

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

gold bullion or coin, excepting for modest amounts held as collectibles" (cover story, 7/23). He should have checked Wikipedia: "The limitation on gold ownership in the U.S. was repealed after President Gerald Ford signed a bill legalizing private ownership of gold coins, bars and certificates by an act of Congress codified in Pub.L. 93-373 which went into effect December 31, 1974."

Charlene Marion
Eugene

OFF THE ROCKER

Is that "Off the Waffle Guy" off his rocker?! Appearing in "brown" face as Michael Jackson in his ad July 16?! Lemme check my calendar ... yep, it's the 21st century. You wouldn't know it by looking at that ad.

Boo, Off the Waffle! Boo, EW! Boo!!!

The delicious irony is that he would've looked more like Michael if he kept his Caucasian cartoon character ... and just donned the glove.

Glenn Leonard
Eugene

EVEN MORE POLLUTION

The climate change impacts of the proposed Seneca power plant have been overlooked. Seneca will emit a combination of direct and indirect greenhouse gases. Direct greenhouse gases absorb directly heat radiation, while indirect greenhouse gases contribute to the formation of direct greenhouse gases and lengthen their atmospheric lifetimes.

The direct greenhouse gases emitted by Seneca are carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane. Many tout biomass power plants' contributions of carbon dioxide as neutral, but this does not hold true if fresh timber is used and the Seneca biomass plant has not guaranteed they will not burn fresh timber. Additionally, all the forestry operations and transportation that are required prior to the incineration of fresh timber and woody debris use fossil fuels, adding more CO₂ to the atmosphere. The other direct greenhouse gases emitted by Seneca are even more potent than carbon dioxide: Nitrous oxide is 296 times more powerful, and methane is 20 times stronger.

Seneca will also release carbon monoxide, non-methane volatile organic compounds and NO_x, all of which are indirect greenhouse gases in addition to being serious health threats. NMVOCs and NO_x combine in the presence of sunlight to form ground-level ozone, a direct greenhouse gas. Carbon monoxide contributes to global warming by lengthening the lifetime of methane and ground-level ozone, and by its eventual transformation into carbon dioxide.

Together these direct and indirect greenhouse gases work to increase global climate change. The Seneca power plant is taking us in the wrong direction in the quest for truly "green" and renewable energy.

Hannah Satein
Eugene

VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

I just noticed the item in Slant (7/30)

about Network Charter's quest to move to 858 Pearl. Thanks a heap for the vote of confidence! The city staff members who manage proposals are already on the case. Emmy Jenson, the property manager, showed me the property 10 minutes after I called from the sidewalk in front of it to ask. Even while she was on vacation, her colleagues replied helpfully to my emails. Steve McGuire and all his colleagues in planning and development have devoted hours to helping us evaluate this and the few other commercial options, with a clear interest in helping us make this transition effectively while assuring safety, as defined by relevant codes. The larger political and economic issues have to be addressed, of course, and that may be complicated.

It sure would be swell if we could get this to work, because we really want to be part of downtown renewal, and our students benefit enormously from the resources downtown. NCS is a free public school chartered by Eugene School District 4J. It enrolls students in grades 7-12 from all over Eugene and the surrounding areas. The program is offered by a consortium of five local nonprofits and leads to a regular high school diploma.

I'm very grateful to the person who included the words of encouragement in last week's EW.

Mary Leighton, executive director
Network Charter School

A NATIONAL LAB HERE

Eugene-Springfield has a golden opportunity. The 1,100-acre parcel of land adjacent to LCC that is owned by Arlie & Company would make an excellent location for a national laboratory focused on the "green" development of energy generating technologies using the many energy producing natural resources found in Oregon.

The selling points are these: two nearby public research universities; adjacent LCC (technician training); the Pacific Ocean; five nearby mountain rivers; more than 30 hot springs throughout Oregon; the Columbia River and Bonneville Dam; four nearby reservoirs; five potentially active volcanoes in the Cascades; frequently cloudy skies on the coast and in the Willamette Valley; frequently sunny skies east of Bend; coastal and central Oregon winds; and located on I-5 near Hwys. 58, 99, and 126 in a community with both a train station and an airport.

Nearby energy producing natural resources include: ocean waves and currents, river currents, dams, geothermal, volcanic, solar and wind. Where else but in Eugene can all of the above be found within 150 miles of a central location?

Only one national laboratory comes close to what I propose: the National Renewable Energy Laboratory located near Golden, Colo. — a place with no ocean, no rivers and no volcanoes, but with a lot of wind and sunshine. It was founded in 1977 as the Solar Research Institute, and was renamed in September 1991 when it was designated a national laboratory. NREL currently has approximately 1,000 full-time employees, of whom 47 percent are scientists and 42 percent are engineers. NREL had funding totaling \$378.4 million



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