

letters

EUGENE MAKES HOMEOWNERS SUBSIDIZE DEVELOPMENT

The Eugene City Council has done it again. Ten years, no property taxes for the latest seven-story, 237-unit, market-rate riverfront apartment complex. All other property owners will receive their annual 3 percent property tax raise. Although we need more apartments in Lane County, this building will contain no low-income apartments. When do homeowners get a break?

Marlene Pearson
Eugene

CLOSING EUGENE'S ONLY HOSPITAL ISN'T RIGHT

Health Care for All Oregon is the only organization in Oregon whose mission is to bring universal publicly financed health care to Oregon. We have seen this coming for a long time. As this country continues to treat the health of our people as a commodity, corporations, investment companies and insurance companies will compete more and more to gain profits off of our health care needs. This is causing merg-

ers, buy-outs and closures of clinics and hospitals, such as the closure of the University District hospital, when enough profits are not gained. We need this hospital in our community to serve the public and not investors, administrators or corporate heads.

Birthing centers are easy targets. Three years ago PeaceHealth closed its birthing center. This last year Baker City, McKenzie/Willamette Hospital and East Multnomah Health Center all closed their maternity birthing centers. Then there are buyouts. Amazon, one of the largest corporations in the world, bought out One Medical, an online virtual medical service. Our own Oregon Health Sciences University has proposed to merge with Legacy Health, which has six hospitals and 70 clinics.

We know — and it has been proven — that when corporations merge, service to the public suffers and prices and profits go up. Fight against the hospital closure. In addition, join Health Care for All Oregon to win publicly financed universal healthcare.

Lou Sinniger
Elmira

WATERSKIING SQUIRRELS ARE ABUSED

Eugene Weekly's mission statement includes these excerpts: "We expose corporate practices... We provide a voice for the oppressed... We advocate aggressively for... social justice." One would think a progressive newspaper such as *EW* would advocate for animals. Yet the ad currently running in your paper from The Lane County Home Improvement Show advertised its event using a degrading animal act: "See Twiggy the Water-skiing Squirrel! Performing All 3 Days!"

The ad's photo depicts Twiggy, a squirrel who is waterskiing, wearing a red harness and strapped to a pair of matching red miniature skies. A thoughtful person with a little imagination and compassion (as I'm sure describes most of your readers) will recognize this as animal abuse, e.g. an animal is taken out of its natural environment, caged, manhandled, trained and subjected to crowds of loud humans for hours on end.

Fortunately, in recent years, animal rights groups have exposed the suffering of animals used in entertainment in-

dustries. The Ringling Brothers Circus was forced to close its doors after it was revealed how its elephants were suffering; similarly, SeaWorld stopped using orca whales in its shows. Elephants and orcas are large animals, but small animals such as squirrels deserve the same humane consideration and respect.

Animals' lives matter, no matter their size. Please remove this ad.

Ann Walker
Eugene

Editor's note: EW looked into Twiggy in a 2018 story. EW reporter Taylor Perse wrote that the various squirrels performing as Twiggy were all rescued animals that could not be released back into the wild. See more about the waterskiing squirrels at [twiggysinc.com](https://www.twiggysinc.com).

KEEP BIKES OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

Last week to celebrate turning 71 years old, two friends and I spent five nights backpacking in the nearby Waldo Lake Wilderness. The wild berry bushes were golden, purple, orange and red. It was amazingly beautiful and, due to climate heating, the early October Cascade mountains weather was dry and warm. Perfect!

Wilderness in essence means foot

Local and Vocal

BLACK GIRL FROM EUGENE BY AYISHA ELLIOTT

Are We OK?

THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF INTEGRATION AND A POST-2020 WORLD

Here we are. We are forever changed and unrecognizable to our pre-2020 selves. We are not the same in ways that may be obvious, or in ways that are more subconscious. Collectively, I think we can agree, our society looks very different than it did just three years prior but: Are we OK?

Anyone born after 1975 has been socialized and racially integrated most, if not all, of our lives. We have gone to school completely integrated. The messaging we have studied together was about the benefits of diversity. However, the small writing in this arrangement is that we would then socialize all non-white people to behave, associate and recognize themselves through a lens of whiteness.

All information not only for ourselves but also for our white counterparts in the front of the class was whitewashed to ensure that segregation would remain intact. Perhaps not in proximity, but certainly in opportunity, self-actualization, access and resources.

Those of us living in places that were mostly white experienced that integration in a way that had such a hidden violence it became normal, expected, even comfortably predictable.

Integration was violent? The erasure of Black history and contributions, Indigenous sovereignty, and the basic knowledge of the global violence with young minds asking for clarity and affirmation is violent. That violence was taken subconsciously and noted in self worth, self esteem and internalized oppression. These issues, shackled in our minds, were carried into adulthood. Some of us survived and others — well, they are unrecognizable but familiar versions of who they were from the continued impact of it all.

As violence does, you're never the same. As the world spirals towards an unknown awakening, the privileged are expressing their fear of losing power in the most sweep-

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ingly violent ways they can: stripping the already bare social systems of any recognizable human decency for its citizens, specifically citizens of historically excluded groups.

It is a choice. The same one for each of us — historically excluded and white-bodied men — a choice to face the untold and unspoken stories. For those of us who represent

the global majority, the need to declare that the space we take is not by favor, but by character, by persistence, by resolve, by receiving the assignment from our ancestors and community, picking it up and leaving nothing unanswered.

This character, undoubtedly measured by white-bodied people by the violence the environment has promised us.

That character is not the character we speak of. Our char-

acter is connected and buoyed by our deep knowledge of self, community and familial worth. This character constantly wrestles with that opposition. To be in high proximity to whiteness, is to consistently balance precarious positions of safety and progress.

Now, late 2023, we are not indebted. We are not in doubt. The balance is publicly displayed as uneven; we are seeing the lie. The choice the global majority is making is to reintroduce a truth that is not new to them, but new in an insistence to have our natural names be pronounced how they were intended, an insistence that the teachers represent my culture, an insistence that linguistic variety is represented in a robust and functional way, an insistence that the structures — the institutions — are named and held responsible for their part in this violence. The insistence that white peoples' discomfort is not a no go, but a necessary step to liberation.

This is a different courage, this is a different movement, this is a new collective truth. I'm here for it.

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