

COAL TRAIN FREE

Thanks for your cover story (1/19) on the coal trains coming soon to dozens of Northwest communities. I wanted to alert you that there's more that residents can do than to merely plead with their local politicians to pass nonbinding resolutions. They can instead follow the lead of the group Coal-Free-Bellingham.org, which just launched a local ballot initiative campaign.

Bellingham, Wash., is the newest addition to the more than 150 mostly East Coast communities that are learning how to exercise their inherent right of local self-governance by passing community rights-based legally binding ordinances. These communities in six states have banned corporate fracking, corporate agriculture, corporate mining, corporate water extraction for bottling and corporate sewage sludge dumping on farmlands. You can review the actual ordinances at celdf.org

I work full-time on building this community rights movement across Oregon and would love to return to Eugene soon to help your community to jump on board this new-paradigm campaign.

Imagine if we could pass this same ordinance in towns along each of the rail lines the coal corporations plan to use! Wouldn't that be exciting?

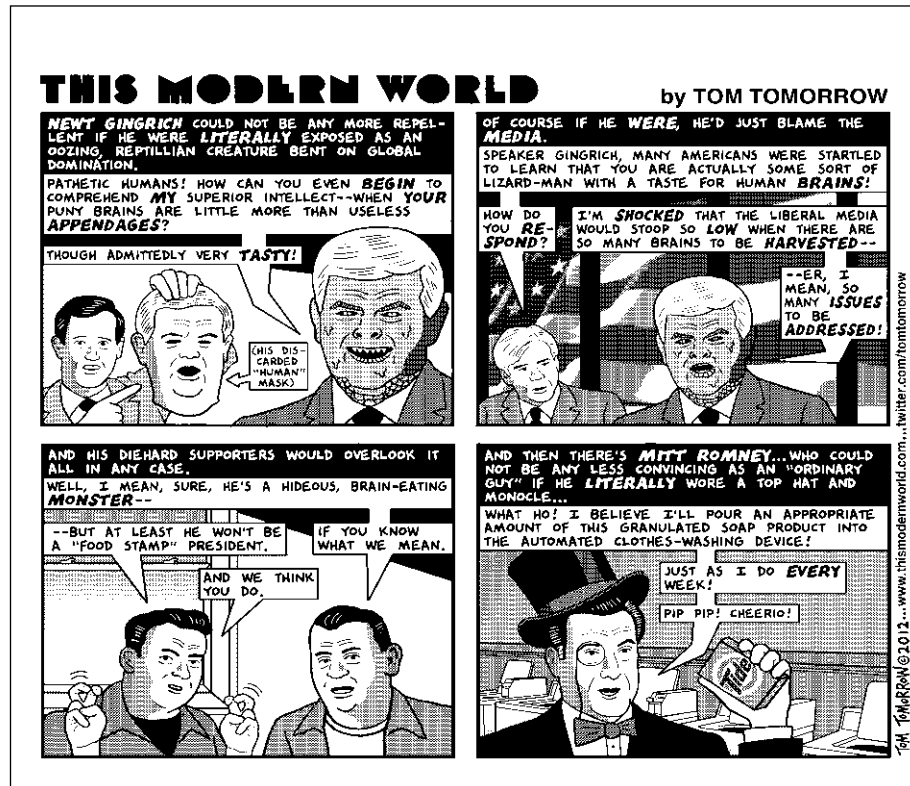
It's time we the people stopped pleading with our politicians and started exercising our right to govern ourselves. We live in a corporate state. Let's acknowledge this fact and start acting accordingly.

I urge *EW* to write a follow-up story on Bellingham's legally groundbreaking efforts, so that all local residents here can learn more about this extraordinary new rights-based movement. More info at PaulCienfuegos.com

Paul Cienfuegos
Portland

IMPROPER POLICE

OK, so a federal judge and jury says officer Bill Solesbee violated the rights of and used excessive force upon Josh Schlossberg. But Chief Pete Kerns and his internal investigation ruled Solesbee acted properly! Who can we believe? Not Kerns, the former supervisor of rapist Roger Magana. Not Solesbee, notorious for instigating the Ian Van Ornum incident. Not his Taser-happy sidekick Judd Warden, or our town's own renegade duo, federal agent Rob Hart and officer Jim McBride. This untrustworthy police department repeatedly makes Eugene liable for its illegal actions and ought to be disbanded and investigated. We have the constitutional right and moral obligation to instead form a community militia to competently defend Eugene



ourselves and throw these cynic brutes off the public payroll.

Michael McFadden
Eugene

ALTERNATE FILM REVIEWS

Ideally, moviegoers would make choices about what movies to see based upon the opinions of more than one person, but given busy lives sometimes a glance at how many stars a movie receives in the *EW* is the deciding factor. While critics should certainly give their honest opinions about the movies they review, I'd like to suggest that alongside its "stars," the *EW* publish the average ratings of other critics and viewers, especially in instances in which the *EW* reviewer's rating is very much at odds with these averages.

Rick Levin's one-star review (1/19) of *Shame* contrasted sharply with an average critic rating of 7.4 out of 10 (based on 159 reviews) and an average audience rating of 3.9 out of 5 (based on over 10,000 viewer ratings, see rottentomatoes.com). The *EW* wields significant power over the health of Eugene's beloved Bijou and should wield this power more responsibly. Oh, and Sissy was played by Carey Mulligan, not Carey Sullivan (as erroneously stated in Levin's review).

Also, in response to nurse Brandy Gordon's letter (1/19) regarding OMSI's Body Worlds exhibit, she "went there to learn about anatomy," but objected to "nipples, penises, and vulvas left intact." Who are her patients, the Muppets?

Doug & Robin Quirke
Eugene

SORENSEN SUPPORT

I'm not a Lane County resident any longer, but I lived in Pleasant Hill in Lane County between 1989 and 2003. I'm writing to point something out about the work of Commissioner Pete Sorenson.

He played a significant national role in the effort to "decouple" federal forest payment dollars from logging on National Forests and forest lands managed by the BLM. He testified before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Forests and Public Lands, pointing out that county government cannot tax the federal lands and that payments to counties, in lieu of their taxing the federal lands, should be made not on the basis of logging those lands but from other sources.

This effort, called decoupling, is a national conservation effort. Not only did Sorenson testify at the congressional hearings on this, but that legislation was signed into law by President Clinton in October 2000. For his work in support of this legislation, he was invited and did witness the president signing the law in the Oval Office. He was the only county commissioner in the nation who both testified on the legislation and followed it through to signing.

I now live in southwest Oregon, where the process of decoupling has been especially helpful in turning down the heat in the "timber wars." As a consequence I am reminded that Lane County has a national leader in Sorenson. I'm glad he's there and he has my support.

Rich Fairbanks
Jacksonville

COAL VS. PASSENGERS

Will the coal trains be sharing the tracks with Amtrak thereby reducing Amtrak service quality and encouraging riders to go to their cars?

Glenn Heiserman
Eugene

NUDE YOGA: A HISTORY

EW's Jan. 9 Slant column said that "flexible minds want to know" how nude yoga is one of the rating criteria for Eugene being the 22nd gayest city in America according to a Jan. 9 *The Advocate* magazine article.

Perhaps it comes from *The Advocate*'s four-decade-long archives. In the 1970s, nude yoga became common in gay hippie communities from Eugene to San Francisco. Nude yoga was practiced by the famous UO journalism graduate Randy Shilts, whose first job was at *The Advocate*, which at the time was a national biweekly gay newspaper. In 1982, Shilts moved on to *The San Francisco Chronicle* — he became a famous reporter and author of several books that were made into major motion pictures before he died of AIDS.

The poet Allen Ginsberg and other authors of the book *Queer Dharma* mixed nude yoga with Buddhism. Photos of men in nude yoga spiritual positions appear on the cover of this book, edited by Winston Leyland and published by his Gay Sunshine Press of San Francisco in 1988.

I doubt *The Advocate* has the resources to fact check it because they are struggling financially, similar to most other print magazines.

Thomas Kraemer
Corvallis

MISSING THE POINT

In response to Rob Spooner's "Absurd Numbers" letter (1/19) I have to reply that generalizing numbers can prove virtually any point you wish to make, for the right or the left. When you generalize as you do in your letter, it only proves that you are trying to spin a message to your side of the debate.

You completely missed the point of Bob Cassidy's original letter (12/22). Sure, Johnston may have been exaggerating the numbers, but that's what happens when one generalizes. So let's get specific.

I make about \$32,000 gross, netting about \$28,000 per year. I have been working for the same company for more than 10 years and have not received a raise over the last seven years. Given the rate of inflation, I am now making less than when I started 11 years ago.

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