

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

the police and downtown business owners are skewed.

Violent crimes certainly require more investigating than do possession of marijuana charges. Is that why the police would rather hassle the pothead than the one actually causing a disturbance, even with the already limited budget?

*Bert Vaughn
Eugene*

DUE PROCESS?

We should not be shocked that our City Council, with its recent "exclusion zone" vote, willfully trashed the due process clause of our Constitution. They are simply using the model of the Bush Crime Syndicate, which has repeatedly raped, abused, tortured or ignored the Constitution of our country.

As a frequent volunteer in the exclusion zone, I am very aware what staff, patrons and neighbors have to put up with from certain individuals. I sympathize with those who have had windows broken, threats and crap at their front door in the morning.

Hopefully some local lawyers or organizations will seek injunctions or stays, as needed, to prevent a single person who has not been convicted of a crime from having their rights violated by an overzealous City Council hell-bent on ripping another hole in the Constitution.

The above is significant and brings into serious doubt the fitness of the majority to govern our city. On top of above issues, did they deal with where so called "unwanted or excluded" will stay or hang out? Hell no! We should not allow those without backbone to govern us. This council mirrors our useless Congress, nobody willing to make gut-wrenching decisions. In this case our council said, "Oh, hell, the 'excluded' can go to Whiteaker, Springfield, the river, I really don't care, I want to keep my seat for another term."

Unlike the Bush Syndicate, which goes unpunished, those who knowingly voted to pass an unconstitutional ordinance should be removed from office and face possible criminal charges as well as civil lawsuits. Let the citizens of Eugene teach our Congress a civics lesson, and start the recall of those responsible for spitting on the Constitution.

*Tom Wilt
Eugene*

JUST STAY INDOORS

Well, it's that time of year again: the time when you can drive between Portland to Eugene and witness the gifts given to the people of Oregon by the Grass Seed Council's 10 percent of corporate farmers who still refuse to bale, citing financial reasons they refuse to stop burning their fields.

These gifts come in the form of a type of mushroom cloud that permeates the air with pollution, which is very detrimental to the health of our children and older residents who suffer from asthma. Now to protect their health, the great concern that is shown is that the burning is monitored by Experts, who are hired to perform this task. If the pollutants are of sufficient quantity in the air, why, The Experts tell everyone to just stay indoors. That's like saying corporate goons are running through your city clubbing anyone they see, so stay inside and you will not be hurt. Whether the pollution lasts for a day or a week, or a month for that

matter, just stay inside. So if you would like to stay healthy, why stay indoors this August. Nice.

Eugene is especially gifted by being at the end of the valley, so the pollutants can hang over the city longer. Let's promote Eugene to be the site of the next Olympic games, especially if timed to coincide with the burning. I know we can compete with Beijing for pollution. I mean, it's all about money anyway, so let's join the rest of the world and sell off our citizens' health for a few coins.

*Gene Okins
Eugene*

MISLEADING STATS?

In endorsing bike helmets, Karen Kennedy (8/7) writes, "Like motorcycles, we share the roads with cars and trucks, and thus share the same hazards." But there's a vast difference between bicycles and motorcycles, partly because motorcycles can keep up with cars and don't "share" the road (or the hazards) as Kennedy says. Bikes, however, *do* share the road with cars, though less dangerously where bike lanes exist than where they don't. There is also a much wider skills range for bicyclists compared with motorcyclists, primarily due to motorcycle licensing requirements (and often mandatory safety programs), including a minimum age.

Kennedy reports that "750 of the 767 bicyclists killed were not wearing helmets," but might they have died from their injuries even if helmets had been worn? We are not told, so we must be skeptical about her use of statistics. And she says she had a bike accident in Portland recently but fails to say whether it was her fault. While she's glad she wore a helmet, she doesn't say whether she could have prevented the accident in the first place.

I've traveled thousand of miles on motorcycles, and I always wear a helmet (even in my native Illinois, where there's no helmet law). But I will not wear a bicycle helmet despite (or maybe because of) my having biked thousands of miles, including hundreds of miles on busy streets in Chicago and other cities. Too many bicyclists fail to do these two things: 1) make yourself as visible as possible so it's unlikely you'll be hit, and 2) be vigilant to looking for hazards, such as car doors about to open into your path.

So perhaps bicyclists should be required to take safety courses and also to be licensed?

Think about it!

*Charles Whitman
Eugene*

CHOICE OF WARS

Paul Prenskey's Aug. 7 letter worried that the Bush regime might declare martial law if Obama is selected in November.

However, we have been under partial martial law since November 22, 1963, the coup d'etat against President Kennedy (he was removed from office after he turned against the Cold War). Eisenhower's 1961 warning about the "military industrial complex" is now our reality.

Obama wants to increase troops in Afghanistan, to maintain Bush's military bases in Iraq and would be a better president than McCain to sell increased intervention in West African oil fields. Obama's advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski helped create the "Rapid Deployment Force," the predecessor

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