

PUBLIC TRUST

Only a dozen residents attended the May 22 Department of Environmental Quality Meeting regarding groundwater contamination of the Trainsong and River Road neighborhoods. This clearly is a message of either poor public notification or the apathy of residents whose private water wells have been tainted for 25 years.

Since 1990, DEQ has been investigating groundwater and soil contamination from the Union Pacific Railroad rail yard in the Trainsong and River Road neighborhoods. DEQ's plan is to monitor 15 test water wells for five years and to manage risks to site workers through on site controls and deed restrictions.

The Public Trust Doctrine, in existence since the Roman Empire, states governments have a sovereign duty to protect the assets of the public. The natural resource contamination of groundwater and soils by Union Pacific Railroad violates this trust and the DEQ has a fiduciary responsibility to protect the trust from substantial impairment and restore these assets to their original state.

The natural resources of Eugene are part of the reasons we live here, and they should be protected for present and future generations. From herbicidal aerial spraying to polluting industrial practices, residents have a responsibility to demand protection of air, groundwater, soils, shores, waterways and watersheds.

Contact DEQ at Hanson.don@deq.state.or.us before June 15 to submit questions and comments.

*Jim Neu
Eugene*

REMEMBER THE HEROES

Recently in Portland, several citizens bravely stepped forward, like many other stories of "ordinary people" risking their lives and safety to help someone, anyone, threatened with harassment and possible death.

Two lost their lives and one was severely injured. Although they have received timely support and acclaim, in the long run this story is like that of many other news stories of our time; it will probably be lost, like tears in the rain, as society moves on to the next new issue of the moment.

Rather than being forgotten, we would be better served if acts such as these were preserved as a lasting inspiration for others. Oregon could best do this by establishing one day a year for recognizing selfless acts as these.

This event need not be limited to just Oregon or Oregonians, but Oregon is a good place to start.

*William W. Trevarrow
Eugene*

SUFFRAGE THE LITTLE CHILDREN

The city of Eugene has the chance to lead the nation as the U.S. pulls out of the Paris Accords. Of course, we should redouble efforts to meet goals of the Climate Recovery Ordinance, but our response can and should run far deeper and resonate more meaningfully.

Pundits are fond of saying global warming is destroying our children's future. At the same time, our children remain excluded from a political process that gravely affects them. I propose that the city of Eugene expand its democratic base and give our children the vote.

Enfranchise children. It is their due as citizens. They may, I am sure, exercise the right more wisely than we have. They could hardly do worse.

*Otis Haschemeyer
Eugene*

HOW TO BE A FEMINIST

Hi Mr. Chad Anderson [Letters, May 11]: In my last letter I promised you some suggestions for how to be effective as my feminist ally.

Support equal pay for equal work. Find out if your female coworkers are paid less than you are, and demand that they get raises until they have pay equity.

Criticize the capitalist system that profits off unpaid or underpaid female labor. Demand that parenting become a paid position, with guaranteed income for full-time parents. Demand that childcare, eldercare and care for disabled adults become living-wage jobs. Support increased funding for welfare cash assistance for mothers, remembering that the average welfare mother is 30, divorced, with two kids and fleeing domestic violence.

Stand up against the objectification of women. Stop your friends from making jokes and comments sexualizing women's bodies. Do not consume pornography.

Tell your male friends to get off their video games and get to work. Recent studies show that among people aged 18-30 who are unemployed and not looking for work, greater than 90 percent of women are engaged in unpaid caregiving or housekeeping, while greater than 90 percent of men are playing video games.

There is plenty of unpaid work to do in your family, household and community, and there is no rational reason women should be doing the bulk of it.

*Kara Huntermoon
Eugene*

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