

interested in being part of the commission are asked to submit an application form before the end of the day on Friday, Sept. 7. The application form and supplemental questions are available on the city website (www.eugene-or.gov/bcc) or by calling the city manager's office at 682-5010.

Eugene's Sustainability Commission should be top notch with a high level of expertise and civic involvement, setting goals to quickly and effectively make cutting edge advances toward real sustainability. Please apply.

*Mayor Kitty Piercy
Eugene*

SPORTS CAN BE BOTH

I wanted to commend professor Jim Earl for contributing his excerpted essay (8/16) on sports in college, and for his courage in speaking truth to power. The author succeeded in doing what many great teachers do: evoking discussion by presenting points I agree with while motivating me to respond to the points to which I respectfully disagree.

I would agree that college athletics, including American football, have absorbed and now reflect many of the least redeeming cultural features of our current times: financial excess, corruption, violence, celebrity. The resources being directed to athletics, including resources that could otherwise be directed to academics, are at times obscenely disproportionate within the context of the university mission. If you doubt this, consider for a moment what \$100 million in shoe and apparel profits could accomplish if spent entirely in the classroom. Pour that

much money into your lit department, and I'm guessing we'd see your collective joy.

But can important life lessons be taught through athletics, including intercollegiate athletics? Absolutely. Training for the decathlon taught me how to manage multiple priorities. I learned teamwork while playing football, where the offensive game is wholly reliant upon synchronized execution. And as much as I'm grateful for my 20-plus years of formal education, these important life skills were taught in the context of competitive sports in ways that cannot be taught in the classroom. With all due respect for the academy, important learning does occur outside of the classroom. Sports do teach kids about life.

As one familiar enough with the Greeks to reference two of them in his essay, Jim knows better than most that Dionysius, the Greek god of wine, represents not only the intoxicating power of wine but also its social and beneficial influences. In addition, Dionysius was regarded as the promoter of civilization and peace, as (you guessed it) many of our universities aspire to be. Our modern gods, little icons on the field of play, are similarly complex, at times reflecting both the deepest and shallowest values of a culture. Is it possible that collegiate athletics offers us some of both?

*Jeff Davis
Eugene*

BIODIESEL KILLS

We used to look at those cute, clever bumper stickers that proclaimed "My Car Runs off Biodiesel" and think, "Wow, that person cares." But evidence that biodiesel demand is running up corn prices and therefore forcing poor people all over the world to compete with the sociopolitical needs of liberal conscientious consumers leads us to believe that biodiesel use kills.

Furthermore, the energy needed for the total process of creating, distributing and using biodiesel is actually more deleterious to the environment than nasty and disgusting gas.

So if you have that cute little bumper sticker proclaiming your consumer consciousness, you are actually advertising your ignorance. It's a weird irony that Hummers are better for the environment than an old biodiesel Mercedes or VW beetle with a clever bumper sticker. My only hope is that all the middle class liberal elite will do what's right: educate themselves before patting themselves on the bumper.

*William Porter
Eugene*

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- Cowboy Bill
- Science Pub
- Becoming Jane
- Best Of Ballot



Jim Earl at Autzen

I'm a more or less typical English professor, a bookish egghead not much addicted to sports. I'd rather spend Saturday afternoons in the Fall reading *War and Peace* than watching the Ducks. That's the dirty little secret I've kept to myself during the years I've worked on sports reform at the UO. Not really a big fan. Big surprise.

People always accuse me of not liking sports, and I always say, oh no, I ran track in high school. I know how pitiful that sounds, but for some reason I've always been embarrassed to confess my real thoughts about sports. Now that I'm about to retire, however, I'd like to come clean. So I'll tell you about my most embarrassing moment as a spokesman for athletic reform at Oregon...Continued, page 16.

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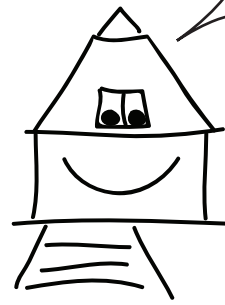
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