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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Safe?" warns there is no regulation of inks injected into skin. The report says "Many pigments used in tattoo inks are industrial-grade colors suitable for printers' ink or automobile paint." See <http://wkly.ws/14a>

I have had a basal cell carcinoma (skin cancer) sliced off my body. Anyone who sticks needles into someone should have medical training and a good reason.

It is ironic that some who object to artificial colors in food see no problem permanently putting paint into the body's largest organ: skin.

The tattoo fad reminds me of the crowd scene in Monty Python's *The Life of Brian*: "We're all individuals." James Kunstler ([www.kunstler.com](http://www.kunstler.com)) has wry commentary on the sociological significance of tattoos. Their increasing popularity is an indicator that our culture no longer has a sense of a future.

Mark Robinowitz  
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: EW is perfectly happy to take ads from dermatologists too.

### OSU AARGH SCIENCE

It's a shame that OSU doesn't practice or even advocate humane and sustainable farming practices that improve the safety and nutrition value of meat, milk, and eggs; promote the humane husbandry of food animals; reduce environmental pollution and conserve natural resources; and broaden economic opportunities for family farmers, including the development and preservation of niche markets.

Center stage is OSU Dairy Center. I'm sure you have noticed the glaring white plastic that covers tons of cow manure at 4490 Harrison St. — manure which would emit dangerous levels of methane gas if let loose. The reason why: The dairy management is reluctant to innovate water troughs into grazing pastures, citing lack of funds and space, therefore trapping more than 250 "wet" cows into the seamy confines of the dairy barn walls.

Next is the OSU Swine Center. Here pigs are raised under the constant glare of fluorescent lights. Fortunately, the sows are allowed to root around outside; the boars are not. The management also cites lack of funds and space as the reasons why.

Last is the OSU Poultry Center where hundreds of chicks are gestated from eggs every term as research projects for students and deftly disposed of after they are no longer of use.

I rest my case. Wake up, OSU Ag Science, and smell the winds of change before they blow you off the map of consumer expectation and of humane animal care.

Kay Sams  
Corvallis

### BEGGAR BOTS

The economy may be depressed but my beggar bots are booting booty. Unemployed and out of insurance, I was getting worried. I reckoned I would soon be standing on a street corner with a cardboard sign. The problem with this method of procuring cash is one of scale: You can only be on one corner at a time. My solution was to deploy a platoon of robots which could cover various locations 24/7. Last winter I built a number of cyber-medicants to test on the streets.

A big problem was predation from, you know, real beggars. No matter how realistic I made my homunculi the street smarties would wise to the occasion. One of my top bots was a crippled granny raising funds to feed her cat (a scrawny specimen with a piteous mew). A motion detector triggered her quavery voice, "Spare change so I can feed my kitty?" Whereupon a shaky, liver-spotted hand would beseechingly be proffered. This puppet was taking in 50 to 60 bucks a day. Then all of a sudden she dries up and doesn't yield a dime. So I get mighty suspicious and set up a surveillance cam. Turns out some young street punk was filching all her collections. Stealing from granny! Tells you something about human nature to observe such wickedness.

But I am not a tech-savvy, high IQ, creative genius to be bamboozled by such a flaw in my system. I invented an aromatherapy discouragement to beggar bot crittling. Unauthorized access of the purse wherein the cash is stashed releases a powerful effluvium. This stuff makes, comparatively, a sewage treatment plant smell like Elysian Fields after a rain; makes a strong man swoon and a débutante retch out her liver. Banditry of my beggar bots has fallen off sharply.

I now have a network of bots sucking in as much as 900 smack-a-doodly-whops a day. Tax free cash in a flutter of small bills but mostly dimes and quarters. I actually have to use a wheelbarrow to take it to the bank.

A glamour gig it is not. But it beats collecting cans and bottles or, gulp, standing out there with a cardboard sign myself.

David H. Tyson  
Eugene

### HUMAN VS. BICYCLE RIGHTS

Shannon Wilson's letter (9/22) demanding safe bicycle routes would please me, however, safe bicycle routes will not significantly reduce the carnage caused by motor vehicle operations. Currently approximately 2.3 million emergency room visits, 40,000 human and 300 million-plus animal deaths are caused each year by motor vehicle incidents. Traffic engineers know that motor vehicle operation at speeds below 20 mph greatly increase collision survivability and reduce incidents, yet we permit speeds of 35, 45, or 55 mph in areas where people must cross or enter roadways. Few question why until they lose a loved one.

Governments seem to operate at two extremes: one allowing exploitation of the people, the other to protect. I argue that our government is allowing exploitation of people for high speed commerce on our roadways. The injuries and deaths seem worth the profits from rural development and fast delivery. The problem could be solved through legislation and infrastructure, and it could be solved immediately by the people.

If only a fraction of the humanitarians and "believers" who profess love for their fellow man and living creatures would not drive in excess of 20 mph on any secondary road, motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians, equestrians and animals could all coexist safely. Will any of us take action?

Ed Gunderson  
Creswell

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