

## A PROPHETIC MOMENT

I've had the privilege of being Peg Morton's scribe for her many writings in the last months of her life. More of these writings will be disseminated after her memorial service as she requested. In mid-November she wrote a proposal that was communicated throughout the world to her "peace-building, nonviolence-loving groups and others, including faith communities, friends and family." Thousands of people have now read, shared and are acting upon Peg's proposal, which begins:

"I am envisioning the rise of a broad, nonviolent movement that calls for this country to face itself, to publicly and humbly acknowledge the suffering and destruction which we have been engaged in throughout our history and in the present. We need to seek forgiveness and to make amends. And we need to grieve. We cannot be healed as a society until we have deeply and honestly faced ourselves.

"My dream is that we, our country, will learn to step back out into the world and

our planet humbly, as citizens of the world, of our planet, joining with others in its healing. Let's give it a start."

During the days of Peg's dry fast she was writing fervidly about this being a prophetic moment in time, "for a new world filled with the energy, humility and love for our beloved planet."

Be a part of fulfilling this prophecy; this was her dream!

"Granny" Laurie Granger  
Eugene

## WHEELS IN MOTION

We're not giving up! Oregon's grassroots organizers for universal publicly funded health care have a solid plan that builds on success: action groups in 14 counties with 120 organizational members and 18,000 supporters; over \$500,000 in donations to date to conduct voter polls and an economic study; and we now have a funded bill from 2015 to study models for financing our system.

The groundwork is being done. Now Oregon's Legislature needs to complete the

job: We want a funded work group to design a health care system based on the study in 2017, a bill with a defined tax structure in 2018 and the plan referred to the voters in 2020. If that fails, we will collect signatures to qualify an initiative petition supporting publicly funded health care in 2020.

We know what we need to do! We will attend town halls and speak to our representatives. We will create a mandate. Our opportunity is to create a health care system designed to serve people, not maximize corporate profits.

This is obviously the right choice. For Oregon to be a leader, we each need to do our part to bring our state health care system up to par with every industrialized county in the world. Get involved. Go to HCAO.org, see what statewide activists are doing and plug in, come to the monthly Eugene chapter meeting at 7 pm the first Mondays of the month at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive Street. Let's create the world we all want together!

Patty Hine  
Eugene

## A COLD CHRISTMAS

What kind of society allows a young, vulnerable, developmentally disabled, homeless woman to roam the streets in a thin sweater on a freezing Christmas night? No matter what you think of homeless people, those who are not able to take care of themselves or protect themselves should not be left out to wander the streets in freezing weather.

It was my first week of volunteering for the Egan Warming Center when this sweet woman came in. She was too afraid to stay, so we went for a walk and looked at some pretty Christmas lights, but then she got too cold. All the donated coats had already been taken. We went back inside but there she was nervous around so many people.

Another volunteer went to her own house and returned with her own coat to give to this woman. Later she calmed down enough to lie down on her mat and go to sleep. The volunteers were all great, caring and patient, but a vulnerable woman like her should not have to depend on random kindness to help her.

## HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

## Trump Off, Oregonians?

NATIONAL INTOLERANCE AFFECTS OUR LITTLE STATE

Welcome back, students, to the cold wet winter of your discontent, otherwise known as the dark term before spring break 2016. It's time to shake the shards of sugarplum fairies out of your sensory-savoring limbic systems and pay attention to politics. The Oregon Legislature returns to Salem in less than a month. Beware!

As you know, the Legislature had a *dramatic* impact on students in 2015: New laws required students to have both a driver's license *and* a recreational medical marijuana card *in order to vote!* I might be getting this wrong. Actually, students are now required to vote in the primary and general election *in order to get* a driver's license and a recreational medical marijuana card. Yeah, that's it. Sorry. Actually, one reader actually took me seriously the *last* time I tried to analyze our new laws. Please don't!

Anyway, we should all pay attention to what effect the national clown show Republican presidential primary will have on Oregon politics in general. How will national politics, awash in the *Citizen United* SuperPAC money, affect our statewide and legislative races?

Former U.S. Speaker Tip O'Neill had it right: All politics is local. But timing is important, too. The Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary also occur in February, and Republican winner-take-all primaries will occur in March. You can't read a newspaper or turn on a TV today without seeing Donald Mania and its impact on every race-baiting, neo-Nazi, gun-waving group in this country. San Bernardino immediately lowered the rhetoric of the Republican debate to a nasty anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant frenzy. It's amazing how quickly intolerance can catch hold.

I'm hoping Trump will open an Oregon campaign headquarters (or at least build a casino) at Malheur National Wildlife Reserve, given recent events. Apparently there have been several sightings of the species *Corkscrewicus Republica*, a cuckoo bird so named for its genetic adaption of having only a right wing — which forces it to plummet to the ground whenever it attempts to fly. Some political pundits believe that's why Oregon hasn't elected a Republican governor since 1982. (On the other hand, *Whirlybirdicus Democratica*, another prevalent cuckoo, has a genetic adaption featuring 11 left wings and three right wings, all of which appear vestigial, functionless in the course of evolution.)

But I digress. Of course this conservative national turn of events will affect Oregon politics. As I said before, Democrats have been getting shellacked recently in state and federal elections: Republicans now control 70 percent of our state legislative

chambers; in half of our states Republicans control both legislative chambers, and more than 60 percent of our states' governors are Republicans.

The key question regarding the impact of national politics on Oregonians is this: Who turns out for the primary and general elections in 2016? Historically, primaries always have lower turnout than general elections, and primaries and general elections during presidential years have greater turnout than non-presidential years. Will the Republican presidential race be decided months before Oregon's May primary, and will Oregon Republican voters turn out if it is? We don't know. They'll obviously come out in higher numbers if it appears to be a brokered convention with no clear winner by May. There will be no referrals on the primary ballot, and the only current contested statewide race for Republicans is for secretary of state. So we can't assess Republican turnout until we get closer to the May primary. Republican turnout in the general election will depend on who's at the top of the ticket and on the ballot measures that may appear in November.

Democrat turnout could be muted in the primary, but who knows? Bernie excites the young *and* the old progressives. As with Republicans, the only current contested statewide race for Dems is for secretary of state. But the dynamic in that primary is intriguing, very different than two tired old males in the Republican race. Democrat women may have a reason to vote in a race featuring one woman and two men — Val Hoyle vs. Richard Devlin and Brad Avakian. The Democrat base also should have good reason to turn out for the general election — the presidential race, the governor's race, the secretary of state race and several swing districts are up for grabs in the Legislature. There won't be a "grand bargain" this year, no compromise regarding the ballot measures that could appear in November, from the right or the left, so we still need to see what qualifies.

*Quién sabe?* Maybe Trump is a verb.

Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is a former state senator and a recently retired state employee.

