

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

idea to fund it with the cutting of the irreplaceable Elliot State Forest is nothing short of a brainless "bake sale."

Let's pretend that we would like our future graduating classes to help amend our past environmental mistakes and learn to manage our planet in a more intelligent and caring way.

It would seem extremely self-effacing to continue with your current plan when the very sector of society which you are professing to assist would suffer the most by its passage. The environmental devastation created by this plan would be irreversible for generations to come, and the opportunity to teach our children how to preserve the legacy of nature, lost forever.

Evidently, any past educational system funding provided by public land depletion has not served us well.

*Terry Richardson  
Springfield*

### PROVIDE BASIC NEEDS

For the growing homeless population of young people it is especially difficult. Our kids grew up here expecting more job opportunities. Until we figure out how to make jobs we must provide shelter, food and basic needs.

Our newly formed Homeless Action Coalition (email [homeless-action@yahoo.com](mailto:homeless-action@yahoo.com)) appreciates the effort of many to provide food and shelter when it is freezing outside but we need funding to provide basic needs, counseling, job training and opportunities. County and city funds have been cut. Now the community needs to respond with donations and more citizen involvement. Money alone won't solve this challenge — we need everyone working to reverse growing homelessness and not allow it to continue with so little hope for change.

Visit or call St. Vincent de Paul/Egan Warming Centers, Shelter Care, Catholic Community Services, First Place Family Development Center, Eugene Service Station, Hosea Youth Center, Looking Glass, Centro Latino, White Bird, Eugene Mission, St. John Bosco House.

The year 2011 must have a new beginning! Donate and/or volunteer!

*Ruth Duemler  
Eugene*

### CUT THE ADMIN

I have two daughters in the 4J School District. During winter break in December, I was trying to come up with ways of "finding" the "optimistic" \$22 million needed to continue to give our kids a high quality education next year. The worst solution is to cut teachers. I have great respect and admiration for teachers, and they are the key to the education of our children.

A concurrent solution was to cut administration staff. Time and effort need to be focused on reconfiguring/ consolidating administration staff, instead of schools. I suggest that we start at the top with the superintendent. In the shadow of a \$22 million budget shortfall, now is the time to be nontraditional and unconventional.

I propose that administration staff department heads report directly to the School Board. This has several benefits.

1. Nearly \$200,000 in annual salary, benefits and bonuses can be redirected

back into the budget to help our schools maintain quality allowing our schools to stay open a half day more for learning by our students, or teacher training time.

2. The School Board is elected by the voters. Ultimately, the administration staff will be more accountable to parents and students, instead of a district superintendent, found and hired by a search committee.

3. The time, effort and money expended by a search committee to hire an outside search firm can be redirected to the actual "stakeholders" of our school district and schools, i.e. our children/ students.

*Mark Callahan  
Eugene*

### UNSAFE CROSSWALKS

In the year 2008 Eugene developed many crosswalks meant for just pedestrians, in hope of a safer crossing spot for all people. I am writing on behalf of Dave Heying, author of "Holding the Bag" in the Jan. 6 letters.

I do not own a car, so most of my transportation is by walking and taking the bus. My walking experience around Eugene has not been only a bad experience, but also very dangerous and frightening. In 2008 when these crosswalks first developed, I was on my way home from school, and I had to cross at River Road. A car with a family in it did not see me and slammed on its brakes and at the last second saved my life. After the driver came to an abrupt stop, there was a three car pileup, with only minor injuries. The sound of the hitting cars sounded like gunshots and has permanently made me avoid crossing busy streets. I was 15 at the time.

My experience, and I could imagine many others, just like Heying's, has been very traumatic. The officers involved in accidents like this one should be more sympathetic towards the pedestrians because that's the reason the crosswalks are there. Drivers who abuse and pay no attention to the pedestrian crosswalks should be punished for it. I hope more drivers are aware of this problem and try to avoid it as much as possible.

*Leila McElroy  
North Eugene*

### WORSHIPPING HORDES

I was intrigued by the recent (1/6) News Briefs: "Eugeneans Concerned for Bahá'is In Iran." After brief research on the Bahá'is and their latest messenger from god, Bahá'u'lláh, I've come to the conclusion that these folks, along with other "faith" believers, are developmentally disabled adults.

Iran's persecution of these unfortunates is the one thing we should all agree is wrong. However, gathering for a day of fanciful prayer with other illusioned sects and their religious-selling leaders accomplishes nothing, except to make them all feel good. Watching Bugs Bunny cartoons also helps people feel good.

Perpetuating and supporting the childlike beliefs of developmentally disabled adults in the 21st century is a major step backward in true spiritual growth. It's a cop-out, and it explains one of the reasons our Earth continues to be trashed. The worshipping hordes —

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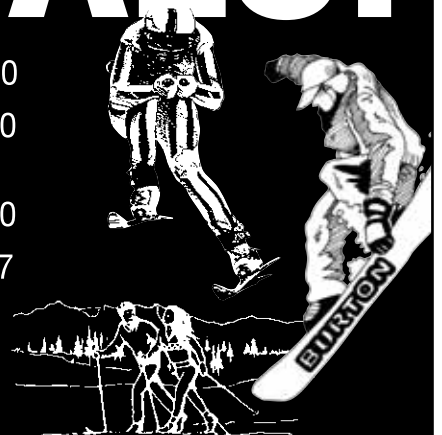
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