
Letters in the Editor's Mailbag
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Protesting bad policies is a duty

The June 29 letter from Shauna Wirth was thought-provoking. She cites Sept. 11, 2001, as our reason to be in Iraq - twice within the first three paragraphs.

She and Vice President Dick Cheney are the last two people in America who still draw a straight-line connection between the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 and our invasion of Iraq. There was no connection between Iraq and Sept. 11. Even President Bush no longer makes that claim.

Most of the terrorists who carried out those attacks were from Saudi Arabia. The one person most responsible, Osama bin Laden (by the Bush administration, anyway), is also Saudi and has been allowed to remain free. Why the military was not instructed to capture this man and bring him to justice is a question that this administration and its apologists will have to answer. Tough on terror? Then why is the chief terrorist still free?

In her opinion, everyone should stop writing horrible words and just be thankful. I am grateful that brave people like her nephew still defend our country. They are also defending my right to point out when our national policy is madness, as it is now. Protesting that policy is not just my right, it is my duty.

More than 3,500 Americans are dead, many times that number wounded and many more still left to battle demons that will never vanish. And taking a Pollyanna attitude that everything is just fine and we should all just be thankful will not change that.

JIM SCHMIDT

Eugene

Are big hospitals outmoded?

I enjoy the situation comedy "Scrubs." For me the show has an enjoyable combination of slapstick humor and factual information.

One show I remember had the salty Dr. Cox turning to Newbie and saying, "You know, Newbie, if you eliminate the emergency room and the maternity ward, one out of three people who come to this hospital will die."

I have lived in Eugene for more than 15 years and in that time the women I have known who have given birth - including a nurse - have chosen to use the birthing center instead of the hospital.

I remember when the big plan for Eugene was for nodal development. Why not have a small emergency room in each neighborhood? If a child falls on a playground in Bethel, why should the parents have to drive 20 minutes to a hospital? Wouldn't it be best to have an emergency room in Bethel five minutes away?

And as for dying, I read an article that said many people are choosing to die at home - surrounded by things they know and love instead of in a sterile hospital surrounded by strangers or being ignored.

Maybe hospitals are so 20th century. Maybe the age of the mega-hospital is over.

CHRIS PENDER

Eugene

Church still conceals truth

As an ex-altar boy and a former student and teacher in Catholic schools, I honor and respect the priests and brothers who were my teachers and my inspiration.

As victim of a pedophile priest, I condemn church leadership that obstructs justice with a decades-long strategy of secrecy and cover-up that provided abusers with more victims.

I disagree, therefore, with Odrey Wootan's bizarre demand (letters, June 22) that the media remain silent about "all the accusations and allegations" of such sexual abuse.

Despite criminal behavior, enablers have been rewarded. Pope Benedict XVI appointed Bernard Law (forced to resign as Boston archbishop, now a cardinal) as archpriest of St. Mary Major Basilica in Rome, one of four major basilicas under direct Vatican jurisdiction. He also appointed Archbishop William Levada (who as leader of the Portland Archdiocese failed to vigorously pursue allegations of clergy molestation) as head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Faith (Benedict's former position). The pope continues to bury abuse allegations under highly secretive canon law. In this country that's called criminal obstruction of justice.

Moreover, the Portland Archdiocese, after shrewdly declaring bankruptcy, continues to do everything it can (aided by Judge Michael Hogan's and Judge Lyle Velure's gag orders) to confuse and conceal the truth about the abusers' reprehensible crimes.

Pedophile priests? Sick. Their enablers? Worse. Those at the highest levels who reward the enablers? The worst.

JEROME GARGER

Yachats

Raise military enlistment age

I do not support our troops in Iraq. I realize most of them were too young to know what they were getting into when they signed up to be part of the wrecking crew, but what they are doing is immoral. The only support I would offer them is to bring them home and give them adequate medical care and social services.

We ought to raise the legal military enlistment age to 21, so these kids would have to grow up some before they could volunteer to be paid killers for the American imperial war machine. Almost no one at age 18 or 19 has the faintest idea what American foreign policy is about, which is expanding the American empire and making money for large corporations. I joined the U.S. Navy at 19, a long time ago.

In a recent article on counterpunch.org, an Army surgeon who treated soldiers wounded in Iraq is quoted as saying that he "amputated the genitals of one or two men every day." Well, there go the grandchildren. I don't care how large a bonus they give you to join, is it worth spending the rest of your life with no sex?

LYNN PORTER

Eugene

United States is being invaded

Stuart Banister tells us in his June 22 letter "illegals are fellow human beings." So were Jeffrey Dahmer and Ted Bundy. Illegal is illegal, in this case trespassing.

They are breaking the law simply by stepping over the border without permission. They compound this criminal act by using fake or stolen Social Security numbers and by making false statements to get driver's licenses. They hold down wages for labor and, because they are not tested, bring some nasty diseases. They overload the emergency rooms, drive drunk

without insurance and are a major conduit for illegal drugs.

Apologists like Banister say, "They're just trying to make a better life for themselves." Beware. If this is Banister's criteria, then I suggest you guard your possessions. If he thinks he needs them, they may turn up missing.

This leads to Sharon Looney's letter of June 28, in which she admits helping illegals file their taxes. If a tax preparer has knowledge that a Social Security number is fake or stolen, to file a tax return providing that number could amount to aiding and abetting a criminal act. We are being invaded, and the invaders are being aided by willing fools.

TOM PREUSS

Creswell

Cheney mocks American people

What is Vice President Dick Cheney now? As a citizen who believes in the rule of law and the U.S. Constitution as the guiding principle of our way of life, I'm a little confused.

I didn't realize the vice president could just make up an office without the consent of Congress or the people. Silly me.

Cheney has made a mockery of our Constitution. He's made a mockery of the U.S. Congress - those buffoons we thought we elected to represent us - and, worst of all, he's made a mockery of the American people. You and me.

With this latest set of shenanigans, he's made us all look like a nation of idiots - Republicans, Democrats, independents, everyone. The world laughs. A confederacy of dunces. Is there no one in government willing to restore our honor and dignity? We wait.

KEITH SWENSON

Eugene

'Body Worlds' wasn't disgusting

I am truly sorry that Barbara Dexter was sickened by The Register-Guard's June 17 article about the "Body Worlds 3" exhibit. I attended a similar exhibit when my husband and I visited Las Vegas.

At first glance, I'll admit I was taken aback. I had never seen anything like it before. But as we wandered through the maze of bodies, I realized how wonderfully intricate and delicate the human body is and to see it displayed in a very tasteful, albeit revealing, fashion was humbling.

I realize not everyone will agree with me, as I disagree with Dexter. I found it neither morbid nor disgusting, but educational and unforgettable. Please, I mean no offense to Dexter or anyone else. I just wanted to offer a different perspective.

KAREN LOY

Eugene

Pick a logical hospital location

We were in the 1989 San Francisco area earthquake. The epicenter of this quake was some 70 miles from San Francisco - about the same distance Eugene is from our coastal fault.

Thank goodness for the emergency and medical services that were available on both sides of the Bay Bridge when the freeway structure collapsed. In the days that followed the initial 15-second earthquake, there were more than a thousand aftershocks which continued to be

damaging. Emergency response people told us to sleep in our clothes and have car keys and flashlights next to our bed. Not fun.

Can Eugene assume that this will not happen here? I understand that it is not a case of if it will happen, but when. We need two hospitals in our area. We should locate one hospital on the south or west side of the Willamette River away from our flood plain. This hospital location would serve our community in a disaster.

Eugene area residents, please speak out on the location of a new hospital. Hospitals can serve people if they are logically located.

P. A. GROVER

Eugene