

CIVILIZED SOLUTIONS

America: 350 million guns, 47,000 psychiatrists. We have a constitutional right to bear arms. We have no constitutional right to health care.

America is the most heavily armed nation in the world. America also leads the world in mental illness. Half of all Americans develop at least one mental illness. Half of all cases begin during childhood.

Nearly half of all Americans have at least one gun at home. The human brain controls the gun. People will find ways to end their pain.

A civilized society offers civilized solutions. A violent society offers violent solutions. It's easier to get a gun than see a psychiatrist. It's cheaper to buy a gun than see a psychiatrist. Ammunition costs less than medication. Bullets are just a few cents each.

God bless America.
Pamela Wible, M.D.
Eugene

SMALL SACRIFICES

Tom Giesen's essay on global warming [12/27] nailed it. The level of denial in the U.S. is beyond frustrating. Recently I went to San Francisco for a Climate Reality Leadership training. There were 1,000 attendees from 58 different countries. They had to schedule a separate meeting for those in other nations to strategize, because they do not have global warming denial.

Every academy of science in the world agrees this is happening and is urging

action. If we make some relatively small sacrifices now, we could make a difference. If the speed limit were reduced to 55 mph we would save burning one billion gallons of gasoline a year here in the U.S. alone, and if we parked our vehicles and walked or biked, even better. Deforestation is second only to fossil fuel burning in contributing to global warming. We need to demand an end to clearcuts and old-growth logging on private, state and federal forestland.

A global tax on pollution is essential. That way clean energy, selectively harvested wood and other sustainable options would be competitively priced and industry would be on a level playing field. It's past time to take responsibility.

Pam Driscoll
Dexter

DON'T GIVE UP ON CLIMATE

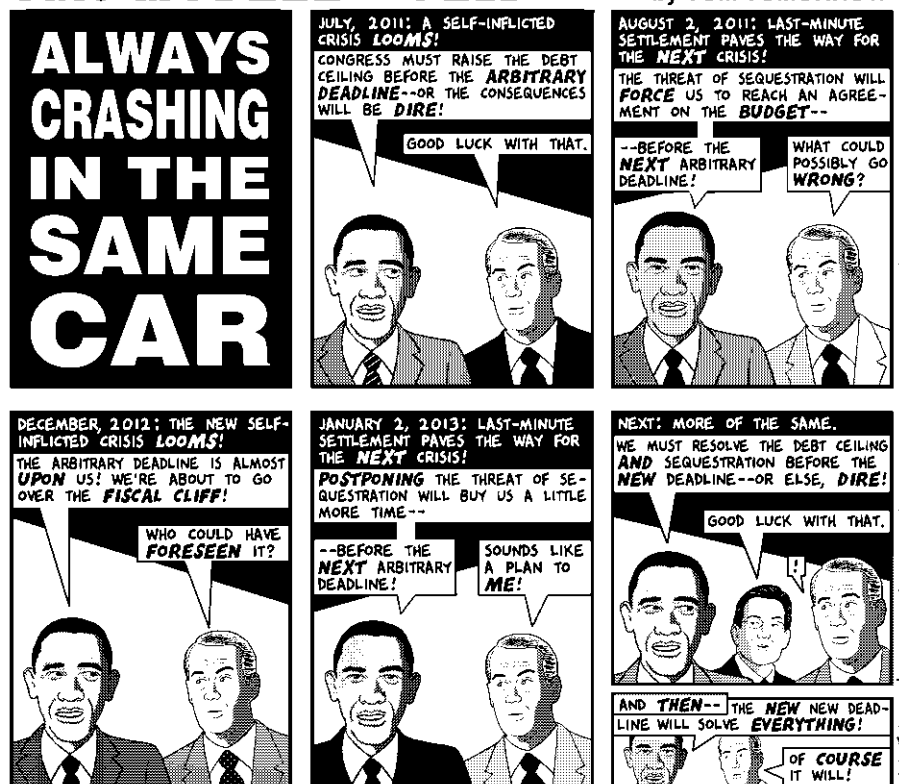
In his Dec. 27 article on global warming, Tom Giesen says that "international negotiations to agree to a treaty to reduce emissions so far proved useless, as the process is long on rhetoric and intention, and bereft of action."

However, a new international treaty is essential, because no country can deal with the global warming crisis alone. I'm not ready to give up. The world's poorer countries agreed in December 2011 that, unlike under the Kyoto Accord, they would be willing to have their emissions limited by legally binding targets. But President Obama seems to believe that the U.S. should not sign a treaty that the Senate will not ratify.

The Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL), an

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



organization with over 60 local chapters, has been building the political will for Congress to put a price on carbon. Grassroots activity can convince President Obama that his hands are not tied in the negotiations.

People can participate in one-hour informational conference calls introducing them to CCL on Wednesdays at 5 pm Pacific time, (866) 642-1665 (toll-free), pass code 440699#.

Milton Takei
Eugene

UNSAFE FOR ALL

The city of Eugene South Willamette Street Improvement Plan states its goal as helping south Willamette become a "vibrant urban corridor accessible by bicycle, foot, car and bus now, and in the future." Currently South Willamette Street is frighteningly unsafe for all forms of travel. Reconfiguring it to our needs as a community in touch with its time means a design that puts more emphasis on walking, taking the bus, auto sharing and bicycling.

VIEWPOINT BY CAROL VAN HOUTEN & SHELLEY CORTEVILLE

Epidemic of Abuse

WHERE RAPE IS AN OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD

The U.S. military has a well-kept and shameful secret. It is called military sexual trauma, and it is of epic proportions, with over 3,000 reported rapes or sexual assaults occurring each year. Because of under-reporting, it is estimated that the actual number of incidents is closer to 19,000 per year or an average of 52 per day.

Despite previous public exposure of widespread sexual assault and despite the military stating that it has "zero tolerance" for sexual assault, this epidemic continues. In fact, the military allows for, and even encourages, military sexual trauma. The military is a command structure organization and this means the victim must report rape or sexual assault through the chain of command. Frequently that means reporting either directly to the perpetrator or to a friend of the perpetrator.

The commanding officer is not a trained criminal investigator. There is no separate system of police, investigator and litigators who represent the interests and well-being of the victim. This is completely different from civilian life, where survivors do not

report to their rapist nor look to him or her for justice!

Most of all, for a commanding officer, an allegation of sexual assault in his or her unit will reflect badly on his or her leadership and hence any future promotion possibilities. Consequently, in the few instances when victims report the assault, the frequent outcome is that she is penalized and the perpetrator is absolved or even promoted.

Victims who report generally experience two traumas: the initial sexual assault and then the assault by the command system punishing the reporting victim. All the incentives in such a command structure are to stop the reporting, not to stop the assaults. Perpetrators get a clear message that they can get away, even get rewarded for raping and assaulting.

Congress has repeatedly failed to take significant action to require the military to change. The court has even declared that rape is an occupational hazard of enlistment in the military, hard as that is to imagine in this day and age.

Around the country there is a small, but growing, voice for real change so that victims have competent, independent legal help. Seemingly in response to this

movement, the military has recently made two changes. They changed Department of Defense personnel in charge of SAPRO (Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office) and they plan to move reporting from the immediate superior to the next higher officer. Those are not solutions; they are tinkering around the edges. The only solution is to institute a system similar to what civilian victims have, independent police, investigators and litigators who represent the interests of the victim, not the interests of the military.

Our goal is changing the military so that assault victims will get justice. This dirty little secret must be exposed and the system that sustains it must be changed.

To achieve this goal, both locally and nationally, many concerned groups and individuals are showing the film, *The Invisible War*. The film, using veterans' stories, exposes the pain of the assaults on both male and female military members and the inaction of Congress and the military.

Help achieve that goal by attending local showings of the film, *The Invisible War*, at 7 pm Friday, Jan. 11, at the Wildish Theater in Springfield; at 2:30 pm Saturday, Jan. 12, at the Siuslaw Public Library in Florence, and at 6:30 pm Wednesday, Jan. 16, at the Community Center, 600 E Gibbs St., Cottage Grove.

Carol Van Houten is coordinator of Truth In Recruiting, a program of Community Alliance of Lane County. Shelley Corteville works with Veterans for Peace, Chapter 159 and is an Army veteran.