

# Citizens discuss Peace Dividend Federal debt may swallow peace funds

By Dan Eisler  
Emerald Reporter

Local citizens expressed criticism of defense spending and presented their wish-lists at the National Peace Dividend Speak-Out on Wednesday night.

The public meeting was part of a national event, held in 60 cities, to discuss what to do with Pentagon funds in the post-Cold War era.

Citizens were invited to join in open-microphone dialogue on where the "Peace Dividend" is needed most in Lane County and what kind of organization is needed to meet those needs.

Present at the meeting were Jeff Stier, representing U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), state Sen. Grattan Kerans (D-Eugene), Lane County Commissioner Jerry Rust, Oregon PeaceWorks activist Olive Bowers and Eugene City Councilor Shawn Boles. The program was moderated by KLCC broadcaster Alan Siporin.

"We are not here to debate whether to transfer money from the military to domestic needs; we've wasted 40 years on that," Siporin said at the intro-

duction to the meeting.

However, Stier questioned whether there would be a peace dividend because of the tripled national debt generated during the Reagan administration by a combination of a \$2 trillion defense build-up and tax cuts.

sition and the peace dividend's a part of that," Boles said, adding along with Kerans that a return to pre-Reagan federal revenue-sharing with states and cities could be used to improve the public infrastructure, social programs and education.

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— Alan Siporin

About \$170 billion dollars, or 10 percent of the federal budget, is allocated to pay the interest on the debt, and is the budget's fastest growing segment, Stier said.

Other excuses are given for the lack of a peace dividend, Boles noted.

"I continue to hear we can't have a peace dividend because we have the federal savings-and-loan industry bailout," Boles said. "The government seems to be willing to spend money to chase criminals from the lower socioeconomic level."

"We're in the start of a tran-

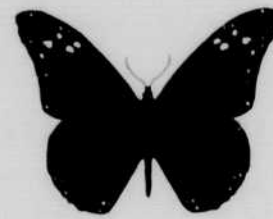
This country is imploding in a state of financial and moral disintegration, Bowers said, adding that, "Our greatest fear is not of an outside power but of each other."

The U.S. Cold War strategy of undermining the Soviet Union's economy succeeded, and undermined the United States' own economy in the process, Bowers said. Mean-

Turn to Peace, Page 6

## Myth and The Power of Joseph Campbell A Critique

A Mars Hill Forum - Restoration Campus Ministry



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