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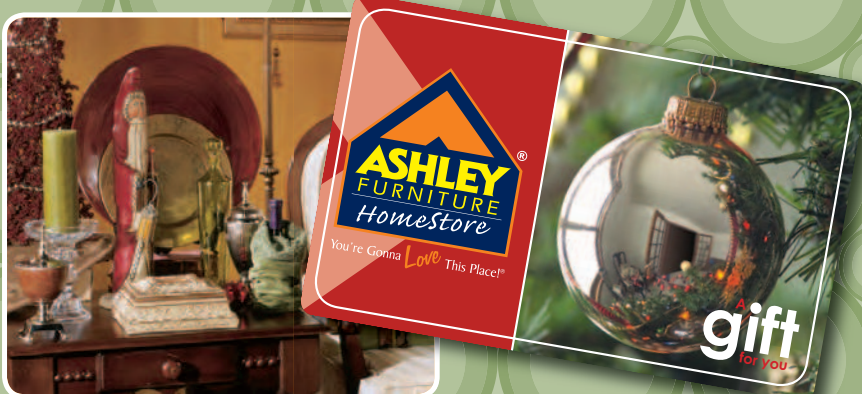
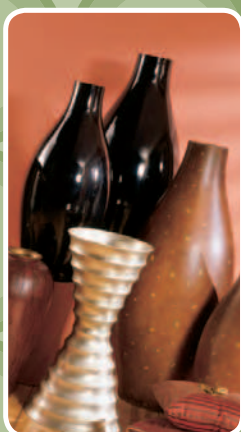
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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DOWNTOWN BYE-BYE

The naysayers have spoken, so get used to saying, "Goodbye, downtown development." The next big news will be Beam and KGW pulling out of the project.

Can't blame them. Would you put your money on the line if others are limiting the potential on your investments? Eugene then will have to be very lucky to get another opportunity like this. The word gets around in developers' circles.

The naysayers call themselves "progressives." My dictionary says: progressive = moving forward: advancing.

They are thinking progressively all right, for advancing their own profits and stifling competition. Because that's what it's all about. They only want progress in downtown if it doesn't hurt their own wallet. We can't have another grocery store or natural food store downtown. Gosh, people might choose to shop there. We can't have people go to another art movie theater; otherwise they are not forced to watch foreign movies in this old dusty place by the university. We need to keep the rents low for nonprofits in downtown. The naysayers have confused voters by misinforming them about the true costs of urban renewal. Guess where I won't set my foot in anymore: starts with K, S and B.

I still can vote with my wallet. So can you.

This development was a big chance for Eugene to make a "great" downtown. To get something "great" one has to think "great." As it is now, Eugene downtown is, mildly said, "uninspiring." It is unappealing to shoppers, potential tenants and especially tourists.

Isabell Norman
Eugene

NIKE LOAN?

Dear Phil: Is it a gift, loan or what?

Some of you may not have noticed that the proposed financing for the new UO basketball arena has funding coming from state of Oregon Bonds partially backed by interest payments from the Knight "gift."

At the recent meeting of the State Board of Higher Education a question was asked as

to whether the Knight funds could be used to pay principal or just interest on the bonds. The UO president said that the terms were yet to be worked out. Two points are relevant here. First, bonds are a much more costly form of finance since they involve interest payments over time, as well as the construction cost of the arena. Are the Knight funds only "on loan" in the sense that they cannot be used to build the arena but only to pay interest on state of Oregon bonds? Second, to the extent that state bonds are used to finance the arena there is a public subsidy going to the program because state bonds used for this purpose cannot be used for other state or university programs. The reason is because these bonds "use up" some state borrowing capacity.

If the UO is in the dire financial predicament they claim, why are they asking the state to divert borrowing capacity to the "financially independent" athletic department? There is little or no evidence that athletic programs benefit academic programs. Why the subsidy?

Robert Olsen, economist
Eugene

KARMIC HEARTBURN

I was a big fan and supporter of EW, until you decided it was humorous to post a very mean-spirited category (10/25) on the "Worst Service in Eugene." How ignorant for you to attack local businesses which happen to advertise in your publication. Does it make you feel good to know that you have now blemished the résumés of some very hard working people? And for what? Shame on you, and I hope you can still savor your next coveted tater tot without a big dose of karmic heartburn.

Jessica Dorff
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: Just a reminder that voting in the Best of Eugene readers' poll is by our readers, not our staff.

CHINA'S FAILURE

Because of local activism, editorials and