

Council decision may spell library's demise

Just when all was moving smoothly, just when the Eugene City Council seemed to be making the right decisions about a new public library, and just when we all thought we had that new library in the bag — well, the city council may have brought this smoothly progressing idea to a screeching halt.

This is irony at its best. And it could very well kill the idea for a new library.

Not only did all seven council members agree to placing the new library in a new Pankow Development Co. office tower downtown (at Eighth Avenue and Willamette Street), but Eugene Mayor Jeff Miller also gave the thumbs-up to the idea. In fact, the complete unanimity led City Manager Mike Gleason to give the go-ahead to Development Director Ave Farkas. So far, so good.

But then the council fell apart, and the unanimity diminished.

The city council has decided to ask voters what to do now. In March, the voters will be asked not only whether to raise property taxes with a serial levy to pay the higher operating costs of the library, but also whether to put the library in the Pankow building.

Interestingly, Gleason suggested only asking the voters about the Pankow location, while saving the operating cost question for another time. Well, Gleason has the right idea, but the wrong subject.

The issue of *where* to put the library shouldn't even be an issue. The city has an apparent need for a new, larger library. Just how to pay for the library, of course, is of concern for taxpayers; this is the issue to be considered.

But a "no" vote to either of these issues on the ballot will put an end to the library pipe-dream. So it only seems logical that the council should decide how to handle the operating costs, and how much these operating costs will be.

This week, the council meets again to decide the exact wording for the question(s) to be put before the voters. It's possible that the voters' decision could be a limited one (only being given one of the issues, rather than two) if the council makes what we think is the right decision. It should place only the serial levy on the ballot.

Judicial review shouldn't be limited for any reason

Last Saturday, Oregon Sen. Robert Packwood noted that Congress may take action to limit judicial appeals of some forestry issues in order to return management of the nation's forests to the U.S. Forest Service.

Packwood, in fact, said, "We did not intend to have the courts manage the U.S. forests."

But wait, what's happened to the checks and balances system of government that we all learned about (at the earliest) in grade school?

Packwood seems to have gotten off track. Instead it is Douglas Norlen, spokesman for the Waldo Wilderness Council (a Eugene-based environmentalist group) who has the right idea.

Norlen has been a champion of the judicial review of forest issues, contending that the limitation of judicial review compromises the integrity of the system.

By limiting judicial review, agency appeals to the courts would not be allowed. At present, environmental groups have a lawsuit pending that has blocked one-third of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management timber harvest in Oregon. This is a perfect example of the need for judicial review of forest issues. People who disagree with Forest Service decisions on timber management deserve some recourse to challenge them.

But of even greater importance, this is a perfect example of the need for the checks-and-balances system of government and why it shouldn't be undermined.



Letters

SAE evasion

I have been reading with interest the heated responses of fraternity members to Michael Dawson's letter (ODE, Dec. 5), and thinking.

I do not support Dawson's across-the-board condemnation of the Greek system as an enclave of racial bigots. He too was guilty of prejudice against a defined group of peoples. He was wrong.

But I have also been extremely bothered by the tone and content of these responses. The letters have been so preoccupied with bashing Dawson that they have evaded the issues. The men were on Sigma Alpha Epsilon premises; eschewing Dawson's point just by questioning that they were SAE members was entirely inadequate. What has SAE done about the situation? Have they held a house meeting to discuss the incident, specifically to discuss the issue of racism in their fraternity? Have they done anything?

This episode has the potential to be used in a positive way. Sigma Alpha Epsilon and/or the Greek system could participate in some sort of community education program. There is a virtual plethora of groups in Eugene that would be more than willing to send speakers to educate about racism (or sexism, heterosexism, able-ism; name your -ism). There are community events dealing with minority issues that sororities and fraternities could participate in. It is no big secret that there is a problem with racism in the Greek system; I have heard members say

so.

Dawson would also do well to recognize and take steps to cope with his own prejudice.

Yet, most importantly, the Greek system should finish being so engrossed in its indignity and deal with a possible problem. And an apology from SAE to the black woman is definitely in order.

Kristin Walkup
Pre-Journalism

Infringement

I didn't see many student reactions to the recent congressional pay raises, and I wonder why students seem to have so little interest therein.

Maybe this reflects our view of what it is OK for government to do, i.e., to take taxpayers' money and use it for whatever it pleases. In the case of a salary increase from nearly \$90,000 to \$135,000, I should think that this concept has been pushed to its limit, perhaps beyond.

Let's consider a different concept of government, that of the Libertarian Party. Accordingly, government's only proper role is to protect the individual's freedom, the right to control body, action, speech, and property, so long as the rights of others are not infringed upon.

Taxation, inasmuch as it is a coercive infringement on one's right to control one's property, is outside the proper role of government. In fact, you will find that it is a violation of the Bill of Rights. The Libertarians believe we should protect our Constitution as it was originally written, it being a sound basis for good government.

Pretty soon we're all going to be serious taxpayers, and we'll be asking ourselves, "Do I like the kind of government I'm paying for?" If not, we might want to consider the Libertarian way.

For more information, con-

tact the Libertarian Party of Lane County.

Ethan Ray Carlson
Math Education

Shelling out

I have this recurring nightmare. I am shelling out huge sums of money to be able to better my mind, yet each time I do so all I end up with is an empty bank account, and a roster of classes that doesn't interest me. Is there anyone else out there having the same nightmare? The truth of the matter is, it's not a humorous situation at all.

Hundreds of students are ending up with schedules that include few of the classes they either wanted or needed for graduation requirements and are instead paying hundreds of dollars to take classes simply because they fit their schedule. This is disgusting, yet it has become an accepted problem, something to be laughed off after registration with the assumption that it's an unavoidable hassle one encounters at a large university. It is avoidable, and it is the university's obligation to do something about it. Does the university expect (or perhaps hope) that students will remain term after term, year after year, spewing out tuition to take whatever classes they can grovel for at registration? Whether one is studying towards a degree or simply taking a few classes out of a basic want to learn, one deserves at least a chance at desired classes in return for the academic as well as financial effort one puts into this university. If that is too much to ask, there are better pickings at the local community college, and it's cheaper too.

Jill Freidberg
Anthropology

Letters Policy

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