

recommendations on word usage.

To me, the use of “faggoty” in Sheklow’s piece made perfect sense. She clearly uses it as a term of affection: “We were loving the conductor,” she writes. “Faggoty” in this context expresses inclusion and solidarity, not exclusion or derision — it says, “We have faced similar oppression, and though we may be strangers, we are members of the same queer family.” “Faggoty” also makes sense in a piece on Joan Rivers — Sheklow is borrowing a page from Rivers’ book, using brash and offensive language to convey a campy appreciation. And, as Sheklow points out, Rivers is a gay icon and they’re playing the overture from *Gypsy*, for crissakes! The conductor, Joan, Sally herself — they’re all taking the potentially hateful “faggot” stereotype and performing, reinventing and celebrating it as the radical and delightful identity it really is.

To answer Zuckerman’s question: yes, LGBT people get to say “faggot” out loud, hopefully as loudly and enthusiastically as possible. Like other reclaimed slurs against marginalized people, its history is ugly and its use controversial. I’m sure not everyone, gay or straight or what have you, would agree with me. But in my experience, the people who bigots call “faggot” are among the most resilient, self-aware, daring, admirable people I have known, and I am honored to claim them as my brothers, sisters and others in faggoty faggoty.

Russell Melia  
Eugene

**VIVE LA DIFFERENCE**

The healthy rivalry between the *R-G* and *EW*, exemplified by their differences over the legal flap about the meeting process at the county courthouse, marks a coming of age of politics in Lane County. Divisions between rural and urban, and between resource owners and we the people, are coming into focus. Vive la difference!

In the *Guard*’s version, we are led to believe that those staunch defenders of personal liberty, our old-time timber family interests who own much of Lane County, were obliged to step forward to protect the rights of citizens being abused by corrupt leftist politicians who don’t think answering their own telephones is the best way to discharge their duty to manage Lane County’s \$600 million organization.

Or else the timber barons have decided to reassert their historic control over Lane County politics and resources, first broken by the 1976 election of Commissioner Jerry Rust, in the post-Watergate Carter democratic election landslide, when the commission went from three seats elected countywide to five geographic districts.

While virtually the entire forestry, sand and gravel, and real estate industry was donating to Jay Bozievich’s campaign against Rust in west Lane last year, Seneca Industries meanwhile apparently persuaded ex-commissioner Ellie Dumdi to put her name on a lawsuit against Commissioners Handy and Sorenson for Oregon Public Meeting Law violations. Seneca dropped something like a quarter million dollars in legal costs on the campaign against Handy

and Sorenson while their forest, mining and real estate comrades ponied up a similar sum to defeat Rust. The *Guard* overlooks the fact that Dwyer and Stewart, who were not named in Seneca’s suit, were equally guilty under Gillespie’s ruling, which has sent a chill over governing bodies around Oregon.

What public official might not be found guilty if someone is willing to spend a quarter million dollars suing them for trying to “think about and discuss issues carefully” with their elected colleagues? Is that not exactly what we elect our public officials to do?

Had the *Guard* read the Gillespie decision they would know (or should have known) that Stewart also supports paying for a personal assistant. But he pays his personal aide out of his personal fortune — a fortune made in the timber industry.

Fergus Mclean  
Eugene

tell us that officials from the UO, medical community and other local employers such as Palo Alto Software and Sporthill have testified that school funding crisis is making it hard for them to attract new employees. Come on people, you are telling me out of the thousands of unemployed here in Lane County you can’t find someone who needs a job? When was the last time you placed a “help wanted” ad? One business listed an ad for two new hires and 270 people applied. Can’t find employees?

I have to feel that this is nothing more than a scare tactic on the school supporters. I am all for helping the school with funding, but feel strongly that most of this tax would go to pay the past due contributions to PERS, plus the new increase of 18 percent due in 2011 and would do little to help anyone but teachers’ retirement.

Dick Walker  
Eugene

**TRUMPED-UP CHARGES**

I think what the few are doing to Pete Sorenson is wrong and mean spirited. I have lived in Eugene for 22 years and know that Sorenson has served our community well. With his progressive ideas (since when was progressive a dirty word anyway?) he has fought for Eugene, Lane County and Oregon time and time again in his work as Lane County Commissioner.

The letters in the local papers are downright nasty and make a villain out of this civic leader who has done everything to represent the majority of people in this town. A few disgruntled people are

**JUST A SCARE TACTIC**

I would have to take umbrage with a couple of items in the Alan Pittman cover story (2/3) concerning the purported school tax.

First off, 25 percent of the 4J and Bethel students live outside city limits and no households in those areas would be taxed. But the school supporters want us to ignore that fact, using the thought, those children are part of our broader community. So we who live in the 4J area should shut up and carry the load.

Secondly, the economic impact. You