

LUCKY TO HAVE LEVIN

Although Rick Levin does not need anyone to write in his defense, I feel the need to at least register some opposition to a recent letter accusing him of showing “condescension,” “cruelty,” “arrogance” and of being both “smug” and “self-satisfied” (“Levin Is Wrong,” Letters, 1/18).

I don’t know Mr. Levin, and at times he may exhibit all of those qualities. But I do know that he is, along with many on the *Eugene Weekly* staff, a creative, thoughtful, always provocative writer. He thinks beyond the topic under discussion.

Like any top-notch journalist, Levin sees more than a narrow subject to be described; he goes after implications, nuances and the entanglement of ideas. I don’t always agree with his conclusions, but I’m always stirred and excited about what he’s discovered. We’re lucky to have him.

Lou Caton
Eugene

THE FLICK IS JUST MEH

I must disagree with Rick Levin’s review of *The Flick* at Oregon Contemporary Theatre (“Imitation of Life,” 1/18): While it is by no means a bomb, it is, for sure, by no means a hit. That makes it a “miss” (that is, you can safely miss it, with no harm done to yourself), at least in my book.

I have no idea what other members of the audience felt, but at least two members of that audience walked out of Sunday’s matinee. Their actions do not reveal “faith in the fact that the audience will fall, slowly and surely, into its strangely punctuated rhythms ...”

My own high point was when Tara Wibrew and Jonathan Thompson settled down to watch a movie. It could be any movie, but I (correctly) noted it was Sam Peckinpaw’s *The Wild Bunch*. That was my high point.

Michael E. Peterson
Eugene

CARNIVOROUS HYPOCRISY

How disheartening that the Jan. 25 *EW* attempted to romanticize the killing of animals (“Meat Isn’t Just Murder”). The so-called “ancient process of food preparation”

needn’t include using fellow sentient beings as ingredients, especially since we aren’t, obviously, living in ancient times.

Using “tradition” as an excuse to use, abuse and kill animals cannot be morally justified. To suggest that killing animals “creates a sense of connectedness to nature and to each other” is utter nonsense.

One point I agree with is that those against hunting who continue to use animal products are hypocritical. While hunters and others who kill animals undoubtedly differ psychologically from the Average “I could never kill an animal myself” Joe, the Average Joe’s continued participation in using animals for food and clothing is no different ethically. Whether deer or lamb, elk or cow, sentient beings value their lives equally.

This hypocrisy shows up everywhere, such as animal rescues serving dairy/eggs/meat at fundraisers, or environmental groups decrying the killing of wildlife while not promoting veganism; or “bird lovers” who dutifully keep their bird feeders cleaned and filled for certain birds, while eating certain other birds. And so on...

The do-it-yourself-butchered glorified in the *EW* piece caters to an infinitesimally small niche market; ethics aside, it’s totally unsustainable based on land requirements alone. Animal agriculture uses up land at an astounding rate, including the tremendous number of acres required to grow crops to feed the billions of farmed animals killed annually. And it sucks up water at an equally deplorable rate.

Barb Lomow
Eugene

NO NEW ZONE?

I opened the *Eugene Weekly* with eager anticipation only to feel a keen sense of disappointment when I saw that New Zone Gallery was not mentioned in your gallery issue (Bravo, 1/18).

New Zone has been a presence in Eugene for well over 30 years. Many galleries have come and gone during that time — and yet we persevere in conditions that have become ever more difficult for the visual arts. A tight budget leaves no resources for advertising, making our omission that much more painful.

Many of Eugene’s successful artists have come through our membership, and we continue to nurture 65 accomplished and emerging artists each month. Our First Friday celebrations find the gallery packed with appreciative viewers and art buyers.

In our best month we sold over \$6,000 of art. Many community members chose to do their Christmas shopping at New Zone, as we offer original art for most income levels.

Visual arts are the one art that requires no ticket to enjoy and has the most difficulty supporting itself. Our very low gallery commission of 25 percent puts the majority of the purchase price into the artist’s pocket and then back to community.

In our past, with no grant writer, grants have been beyond our reach. Our 65 members all volunteer to keep the gallery running and our manager works 32-plus hours a week for only a \$500 stipend.

New Zone Gallery has a big heart and is vital to our community. Please don’t ignore us.

Dianne Story Cunningham, president
New Zone Board
Eugene

CONTRA TOXINS

Farewell, Lynn Bowers, warrior, indeed. As did Jan Wroncy, thank you for your years of work and using your voice to show the real-life impact of exposure to toxins; thanks for the fight to educate for the greater good (Letters, 1/18).

I want to add to your voice and remind folks that when the neo-cons took over the Board of County Commissioners (Bozievich, Leiken, later Farr and then, later, Williams for Stewart), among the first things they did was to eliminate important citizen advisory committees. The Vegetation Management Advisory Committee (VMAC) had informed citizens to advise commissioners on roadside toxic spraying issues in Lane County. No more!

Elections matter. With neo-cons making up the majority on the Board of County Commissioners, the soon-to-retire Commissioner Sorenson has little ability to get important issues seconded even for any discus-

sion. If you care about issues such as toxins, it’s vital to elect people who care about them, too. 2018 is a great start to do that.

Lynn Bowers, you and Jan Wroncy informed us about so much. Please know, as you deal with your cancer and its impact, that your courage, vision, heart and voice have influenced many, and that we thank you. Your legacy continues.

Rob Handy
Eugene

UNIVERSITY OF OVERDEVELOPMENT

I run along the river almost every day. The University of Oregon’s riverfront land north of the railroad tracks near the Frohnmayer Footbridge is truly magical. On my runs I often think how special it is to have such a beautiful wild place in the middle of Eugene.

Running throughout the year I see people walking to football games, classes of students and those just seeking solace in nature. I know I am not alone in enjoying the open space, the birds and the trees.

Now it appears that this open space enjoyed by so many is threatened. I have learned that the university is proposing buildings and large artificial turf fields that would be brightly lit at night (“UO Planning to Expand Toward River,” 1/18). If the land is developed in this way, a unique part of what makes living in Eugene special will be lost forever.

As Eugene’s population grows and the UO develops, the open space that remains will be even more valuable. The University of Oregon has an opportunity to preserve the natural character of its riverfront land for the enjoyment and education of future generations.

The preservation and restoration of the riverfront could be an educational opportunity. The natural beauty is a major selling point in attracting talented people to come work at the university.

The UO can demonstrate its commitment to environmental stewardship by preserving and enhancing the natural beauty that makes this city unique.

Jackson Kellogg
Eugene



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