

models in Europe I dislike, but this one is standard there. We don't need more governmental regulation, just more information and education. How can we recycle and reuse these plastic buggers?

Donna Carter
Eugene

PLANT PARADOX

I appreciated Rachel Foster's piece about the Native Plants and Permaculture gathering May 11-13 at Lost Valley ("Natives vs. Non-Natives," 4/12). Because of what I believe must have been a copy-editing error, readers may have been left confused by a passage in the third paragraph. To clarify: It is the School Garden Project (not permaculture, as stated in the article) that encourages gardeners to avoid planting "invasive, non-native plants." The School Garden Project also advocates the use of permaculture. Yet, as SGP executive director Sharon Blick recognized, some permaculturalists promote the planting of non-native plants that the Native Plant Society warns against. The idea for this conference was born from that paradox and apparent conflict.

Behind both permaculture and the native plant movement lies a sincere desire to undo some of the ecological damage our civilization has done and to restore health to the ecosystems we inhabit. I believe people in each movement can both teach and learn from one another. Permaculturalists have developed innovative, relatively ecologically benign methods of feeding ourselves and meeting other basic needs, while native ecologists and restorationists have studied the dynamics of natural ecosystems extensively and are perhaps better positioned to help us distinguish true ecological threats from those non-native plants that may actually benefit a native ecosystem by contributing to a less damaging human presence. The Native Plants and Permaculture conference exists to bring together these groups for mutual education and hopefully to find a "third way" in which our pooled wisdom, knowledge and experience lead to new understandings and approaches. More articles and information about these topics can be found at www.lost-valley.org/nature2007may. We hope to see many Eugeneans there!

Chris Roth
Dexter

DISSENT IS A DUTY

I would like to reply to Mr. Marty Wilde's letter, "Dissent is Dangerous," in the April 5 letters section. I would like to ask him if he would have said the same thing to the Germans who served in the military during WWII. I know for a fact that many Americans during the aftermath of that war were asking that very question, "Why didn't German soldiers question their superiors or orders that they were given?" The simple fact is that Americans were undisposed to making allowances for the same arguments that Mr. Wilde uses as logic for why soldiers must always obey orders.

I was a Marine during Vietnam, and I am also directly related to soldiers who served Germany during WWII. I know the difference between obeying wrongful and unconscionable governments that wage war for reasons that are nothing but sheer aggression. I love this country, and by that I mean the land and the ideals that we were all taught meant something. Many of those ideals seem to have been given short shrift by this coun-

try's leadership. It disappoints me to realize that I fought not for those ideals but for the ambitions of a small group of wealthy elitists. I doubt that the average German soldier could have defied his government any more than I could have and for all the same reasons, mostly fear of retribution. Had we made the decision to refuse an order, we could very well have wound up dead or gone to prison at the very least. Some of my forebears did in fact end up in concentration camps.

I admire Lt. Watada for having a mind of his own, something that was once considered an important asset to have as an American. I can only ask, "What happened to the rest of us?"

Fred Mannheim
Springfield

COMPETITION NEEDED

To all those who would like EW to drop "Savage Love": I'm not going to call you prudes or suggest you pull your heads out of certain places; my suggestion is a little more proactive. Look, what you need is a paper that doesn't run "Savage Love" but is edgier than *The Register-Guard*. Think about it: This area is large enough for two alternative papers, isn't it? Every place needs a paper doing risky investigative journalism, and there are other syndicated columns out there you could include besides "Savage Love."

Judging from the letters, there would be a readership for it. I would read it after reading *Eugene (Savage Love) Weekly*.

Wayne Wilson
Eugene

DIVESTING FROM WAR

It may not be common knowledge that with Senate Bill 1089, codified as the Oregon Human Rights and Anti-Genocide Act of 2005, our state divested its public funds from Sudan in acknowledgement of the genocide and humanitarian crisis taking place there, created and sustained by the government of Omar al Bashir, voted *Parade* magazine's "world's worst dictator." In a January 2007 annual report to the legislative assembly, it was reported that \$38 million had been reduced to identified companies in the region since the act was instituted. Although I am proud that Oregon was one of the first of fewer than 10 states to divest, and the impact meaningful, it is not enough!

There is a current movement called Fidelity Out of Sudan. Fidelity Investments currently holds \$1.2 billion in Petrochina, a Chinese oil company in the region. Given the fact that 70 to 80 percent of Sudan's oil revenues are used to purchase weapons of war, Americans with investments in Fidelity are inadvertently funding the war. Please check with your financial planners to see if your money is invested in Fidelity and consider moving it unless the investment company changes its policy. Call or email them to let them know of your concern. Divestment from Sudan is critical for applying sufficient economic pressure on the government to change their policies. The acceptance of United Nations Peacekeepers to protect civilians, access that al Bashir continues to deny, is crucial. Economic consequences may be our only hope in a country where 400,000 have already died and 2.5 million have been displaced.

The situation only worsens. Will you do what you can?

Marti Berger
Member, Lane County Darfur Coalition

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