

can get away with spending much of the article discussing how little effort she put into researching the subject of the article. She discusses the lack of an up-to-date MySpace page, which I find intriguing, since I happen to be a MySpace "friend" of the band. Maybe you should have tried clicking on one or two of the other dozen or so MySpace profiles with the display name of "The Gourds." To save you some time, here's their profile address: www.myspace.com/thegourdstx Strangely enough, this one has listed the show they played in Eugene on Feb. 16! And songs from their new album!

I'm making this point because I am routinely disappointed in the lack of interest *EW* appears to display towards roots and Americana music. Another example that comes to mind is from a year or so ago in a disrespectful review of an amazing Portland old-timey band — Foghorn String Band. I can understand if the reviewer doesn't like the music, but in this case, they began the article by saying something along the lines of "I don't usually listen to country music." Such a comment is totally irrelevant and displays general ignorance of the various genres of roots music. And one really doesn't need to know much or research much to learn the difference between modern country music and old-timey string band music. The author then made it worse by justifying his ability to write the review with something like "but I have friends that listen to country."

Another reason I highlight these two examples is that the shows that these two reviews directed their readers to were two of the best shows I've seen in my four years living in Eugene.

Sean Bemis
Eugene

THE 400

Recently a TV news story said it took four hours to respond to the shooting death of a dog with a child nearby as there were only three officers covering all of Lane County because the Sheriff's Office (SO) is so understaffed. The SO has about 400 employees!

The news report should have been asking, "Why, on a weekday, were there only three officers on duty?" Just where are those 400 employees allocated? How many management positions can be cut and the money be used for additional employees that actually provide services to Lane County residents? Instead we're supposed to just conclude that the SO needs more funds for more officers. It's the same every year. The sky is falling, the sky is falling!

For that matter, just how "top heavy" are

all county departments? Do we really need all this management when we are being told that either funding will be cut for other essential services or they need us to pay more taxes?

This brainwashing attempt is just a prelude to what we will be subjected to over the next few months as the county will be asking us yet again for additional tax revenues. They need to start by streamlining county department structures, removing the top-heavy status quo and actually removing employees whose job performance is substandard, not to mention showing us that they are good stewards of the tax money we do give them.

Tamara Barnes
Eugene

VOICING EMOTIONS

I attended the play *Telling* at the Veterans Memorial Hall on Feb. 8. The play drew me like a huge magnet, and I want to thank *EW* for putting the story on the front page (2/7).

I want to thank the veterans for speaking out, the director and writer for a unique play experience and the Vet's Club for donating the time and space for the play to be produced.

War is so unreal that is it a great, connecting, awesome experience to see, hear and meet people who have been to Iraq. The more I hear their stories, the more I can reality check my own opinions.

I had my usual feelings of dismay about how young the people are who go to war, about how grueling their military lives are, how old and worn out a story it is that we must have wars.

I felt such kinship with the storytellers, how it feels to put voice to deep emotion, how there are no words to adequately express the complex feelings that go with forced actions towards goals maybe one's own, maybe partly the unexplained goals of someone else. How many guts it takes to be public with who you are. Bravo.

The best part for me was after the show when I asked one of the vets, "How is the transition going?" (back to civilian life), and he responded "It's a long process; it's like comparing apples to oranges. There's no similarities, but it's all *experience*, life experience."

If we can all view the intense, sometimes horrific, always human experiences of our lives this way, we can live. We can speak out, we can embrace our lives and our humanity and we can survive. Collectors of experience, we can make it back or forward without undue harm. Thank you again, veterans, and welcome home.

Kathleen Hogan
Eugene



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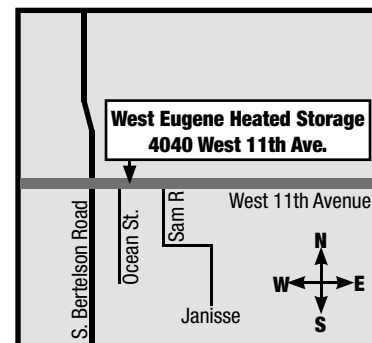
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