

instant runoff voting, gives voters more choices. On the other end of the spectrum, Measure 90 would limit the number of candidates we could choose from at our most important elections. If we're going to change the way we choose our elected representatives, let's do it in a way that preserves our freedom of choice. Measure 90 fails this test.

Blair Bobier  
Benton County

## HEALTH & HAPPINESS

Does everyone deserve health care? I cannot imagine why not. Healthy people equals happier workers equals efficient workforce. Diseases spread to epidemic levels without health care for all. Profit-based health care delivery excludes many. Health care is a human right. Support health care for all.

Joan Armstead  
Eugene

## UBER IS RELIABLE

How can the powers that be, who banned plastic bags for the good of the environment, look past the good that Uber is doing? A vision for a more livable city where the goal isn't to put more cars on the road, but actually to take cars off the road and create even more good jobs and income opportunities for people is what I see.

This service is reducing traffic congestion. It saves the time and hassle of finding parking. It allows you to explore communities that are otherwise inaccessible by traditional transit. Knowing that you have a safe, *reliable* ride within minutes after a night on the town or when you find yourself working late is wonderful. It serves all communities and neighborhoods with ETA-based dispatch rather than traditional location-based dispatch, ensuring that no rider is rejected because of who they are, where they live, or where they want to go.

Accountability. After every ride, the rider gets a text with a record of the ride and the request that they rate their driver. If they rate the driver low, they are then asked to explain why. Drivers can lose their permission to drive using the Uber app if they consistently score low. That's what keeps the drivers nice, the cars clean and the routes correct. Accountability.

Riders are also rated by the driver after the ride and asked for details when it is a particularly low score. Uber users can be banned from using the service if enough drivers complain and score them low enough for legitimate reasons.

Take a good look at some of the people driving taxis in this city. They are often dirty, looking like they just crawled out of bed. They or the cab itself sometimes smell like urine or vomit or worse. I've called to complain before, but I am then informed that there is nothing they can do, since the driver is an independent contractor with their own lease on the vehicle. Again. No accountability.

Kimberley Thompson  
Eugene

## DISAPPOINTING DEMS

Some people suggest we should hold our noses and vote for Democrats because they are supposedly the lesser of evils. But a better description is they are the "good cop" to the Republican "bad cop."

The entire congressional delegation (all Democrats except for Greg Walden) supported the Obama administration's \$226 million corporate welfare subsidy to NuScale, the nuclear power company in Corvallis. Gov. John Kitzhaber and his State Lands Board plan to sell the Elliott State Forest to timber companies at their Dec. 9 meeting (after his re-election). Peter DeFazio and the rest of the congressional Democrats are pushing to privatize the BLM forest lands, a gift to timber barons who overcut their own lands. Every Lane County Democrat in the state Legislature voted for funding toward the \$4 billion Columbia River Crossing superhighway (which would be up to 16 lanes wide on the Vancouver, Washington, side).

In the unlikely scenario that a Republican replaced Kitzhaber, Jeff Merkley or DeFazio, the environmental groups would wake up and mobilize against them. With the Democrats, environmental groups are lap dogs, not watch dogs. The Republican challengers are straw men and women who provide the illusion of opposition. These incumbent Democrats are shoo-ins for another term due to demographics. Their party labels guarantee they will be in office as long as they want. They're far more effective than the Republicans could be regarding forest

land privatization, subsidy for Oregon's NuScale nuclear power company, highway expansions and other anti-environmental policies.

Mark Robinowitz  
Sustaineugene.org

## INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS

This community is lucky in its many organizations, including the city sanitation services, in dealing with trash carelessly thrown on our city streets and parks.

My son says, "Organizations are certainly helpful, but at the end of the day, it is also an individual's responsibility to help keep their city and parks clean. It is a good idea to keep nature clean, especially in natural wildlife habitats. We respect nature and it will respect us back."

I believe we can all contribute by disposing of our trash properly. My son Abhinav Vats Schamber is cleaning up the Delta Ponds in Eugene, on his personal initiative. I am proud of his efforts.

Gregory Schultz  
Eugene

## BURGERS & CLIMATE

It's wonderful that people care about our planet and environment enough to have marches and discussions about climate change. But if those conversations don't mention the number one cause of global warming, it's all a bit pointless isn't it? According to a 2006 report by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the meat in our diet causes more greenhouse gases than either transportation or industry. Think about that for a minute. Producing just half a pound of hamburger releases as much greenhouse gas into the atmosphere as driving a 3,000-pound car 10 miles. Want to really do something about climate change? Go vegan.

Lila McDaniel  
Eugene

## MCCAIN'S NEW CHOICE

John McCain knew almost nothing about who or what Sarah Palin was about when he nominated her to be his vice presidential partner in 2008, and we now know what a disaster that was for his campaign, not to mention what has happened to the mess we call Congress since then!

Now he's proudly promoting Monica

Wehby as our savior against Jeff Merkley, who actually *has* a proven record in Congress. One has to wonder if he actually knows anything about Wehby either, or is this just party politics? We as a state could lose out big time because of his, and people like the Koch Brothers meddling in our local politics.

Please everybody, think things through before you blindly vote in November.

Robin Bloomgarden  
Eugene

## COUGARS ON CAMPUS

When asked if he had ever seen a cougar on campus, Jed Gilbert [10/2 Back to Campus interviews] said, "Save the cougars! They're cool. If you watch nature videos, they always take the weakest of the herd."

According to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife 2006 Cougar Management Plan: "The common perception that cougars select only injured or sick animals is incorrect." Studies have found that "body condition did not affect prey selection."

Cougars are obligate carnivores. When they get hungry, something has to die violently. Cougars eat deer fawns, elk calves, healthy adults and anything else they can catch. Cougars have even been reported eating porcupines in times of severe stress. They also eat pets, livestock and have attacked humans in California, Colorado, Washington, Montana, British Columbia, Alberta and New Mexico. It is highly probable that Oregon will be added to this list sometime soon as the population of cougars continues to climb to unprecedented levels. Sadly, most human fatalities are children.

ODFW scientists say there is enough habitat in Oregon to support a population of 3,000 cougars, which was the level when cougar hunting with dogs was banned in 1994. In the 20 years since, the population has doubled to at least 6,000. Cougars are not endangered or even struggling. They have filled all available habitats and are now becoming more common in urban areas and more damaging to livestock, elk and bighorn sheep populations in rural areas.

Marshall Dunham  
Blodgett



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