

The Register-Guard: *Editorials*Letters: *Commentary*

LETTERS IN THE EDITOR'S MAILBAG

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John Deere didn't cause tragedy

A woman who spills hot coffee on her lap and scalds herself while driving sues McDonalds for millions due to her own negligence.

Now the father driving the riding lawnmower who ran over his child is suing for millions due to his own negligence. It is a very tragic story, but I only see negligence on the part of the father.

When are people going to start taking responsibility for their actions without pointing the blame? John Deere should not be held responsible for this man's mistake. That is what it is and was — a mistake on the father's part, no one else's.

He was the operator who failed to take the extra second to check around him. He was the one who flipped the switch. He was the adult. He should stand up, take responsibility and quit blaming everyone else for his momentary mistake.

Yvonne Muller

Eugene

School needs fewer days off

I wonder if The Register-Guard would assign one of its reporters to investigate the number of days the Eugene School District school children are in the classroom.

I strongly favor more school time for our children and much less homework for parents to contend with. Why do teachers need Jan. 7 off after a lengthy vacation? Again on Jan. 21, an off day.

In February, there's no school Feb. 1, 4 and 18. I could go on. Also add up the one-hour early closures each Wednesday afternoon. I never hear of teachers staying after school to help a student or being concerned about a math student like my grandson, who had to think too long for an 8 plus 5 answer at the end of his third-grade school year.

I could go on, but would love to read another person's opinion.

Gloria G. Bodine

Eugene

Choose another street for King

I was a former resident of the area, just returning after an absence of a few years. I am deeply offended by the renaming of Centennial Boulevard to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

As a native Oregonian, it is an offense to forsake the memory of our forebears and the struggles they went through; all races and creeds. Dr. King does deserve respect, and I do believe in honoring him by naming something for him, but not at the cost of all Oregonians and our history.

We should be able to honor both. Perhaps rename Sixth and Seventh avenues for him. How would we feel renaming Willamette Street for him? Isn't that equivalent?

Michael Perkins

Eugene

Sorenson deserves position

Three Lane County commissioners belatedly confessed their blunder in imposing an unpopular income tax, yet The Register-Guard is pleased that South Eugene Commissioner Pete Sorenson was denied the chairmanship to retaliate for his accurate prediction of voter response.

The newspaper had favored this tax, but that didn't bring it to pass. Now, both the newspaper and the commissioners who made the wrong call seem to be indulging in a large portion of sour grapes.

While those three commissioners claim to respect the voters, they still take aim at the messenger, Sorenson, who tried to warn them that this tax was not the right step for that time, though he had advocated tax levies for public safety at other times.

Besides the vindictive process, the worst thing is that Commissioner Faye Stewart's views, seconded by Vice Chairman Bobby Green, will continue to warp the county's agenda. We know from his recent guest viewpoint that Stewart embraces the cynical special interest giveaway known as the WOPR — the Bureau of Land Management's Western Oregon Plan Revision. This is an irresponsible endorsement of the most extreme agenda of the timber industry at the expense of old growth, riparian setbacks and fish protection.

Sorenson's views can still move Lane County to become its better self — firmly

against the WOPR, with hope and vision for a sustainable environment and economy. South Eugene — like any district — deserves to share the agenda-setting role. How can our only local newspaper applaud a loss of that fairness?

Elaine Weiss

Eugene

Remodel lacks 'urban buzz'

Where do these guys get off calling their artist's rendering of La Perla (Register-Guard, Jan. 9) a "Northwest contemporary with an urban buzz and shadows of ancient Italy"?

That drawing conjures up a California tilt-up strip-mall from 1963. Nothing even remotely hints at arches, nothing looks "urban buzz," and if that's what they call Northwest contemporary, they must mean contemporary to the late 1950s and early '60s.

Although it's a shame the ice cream parlor had to close, and a pizzeria sounds like a great alternative, that drawing of such a hideous building gives me absolutely no appetite for their certified authentic Italian pizza. How they expect that building to fit into that beautiful neighborhood is beyond my reach.

Gwen Eastland

Creswell

Criminal acts can be dangerous

Finally, someone said it: "There are certain risks that go along with being a criminal." This from Cottage Grove Police Chief Mike Grover (Register-Guard, Jan. 8), "Combative suspect twice subdued with stun gun."

In this era where criminals trying to break into a building sue the owner because they were injured while committing the break-in, it is about time someone acknowledged that criminal acts can be dangerous and are entered into freely by the criminals.

And this particular suspect better be glad the police had stun guns because without them, he might have ended up with bullet holes in him!

I congratulate Chief Grover for having spoken his mind.

Nancy Lukasik

Eugene

Follow Brazil's lead on ethanol

In response to Christopher Calder's Dec. 27 letter, "Remember that bio-fuel is food": First, there is no food shortage and none impending. Throughout the world, we produce two times the amount of calories needed to feed all humans. What we do have is a money shortage, since food is a commodity and not a right: Whoever can afford it gets to buy it.

Secondly, he claims that ethanol made from corn is increasing food prices. Fact is 87 percent of the corn grown in the United States is fed to livestock, not humans; and 5 percent is used to produce high fructose corn sweetener, which is not actually human food.

Lastly, he claims that using bio-fuels is a hoax. I guess Brazil is the international Houdini. That nation has been pulling off this hoax since the early 1980s. Brazil is energy independent and does not import a single drop of oil, using sugarcane to fuel its vehicles. We could use plant stock that produces 5 to 10 times as much ethanol per acre as corn — buffalo gourds, fodder beets and Jerusalem artichokes, to name a few.

The internal combustion engine was designed to run on ethanol. Gasoline is the alternative fuel. Do not fall for the fear factor that food prices will quadruple in the next 10 years; that is the hoax driven by the oil industry.

Read "Alcohol Can Be a Gas" by David Blume, educate yourselves on Brazil's success and write your representative to urge them to follow Brazil's lead.

Zack Page

Eugene

Why run an unflattering photo?

I'm astonished that a newspaper with award-winning photographers has once again printed such an unflattering photo of Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy (Register-Guard, Jan. 8). If that were the only or the best photo available, why not drop the photo and increase the number of words?

I love many photographs in The Register-Guard, but I don't think that one was worth the paper and ink.

Annetta Forrer

Eugene

A good deed deserves another

Just after the new year, I bought an item I had been wanting at G.I. Joe's. I got in line to pay and the fellow in front of me tossed a gift card down as he was leaving and said "Merry Christmas." I was taken by surprise and probably responded with "Uh, thanks."

I had no idea if he was giving me something of worth or tossing me his used-up card. As it turned out, the card still had value, and I applied it to my purchase, which saved me a fair amount of money. By the time I realized what had happened, I looked for the man outside the store to thank him but did not see him out there.

I hope he reads the paper and realizes that he is the person I am talking about, and that he knows that his gift is much appreciated. Most importantly, the idea of paying it forward is alive and well in Eugene.

I will follow his lead and do the same for someone else. Hopefully, those who are reading this will do the same.

Joanne Kuhnlein

Eugene

More work to do on equal rights

During the vigil at the First Christian Church (Register-Guard, Jan. 3), Pastor Dan Walker said: "We are all human beings endowed with certain inalienable rights to life liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and when the laws of our government inhibit that pursuit or deny that liberty, or devalue that life, they must be changed."

I sincerely believe that it is our responsibility to protect the rights of others as we would our own. It's hard for me when someone else has to struggle for something that I am given without question. As human beings, we all have the right to dignity and safety.

I am thankful that gay marriage has finally come to a vote, but we still have a long way to go. When no one has to ask for the right to health care or for the right to marry — or to take care of their children, that's when we will have come far enough.

Jane Johnson

Cottage Grove

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