

**PROGRESSIVE TRADITION**

For decades, Pete Sorenson has been a courageous and highly principled servant of South Eugeneans. Since the timber-industry's underwritten and orchestrated lawsuit of 2010, he has been the target of a sustained politics of personal destruction. This has been cold, angry and ugly — dripping with sarcasm and half-truths. Citizens should reject it.

As a South Eugenean since 1965 and as a loyal and dedicated friend and campaign aid/advisor to the late former senator Wayne L. Morse and local former congressman Charles O. Porter (both South Eugene residents), I view Sorenson's career to be in that great tradition of public service.

As immediate past chair of the Lane County Budget Committee and a seasoned county volunteer, I know that Sorenson has been unsurpassed in his independence and professional courtesy. He has, without peer, championed the environment, education, UO, civil and privacy rights, seniors, veterans, peace and fair board process. He has a perfect board meeting attendance record and consistently has the most professional service delivery to constituents.

No other board member or candidate comes close to his breadth of knowledge and service — congressional and White House appointee assistant, LCC board chair, state senator, small business owner, and four-term board veteran.

His voice and experience are needed to balance a right-wing board majority.

Character assassination should have no place in public life. In the face of political efforts to destroy him both financially and politically, Sorenson has displayed a kindness and dignity we should admire.

*W. Scott Bartlett  
Eugene*

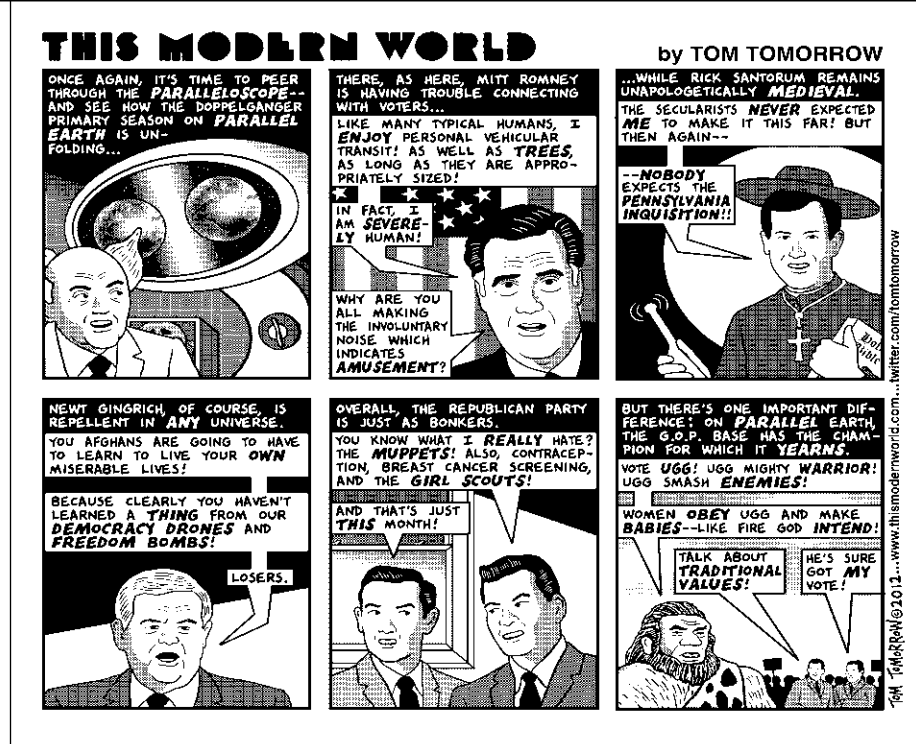
**NAVIGATING THE MAZE**

While manufactured legal gamesmanship and contrived political attacks garner their intended diversions and distractions, we should never overlook the ever constant and vitally important day-to-day responsibilities of being a county commissioner. One such role is the level of care and assistance dedicated commissioners give their constituents.

During my four-year term as commissioner, I provided much needed constituent outreach to the people of my district (which is roughly the size of the entire state of Rhode Island) by holding 196 town hall-style meetings and forums. Helping people navigate through the maze of local government is perhaps the single most important function a commissioner can provide.

I was continually inspired by the untiring constituent service work my colleagues Rob Handy and Pete Sorenson daily gave, and continue to give, their districts' citizens. They are the two hardest working commissioners currently on the board with respect to instant and persistent constituent service, response and holding public meetings and meeting with citizen groups.

Both Handy and Sorenson obviously care deeply about keeping in touch and rendering service to their districts — reflecting and giving courageous voice to their neighbors' most noble views and ideals. Although they have been subjected to



an ongoing smear campaign funded by narrow special interests, they continue to stand tall and hold their heads high in the face of these vicious personal and politically inspired attacks and specious investigations.

Fair-minded citizens will vote to reject hateful and counterproductive political warfare and will re-elect these deserving humble public servants.

*William A. "Bill" Fleenor  
Former West Lane  
County Commissioner*

**BONANZA REVISITED**

I've found recent articles in *EW* and the *R-G* on Greg Demers and his companies' high-risk exploits interesting, informative and surprising. Demers is a speculator in logging, real estate, the water business (bought the small Willamette Water Co.) and most visibly the gravel mining at the controversial Parvin Butte mine above Dexter.

I'm stunned that a speculator with such a questionable business history, including lawsuits, at least \$4 million in unpaid taxes, bankruptcies, murky ownerships, questionable grant applications and a terrible environmental record could get the approval of a majority of Lane County commissioners to give him rights to lock up millions of gallons of McKenzie River water.

The ongoing destruction of Parvin Butte, a beautiful and iconic landmark 1,500 feet from the Dexter Post Office, is explicitly tied to Demers' application for state money to build a railroad hub to transport rock from the butte to the coast. In no way should Oregon commit taxpayer grant money to this endeavor.

What century is this?

I'm reminded of episodes from the old TV show *Bonanza* where a smooth talkin' businessman comes to town promising jobs and riches. Nearly everyone in town is in his thrall, except Ben Cartright, who sounds the alarm. Ben and his boys, including Hoss, usually save the day.

County Commissioner Pete Sorenson voted against Demers' water scheme. I guess we should call him County Commissioner "Ben" Sorenson. Having a watchdog at the courthouse is valuable. Let's keep Sorenson our commissioner.

*Leslie Weinstein  
Eugene*

**WHERE'S THE TEETH?**

The issues that we are seeing with regards to Mr. Demers and the McDougal brothers in Dexter and now on the McKenzie River are just the latest examples of how our government, on all levels, no longer represents the best interests of all citizens.

How is bowing to the pressures and influence of corporations and the wealthy, allowing them to violate county codes and regulations for personal profit and at the expense of the local community? And to add insult to injury, all this is being perpetrated by a man that owes millions of dollars in back taxes.

Demers and the McDougal brothers have shown blatant disregard of the process required by the county and state regulators. They lied on applications for mining and forestry permits and the application for a bridge to be constructed in a fragile salmon stream. Are they paying a penalty for their dishonesty? On the contrary! They are rewarded by being allowed to proceed without needing to take into account the concerns of the many citizens that surround their property.

Citizens whose health, property values and quality of life are going to be negatively affected. Citizens who went through the proper channels to stand up for themselves, and who also don't owe millions of dollars in back taxes. If you have natural resources in your back yard, as so many of us in Oregon do, you may be the next victim of this greed. Don't look to local government to stop it. They have no teeth.

*Dan Orleck  
Dexter*

**RESIDENTS OBJECT**

The proposed downtown student housing project at 13th and Olive seriously threatens to inundate those who would be its closest neighbors, the residents of Olive Plaza. OP is the 12-story apartment building at 11th and Olive designated for extremely low to very low-income elderly and disabled persons, some of whom have resided there for the 30 years of its existence. The average age of its 150 residents is about 82; many use canes, walkers and wheelchairs to get around, and

caregivers provide the support needed for OP residents to maintain an independent lifestyle. Does this sound like a match for a complex of 1,200 students? We think not!

We are concerned about such a huge influx of people in such a concentrated area and the impact it would have on our quality of life. Such a project is not welcome in the UO area, as an *R-G* editorial points out, "the influx of students, with the associated parties and demands for parking, has led to complaints from long-term residents." Neither is it welcome here! There is a lot more at stake than the wished for influx of cash for downtown businesses. We urge reconsideration of this project.

*Phyllis Linn  
Eugene*

**MENACE TO SOCIETY**

A few nights ago I went to the local Dari Mart. As I was waiting my turn another customer was making a purchase of beer. The man behind the counter said "Hey Ted. What are you gonna do this weekend?" The customer replied, "Well I'm gonna drink this beer, smoke some pot, do a little meth, start all over again and go to work on Monday." The man behind the counter said, "Oh, same old, same old, huh?"

As I looked around the store and all of the other people standing in line waiting to make their purchases, I was amazed that not one person looked shocked or even surprised. Myself, my jaw dropped. Is drug use so prevalent in Springfield that it is normal to speak of it so openly? I'm beginning to think so. I see it everywhere in Springfield. On the bus. At the bus stop.

Hard drugs are a menace to society. I really don't care what it does to the individual who ruins his or her life with them. It's the despicable things they do to obtain the drugs that I despise. It's the disgusting behavior that they display under the influence of drugs like meth and heroin. I understand the city of Springfield can't afford to take these losers off of the street. That is the saddest thing I've ever heard.

*Maureen Jenkins  
Springfield*

**SHARE THE STREETS**

Walking from the Whiteaker neighborhood, where I live and work, through the park between Washington and Jefferson streets and on to downtown Eugene, what I notice is a town on the brink of becoming a city — and cities are diverse, complicated and bustling. In my fortunate travels to various places around the U.S. and to other parts of the world, I can report that people who live in cities do their working, shopping and living among all sorts of other people doing likewise.

It is time, Eugene, to move beyond the idea that only some people are allowed to be some places some of the time. Under what is currently known as the exclusion zone, or officially, the Downtown Public Safety Zone, we have given police the power to decide who gets to stay and who gets hassled, ticketed or arrested. There is this idea that we can't go to dinner or do our shopping if three young people are standing on the street corner with a dog.

My excitement at seeing the John Lennon Memorial in Central Park (New York) was