

discuss or vote on. That is the people's business.

Eron King  
Blachly

### PREVENTING BIKE THEFT

I've had another bike stolen, my daughter's blue 20-inch Gary Fisher mountain bike. When we have a bike stolen, we tend to blame ourselves. I know I do.

While individual theft is not a major crime, collectively it's a criminal industry. We have a national reputation as being "worse than New York" when it comes to bike theft, and not much to extrapolate that this reputation affects our local economy.

As a community, we could end bike theft if we wanted to. We should register our bikes with Bike Index, a Portland-

based website — and it's cool, as I learned when I read "Bike Batman" online from *Outside* magazine. The city could have a dedicated bike-theft police officer. Most of all, we could refuse to buy stolen bikes.

Ask for serial numbers and check them against the Bike Index website. If bicyclists begin demanding serial numbers, then legit sellers will provide them. Just because it's on Craigslist or some untraceable picture-only website does not mean it isn't a stolen bike.

We can't have it both ways: getting that "too-good-to-be-true" deal and wanting a community free of bike theft. Consumers drive the economy.

Otis Haschemeyer  
Eugene

### CORPORATE CHEMICALS

The McDonald's Corporation, which is largely responsible for obesity in children, now has a problem in its campaign to discredit the innuendoes that it is not concerned about public health.

The Big-Hearted Mac distributed free fitness bracelets of dubious worth that were laced with poisons causing a rash of complaints.

Walmart faced similar charges for importing lead-infused Crayola crayons decades ago. Nothing has changed, including public apathy. Sleep on it.

Vince Loving  
Eugene

### CLINTON AND SYRIA

As prospective coronation of the "Queen of Chaos" draws closer, familiar

leader-demonizing and atrocity-image propaganda of dubious origin about Syrian President Assad increases.

At our mid-August annual Veterans for Peace convention, our vice president reported following a recent delegation to Syria meeting a broad cross-section of Syrian citizens and organizations, that — as polls, the 2014 election and honest visiting journalists confirm — President Assad is widely respected and trusted to protect their secular government and institutions from wanton destruction by the U.S. and NATO as befell Iraq and Libya. Our media, as usual, lies.

Syria has a long-established parliament, a 2012-revised constitution approved by 89 percent of the electorate and protection of religious and ethnic minorities which Syrians fear is gravely threatened by

## NOTES FROM THE RIVERSIDE

BY MARK HARRIS

# By My Sense of Times Intertwined Deep with the Great Blacks

*Making communities of color visible*

I wanted to be white for three weeks in 4th grade (1965) because I was being rejected, being the only black kid in class in my elementary school in Bel Air. After three weeks I realized, wait, there's nothing wrong with me, it's them.

My home training countered the non-lessons I was getting: Slaves were smart. Slaves resisted every step of the way. We were the slaves that taught ourselves to read, when it was a death sentence.

Therefore: Learning to read before kindergarten, reading at least three grade levels above where you are, trying to excel at everything you can, especially at the multiracial nation-building things black people have done before ... know The Great Blacks, before you go to school. Because you can't trust the schools to teach you all you need to know. Know about other people of color, too. A movement of multicultural affirmation.

Black Lives Matter erupts, emerges, evolves, from the same conditions that lead James Brown to write and record, "Say It Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud."

The messages from mainstream society, despite assertions of equality, i.e. All Lives Matter, is that White Lives Matter More. Whitewashed historical evidence suggests the best thing you can do is adopt the values, including historical and cultural amnesia, and acquire the trappings of wealth and success. Emulate American successful exemplars displayed on street signs, buildings, tabloids, reality television, fashion magazines and school curriculum. To counter that, a larger story needed to be told, and the Ethnic Studies movement evolved from Negro History Week.

"I Too Am Eugene: A Multicultural History Project" was a project that broke the story of Eugene Klan #3, nearly 20 years ago in *Eugene Weekly* and through Lane Community College's Ethnic Studies program and Rites of Passage summer youth academies. Cheri Turpin sat down with microfilms of newspapers, cross-referenced archives and found the Klan/UO connection, Klan membership lists and statewide Klan activities well past the purported death of the Klan in 1925.

In 1937, meeting in Portland, (reported in *The Oregonian* but not in *The Register-Guard*) the Klan claimed 16,000 members statewide and wanted Eugene, again, as its state headquarters. The Klan decided to recruit in law enforcement and again be politically active.

The Eugene Klan didn't die, but embodied the Invisible Empire: political, news, business, education, law enforcement and justice system infrastructure. There is nothing to show that they weren't successful or that anyone stopped them from those goals. Or more cogently, subsequently eliminated their influence from the businesses, organizations and institutions they inhabit today.

Post-WWII, the Klan focused on the growing black community, including cross burnings, at least one lynching and practices of legal and illegal housing, job and lending

*Standing in my corner, ain't no way you can fake that.  
No way you can shake that, No way you can take that  
I reckon that you pace back, and learn to embrace that."*

— 'GREAT BLACKS' GEORGIA ANNE MULDREW, A THOUGHTIVERSE UNMARRED

discrimination. In effect making Eugene both a redlined and sundown town. A place where skilled millwrights like Willie Mims' father could not find work in the timber industry because of their race. A place where business owner Sam Reynolds could neither get a business loan for a new business nor rent or buy a home within the city limits.

Gathering personal accounts by black and white community members, Cheri Turpin and I were able to establish Klan influence from the post-war period into the 21st century. Since experiences affecting people of color are not regularly reflected in Eugene, the University of Oregon, *The Register-Guard*, can maintain the fiction that the Klan has been dead for 90 years. Institutional historians may use the standard that if we can't produce membership lists, then it's not Klan activity.

Even if cross burnings and lynchings occur, we can't say it's the Klan that did it. If a toy gun is treated the same as a real gun by the police and military, then crosses burnt on Skinner Butte, in front of the West 11th community, in front of a home on Friendly Street or a home in Springfield one week after 9/11, are going to be considered the genuine article.

The Klan is a secret fraternal organization that infiltrated news, schools, business, law enforcement and politics. Members learned from their past mistakes, but they could and did act through the institutions they infiltrated as "red-blooded Americans," a Klan phrase indicating racial purity. Doing that, they could order the incarceration of American citizens of Japanese descent; order the termination of Native American tribes; question Latino-American citizens on the basis of race alone.

"I Too Am Eugene" activist-historians produced school, college and Rites of Passage curriculum, a historical bus tour, trained K-12 teachers and acted to make communities of color historically visible through the Wiley Griffon historical monument, renaming Sam Reynolds Street and MLK Boulevard. and through facilitating Talking Stones and other projects, because we feel as a multicultural history project it's more than just a story in black and white. Activist historians operate outside of classrooms, books, curricula, into the community, to meet real human needs, not operate in some academic remove.

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