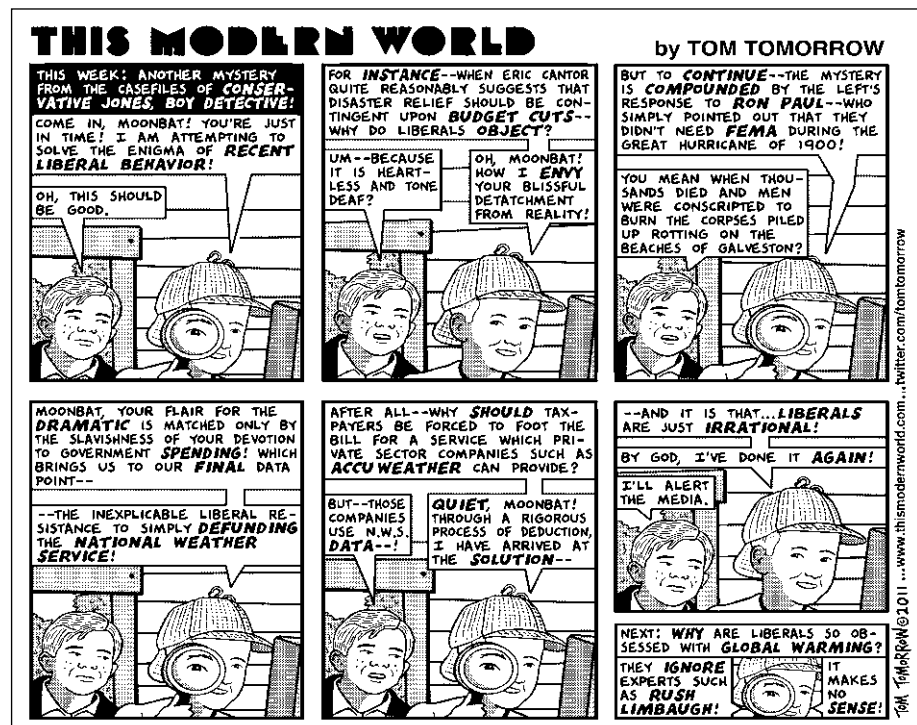




HIRSUTE PURSUIT

Here is a thought after just attending the Eugene Celebration. What do you all think about having a beard fashion show or contest at next year's community celebration? For complete disclosure, I have not shaved or trimmed my beard for the last 12 years or so.

I am thinking that a little bit of advertising would bring many hirsute hippies out of the woodwork and woods. Not to stereotype beard wearers though, this is Eugene. I am quite certain that there are folks from all walks of life with fun, quirky and amazing facial hair. We could have categories: beards, moustaches, sideburns, goatees — even eyebrows (or eyebrow).

So what do you think, Eugene? If it sounds good, contact the Eugene Celebration office, and let's get this hairy situation rolling. I ran into famous TV celebrity Mr. John Fisher at the celebration, he thought a fundraiser would be nice. Perhaps a "hairaiser fund raiser," a hirsute pursuit? Maybe we could have a yearlong contest to see who can grow the longest beard in a calendar year, with photos before and after and a measuring day during the Eugene Celebration?

If this doesn't pan out, maybe us hairy guys could get together and be a parade entry? Hirsutes Unite, Running with Scissors or Running from Scissors — just put on your marching boots and let the beards fly! So what do you say, Barry, Cary, nondairy Gary, Mary, Perry, Sherry, better head for Jerry's, razor blades be wary. PS: Santa Claus, you are most welcome to join us.

Tim Boyden
Eugene

REPLACE LIGHTS

I agree completely with your Sept. 25 article on Walkability. Another dangerous intersection is on 1st Avenue in the Whiteaker. 1st Avenue is unfortunately a cut-through from River Road to downtown. There is heavy traffic at times, and traffic speed is pretty fast.

A pedestrian crossing at 1st and Monroe is marked with a crosswalk and constantly flashing yellow lights. Monroe is a popular bicycle and pedestrian route, and many people use it. However, the

constantly flashing yellow lights are generally ignored, because usually nobody is crossing the street. So when somebody does want to cross the street it is not very obvious.

Why not replace these lights with stutter-flash lights that only come on when somebody wants to cross the street? This would be much safer for both pedestrians and bicycles.

Duncan Rhodes
The Whiteaker

DUCKING & DODGING

I agree with your article Sept. 25 on walking in Eugene. I've walked the downtown area extensively. And pedestrian traffic is certainly a second-class citizen in this city. I usually walk to work, a bit over half a mile.

There's many a plan for bicycle traffic. Eugene is a trailblazer in planning for bikers, maybe too much so. As a walker I've often found myself at odds with bicyclists. Many bikers feel they have a pedestrian-type right-of-way: not yielding at stop signs, riding against traffic, traveling wrong directions on one-way streets, riding without lights after dark. Eugene might be one of very few cities where one needs to look both ways while crossing one-way streets, not for cars, but bikes! It's obviously not every biker, not even most. But you irresponsible bikers know who you are.

In a city with dedicated bike lanes throughout it's a shame the ducking and dodging you have to do as a walker on our downtown sidewalks to avoid being run over by a bicycle. I'm certain I'm not alone in this experience. And given the city has put so much into being bicycle-friendly, isn't it time the police enforce some simple rules of the road? Or at least the sidewalk?

DJ Barber
Eugene

AVOIDING REAL ISSUES

In a Viewpoint column in EW Aug. 25, Bill Tanner and others continue to avoid the real issues at EPUD by continuing to claim that the problems that exist is a personality issue between the general manager and a board member. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Tanner claims that fiscally we are in a better cash position today than 10 years ago. As a Finance Committee member for 10 years I happen to know that approximately a dozen years ago the board elected to pay over \$4 million in cash out of our utility reserves to build a badly needed substation in Marcola. They did so to avoid interest and related costs in borrowing the money for the construction of the substation. This allowed EPUD to strengthen its financial position through the years, thus allowing for a better financial statement today. Obviously, long-term debt has decreased, because EPUD makes an annual payment to retire their outstanding debt. In reality, there is not much change.

It is wrong to dismiss former employees (40 out of 78) as disgruntled. Many were forced out of their positions. They devoted extra time and effort while they were employed in building a great utility that we still have today.

If however, administration and some board members continue on their trek of self-serving and continue to disrespect some board and committee members (I have personally experienced this) who do not always agree with them, it will ultimately affect the progress and wonderful reputation of our utility. Call your board director and ask them for greater transparency and open committee meetings, including the finance, rate and resource committees.

Vicki Flynn
Eugene

BAILOUT BANDIT

In a recent U.S. Bank statement, I was charged a new monthly maintenance fee of \$8.95 for my checking account. Though the tellers were courteous and friendly and I had unused checks, I moved my account into a local credit union. Numerous examples show how U.S. Bank uses fees to prey on citizens facing financial difficulties.

In 2009, U.S. Bank supplied money to fight Measures 66 & 67 that slightly raised taxes on the wealthy and corporations.

U.S. Bank contracts with the state of Oregon to handle the "ReliaCard," a debit card that stores unemployment and child support payments. Though unemployment benefits are provided weekly, single parents and the unemployed can only access benefits from an ATM twice a month before being charged extra fees. Cardholders are charged for speaking with a teller more than twice monthly.

All this is while U.S. Bank paid out billions in bonuses in 2010 and had huge corporate earnings in 2011.

U.S. Bank is clearly another one of Wall Street's bailout bandits. I urge anyone who has money invested with any the big banksters to move your money into a local credit union and work for the creation of an Oregon state bank.

Scott Fife
Eugene

UNSUPERVISED

A quick heads up for Eugene parents who may not be in the know. Your 6-year-old should *never* be unsupervised alone in a public area. Not a park. Not a library.

Especially not in Maurie Jacobs Park directly across the bridge from the Valley River mall walking your dog. I don't care how you were raised. I don't care if every one of your neighbors thinks it's OK.

I'll give you a quick update: the Department of Human Services considers it neglect. So do I. So should all you other mandatory reporters out there — even "helpful" neighbors.

Ian Rapp
Eugene

KEEPING SECRETS

There are some things that should be kept secret. I really wish that anyone since Einstein who had an idea about how to make an atomic bomb had kept it to themselves.

But I think it's open season when the government tries to keep secrets from the people about their corruptions. It says we no longer have real democracy because they're purposely keeping important facts from the voters, those who are supposed to ultimately be in control. Julian Assange remains my favorite hero. The best ways to bring peace are to use persuasion and subsistence assistance as needed. It's important to be seen as respectful rather than manipulating and dominating, especially of those who try to get the truth to us.

Dan Robinson
Eugene

PAINFUL TRICKS

This past weekend, I had the pleasure of joining fellow PETA members along with more than 100 demonstrators to call attention to the abuse elephants face at the hands of Ringling Bros. circus. Holding a sign that said, "Elephants Never Forget," I wore an elephant costume to represent animals who are abused by the circus.

According to very recent veterinary and inspection reports, Nicole and Karen, two elephants who are suffering from arthritis and have been lame for many years, and Juliette and Sara, young elephants Ringling has failed to treat for chronic lameness, are forced to perform grueling and painful tricks in the circus's shows.

We also displayed photos taken inside Ringling's training center. The photos expose how baby elephants are stretched out, slammed to the ground, gouged with steel-tipped bullhooks and shocked with electric prods. These abusive sessions go on for several hours a day in order to force the baby elephants to learn to perform circus tricks out of fear of punishment. As infants, elephants are torn away from their mothers and beaten into submission — and older, arthritic elephants like Nicole and Karen are *still* forced to perform painful contortions despite their ill health.

Not only was it impressive to see over 100 people speaking up for the elephants who are beaten, electro-shocked, and chained up to 100 hours at a time — but it was great to meet so many people of all ages who were speaking up for the first time. Anyone who looks at the heartbreaking photos and videos will see with their own eyes how bad Ringling's abuse of elephants is. I hope parents will realize that if their kids love animals,