

RELISH THE OPPORTUNITY

Pickleball vs. Tennis (*EW*, 7/5): If Buzz Summers says pickleball is about finesse and strategy, and tennis is about power and pace, it must be true. Buzz won national championships in both sports.

Of course, there is a lot to learn in tennis before you get to power. I played pickleball once. It was easy, I had fun and it was a decent workout.

Buzz said it best when he said, if you want to learn pickleball, give me two hours. If you want to learn tennis, give me two years. Just like racketball took over the four-wall handball courts, pickleball will take over the tennis courts.

*Norman Bellitt
Springfield*

PRESIDENTIAL COMPOST

Many of my fellow citizens rue the triumph of Trump — his style of pre-emptive prevarication, his fraudulent contributions to the commonwealth. I argue that big D's historical significance should not be overlooked.

I think he will be remembered as the Great Composter of institutions that certainly needed to be composted.

An organic gardener knows the value of

compost, the ripe teeming rot of decomposition. It is where the treasures of regeneration are born, the black soil that grows the gorgeous tomato and the juicy golden corn.

So it is with institutions. They need to be broken down so that new life can be cultivated from the fertile muck of their residue. Such institutions like the State Department and the FBI are examples.

I don't know your opinion of these institutions, but the past 50 years of their activities has not resulted in many gorgeous tomatoes or golden ears of corn. Despite their amply remunerated talent, in fact, the institutions themselves have become pathological.

So citizen gardeners like myself plan the season. We ask ourselves how best to utilize the disintegrating components to grow the good stuff.

*David Hugh Tyson
Eugene*

DIRTY POLITICS

Summertime is upon us, and most of Eugene is vacationing or busy preparing to attend or work at the Country Fair. City Manager John Ruiz is also busy, conducting a bit of political railroading that he hopes to slip through while we are all dis-

tracted with other pursuits.

The downtown smoking ban, twice defeated by enormous public outcry in opposition, was sneakily inserted into the city agenda again — added the Friday before Monday's meeting and quickly forwarded to be voted on July 23, the council's last meeting before they take a long summer vacation of their own.

I manage a market downtown and to my knowledge no business owners or residents in the affected downtown core were contacted about their opinions on the issue, perhaps because we previously said "no" to the ban.

Legally mandated public comment is slated for the day after Country Fair, by design — the city manager and council clearly don't want to hear from the public, and so plan to do so when no one can attend to express opinion.

The ban creates an unfair exclusion zone that will adversely affect already teetering downtown businesses. As there is a vaguely defined "opt-out" clause in the proposal, allow me to propose that all of downtown wishes to opt out now.

Too bad there is no such clause to opt out of our out of control city manager!

*Jeffrey S Keim
Eugene*

DON'T BLAME RALPH

Can we please stop repeating the lies about Ralph Nader's costing Al Gore the election?

Had Nader not run, Bush would have won by more in Florida. CNN's exit poll showed Bush at 49 percent and Gore at 47 percent, with 2 percent not voting in a hypothetical Nader-less Florida race.

Not to mention: Gore lost his home state of Tennessee, Bill Clinton's Arkansas and traditionally Democratic West Virginia; with any one of these, Gore would have won.

And then there's the 5-4 Supreme Court decision that stopped the vote counting that favored a Gore victory. Gore simply was not a strong enough candidate.

*Jim Flynn
Springfield*

YOUR COUNTRY ON DRUGS

Immigration will not be resolved by begging and appealing to selfish people. There are one billion people in the American continent; one third of them are in the U.S. and the other 670,000,000 are in the rest of the Americas.

Letting everybody come addresses the symptoms instead of tackling the root problems.

VIEWPOINT BY BERNARDO

Yes, There are Men in Eugene

WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED UNWANTED SEXUAL CONTACT

Many of us men in Eugene cheer on the #MeToo Movement. Some of us men have special, private reasons we are encouraged, because we have experienced unwanted sexual contact, often as children. Women survivors speaking up help many in our society who are marginalized.

In April, my wife and I attended an important community gathering in Eugene — Addressing the #MeToo Movement: What Men And Our Community Can Do To Prevent Sexual Violence. The good-sized turnout at St. Thomas Episcopal Church listened to community leaders, and then we held small group discussions.

This event was sponsored by The McKenzie River Men's Center, Sexual Assault Support Services, and the Center for Community Counseling, but my essay only speaks for me.

Thanks #MeToo. It's past the time that our whole community to speak up and support you.

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In 2018 the media have run a lot of stories about sexual assault of women. It is about time that there is more attention to this harm. This movement led by courageous women helps in some unexpected ways.

As I look around at my weekly support group, we are all men who survived harmful and inappropriate sexual contact. Male survivors of sexual assault are largely invisible. I will use this pseudonym of "Bernardo" because it still does not feel safe to use my real name. For example, my family has not yet addressed this issue, and some might be surprised.

The #MeToo Movement has provided support for addressing these issues.

Now I am at retirement age, but more than 50 years ago, when I was about 8 or 9, a close adult male relative would enter my bedroom in the morning, and while I lay on my stomach, he would lie on top of me. I felt pinned down, and this lasted for several minutes. He would make jokes about sex, for example talking about male erections in the morning, which I did not know about at all. These inappropriate events happened many weekend mornings.

Thankfully, this inappropriate activity did not become as violent as rape or even direct body-to-body naked contact. However, this intrusive and negative behavior happened repeatedly. At the time, of course, it did not feel good. For decades later, I looked back at these experiences as harmful. It seemed that at that time, I lost a type of innocence, and began to feel guilty just for existing.

Also, this negative activity illustrates a hidden iceberg of ways that learning about

intimacy could have been healthier.

Yes, I realize that some of the reports in the media describe far worse sexual abuse. However, certainly considering my age, my abuse was as or more serious than some of the media reports. In any case, I have learned that one cannot rank abuse. Each person responds differently.

Unfortunately, there is an odd double standard for boys who survived sexual assault. When the perpetrator is a man, the abuse seems more clear. But whether the abuser is a man or woman, a child survivor is robbed by a person with power over them.

Eugene has a great resource for men who have experienced unwanted sexual contact. Each week the well-respected nonprofit Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS) holds a drop-in mutual support group for us. I have been going for a few months to a comfortable space in the SASS building over by 19th and Jefferson Street.

The group is led by two wonderful and professional counselors. One, Rebecca Robinson, wrote her 2017 master's thesis on male sexual abuse survivors. She wrote, "An often surprising percentage of the sexual assault survivors are men. These men deserve counseling and support from informed therapists who understand how the effects of the traumatic experience, and their recovery journey connected to this trauma looks different for them."

Another counselor helping to lead our group is finishing her thesis on the same subject, and recently held a seminar for working counselors on this topic. The fact that our SASS group therapists are both female actually adds to the value of this group. It is nice to have allies. Thanks, and thanks SASS!

While of course this group is confidential, I can say that there is a wide diversity of abuse, often hidden.

As a drop-in support group, participants do not have to commit to attend. We can decide at the last minute. At least one member waited in his car for a while and finally entered. If you are an adult guy in Lane County who has experienced unwanted sexual contact, you are invited to attend this support group.

We have been few in numbers, so I hope this valuable service continues. I have gotten a lot of support and healing here. I personally appreciate the #MeToo Movement for shining more of a light on this under-recognized subject.

For more information, go to the SASS web page at sass-lane.org. I can be emailed privately, via my pseudonym: bernardo-survivor@protonmail.com. This essay has just been included in Reclaim/Reclama, a 24-page publication highlighting the stories and artwork of survivors from all walks of life throughout the state of Oregon. The magazine was published earlier this spring by the nonprofit Sexual Assault Resource Center of Portland, sarcoregon.org