

and we were cheered by by-standers.

The short rally featured a cogent talk by Jim Schmidt of Veterans for Peace, and two children who spoke powerfully about the effect of global warming and invited all to join the Mothers Day "iMatter!" march. It all ended with a delightful fashion show that also featured two children, one a large yellow banana, the other giant teeth: "We'd Rather Pay for Organic Food than War," also a "Carbon Footprint" with trails of trash attached and a "Hanford Clean-Up," covered by a large white baggy suit and a gas mask for protection pushing a vacuum cleaner, and more.

We all returned home, soaked to the bone but with our spirits buoyed. Who knows, maybe this small action was effective in its own way! The event was sponsored by WAND, CALC, Taxes for Peace Not War, and Veterans for Peace.

*Peg Morton
Eugene*

BAN LOOPHOLES

So now it comes out from IRS records that the top 400 households own 50 percent of the wealth in the U.S. and their federal tax averages 16 percent. Their Social Security tax is capped at \$106,000, making it less than 0.0001 percent. And we ask why Social Security is in trouble? Their capital gains are taxed at 15 percent, but they pay *nothing* until they take money out of the market, possibly for years! Their techniques get state, local, gas, employment, phone, internet and property taxes to less than 1 percent of their wealth. Their health, home and auto insurance costs are comparatively zilch.

When calculating the common man's taxes, even the poor pay more when factoring in gas, employment, phone, parking and internet taxes. All of the loopholes benefit them, not us. None of this takes into consideration their offshore tax havens where the real money is hidden.

Their businesses include the industrial military complex, oil, coal and other taxpayer subsidized ventures and their investments are tax sheltered. Their money can be translated into influenceable speech which is currently shifting the tax burden from federal to state/local, where we, the burdened middle class, are left to fight amongst ourselves over crumbs for education and the most basic of needs.

I'm sorry but the richest man in Eugene is not of the class that owns 50 percent of America. The Tea Party's efforts benefit this class immensely and themselves barely but they are not alone. We are all fools and need to wake up.

*Greg Norman
Eugene*

IRREVERENT EW

I have read *EW* to get another take on local and international events and politics. I may not have agreed with all the opinions and ways things were stated, but they seemed at least evenhanded. On April 28 the News Briefs "New Electric Car Unveiled" started with the sentence "Easter weekend marked the return of Zombie Jesus." I was outraged. This was a mean-spirited attack on Christians that was not relevant at all to the article, just insulting in an attempt to probably be clever. Even though you may not agree

with the faith of Christians, Jews, Muslims or any other people, treat all with respect. I will not read this newspaper again.

*David Olszyk
Corvallis*

BLAME GAME

EW piles the blame on Republicans for "this mess" we're in (Slant, 4/14). The R's certainly deserve it. One of my alma mater's professors, David Cay Johnson, masterfully describes in the same issue how Republican manipulation of the tax code contributed to "the mess."

But you conveniently forget that this "mess" was precipitated to a large degree by the collapse of the housing market. That part of the story began under a Democratic administration (Carter) with the passage of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).

CRA essentially required banks to write mortgage loans to people who could not realistically afford them. Certain banks took this to extremes by writing "NINA" loans (No Income, No Job, No Assets). One of the biggest banks reportedly didn't even require Social Security numbers in some cases.

Then came the repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act, also under a Democratic administration (Clinton), that gave financial institutions a blank check to venture down very risky paths with their assets, and we all know the result.

The bottom line: If we want real, meaningful change, we must stop sending Republicans and Democrats back to Washington. Neither major party represents you and me.

*Jerry Ritter
Springfield*

RELOCATE ORI

We have something to celebrate in Eugene. I want to publicly thank President Lariviere of the UO for suggesting that the Oregon Research Institute (ORI) build their offices away from the riverfront. A university should consider all the latest science for any projects near sensitive natural areas. The habitats along rivers are critically important for water quality and wildlife.

There is no logical reason, with so many other options, to build on some of the last undeveloped riverfront in Eugene. This issue has been ongoing for 20-plus years. Other cities around the country are removing structures along their rivers, understanding the vital importance of natural riparian flora and fauna. "Sustainable Eugene" should keep these areas from being developed. ORI must build elsewhere. Thank you President Lariviere for making a wise decision that will be remembered for a long time.

ORI, please do what is right for now and the future health of our community, and make every effort to relocate your building plans.

*Pamela Driscoll
Dexter*

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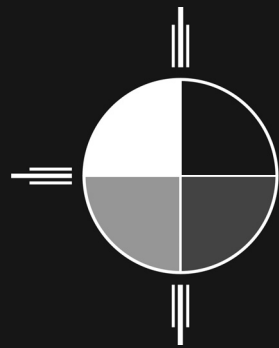
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