

pagan, have been lost forever due to Catholic missionaries.

“We were not meant to be inundated by cement, asphalt, glass and metal, and deprived of physical contact with nature” (44). Then why are hundreds of thousands of paved and little-used parking lots, and billions of tons of concrete, glass and metal, devoted to create your so-called places of worship?

When the Catholic Church gives up its land holdings — or at least pays taxes on them for the greater good, when the corrupt Vatican Bank ceases to exist, when the church approves of birth control and disapproves of GMOs and when we can have a real dialogue about the harm caused by Christianity’s childish and selfish beliefs, we will be making progress. Until then, Francis is whistling in the wind.

Locally, as long as more paved roads are developed and expanded and the number of private automobiles increases, rhetoric dealing with climate change and sustainability is bullshit.

Robert Simms
Eugene

SILENCED VOICES

Section 704 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was written by lobbyists for the telecommunications industry to strip homeowners and local zoning commissions of the ability to protect the health, safety and welfare of the community.

Globally, thousands of doctors, scientists and experts know of cell tower radiation and biological damage. Cell towers release powerful pulses of electromagnetic energy, saturating us with a level of radiation incompatible with the natural functioning of our body: brain, organs, blood and even DNA replication.

Smaller organisms cannot biologically withstand the invisible currents from cell towers. We could no longer see or hear birds, crickets, frogs or bees. Families have gotten mysteriously ill and many died with cancer.

A meeting was held regarding a proposed cell tower in the Amazon Creek area. Attending were representatives of AT&T; members of Eugene’s government, others and the Crossfire church pastor responsible for the cell tower.

Opposing community members came to speak and were given strict guidelines, stifling comments to sight, sound and property values and little more. Most left scientific reports of proven health damage and personal accounts in writing. To what end? A humble community silenced by a large corporation. I am speechless.

Eve Woodward-Shaw
Eugene

EDITOR’S NOTE: AT&T dropped its proposal to build the tree-shaped cell tower in South Eugene and is currently exploring other options.

A LEAP FORWARD

I’m proud to be an Oregonian, especially when it comes to reproductive justice. We are the only remaining state without any restrictions on a woman’s access to reproductive health services. As the Fundraising Chair of the Lane County Leadership & Advocacy Team for Planned Parenthood Advocates of Oregon, these matters are especially important to me.

In addition, the Oregon Legislature just passed House Bill 3343, which will

require birth control providers to dispense a full year’s supply of birth control instead of one or three months. This bill is a huge leap forward, as 99 percent of women will use some form of birth control in their lifetimes, and a 12-month supply has already been associated with a 30-percent reduction in the chance of an unintended pregnancy. You can’t fight the facts: This bill simply makes sense.

I want to thank our representatives for working to get this bill in effect and for keeping Oregon a pivotal leader for women’s health. Here’s to a happier, healthier Oregon!

Geena Glaser
Eugene

JUST ONE IS ENOUGH

Just one life (Oregon Senate Bill 941), just one room of school children (SB 941), just one room of people (SB 941) and the loss of their lives through easy gun sales, is reason enough to restrict the sales of guns, by the insistence of criminal background checks before a gun can be legally purchased.

LIVING OUT! BY SALLY SHEKLOW

Pride and Joy

WAVING RAINBOWS AS LOVE PREVAILS

June 26, 2015, 6:30 am. I drift into wakefulness, my darling Wifey asleep beside me, the window air conditioner whirring in its valiant effort to keep our bedroom cool overnight. The cats are still curled up, too early even for their breakfast yowling.

Blurry-eyed I reach for my laptop and open the live blog from the Supreme Court. Wifey stirs, fumbles for her iPhone. People are logging on from all over the world. “Greetings from the Netherlands, first country to legalize in 2001,” someone posts. All sorts of procedural questions are asked and answered while we wait for the ruling we’ve been working, hoping, praying for.

7:01 am. “Marriage,” the court blogger types. The ruling is in. “Fourteenth Amendment requires a state to license a marriage between two people of the same sex.”

7:02 am. “And to recognize a marriage between two people of the same sex when a marriage was lawfully licensed and performed out of state.”

This is it! We won!

I hug Wifey, we kiss and laugh. Sheer joy. I hop out of bed, grab our rainbow flag, freshly ironed in expectation, and sing the *Stars and Stripes Forever* tune while I dance nude around the bedroom. Wifey takes a turn waving the PRIDE flag and does her own happy dance.

I’d been optimistic but braced for disappointment — we’ve had so many in this long bending of history’s arc — toward justice.

The cats are yowling now. What do they care whether

their humans have the right to marry in all 50 states — and territories? They want breakfast. While I feed the pussies, Wifey turns on the TV. Masses of people are celebrating, crying, laughing, dancing in front of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Cut to our president speaking in front of the White House:

Good morning. Our nation was founded on a bedrock principle that we are all created equal ... Progress on this journey often comes in small increments, sometimes two steps forward, one step back, propelled by the persistent effort of dedicated citizens. And then sometimes, there are days like this when that slow, steady effort is rewarded with justice that arrives like a thunderbolt.

Yes, yes, like a thunderbolt! I’m weeping and laughing.

This morning, the Supreme Court recognized that the Constitution guarantees marriage equality. In doing so, they’ve reaffirmed that all Americans are entitled to the equal protection of the law. That all people should be treated equally, regardless of who they are or who they love.

Equal under the law. Us! This is REAL!

Wifey has to leave for work, so we hug again and smooch goodbye for now.

I’d usually be heading out on my morning walk before work, but I’m too excited, too elated. I won’t take my usual meditative route today. I put on my walking shoes and sun hat and head out the door waving our rainbow flag. It’s only 8 am and already hot. As I’m crossing the

street, a car horn toots. The driver grins and gives me the thumbs up. I’m a parade! As I march across town, I stop at Kate and Amy’s house to see if they’ve heard. They burst into happy laughing tears at the news. We share sweaty hugs and recall the day these two friends held the rainbow flag canopy for me and Wifey when we (and 10,000 other couples) were symbolically married during the March on Washington in 1993. This day has been a long time coming.

More tooting and waving as I continue my one-dyke parade. I’m so happy I just keep walking, stopping in to thank people who have helped bring us to this amazing day — the Rev. Dan Bryant at First Christian Church, Ted Taylor, my editor at *Eugene Weekly*. Neither are in, but receptionists snap my photo and agree to pass on my gratitude. People all along my parade route smile and wave.

We’ve come so far. I’m thinking of all the marches, rallies, phone banks, canvassing, panels, speeches, songs, letters to the editor, meetings, pickets, petitions, lobbying, endless comings out and courageous conversations that have gone into making this day possible. All the family rejections, casting out, condemnation, humiliation, isolation, erasure and abuse LGBTQ people have suffered and endured and not always survived. And now our highest court has ruled and our president has spoken and some 63 percent of Americans support our freedom to marry.

No question there’s more to do. As our president said, it’s our responsibility to “keep reaching back to help others come along.” I know we can’t be complacent, but we can celebrate. We can take heart that our efforts are being rewarded, that our full humanity is recognized. Today love won. ■

Award-winning writer Sally Sheklow has been waving rainbows in Eugene Weekly since 1999.



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