

Thanks for Everything

A rhyme at Thanksgiving time



I can hardly believe it's already November
The month when I like to sit back and remember
The reasons I'm thankful and grateful and glad
And not to obsess quite so much on the bad

It's easy to go there, to dwell on the grim
Like the chance for real health care reform growing dim
There's war and corruption and justice denied
By elected officials who've cheated and lied

While people endure economic distress
The so-called "conservatives" add to the mess
What's wrong with this picture is clear as a bell
Like the "Defense of Marriage" and "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

Those laws that Obama says he'll overturn
But when he will do it we still can't discern
I know as I'm watching my blood pressure climb
That the Change We Believe In could take a long time

That's why each year I make it my aim
To lighten my load with this thankfulness game
I say thanks to the ocean, the birds and the trees
And what's left of the cartilage down in my knees

Thanks to the farmers who bring us our food
And thanks for the comforts in life I've accrued
Thanks to the animals, thanks to the plants
Thanks for warm socks and for clean underpants

While bigots and homophobes truly are hateful
There's plenty of reasons I still can be grateful
It's good for my soul and it's good for my spirit
"Thank you!" sounds good and I'm thankful to hear it

Gratitude helps my rigidity soften
So really, it's good to be thankful more often
I actually try to be thankful each day
But my preoccupations can get in my way

I worry and fret and I stay awake nights
I fear that gay people will not get our rights
The right to be married, the right to adopt
To be free from queer bashing, which still hasn't stopped

No federal law against discrimination
Based on one's sexual orientation
And need I remind you that even today
Women still are unequal with no ERA?

Numerous grievances always persist
That's why I must focus on making my list
I'm thankful to all who bring joy to my life
My neighbors and friends and especially my wife

I make it my practice this time every year
To remember the good and be happy I'm here
I think of the very good fortune of mine
That even with challenges I'm doing fine

Gratefulness outweighs my doubts and my fears
I'm grateful I've done "Living Out" for 10 years
Ten years of this venue to kvetch and to vent
For that I'm most grateful and truly content

My life's pretty good: I have love, I have friends
My things-to-be-thankful-for list never ends
Come to think of it, my life could hardly be sweeter
I hope that's true for you too, my beloved Dear Reader.

Sally Sheklow has been a part of the Eugene community since 1972 and is a member of the WYMPROV! comedy troupe. Her column, which began at EW in 1999, also runs in several other newspapers and magazines around the country and world.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CURE FOR GREED

On Oct. 29 I was reunited with my sister for the first time in 40 years. Yesterday, she was diagnosed with inoperable cancer. Thursday we will find out if has spread to her brain and how much time she has left to live. Had the cancer been detected sooner, she would have been a candidate for surgery and cancer treatment.

Being indigent, my sister, like so many others in this country, only goes to the doctor when she can't cure herself with over-the-counter medication. Monday we will meet with my sister's doctor to find out how we can make her comfortable in the time she has left. She will leave behind three children, six grandchildren and a sister who barely got to know her.

It's too bad there isn't a medical cure for greed and inhumanity, as it has seemed to reach epidemic proportions in this country, especially in Washington, D.C. How Congress can adjourn for the holiday season without passing real health care reform is a sad state of affairs for this nation.

Linda Jiler
Eugene

IDENTIFY BIG MONEY

Sam Porter wrote well (Viewpoint, 11/12) about how our would-be democracy is held hostage to the corrupt ruling that enables big money to bribe candidates with massive campaign contributions. What he also needed to do was name names — leaders of the munitions industry, tobacco, Israel, auto industry and pharmaceutical industry. Without names, readers will not waken from the slumber that leads all of us to destruction at the hands of plutocracy.

Names must be named. Some of them operate right here in Eugene. We must become angry and personal to get real campaign reform.

George Beres
Eugene

FRINGE TAKEOVER

Regarding Sam Porter's "Soft Despotism" (11/12), the problem is not out-of-control campaign spending by the "aristocracy." The problem is disengaged, apathetic voters who can't (won't) see the forest for the trees.

Middle-class Americans have not connected the dots that neither major party represents them. They keep sending members of both parties back to office and expect things to change for the better. They vote on sound bites and name recognition without taking the time to understand the issues or the candidates.

Now that fringe elements have taken over both major parties it is increasingly apparent that we have to drain the cesspool in Washington. I'm hopeful that the Internet will level the playing field and we can get some decent, moderate independents for replacements.

Jerry Ritter
Springfield

RAGE AT THE TASE

Where is the rage? Two college kids Tasered by the same police officer, on very questionable grounds. It's disgusting! And even more despicable is not just the decision by the EPD to absolve Judd Warren, the officer responsible, but to give him the "Officer of the Year" award. Since when does shocking an individual because he was exercising his right to free speech or, in the more recent case, simply sleeping in his own home, deserving of an award?

In my opinion, officer Judd Warren should immediately be stripped of his badge, his dignity and his weapon. Tasers are a highly dangerous and potentially lethal weapon (if you don't believe me, what about Brett Elder, a 15-year-old boy in Michigan who was killed by a Taser last March? Or Robert Dziekanski, a Polish immigrant who was Tasered to death by Royal Canadian

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