

Thanksgiving

A FAREWELL FROM A LONGTIME COLUMNIST

If you know me you know that each year in November
I like to take time to take stock and remember
That Thanksgiving means: Giving thanks for it all
For the things that are great and the things that are small

For a home that is safe and is peaceful inside
For the love and the laughs that I share with my bride
For my neighbors and friends who are gentle and kind
And for comfortable pants that don't chafe my behind

For the cats who live with us and sit on our laps
And who join us in taking midafternoon naps
I give thanks for my wife and for having fun daily
Like singing old songs while she plays ukulele

I'm thankful my body is working so well
With its strong beating heart and a nose that can smell
For my bones and my muscles and all of my guts
For miraculous healing of owies and cuts

I'm grateful my life's rich with Jewish traditions
Like Shabbes and latkes and klezmer musicians
And rabbis who teach us and help guide the way
As they wisely remind us to treasure each day

I'm thankful for comics on late night TV
Who help us endure the buffoon in DC
For the writers and activists using their voices
Exposing abuses, protecting our choices

For all of the women now speaking about
The assaults and harassment, men's power and clout
From Cosby to Weinstein, O'Reilly and Ailes
And all of those guys who belong in our jails

But lest I get angry and waste all my chi
I'll refocus on what's most important to me
My gratitude list helps in keeping my cool
So I'll stop and give thanks for the old Golden Rule

Treat others with kindness, as Ellen's still saying
And never stop loving and laughing and playing
And that is exactly my plan, when I say
My "Living Out" column is going away

First written way back in nineteen ninety nine
The *Weekly's* been great, and it's taken some spine
To run a queer column, so dykey and gay
Especially with how things were back in the day

I've had eighteen years, my dear readers and friends
To write about life through a lesbian lens
Things really have changed and you know that they will
Keep changing and changing and changing more still

I've changed a lot, too, and I'm glad for the chance
To do my small part to help freedom advance
I'm glad that at last I've achieved some maturity
And am thankful as hell for my Social Security

While November's a good month to stop and reflect
On things I enjoy and admire and respect
I send you my thanks and a wistful goodbye
And trust my departure won't make people cry

I hope you'll be brave and hang in with good cheer
There's lots to be grateful for throughout the year
Stay out of the closet, be true to yourself
Get out there, have fun, don't just sit on the shelf

Keep thankfulness going and joyfully give it
Life is amazing, however you live it
And always take time to sit back and remember
The things you are thankful for every November



Sally Sheklow wrote "Living Out" from 1999 until 2017 and has been a winner and frequent finalist for "best writer" in EW's Best of Eugene annual readers poll.

LETTERS

NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD

Sorry, Joe Tyndall (Letters, Nov. 16). Can't do it. Men are human. Human beings, like other animals, are innately neither good nor bad. I have known many "good" men, most of whom have at one time or another done a bad thing.

It makes little sense to either blame or aggrandize anyone by category. Neither does it make sense to ignore privilege and harmful behavior.

*Evelyn Hess
Eugene*

CONTACT PETER DEFAZIO

Nice interview with Congressman Peter DeFazio with his selection as "best local politician" (Nov. 2). He truly seems like a person who cares and will listen. So give him a call or write a note, asking him to cosponsor House Resolution 466 supporting the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

The GPE will help countries provide education for the millions of children and youth out of school. By supporting the GPE's efforts, America can join other countries and individual donors to create a more peaceful world.

In addition to reducing conflict, educated populations have lower birth rates, better health and higher earnings. This is a perfect step for the man selected as a "World-Changer."

*Willie Dickerson
Snohomish, Wash.*

PROTECT OWYHEE

These are troubled times. Threats abound to our way of life, perhaps to life itself. It all feels overwhelming. What does a poor boy or girl do? Pick a threat, write a letter, then feel better.

One threat deserving our attention is to public lands. Near and dear is a spectacular example: Oregon's Owyhee Canyonlands. These public lands are an irreplaceable treasure and the largest unprotected area left in the lower 48 states.

Carved by rivers winding toward the Pacific, the Owyhee Canyonlands — with their red-rock canyons, blue-ribbon trout streams and gently rolling hills — make up a diverse, wild place nearly the size of Yellowstone, home to a rich array of wildlife. There is no place else like it.

Remoteness alone will no longer protect the Owyhee Canyonlands. Development pressure and impacts are coming. Damage from irresponsible ATV use is already here. Mining could be next. Permanently protecting the Owyhee Canyonlands would safeguard the nation's largest herd of bighorn sheep, as well as native trout, raptors and the imperiled greater sage-grouse.

Protecting the Owyhee Canyonlands would benefit people, too, by helping the local economy, providing certainty for ranchers, boosting recreation and tourism, and guaranteeing access for those who hike, camp, hunt, fish and explore.

Now is the time to take action — before it is too late. Please add your voice by contacting senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden, and Congressman Peter DeFazio. Ask them to push for permanent protection of the Owyhee Canyonlands.

*Benton Elliott
Eugene*

LOVES TRUMP, HATES FREE PRESS

I just read your Nov. 9 front page and article on President Trump and Vice-President Pence. I agree that everyone is entitled to his opinion and I happen to be a very conservative Republican who believes in our president and vice-president!

I can't believe you would publish something like this, calling for impeachment of President Trump ... I found all of the copies I could, here at the Eugene Hotel, and threw them in the trash.

I will continue to read your publication, because I am interested in what is going on in Eugene, but PLEASE don't publish "stuff" like that in the future.

Thank you for your consideration,
*Burl V. Stonum
Eugene*

Editor's Note: EW states in the fine print on our masthead that individuals are limited to five free papers. That includes individuals who want to burn them or throw them out. If you want more copies for less nefarious reasons, please stop by 1251 Lincoln Street and we will provide them.

A SHADOW ON THE UO

Newspeak for university riverfront development is "North Campus conditional use permit." The meeting at EMU on Nov. 8 was sparsely attended because one notice was posted only one week before. That one notice was removed Nov. 16.

It turns out this is an application to allow four-story (45 feet) buildings next to the river: two or three buildings where Oregon Research Institute would have been, before that was rejected several years ago, and two or three buildings right next to Autzen footbridge, plus three floodlit athletic fields.

The existing Riverfront field is well drained, attractive and consistent with its location. However, AstroTurf with floodlighting has no place in the sensitive and beautiful environment near the river. Also, there are plans to build six-story (75 feet) buildings just south of the railroad tracks.

All these buildings would cast shadow in the winter on the bike path and block views.

A great university needs to preserve this special land, which is needed for recreation for all its members and the growing Oregon public. The university planning committee meets Nov. 28. The university should not destroy this unique resource. The riverfront should not be turned into an antiseptic corporate environment.

*George W. Evans
Eugene*

WHAT UP, SENECA?

Since it's hard to avoid your ads claiming Seneca timber practices are sustainable, do tell us just exactly what was sustainable about the logging on your Doane Road tree farm? What were you sustaining other than your company's profits?

I assume you noticed that the Douglas fir there was stressed and dying, just like it is on our forest next to you and all over the valley. Is that why you harvested such young and small diameter trees, or did you need more wood to burn to boil water to run your turbines to produce electricity and air pollution?

What do you intend to do now with