

# THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Contacting councilors, commissioners and lawmakers takes time and expense, but the cause is authentic and deserves the effort.

Jeff Simons  
Eugene

## FAILING THE TEST

I am a first year teacher, just out of the UOTeach Program. Students in Oregon face a deluge of standardized tests starting in the third grade. Every year, numerous hours of instruction time are dedicated to test prep and testing. It is estimated that standardized tests cost upwards of \$27 million per year in Oregon. The cost to students is much greater.

Due to testing, 4J Schools have limited time and money for physical education, music and art. Teachers struggle to squeeze science and social studies into their schedules. Funding for targeted interventions is limited and always uncertain.

This means students with the highest reading and math needs may not receive the individualized help they need to meet academic goals.

The current focus on testing is a huge disadvantage to our youth. Students should have a well-rounded education in which they explore science, social studies, art, music and physical education.

Education is more than just reading and math. Testing has dulled the classroom experience by removing the fun from learning.

It is my job to somehow take a fixed schedule and squeeze in everything that

has been removed due to testing. This is to ensure that my students have the opportunity to find out what they're good at.

School should be a place full of experiences that lead to students to love learning. Testing does just the opposite.

Reneé Henderson  
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## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Louise and I have been missing some of our favorite aspects of summer in Eugene: Where's the Bike Brigade, those fun-loving lit-up pedalers who used to roar through the neighborhood, often ending up at Skinner Butte Park (where they once did a midnight fashion show on the playground bridge)? Where are the fire dancers who entertained with their practicing down at the end of Lawrence Street?

And, of course, where are the Skinner Butte eagles, which for the first time since their appearance in 2007 did not nest and raise young on the butte this year?

On a different note, where is my buddy Steve, who was a regular panhandler for two years at the corner of 6th and High, on the north edge of the Good Times parking lot? I gave him a warm coat back in December, and he greatly appreciated it. If anybody knows why he disappeared this spring, will you let me know? 541-687-1023.

Jeff Harrison  
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