

VACUOUS REPUTATION

How threadbare is the sham of Eugene's progressive reputation? The idea that we live in a supposedly liberal community is an increasingly absurd notion. Articles like Alan Pittman's "Wet Beds" Sept. 29 just add further evidence as to the emptiness of Eugene's reputed commitment to progressive politics.

We have no problem dropping \$2 million on City Hall blueprints that never get used, but we definitely cannot afford to keep our neighbors from freezing to death on our streets.

Someplace I once heard that the mark of a virtuous society is found in how it treats members of its lowest ranks. Let's not play pretend that there exists within this allegedly liberal town anything but the most empty rhetoric regarding homelessness. We are far more concerned with remaining "Track Town USA" than we could ever be about saving bums from exposure.

Our priorities are completely in order. Actually important funding priorities include enforcing our constitutionally bankrupt Downtown Exclusion Zone, or making sure our cops are free to Taser anyone they please, or making sure our police are out there making us all super-fucking safe by harassing the homeless for dangerous camping infractions, or god forbid, panhandling on the wrong street corner.

*Drew Furor
Eugene*

KEEP THE BOUNDARIES

Among the foundations of our representative democracy is the notion of equality: Each person gets one vote to determine who will represent his or her interests in policymaking.

The two most fundamental threats to our democracy undermine this principle. One is the legal fiction that corporations are persons, with the right of free "speech" including unlimited, anonymous contributions to political campaigns. That effectively gives some people more than one vote.

The other is gerrymandering, the practice of drawing electoral boundaries to favor one political perspective over another. That deprives some citizens of having a vote that matters.

A public hearing was held Oct. 5 on whether to maintain or change the boundaries of the commissioner districts for Lane County. But it's not too late to express your views by email, phone or in person (details at <http://wkly.ws/14k>). Democracy is therefore generally best served by changing electoral districts as little as possible, to avoid gerrymandering by those currently — and temporarily — in power.

I understand that in the last 10 years population growth was even, within 1 percent, across all commissioner district boundaries. If that's correct, then there would seem to be no good reason to change them; and it's hard to see how any major changes to the current boundaries could be other than politically motivated.

A decent respect for democracy therefore appears to require that the current commissioners leave the existing Lane County districts intact.

*Robert Roth
Eugene*

HOST THE HOMELESS

If you're a big fan of the homeless prove it: Invite them over to your place and enjoy their company. Your invitation should be nice and early, say 6 am. First you can let them root around your lawn for anything not nailed down or locked up, because spare change only goes so far.

After scrounging up enough money from that, it should be about 9 am; a perfect time to go get some malt liquor with your new friends! After that highly important errand let them hunker down on your front lawn and enjoy the sweet sounds of violent confrontation between two people who had been drinking buddies only minutes prior. Once everyone becomes too drunk to buy more camo have them toss their empties in your lawn and let out a self-satisfied sigh while watching them fall into a peaceful slumber wherever they may lie (the lucky ones get your front steps).

I feel far too selfish keeping these wonderful people all to myself a few days a week, so give EPD a call and ask them when they plan on harassing street people with such oppressive tactics as: asking them to move along, citing them for public intoxication, or generally just trying to make taxpayers actually feel comfortable

in their own neighborhoods; and let them know that you have a safe, secure place for these poor people to get drunk at.

Oh wait, I forgot that Eugene doesn't support drunk, belligerent litterers. Or is that only the case when they're paying for an education? Man, this town is confusing.

*Drew Mohr
Eugene*

OBVIOUS PLOYS

I like to stick to the issues and avoid ascribing self-serving intentions or hidden agendas to someone's actions. Still I am at a loss to account otherwise for the astonishing behavior of one county commissioner at the county redistricting hearing Oct. 5.

A crowd of well-informed citizens, having studied all seven redistricting proposals before the board that day, turned out (even at the inconvenient early afternoon hour) for the public hearing portion. Several dozen regular folks gave impassioned testimony as to why the current plan — in force for the last 12 years — still works fine. There was an overwhelming consensus of 99 percent that "it ain't broke, so don't fix it!"

Several of the proposals were obvious attempts at gerrymandering; that is, stacking districts in such a way that the next elections would unseat one of our two remaining liberal commissioners. Adding insult to the entire process, Commissioner Jay Bozievich waited until after the public hearing process was over before

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