

A WARRIOR'S FAREWELL

I am a chief petitioner for the Freedom from Aerial Herbicide Spraying Bill of Rights.

I am coming to the end of the activist's path, trod by our beloved Audrey Moore (Josephine County) and Jan Wroncy (Triangle Lake). I am dying of cancer after a long healthy life.

This is not a fight any of us chose. We did not put ourselves in harm's way. The timber companies came to our homes with their herbicide poisons.

My friends, neighbors, colleagues and co-conspirators, I am so sorry to be leaving you so soon.

Timber Guys: Examine your consciences. You cannot say you didn't know or were just following orders after 40 years of widespread harm.

Lynn Bowers
Eugene

LOCAL FASCISM

It appears that our little city has garnered international attention once again. Sadly, Eugene's most recent notoriety is related to our long-time problem of bold and outspoken white supremacists and their newfound momentum for all things "fasci."

The *UK Daily Mail* released a NYE report that, while hyperbolic, described an atmosphere of escalating activity, recruitment and hate crimes from area Nazis. While most online readers know the *Daily Mail* is a garbage rag, locals count *The Oregonian* as a legitimate news service.

Neither story was a "New York Timesian" level puff piece, but they did provide another platform for white supremacist ideas; both reports eagerly contextualized the Nazis' re-energized activity in the current political climate.

Yet, they failed (miserably) to contextualize the confluence of those factors in the history and characteristics of fascism, a system for which white supremacists are gleefully wielding a torch.

Perhaps it is a consequence of jour-

nalistic objectivity, but this lack of context tends to be woefully lacking across the board in recent reports on white supremacy in America. Folks who take care to consider history and study society and political systems see this as a glaring error that could doom humanity to repeat the mistakes of our past.

I don't want us to drop the ball on this challenge, because the consequences of fascism are too widespread.

For local readers who are interested in developing a deeper understanding of the social and historical context of how fascism is developing, a "Nature of Fascism" class is hosted every Saturday at 2 pm at the Growers Market.

Candice King
Communist Labor Party of Eugene

LEVIN IS WRONG

Rick Levin's cover story on Troy Monroe — the "rebounder" on the corner of Coburg — in the Jan. 4 issue of *Eugene Weekly* treated its subject with condescension and cruelty.

Before Levin has introduced Monroe into the article, ostensibly written to promote Monroe's fledgling career as a fitness coach and nutrition adviser, Levin establishes his authorial disposition as one of smug patronage. Monroe's profile is presaged for three paragraphs by Levin's facetious accounts of humankind's striving for "sexy immortality" through diets, cosmetics and "plastic surgery disasters," wherein the disastee looks like a "shrink-wrapped cadaver."

Levin ends this digressive preface by ditching his bloviated standard English to say "[Y]'all can stop scouring the ends of the earth. The Fountain of Youth is within us!" This parodic tone disadvantages Monroe to the reader's credulity by biasing the very topic of discussion as humorously inadmissible.

In his arrogance, Levin believes being a journalist grants him dialectic say-so; in this instance Levin's impartation of a deeper truth is that jumping on a trampoline is

as dumb as any other fitness gimmick. "Not to be a stickler," he writes, buttressing himself in a caveat, "rebound exercise is at best aerobically mild."

The article's last column of text is almost wholly dedicated to quoting Monroe's blog where Monroe expounds upon "medical genocide" perpetrated by "international Communists." Undoubtedly, Levin knows the best way to disabuse someone's authority is by appending it to the reek of conspiracy.

I can't imagine the self-satisfied pleasure Levin felt printing those quotes.

Bryce Jones
Eugene

FORBIDDEN FRUIT

There's a female ginkgo biloba just outside of Villard Hall at the University of Oregon that is posted to be removed Jan. 15. It's proposed to be replaced with a male ginkgo, but in an attempt to spare the existing tree, I'd like to bring to attention that the inconveniences of the "mess" produced by the fruits of the female do not outweigh the benefits the tree provides.

Not only does the existing tree provide canopy, add substance to the arboretum and attract wildlife, but the nuts of the ginkgo biloba have been well known for centuries to possess a plethora of scientifically-proven medicinal uses.

The fruit's scent is somewhat unpleasant, but removing a well-established tree just because the fruits don't smell great doesn't seem fair, and in fact appears to contradict the Campus Tree Plan. Furthermore, the Ginkgo fruits are only produced for two months out of the year.

Surely the genetic diversity of an arboretum with a mated pair of living fossils is better than one containing solely males. By removing this tree, the UO community would miss out on a great opportunity to educate and inspire students, faculty and visitors who might not realize how valuable these extraordinary female trees can be.

I encourage anyone with the power to revoke the removal of this fine specimen

to do so, and urge you all to acknowledge that what some recognize as flaws can actually be occasions to grow and learn as a community.

Rebecca Snowdale
Eugene

EAT YOUR ETHICS

In 1976, when I was a young "back-to-the-land" hippie, having just started the Newport Farmers' Market, if someone had told me that one day you would be able to buy "organic" food at Safeway, I would have laughed.

But some 40 years later, not only is there "organic" food at Safeway but at Walmart and Costco, which are putting the small farmers who started and nurtured the movement out of business.

When Big Ag saw the premium prices that "organic" products were getting, they jumped on the bandwagon, bastardizing organic practices to fit their economies of scale. Is this a good thing for consumers? Does cheaper organic produce from Mexico have the same quality and care for the environment that local organic can provide? Is Earthbound organic lettuce mix, grown in greenhouse factories and packed in plastic boxes with gas to extend its shelf life, as nutritious? And what kind of carbon footprint does that have compared to a bag of locally grown lettuce mix?

For the past five years my farm, Phoenix Farm Enterprises, Inc., has had a great partnership with Ninkasi Brewing. Ninkasi pays half of their employees' CSA share as a health benefit. This is a win-win-win for Ninkasi, their employees and Phoenix Farm.

Just imagine what it would do for the local farm community if Symantec, the city of Eugene or EWEB offered their employees the same benefit?

It is time for conscientious consumers to "put your money where your mouth is" and eat your ethics.

Angela Andre, farm director
Phoenix Farm Enterprises, Inc.
Springfield

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