

**CARE FOR THE DEAD**

To preview the Dead and Company show with an article (“The Living Dead,” William Kennedy, June 26) written by a guy who neither digs nor understands jams bands or the Dead ...

Who’s going to write the review? You know, to report on what actually happened? Here, let me: John Mayer sparked and roared, and took good care of us for the entire evening. Kinda like Jerry used to.

Finesse and amazing dynamics were the hallmarks of the band. Brilliant song selection.

What a night.

Lea Jones  
Eugene

**JUDGE NOT**

You had me with “Love is the only way that is” (Letters, “Ganja Love,” June 7).

You then backed it up with how you arrived at that statement. Then you went into the ganja haze a little, but that’s okay.

But then your “screw the ducks” (sports or swimming at Alton Baker Park?) totally lost me, and I think for most readers it probably undermined the entire tenet of your letter. How does that statement support love?

Whatever happened to each her own, and live and let live?

If you want others to allow you your place, then best to allow others their place.

Gary DeCamp  
Eugene

**NOT TICKLED ABOUT PICKLEBALL**

I believe your recent article on pickleball missed a few essential points. Former UO tennis coach Buzz Summers is paraphrased as saying that pickleball, “requires more strategy than tennis” and that you can win in tennis by simply “overpowering” an opponent.

I do not understand why it was necessary to falsely denigrate tennis in order to promote pickleball. I do not see any improved tennis courts in Eugene due to pickleball. I have seen the four courts at Westmoreland rendered unplayable at the cost of \$30,000.

Tennis is a sport that develops and maintains a broader range of flexibility and aerobics. It’s not uncommon for a player to run more than a mile during a single match, though in more extreme cases and in five set matches, players have run more than five.

The footwork and body movements involved with tennis might not be for 80 year-olds like Summers, but he should not write off the sport for kids and those younger who might want to play a sport that challenges their bodies more and for which there are high school teams and college scholarships.

I understand that pickleball is a great thing for people like Summers and seniors and others with mobility issues who can no longer handle the rigors of a full-court tennis match or the time involved in learning tennis. It’s a great sport for retirement communities to get people moving and rotating their bodies.

James Tily  
Eugene

**ANTIFA TACTICS**

To Portland’s Antifa: I love the First Amendment, though I wince at pornography and cry rage at hateful lyrics. My question: Isn’t the First Amendment an individual protection we each wear around us? Even though the “Patriot” Prayers were largely not Portlanders, don’t they have our same right to speak and to march?

Antifa is committed; its members are

the spear to pierce our bubble of impotent inactivity. Thank you for your bravery! I am awake now and will pay better attention.

I would so prefer Antifa’s black block and masks, though, in an elbow-to-elbow stormtrooper wall *behind* teachers, students, mothers, fathers, children, leaders, elders, skateboards, strollers, bicycles, running shoes, walkers and wheelchairs.

Witnesses of our city silently protesting hate walking freely down our streets. So Antifa — you are Malcolm X and the rest of us need to MLK up.

Lynne Lockhart  
Eugene

**TIME TO ACT**

Love David Wagner’s column title: *It’s About Time* in the *Weekly* (7/5). So many possibilities of content, the old John Denver song of the same title being the most memorable, or perhaps the question, what do we do with all of our time?

Every day, more than 15,000 children under 5 and 800 mothers run out of time and die of complications we know how to prevent. It’s about time to pass the Reach Every Mother and Child Act to help end

**VIEWPOINT**

BY BOB PENNY, WITH THE EAST GRANDSTAND SUPPORTERS

# Last Stand for The Grandstand

PRE’S EAST GRANDSTAND IS GONE, BUT LET’S LEARN FROM ITS HISTORY

**O**n Sept. 3, 1974, Steve Prefontaine put down the megaphone he had just used to address the crowd in the East Grandstand at Hayward Field and thought of what to do next.

The black field-burning smoke that descended upon Eugene that day, now known as “Black Tuesday,” had come from legally conducted grass seed stubble removal operations. The rules themselves would have to be changed for citizens to gain their rights to breathe clean air.

Two months ago I wrote an op-ed for *The Register-Guard* entitled “What would Pre do?” In so many ways he was an example of effective action. In the face the recent destruction by the University of Oregon of the nearly century-old iconic and historic East Grandstand, the question many are now asking is, “How did this happen, and what could we have done to prevent it?”

My fellow East Grandstand supporters — Liz Carter, Peter Thompson, Scott Krause, Jonathan Pincus and my brother Bill Penny — worked tirelessly to save the building. In a few years the 1925 Ellis Lawrence-designed grandstand — which featured almost unnoticeable shifts in seating angle as one went higher into the building, allowing all to see when everyone stood — along with its famed booming resonating structure, would have had its centennial. Its restoration could have been a community celebration.

Instead, we have been left with the horror of its public destruction in a willful act of ignorance and contempt. Our legal appeal to stop the demolition was in transit that morning to the Oregon State Land Use Board of Appeals in Salem, but, fearing our success, our opponents sent in four track-hoes, and we were too late.

All along we struggled with a lack of public support, which had been poisoned by assertions the building was rotten and antiquated — false claims promoted by Howard Slusher, Phil Knight’s project hitman. Pre was dealing with similar obstacles. He needed to address the power structures enabling the problem.

So Prefontaine and Bill Bowerman testified to state legislative committees. They even had the advantage of the governor backing their efforts.

But it would be nearly 30 years after Prefontaine’s death that others, including his sister Neta and his fellow Olympian Kenny Moore, as well as dedicated local environmentalists, could finish his work so that Oregonians can now experience summers of clean air.

Hayward Field is owned by the citizens of Oregon, but through a newly established

system that three years ago abolished state-level higher education oversight, it is now administered by a board of trustees, and ultimately by the university president himself.

Operating with almost regal authority, the UO President Michael Schill was able to transfer the facility away through a lease agreement to a private interest, PHit LLC, to do with as it will without the normal campus planning process. Other agencies like the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the city of Eugene simply followed suit and chose not to get in the way of the public/private juggernaut that was enabled by this lack of oversight.

To change this situation two efforts are necessary.

The first is to challenge the SHPO’s lack of administrative rules. That process provides for mandatory public involvement and a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) before work is undertaken, *not afterwards*, as happened here. And the MOA, which governs the mitigations given back to the public for the loss of the building, was not signed by anyone from the campus planning office who would have been qualified to judge the appropriateness of the agreement.

So clearly, in this case, the intent of the federal rules was circumvented.

Second, and more importantly, the 2015 change to Oregon’s higher education oversight needs to be re-examined and fixed. This will require endorsement by elected representatives and legislative action.

The loss of the East Grandstand was a bridge too far, setting a dangerous precedent across the entire state university system. Implementation of the UO’s existing planning process likely would have saved the East Grandstand and resulted in a more appropriately scaled project in line with city and university planning guidelines, including full public involvement.

This established process must not be circumvented by the university, which is entrusted to steward public historic properties, through a private lease entered into without public knowledge or approval.

“What would Pre do?” He would do what he always did when faced with a challenge. He would not stop fighting.

I hope the citizens of Eugene will remember his example, even though the building he performed in and which hosted his memorial has been erased from history.

*Bob Penny is a former high school national record holder from South Eugene High School and ran for the UO and the University of Arizona. He is a building contractor living in Bellingham, Washington.*