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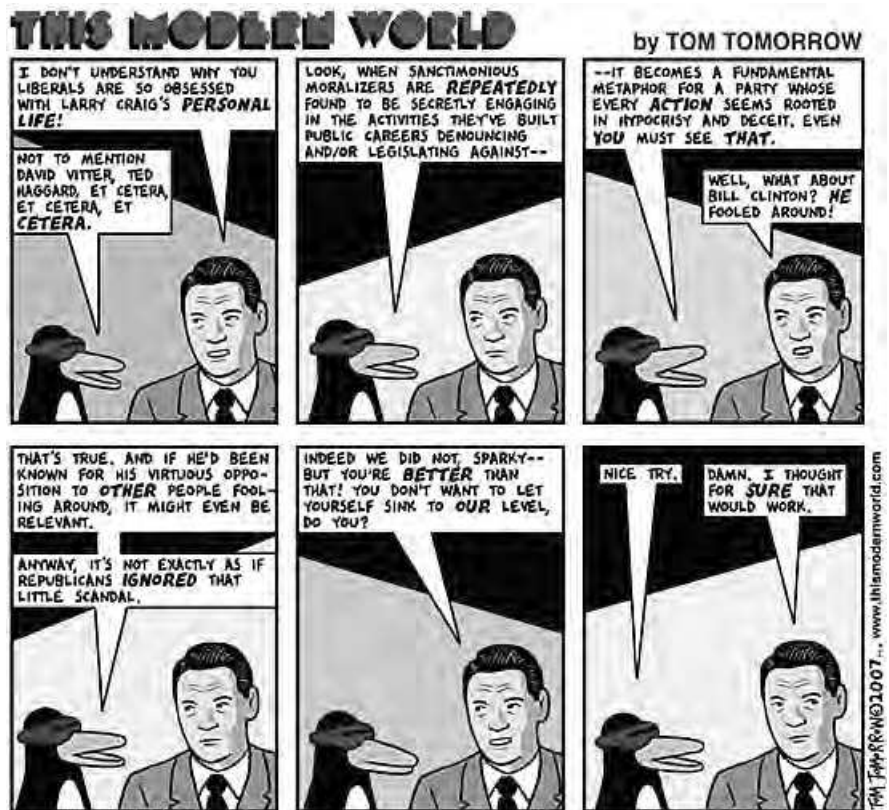
OBAMA ON A ROLL

Some Eugene residents have taken a well-traveled 1973 Volvo station wagon and turned it into an Obamamobile, inspired by Democratic presidential primary candidate Barak Obama.

Photos of the colorful Volvo have been sent to Obama campaign headquarters in hopes that the candidate will include the Eugene Celebration in his current West Coast travel plans, says Ed Pliml. Obama will reportedly be in Portland Sept. 7, and the Celebration parade is Sept. 8.

Pliml says it would be too expensive for him to enter the car in the parade but says he was told by parade officials that the car could be in the parade for free if Obama shows up. As *EW* goes to press, Pliml has not heard back from Obama's campaign staff.

Pliml owns the Volvo and organized family and friends to undertake the paint job. He and Georgia Glenn did most of the painting (Georgia gets credit for the flames) and had help from Boadicea Pliml, Katelyna Vasquez, Nayma Glenn and Jacob Glenn. The paint was provided by an anonymous donor.



news Briefs

MAYOR, SCHOOLS POPULAR

Voters in Eugene like Mayor Kitty Piercy and say improving schools should be the city's top priority, according to a May survey by a city consultant.

Sixty percent of respondents gave Piercy a favorable rating. By comparison 43 percent gave their ward's city councilor a favorable mark.

When asked what should be the city's top priority, 31 percent said improving public schools. Revitalizing downtown followed with 18 percent. Fixing roads got 17 percent and reducing crime 16 percent.

Half of respondents said Eugene is on the right track.

The rare city political survey of likely voters was conducted to gauge support for a new City Hall although it contained many other questions as well. The survey showed that while the city has made new offices a top priority, citizens haven't. Even when pushed with biased information, only 48 percent supported a \$155 million City Hall measure.

Among other interesting survey results:

- 35 percent think Eugene police are doing an "only fair" or poor job; only 5 percent give the fire department a similar low rating.
- 65 percent rate downtown as "only fair" or poor in attractiveness.
- 76 percent say road conditions are "only fair" or poor.
- 66 percent say the council is doing an

"only fair" or poor job of managing growth and development.

- 66 percent rate the council economic development work as "only fair" or poor.

- 62 percent say the council is doing an "only fair" or poor job of managing and spending tax dollars.

The survey results appear to have had little effect on the council. The city has stopped efforts to help fund local schools, and new City Hall offices remain a top priority. But voters may not be surprised to hear that 57 percent of those surveyed say the council is "only fair" or poor in responding to citizen priorities.

— Alan Pittman

CITY MEMO CONTRADICTS BALLOT TITLE

A key element of the city of Eugene's ballot title for a November vote on spending an additional \$40 million of urban renewal money to subsidize downtown developers is factually contradicted by an earlier city document.

The "summary" section of the ballot title states that "tax increment financing," otherwise known as urban renewal, "does not impose new taxes." But an April 12 memo from city staff to the Eugene mayor and council states: "Urban renewal nominally affects certain voter-approved local option levies and bonds because the affected district has less property value to levy taxes against, resulting in slightly higher tax rates."

The staff memo did not calculate how much taxes would increase to fund the proposed \$40 million urban renewal increase for developer subsidies. Most of the money will come from diverting tax revenue from schools and other government services.

Former City Councilor Paul Nicholson, owner of Paul's Bikes, has said he will appeal the ballot title. — Alan Pittman



POPE GOES GREEN

Pope Benedict XVI told an estimated 500,000 young people gathered in Loreto, Italy this weekend to take care of the Earth. "To the new generations is entrusted the future of the planet, where it is clear that development has not always been able to protect the delicate balance of nature," he said, according to the Catholic News Service (CNS).

The pontiff focused in particular on the issue of water, saying it will become a source of conflict unless it is shared equally around the world.

The CNS referred to the crowd as a "megagathering." Going green is apparently part of the "alternative path" the pope advocated for young people.

The event featured biodegradable and recyclable materials such as prayer books for the Sunday Mass made out of recycled paper. It took place in conjunction with the Catholic Church's "Save Creation Day."

Benedict's tenure as pope seems to have a bit of a green theme. The Vatican installed solar panels this summer on the auditorium where the pope holds weekly public audiences. The Holy See is also following the trend to go "carbon neutral" by planting trees in Hungary on 37 acres of land that will be renamed the "Vatican Climate Forest." — Camilla Mortensen