

**ARSENIC IN THE AMAZON**

Public health and safety — two values that a community must not compromise or our children, family, friends and animals wind up at risk — especially when the compromise concerns the deadly poison of arsenic.

Our City Council may vote soon on a compromise for developing the two southeast Eugene parcels to allow about 25 houses to be built and keep the rest parkland.

Twenty-five houses might seem fine enough to appease developers, but any ground disturbance puts arsenic into the Amazon Creek. The DEQ has listed the creek as holding all the arsenic it can safely carry — any more and the deadly poison will harm our life and animals. Any development will cause more arsenic in the creek. This is a disturbing concern as kids play in our creek, and people's pets swim and drink from it.

The creek flows through the whole city and is a very important water body for Eugene. Millions of dollars have been spent to improve it, and this effort goes to waste if the water becomes unsafe. On top of poisonous waters, the city might be at risk for a Clean Water Act lawsuit if it allows this without any specific ways to mitigate the arsenic problem.

Please contact the mayor and your council representative. Urge them not to poison our waters and compromise our health and safety.

*Anne Guthrie  
Institute for Wildlife Protection  
Eugene*

**POKING FUN AT NUNS**

I was upset by the caricature of a nun on the front page of the May 31 issue of the Weekly. Although I'm confident that you meant no harm, here's why it upset me:

I am close to many Catholics, both religious and secular. Many have spoken of the deep hurt they and their families have felt associated with the anti-Catholic prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping that is pervasive and accepted in our culture. (Poking fun at nuns is one example.) Anti-Catholic bias has historical basis in the oppression of poor and working-class immigrants, many of whom have been and are currently Catholic (think: Irish, Italian, Eastern European, Latin-American). It can justify violence and has been used to divide people who would otherwise feel a natural alliance, particularly working people of different religious and cultural backgrounds.

Catholic culture is viewed as out-of-step with the dominant (more individualistic) Protestant culture, which dovetails more smoothly with capitalism. In reality, I've come to notice that many of the Catholics that I am close to have taught me much about being human. I believe that Catholics, as a religious and cultural group, have held onto many beautiful qualities and values that the dominant culture often finds in short supply, such as: warmth, generosity, cooperation, togetherness, humility, integrity and social justice.

As a paper, you can help us put our attention on what is positive about any culture, including Catholic culture, rather than unawarely contribute to ridicule and divisiveness. Let your editorial choices have an impact that unites us.

*Cameron Hubbe  
Eugene*

**CARE TO JOIN US?**

Cascadia Forest Defenders has been a part of the Eugene community since the mid 1990s, during the days of Warner Creek and the infamous "salvage rider." For over the past decade, CFD has been active in the ancient forest protection campaigns of Fall Creek, Straw Devil, Winberry, Blue River Face, Biscuit and Sten (where treesitters were shot at on multiple occasions).

Over the past year, CFD has been involved with: the Victoria's Dirty Secret campaign; pressuring timber baron Aaron Jones to stop logging in Eugene's drinking water source, the McKenzie River watershed; urging Market of Choice to stop banking with Umpqua Bank (StUmpqua), whose board of directors are the most notorious clearcutters in Oregon; working with Northwest Ecosystem Survey Team (NEST) to climb trees to find red tree vole nests, resulting in the protection of thousands of acres of Oregon's forests.

Like any all-volunteer entity, CFD has gone through many metamorphoses and evolutions over time. Currently, CFD is looking to increase our community involvement by encouraging more of Eugene to directly participate in what we're doing. We would like to formally invite anyone who has ever had the desire to empower themselves to harness their passion, positive energies and creativity to protect the forests that sustain life on this planet to be a part of CFD.

All of us at CFD urge you to attend a gathering (free food!) on the first and last Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm at the Grower's Market on 4th and Willamette. There is no limit to the amazing things we can do if we put our heads together. The timber beast is soiling itself in fear just thinking about us.

CFD will be heading to the ancient forest for an Action Camp/Skills Share in June. For more information email us at forestdefenders@riseup.net

May the forest be with you!

*Julie Anderson  
Eugene*

**TORCHED EARTH POLICY**

Regardless of whether you consider Stanislaus Meyerhoff, Kevin Tubbs, et al. to be eco-terrorists or environmental activists, isn't it ironic that they chose to set fires to protest, among other things, global warming?

*Tom Arnold  
Eugene*

**IT'S EMBARRASSING**

Alan Pittman's lead article (5/24) about "Biking to a Better Eugene" misses the point. As does the city's recent Biking and Walking Summit where vocal bicyclists dominated 95 percent of the conversation. While 40 percent of folks may ride a bike sometimes and perhaps 20 percent of them may even commute to work occasionally, probably 60 percent of those in Eugene will never ride a bike. Nearly 95 percent of residents, however, could and would walk to some of their destinations some of the time. The city should focus on pedestrian issues the way they do for these vocal bicyclists.

Safely walking along a four-block section of Acorn Park Road is dangerous example of how NOT to do it. This neighborhood off West 11th near Fred Meyer did its part to hold the urban growth boundary over the last 20 years. They "densified" nearly 40 percent



with increases in new homes, apartments, Section 8 housing and a large subsidized single-family node.

The city did not require any of those 13 developers to pay the real costs to allow these new residents to walk to the park, schools, grocery stores, retail outlets, restaurants or the nearby bike path by completing sidewalks along the unimproved Acorn Park Road. Now that the developers are gone, longtime residents are left with big increases in both pedestrian and car traffic. The funding for sidewalks now is left to the property owners' taxes.

The worst offender is the developer of the Richardson Bridge Apartments, which is subsidized Section 8 housing. The developer got a special waiver to not complete an 80-foot section of sidewalk which would connect their residents (who often walk) to the bike path right next to them! Instead they and their children walk on the roadway everywhere since the deep ditches leave no shoulder at all.

The city's lack of pedestrian focus has left 110 miles of uncompleted sidewalks in Eugene, according to a 2004 survey. "We have no money for that," is what city officials say. Of course when Hynix went in 12 years ago, they "found the money" to build 1.8 miles of seldom-used sidewalks along 18th. If the city can't pay, then let's find a mechanism to have developers pay.

Vancouver and Victoria, B.C., have sidewalks everywhere and painted crosswalks at every block. Here in "green Eugene," we have people trying to walk all the time along dangerous, no-sidewalk, no-shoulder sections of roadways like Highway 99 as it crosses over the railroad tracks near Roosevelt. It's embarrassing.

The city's sustainability initiative needs to focus on pedestrians, not just bicyclists.

*Tom Schneider  
West Eugene*

**132 WAYS**

Thanks for the cover story (5/24) on biking in and around Eugene; we need it now and forever. Biking is the best solution to our spoiled, addicted culture of style and speed, waste and pollution. So why has biking in

Eugene dropped in the last few years? Since we began bike lanes and curb ramps here in 1972-73?

The UO Community Planning Workshop has helped brainstorm 132 ways to improve biking and walking here in Lane County. The plan has priorities for developing biking and foot-travel-friendly programs, places and routes. They worked with Eugene's city advisory committee. Their published document is long and detailed, showing potentials for simplifying our bike-friendly communities over the next five years — assuming our economy keeps growing.

We already have traffic, air pollution and the madness of speeding to market for imported junk through power grids of toxic stress. What we need now is more "Food Not Lawns" and green belts around Eugene where we can use bikes to haul around our foods, herbs and tools.

*Micheal Sunanda  
Eugene*

**CAREER-DRIVEN**

In response to Brian Bogart (Viewpoint, 5/17), war is only an instrument of career politicians, no one else — not even the military or employees of military contractors want the war.

The solution is simple, but the solution can only be effective if applied on a worldwide basis — no force or group can ever hope to defeat career politicians and career bureaucrats.

*Frank Skipton  
Springfield*

**QUESTION PRIORITIES**

Having lived in New York for seven years, I am familiar with the effects of terrorism: bloodshed and collective mourning. This kind of suffering simply does not compare to incidents of property destruction targeting corporations whose policies harm individuals and the environment, incidents where not one human was injured. Terrorism is the trauma and intimidation caused by the violence of the Ku Klux Klan; it is the maiming and killing of civilians that our government is responsible for in Iraq.

We have to question our priorities when