

OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

I taught and counseled delinquent adolescents for 28 years. Some grew up to be politicians. Most of the others were successfully rehabilitated. Don't get me wrong, I'm not condemning all politicians; some of them are very decent, dedicated public servants — working to promote the wellbeing of us all. It's just that the 99 percent give the other 1 percent a bad name.

There, now that I've got a few cheap shots out of my system, I feel much better. But really, must these folks live the cliché “power corrupts”?

Too frequently, politicians' initial desire to “do good” isn't strong enough to resist the temptations which come with power and influence. “Oh Lord, it's hard to be humble when you're perfect in every way.” And the sycophants surrounding politicians spent every waking hour (and, yes, sometimes more) telling politicians how wonderful they are. Contradict the “great one” or criticize him or her (or his or her fiancé) and you'd better update your resume.

Generally politicians are only held accountable when it's too late, when their accumulated transgressions are so great and/or so many that they can no longer be hidden and public exposure dooms their political careers.

John Kitzhaber is far from the first and, unfortunately, will be far from the

last such politician to suffer from the occupational disease of excessive hubris.

I wish Kitzhaber the best in his post-political life and, if I had the power, would grant him a “mulligan” in his choice of girlfriends.

Gary Crum
Junction City

POT AND RECOVERY

In a letter to the editor Feb. 12 titled, “Stoned & Happy,” Joe Canfield of Eugene reported he has been smoking marijuana in his ShelterCare apartment for more than two years. It is important for me to provide *EW* readers clarification on ShelterCare's policy concerning the use of medical marijuana by its program participants.

Use of marijuana, including prescribed marijuana by a physician, is prohibited on all ShelterCare property, as is storage of the product and associated paraphernalia. Our rationale behind the policy is based on our belief that exposure to medical marijuana and associated paraphernalia threatens the sobriety of many of our clients in recovery from addiction to drugs and alcohol. Medical marijuana use and those in recovery simply are not a good mix.

For clients who provide ShelterCare staff with a prescription for medical marijuana from their physician, we work with them to find alternative locations

to use and store their prescription and paraphernalia. We also expect clients using medical marijuana to refrain from contact with ShelterCare program participants while they are under the influence of marijuana or smell of marijuana smoke.

ShelterCare's no-smoking policy is not limited to medical marijuana. Smoking tobacco or any other legal or illegal substance is also prohibited on our agency's property.

Our team takes its responsibility to help clients heal physically and mentally very seriously. The use of medical marijuana can help some clients, but ShelterCare will not allow medical marijuana use to threaten the sobriety of fellow program participants.

Susan Ban
Executive Director
ShelterCare

ARCHAIC SHELTER

I volunteer at the First Avenue Animal Shelter in Eugene. Recently, I learned that as part of Eugene's 2016-2021 Capital Improvement Program, a new animal shelter is being considered.

This rectification is long overdue. The archaic configuration can be dangerous to volunteers and staff. Small concrete kennels are in two rows where dogs face each other with a 5-foot walkway in the middle. This causes dogs to constantly

bark and growl at each other. The public uses this walkway to view the dogs for possible adoption. The noise and anxiety produced does not lend itself to a good experience with the dog.

The raised stress level of dogs means staff and volunteers are put at unnecessary risk when entering kennels to take dogs out for a walk or for a potty break.

Twelve years ago a task force delivered a report stating an immediate need for 30 more kennels at the current facility. I do not believe there has been any change to date.

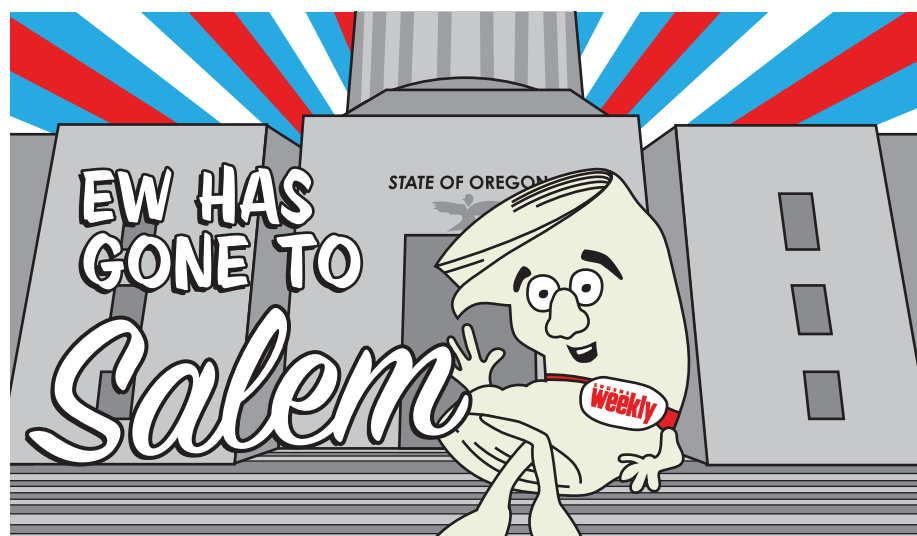
I ask readers to: Go visit, ask questions and tell your city councilor and county commissioner that our community should have an animal shelter that shows we care about our pets!

SueAnn Schoeler
Eugene

TIME TO BARK AND HISS

I'm a former First Avenue volunteer dog walker. Truth is, the facility's awful. It's crowded. It's loud. It stinks. Pure bedlam. You won't find a “best of show” in this place, just a horror show. I couldn't handle the truth, so I left. Being human, I had that option.

Struggling animals don't have a choice. They're stuck. They need a decent space to get healthy, feel safe, grow calm and have a shot at adoption. They need a new shelter. People need to act to make it



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