWO FUTURES

In January of 2009, the ex-president will return to Texas with a generous retirement package financed by American taxpayers. He and his family will have the most complete health plan available. A permanent security detail assigned to his ranch will provide a variety of incidental services. There will be funds for an office and administrative costs of the future presidential library. He will live financially worry free the rest of his life.

In January of 2009, physically and mentally wounded veterans of the tragic Iraq war will still be faced with an uncertain future for themselves and their loved ones. Medical and mental services from the Veterans' Administration will be inadequate. Those unable to work will have difficulty providing medical coverage for their families. Veterans' benefits and disability pensions will not provide a decent standard of living for their children nor provide for college educations. Many will live with pain and uncertainty the rest of their lives.

Shame on Bush! Shame on us!
 R.C. Cross
 Eugene

drawing as therapy by harvey dickson



MATH OF DESTRUCTION

Are you smarter than a fifth grader? Math is often messy. Especially for us grownups! For instance, in the war on Iraq, the U.K. medical journal *The Lancet* says there may be as many as a million Iraqis now dead due to this war.

The Department of Defense says that almost 25,000 Americans have been wounded in the war on Iraq. But this number only reflects physical wounds. I don't think anyone will be able to count the number of Americans who return home with mental wounds.

Here is a number we grownups can understand: three. This is the current average number of Americans killed every day in the war.

I've devised a very simple equation to determine when we should end this war on Iraq and bring our troops home. Think you can solve it? Grab a piece of paper, a #2 pencil and write your name on the top line. Are you ready?

First, write down today's date. Then, choose a date you would like to bring our troops home and write that down. Next, write down the total number of days between now and then. Finally, take this number and multiply it by three. You now have your answer. This is the total number of Americans you are willing to get killed before we bring our troops home. If you don't like this number, change the date you want our troops back home and solve the equation again. Repeat until you have a final answer you can accept.

George W. Bush's answer is 1,968 dead Americans. What is yours?

Rees Maxwell
 Eugene

BEN LINDER, ¡PRESENTE!

I wish to give tribute to celebrate the life of Benjamin Linder, who gave his knowledge, energy, humor and love to the people of Nicaragua.



Ben Linder in Nicaragua

Ben was a mechanical engineer from Portland who went to Nicaragua in August of 1983. There, in the remote mountain region of El Cuá-Bocay, he worked on hydroelectric projects that today provide energy to the community, schools, clinics and poor farmers.

Ben was also a very talented clown, juggler

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