

Mitigating Uncertainty

Learning to be a more resilient community



I start most days reading *The New York Times*. There are stories every day about topics and issues I have never thought about, and articles that describe people making changes in their lives, before they have to because of concerns over climate change, resource depletion or an economy they have decreasing confidence in.

Those concerned with earthquakes, struggling to pay the bills and anticipating deeper economic disarray have much in common. All those scenarios can seriously challenge and disrupt lives, families, health, employment and community well being. Preparing for different versions of the unknown, no matter if human or natural, share some common turf.

Several programs in Eugene can be very helpful with preparing for the unknown, and many local groups and initiatives dovetail nicely with those programs.

- Most cities and towns have contingency plans in the event of natural disasters. Locally, one can become a citizen first responder by taking **Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT)** training and learning first aid, preliminary search and rescue and helping the professionals.

- Knowing one's neighbors is an essential part of a resilient neighborhood. **Neighborhood Watch**, a program offered both by the city and county, provides tools and know-how for creating networks that help neighbors look after each other for mutual safety and security.

- **Permaculture** offers many approaches to building more resilient homes and neighborhoods such as designing for edible landscapes, rain water catchment, solar energy and local economics.

All three programs focus on safety and security for the community and rely on citizen participation. Consider how these three programs might cross fertilize. Turning a front yard into a garden, for example, benefits the goals of all three programs: Food growing in the front yard puts eyes on the street, which is safety for neighbors; it also provides local fresh food, unaffected by disruptions to transportation and supply systems whether by natural or human causes.

Neighbors will be interested in the new front yard garden, a great way to start new friendships. For those willing but unable to start their own garden, volunteers – neighbors, Scouts, school groups – can help out. Neighborhood organizations are perfectly placed to help. They know their neighborhoods, have communication tools and leadership skills.

Neighborhood Watch, emergency preparedness and permaculture could include basic information about each other when doing outreach and teaching classes. They could share speakers, organize site tours and follow up and collaborate in creative ways to expand interest in community resilience.

Many people in town have valuable knowledge about a wide range of important skills relating to community resilience. A neighborhood committee already has a speakers bureau available to any community organization. Communities of faith have a big part to play. They could make space available for classes teaching first responding, effective communications and permaculture, in effect, becoming neighborhood community centers. Local media can help let people know about these programs and opportunities.

Creating a more resilient community and region should be a civic priority. By sharing our best with each other, can evolve more effectively with changing times for building a more resilient community.

To learn more, please join us at 7 pm Monday, Oct. 19, at the Annex, 1055 River Road, two blocks north of Goodwill, or visit www.suburbanpermaculture.org

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MISSING PIECES FOUND

As an involved party to the Taser incident, I sat through the recent Civilian Review Board meeting feeling very dismayed and dumbfounded by what I heard and saw. It seemed obvious that several of the board members had such a strong pro-police bias that they could not be swayed even by overwhelming evidence that the police had violated their own Taser policy. The key point was that the Tasing occurred while Ian was face down with his hands behind his back, a clear violation of the police Taser policy. That policy was read aloud, a judge described how the Tasing was a clear violation of that policy and then the board voted 4-2 that it was not a violation because "we should not second-guess our police." My deepest sadness was that the community would never even know what really happened at this board meeting, that they would just read in the paper that the board sided with police.

But then I read the Oct. 8 *EW* article by Alan Pittman, and my heart lifted. Not only did Pittman describe accurately the injustice that occurred at the CRB meeting, but he provided the missing pieces to the puzzle. He described the backgrounds of the recent appointees to the CRB, and all of a sudden the bizarre vote made sense. The recent appointees have pro-police backgrounds that explain their obvious bias in the face of overwhelming evidence that Taser policy was violated.

Kudos to Alan Pittman for making what seemed inexplicable understandable though still sad. The level of deep investigative reporting in this article is deserving of a journalism award, especially in light of the fact that the key information appeared in no other media story and was unknown even by my activist friends. Damned good job, Alan! Now, how do we take back our CRB so that it is not simply a rubber stamp for police misconduct?

Day Owen
Co-founder, Pitchfork Rebellion

FETISHISM NOT SCARY

I read, with interest, the cover story "Fetish Fun" (10/8) written by Camilla Mortensen and found it to be one of the most comprehensive and well written news pieces on the topic. She did a fine job! The article spelled out in a truthful manner the "scene" as it is for the people involved.

I appreciated the fact that she did not sensationalize the topic, like most news or lifestyle writers do, with lots of fearful adjectives and scary vocabulary. Fetishism is NOT scary. It is, in fact, something most people do, and Mortensen stated that. She simply put the truth out to the public and I applaud her for doing so. The lifestyle is one of honor, mutual consent and caring for one's partner(s), and that came across with her writing. Thank you, Camilla Mortensen. I appreciate your fine effort.

Ann M. Soucy

Northern Connecticut

VIOLENCE ON THE COVER

Tell me, just how would a 10-year-old interpret her/his parents' copy of *EW*'s Oct. 8 issue with its cover showing a chained-up adult woman being spanked by a man? A reprehensible cover photo of a smiling, presumably consenting, chained-to-a-wall blonde woman being spanked by a man clad head-to-toe in black leather wielding a metal-spiked paddle.

Did *EW* air-brush out bleeding caused by that spiked paddle? What happens in the next photo frame of those two? Does the blonde get whipped or cut next? Is it OK for boys to abuse blonde girls? How would, say, a woman, or girl who is recovering from being raped and/or beaten interpret *EW*'s cover photo?

Are Eugeneans nowadays working on ways to prevent the early release of inmates at the county jail? Did two of those released-early inmates then go out and commit crimes of violence against women? Will a majority of responsible voters now vote to pass bond measures funding more jail beds?

The popularization of violence whether in video games, movies, broadcast sports

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