

MAKING IT BETTER

Yet another mass shooting by a young person, and in a grade school at that! I am sad, but I am also angry at a culture that allows this to continue. And yes, I too am a part of all of this. Let us please have a serious conversation. Some will speak of gun control laws and that is a part of the equation; but this runs so much deeper, a societal problem, a dysfunctional way of thinking.

Our culture of accepting violence and killing affects our lives in so many ways: from condoned wars in far away places, to assassinations with drones, to video games full of death, destruction and decapitation, to extreme sports where people climb into cages and beat one another senseless, to movies and television that glorify violence.

What can I do to help in some small way to change the flow of this culture? I can have calm, thoughtful conversations, write my representatives requesting specific actions, refuse to support violent things, lead a slower, more purposeful life, join one of many local groups and work for peace, ask when anger rears itself inside me just what is truly bothering me, use

humor to lighten moods and ease tensions, and create art that speaks to nonviolence.

I can purposefully use nonviolent communication in my everyday life, have compassion for those around me who are having a tough day, share my own struggles with manic/depression that it might make people be more at ease with mental health issues, become a teacher (not necessarily in a school), volunteer at a school, join a mentoring program, tell those I know that I love and appreciate them very much for all that they do.

Perhaps the best thing I can do might simply be a joyous example of a different way of living life in a kind and gentle manner. "The smallest deed is better than the greatest intention" — Amish wisdom.

*Tim Boyden
Eugene*

ONE-SIDED REPORTING

Camilla Mortensen's report (12/20) on the use of a seclusion room and restraint of a child attending a 4J elementary school tells one side of the story. Anyone who has spent time in elementary schools knows that there are multiple stories that describe a child's behaviors and different

teachers' responses over time. We heard from Jared and from his mother. We didn't hear from Jared's teachers or from the school principal. That's understandable. Most educators shy away from discussing issues or incidents in the press that involve children who were once in their care. That's part of the ethic of professionalism that goes with the job. But Ms. Mortensen also has a journalistic ethic to present more than one dimension to a complex relationship in a school setting.

Were there other levels of response from Jared's teachers before they resorted to secluding him? How did Jared's classmates feel during his episodes of misbehavior? Were some of his outbursts the result of peer dynamics at school? Did Jared receive any conflict management help from teachers? If so, how did he respond to their direction? One-sided reporting is good at pulling emotional strings, but it's a poor substitute for good journalism.

*Paul Bodin
Eugene*

END ISOLATION ROOMS

Sunday morning I woke up and worked

on scanning some of my old family photos onto my computer. Being lonely and nostalgic, I then wrote a bit in my journal. I spent some time thinking about my first grade class and the desk I had with walls. I drew a picture of the layout of the classroom to accompany my prior entries. Almost a third was taken up by a big closet where I would be placed if I ever disturbed the class. I have distinct memories of the teachers sitting on me in this closet.

I think often about my first grade class. Later that evening, I drove down to Cafe Yumm. I ordered a large Hot n Jazzy, grabbed a *Weekly* and read about Jared Harrison. This article [12/20] hit a bit too close to home. I am 37 years old and I can say from experience that childhood isolation leads to one single result: a lifelong feeling of isolation even around others.

I was staggered to read that this practice still happens today. This has to stop and it has to stop now. I beg every elementary parent to call their local school and demand that their child is never placed in isolation as a punishment.

*Brian Doffing
Eugene*

VIEWPOINT BY KAYLA GODOWA-TUFTI

Idle No More

UTMOST APPRECIATION, RESPECT AND SOLIDARITY TO OUR FIRST NATIONS BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CANADA AND THE IDLE NO MORE MOVEMENT (FROM A NATIVE UNDER U.S. OCCUPATION)

It seemed to happen overnight. A new uprising for Indigenous rights and environmental justice has begun. Most of us heard about it through social media first. Flash mob Round Dance videos uploaded to YouTube of First Nations in Canada reclaiming public spaces to send their message of un-honored treaties have now reached all four corners of the globe. Solidarity rallies all over the U.S. have been held and have spread to Egypt, New Zealand, Palestine, England and Norway.

There have been Idle No More solidarity rallies in Eugene, Portland, Klamath Falls, Warm Springs, Tacoma, Spokane and Los Angeles to name a few, with many more to come.

This is the culmination of resistance efforts from Aboriginal and environmental activists who are calling on Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper to honor treaties with Aborigines, open dialogue with environmentalists and reject tar sands pipelines that would infiltrate First Nations territories. What started as a string of emails between four Saskatchewan women in November protesting Bill C-45, an omnibus bill passed by the Harper regime to strip First Nations treaty rights and sell these resources to multinational oil corporations, became a hashtag on social media, accumulating over time into a global movement for Indigenous rights and environmental justice: #idlenomore

The U.S. is the main consumer of tar sands oil. Sixty percent of the 1.34 million barrels of tar sands oil produced daily in Canada are exported to the U.S., and oil companies aim to expand production to as much as 3.5 million barrels per day by 2025. In America, oil

and pipeline companies plan to build an extensive tar sands pipeline and refinery infrastructure that will lock the U.S. into reliance on this high-carbon fossil fuel for decades. This conflicts with tackling global warming and shifting the transportation sector to cleaner alternatives. Pipelines bring a danger of oil spills to America's agricultural heartland, while pollution from refineries threatens local communities and the Great Lakes.

Over the last few years, First Nations resistance to multinational oil has been on the rise, with very little attention from mainstream media. Powerful resistances against pipelines, tankers and tar sands have been in the works for the last few years.

In Ottawa, Theresa Spence, chief of the Attawapiskat First Nation of Canada, has been on a hunger strike since Dec. 11, demanding justice and respect for her people. She intends to continue to strike until Harper agrees to meet with her. She demands justice and respect for her people and for all First Nations in Canada. She told reporters, "I am willing to die for my people because the pain is too much, and it's time for the government to realize what it's doing to us."

As of Dec. 31, she was on her 21st day without food. While writing this, I fasted for 24 hours in solidarity with Chief Spence and all the others who have decided to fast along beside her. I cannot even begin to imagine how she must feel after 21 days without food.

It is not my intention to criticize those who have held solidarity rallies because these rallies are creating unity among Natives and non-natives like nothing we have seen before, but if we want to fully stand in solidarity with our First Nations brothers and sisters,

then we must address our consumption of tar sands oil, and the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline through our country, because it is killing those who we stand in solidarity with.

In Canada, the U.S., all over the world, it's the same story. We are all being held hostage by multinational oil, by people with a disproportionate amount of wealth. Our only hope is alliances with each other and honoring First Peoples' treaty rights. On a local level, our Indigenous people must find the strength to uphold our treaties and demand they be honored by our governments, in order for us to survive as a human race. The resistance must be worldwide.

As 2012 comes to a close, I cry for all the pain and struggles that our people endure everyday. I cry for the strength to continue on together in solidarity against this inhumane oppression. I cry for all the children who will be the next caretakers of this planet, in hopes that they will not be left with the destruction and injustices that our oppressors are creating. But, looking at history, we have to teach them the way of The Struggle, because this beast never sleeps. We will have to teach them to stand strong for their rights in the face of oppression. We will have to teach them of our legacy.

They will know the history of resistance and insurmountable strength of our people. We are witnessing a spark that could ignite the entire planet, engulfing our world in the flames of revolution. We are witnessing the beginning of a new age, a new time of hope and inspiration for our people, unlike any we have ever seen in our lifetime.

Kayla L. Godowa-Tufti is member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs of Oregon. A longer version of this viewpoint is at eugeneweekly.com

