

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I feel sorry for Williams having been involved in such a bad accident, but the ideas she is promoting make the situation even worse for bicyclists. I would like to suggest to Williams that she reads the research that has been done on bicycle safety in countries like the Netherlands, where bicyclists are not marginalized, do not wear helmets and have a fatality rate that is one fifth of the rate in the U.S.

Arjen Hoekstra
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: The letter did run in EW, but not in print. It can be found in our web archives for March 26.

MATH FOR STARS

Movies are expensive, and movie reviews can help decide which to see. Years ago I could count on Lois Wadsworth that way. If she hated a movie I knew I'd like it, and vice versa.

This was caused by two things typical of weekly papers: The smaller paper's insecurity comes out as contempt for anything that isn't itself an expression of contempt (familiar to many teenagers but alien to the rest of us); and reviewers have seen thousands of movies and judge new ones in that esoteric context (oblivious to our more practical perspective).

The current reviewers, unfortunately, follow this tradition. While they're not going to change anything in response to this letter, a more realistic star-assignment by the editors seems possible.

The review of *Monsters vs. Aliens* contained 16 sentences. If we assign one star out of five to each of the eight purely negative statements, and two stars each to the remaining positive-but-negative statements (a negative-but-positive statement would get four stars) then the overall review should have shown one and a half stars, not three.

Such a system would make it a little easier for regular, unsophisticated folks like myself to apply the Wadsworth test to movie reviews.

Steve Downey
Eugene

SKIP THE LIDS

As we approach Earth Day, may I make a suggestion? If you are one to occasionally indulge in a coffee shop-purchased hot drink to go, the next time you find yourself without your own mug, ask for the beverage sans lid to go without or reuse one you have saved.

Being non-recyclable, every one of these lids must be thrown away and represents a small amount of oil that could have seen better use as medicine or clothing.

If you go without a lid, you'll notice in yourself a more mindful state in order too not spill the drink, thus providing a good opportunity to meditate on the cumulative impact that your everyday actions have upon our environment.

Thomas Kirkpatrick
Thurston

THAT'S HOW WE ROLL

Since 1982 Idaho state law has allowed bicyclists to approach stop signs and roll through after first yielding the right of way. Bicyclists in Idaho are also allowed to turn right at red lights without stopping, so long as the bicyclist first yields to other

vehicles. Researchers at the University of California analyzed accident statistics and have concluded that riding a bicycle in Idaho is as safe if not safer than other states. (This study is available at the Bicycle Transportation Alliance website). That's why top officials in Idaho — including sheriffs and transportation planners — consistently support their law.

Polls indicate that about 60 percent of the public is interested in bicycling but concerned about their safety and convenience. Most people would prefer to ride on low volume, low-speed residential streets, but in the interest of traffic calming, these streets are often loaded with stop signs to discourage high speed automobile traffic. The problem is that they also discourage bicycle traffic.

If we want to encourage bicycling as an alternative mode of transportation, our laws must allow for safe and efficient bicycle travel. Idaho's 27 years of experience provide ample evidence that Oregon can enact similar legislation without endangering bicyclists or motorists.

Allen Hancock
Eugene

GELLER FOR 4J

We all are keenly aware of the many challenges facing our 4J schools: the loss of state revenue, the achievement gap, the workload demands placed on teachers and administrators, the changing demographics of our community and the need for our students to enter the work force able to compete in a global economy. Voters in the 4J School District will have a wonderful opportunity in May to elect a person who is uniquely qualified to face these many challenges.

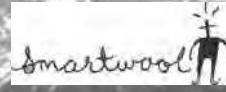
Jennifer Geller has spent countless hours as an advocate for great schools. As the parent of 4J students, she chaired her children's parent group, organized and advocated for the successful local option levy for 4J schools, led a successful effort to rid schools of soda and junk food and worked to ensure excellence in each the classroom.

She is also a recognized community leader. She was the past chair of the Lane County Stand for Children chapter and is a current member of the Eugene Public Library Foundation Board and a gubernatorial appointee on the statewide Comprehensive Revenue Restructuring Task Force. She is a former Washington state assistant attorney general and while serving in that capacity worked on many issues related to education law in an environment of shrinking resources and tax limitation measures. At the present time she is an instructor in the Academic Learning Services department at the UO. It is obvious that she is qualified to serve on the board.

Geller will bring a transparent and inclusive style of decision making to the school board. She will listen to parents and voters and will work to see that limited funds are spent wisely. She promises a fair, balanced approach to the challenges of our community and will put the interests of our children first. Please join me in voting for Jennifer Geller for Position 6 on the Eugene 4J School Board.

Mary Walston
Eugene

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