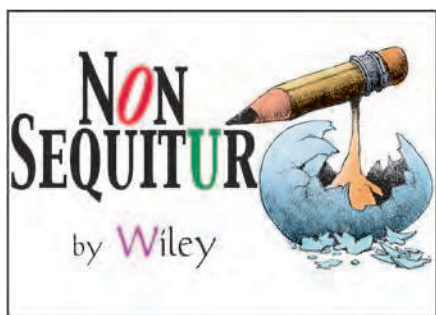






HEAR YE,
HEAR YE !!

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letters

DON'T RUIN RUNES

In "Stopping Hate" (*EW*, 7/3), the Othala rune is described as "popular among white nationalists." While this problem is hardly confined to our local racists, I feel the need to speak out and educate our community about the origins of this symbol and its other associations.

Racists have already managed to irreparably damage the reputation and use of one ancient and originally benevolent symbol (the swastika), and we can't let them have another one.

The runes were the alphabet used by various Germanic and Scandinavian languages in antiquity, and they can be found in ancient inscriptions and medieval manuscripts. Over time, they also acquired symbolic meanings and were (and are) used in divination and magic.

Othala, also called Odal and representing the sound "o," has connotations of ancestral homeland (hence the appropriation by white nationalists) and inheritance. The runes are now used, and considered sacred, by many practitioners of Heathenry, Asatru and other modern pagan and polytheist religious traditions — the vast majority of which are vehemently opposed to all forms of racism both in their spiritual communities and beyond, and are devastated at the recent increase in usage of Othala by neo-Nazis.

In order to prevent the runes from being totally corrupted by racist propaganda (and to prevent non-racist pagans from being attacked, verbally or otherwise), I urge everyone to consider the context when encountering runes, and remember that they are still sacred imagery for many people.

It is horrible to have your spiritual symbols twisted into a tool of hate.

Kate Winter
Eugene

RE-ENVISIONING EUGENE

Neal Cassidy ("High-Density Hell," *Letters*, 6/20) has lambasted the ugly building spree in Eugene. Susan Hoffman ("Welcome to the Occupation," *Letters*, 6/27) has pointed out that the composition of the Eugene Planning Commission is heavily (and illegally) packed with five (out of seven) commissioners professionally connected to the building trades, with ugly results.

In 2015, Seattle-based Evergreen Group plunked down 192 "market-rate" apartments (one-bedroom: \$1,300) along River Road. Its three-story blocks loom over the old suburban houses, and its cars clog the narrow lanes. Evergreen recently sold this monstrosity for \$17 million.

Now Evergreen has its eye on another River Road lot, just off the Willamette River Greenway, again overlooking a peaceful suburban community. It wants to impose 94 units and 128 asphalt parking spaces on three acres, covering some of the richest soil in Lane County.

Strangely, Homes for Good was told

it could not build affordable housing there because of a flood plain issue, but the flood plain disappeared after Evergreen hired its own surveyors. Pat Farr, county commissioner for River Road, says "Envision Eugene" has tied his hands, and now it's mandatory to build giant apartment blocks everywhere.

Let's untie all the hands, put all the cards on the table and rethink "Envision Eugene." Let's envision our town growing prettier with time, instead of uglier and our government working for the people who live here, instead of for out-of-state developers.

Let's envision a government that truly cares about the climate, sustainability and the environment.

Christopher Logan
Eugene

PRICED OUT

Marc Shapiro's concerns about increasing homelessness are a concern around the country ("Over the Edge," 7/3). With rents going up more than 60 percent since 1960 but wages only rising 5 percent, it's no wonder there is a problem.

A renter's tax credit is being proposed in Congress that would help millions of families who pay more than 50 percent of their income for housing. Help stop the pipeline to homelessness by calling and writing those who represent you in Congress to support a renters tax credit.

Willie Dickerson
Snohomish

BIRD BRAINS

To Jean Denis (*Letters*, 7/3): I will commiserate with you about feeding our beautiful wildlife. I have seen people stand right by the educational signs in Alton Baker Park and throw Doritos or bread cubes to the birds! I want to wring their necks, but then I know that they think it's just great to share their bad food choices with animals (and to vocally defend their right).

It's an idiot's way of "bonding" with nature, I guess.

Solution: Plaster the parks and fishing areas with bright simple signage: BIRDS DON'T EAT PEOPLE FOOD! PERIOD!

Education starts in schools with the kids. If their teachers don't bring this subject up, it's a sure thing their clueless Wonder-Bread parents won't either.

Annie Kayner
Eugene

UNETHICAL ANNOUNCEMENT?

"Allyship" and "advocacy" have become huge buzzwords in 2019 among white Democrats, especially with the growing crisis at the US-Mexico border.

However I am becoming increasingly concerned with the abuse of privilege and platforms I am seeing among white Democrats in their interactions with immigrant groups.

Recently, a new candidate for Congressional District 4 announced her

campaign at a rally intended to be about the crisis undocumented immigrants are facing at our border. I was incredibly taken aback and confused as to why this candidate thought this was a good idea.

This action goes hand-in-hand with the ill-perceived "we are all immigrants" rhetoric, which dismisses the plight immigrants face — that natural born citizens will never experience.

Frankly, it looked to me like the only reason she attended the rally was to further her own political career — and thus her motives were completely unethical.

Heading into 2020, we need to be hyper-critical of the motives white Democrats have in their interactions with immigrant groups in order to make sure these "progressives" aren't tokenizing and using marginalized groups for their own gain.

Anca Matica
Eugene

FEUDAL OREGON

On June 28, 2019, *The Nation* ran a story by Zoe Capenter titled "Behind Oregon's GOP Walkout is a Sordid Tale of Corporate Cash." I was among those rallying for passage of HB 2020 at the Capitol and will say that it's the best article written so far on this disgraceful and anti-democratic act.

We are under siege by the greedy and entrenched who have seduced the disgruntled and misinformed. Why do we allow our elected representatives and laws to be so easily corrupted? It makes me sick and disgusted to learn that, as Carpenter reports:

"Oregon now ranks sixth for the total amount of corporate money given per lawmaker and first in per-capita corporate giving. According to an 18-month investigation by *The Oregonian's* Rob Davis, industry has leveraged these donations to gut or block a number of environmental regulations. As a result, the state's environmental protections are now far weaker than those of neighbors Washington and California."

What this information means is that citizens who believe in honest government have to go back into the trenches. We've been lied to and shat upon. The Trump legacy is trickling down and leaving a stench across our state.

Jack Cooper
Eugene

BAD DEMOCRATS

Tony Corcoran regularly appears in *EW* bashing Republican legislators. So what have Democrats been doing in Salem?

They've weaponized the "emergency" clause to prevent voter challenges to their decisions.

They've violated two recent voter mandates, Measure 97 (gross receipts tax) and Measure 88 (driver cards for undocumented immigrants).

Through an ongoing series of deliberate decisions, each with a bogus "emergency" clause, they've incentivized illegal immigration to Oregon. Guess who