

OFFENSIVE FENCES

The next step in the city of Eugene's plan to criminalize the homeless is fences under bridges that have been used for shelter. Human beings, with no other resources than the clothes on their backs and the food they can find, use these areas for life-saving shelter and to find safety with others in the same predicament.

A fence creates a perception of "other" when so many of us are just a paycheck or medical emergency away from losing everything. These fences are taking away yet more public space. It seems that the Department of Parks and Open Space should be renamed Department of Parks (during posted operating hours only, restrictions apply) and Closed Space. Displacing unhoused folks means they will migrate further into neighborhoods. These fences are yet another violation of human rights, my rights and your rights, not just homeless rights.

The city claims it spends \$250,000 annually on cleaning up after the homeless. Better solutions could be funded with this money. Ideas could include funding check-ins by CAHOOTS at areas where unhoused people shelter themselves. With sharps collection and mental health services, a CAHOOTS-like model could be very effective at filling social service gaps. A social worker could be assigned to check in at various spots, assisting people in getting the help they need. Actions like the above could truly make a difference, both in the lives of those helped and in the amount of money the city spends on "cleaning up after the homeless."

Vickie Webb
Eugene

AERIAL SPRAY ACTION

Oregon Wild and the Freedom from Aerial Herbicides Alliance (FfAHA) stand united in their demands that this practice [aerial spraying of pesticides] be banned — as soon as possible. We recognize that due to the entrenched power of the corporations that benefit from this practice, a diversity of tactics toward this goal is necessary, and we respect the fact that several legal avenues must be taken to end aerial spraying of toxic chemicals on our homes and streams.

FfAHA has spent years working toward a Lane County ballot initiative that would completely ban the practice of aerial spraying for any purpose in this county.

Similar efforts are being made in other counties around Oregon. FfAHA is in the process of collecting signatures to put this initiative on the ballot, which can be found on their website. Thanks to the hard work of many volunteers, citizens of Lane County will soon have the opportunity to vote in support of this initiative.

This year, launching a campaign to reform the Oregon Forest Practices Act, Oregon Wild, Beyond Toxics and others have submitted nearly 4,000 signatures to qualify three separate initiatives for ballot titles on a statewide ballot. In addition to other new logging regulations, these initiatives would halt forestry-related aerial spraying "on any watershed which serves as a source of drinking water." DEQ maps indicate that this would include almost the entirety of western Oregon.

Together, we call for unity and will use all available legal routes to end this practice as soon as possible everywhere we can. Please find us online, where you can view these initiatives, and find contact information for these organizations.

Jason Gonzales
Walton

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jason Gonzales is the Forest & Watershed Campaign organizer for Oregon Wild and serves on the Freedom from Aerial Herbicides Alliance Steering Committee. This letter is in response to a letter from Mark Robinowitz March 10 critical of "establishment environmentalists" and their proposals.

HOSTILE CARTOON

I was very disappointed in Ben Ricker's cartoon depiction of Springfield. It is mean-spirited. Not at all what I would expect from *EW*, even if the intent was to be funny. Springfield is not Eugene. We don't want to be Eugene, but we are neighbors, and as such, I hope that we can appreciate each other for who we are.

Maybe it's just the influence of national politics that has elevated ugly, mean-spirited rhetoric to a new level of acceptance, but I was hoping our two communities could see how much harm it is doing and stay above the fray. *EW*'s choice to run the cartoon has proven me wrong. I consider the cartoon a form of bullying and bullying is just wrong, plain and simple.

Our two communities have been working well together on many important projects like the river districts that we share along the Willamette River. I know because I am part of those discussions.

There is so much we can do together; I just hate to see anything cast a doubt on the progress we've made to improve both our communities.

I will continue to make every effort to work with our partners in Eugene, many of whom I consider friends. And I will encourage Springfield residents to do the same. I am just hoping for the day that hurtful prejudice against Springfield goes away, and I don't have to write another letter to the editor in response to an inaccurate, hostile cartoon about the city that I love.

Christine Lundberg
Springfield mayor

UNINFORMED BIAS

I wrestled with the question of even responding to the ridiculous article the *Weekly* wrote about Springfield in Swizzle March 10. The writer is obviously suffering from an outdated stereotype of Springfield and as is the case with bias, he has bought into their stereotype so firmly that he didn't bother to observe reality — not unusual for *EW*.

In recent years downtown Springfield has developed a vibrant and thriving downtown that provides excellent food, drink and entertainment. Main Street features a theater with some of the best acoustics of any venue in the region. The Wildish Theater features a wide variety of entertainment from classical to popular. Audience members at the Wildish are from both Springfield and Eugene.

The Plank Town brew pub on Main Street features excellent food and drink and a great place to meet friends. It is frequently packed with people having a good time. Haven, also on Main Street, is a wonderful place to find unique antiques, art and gifts.

The pizza at Mezza Luna on Main Street is top notch. The Washburne Café offers a hometown venue with outstanding food, a wonderful atmosphere, a friendly staff and a good place to meet friends.

Springfield also has its own arts scene with many of the downtown buildings featuring a wide variety of murals. Springfield also has the Art Walk on the second Friday evening each month. There is an eclectic range of unique and diverse businesses on Main Street and throughout the entire downtown.

Willamalane in Springfield boasts some of the best indoor and outdoor park and

recreation space in the region, including the region's only wave pool.

If you need a hospital, Springfield has two of the area best, with McKenzie Willamette undergoing an \$80 million renovation/expansion right now.

Sprout! and the weekly Farmers Market provide a place for farmers to offer fresh produce to all comers. Sprout! also contains a commercial kitchen that can be rented for everything from home canners to those exploring new food concepts for an emerging business. While the Abbey may not be a wild place, it is a great place to meet friends.

In short, Springfield is a wonderful place to live, work, recreate and visit. It provides a true hometown feel and the kind of friendliness that can only be found here. Come on, Eugene — ignore the outdated, uninformed bias of *EW*, and come and discover Springfield for yourself!

Mike Eyster, chair
Springfield Area Chamber of
Commerce

FICTIONAL SPRINGFIELD

"All Quiet on the Eastern Front" March 10 has left me thoroughly confused. I'm not kidding. I don't get it. What Springfield did you visit? I appreciate thought-provoking, artistic talent that through humor, wit and creative expression expands my view of the universe. But, creativity born of mean-spiritedness and interpretative observations lacking any hint of truthfulness is nothing but, well, mean-spirited fiction. Fortunately, fiction does not dictate reality. Your readers are smart enough to know that, and the many who have found the *real* Springfield have experienced one very different from yours, *Eugene Weekly*.

Vonnie Mikkelsen
Springfield

SPRINGFIELD NIGHTLIFE

Hi, just wanted to say that I liked Ben Ricker's cartoon "All Quiet on the Eastern Front" about Springfield nightlife (or lack thereof) in the March 10 *EW*. Very clever and really funny. These sorts of personal graphic narratives are not rare — lots of cartoonists do them — but his seems especially well written and illustrated — the graphics worked really well. I'd like to see more of his cartoons.

Bruce Burriss
Corvallis



ACTUAL VOICEMAIL RECEIVED MONDAY AT 9:20 AM:

THIS IS REGARDING THE FLYER DISRESPECTING SPRINGFIELD

IN THE RECENT EUGENE WEEKLY ARTICLE,

UHHH ... IF YOU ARE LISTENING TO THIS ...

I HOPE YOU ARE **FUCKED** FOR THE COMPANY THAT YOU WORK FOR RUNNING SUCH A SHITTY FUCKING ARTICLE ABOUT ANY BUSINESS IN OREGON ... OR TOWN IN OREGON.

AND THAT YOUR WHOLE FUCKING NEWSPAPER IS WRONG.

AND YOU GUYS OUGHTTA JUST FUCKING **BURN AND DIE!**

EDITOR'S NOTE: The employees of *EW* would very much NOT like to fucking burn and die.