

a million times what I have been able to accumulate (including inherited wealth).

Accumulated wealth is the real story here. Let's hear any politician dare to say anything about that — and invent a plan to remove that wealth.

It will take a revolution.

*Ann Tattersall
Eugene*

OREGON'S OWN EFFORT

When I first learned of Oregon United For Marriage, the campaign to win the freedom to marry for all Oregon couples, I was ecstatic. Having seen the excitement of the 2012 ballot victories in Maryland, Maine, Minnesota and Washington, I couldn't wait to get involved with Oregon's own effort to win the freedom to marry.

When people ask me why the freedom to marry matters to me, I think about my own parents, who've been married for 27 years and created for my brother and I a stable, loving home. Someday I want to have that kind of a family. Next I think about what kind of community I want to live in. I want to live in a place where all families are accepted and honored as equal members of the community. Lastly, I think about my own life and experience as a gay man. I think about my own goals and hopes for the future, and I realize they aren't that different from those of my friends. This November, Oregon voters have an opportunity to say yes to fairness, and to honoring the love and commitment that we all share. It is an opportunity we should fully embrace.

*Kenneth Sergienko
Eugene*

A FIRST BIG STEP

Stopping the Keystone XL pipeline won't stop global warming. It probably won't even stop diluted tar from Alberta from reaching Gulf Coast refineries or foreign markets. But it will be a big first step in starting a serious conversation in this country about the dire consequences of continued greenhouse gas emissions and how we can prevent or mitigate them.

I urge all of you who "get" global warming to take advantage of the 30-day public comment period, which ends on March 7, to let the State Department know how bad the pipeline could be. The online address is regulations.gov. The mail address is: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Energy Resources, Attn: Keystone Public Comments, 2201 C St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20520.

Many of the Cabinet Departments and the EPA get 90 days to comment. Write them too. And don't forget to write to Secretary of State Kerry and President Obama.

*Jere C. Rosemeyer
Eugene*

I SAW SOMETHING

So do you get submissions to "I Saw You" from people actually looking to find somebody or is it all just inside jokes and stoned babblings? Just wondering.

*Kris Bluth
Eugene*

KEY POLLINATORS

I am bringing to your attention an issue of utmost importance in our nation regarding our pollinators. There are certain pesticides, containing neonicotinoids,

readily available and used in the public, that are having a drastic impact on our natural pollinators, especially bees. Bees account for a large majority of pollination of our crops. They are able to travel great distances with pollen from one plant, and deposit it on another, creating much-needed genetic diversity to maintain a healthy plant population. Without this key pollinator present, the abundance and health of the crops that are produced out of our region will suffer.

Many European countries have already banned these pesticides because they understand how these chemicals affect the natural balance of our ecosystems. HR 2692, the Saving America's Pollinators Act, is a current federal bill that would remove these specific pesticides from common use and create better monitoring of the pollinator's populations. I urge you to support this federal bill by contacting your local representative and encourage them to cosponsor the bill. We as humans rely on our planet and our co-inhabitants to provide us the sustenance to thrive so it only makes sense to take care of it in return.

*Hannah Swim
Eugene*

DRAFT THE HOMELESS

The huge homeless population created by all of us through greed, ignorance, stupidity and addiction needs a larger answer. The cities and states do not have the money, nor the capability, to solve the problem.

I believe one possible answer to the problem could be to turn it over to our military — that's right, our military.

With an annual budget of more than \$900 billion, we do not need to police the world. What we do need is home security, protecting this country with our military, and to turn over rebuilding our infrastructure at home to a community branch of our military, like the WPA from the 1930s.

Anybody who is homeless and single (without dependent children) would have no choice except being offered the opportunity to serve four years in the military or six years in the community. The homeless would receive no pay but would be given food, shelter, health care and the opportunity to learn an occupation, serving their community. They would receive no pay for the six years they served, but would receive full payment for college, room and board, and health care for four years after the six years served.

The homeless that joined the military (if accepted) would receive pay while serving, as well as full college tuition, board and room, and health care for four years after serving.

Any of the homeless that need medical care or have physical, mental or addiction problems could be handled by the only branch of our government capable of handling the problem: our military, with the budget to do so. This would also include helping families with dependent children, who then would have to work for the military in some way.

*Gene Okins
Eugene*

RECLAIMING PUBLIC EDUCATION

BY COLLEEN YOUNG

Standardized Oppression

STUDENTS NOW PERCEIVED ON NARROW BASIS OF DEFICITS

CAPE stands for Community Alliance for Public Education. CAPE's goals are to build community around public education and to promote vibrant, honest dialogue that encourages students, families, teachers and community members to work together for a public education that benefits all.

I got involved in CAPE last year because I believe my primary role as an educator is to ensure that what happens in the classroom is best for all children. In an education climate in which many teachers are fearful of speaking up, I found support in CAPE to begin using my voice to advocate for students.

One of the most pressing issues we face in the classroom is that of standardized testing. Standardized testing is being used more and more as a tool to oppress students. Students are being viewed on the basis of deficits rather than on the reality of the complex, beautiful person each child is, with an array of talents and rich cultural experiences.

If students cannot pass standardized tests in Oregon, they can no longer graduate

from high school. And, beginning this year, students who cannot pass standardized tests (and therefore graduate from high school) cannot receive federal student aid. This is a human rights issue. Whole segments of the population will be unable to afford to go to college (even to finish their GED!). The greatest impact of this will be on low-income students (income is highly correlated with student success on tests), minorities (who have a much greater likelihood of being low-income) and students with disabilities.

Standardized tests evaluate student thinking at a very low level. Emphasis has shifted from creativity, application and evaluation/critical thinking to merely having the ability to describe, explain and remember. In addition, curriculum has narrowed; Not all students get to take even science or social studies classes. Further, each year that's passed has seen a decrease in arts education, elective classes and physical fitness. When these types of classes can be offered, it is far less likely that students of color, students with disabilities or students who have low-income status will be in them: Those students will be in the remedial/pull-out classes to receive further instruction designed to help them pass standardized tests.

An example of a true measure of student knowledge is project-based learning, in which students demonstrate complex thinking, problem-solving and apply/evaluate their learning with real, hands-on situations that connect them with their communities. This kind of deep learning has been pushed to the wayside by testing-driven education because it doesn't fit into a tidy little bubble sheet with "hard data" that can be analyzed from afar. The reality is that only work and measures that are well-rounded can begin to reveal the fullness of the learning of a living, breathing human being.

For further reading about the impact of testing on education, head over to fairtest.org.

Colleen Young teaches seventh and eighth grade language arts/social studies, and co-coordinates a bilingual, bi-cultural leadership program for Latino students called Ganas. This is her ninth year of teaching. Find CAPE on the internet at wkly.ws/1ou.