

Meet Your Farmer

and change your life!

Today I had the pleasure of delivering a truckload of firewood to a neighbor. I gathered the wood for free and at the same time helped a friend thin a long neglected Christmas tree farm.



The wood was a trade/barter for the two Thanksgiving turkeys that I had received last November. My farmer neighbor raises true free range heritage turkeys. Blue Bourbons are a "dying breed." They are not as "cost effective" as the turkeys bread with breasts so enlarged their legs break. Corporate factory farmers want to butcher birds as young as possible, so they are bred to grow fast. A percentage of the birds grow so fast their hearts burst before they are butchered. Blue Bourbons are normally proportioned and can fly, and the meat tastes incredible!

I know my farmer and I saw my turkey in the field as a chick and later as an adolescent and of course on the day it was butchered. My farmer instituted a "pluck your own" policy. I welcome the honesty of being an omnivore involved in my "food chain." In fact, plucking day became a soulful community event for the 50 or so who came to get their turkeys. Whole families came – some clad head to toe in plastic gear and rubber boots. Some brought homemade soup, bread, cheese and sausage to share. Children could see the life blood of the turkeys, shed to nourish their lives. Those who had plucked before shepherded those of us who had never seen their food with feathers on.

In this day of anonymous people producing our "factory farmed," frequent flyer, fossil fueled food (Americans' average bite of food has traveled 1,500 miles), it was amazing to experience the integrity of participating in the local sustainable "solar" harvest of our Thanksgiving dinner.

Research tells us that Americans have become increasingly less happy since the 1950s. At any given time, 46 percent of Americans take (legal) mood-altering pharmaceuticals. Our children are overweight but undernourished, entitled to "collect 'em all" consumption, and some are so angry they go to school and kill their peers. We live longer but are less healthy and now one in three of us will get cancer – some multiple times. Global warming, climate change, economic and environmental devastation – it seems the writing is on the wall: change or die!

I want to invite you to a life changing celebration that I know can result in a happier, healthier, more sustainable life! April 21 will be the 10th anniversary celebration of "That's My Farmer." You can meet the 13 local organic community supported agriculture (CSA) farmers in the Eugene area, support "shares" of food for low income families, win farmer-raised or grown door prizes, sing songs about food and justice and hobnob with Mayor Piercy and members of the 16 faith community coalition that sponsor the event. I predict the organic homemade ice cream (at the very end of the program) will, for at least a few moments increase your immediate happiness greatly!

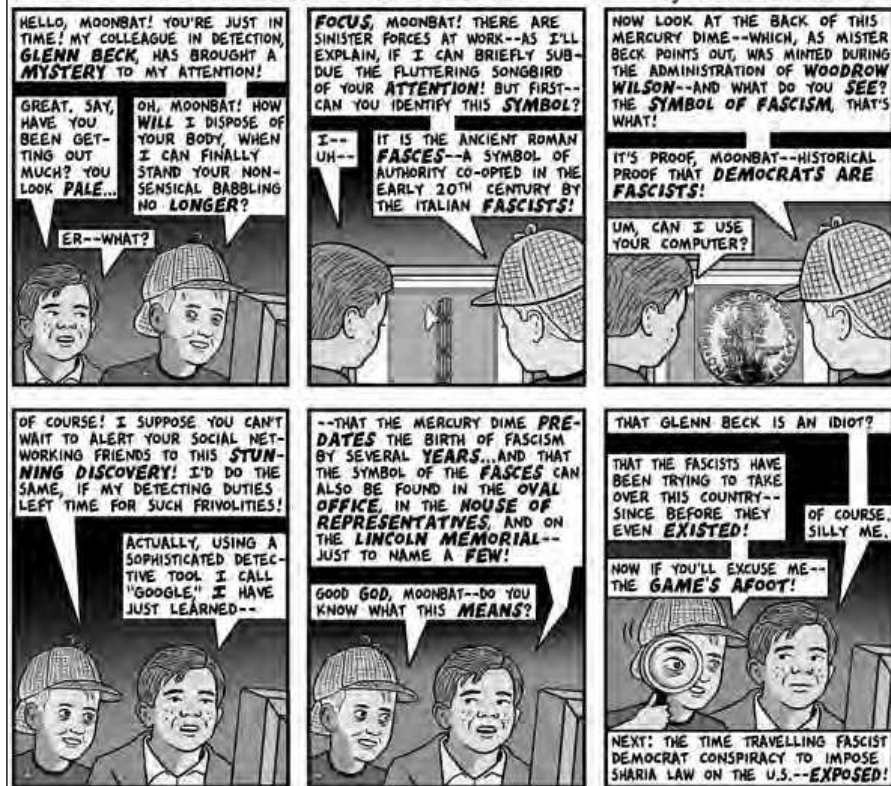
As for me, I'm now trading my labor, restoring a neglected vineyard to a farmer for all the wine grapes I can grow! Who knows, maybe you'll make an amazing connection at That's My Farmer!

The event is from 6:30 to 8:30 pm Tuesday, April 21, at the United Methodist Church, 13th and Olive. Suggested donation is \$5-\$10, which goes to low-income CSA shares.

Deb McGee of Eugene is an adjunct professor at Northwest Christian University.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HOW DO YOU SLEEP?

If this here progressive, left-wing, organic gardening, former radical home schooler knows that John Brown is not a conservative, how come your weekly tabloid does not? And the recent assertion of that *National Enquirer* reject Alan Pittman that the Civilian Review Board (CRB) has been meeting in secret? What was that about? Every last meeting has been in the Public Meetings Calendar on the city's website and in the other paper in this city — the one that still has the corner on accurate reporting in this town, apparently.

I would like to challenge *EW* to be honest for one solid month. I will bet you a \$50 bill and a gallon jug of Hop Valley Stepchild Red Ale that your readership will increase along with your advertising revenue and you'll be able to quit your endless dependence on seamy phone sex ads if you do so. It's time for *EW* to face the fact that this town is not full of endless conspiracies and corruption. In fact, Eugene is pretty sleepy, if a person actually pays attention.

Meanwhile, just for your edification, which you so solidly seem to need: John Brown is a rabid environmentalist, to put it mildly, and this area's biggest advocate for the protection of our fresh waterways. And the CRB most often meets on the fourth Monday of the month starting at 5:30 pm. The problem with spreading half-truths and lies is that people believe you and then, sheep-like, parrot the lie until it grows legs and takes over.

EW is not making Eugene a better place to live with its lack of journalistic integrity. It is contributing to anger and discontent, the antithesis to progress of any kind.

*Ruth M. Atcherson
Eugene*

EDITOR'S NOTE: For the record, Alan Pittman's story March 19 was about the CRB's discussion about excluding the public from its meetings. The story did not assert that any meetings had been held in secret.

BUSINESS AS USUAL

A couple of weeks ago, I was driving down Franklin Boulevard headed toward Glenwood. A rock hit my windshield. The

source of this insult was a large truck overfilled with dirt and completely uncovered. As the driver continued down the road, a steady amount of debris spilled out on to the roadway.

The truck was hauling away the excavation dirt from the new UO basketball arena. I noticed the name of the trucking outfit, and I also noticed that several different companies are employed to haul away this debris. Two weeks later, as I was driving down Franklin, trucks continued to drive out of the construction site, overfilled and uncovered.

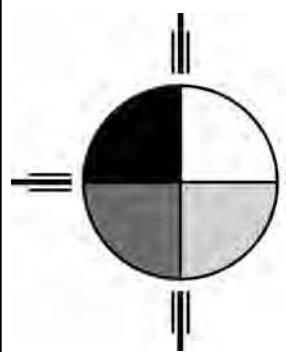
I understand this is business as usual for this project. There is not one person working on the construction site who could not notice the overfilling. Is the source big money, the big name project or just good-old-boy half-assedness? I tend to suspect it is the collaboration of all three. The news mentioned the lack of an impact statement to the neighborhood, and how the whole project was rubberstamped through permits. Now the project is fully under way and there is little evidence to suggest any care is being paid to the people who live and work in this area.

At first I was all for the basketball arena. We were under the impression that big Nike money was going to cover the costs, but not so. I am still happy we will have a new arena, but the lack of forethought to the neighborhood impact is appalling. Maybe shifting the focus to winning basketball games, and not how to spend the next \$20 million, should be at the top of UO/Nike boardroom itinerary.

*Dan Johnston
Eugene*

GYPSY MOTH NOT SO SCARY

Nobody wants to see deciduous trees defoliated by gypsy moth caterpillars. As anyone visiting gypsy moth habitat in Europe, Asia, and the northeastern U.S. can see, it is not treeless. Although it is quite devastating when the moth is out of control, like all overpopulating species, they do crash and the majority of the trees survive.



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