

**2011**  
AN ADMITTEDLY INCOMPLETE AND LITERALLY SUBJECTIVE YEAR IN REVIEW  
PART TWO (YES, IT IS VERY WORDY)

**SEPT. 20:** "DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL" REPEALED; REPUBLIC FAILS TO COLLAPSE.

**SEPT. 22:** DEMONSTRATING THEIR UNCONDITIONAL RESPECT AND GRATITUDE FOR MILITARY SERVICE, G.O.P. CROWD BOOS SOLDIER FOR BEING GAY.

**OCTOBER 29:** FREAK SNOWSTORM ALONG EAST COAST MEANS...OH, YOU KNOW.

**"MARGE BARGLE BLARGH AL GORE!"**  
HAW HAW HAW HAW HAW

**NOV. 30:** MICHELE BACHMANN SAYS GAYS DO HAVE THE RIGHT TO MARRY.

"THEY CAN MARRY A MAN IF THEY'RE A WOMAN, OR THEY CAN MARRY A WOMAN IF THEY'RE A MAN!" SERIOUSLY, SHE SAID THAT.

**MOST OF THE SUMMER:** OBAMA REPEATEDLY TRIES TO STRIKE A "GRAND BARGAIN" WITH REPUBLICANS. PLEASE, MAY I OFFER FURTHER CONCESSIONS?

**NO.**

**AUG. 12:** ALLEGEDLY SERIOUS PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE HERMAN CAIN TELLS CROWD--

"--A POET ONCE SAID 'LIFE CAN BE A CHALLENGE, LIFE CAN SEEM IMPOSSIBLE...'"

IF IT IS THE THEME SONG FROM A POKEMON MOVIE.

**SEPT. 12:** RON PAUL SAYS UNINSURED "TAKE (THEIR) OWN RISKS"; G.O.P. CROWD CHEERS AT THOUGHT OF HYPOTHETICAL PERSON DYING DUE TO LACK OF INSURANCE.

WHICH ACTUALLY HAPPENED TO ONE OF RON PAUL'S OWN STAFFERS IN 2008.

**SEPT. 24:** OCCUPY WALL STREET GAINS TRACTION WHEN VIDEO OF COP MACING PEACEFUL PROTESTERS GOES VIRAL.

NICE WORK, DUMBASS.

**ALSO:** THANKS TO THE OCCUPY MOVEMENT, PUNDITS BEGIN TO REALIZE THAT ORDINARY AMERICANS DON'T GIVE A RAT'S ASS ABOUT THE DEFICIT.

APPARENTLY THEY WANT "JOBS!"

WHO KNEW?

**SEPT. 30:** U.S. GOV'T ASSASSINATES U.S. CITIZEN ACCUSED OF TERRORISM.

"I GOTCHER DUE PROCESS RIGHT HERE!"

A FEW WEEKS LATER: U.S. GOV'T KILLS HIS TEENAGE SON.

**NOV. 1:** HOUSE VOTES TO REAFFIRM "IN GOD WE TRUST" AS NATIONAL MOTTO.

JUST IN CASE ANY-ONE THOUGHT WE HAD STARTED WORSHIPPING CYTHLHU!

**NOV. 9:** ALLEGEDLY SERIOUS CANDIDATE HERMAN CAIN DECLARES: "FOR EVERY ONE PERSON THAT COMES FORWARD WITH A FALSE ACCUSATION, THERE ARE PROBABLY THOUSANDS WHO WILL SAY NONE OF THAT SORT OF ACTIVITY EVER CAME FROM HERMAN CAIN!"

**MONTH OF DECEMBER:** INCREASINGLY DESPERATE G.O.P. CONTEMPLATES PRESIDENTIAL VIABILITY OF DISGRACED FORMER HOUSE SPEAKER WITH LONG HISTORY OF ADULTERY.

ON THE PLUS SIDE, HE'S NOT MITT ROMNEY!

**ALL OF 2011:** MORE LUNACY THAN WE COULD FIT IN AN ENTIRE YEAR'S WORTH OF CARTOONS--

--THOUGH OF COURSE WE TRIED!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM TMW! SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

**MISDIRECTED ANGER**

For those who look at the Occupy movement with disdain, look deeper. This is a case of misdirected anger, with lots of help from mainstream media. Eighty five percent of college graduates are moving back in with their parents due to lack of employment. People are losing their homes because they can't afford medical bills or have lost their jobs. Yet government bailed out the big banks which helped create many of these problems. We subsidize the fossil fuel industry which is making more profits than any in history. Most legislators are in the back pockets of the wealthy, afraid to change this corrupt system.

Applaud the Occupiers, join them, become one of them. We are at a crossroads in history where the path we choose will determine the fate of life on Earth. The economy is intricately connected to the natural environment. Wildlife habitats are being destroyed, climate change is accelerating and humans are consuming resources at an increasingly unsustainable rate. We need to occupy these truths in order to change our course to one of sharing, compassion and love for one another.

*Pamela Driscoll  
Dexter*

**PARKS FOR THE POOR**

It's gone but not going away. Lauren Regan, Occupiers and no-choice homeless: Thank you all for being a force for the betterment of American Life.

Going back to the history of struggle in the late 19th century is Jacob A. Riis, an immigrant from Denmark who was homeless for seven years. He is considered the father of the small park movement. Parks were meant for poor people.

Riis fought for housing for homeless and got it with the help of Theodore Roosevelt. He also fought for pure water, schools and against child labor and corruption. If we must go backward, let's go forward.

Riis' parting words were "We can and will right our wrongs in an orderly way or the republic is a mockery."

*Steve Trimmell  
Veneta*

**ERRONEOUS CLAIMS**

Isn't it ironic when you read a letter to the editor from someone with a "research" background who throws around a lot of figures and analysis, but has failed to do the basic research? This is the case with the Dec. 15 letter in *EW* from Michael Lee regarding EWEB's plans to upgrade technology and install new digital meters, aka smart meters, in 2013.

Let's set the record straight. Contrary to the erroneous claim that the project will cost \$50 million, past and updated estimates have established a project cost range of \$27 million to \$32 million. Certainly not a small figure, but still almost half what Lee claims.

Next, Lee claims the supposed \$50 million project would cost every customer \$500. Not true. Basic math: \$50 million divided by 142,000 electric and water meters equals \$352. EWEB doesn't plan to charge a meter fee to customers and the project cost is in the \$27 million to \$32 million range, so Lee's poor math is irrelevant.

Lee challenges whether EWEB's 19

meter readers drive 100 miles a day to read meters. That would mean each meter reader drives only about 5 miles a day. EWEB reads 142,000 meters each month, spread out over 21 work days, in a geographic area that is 235 square miles in size, from Greenhill Road to the west and Vida to the east, from North Coburg Road to Spencer Butte. EWEB knows how many miles each vehicle is driven, each day. We've got the numbers. Why anyone would speculate by grabbing inaccurate numbers out of the air is puzzling.

Lastly, EWEB's digital meter project would replace all of the utility's aging mechanical meters. The cost of the project would be offset by eliminating the expenses associated with manually reading meters. In other words, customers wouldn't see any noticeable impact on overall rates.

*Lance Robertson  
Public Affairs Manager  
Eugene Water & Electric Board*

**YEAH, BUT**

It seems like our New York and Chicago delegates in recent letters both agree with me that PRI and Pegasus are overrated. They simply are old favorites of UO alumni and current students alike. As for the others, Sy's kind of gets it but the best kept secret in Eugene is the utterly fantastic organic made-from-scratch pizza found at World Cafe/ New Day Bakery in the Whiteaker. This hard-to-please lifelong Philadelphian ('til '06) is verry impressed!

*Glenn Leonard  
Eugene*

**WILDLIFE DISSERVICES**

Thanks for publishing Debra Merskin's article (12/22) about the government Wildlife Services Department and their mass killing of nonhuman animals — both intentional and unintentional. Please continue to interrogate this destructive government agency that does not provide a "service" to wildlife, but rather to certain industries.

*Carrie Packwood Freeman  
Atlanta, Ga.  
(formerly of Eugene)*

**GETTING TO THE POINT**

I'd like to suggest a new *EW* convention that each letter to the editor begin with a clear and concise topic sentence.

The problem as I see it is that typically *EW* letters ramble here and there without ever getting to the point, leaving the reader guessing to the end what their purpose might be. They might talk about a childhood pet or the neighbor who won't prune the fence roses, or perhaps complain about the underhanded behavior of some distant governmental functionaries, before eventually settling on the real issue: the lack of proper bike lanes downtown or the way the sun gently brightens 10th Avenue in the late afternoon. Or a beautiful bus stop face seen in passing or the sofa-clawing thrill of discovering a \$2 micro-draft happy hour. Everyday community events, in other words.

Which brings me to my point. I love Eugene radio. We are blessed in this town with three wonderful community stations, KRVM, KWVA and KLCC. Wherever I go at any time of day or (more often) night I can generally count on finding excellent, unpredictable music on at least one of

**NOTES FROM THE RIVERSIDE** BY MARK HARRIS

**Waiting for Justice?**

Making a way out of no way

While I fervently wish that racism would take a holiday, I haven't noticed that it does.

I listen to my Tea Party critics when they accuse me of "playing the race card" every time I don't get my way. It's more about making my own way out of no way. It's not like Black Santa is going to appear in Kinte cloth on Kwanzaa-Umoja with a reparations check, saying "thanks for all you do, love Barack."

I can give thanks that I have a home when it's 36 degrees, but that is tempered by the revelation that I have a home where it's 36 degrees F, not 36 degrees C, with a sea breeze. The climate is chilly in other ways. In the "game" where race is a card, the rules say that if I use race it's a two of diamonds. If a Caucosoid, or someone with most favored minority status uses race, it's an ace to prove me wrong. I don't mind being proven wrong, I just hate being right. Given that usual outcome, my actual experience is that I can't hope for any solution or resolution from you. That's like waiting for a pimp to free his hos, or a slaver giving his slaves 40 acres, a mule and a free ride to Harvard, let alone Howard.

Look, even the dude who ripped off an African melody to write "Amazing Grace" was a slaver, who after being delivered of the storm (which was the inspiration for the song) still didn't free his slaves on that voyage and continued to make more slave voyages.

I don't believe any institution rooted in slavery, or expect that a state founded in racial injustice, like Oregon, would allow its institutions to embody and embrace a larger humanity. Not at the expense of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy more commonly known by its kinder, gentler appellation: the Matrix of Domination. The Matrix is that interlocking set of isms that can be known by the acronym CR<sup>2</sup>A<sup>3</sup>SH (classism, racism, religion, addiction, ability, age, sexism, heterosexism). Definitely, if you speak English and were taught and believed the "Columbus discovered America" narrative, along with the Easter Bunny and Santa Claus, you are in the Matrix. You know what agents of the system look and sound like, and asking them for justice and freedom is like asking the Mafia to turn Vegas into a homeless vet rehabilitation community. Not necessarily an idea that would occur to them.

All that remains is that you free yourself from your own bonds, be your own Morpheus, Trinity and Neo, and never trust an agent of the System to free you. So I don't play the race card, because I don't allow myself to expect justice, where it has been long evicted. But I'm open to being surprised when I see Justice on the street, begging for Change. Maybe during those occasions I'll raise a fist with Justice and shout Harambee!

Let's pull together. Till freedom comes, stay strong.

*Mark Harris is an instructor and substance abuse prevention coordinator at LCC.*

