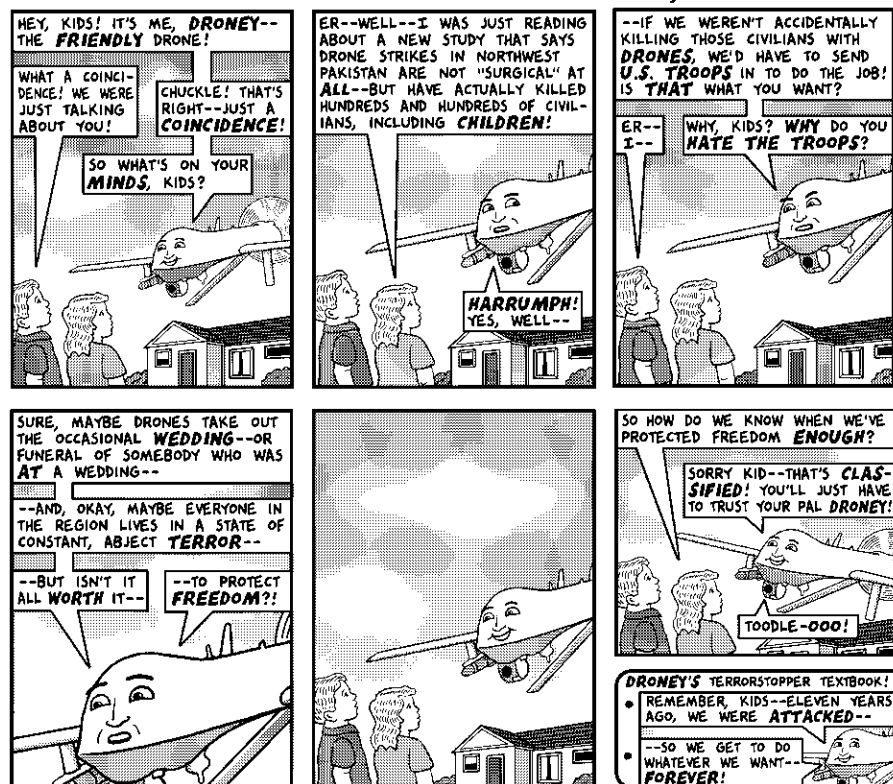


THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



FANTASTIC RECORD

Once again Betty Taylor is the clear choice for City Council to represent south Eugene. Betty has done an outstanding job of representing her progressive and environmentally conscious district. She listens to all perspectives and always makes careful, thoughtful decisions. She works hard to represent us and has a fantastic track record of service. You can always reach Betty by phone if you need to talk with her about city issues.

Betty is being challenged vigorously in this election by Juan Carlos Valle. Valle has already secured the conservative, pro-business, developer vote. But to win our district he needs to cast himself as an environmentalist and progressive. To do this, he raised large sums from developers and real estate interests.

Recent campaign funding reports show he is outspending Betty 2-1, with his largest supporter being the Eugene Association of Realtors (\$3,266). The Realtors association has a thinly veiled agenda to expand Eugene as fast as possible and eliminate all development restrictions. Valle is also being funded by the Community Action Network, another right-wing group representing timber and developers.

John Brown is funding him, the same guy who filed an unfounded complaint against Commissioner Rob Handy just before the last election. If this group gets their way, our City Council will take a big swing to the right. Why would we want to give away our most progressive district in the city to yet another developer representative? Betty is a retired school teacher with the experience and vision we need.

Eben Fodor
South Eugene

GRANGE ADS DECEPTIVE

"The Grange." It conjures up warm, fuzzy feelings of country life, homemade pies and community gatherings. But The Grange in ads we're being bombarded with on television and radio is none of those things. What it is, instead, is an attempt by greedy developers to establish

the first non-Indian casino in Oregon. If The Grange didn't include a casino, it wouldn't be on the November ballot as Measures 82 and 83. In fact, Measure 82 is not only a referendum, it's constitutional amendment!

It's bad enough that tribes have been relegated to only being able to make a living by operating casinos, since their entire way of life was taken from them in the 1800s and 1900s. Now even that is at risk because some people resent that non-Indians can't own casinos, and can't stand the fact that they can't get their fingers into every single pie.

I urge you to educate yourself about The Grange. Look past the buzz words "thousands of jobs," "for our schools," "for Oregon," and please consider voting no on Measures 82 and 83. The Grange could still be built without a ballot measure if it drops the casino option. But it won't be. Because it's all about the casino; the rest of it is superfluous camouflage.

Laurel Hanley
Eugene

PETE LIKES BETTY

Councilor Betty Taylor is up for re-election Nov. 6. I've worked with Betty on a variety of issues and I want everyone in Ward 2 to know that I wholeheartedly support Betty in her re-election.

A lot of people know that Councilor Taylor is the conscience of the council, but I think that it's important that her background in Eugene issues goes back many years. The UO and higher education community is significant in our ward and she's the only councilor who's earned a Ph.D. (in English) and thus has a better idea of what the city's relationship with the UO should be.

Councilor Taylor and I served together on the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency board for several years, and Betty was chair of the LRAPA Board for two years. I also appreciated the work that she did in organizing a health care forum. Mayor Piercy and I both spoke at that forum, but it wouldn't have happened without Councilor Taylor's leadership.

GROUND GAME

THE ROAD TO NOVEMBER 6, 2012
BY NANCY WEBBER

FULTON COUNTY BLUES

Undecided voters are hard to reach

I sat in the Walmart parking lot in Fulton, Ky., talking to Darnell Green, a verified undecided voter. She won't watch the debates that begin this week or be influenced by the attack ads on TV, because she doesn't own a television. She doesn't take time to read the campaign mail delivered to her doorstep or listen too much to what she hears at work. And she doesn't know how she is going to make her choice for president.

Green has four adult children and nine grandchildren. She lives in an insecure world where there isn't enough money to send those grandchildren to college. Jobs — including hers — disappeared when the local factory closed and home ownership is beyond her reach. She cares deeply about her country and the direction the winning candidate will take us.

The candidates care about people like Green, too. Undecided voters in battleground states — about 4 percent of the electorate now — could decide the outcome of the upcoming election and they are hard to reach. In general, they don't respond to the same voter contact methods that organizers use to find supporters.

Green lived in Wisconsin until her employer closed the plant where she worked.

"I wasn't old enough to retire and I thought, I'm going to have menial jobs the rest of my life unless I go back to school. I wanted a job that would pay all the bills," she says.

At 54, Green retrained for a job in communication technology. After finishing the program, she was offered a position with a company that required a move to northern Kentucky. Her children likewise have had to move for work and now live in Wisconsin, Ohio and Texas. She travels a lot to see her family and the uncertainty of where they will be and for how long is a source of frustration for her.

"You're lucky if you have a job and lucky if you have a good job," she tells me. "Even though I belong to a union, I don't know how long my job will last. You never know when the doors are gonna close. That's become a way of life."

Green wonders if her union has the strength to advocate for the things that matter. Job security in the face of future plant closures and health care are at the top of her list.

She has good reason to be concerned. Kentucky's unemployment rate at 8.5 percent is also above the national average, although it is currently 16.7 percent in Fulton County, where I am talking with Green.

In 2011, Fulton County suffered through the Goodyear Tire plant closure in nearby Union City, Tenn. This past spring when Ferry-Morse Seed Company decided to close, the county's unemployment rate rose to 20.5 percent and ranked highest in the nation.

Green doesn't blame President Obama for her frustrations, nor does she think that Gov. Romney has a solution. "I know what everyone says about Obama, but it was a mess when he got there," she says. "It was a mess when Bush was there. It's been a mess for a long time."

She just hopes one of the candidates understands what it's like to live on a paycheck, as she does; one that she always fears may be her last. "I just feel like America is getting depressed," she says. "We need to go back to work to generate more money. Something has to be done and done now."

People in Fulton County know exactly what she means and they are doing something. It may not be full-time work, but as I passed through on my way to Florida, everyone was working on a festival that they hoped would bring money into the community and they were having fun at the same time.

As Green and I ended our conversation, the 50th Annual Banana Festival was getting under way. For a solid week, the events — scheduled every hour of every day — would attract thousands of visitors to town. There was a banana bake-off, the Banana Ball and the ever-popular banana bonnet contest. The festival ended with a grand parade, led of course by the Top Banana, and included a one-ton banana pudding, big enough to feed everyone who came.

I know that Green will vote. She believes it is very important, but she wants to be confident that her choice is a good one. She is surrounded by Obama supporters — her son, her sister, her friends — which may prove to be the deciding factor. These are the people she will listen to more than the debates, TV ads or the campaign brochures that come in the mail. Even though she isn't in a swing state, Darnell Green truly is in the political center of the country. Personally it's a difficult place to be right now.

Nancy Webber of Eugene is a longtime Oregon political activist and author of *Ground Game*, a new book that chronicles her time in the field offices of the 2008 Obama campaign. The book is available at Amazon Kindle, iBook, Kobo and Inkwater Press.