

Special Props

Appreciating those living proudly



We're deep in November, the month of Thanksgiving
A chance to reflect and be thankful for living
It's good to slow down, settle back, take some time
To express why I'm thankful, then make it all rhyme.

When I put it on paper (well, really a screen)
I can give my thoughts words, I can say what I mean
Expressing my thanks puts a smile in my soul
Now if you're smiling too, I've accomplished my goal.

I know we're all busy and worried as well
The news isn't good, we can get mad as hell
At the unabashed greed of that darned 1 percent
So we certainly need to speak out and to vent.

And while we are using our freedom of speech
To make our thoughts known, to complain, and to teach
More people are hearing and speaking out, too
And finding there's really so much we can do.

Our systems are broken, our world needs repair
And we can contribute to make things more fair
We can free up our minds, think out of the box
We can all get our news from more places than FOX.

The people uprising is good news to me
The great occupations, the will to be free
The long arc of hist'ry, dear Martin once said
Bends clearly toward justice, we're moving ahead.

The movement is growing, there's change in the air
There's hope and there's vision, and goodwill to spare
There's progress and beauty, and so I say thanks
And express my desire to re-regulate banks.

When I stop to indulge in this yearly tradition
Of turning my thoughts to my current condition
I can't help but notice that things, all in all,
Are pretty damned good, which is good to recall.

A few little problems are nothing compared
To this past year of health and the good times I've shared
With my dearest of friends and my closest of pals
Especially the gay boys and lesbian gals.

It's not that my straight friends and loved ones don't matter
They do and I'm glad for both former and latter
But I give special props to the glorious queers
Who are living life proudly and conquering fears.

Queers in the service aren't really that scary
And looks like we're winning the freedom to marry
I'm thankful I get to be part of this change
That makes queerness normal and makes normal strange.

Of course there is suffering, evil and hate
But it helps to remember the things that are great
Like the space and the time in the month of November
To cuddle in close, take some time, and remember.

Award-winning writer Sally Sheklow's cheerleading for justice and equality has appeared in EW since 1999. Send comments to sally@wymprov.com

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IN MY DREAMS

Here is a dream I had the other night:

While walking along 5th Avenue I had an intuitive notion that prompted me to walk over to the Occupy Camp at Washington/Jefferson Park. There seemed to be lots of people there and the vibe seemed surprisingly positive, almost festive.

From a small tent I was standing near, out steps Phil Knight. He motions people to gather around and then begins to speak loudly:

"Hi, my name is Phil Knight, I am the founder of the Nike Corporation and I have something I wish to tell you. I have recently had a vision in which the late Steve Jobs' spirit visited me. He has convinced me to do something that I know in my heart I should've done years ago. I am announcing to you here today that I have decided to close one of our Nike manufacturing plants in Indonesia and open up one right here in Eugene, possibly in the closed Hyundai plant. It will employ more than 5,000 people. I know this will cost me about a \$1 billion, but I can afford it and I know that my accountants and lawyers are going to try to stop me; they won't. Steve also promised me that if I could pull this off, he would visit some of the other 1 percenters and challenge them to do the same!"

As I awoke, I sat on the edge of my bed and pondered the idea of dreams coming true.

*Rick DeAngelo
Eugene*

TICKET-HAPPY COPS

I need to blow off a little steam over the last two traffic citations I got. The first one was for a burned-out brake light bulb that cost me \$142. Two bulbs were working which is all you need to be legal, which I found out later after paying the fine. The most recent was \$262 for failure to stay in a single lane. My front tire was on the center line briefly.

Most of the Eugene police officers are ticket happy and would give a ticket to their own mother. I think we should all start protesting. This is completely outrageous.

*Phil Swaggart
Eugene*

TIME TO LIVE FREE

The Occupiers have a problem identifying with a specific course of political action that they support. But, that lack of focus only further explains why so many Americans feel that the American Dream has either passed them by or is now only a hoax meant to divert our attention while the robber barons continue to steal the American Dream from us.

It used to take many years, sometimes decades, for the capitalist system to create the conditions that lead to wide-spread social unrest. From the crisis of the Second Bank of the United States in 1819, to the New York Stock Exchange crash of 1929, to Black Wednesday in 1992, and finally to the Great Recession of 2008, the financial meltdowns have come with increased regularity.

The capitalist system relies on two major conditions: the ever expanding market for goods and services produced, and a population capable of purchasing those goods and services. What has happened is that the reduction of the ability of the middle class to buy the output of the capitalist system has caused the market to become drastically reduced.

If the Occupiers are not especially articulate it is because they are still in the grips of an economic culture that they expect will produce results for the 99 percent as well as the 1 percent of the population. The fact is that the system as it now enforced is in the process of strangling the very market it needs to continue to exist. The solution to this is not more police action to break up the Occupier camps or even more Occupier camps; it is a retooling of the American Dream to make it consistent with the legitimate desires of all the population, the 99 percent and the 1 percent, to live free and to have a life of dignity and self-respect.

*Gerry Merritt
Eugene*

HITTING & KICKING

In reference to the cover story (11/17) on the muay thai martial arts champion, for the life of me I cannot understand why a person gifted with superior athletic ability,

