

GAME VS. BIKE

While riding my bicycle home from work Sunday evening, I found myself immersed in the buzz and hum of a most important event. Car after car after bus after 4x4 pickup after SUV were gleefully, if a bit impatiently and aggressively, packing the road, apparently on the hunt for a place to park to get to a big game at Knight Arena.

I always do my best to stay off of sidewalks when I'm riding, and this night was no exception. I was more than happy to risk my life and limb in the game traffic. So, I waited patiently behind the line of automobiles at the four-way intersection by the arena as the traffic police waved us through the busy intersection.

I have two headlights on my bike, one that blinks, a reflective caution-yellow vest, a helmet covered with reflective tape, reflective ankle straps and two red blinking taillights. But when it came to be my logical turn to go, the traffic cop looked at me, turned away and started waving the SUV through, even though I had started crossing the intersection. I was easily on my way when the SUV revved its engine, headed straight at me and the nice traffic policeman thoughtfully shouted at me, "That's a good way to get hit, sir!" and the SUV driver yelled, "Yeah!" I thanked them for their consideration and continued pedaling.

Now, many cyclists might be upset about being first ignored, then treated like they had no right of way, but not me.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



No sir, because it was obviously a very important event, and of course the people in the cars needed to quickly find a place to park so they could get to the big game to cheer on their favorite team. I totally get it.

Go Sports!

Steven Colbert
Eugene

THROWING TAX WAIVERS

They're at it again — "the Eugene City Council is interested in once again granting property tax waivers to encourage apartment and condo developments ..." (R-G 10/16).

What's wrong with these people? The Core Campus project going up on

Broadway has a rooftop swimming pool and needs \$455,000 a year in tax waivers to make it work? For \$846,000 a year in waivers we get a hideous monolith downtown? (It has a swimming pool as well.) Local landlords are paying property taxes on vacant units and the city council wants to subsidize the competition?

We can't find the money to establish a "quiet zone" in Eugene so the trains keep blasting through, the parks division has \$7.2 million in deferred maintenance projects (R-G 10/30), and in order to pay for an additional floor on the new City Hall, the City Council is going to raid "reserves held by three public works department operating funds — road, sewer and stormwater," \$435,000 each for six years (R-G 11/2). (Road, sewer stormwater funds for City Hall construction?)

I'm retired and living on Social Security. I just mailed my property taxes check and I can't tell you how much it galls me that nearly 20 percent of my Social Security income goes to pay my property taxes and my City Council keeps throwing tax waivers at multimillion-dollar out-of-state developers.

Enough already.

Ted Chudy
Eugene

REJECTING FEAR

In sharp contrast with election results in much of the country, Democrats in the Oregon Legislature not only kept our

VIEWPOINT BY DEBRA MCGEE

Stop the LNG Pipeline

IT'S NOT GOOD TO STOP COAL IF WE TURN TO FRACKING

Hdraulic fracturing (fracking) technology has enabled production of previously uneconomic shale gas in North America. Some believe that using more natural gas will slow the growth of green house gas emissions. Five research teams from the United States, Australia, Austria, Germany and Italy completed independent studies for a project led by the Joint Global Change Research Institute. The research analysis was published in October in the journal *Nature* with the conclusion that increased use of natural gas will not slow climate change, due to increased release of methane and increased total energy use spurred by inexpensive gas.

Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, Rep. Peter DeFazio and State Rep. Val Hoyle have all expressed support for the southern Oregon Pacific Connector pipeline (extending from near Klamath Falls to Coos Bay) and Jordon Cove terminal projects, which will emit 2.16 million tons of CO₂ a year and be the only LNG export terminal on the West Coast. This planned terminal in the Port of Coos Bay will hold thousands of gallons of LNG in two 14-story storage tanks on a sandspit that lies in a tsunami and earthquake zone. Does that make good sense to you?

The 234-mile planned Pacific Connector pipeline (transporting 1.2 billion cubic feet of gas per day) will create a permanent clearcut, 95 feet wide, destroying

roughly 3,000 acres of wildlife habitat on public and private lands. This includes sites used by northern spotted owls, imperiled marbled murrelets and 32 plants and animals protected under the Endangered Species Act. It will cross 397 water bodies, major rivers (Klamath, Rogue, Umpqua, Coquille and Coos) and hundreds of salmon-bearing streams, as well as two mountain ranges. There may be many serious detrimental impacts to marine mammals and other sea life. Also, since the route is mainly in rural and forestlands, pipeline safety standards for the industry are lower than they would be in an urban area.

All this, so a Canadian energy company, Veresen, can ship huge tankers of (think burning lots of fossil fuels) American fracked gas to China stemming from a pipeline that will take Southern Oregonian's land by eminent domain for private corporate profits. This pipeline will be built by (out-of-state) Williams Company, which has already had three leaking/exploding pipelines in 2014 alone.

The huge risks, for the people and the planet, associated with this pipeline and export terminal are intolerable. Any short-term gain of "jobs" is completely canceled out by the risks and damages. This pipeline and export terminal will reduce incentives for the world to develop low-carbon energy sources like solar and wind.

So now we know, increased use of gas does not lower greenhouse gas emissions. Our elected officials

who eschew the burning of coal yet applaud a proposed LNG pipeline and terminal are either misinformed, insincere or both. It is as if they want natural gas to be the supposed less toxic, "low-tar" cigarette. While true, less carbon is produced when gas is combusted, the potent methane leaks destroy any benefits to the atmosphere. We must reject the lies that we can continue to burn fossils for energy without wrecking the planet's life support systems.

Oregonians have a fierce protective love for our beautiful, pristine, natural environment. We should and we can stop this pipeline and export terminal. We will stop it for everyone who loves the beauty of our state and we will do it for the well being of all people and the planet. Our politicians will do the "right" thing if we make them. So send your emails, click on petitions, call with a message, attend hearings and testify, explain things to your friends, then get ready to engage in peaceful dignified acts of civil disobedience. Only massive bold social movements can turn the destructive tides created by the psychotic love of money and power. I say psychotic because surely it is insane to continue behaviors that will result in our own mass extinction.

We, the people, often feel that we have no power and insufficient money to create the world we want to live in, but together we can and must change the course of our future. We have before and we can now!

Update: On Nov. 7, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission concluded that there are limited environmental and public safety impacts from the construction and operation of the proposed LNG export terminal in Coos Bay, and those impacts could be mitigated to less than significant levels.

Debra McGee is an organizer with 350Eugene.