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**THIS MODERN WORLD**

by TOM TOMORROW



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**HOEDADS ARE BACK**

Former members of the Hoedads, the forestry workers cooperative that, in the late 1970s, had one of the largest payrolls in Lane County, will be having a reunion in Eugene Aug. 12-14.

The Hoedads did reforestation work in every state west of the Rockies, including Alaska. Hoedads fought forest fires, built hiking trails, did watershed restoration and technical forestry work, advocated for the right for women to work in the woods, formed a crew of Mexican-American workers, fought in the Oregon Legislature against the rampant use of herbicides, pushed federal agencies in developing more ecological forestry practices and helped to form and support dozens of other worker cooperatives.

In Eugene, Hoedads provided loans and grants to many local alternative businesses — from providing initial operating expenses for the WOW Hall to providing startup money for cooperative businesses, among them restaurants, auto repair shops, wholesale food suppliers and construction companies.

The Hoedads flexed their organizational muscle in local politics, enlisting hundreds of Hoedad volunteers and electing Jerry Rust, the first Hoedad president, as a Lane County commissioner in 1976. Rust ultimately became the longest-serving commissioner in Lane County.

For a period of time, Hoedads and other forestry worker cooperatives cast the Oregon treeplanter as an iconic parallel to the Oregon logger.

If you are a former Hoedad or know of someone who was, please pass the word. There's a Hoedad Reunion site on Facebook. There will also be Hoedad entry in this year's Eugene Celebration parade!

Roscoe Caron  
Eugene

**POOR OBSERVATION**

It appears that intern Brit McGinnis, in reviewing (8/4) our production of *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, made the common mistake of allowing preconceptions and expectations to interfere with good journalism. Your novice reporter admits wanting to see "a satire about technology," but neither the author nor our production offers such.

To claim that the play is "genuinely not funny," is to ignore or simply not notice the audience response throughout the evening, which on several occasions caused the actors to pause for the laughter to subside.

The play is not about "the technology-addicted masses," nor "the rest of my Facebooked and Twittered society." Perhaps McGinnis missed all the references to Charles Dickens. One of the characters reads a paragraph from *A Tale Of Two Cities*. Another refers to it again three times. The character Hermia paraphrases from the novel "we drive alone in our separate carriages never to truly know each other and then the book shuts and then we die." The play is about how we have always lived in isolation and the need for real connection-love.

We were not influenced by *The Jetsons* nor did we have "day-glow colors." Perhaps McGinnis didn't see the poster which is an homage to the painting "Nighthawks," nor the lobby display on Edward Hopper. Hopper's art was Skip Hubbard's influence in creating a set that all observers but McGinnis saw as beautiful. The projections were not of "street signs" but names of restaurants. Good reporting should start with accurate observations.

Everyone connected with this production is experienced and educated in the art of theater, and while we don't expect every reviewer to have the same expertise, we do want them to know something about their own craft. Don't you?

Patrick Torelle  
Director, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*

**SNEAKY DEATHTRAPS**

I'm delighted to see the recent pedestrian-friendly letters ("Just Go" and "Pedestrians, Too"). As a person who enjoys getting around by foot, I'm familiar with Eugene's sneaky little deathtraps. Like the painted crosswalks at Willamette and 15th — no one ever stops (there isn't even a sign reminding drivers that they must stop, by law, for pedestrians). And those nasty double-turn lanes. And the treacherous unmarked intersections mandated by an obscure rule of the road that goes against human instinct — the two-lane one-ways, for example: when a car slows for a person safely waiting to cross, the driver behind instinctually