

release 180 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere over the next 100 years. That is equivalent to adding one million more cars to the road and those cars being on the road for 132 years.

For our future climate and well being, we need to protect our forests.

Kim Kelly
Eugene

QUALITY OF SLEEP

Many thanks to Larry Deckman for his op-ed on train horns in Eugene (*R-G*, Feb. 15), and to Whitey Lueck for partnering with him to start a grassroots effort for a “quiet zone” in Eugene (*EW* story April 24).

I live a half mile from where the trains start to blow their horns at the Van Buren crossing, and depending on atmospheric conditions, sometimes they seem like they’re in my backyard. I can’t begin to imagine the impact it must have on those who live much closer to the tracks. How many people are unable to get an uninterrupted night’s sleep?

This isn’t simply a “noise” issue. An internet search on side effects of interrupted sleep reveals how adversely it affects our

health — from babies (see wkly.ws/1qh) to the elderly.

“It was the quality of sleep that predicted future cognitive decline in this study, not the quantity,” said lead author Terri Blackwell, senior statistician at the California Pacific Medical Center Research Institute, and everyone in between. H. Craig Heller, professor of biology at Stanford University, explained: The findings “point to a specific characteristic of sleep — continuity — as being critical for memory.”

It’s truly discouraging to have a city government that seems to be more concerned with throwing tax breaks at developers than it is with the health and well-being of its citizens. Maybe if everyone paid their fair share we’d have the money to fix the problem.

Ted Chudy
Eugene

OUR CIVIC DUTY

Have you seen the new Voter’s Pamphlet for Oregon’s May Primary Election? Nauseating. It’s divided by party block, not by race or region. Interestingly, Republicans are listed first. Does R precede

D alphabetically now or was this decided on a coin toss?

All the candidates, incumbents included, are woefully underqualified for public office, each having tantalizing lists of college degrees and selfish jobs such as lawyer, neurosurgeon, investment counselor, and one former Marine with no education or experience. Not one has credentials I associate with working for the public convenience, necessity, nor good. Not one. If the Marine were an independent, I’d consider voting for him simply due to his lack of sheeple points.

Seeing as the status quo seek not to benefit any group who doesn’t have degrees, corporate titles, fraternity stints and otherwise elitist aspirations, maybe we would do well to encourage the un- and under-employed, those lacking college degrees and those who stand to be hurt the most by the fewest to run for these offices! I see no Democrat challenging the incumbent corrupt governor nor congressional posts, only incumbents seeking record-breaking stints snubbing the founder’s concept of doing good for all then going back to the farm.

Perhaps we’ve forgotten that civic

duty does not have a minimum education requirement. Civic duty is so *all* might participate. Why do we all *not* participate in such vast numbers?

James Kaplan
Springfield

CURTAIN OF SILENCE

“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” — George Santayana. Please bear those wise words in mind while you consider these names: Juan Lara, Roger Magana, Sefan Zeltvay.

In honor of sexual assault awareness month I respectfully remind each of you who lives here in Eugene, new citizens and old, that our police have a long history of obstruction of justice where sexual assault has been carried out by law enforcement, because after all, when you are raped by a cop, who will you report it to? See *EW* archives for Dec. 8, 2005, April 20, 2006, March 29, 2007, July 24, 2013.

If you have been assaulted and need someone to turn to for help consider Womenspace, 1577 Pearl St., Eugene, or call 485-8232.

Tawasi
Springfield

VIEWPOINT BY SCOTT L. POPE

Laggards And Leaders

UO FALLS BEHIND IN GREEN INVESTMENT POLICIES

University of Oregon students voted recently to urge the UO Foundation to divest its fossil fuel stocks. The vote to divest — which prevailed with yes votes of roughly 73 percent — should spur the foundation to sell the fossil fuel stocks that reportedly make up roughly 1 percent of the foundation’s holdings.

Unfortunately, *The Register-Guard* editorialized on Earth Day, April 22, against divestment. We should applaud the UO students for showing leadership on this issue and urge the UO faculty and administrators to join in calling on the UO Foundation to divest.

Numerous universities and colleges across the country are considering divesting. The *R-G* claims the UO Foundation is ahead of Middlebury College because the UO Foundation adopted an Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) investment policy. However, the UO Foundation declined to release that ESG policy and I believe the UO Foundation is well behind Middlebury College, which has worked extensively on the fossil fuel divestment issue for the last 16 months and has held two large public meetings on this topic. I applaud Middlebury’s transparency in this distributed investment statement on its home page: wkly.ws/1qi.

Middlebury’s president says: “This debate has seen Middlebury at its best. The good faith shown by people on all sides of this question has been extraordinary. The discussion has raised awareness of our legacy of environmental leadership and caused us to look for new ways to extend that leadership into the future.”

This thoughtful approach stands in stark contrast to the UO Foundation’s dismissal of the student vote and reliance on a secret ESG policy.

Divestment campaigns work. Divestment has been a tool since banking and investment first began. Issues have changed but the techniques have stayed the same. Indeed, the U.S. government is currently pursuing divestment campaigns against Iran, North Korea and Russia.

The main purpose of a divestment campaign, like a boycott, is to create awareness of an issue so that public opinion will move politicians to take appropriate actions. The *R-G* dismisses the divestment campaign and says that an effective response to climate change must come from governments. Governments are failing us miserably — the divestment campaign aims at moving public opinion and hastening a transition away from fossil fuels. The campaign is needed because politicians are not taking appropriate actions or showing leadership on the issue —

we can’t keep waiting.

The divestment campaign against apartheid in South Africa helped bring about essential, positive changes. The call for divestment in South Africa shined light on racist, unjust practices and influenced the U.S. Congress to pass a divestment bill in 1986. The fossil fuel divestment campaign can play a similar powerful role in the eventual transition from fossil fuels.

The goal of fossil divestment is not the elimination of fossil fuels immediately, but rather reduction in the demand and use of these fuels. Gasoline is currently cheaper than bottled water and the U.S. is the world’s largest exporter of gasoline. As the U.S. moves away from a reliance on coal, the stock prices of the two largest coal producers in the U.S. have dropped more than 70 percent since the beginning of 2011. The stock of BP has languished due to the Gulf spill. There will be laggards and leaders in this transition. Reducing the reliance on fossil fuels does not mean the end of our economy; instead studies suggest it creates even more jobs. We all benefit from a cleaner economy.

Divestment of fossil fuel company stocks is not a statement on the morality of carbon or no carbon. The science is clear that reducing carbon emissions is about long-term survival, not morality. The U.N. in its latest climate change report emphasized once again that governments are not doing nearly enough. The culpability for the use of fossil fuels falls on each of us, therefore it is our responsibility to act. In speaking up and speaking out we can improve our world. We vote with our money with every purchase or investment we make.

The UO Foundation has a choice to be a leader, to be ahead of the curve and to be proactive. In the investment world it is often easier and more cost effective to be ahead of change and be relevant. The UO Foundation should applaud the divestment vote by the students and foster a thoughtful, transparent debate about how the UO can best help move us away from fossil fuels. I urge the UO Foundation to consider a similar approach as Middlebury College has taken. In coming years, these students will feel the worst impacts of the damage we are doing our climate now, and we owe it to them, and future generations, to begin moving away from fossil fuels. We need to act now.

Scott L. Pope, CFP, is the owner of Sustainable Wealth Management in Eugene and has managed “socially responsible impact investing and environmental, social, corporate governance screened portfolios” for corporations, individuals, trusts and nonprofit organizations since 1989. He is a UO alumni, 1983.