

make a right. Assuming the *Guard* has a “pro-sprawl bias,” should the *Weekly* be “anti-sprawl biased” in its, using the term loosely, “news” columns? You folks, and reporter Alan Pittman in particular, haven’t yet figured out that the facts will usually speak for themselves, and readers don’t need to be bludgeoned into the “correct” opinion in “news” articles.

Jenny Moos
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: Sometimes biased reporting is necessary to overcome outdated thinking. Most stories about child abuse today, for example, talk about the psychological damage, injustice and hidden costs of child abuse. A "balanced" story would include equal discussion about why kids need to be regularly beaten: Spare the rod, spoil the child, etc.

SHILLS FOR CONSUMPTION

At the recent Public Environmental Law Conference, Sierra Club member and keynote speaker Bruce Nilles touted the work his organization has accomplished in shutting down numerous coal-fired power plants and stalling some of those in line. In their place, he said, we must support large scale wind and solar projects. Others, including the president, promote nuclear energy as a viable replacement for fossil fuels.

What do these perspectives have in common? In their desperation to avoid root causes, they give the lie to intolerable effects. Large scale wind and solar, even biomass and nuclear, are advocated as “clean” and “green” alternatives.

Miles of 400-foot wind turbines (with parts made from oil) kill bats and birds, destroy habitat and sense of place, and even advance into iconic landscapes like Steens Mountain, bringing roads and transmission lines with them. Bulldozers scour deserts for solar panels and mirrors in projects of 7,000 acres each, plundering fragile soils, habitat for endangered lizards and tortoises and arid land as a place and a concept free of our meddling. In the air, biomass particulates join radiation from nuclear meltdown and waste.

Instead of supporting and promoting limits to growth, those who pretend to be

environmentalists have been the shrillest shills for massive alternative energy plagues masquerading as panaceas. Until deluded greenwashers seriously confront overpopulation and overconsumption, rather than enable more of the same, they’re merely tilting at windmills.

Robert Emmons
Fall Creek

TAX OTHERS

What exactly was your point in printing Alan Pittman’s cover story (3/24) about the proposed school tax measure? About three quarters of the story could have been summarized by saying that we need good schools because childhood education is important and good schools attract people to Eugene. The other quarter of the story was about the conservative/Republican/Tea Party backgrounds of a few people who are against the measure.

Your story would have been far more useful and poignant if you had actually discussed the measure, unless you are afraid that people will vote against it if they know what it actually says. For those not familiar with the issue, the May ballot measure is a proposal to tax some people who live in Eugene, while not taxing others. For example, PERS recipients and those earning under a certain income are exempt from contributing to our schools. Moreover, 24 percent of the students who attend 4J schools and 18 percent of the students who attend Bethel schools live outside city limits and their families will contribute nothing to our schools.

Unlike the impression that Pittman tries to give, the people who are against the measure aren’t right-wing Bushophiles. They’re people, like myself, who are educated liberals, and who have supported every previous school ballot measure. They’re people who drive hybrid vehicles and voted for Obama. They’re people who, just like the pro-tax contingent, know the importance of a good education, but our side refuses to support this measure because half of those using the schools won’t be contributing to the cause.

EW tries to come across as politically correct. Stereotyping people who are for or against something is anything but politically correct.

Dave Taube
Eugene

BASEBALL FIRST

I’d like to support 4J schools; I believe that our good schools are basic to the good of our community. I want to vote yes in support of this proposed tax; however, I also believe that Civic Stadium is also basic to the good of our community.

So I have this to say to the School Board: You’ll get my vote if you do the right thing which is: ensure Civic remains a community asset! Not razed and replaced by a shopping mall!

How the School Board handles this issue will determine, for me, how I vote. Are there perhaps others out there who agree?

Baz Freedman
Eugene

SOLUTIONS NEEDED

Last month, Lane County commissioners approved the final selection of contracts with nonprofit human service programs that are administered by the Human Services Commission by awarding contracts for access to services. The previous board approved the majority of awards in December including a community review committee’s recommendation that did not include funding a proposal for funding the Family Shelter operated by ShelterCare.

The proposed fiscal year 2011-12 county budget will be presented at the end of April by the county administrator. The decision to not fund the Family Shelter did not have to do with the county board deciding to fund public safety services, as presented in “ShelterCare Housing at Risk” (News Briefs, 4/7). The current annual amount available for award to nonprofit human service agencies represents a projected \$1.47 million, or a 28.7 percent reduction in revenues available in fiscal year 2010-2011. Revenues have declined from local, state and federal governments.

The services funded through HSC resources will continue to help address the needs of adults and children in poverty, yet there is much more work to be done in our communities. We will work in the coming months to bring faith, private nonprofit organizations, civic organizations and community members together to creatively address the funding and service challenges we face.

If you are interested in contributing your ideas, resources or volunteering in the effort to find community solutions to help our neighbors in need please send an e-mail to hsc.info@co.lane.or.us

Steven Manela
Human Services Division manager,
Lane County Health & Human Services

WTF, LANE COUNTY?

Thanks for the article “ShelterCare Housing at Risk” in the April 7 issue. It helps me in my ongoing quest to figure out WTF is going on around here. Here are the takeaways from the article:

Facts: Lane County spends \$102 million on discretionary funds; 6 percent of that is spent on public health and welfare; 63 percent goes to public safety; commissioners slashed \$300,000 (that’s just 5 percent of the aforementioned 6 percent for public health and welfare) in funding for ShelterCare, a local nonprofit that does a whole lot to get homeless adults and children into stable, long term housing.

Opinions: That is a good thing that everyone should want; and since Commissioners Bozievich and Leikin clearly got beaten up too much in high school they want to throw more and more money at public safety, thinking this makes them look like tough guys.

Summation: Starve a nonprofit that helps keep kids and adults off the streets, thus creating more criminals, thus making your argument for more jails and cops a slam dunk.

Fact: This blows.

Kevin O'Brien
Eugene

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