

WEAK FORESTRY LAWS

On Oct. 16, 2013, over two dozen residents of Cedar Valley noticed two helicopters flying over our homes. We at first did not give it any thought but soon came to realize that they were releasing some of their herbicidal product upon us. Many of us have become ill immediately and still suffer from the effects of this spray. We have property damage, including animals, some of which are dying or already dead. We went to our local Health Department immediately and were informed we had to seek help from the State Agriculture Department, which we did. It has been over three months and we still do not have answers; our own doctors cannot seem to get any information. We have been passed from department to department with no resolution; however, we have had contact with the U.S. Center for Disease Control and sent a petition for the federal government to step in.

Beyond Toxics has been instrumental in helping us navigate this maze of bureaucracy that we now face. We are requesting the help of our state legislators, our health professionals and even our

federal agencies. Oregon has such weak laws for forestry and pesticides that many rural residents are harmed and our property is being damaged. The forestry laws only apply to protecting fish and habitat streams. What about human health? What about our drinking water? We need help and we need stronger and protective regulations. I hope our governor will stand up for protecting our health.

Kathryn Rickard
Gold Beach

SOMEHOW FEMINIST

Saba Malik, Deep Green Resistance functionary, deems Shannon Finnell's "Transphobia at the PIELC" full of lies. And the DGR cult has pumped out several near-identical letters from its clones, who follow orders and evidently swallow anything.

But the fact is that Lierre Keith, the subject of Finnell's article, has made a career of publicly hating transgender folks. This is simply a matter of record and Keith has always seemed proud of it.

There are no lies in the *EW* piece. The lie is in claiming that trans people do not

deserve respect and acceptance, and in cloaking this bigotry as somehow feminist.

John Zerzan
Eugene

IN LOVE AND AT HOME

Thanks for getting out the word about my fall and broken neck. I have good news. Friends of David Oaks (FODO) has succeeded in raising enough money for a 2013 accessible van for me.

I would like to thank my brother Tony, who came to my side from Texas within hours of my accident and spent most of the year with me.

My amazing wife, artist Debra Nuñez, has helped so much. The spouse of someone who has a major disability deserves a lot of support. Debra is such a delight for my heart. I am in love and at home, what a wonderful Valentine!

As some of your readers know, I have continued to be an activist. I have focused on how our progressive community needs to be more active about the climate crisis.

I am sorry that the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce has still not put out a statement about the climate crisis and

the problem of the U.S. Chamber, which is one of the main obstacles in the U.S. to address greenhouse gases. The way we people have treated Earth has placed us all in a position of disability. Let us support one another during this crisis.

FODO plans to do a living estate sale Feb. 21-23. FODO is on the web and in Facebook; just search for the phrase "Support David Oaks." People may also find my personal blog on the web and my page on Facebook by searching for David W. Oaks.

Thanks to everyone who has offered support. What a great community.

David W. Oaks
Eugene

LET IT POUR

Rain is so welcome! I'm so glad to see it pour! I have wondered if we would be faced with a drought as serious as California is experiencing. It reminds me of how precious every source of water is and how the three streams of the Amazon Headwaters must be protected. If you haven't walked the paths by the headwaters I hope you will before the city decides its

NOTES FROM THE RIVERSIDE BY MARK HARRIS

A Reverie in Black and White

THE COLOR AND FORM OF GIVING MATTERS NOT

Part of my Eugene Experience is mentioning observances of famous birthdays, like Martin and Malcolm, and getting the response: "Martin who?" or "Malcolm who?" Even mentioning Angela's work on the prison-industrial complex, and the school-to-prison pipeline, and people saying "Angela who?" Black History Month grew from Carter Woodson's Negro History Week, which was situated to encompass two birthdays, Lincoln and Douglass, so we would always remember the contradictions of America, who actually freed us and wanted us free, and who took the credit for freeing us, but didn't actually want us living free, alongside him: a sentiment Oregon's founding fathers could well relate to. I had a dreamlike reverie. See how many references you are familiar with without resorting to Wikipedia.

'Twas the first day of Kwanzaa, and all through the home, the savory scent of Nawlin's style gumbo imbued each room. Grandma Dosh's signature rum fruitcake was on the table, a hoghead cheese was on the counter, as well as a baked salmon and the remains of both a turkey and a tofurkey in deference to the vegetarian guests.

On the Kinara, Black Umoja candle burned bright, in hopes that Sankofa's song would sound through the night. It was somewhere in the *alam-al-mithal* I recognized in the scene before me. How else could Black Santa, a godlocked Black Jesus, the griot Sankofa from the film of the same name, Grandma Zeely, Chinosole, Nelson Mandela, Amiri Baraka, Paul

Robeson and The Preacher be sitting around the kitchen table in my grandmother's house in the Haight?

I didn't know, but as I shook my head to clear the disbelief, closed my eyes and took some breaths of Ruach-Holy Spirit. Intoning within my mind the Aramaic first line of the Lord's Prayer mantra *Abwoon D'Bwashmaya* — Birther! You create all that moves in light.

Illumination revealed other rooms and spaces, not in the original building, which were filled with people and other beings, and the resemblance to my actual earthly childhood home ended. I thought: As a child, I did learn about Black Jesus, and Black Beethoven, here, why not Black Santa?

Isho nodded at me when I opened my eyes, shook his locks and laughed, saying, "In one sense for children, it doesn't matter what color or form the spirit of giving takes," nodding whassup and *q'vole* to Pancho Claus, as he walked into the room. "You've pointed out in your classes, the power of a meme does not lie in its veracity. People can childishly believe a fiction like Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny or white supremacy, until they grow up and recognize the reality of diversity without fearing being annihilated by it."

Amiri, nodding around the room, quoted from his poem "Ka'Ba": *We are beautiful people, With African imaginations, full of masks and dances and swelling chants, with African eyes, and noses, and arms, tho we sprawl in gray chains in a place full of winters, when what we want is sun. We have been captured, and we labor to make our getaway, into the ancient image; into a new Correspondence with ourselves and our*

Black family. We need magic, now we need the spells, to raise up, return, destroy, and create. What will be the sacred word?

"Word!" said the Preacher. "Ameyn," said Ieshua in his language. "Amandla!" said Nelson, in his.

I moved to the den where Martin and Malcolm were engaged in a chess game. Nzingha and Harriet Tubman seemed to be setting up a second one. Trayvon Martin, Emmett Till, Rosa Parks and Keke Palmer were playing a fierce Scrabble game.

In the backyard, on a half-court replica of the White House basketball court, Angela Davis and Michael Franti were playing against Kareem and Sheryl Swoopes. Barack and Diana Taurasi seemed to have next. The garage band seemed to be the Coltrane's Alice, John and Ravi, Miles, Mingus, Mongo, Art Blakey, with Hendrix sitting in on a version of "A Love Supreme," with Spanish Key intensity.

I started to walk out into the night; the Drinking Gourd hanging in the Western sky, my granddaughters sitting at the piano with Beethoven playing "Für Elise," with the Chevalier De Saint-George accompanying on violin. The ancestors, the living and the future remembering how to make our world anew.

Mark Harris is an instructor and substance abuse prevention coordinator at LCC.

