

City ordinances: picking apart the outdated and bizarre

By Stephen Maher
Emerald Associate Editor

Laws, laws, laws.

Everywhere one goes there are laws. And for every bundle of good laws, there are those with no rationale whatsoever. The ordinances found in the Eugene Code are no exception.

Some of the Eugene ordinances are outdated, left over from the era of horse carriages and larceny. Others are ridiculous, the result of city councilors wielding a little too much power.

Take the ordinance making it against the law for the crippled and maimed to beg for "alms or charity." It's hard to believe that a city that likes to brag about its high consciousness and liberalism has such a law. But under Chapter Four of the Eugene Code (the "Offenses" chapter), Ordinance 4.720 lets all who read it or enforce it know that "no person shall at-

tract attention to his diseased or crippled condition by sign, act, look, word or gesture" for the purpose of collecting money or goods.

So much for the down-trodden, the poor or Helen Keller. St. Jude's Hospital Eugene is not.

Ever since the city finally cleaned up its mud-filled streets around the turn-of-the-century it has taken on the clean look in the grand old Victorian, northern European style. As far as laws go, the desired clean look has taken a number of paths.

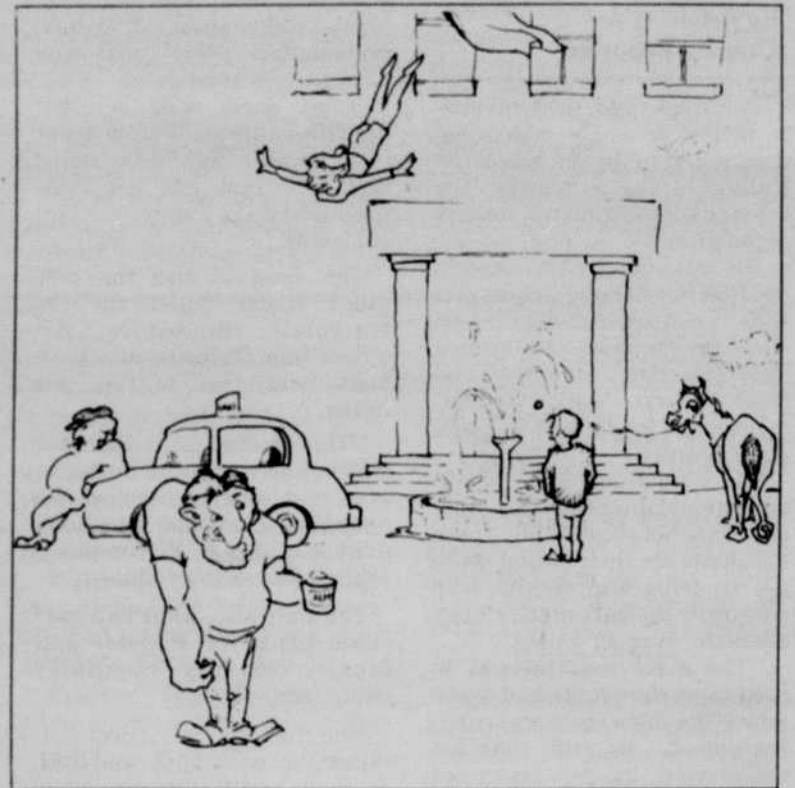
For starters, Ordinance 4.725 says it's against the law to spit in public "against any surface, substance or person." If it's in private, sure. Although if Judge Bork gets confirmed, you probably should learn new habits.

The same ordinance also contains a subsection devoted to instructing the public that "no person shall jump or dive from any parking surface, bridge, viaduct, overpass, walkway or

other elevated structure." The reasoning for this ordinance is anybody's guess. Perhaps at one time the city was in desperate financial straits and needed to collect money, in the form of tickets, from the estates of dead citizens. Or perhaps, like the "no spitting" ordinance, they desired clean streets.

One thing is certain, though. The city of Eugene likes its mall fountains. Ordinance 4.875 clearly, er cleanly, states: "No person may deposit and leave in the water in a mall fountain any object or any substance other than water." Umm, wonder what that means?

Nor does the Eugene Code look kindly upon noise. Under Ordinance 4.083, titled "Unreasonably Loud or Raucous Noise — Specific Acts," one finds it's illegal to yell, shout, hoot, sing or whistle on the public streets of the city, "particularly between the



Graphic by Lorraine Rath

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Gun permit criteria examined

By Thomas Ruggiero
Emerald Contributor

Pat Wilson carries a gun. She's not cop or a private eye or a criminal, but the 68-year-old woman has a license to carry a concealed weapon.

Wilson is the manager of the rurally located McGowan Creek Rifle Range in Springfield and says she needs the gun for protection.

"We get alot of 'kooks' around here," she says.

If you find yourself agreeing with Wilson about the overabundance of 'kooks' in Lane County and think that's a good enough reason to carry a hidden revolver, you still have to convince one man.

Lieutenant Woodworth of the Lane County Sheriff's Department.

Woodworth is in charge of granting gun permits. And he says he rejects "a lot" of people who ask.

According to Oregon Revised Statute 166.250, carrying a concealed weapon without a permit is a class A misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail, a \$2500 fine

or both.

Those interested in holding a permit must be 21 years old, a Lane County resident, and have what Woodworth calls a "valid and specific reason."

Permit holders also will be fingerprinted and photographed as well as checked for criminal and traffic records violations. In addition, references are checked.

Woodworth says he receives some 30 requests a week for permits.

Security guards and business people who transport large sums of money are the most frequent petitioners, Woodworth said.

He says he will not issue a concealed weapon permit to someone who is taking a hiking or camping trip, or to someone who is simply "afraid of the dark."

Woodworth adds that people may legally possess a gun in their house, mobile home, or camp trailer without a concealed weapons permit.

Lane County issued 83 renewal permits in July, 72 in August and 91 in September. However, statistics for the amount of new licenses were

granted in that same period are unavailable, according to Pat Dawley of the Weapons Permit Division of the Lane County Sheriff's Office.

Oddly enough, in Oregon, as in most states, citizens can legally carry firearms without a permit if the weapons are displayed.

But, according to Tim Burr, Eugene Police Department public information officer, a handgun must be worn in a "belt holster."

And Eugene has local ordinances against "malicious mischief," "acting in a threatening manner," and "public nuisance" that effectively allow law enforcement officers to arrest anyone abusing the right, Burr says.

One major problem with the current concealed weapons licensing procedure, according to a Gainesville, Fla. psychologist, is the impossibility of the state to know if the applicant has been hospitalized or treated by a private counselor for a serious mental disorder because those records are confidential.

RIVERFRONT RESEARCH PARK

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to discuss the master site design for the
Riverfront Research Park
Thursday, October 8, 1987
Eugene Community Conference Center
7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

The Design Advisory Committee, the Riverfront Research Park Commission, University of Oregon President Paul Olum and the Mayor and Eugene City Council are sponsoring a community forum to discuss the master site design for the Riverfront Research Park. This is the third in a series of three forums.

Representatives of The Carley Capital Group, private developer of the Park, and their architects, Elbasani & Logan Architects, will be present to discuss the master site plan and to hear comments and suggestions on the master plan for the project. We encourage you to attend and participate.

In order to help us to plan for this event, we would appreciate your advance response by Friday, Oct. 2nd. Reservations are not required.

Riverfront Research Park Community Forum

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