

host an upcoming traveling road show, Ringling Bros., that still uses animals as “entertainment.”

Just a few days ago, USDA inspectors again cited Ringling Bros. in Colorado Springs. Sarah, a 54-year-old Asian elephant has a chronic health condition and is sick. She fell to the ground as the circus handlers tried to load her into a train boxcar. Stress and fatigue likely led to her dangerous fall. “This elephant’s needs and incidents like Sarah’s fall, underline the dangers faced by animals chained and caged in this impoverished life on the road,” according to Animal Defenders International. A formal complaint has been filed by ADI, with the USDA, and is available upon request.

The Humane Society of the United States wants people to know that circus acts that use wild animals are inhumane. “Animals don’t perform because they want to, they have no choice — they are beaten until they comply,” states HSUS.

However, people do have a choice. I would like to urge everyone in our community, and the State of Oregon, to support only animal-free circuses. Personally, I look forward to the day when the abusive practice of using animals for entertainment purposes is banned worldwide.

Janet Black
Eugene

CODDLING CONCERNS

Conservative billionaire investor Warren Buffet recently penned a *New York Times* editorial titled: “Stop Coddling the Super-Rich.” Buffet details how he and his “mega-rich friends” have been getting “extraordinary tax breaks” for decades while most Americans struggle to make ends meet.

Buffet also debunks the conservative lies about higher tax rates on the rich hurting job creation and investment.

“I have worked with investors for 60 years and I have yet to see anyone — not even when capital gains rates were 39.9 percent in 1976-77 — shy away from a sensible investment because of the tax rate on the potential gain. People invest to make money, and potential taxes have never scared them off. And to those who argue that higher rates hurt job creation, I would note that a net of nearly 40 million jobs were added between 1980 and 2000. You know what’s happened since then: lower tax rates and far lower job creation.”

I say to the mayor and City Council: Let’s stop coddling the super-rich. In November of 2012, let the people vote on a school-funding measure increasing taxes on the wealthy and super-wealthy. Our children are waiting for someone to act. We can’t expect anything from Washington while the Great Capitulator is in the White House and the wing-nuts are running Congress.

Listen to Buffet: “My friends and I have been coddled long enough by a billionaire-friendly Congress. It’s time for our government to get serious about shared sacrifice.”

Joshua Welch
Eugene

EMBRACE THE INEVITABLE

The article, “Protest Rules: Cascadians Protest Big Oil in Montana” (7/21) was a worthy human interest story focusing on Earth First! activists’ tactics and dedication in opposing development of tar sands in Alberta, Canada. But it was ultimately unsympathetic toward the hard work of those activists to publish a major article and not include one sentence explaining why tar sands are an issue.

There is a reason why various corporations are environmentally devastating a huge region of Canada by digging up black, gunky dirt, and then processing it with vast amounts of water and natural gas ultimately producing something resembling crude oil: That reason is that the world has begun the slow, painful process of running out of conventional crude oil.

EW readers would benefit from knowing something about peak oil because the human family needs to understand that sustainability is not optional. If we don’t voluntarily stop burning fossil fuels then we will involuntarily stop when we run out which is already beginning to happen. As we have no choice in the matter, we may as well embrace the inevitable.

Robert Bolman
Eugene

EDITOR’S NOTE: Indeed the discussion of toxic tar sands was brief, but the topic got much more attention in our cover story on Winona LaDuke and the battle against tar sands extraction in our archives for Sept. 2, 2010.

HAZARDOUS CHOICES

Why are herbicides such as 2-4-D, Atrazine and Roundup legal? These chemicals are poisonous, and some symptoms such as headaches, swelling in the throat and face, allergies, tumors, ADHD, Parkinson’s disease, diabetes and even cancer have been found commonly in people exposed to these chemicals.

Recently our neighbor sprayed Roundup in the alley behind our house and right next to our garden. From the spraying my mom had headaches and I had severe nosebleeds, sometimes five a day, a runny nose and headaches. This lasted for both of us up to five days after the spraying and we were afraid to eat the food out of our own garden fearing that there might be chemicals in the food. Imagine all that hard work on our garden gone to waste because of unnecessary spraying in an alleyway. I could have cut that grass and dandelions with our lawn mower.

Imagine how bad it is for the people in Triangle Lake who have massive aerial spraying only a mile away. I can barely guess how that is affecting them! Couldn’t we find another way to get rid of these weeds instead of using all these harmful and sometimes lethal chemicals? For example, there is a shortage of jobs right now, couldn’t the government help pay for workers to go in and get rid of weeds in public and private places? This would help make jobs, save lives and save the planet!

Santiago Gause, age 12
Eugene

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