

fine art, music, dance, theater and various combinations.

*Douglas Russell, Director
Fairbanks Gallery
OSU Department of Art*

CANNON BLAST

What bothered me was not the justice of Chuck Adams' criticism of the Springfield Mayor's Show (10/18) but the fact that he had to fire off his cannon at a good-spirited community art exhibit.

I am certain he could find a subject more worthy of his enormous talent.

*Dennis Galloway
Eugene*

CUM AGAIN?

Howcum the 6th Street Grille is on 6th AVENUE? Howcum 13th is an avenue everywhere in Eugene except at Franklin, where it's a street?

Howcum there's a sign near the train station pointing us to "Amtrac"?

Howcum middle-aged guys insist on jogging in really short shorts around Amazon Park? Do they really believe they are members of the '77 Trail Blazers? BTW, guys — those are *women's* shorts you're wearing.

Howcum there's a traffic sign near the Eugene Mission at 1st and Blair that reads "No Turn Around at this Point"? Howcum some people manage to notice little annoying things around town and then get their rant published in *EW*?

Howcum?

*Glenn Leonard
Eugene*



CRIMINAL TERRITORY

I applaud Congressman DeFazio for his cover anti-war statement (11/1) but I have decided to give it more teeth [with italicized inserted words]:

I am gravely concerned about the *shitty* justification for military action in Iran and reports that the plan to attack is in advanced *rages*.

This is familiar *criminal* territory for the Bush administration.

They used the same *devious* strategies to drive us into war *crimes* in Iraq ... I do not intend to let Congress fail the American people by *authorizing criminal mass murder* a second time.

*Bob Saxton
Eugene*

Living OUT BY SALLY SHEKLOW

Free to Be Me

Reasons for giving thanks in 2007

by Sally Sheklow

Every year at this time in the month of November, I like to take stock, take some time and remember
That even though much is oppressive and hateful,
The world's full of reasons that I should be grateful.

I may not have wealth stashed away in Swiss banks,
But I still have a lot for which I can give thanks:
My wife and my friends and my health, just for starters
And also my freedom from girdles and garters.

I'm thankful I'm free to be out as a dyke
And to dress just as butch (or as femme) as I like.
I'm glad I am me, and I'm thankful because it
Feels really good to be out of the closet.

I'm thankful for PRIDE day, and queer celebrations
And all of our national organizations
Like PFLAG and GLAAD and the ACLU,
And locally Basic Rights Oregon, too.

I know it's important to stop and revere
The shoulders I stand on and who got me here —
My feminist forebears, that suffragist force,
Who won me the vote and the right to divorce.

Our heroes at Stonewall, those drag queens and dykes
In dresses and heels and on big motor bikes,
Who fought the police in their wagons and cars
In the riot protesting the raiding of bars.

To all who have struggled and joined in the fights
For hate crimes protection and immigrant rights,
Who've called on the Congress with emails and notes
And sent in their money and spoken with votes.

I'd like to say thanks for our U.S. democracy,
Except for the fraud and the blatant hypocrisy.
The Christian far right and the family Bush
Are running a scam that's a pain in the tush.

Health care's in shambles and millions are sick
And nobody's fixing the mess very quick.

Our billions on war are not finding the answer
To homelessness, AIDS or ovarian cancer.

While bigots in power continue the plague,
Like hypocrites Haggart and Senator Craig,
Our lawmakers cave to the war-machine spenders
And won't pass a law to protect our transgenders.



The president says he is earnestly trying
To make it all better but oh, how he's lying!
Yes, lying and stealing and cheating us all
For reasons Gonzales just couldn't recall.

I'm sick of the war and of all the bad news
That makes me disheartened and gives me the blues.
I'm stressed about bigotry, war and injustice,
And cannabis laws that are set up to bust us.

I fret over apathy, gloom and inaction
And how our good minds are so prone to distraction.
We let media images mangle and warp us
And barely say boo over habeas corpus.

As if losing freedom could be the solution
To threats to our country or our Constitution,
It's crazy, it's nuts, so much violence and fear
Taking away what we used to hold dear.

But here I am focused on all that is wrong
So I need to remember my GOOD list is long
Despite the intolerance, greed and exclusion,
Sweet blessings abound in abundant profusion.

I've plenty to eat and clean water to drink
And an outlet to write and to say what I think.
I'm more or less free to speak out with impunity
Thanks to my friends and supportive community.

Tune in and refocus, I tell myself now,
And watch what goes on without having a cow.
Try to stay open, serene and aware,
Change what you can; for the rest, say a prayer.

So even though much is oppressive and hateful,
I still have a lot for which I can be grateful.
That's why I take time to take stock and remember
Each year at this time in the month of November.

Award-winning writer Sally Sheklow is grateful Eugene Weekly has been running her column since 1999.

NEW TRIALS, ANYONE?

Recently writers have spoken of the disastrous war in Iraq. I must take the opposite position and say that this war is going exactly as planned. This war is not about freedom for Iraq or the battle against terrorism but is a smokescreen. With public attention being focused hysterically on the "war on terror" by the Republican leadership and right wing media, no one is watching as corporate America rewrites environmental, tax, regulatory, labor and oversight laws, shifting the flow of capital to fill fewer and fewer pockets. The deck is stacked ever more strongly against working families. How greedy are these people?

One need but follow the profits of this war to discover whether this nation's policies financially benefit one political party or one class. Look at the no-bid contracts given to Bush and Cheney cronies. Look at the billions of dollars "missing" in the corrupt quagmire. And, by invading and occupying a nation of feuding tribes, Bush has ensured years of war and profit taking for his corporate masters. Dollars über alles!

As food for thought, I offer the following: Hess, Goering, and those other German officials convicted and executed during the Nuremberg trials were not convicted of being the leaders of the Nazi party or of involvement in the millions of civilian deaths surrounding the Holocaust and the occupation of Europe. Rather they were convicted of and executed for "planning and waging an aggressive war." New trials, anyone?

*Kenneth A. Wilson
Springfield*

DENIAL = NO EXIT

There is no exit strategy for Iraq and never will be as the real mission continues to be geopolitical presence and domination of gas and oil regions. Iran and the entire Middle East fall into this category as policy since the days of Henry Kissinger and before.

Our gilded age dynasty rulers and their minions are not true leaders and only speak for their narrow interests. Rhetorical manipulations of propaganda, superstition and bold-faced lies hold us and our ecosystems all hostage as one more expendable resource for a massively unstable lifestyle.

Rule by denial and false claims of god, patriotism and freedom (as roughshod exploitation) are cooking the golden goose for us all. As petro-based infrastructure collapses to massive environmental calamity and general socio-economic poverty, privatized neofeudalism and neofascism are steadily filling the tragic gaps.

Leave the competition and wars of short-term domination. Only honest insight and common resolution can create the will and vision of long-term partnership to truly work together for real change.

A rising tide of basic truth will either guide or kill us as a civilization and life form.

*Ralph Penunuri
Corvallis*

POLITICS OF POPPIES

In 2000, Afghanistan's production of the global opium/heroin supply was 70 percent. In 2005, it was 87 percent; in 2006, 92 percent.

This steady increase in annual poppy harvests has occurred despite the country's occupation by U.S. military and coalition forces since 2001. In fact, these harvests can be seen