

**ODE TO MAC COURT**

Memories from a neighborhood kid on Columbia Street (Agate borders Hayward Field, Columbia is one street over).

My earliest recollection is playing tag on the catwalks high above the magic maple floor, 50 or 60 feet below, with older kids when I couldn't reach the hand rails. Mother would turn over in her grave had she known.

Eugene went overboard when the Tall Firs did the first collegiate championship with a parade down Willamette, down 11th to University and into the Igloo. Everyone in town was there, all 10,000, maybe more, to share the glory with Capt. Bobby Annet, Wally Johannson, Slim Wintermute, John Dick and Addy Gale. Howard Hobson was the coach. Matt Pavalunis was the best player on the squad but not a team player.

The private entrance many of us local riffraff enjoyed through the pre-college years was via the steam tunnel heating system where we entered down near the old Journalism building, on through a mystical labyrinth to a door in the basement of Mac Court, all in the pitch blackness at 150 degrees — but free!

The Greater Artist series brought the best and brightest to this small college town with hardly an empty seat: The Metropolitan/La Scala stars of the day, Broadway and Hollywood luminaries, too, and political leaders from around the world.

Nothing was bigger than the big band/swing era. Benny Goodman, the Dorsey brothers, Stan Kenton, Charlie Barnett, Sammy Kaye and countless others. My first legitimate date was to Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra, featuring Frank Sinatra, Jo Stafford, Ziggy Ellman and the Modernaires. My date was Joan Williams, Portland Rose Queen and Oregon DG. \$16 a couple for memories of a lifetime.

A thousand other memories pass through my mind — how the men students would pass up guys hand over hand on crowded games, many others.

Stay in good health for another year and God bless you and yours.

*Bill Harber  
Birmingham, Mich.*

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter has been circulating among Bill Harber's friends and family over the holidays.

**HALT HERBICIDE PLANS**

Oregon Toxics Alliance (OTA) is one of several local environmental groups who have joined together to appeal a decision to spray 14 herbicides on public lands managed by the BLM. The BLM wants a previous injunction to limit the use of herbicides to be replaced by a new rule. The BLM plan will expose users of recreational sites, including hikers, campers, fishers, hunters and families out for a picnic. And what about cumulative exposures to fish and wildlife? The BLM will also not be measuring how much pesticide gets into rivers and lakes.

The modeling used by government agencies to determine potential exposure to pesticide droplets and vapors is way off the mark. Likely, there will be more acute exposures for the unsuspecting public than predicted.

What we do know is there is strong evidence that pesticides are a public and environmental health problem, linked to persistent ecosystem damage and tragic disease. The toxicity of pesticides persists in soils, water and even our bodies. Pesticides banned long ago are still commonly found in fatty tissue, including the breast milk of nursing mothers.

This is worrisome because at least three of the pesticides the BLM plans to use are contaminated with dioxin. Dioxins are commonly regarded as highly toxic compounds that are environmental pollutants and persistent organic pollutants. Some of the proposed BLM herbicides are chemically related to Agent Orange, the defoliant used in Vietnam that was contaminated with dioxin.

As part of my work at OTA, I have read plenty of government reports about Oregonians harmed by pesticide

applications. A 2009 report concluded that acute pesticide poisoning in Oregon is at the highest levels ever documented. Shouldn't we be alarmed that medical studies detect worrisome levels of pesticides in the bodies of American children?

In addition to appealing the BLM decision to use more herbicides over more acres of public lands, OTA has launched the Safe Public Places Campaign — because our state government has an obligation to make healthy people and an unpolluted environment the decisive standard for all pest management practices. Contact us to get involved.

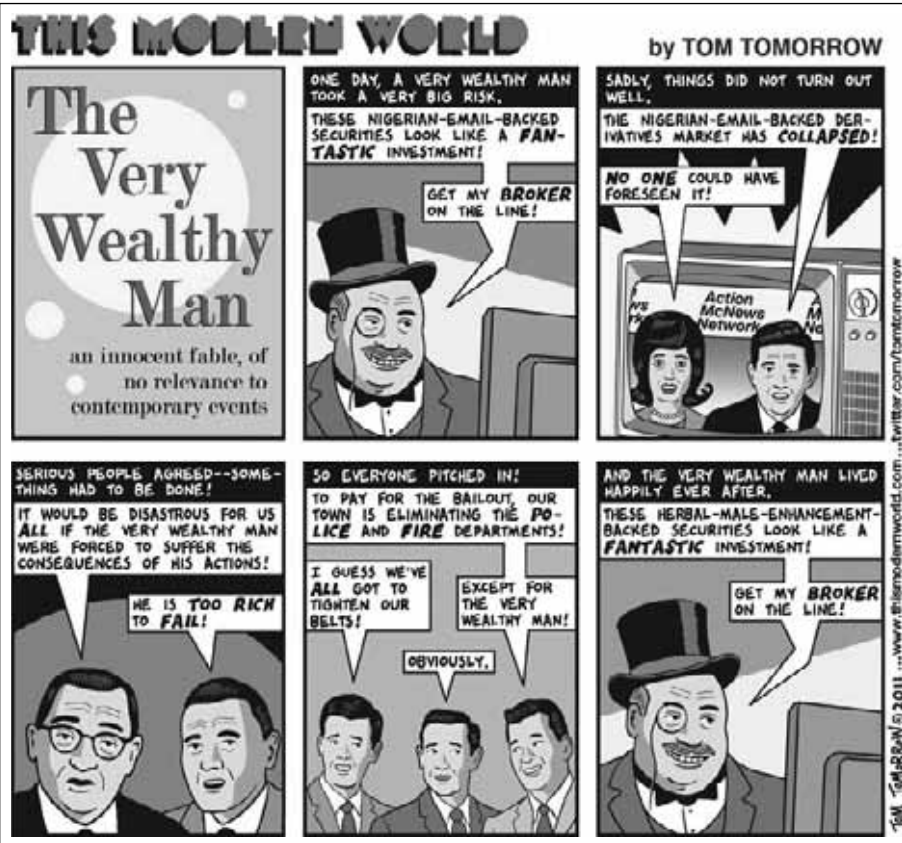
*Lisa Arkin, executive director  
www.OregonToxics.org  
Eugene*

**DAMAGING TRADITIONS**

To Oregon Board of Forestry: I am a farmer and forestland owner in the Coast Range foothills. I have read your "Forestry Program for Oregon" draft 2011. Instead of commenting on specific parts, I feel compelled to question the entire document for its confusing presentation of science and non-science without distinguishing between the two.

The emphasis on sustainability is long overdue. We are pretty sure forests in Oregon were sustainable (as is defined in the *homo sapiens'* era) up until 180 years ago. In the 21st century, the responsible thing to do would be to present the basic science, as we know it, to the public. Considering the state of our environment, a Board of Forestry of today should probably be composed of environmental scientists of David Suzuki's stature.

As you know, sustainable forests are a result of natural evolutionary processes. In today's society, so-called wood products,



human jobs and tax credits are all part of a human construct, which is not natural.

Nature does not compromise, and we can no longer pretend that it does. The draft is an example of trying to justify and continue past practices, while throwing in some obvious truths such as, "Our law, policies, and economic traditions have not always kept pace with scientific advancements, and ... our institutional forestry framework contains internal contradictions" (p.22). The contradictions are reflected in the draft document.

It really is about time more humans acknowledge the dilemma we have created and behave as adults in dealing with it. The Board of Forestry should do the same — present the science without comment to the public, and let people deal with it if they have not already done so. Better yet suggest changes to laws, change policies, and confront "economic traditions" for the damage done.

*Jan Nelson  
Rural Crow*

**STUDY NATIVE LANGUAGES**

Language is power. The de facto top languages in this country are English and Spanish. However, diversification of languages and cultures in this country could enrich all Americans.

Why should we focus on Eurocentric (colonizers such as the English and Spanish) languages and cultures in our nation's schools? The first peoples in our country included great numbers of Native and African Americans, and their descendants are still here. Because of this, our American schools should also teach Native American and African languages.

Study of these languages, cultures and histories would empower our citizens to redress wrongs committed here by Eurocentric peoples who have shut these others out of their fair share. Teachers of these languages and cultures should be Native Americans (including Mexican Americans) and African Americans. These descendants are greatly deserving of gainful employment in this country where their ancestors gave their lives to enrich the U.S.

*Diane Van Orden  
Springfield*

**ONCE A YEAR**

On the subject of the Alan Grossman syndrome, "Christmas in My Face" (12/16): Why on a midnight dreary should we ponder such a Grinch-like query? First off, where is the appreciation of diversity? We are a country just over 200 years young, a baby compared to the rest of the world. We are creating our culture and culture needs celebration. It's a way we synchronize. We do that on Ducks day or for that matter the whole year round. One can't argue that the Duck celebration is in everyone's face 365 days a year. If we can agree on the Ducks, then why not our celebrations and our diverse choices of worship?

And how about our children's education, physical and mental health rights of everyone, and our security? The crucial balance and progress of our much-needed growth in this area, and within ourselves. The Democratic/ Republican principle has us divided, weak and immature. This is our country and our celebrations; all are welcome. They are our freedoms; they belong in the public eye.

It's our duty as Americans to show the rest of the world that we do truly embrace our differences. We truly exercise diversity. It is every American's right to celebrate. Christmas is part of a machine that spans the world, and it is not going to disappear. So celebrate with Americans, your neighbor, brother, sister etc. Call it what you want, Festivus for the rest of us, my very own definitely not Christmas in my face celebration or whatever. Just remember it only comes once a year; Ducks and others are year-round.

*W. Shane Kiser  
Eugene*

**HOLDING THE BAG**

Safe in a crosswalk? Don't bet on it. I learned the hard way. At the intersection of Green Acres Road at Delta Oaks Center, the signal told me to walk. I did, from the north side crossing south. Got halfway across when a driver came up from behind me and turned left into my crosswalk. His car struck me in the lower legs, fortunately at a fairly low speed. I fell backward onto the hood of