

is needed: a campaign against factory farming. Upton Sinclair made one hell of an impact with *The Jungle*, and he never advocated banning meat.

Matthew Calzia
Eugene

CRIME OR ILLNESS?

On July 16, 2008, PFC James Burmeister was sentenced to six months jail time and a bad conduct discharge. He is now ineligible for VA health care for his severe PTSD and traumatic brain injury as a result of a bomb exploding next to him. His only crime was refusing to kill innocent people and trying to speak the truth of what is happening in Iraq. This is in many ways a death sentence. Many veterans with free access to medical care for PTSD and brain injuries still end up on the street or hurting themselves to stop the pain. James Burmeister and thousands of veterans like him have had their lives ripped apart and have no way to even try and put them back together again.

Christopher Hughes
Eugene

POKES AT PITTMAN

The recent attacks on Alan Pitman by Brenda Monroe and Dave Taube — epistolary versions of hiding the ugly truth of the downtown pit from the delicate sensibilities of out-of-town visitors — were unjustified and mean-spirited (7/17 letters).

As a former high school, college and university writing teacher for 40 years, I have long admired Pittman's straightforward style, his passionate sense of justice, his terse clarity and his fearless willingness to take on the sacred cows of the wealthy and powerful in the Eugene area.

His writing has consistently filled the gap left in community consciousness when Don Bishoff retired from *The Register-Guard* a few years ago and no longer skewered the deservingly skewerable in his admirable columns.

I send at least three cheers from the coast to Alan — and an exhortation to keep up the good work.

Jerome Garger
Yachats

WHO'S SCREWED?

Last weekend a group of seven of us from Eugene went to Washington to climb Mount Rainier. When we returned to our car, which happened to be a Suburban towing a trailer we needed to haul all of our climbing gear, we realized we had been "pegged." For those of you that are not aware, pegging is when someone attempts to stick it to SUV drivers by inserting screws into the tires and therefore destroying them. Luckily we had noticed this before driving off.

I am curious if the perpetrator had thought of the following before attempting this act of environmental heroism:

- It would take four Priuses to transport seven climbers and their gear, which would use more gas and have a larger impact on the environment than the one Suburban that we used. In fact, most of us ride bikes for our normal transportation so it's not like we are out wasting gas for fun.

- The tire was ruined and we now get to buy a new tire. This adds money to the rubber industry and also creates more waste since the old tire is now useless and will most likely end up in a landfill.

- What if we hadn't noticed the screw before taking off? The tire would have shredded on the first corner, which could have led to all sorts of terrible situations. Your screw could have removed seven environmentally conscious people from this planet. Way to help your cause.

I commend you for caring, but I am sure there are better ways to go about this without actually causing harm to the planet and potential harm to people. Next time you want to make a change maybe you should do something constructive rather than screwing people you know nothing about.

Steve Kuhn
Eugene

HARD EVIDENCE

Interesting essay from Sally Sheklow that you published (7/17 "Off the Rag"). If I didn't know better I would think that she is serving up hard evidence for the anti-gay, anti-sex education lobby to grab hold of and use to scare parents.

For example Sheklow writes, "Thanks to the kindly dyke who taught my college health class ... I learned lots of things about my body ... that led me quite naturally into the world of woman-loving-woman."

This could too easily be interpreted as 1) This is why we should keep gays out of the classroom, and 2) This is why we should teach abstinence-only sex ed and stay away from all that modern touchy-feely stuff. I mean, we don't want our kids led quite naturally into the world of woman-loving-woman!

Kevin O'Brien
Eugene

THINKING REQUIRED

Instead of raising taxes and cutting needed programs like the OSU Extension Service, let's find ways to conserve energy and resources.

Rather than pit environmentalists against economists, let's work together to help solve both problems. City, county, state and federal budgets are being cut all over the U.S. There are many ways to help save money, lower pollution and our dependence on foreign oil through conservation.

I have a few ideas that I have been playing around with in my head for some time. School buses could consolidate the bus stops and save time and gas for the buses as well as all of us who are stuck behind them. I am frequently behind a school bus in the morning and there are about six stops in a one-mile stretch. This is for elementary age kids on up to high school students. It might help with the child obesity problem as well. Organized sports could offer "neighborhood only" games so travel is cut down. (Don't get me started on the UO's new sports arena.)

Think of all the energy saved if LED motion lights were installed for streetlights and elsewhere. Let's lower the speed limit to 55 mph. Cash bonuses could be given to



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