new white T-shirts over their business clothes with the slogan "Americans for Prosperity." He looked prosperous. I told him that he is chicken-shit (rotten) to picket kids and families who want to help troubled schools.

The rich have tax benefits and profits we don't have. Yet they oppose taxes for our public schools and services.

Jerry Smith
Eugene

EMX NOT THE ISSUE

Have you ridden an LTD bus recently? If so, you have likely noticed how hardworking and important LTD is in our community. If you travel by any means in Eugene you have also likely noticed that LTD has become the victim of a well-funded attack.

Professional graphics, billboard advertising and signage requires time and money, especially money. Whoever is organizing and funding the attack on LTD has deep pockets. My guess is it isn't all coming from small businesses on West 11th.

EmX has been 15 years in the making; the time to impact that decision was over a decade ago. My simple guess is sour grapes from the failed West Eugene Parkway motivates this attack. Perhaps the real goal is to create a political issue to aid an as yet unnamed candidate during the next election cycle. Campaigning for political candidates is a legitimate part of our democracy. Attacking essential not-for-profit community services is not.

I invite those funding this marketing campaign to publicly identify themselves and their goals. Let's openly debate the real issues instead of scapegoating Lane Transit District.

Teresa Damron
Eugene

BIKES HELP, BUT ...

Alan Pittman missed the point in his March 3 "Going Green" article on Eugene's draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan. It mentions bicycle issues more than 50 times and pedestrians just twice! It is typical of Eugene's bicycle-centric active transportation community. Yes, 22 percent of people may commute on bikes in 20 years, but 80 percent of people could cut their car use next week by walking and using the bus for some trips!

Walking is the simplest form of transportation. It requires no special equipment and is part of every trip, even those made by bike, car or bus. Walking makes neighborhoods safer, encourages human interaction and is good for business and jobs.

While I admire those who choose the bicycle way of life, it will not get most people out of their cars! Even less so as our population ages and our mobility needs change. Bicycles can be part of an inclusive, integrated transportation system, but pedestrians, using public transportation, will be the main way we move away from a car-centered culture. There are just far fewer people willing take the safety risks or "gear down" to ride a bike, even among those who like to be active. Much less for the inactive, elderly or alter-abled.

Completing the west Eugene extension of EmX is key to cutting citywide trip times. This will increase ridership and make it attractive for people to leave all their vehicles at home both the two-wheeled, human-powered variety and those with four wheels burning gasoline. Walking is Eugene's future!

Tom Schneider
Member of Eugene's Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

MALIGNANCY OF WAR

March 19, 2003 had a massive effect on millions of people. Consequences have been largely hidden from the people in the U.S. — a little about the suffering of our troops, limited coverage of the financial costs to U.S., essentially nothing about the Iraqis' suffering.

Sept. 11, 2001 transformed the U.S. and the world. The U.S. invaded Iraq on March 19, 2003. There was no connection between Iraq and the events of 9/11. The U.S. administration used three main reasons to argue invading: The men accused of the events of 9/11 were Saudi Arabian, not Iraqi; WMDs were the lies of a defector called "Curveball"; and no "yellowcake" went from Niger to Iraq.

Eight years later, more than 4,000 U.S. personnel have died, tens of thousands have been injured. PTSD, traumatic brain injuries and suicides are alarming the "brass." Poor medical care and support for veterans and soldiers shook up Congress. This will be a malignancy of future generations.

Between 50,000 and 900,000 Iraqis died. More than two million are refugees. And the infrastructure is in shambles.

Corvallis will recognize March 19 with a procession of coffins. Gather in Central Park on Monroe at noon. Please wear black.

Joan Noyce
Corvallis

CONNECTING ON ICE

I am fairly new to the Eugene community and looking for an alternate new source that provides balance and a bit of honesty when it comes to news stuff. The latest whack job out of The Register-Guard came from an article regarding the Ice Center authored by Matt Cooper March 8. The article is filled with inaccuracies and distortions by not telling the readers that many improvements were made to the gates, dasher boards, ice slab, and a Freon detection unit was installed for safety. More importantly, the usage at the center has increased putting them on target to end the ice season making a profit.

As for the future, the Ice Center needs the support of our community and elected officials to overcome the obstacles of raising additional funds when there is no commitment from the Lane County Board of County Commissioners that the Ice Center and the rest of the Fairgrounds will continue to exist in their current location. As a financial supporter, hockey fan and outside observer of the Ice Center activities, I see both sides of the story.

Please write about the diversity of ice sports and benefits of physical or mental development of our youth through hockey, ice dance or figure skating, etc. Participation in community activities and events builds community connectedness. The more events and activities (sports) people participate in the bigger the positive changes are to their community connections. Please help by supporting positive community connectedness through your reporting.

Calla Taylor
Eugene

KILL DEATH PENALTY

This past week we all received the news that Gov. Pat Quinn of Illinois abolished the death penalty. Apparently, the state of Illinois worked for 10 years in an attempt to fix what was broken about their capital punishment system, but in the end it was clear that the system couldn't be fixed. Instead of continuing to send inmates to their death, perhaps innocent and wrongfully convicted, the governor signed into law that other alternatives need to be found.

Our state should follow suit. As a practicing Christian living in a nation that identifies itself as Christian, I believe we need to find our humanity and respect each other as children of God.

Charlotte Nuessle
Ashland

RACIST OPERA

Many people consider The Mikado a racist musical show, so why did the Eugene Opera put it on (March 11-12)? It is based on stereotypes of Japanese culture. Although many have tried to rehabilitate its controversial history, the mindset of Gilbert and Sullivan was made clear in the original version: The character Ko-Ko sings a song about the "little list" of "society offenders" who "if executed would not be missed. " On the execution list are the "n****** serenader" and "others of his race."

I'm sure some will come up with the old "teachable moment" argument. There are many wonderful shows to put on. A better teachable moment would be to skip this one.

Kali Star
Eugene

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