

# On War and Wine

Fortified, once more into the breach

It's dawn of summer 2011. Ordinarily, I'd be rolling around our ratty office/lab on the 22nd floor of Eugene's shakiest/oldest highrise. I'd drag my chair over to the grimy window and peer down on the Park Blocks, feasting my eyes on the burst of flowers and the bounty of spring's early harvest. I wax sappy when I see Eugeneans strolling the market, loaded down with plant starts for their gardens, armloads of flowers, bags of organic groceries.

This year, though, we're still soggy, wet, cold, huddled in winter gear. The rhodies have erupted, sure, but the roses are still tight and our world seems to be melting — along with our schools.

And I'm thinking we need another war.

Partly I'm thinking about war 'cause it's Memorial Day as I write this and I can't help remembering my stepfather and how war brought out the best and worst of that man. The best, heroic: He was a young pilot, Navy lieutenant, assigned to fly Catalina seaplanes, rescuing downed flyers from the Pacific. Whatever the weather or the seas, he'd splash down that rattle-trap and snatch a brother from the watery grave awaiting him.

In one grainy black-and-white snapshot, the skinny, ginning, khaki-clad "loot" stood by his Cat, pointing at bullet

and shrapnel holes that riddled his bird's wings and fuselage. Clearly, it was a near-miracle the crate flew at all.

He and thousands of other young men and women survived that bitter war, but some struggled with peace. My stepdad was not a nice guy; he drowned in gin the hero inside himself and fattened into a drunk who used his fists on me, my four sisters and our mother. He found a better life in later years, post-retirement, but he never again located the hero. Maybe he needed his war.

In 1910, the great American philosopher William James published his essay, "The Moral Equivalent of War"; there, he argued that "War is the *strong* life; it is life *in extremis*; war taxes are the only ones men never hesitate to pay." James added that war's "dread hammer is the welder of men into cohesive states."

There it is: War finds the hero inside the jerk; war "welds" us into "cohesive states"; start a war and we'll gladly pay. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have dragged on for 10 years and will cost us \$159 billion this year.

So, school budgets collapsing? Declare a war. Call it a war on ignorance. Call us to battle.



Problem solved, pour the wine:

We desperately seek drinkable pinot noirs under \$20. **Plowbuster 2009 Pinot Noir** (\$20) is terrific, deep, rich, complex and craftily balanced to achieve texture at once firm and smooth. Flavors are nuanced, from black cherries to blackberries with a dash of spice. Deserves a medal, maybe several; it also rewards service in good stemware.

Spender but classic: **Boedecker 2008**

**Pinot Noir Boris** (\$29) is excellent, a blend of barrels selected by Sundance manager Boris Wiedenfeld. Texture is firm, flavors definitely Oregon pinot (black cherry/raspberry/pepper). Give this wine some air before serving in Riedel glasses, with a tender steak.

**Lagarde 2009 Roque Sestiere Corbieres** (\$12) delivers several surprises: first, this dry white from the Languedoc region of France is aromatic and refreshing but with a silky mouthfeel; second, we're told that the grapes used are all Grenache Blanc, unblended with the usual half dozen white grapes allowed; third, it's delish and delightful — floral, citrus, mineral, well-matched with shellfish.

Fortified, we march again to war. Soon, our schools will thrive. Salud. **EW**

**9 HOLES \$14**  
MONDAY-FRIDAY

Enjoy the Zen of Golf

**OAKWAY GOLF COURSE**

NO TEE TIMES  
2000 Cal Young Road, Eugene  
(541) 484-1927

**Women's Health & Annual Exams**  
Anne Marie Moore, WHNP-BC  
541-393-2334

Friendly, personalized & compassionate healthcare

Nurse Practitioner, Board Certified  
annemariemoore.com

**COUPON**

**NOW 2 LOCATIONS! ★ SY'S NEW YORK PIZZA**

**55 SILVER LN. 654-0603** **1211 ALDER 686-9598**

COUPONS GOOD UNTIL JUNE 23RD, 2011

11AM-10PM DAILY **11AM-MIDNIGHT SUN-THU**  
**11AM-1AM FRI-SAT**

**SERVING DELICIOUS NEW YORK PIZZA BY THE SLICE AND BY THE WHOLE PIZZA PIE**

**\$2.00 OFF ANY 18" LARGE**

**FREE LARGE SODA W/ PURCHASE OF 2 SLICES**

**COUPON**

**KLCC IN BLOOM GARDEN TOUR**  
*Walkin' the Whit*

**KLCC 89.7**

Sunday, June 26, 2011  
9 am to 5 pm • Rain or Shine  
\$10 in advance • \$15 day of tour

**A self-guided tour of 10 delightful private gardens plus nearby public gardens in Eugene's Whiteaker neighborhood.**

Live music • Food & Beer Garden • Chair Massage • Community Booths  
www.klcc.org or call 541.463.6000

**Sustainable Building Advisor Certificate Program**

Convenient classes held one Friday & Saturday per month for 9 months beginning in October

**NWEI**  
Northwest Energy Education Institute at Lane Community College

**FREE INFORMATION SESSION**  
Wednesday, June 15th 6-7pm  
Eugene Public Library, Tykeson Room  
To attend, RSVP @ 541-463-3154

QUESTIONS? VISIT WWW.NWEI.ORG OR CALL  
**(541) 463-3154**

**APPROVED BY AIA FOR 100 CES LEARNING UNITS**

**THE SURVIVAL KIT**

June is all about survival, isn't it?  
Students surviving the year, teachers surviving the students, Dads surviving another year of lawnmowers and barbecues to bask in the glory of Father's Day.

Enter Euphoria's Chocolate Survival Kit, filled with chocolate espresso beans, malt balls, a Caramel Almond Chortle, even a couple of white chocolate aspirin to ease the psychic pains of life.  
The perfect gift for Dads, Grads and Teachers?

**A Chocolate Survival Kit from**

17th & Willamette Valley River Center **Oakway Center Stewart & Bertelsen**