
Letters in the Editor's Mailbag
Published: Sunday, February 25, 2007

The Register-Guard welcomes letters on topics of general interest. Our length limit is 250 words; all letters are subject to condensation. Writers are limited to one letter per calendar month. Because of the volume of mail, not all letters can be printed. Letters must be signed with the writer's full name. An address and daytime telephone number are needed for verification purposes; this information will not be published or released.

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Project made real connections

On Feb. 8, I volunteered at Project Homeless Connect. I am fortunate to work for a company that permitted and encouraged seven nurses to work at the event and made other contributions as well.

Everyone involved with the project acknowledged it was a beginning and that we would not solve people's problems in one day. For me, however, it surely met one of the organizers' goals: a deep realization that it isn't them and us - it's about all of us.

I did many tasks that day, but it was doing medical intake and triage that moved me the most. You cannot face people across a narrow table, look them in the eye, touch their hand and ask potentially sensitive questions - "Do you want to be tested for HIV?" "Do you feel safe?" - without establishing, however briefly, a relationship.

To a person, the people I met were polite, kind and grateful. One man told me he took Ibuprofen for pain when he had money to buy it. When I showed him the Help Yourself over-the-counter medications and the samples of Advil, he asked how many he should take: "I don't want to be greedy," he said. I hope the homeless vet from West 11th Avenue, who wanted only socks and a sleeping bag, left Project Homeless Connect with both.

I commend United Way and my company for the opportunity to participate in Project Homeless Connect. I hope to be part of it again. In the meantime, I will never forget the people I met.

MARY TIBBETTS

Eugene

Spitting incidents did occur

I am writing regarding Bob Thompson's rant saying that no one spat on Vietnam veterans (letters, Feb. 16). He doesn't know what he's talking about. As an Army private flying on Delta Air lines to visit my family while on leave, I was spat upon.

If I flew in uniform, I would only have to pay the taxes and a small amount to Delta to fly standby. After the second time I was spat upon, I paid full fare and flew in civilian clothes to keep it from happening again.

Thompson doesn't need to Google anything, for I am here to tell him that it happened and not once, but twice. One more thing - all you had to do was look at my haircut at the time and I didn't have to be in uniform to be recognized as a soldier.

I am surprised The Register-Guard would print such trash.

THOMAS W. POSTELLE

Veneta

Triad site plan still inadequate

Triad has submitted its fourth proposal to the Oregon Department of Transportation regarding traffic issues on Delta Highway and Belt Line Road, and it's just as ludicrous as the previous three. Maybe Triad's new owners will see the folly since Triad and the city of Eugene refuse to.

Of all the things a hospital needs, one of the most important would seem to be accessibility. Why is it not obvious to Triad and the Eugene City Council that the proposed location will not be suitable for years, if not

decades, to come? ODOT knows it will cost tens of millions of dollars and years to fix the interchange, hospital or not. Shouldn't this cast doubt on Triad's ability to build a hospital when they can't even get out of the starting gate?

I wonder what Triad's new owners will think of this location for a hospital once they see a map. Why the city of Eugene is even pretending to be in favor just to save face is ridiculous. Maybe the City Council is hoping Triad's new owners or ODOT will put the final kibosh on this boondoggle so they won't have to, because they are so desperate to save face for being unable to keep PeaceHealth's new hospital in Eugene. Now they might approve anything with the word hospital in the title.

Please remember Eugene will still have a remodeled Sacred Heart Medical Center downtown. Can we please end this farce before we waste more time, money and effort?

RICK TOMARO

Eugene

Veterans greeted with hostility

When I returned from Vietnam in January 1967, we were told at Oakland Army Terminal that it would be better to travel in civilian clothes and not in our uniforms. According to Bob Thompson (letters, Feb. 16), none of the following ever happened:

I was called a "baby killer" to my face more than once; I was told "I'd like to buy you a beer if you will take that stinking uniform off" (that statement resulted in somewhat of a violent encounter); and yes, I was spat on just outside the San Francisco airport while waiting for my flight home.

Those of us who came back home through California experienced a lot of hostility in varying degrees. I wonder why I was never asked about my experiences. In fact, I don't even know anyone who was. I spent 20 years in the Army and I am damned proud of the military and the veterans.

I would like to invite Thompson to follow his own advice: In the future, I suggest Thompson and his ilk talk to veterans of that war about our experiences before taking some junk off the Internet as the absolute truth and writing about it in public. We were harassed back then, and now Thompson wants to keep the flame alive. What a country.

HERMAN ISAACS

Springfield

Media helped shut down forests

The Register-Guard's Feb. 14 lead editorial decrying the demise of the federal program sharing timber revenues from federal forest lands with timber counties begs a comment.

The editor's logic is that 100 years ago Congress made a deal to compensate counties "in exchange for claiming these resource-rich lands and setting them off-limits to private development and local taxes." The editorial points out that after timber harvests plunged in the 1980s, Congress had established a program to make up for the lost timber revenue.

Absent is any reference to why the timber harvests crashed. Environmentalists and a sympathetic media in the Pacific Northwest were instrumental in shutting down federal timber sales, including, now, even fire-killed timber.

That's all well and good. But now the newspaper wants the federal government to tax Americans from Arkansas to Delaware to North Dakota (which doesn't even have a tree) and send the money to us so that we can have our cake (no trees cut down) and eat it too (no loss of timber revenue).

The argument that the feds prevent us from developing and taxing this resource-rich land is laughable. If they gave us the land tomorrow, that same citizenry and media would block any and all resource extraction or private development. There wouldn't be a dime of tax money.

How about if we in the Northwest grow up and accept the consequences of our actions?

BRUCE MACKEY

Eugene

Vietnam vets verbally abused

I take issue with Bob Thompson's comments (letters, Feb. 16). He claims that veterans returning from Vietnam were not spat upon when returning to the United States because it is not in media articles, he could not find it on Google and he read a book about spitting.

When I got off the plane in San Francisco, I experienced being spat at and was the subject of verbal abuse. I don't think the spit hit my boots, but it was very close. Some military personnel would change their clothes before leaving the airplane so they would not have to endure the abuse. If the spit did hit me, there would have been a confrontation. Thompson needs to get facts from actual people who were there and not rely on the media so much for information.

San Francisco was probably the most prolific place for protesters at the time. The media would have only printed something about the protest had there been an actual confrontation. I don't believe that it happened throughout the country and most vets did not have to go through this abuse, but it did happen to a few. It's not an issue about patriotism, but what is right and wrong.

Thompson doesn't know what he is talking about.

RODNEY GORDON

Eugene

Give girls the HPV vaccinations

I am really confused. If there was a vaccine that could prevent a female from contracting a potentially fatal, sexually transmitted disease like, say, human papillomavirus, why wouldn't you want to take advantage of it and vaccinate your girls before they become sexually active and at risk?

Oh, wait! There is a vaccine for HPV and there seem to be people who have a problem with the fact that at some point their children are going to become sexually active. If you don't believe in vaccinating your children, that is your right as a parent. But, if you are of the mind set that avoiding something means it won't happen, you are doing a great disservice to your daughters!

How would you feel knowing that your daughter caught HPV as a young adult and you, as her parent, did nothing to help prevent it when you had the chance? Be proactive and take advantage of modern medicine.

If you have issues with your child becoming sexually active, please put those issues aside for a moment. It is going to happen, regardless. This is not about government intervention, it is about keeping our daughters healthy.

SHANNON HARDIN

Eugene

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