

• **Argh. Local businesses are going under.** We mourn the loss of both Flicks & Pics, the most marvelous movie place ever, and Musique Gourmet. We always liked trying to predict which *New Yorker* cartoons Musique Gourmet owner Don Lambdin would choose to feature each week. Though we wouldn't say Lambdin was known for his warm and friendly customer service, unlike the geeky-but-kind employees of Flicks & Pics, we enjoyed chatting with him about which version to buy of, say, Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. What's the world coming to with the closing of these treasured, established businesses? If people value local businesses, they need to shop locally. We heart the Internet, but come on, people: Community gathering spots like Flicks & Pics can never be replaced, no matter how much we enjoy the "convenience" of Netflix. And as great as classical music blogs may be, they'll never give us the same experience as talking to Lambdin. What can replace either institution? Maybe J. Michael's can start carrying Lambdin's stock? Maybe the Friendly Street neighborhood can band together, buy out Flicks & Pics and keep it running? Next thing you know, some damn corporation will take over downtown and bring in big box stores. Um ... yeah. Again, argh.

• Eugene has hired a Portland firm to design its new city hall, two Portland developers to rebuild its downtown and now a Portland facilitator to involve Eugeneans in the rebuild. Hey, here's a great idea for local economic development: **Hire local people** for these multiple millions in contracts! Why do all our tax dollars have to go to pay consultants/contractors to drive or fly to Eugene to tell us what to do?

• A familiar watering hole made an appearance in the June issue of *Esquire*, which drew up a fascinating list of the Best Bars in America. Oregon's only selected bar? **Sam Bond's Garage**, about which Tom Colligan wrote, "You slowly realize you're in the family room of one of the weirdest neighborhoods in America – a shady, overgrown co-op of artists, ecoanarchists, spirit healers, drug dealers, and permanently circling vagabonds." A gorgeous picture of SB's shows it at its crowded, cozy best. Turning up on the same list as NYC's tiny, intimate Angel's Share and Seattle's Zig Zag Café is nothing to scoff at – so we'll raise our Mason jars of local beer in a toast to that.

• **One of the highlights of *Sicko***, Michael Moore's new film, is his interview with former British Parliament member Tony Benn. Moore asks: "When did this whole idea [start] that every British citizen should have a right to health care?" Benn answers: "It all began with democracy. Before we had the vote, all the power was in the hands of rich people. If you had money, you could get health care, education, look after yourself when you were old. And what democracy did was to give the poor the vote, and it moved power from the marketplace to the polling station, from the wallet to the ballot. And what people said was very simple. They said in the 1930s – we had mass unemployment, but we don't have unemployment during the war. If you could have full employment by killing Germans, why can't you have full employment by building hospitals, building schools, recruiting nurses, recruiting teachers? If you can find money to kill people, you can find money to help people."

• **PETA hates fat people.** A recent open letter from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) president Ingrid Newkirk to *Sicko* director Michael Moore targets not America's inadequate health care system but Moore's weight. "There's an elephant in the room," she writes to Moore, "and it's you." Newkirk snidely suggests PETA can help him with his "weighty health issue" and claims he can show others how to be "less reliant" on the health care system by going vegetarian. Maybe this body image issue explains PETA's incessant use of naked supermodels in their campaigns? Either Newkirk doesn't think those of us who are a little less than svelte can be healthy animal lovers or PETA hasn't forgiven Moore for that unfortunate rabbit killing scene in *Roger & Me*.

• **The responses to our 7/5 cover story** ("It's *Our Country*") and slant are coming in, and you can read them online at www.eugeneweekly.com (and contribute your own answers to the questions – What do you admire about the U.S.? What are you hopeful about? What are you doing to make the country a better place? – by emailing them to suzi@eugeneweekly.com). It's great to read about local people doing good work! We hope your stories help inspire each other as we all work to create a sane, humane community.

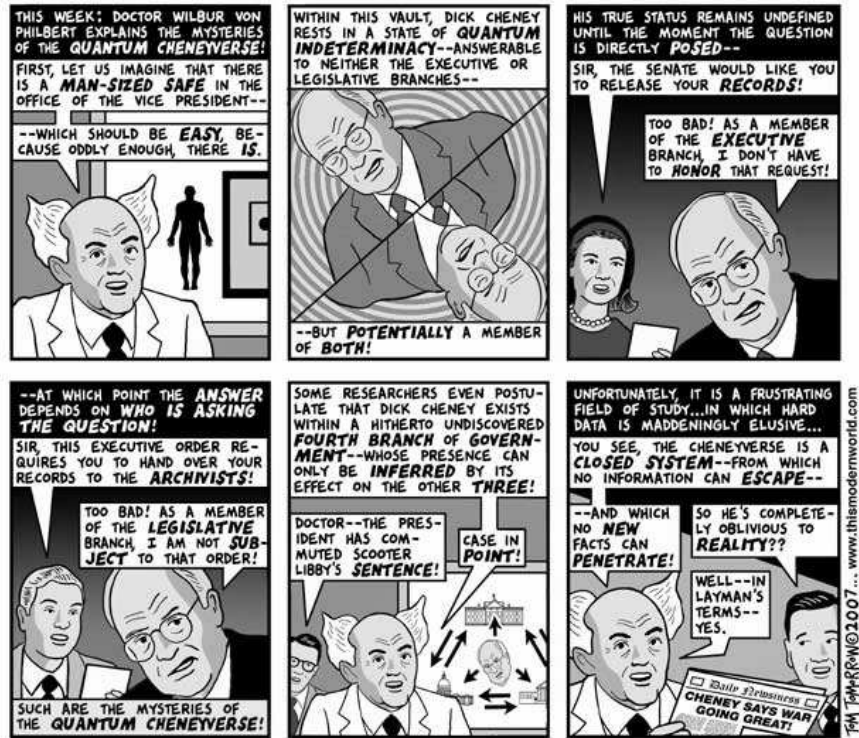
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

PDX VS. EUGENE'S FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Portland has a national reputation as the "city that works" with a booming economy, a thriving downtown, green livability, trolleys, light rail and even a cable car. Eugene has a pitted, dead downtown, sprawl, freeways and police officers who sexually assaulted women for years. What accounts for Portland's success? While Eugene vests much city power in an unelected and, critics say, unresponsive city manager, Portland has a commission form of government where elected officials are responsible and accountable for getting things done. "It's pretty causal as to why Portland is kind of unique," said Portland City Commissioner Erik Sten. With elected officials assigned to head city departments, "there's a lot of attention to second-tier issues," Sten said June 14 at the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies national conference in Portland. For example, Sten said Portland's much-admired trolley system is due to the focus of one commissioner, Charlie Hales, who pushed it through. Other examples of how empowered elected commissioners get things done include the city's green building boom, getting 1,000 of the city's chronic homeless off the street, unique public financing of elections to fight corruption and nation-leading efforts to cut global warming, according to Sten. Portland has cut its emissions of global warming gases 13 percent since 1990 and is

the only city in the nation to show a decrease. Part of the city's efforts includes promoting bicycle transportation. To protest for more biking recently, "800 people rode naked through downtown Portland. We're proud of that," Sten said.

In Eugene, a debate about reforming the city's weak-council/strong-manager form of government is percolating. On July 6, former north Eugene City Councilor Ken Tollenaar spoke to City Club calling for a club committee to study the issue. Tollenaar said he's a strong supporter of the council/manager form but, there's a "legitimate concern" that under the city's current form of government the city "can't build consensus so we can move forward" on some issues like downtown redevelopment. Tollenaar said he'd like to see the manager share more information and a better salary for the mayor to "strengthen political leadership."

After the speech, Councilor Bonny Bettman said she supports the council/manager form but would like to see reforms to "balance the power."

"In Eugene, it's the manage the council form of government," Bettman said. The system "is completely dominated by the Chamber of Commerce, *The [Register-]Guard* and the organization, the city bureaucracy."

— Alan Pittman

BUSTING THE BLM

Local activists have created a film and interactive DVD called *Boom, Bust and the BLM* to deal with Oregon's latest eco-crisis.

The current controversial move under Bush and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is the Western Oregon Plan Revisions (WOPR and pronounced "whopper") to the Northwest Forest Plan.

The acronym WOPR is the same that was used in the 1983 hit film *War Games* for the War Operation Plan Response computer that Mathew Broderick's character unwittingly triggers into planning a disastrous nuclear war.

Oregon environmentalists say the BLM's WOPR is a disaster waiting to happen as well. It will remove protections that were created under the Northwest Forest Plan for native old-