

always controlled and used by a few big outfits that had usually gotten in the game pretty close to the initial land grab from the original holders. When the big spreads sold, the grazing rights went with them.

How are these leases handled in Oregon?

Elena Rae
Eugene

THE END OF RANCHING

I enjoy connecting the dots between issues. The Malheur Wilderness Refuge malcontents need to go on home and take up cricket farming. The heyday of the cattle rancher has left the building, like that of loggers and fishermen. They got greedy when the going was good and have long been left in the dust by even greedier, mega-multi-corporations, who, hell-bent-on-wheels, roll over us all. The wrath, ire and good organizing skills of these contentious groups could be better directed towards fighting the cause of all humanity. Hey, they could campaign for Bernie!

Besides, as a society, we need to phase out of large-mammal meat-eating, pronto. It is a systematically barbaric industry overall and responsible for two of the biggest factors leading to global warming, methane (CO2) discharge and deforestation. We're not giving up traditional native lands and what few parks and wilderness refuges we have left.

Erica Snowlake
Eugene

LOW-WAGE SLAVERY

It seems that Gov. Kate Brown is now compromising with the previous compromisers. Is the only "leadership" we get from the Democratic Party coming from Sen. Bernie Sanders?

How can phasing in increases to the minimum wage to the year 2022 be any different than what will already happen under the present law? And at that time the expected inflation will wipe out any real increase. Why is it these legislators can tolerate a "get by" minimum wage that still makes a person qualify for food stamps? We all want "good quality jobs" to be available, but does that mean that the job pays just enough to cover the cost of the usual monthly expenses and the monthly food bill, with nothing left over to cover the unexpected happenings? Food stamps should be thought of like unemployment insurance — a stopgap for an emergency — not a subsidy for inadequate wages by either a business or city workers.

Low wages do promote jobs. But we made that type of economy illegal in this country when we eliminated slavery. We

must at least try to get \$15 as a minimum now. If people vote against that, we should know who they are so that we know who to vote for in the next election.

Bob Cassidy
Eugene

CHANGING HABITS

I greatly appreciate the sentiment expressed by Jack Van Dusen Jan. 7 that each of us makes a definite and significant impact on global climate impacts with our everyday decisions about what we buy and how we dispose. Analysts of Oregon's recycling systems report that in one year alone, the greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions achieved by recycling our waste into new products was very nearly equal to the GHG emissions of all air travel by all Oregonians in that same year. The environmental benefits of using recycled materials instead of Earth's virgin resources cannot be overstated.

But Van Dusen did not apply the most effective message to his example of a coffee cup. Coffee cups are not very recyclable. They have a plastic liner that renders them undesirable to a paper mill. This item, along with all other paper constructed to package wet materials, are frustrating recyclers across the industry. Either they have a plastic liner, or they have a wet-strength chemical, or both. Both are detrimental to the effectiveness of paper mills that refine old paper to make new. The use of these two methods is not consistent across the packaging industry, so there is no way for recyclers to sort, or give easy instructions to the public. Most recycling programs in Lane County give a resounding *no* to paper cups — plastic cups too, for that matter.

The far better answer is to use your own durable cup for coffee. Recycling is the best thing, if something is recyclable, but far more effective is reducing the production of manufactured materials when we can. Shop at thrift stores, bring your own bag to the store or find a repair service (repair2reuse.org).

We got ourselves into this mess with our consumer purchasing choices; we can get out of it by changing our consumer habits. Seek more durable products and use every penny as a vote for a better future.

Sarah Grimm
Eugene

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Learn about the school choice process. Sign up for school visits. Talk to representatives from every 4J elementary school.

School Visitation Weeks

Monday, Jan. 25-
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Monday, Feb. 22-
Friday, Feb. 26

Each school offers activities and times when parents can visit. Please phone ahead or see www.4j.lane.edu/choice for details.

School Choice Information Meetings

Thursday, Jan. 21, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 23,
9 a.m., 10 a.m., 11 a.m.
(during the School Showcase)

Thursday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m.

4J Education Center,
200 N. Monroe St.
Learn about the school choice process.

Apply by
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