

DICKLESS DOLLS

Kari Johnson (“Rejecting Barbie,” Letters, Aug. 24) gives us a very old feminist lecture I’ve heard years ago, taking on what seems to be some of her old toy Ken and Barbie dolls.

See if I remember this right: It’s moms who give their daughters Barbie dolls and it’s the desire of those dolls’ owners that they choose and get Ken dolls. Moms like that because, as everyone knows, the Ken dolls have no dicks.

Factory emasculated males.

So I hereby give a necessary social correction with this simple statement: Men are from Earth, male feminists are from Uranus.

It’s 50-50 dear, live with it because men are screwed over, too.

Just ask the Vietnam War draftees: You can find a lot of their names on a wall or in a pit, and you need to know that most of them were virgins.

Dan Moore
Springfield

CLEARCUT MOUNTAIN

I can’t help but notice that the size, severity and scope of the recent clearcuts visible from the road seem to have grown and are alarming to me.

For as long as I have lived in Oregon, I will never get used to this egregious practice that forsakes the local community, wildlife and the general ecology of the area. I cannot accept that these lovely forested hills exist for the sake of a chief executive officer or for shareholders who live far away.

The clearcutting along the McKenzie River Valley and the Row River Valley is so extensive that entire mountain ranges are bald, entire mountains completely cut! It baffles me that, in an area as progressive and politically active as Oregon, these practices continue unabated.

What’s holding us back, Oregon? A clear answer comes to mind: the forest industry and the entrenched ties to the political and economic systems in this state.

Corporations make large sums of money from the timber industry, and they are not going down without a fight. But there are more of us than there are of them, and the time is nigh to address the ways this industry is encroaching on life more and more.

As the unsustainable nature and short-term vision of this industry becomes apparent, our recreational spaces and agricultural land are compromised. And these clearcuts are directly related to the unstoppable fires raging at this moment.

All who live here, new and old residents, love this land. It is time for us to deconstruct this practice and finally stop it.

Kerstin Britz
Cottage Grove

TAKING ON HOMELESSNESS

There is not enough recognition of the efforts by Mayor Lucy Vinis that are actually working towards under-attended and long-needed reforms.

I have attended two meetings since July, with officers and homeless persons

present, speaking on concerns and issues at the request of the mayor.

As a member of the Poverty and Homelessness Board, and participant in the shelter task force discussion, I have seen Vinis speak on the topic, listen and have staff taking action on the testimony of our attending homeless. Her motion established an advisory group consisting of 100 percent homeless persons, for the very reason of being interested in hearing directly from those who are experiencing homelessness, with the ability to give feedback on proposed action, and generate materials for the board tasked with addressing homelessness issues.

After I collected definitions for data on homeless and police interactions, I found that even the police are trying to find better ways to engage and help, versus ignoring or increasing the issues.

Kris McAlister
Springfield

GRITS AND BEAR IT

The Oregon Bach Festival fires Matthew Halls for making a private joke (to a black artist friend) about the “antebellum” setting of some event and then, in a Southern (not Southern black) accent, asking if he’d like some grits.

Halls’ friend is not interviewed by the festival board; his firing hinged on hearsay.

What can a person say except, “Did you never see *My Cousin Vinnie*?” Grits are colorblind!

S. Lea Jones
Eugene

WELCOME TO OREGON

Dear newly arrived folks from other states: If it wasn’t a job that brought you here, then it was probably the beauty of Oregon and all the outdoor activities it offers. Living here is truly a throwback to another era.

This does not come without a price. The clean air, water and seemingly endless pristine coastline and trails are costly: It is your time, your donations, your effort and your volunteer hours that keep our state’s environment as healthy as possible.

There are many entities already in place where you can do everything listed above: Oregon Wild, Cascadia Wildlands, Beyond Toxics, Sierra Club. Many of these nonprofits offer outings and hikes. So — go, do, see. Then please get involved in volunteering to keep Oregon beautiful.

We need all hands on deck to fight polluters, and you are the newly arrived hands. We need you. Your involvement will pay you back handsomely in more ways than you can imagine.

Kim Kelly
Eugene

THE ZIG-ZAG PATH

Last week, as my lungs struggled to breathe and the sun was an alien orange blob in the sky, the Hopi prophecies entered my thoughts: “When earthquakes, floods, hailstorms, drought and famine will be the life of every day, the time will then come for either the return to the true path or going the zig-zag way,” said Hopi Elder David Monogue.

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