

ENLIGHTENED UP

I am very fond of the brief comments by your mini-columnist, Rafael Aldave. He's a man of wit who puts his ideas succinctly, gives his analysis briefly and has his heart in the right place.

*Henry G. Campbell, Jr.
Eugene*

PIGEONS DOWNTOWN

This letter is to set the record straight. I was misquoted several times in the *Weekly* article June 30, "Meeting Eyes Behavior Downtown." Specifically, the author missed my point when I suggested giving the truly homeless an opportunity to preserve their dignity by charging a small amount of money (or work) for a meal. This is actually being done with good results in other Oregon cities.

The "pigeons" mentioned in the article are the people who often have homes, but come for the summer and freeloader off of Eugene's excellent services. The Dining Room is definitely not "bird feed to feed the pigeons" (a quote the author attributed to me).

You wouldn't know it from the article, but I really love living in downtown Eugene.

*Sherrill Necessary
Eugene*

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the story, Sherrill Necessary was quoted referring to homeless individuals as "pigeons" and services offered by the city as "bird feed" during a discussion about behavior issues in downtown Eugene.

BRIGHT FUTURE?

I recently graduated from Portland State University. The tone of the ceremony was optimistic and suggested that bright futures await us 5,000-plus graduates, which I hope is true. However, market conditions suggest otherwise: Matthew C. Klein published an article in *The New York Times* March 20 titled "Educated, Unemployed and Frustrated," which chronicles the fact that 11.2 percent of college graduates under 25 years of age are without work.

Consequently, as a 22-year-old graduate, this situation concerns me personally: Despite maintaining a high grade point average during my academic career and submitting applications for hundreds of entry level positions, I'm concerned that I may be homeless within a matter of months unless I can quickly obtain work. Hopefully, the job market will rebound soon, otherwise I may soon be living on the street. Isn't a university diploma supposed to guarantee economic security?

*Mark Abell
Portland*

A NOVEL IDEA

With the economy down, high unemployment and entitlement putting a strain on the budget, I have a solution to cut overhead cost. Let's start by eliminating the handicapped, elderly and the poor. They contribute nothing to the economy. The elderly spend their time in idle retirement draining Social Security. Raise the retirement age to 70. Anyone above that age — eliminate.

The handicapped are an obviously a waste of money. Do you know how much these unprofitable folks cost Medicare and SSD? If they have two perfectly good limbs, give them a shovel or broom and put them to work or else. Think about how much money we save by getting rid of all that excess. Not to mention all the housing and resources freed up for people who contribute to society — you know, the ones who work.

The state can't afford these deadbeats living off the earnings of the rest of us. Either you are a contributing member of a capitalistic, consumer driven economy or you are a loafing socialist who thinks you are entitled to a free handout from the government. Only the fit and productive are allowed to live in this freedom loving country. God bless America.

This is Swiftian satire of course, but some might think this is a good idea — be afraid.

*Alisa McLaughlin
Eugene*

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