

do even less, because most of them receive campaign money from timber interests. It's hard to buck the system when your livelihood depends on it!

Demand changes in Salem about how these poisons are regulated! Also, sign the charter amendment to ban aerial spraying of herbicides in Lane County at [communityrightslanecounty.org/campaigns](http://communityrightslanecounty.org/campaigns).

Robin Bloomgarden  
Eugene

## DON'T BLAME HOLLYWOOD

EW published a letter from Brian Sun under the subhead "Rising Racial Tensions" [12/29] which ended with his concern that "racial tensions are starting to grow and Hollywood is complaining about running out of Asian actors, I think it is important to talk about these issues."

I was unaware that the lack of Asian actors being cast in Hollywood movies was contributing to rising racial tensions until Mr. Sun brought it to my attention. However, I believe he should consider the demographic and cultural factors involved here.

Asian-Americans only comprise 4 percent of the U.S. population, but they represent 20 percent of the students now attending America's elite Ivy League schools. It's obvious that Asians are having tremen-

dous success when it comes to academic achievement.

Asian-American families have a well-earned reputation for placing a huge emphasis on academics. They might even discourage their children from getting involved in extracurricular activities like acting in the school play, since it would take time away from their schoolwork.

Instead of accusing Hollywood of inflaming racial tensions by refusing to cast Asians in major movie roles, has Sun considered the possibility that the pipeline of Asian actors heading to Hollywood to become movie stars just isn't that full?

His lament that "Hollywood is complaining about running out of Asian actors" seems so trivial and petty. This is a demographic and cultural issue, not a racial one. Please use some common sense before accusing an entire industry of racism.

Derek Williams  
Eugene

*Editor's Note: The 2010 census puts the number of Asian-Americans at 4.8 percent, and recent assessments as high as 5.6 percent. And Ivy League schools have been accused of underadmitting Asians.*

## SECULAR LIES

The "freedom of speech" in the U.S. Constitution is "infringed" when a religious banner ["Religious Banner Downtown

Raises Ire," 1/5] says: CHRISTMAS (attend a church of your choice) JESUS (celebrate his birth). It is not "inappropriate, divisive and it's a non-inclusive message to other members of our community."

What a lie!

Stace Webb  
Eugene

## ROBERT 'BOB' DRITZ

Robert "Bob" Dritz has passed on during the early hours of Saturday, Jan. 15, and as he lived his life with intention, so was his passing. As he put it recently: "It's just not that fun anymore and the cost to quality of life is now outweighed by the pain and discomfort and lack of resolution of these growing number of problems."

Bob had come to Eugene after a successful stint in the mainstream business and financial worlds, seeking less fame and fortune in California and more soul-satisfying affiliation and work that mattered to the common person and a place he also knew he was meant to be.

Bob "officially" arrived at White Bird Clinic in 1978, already close friends with several of the then leaders of the clinic, and was hired as the financial Coordinator and second member of the admin team. He had witnessed the first "revolution" at White Bird, affectionately known as "Dog Wars,"

and knew that this was where he belonged.

In 1982 he was hired as our clinic coordinator, and he faithfully served in that role for 25 years, until his declining health led to his need to retire. While Bob's leadership style was at times seen as difficult to work with and at times divisive, there was never a time when folks did not also understand that he was dedicated to our mission and unwavering in his support of the agency, our staff's wellbeing, clients that we serve and the importance of our work and the importance of the excellence in our standards and values. Bob modeled mission-driven leadership and the critical importance of our unchallengeable integrity in all that we did, and his at times impatience and even rudeness appeared whenever he was less than confident that these were what drove us.

There was never a more committed member to our principles, nor one who would fight harder for the egalitarian values that have been the foundation of who we are — a pain in the ass? Yes, at times!

Passion comes in many forms and Bob was never in question about his passion for the cause in the name of the right. He will be missed.

Chuck Gerard  
White Bird Collective member and  
former clinic coordinator

## VIEWPOINT BY DEB MCGEE

# The Times We're Living In!

### REFLECTIONS ON BEING ARRESTED FOR THE CLIMATE

**W**e each bring all our past, including childhood traumas we have been working to heal from, to every experience we have, every day. Being arrested adds an intense fight or flight physical and psychological response that brings all of who you are into sharp focus. At least it did for me. As a child who'd been beaten with leather belts by an abusive father, I felt much of that same terror as an activist blocking oil trains from refineries in Washington state last May on the morning the police arrived in a military assault fashion at dawn, while our camp slept.

While I have never fought in a war, blocking a train track may be a somewhat similar experience, knowing that at some unknown point in time a fierce response by the opposition will come. In our case it was rendered by the state police.

If you get arrested, you will probably get treated in ways you have never been treated before. It feels strange that someone else controls your body, your freedom, safety and your very life or death. That particular someone may be half your age and appear more frightened than you feel. While there can be kindness that individual officers share, there is no mistaking that it is a very dangerous situation.

For me, part of the immediate aftershock of being arrested was feeling argumentative and defensive. If my spouse shared an opinion then I felt oppressed. I felt misunderstood and distrustful. Only later did I realize it was pressure relief I needed to express, which came from being violated: Shackled for five hours, not being allowed to use the bathroom, not knowing what would happen next, having arrest numbers written on my arm with a marker. These indignities were visited on us for peacefully resisting the passage of oil trains, which we did to protect that which sustains us — a livable atmosphere.

I understand that my Sharpie assault is nothing compared to rubber bullets, concussion grenades and water cannons perpetrated on the Water Protectors at Standing Rock. I think we all enter the fight wherever we find ourselves by joining others who are acting. I believe we are in the fight of our lives.

The fossil fuel corporations have clearly stated they intend to extract and sell ev-

ery drop of "their" fossil fuel reserves. Scientists say four fifths of fossil fuels must remain in the ground to avoid severely heating the planet, possibly causing human extinction as well as the extinction of many, many other species.

It is difficult to confront the reality of climate change in a culture where the "cult of self" reigns supreme. We Americans pursue self-interests without regard for the rest of life, including our plant and animal brothers and sisters.

Engaging in resistance can ruin friendships. It can take barely tolerable family gatherings to a crisis point. Even perfect strangers will verbally assault you in a parking lot, when they see you are resisting fossil fuels. Personally it has restored me. I have gained a new sense of power, by working in community with others, who are fighting to change the forces that are killing the planet, the habitat on which our survival depends.

It seems that we now have a powerful leader, who is a fascist, ruling America. We have never experienced such a regime in our United States. As his policy plans unfold, we see racism, authoritarianism and corruption. These are not true American values. Let our grandchildren read the history of our collective response. They will tell the stories of how we worked together and overcame differences, misunderstandings, mistakes and egos to build a movement in America rooted in kindness, inclusion, climate justice and a fair transition to clean energy so together we can build the beloved community we long to live in.

My path leads me to grassroots organizing for the climate, volunteering with 350 Eugene. We feel love and joy working in coalition with allies statewide, and we are beginning to have some climate wins. We will continue to boldly resist! Check out the website [world.350.org/eugene](http://world.350.org/eugene). If your passion lies elsewhere then Eugene is a cup overflowing with opportunities to work for positive change!

This is our time, climate change is the fight for all survival, it is our duty to fight for the future. When we join together we win!

*Deb McGee is a retired public school counselor turned activist/farmer with her partner Patty Hine. Together they are cofounders of 350EUG.*