

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Ken Beeson
Project Manager
EWEB Roosevelt Project

FOR GOODNESS' SAKE

Kudos to Alex Young and peers at the Sheldon High School (letters,12/11). They get it — doing good for goodness' sake provides happiness to both giver and recipient. They're putting into practice the empathy of an evolved species. I hope more clubs like the "Acts of Kindness Club" spring up in high schools all over the country. It might be that those who call security on you are the same ones who could never conceive of do-gooding without expecting something back, be that remuneration or salvation. Pity them.

Aaron Rosenberg
Eugene

MIFFED READER

Reading your feature commentary ("Bang Bang Shoot Shoot," 12/4) left me with one burning question. How much time was spent researching this piece? As an Obama voting, latte-loving, new gun owner I must say: "It's the economy, stupid!" Times of economic woe leave individuals, myself included, concerned with increasing crime and civil disorder. Papers across the nation have been reporting on this phenomena since far before the election. Yet your fine reporter chose not to touch on this issue in favor of belittling and stereotyping gun-owners as illiterate Billy Bobs and Ellie Maes. Worse still was the implication that gun owners are racist, sprinkled throughout this article with about as much cogent articulation as Palin's foreign policy experience. Pejorative articles such as "Bang Bang, Shoot Shoot" work to divide us and spread hatred. They are truly ulterior to Obama's message of unity and moderation. I'm highly disappointed.

Emily Millar
Eugene

NOT MAGIC WANDS

I was pleased by the article on Obama the NRA and the strange fears created by his election. Even though I myself am the proud owner of a handgun and rifles and a supporter of the right to own and carry guns, I have never really agreed with the NRA and its rhetoric. During the election I read some of their anti-Obama pamphlets and was amazed at how ridiculously overblown the fear of Obama was. It was propaganda to prey on the ignorant. I am very concerned by the amount of fear that the election of Barack Obama has created, especially the number of people who have told me that his election is a sign of the end of days. Religious hysteria and ignorance scare me more than guns ever will.

When I purchased my handgun a couple of years ago, I was amazed and a little shocked at how easy it was. I went to a local gun shop, and in about an hour and about five hundred dollars later I had purchased a Glock 17. There was no waiting period, only a few forms and a quick phone call background check. I had a new responsibility, I had not purchased a new toy, I had brought home a very efficient and well designed tool for killing people, that, incidentally, was very fun to practice with. I

hope to god I never have to use it to defend myself, but I wanted to have the option to be able to in an extreme circumstance. I didn't buy my gun because I was afraid, and I did not buy it because I thought it would make me feel more powerful. I believe that gun ownership is an extreme responsibility that has been taken for granted by the NRA, who fear any form of restriction threatens the right to bear arms. Handguns are not magic wands we can wave to make problems and people go away, and they are not toys. We need responsible and well planned gun registration and licensing laws regarding their ownership. And we do not need to defend the right to keep and bear arms on a platform of fear and ignorance.

Daniel Ehrich
Eugene

CHRIST PREACHED PEACE

When politics and religion are combined into one irrational whole, we get a frenzied orgy of idiocy and recklessness as the Bushies and the bin Ladens have so strikingly proved. The bad news is that U.S. society is screwed up every which way, and the good news is that we are capable of evolving toward being less nasty and less brainwashed and smarter.

The U.S. is mostly a Christian nation, and Christ preached peace, and the U.S. is the world's most warmongering nation; therefore, U.S. Christianity is a total and complete failure or a total and complete hypocrisy or has been completely subverted by warmongering U.S. CEO grossness. Wars are caused by greed, nationalism, dictators, overpopulation and religion, all of which are mostly an obsolete crock of shit.

Bob Saxton
Eugene

TONE DEAF

I take issue with a great deal of Rick Levin's recent commentary "Bang Bang Shoot Shoot." Aside from many of his conclusions, it is primarily the tone that is exasperating. As the editor of the Northwest's only independent gun magazine, *American Gun Culture Report*, I have discovered gun owners can hardly be so easily dismissed as uneducated rednecks who can only comprehend NRA-style black and white platitudes.

Sadly, the NRA has become the primary facade of the gun rights movement, but American gun owners are a vast enough group that such a collection of regressive minded conservatives is hardly representative. While Levin apparently took little effort to contact them, there are countless national groups such as the Pink Pistols, Home Alive and Jews for the Preservation of Firearm Ownership, to list just a few, who advocate for self-defense issues on behalf of historically vulnerable groups such as homosexuals, women and Jews. My own magazine has published articles by anarchists, libertarians, socialists, queers, hippies and punks.

I am an Obama voter who bought my first gun from a deep sense of social responsibility and can intellectually defend my decision. There is much work to be done combating the tragic stereotypes unfairly perpetuated in Levin's article. Thankfully the diversity of American gun owners ensures I won't be alone.

Ross Eliot
Portland

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