

MEDIA ROUND-UP

The *Oregonian* is planning to go to an all online format in 2012 — abandoning the print edition — as soon as it figures out how to actually create an online newspaper.

"We're still trying to figure out what kind of ink we're going to be using on the Web site," says someone close to the deal. "We're figuring it out, though."

The one-time Pacific Northwest media giant has seen its readership decline in droves after realizing that journalism was actually key in making the newspaper successful in the 21st century.

The *Willamette Week* editorial team, known for its "gotcha" journalism, did not come after *Street Roots* for the first time in years. SR was expecting a round-house around February after the SR managing editor was caught drunk and full of pills in a panda outfit sending e-mails to SR staff at a local bar.

The shrinking weekly publication still continues to supply SR with freelance journalists through its internship program.

SR's publisher told supporters that he thanked both the University of Oregon's Journalism Department and the WW for having the internship program and partnering with the local community.

The *Portland Mercury* is thought to have abandoned news coverage on important issues save for press releases from City Hall and bike groups — after realizing that no one actually cared about what the *Portland Mercury* was reporting on — unless they worked at City Hall, or rode a bike, or both.

Blue Oregon, once a respected news source for liberal Oregonians changed its format this year so that people commenting on articles had to be logged into Facebook. The change was meant to weed out anonymous people whose rants and raves had become a distraction to the sites managers and readers.

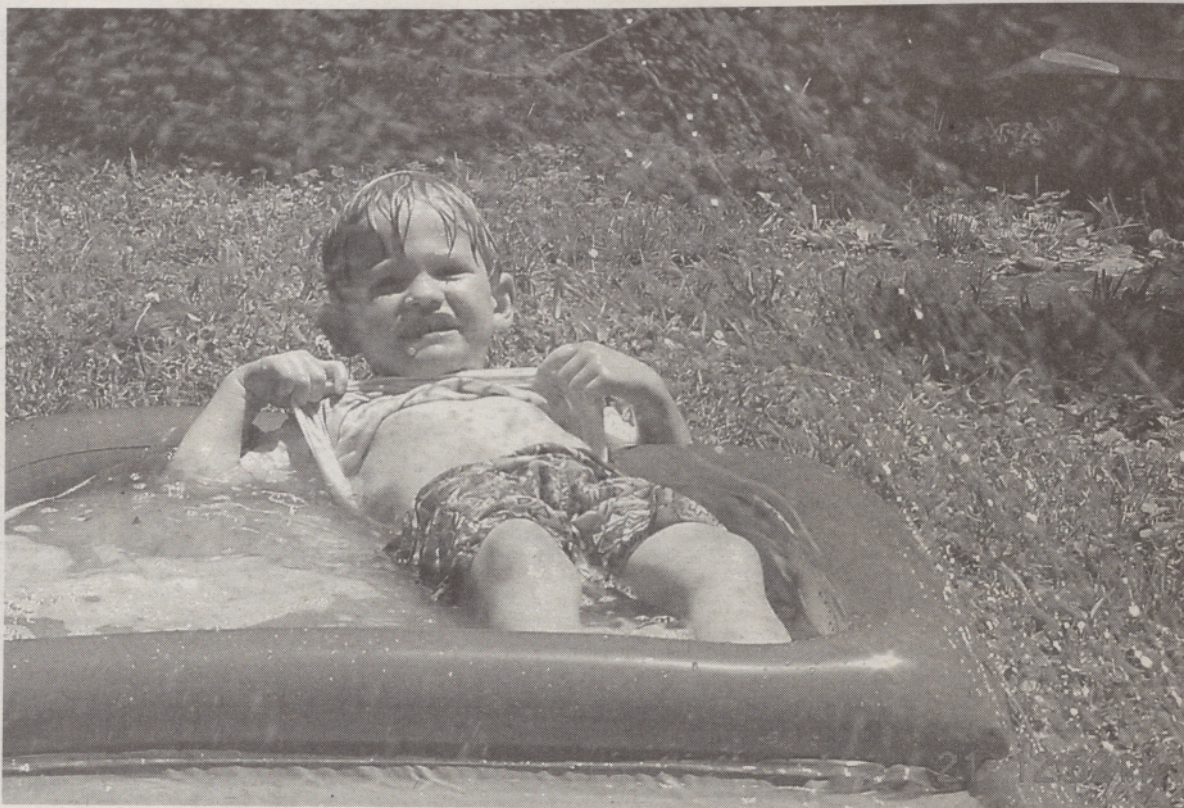
Meanwhile, the number of rants and raves from *Blue Oregon* columnists has increased, while the number of comments has plummeted. It's thought that readers got tired of "liberal speak" about beer, and completely ignored the fact that Democrats were getting their asses handed to them in the mid-term elections while supporting wars in 12 different regions of the world.

ENZYME PDX, billing itself as an online publication dedicated to preserving the best practices of American journalism in a sustainable form for the digital age, closed its doors two months after having a grand opening.

Preserving American journalism is thought to have been short-lived after the news outlet could not find sustainability in reporting on the same events that 15 other media outlets had already covered.

"We're not exactly sure why the online news format through *ENZYME PDX* didn't take off," says the founder. "We had a really great gardening section. It's puzzling."

Television news stations throughout the region were given awards for producing a series of absolutely meaningless drivel about snow forecasts six days before the snow never arrived. One local weather person told SR that they were proud of the acknowledgements but were surprised knowing that their rain coverage had been far more superior this year.



'Bath'n'slide' eases stink of water rate hike

BY WINONA CHICKENSWORTH
STAFF WRITER

Several Portlanders have voiced concern about being able to afford the increase in water rates, but were happy to be able to take new bike paths to social-service agencies offering assistance for their water bills.

"It's a mixed blessing," says Debbie, a mother of two. "We have had to move some things around and my two kids aren't going to have access to things like food or running water all the time, but we're willing to risk those things for a healthier city."

City officials say that a \$3.18 increase for water and sewer rates will go a long way. One official says, "More trees and bioswales mean a healthier planet for people of means who can afford to be green."

Asked if officials were concerned about the projected increase in assistance requests by poor and working families, one insider at City Hall said, "Look, we can't be all things to all people, and if families are preoccupied with how their kids are going to bathe and use the restroom, than I would have to question their commitment to a place like Portlandia. We have set up a special bike path with bioswales that will allow people to ride safely to energy assistance locations and unemployment service. We're a city that values treating people fairly."

SR asked City Commissioner Randy Leonard to comment on the increase in water rates.

"I'm not going to answer that question," says Leonard. "I will say that I really think

the new 'Water House' from the Water Bureau will have a long-lasting impact. It's nice."

Asked if the water bureau would be increasing their energy assistance pool to help the growing number of people needing help, a spokesperson said, "Yes, in the summer we're going to work in partnership with the Parks Bureau and offer a "Bath'n Slide" for kids 16 and under. We're calling it the "Summer of Hygiene and Savings." We're not about to turn our faucets off to those in need."

Cycling and environmental programs funded by the increase water rates will be tabling and offering free bike safety classes during the summer "Bath'n'Slide" events.

Southwest renewal comes not a moment too late

BY URA BASTAGE
STAFF WRITER

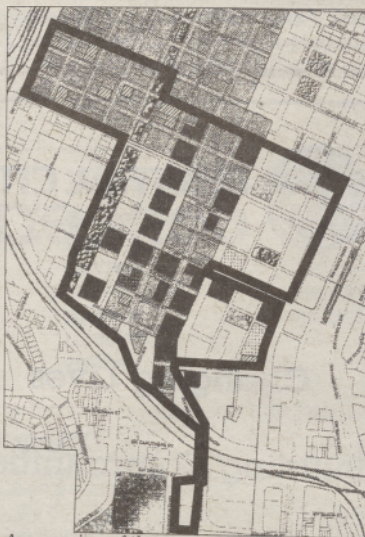
A so-called Innovative District (aka: Urban Renewal Area) could possibly land downtown after Southwest Portland is thought to be on the verge of collapse. About 130 acres on the southern edge of downtown, bordered by Southwest Jefferson and Columbia streets on the north, Park and 13th avenues on the west, Interstate 405 on the south and First Avenue on the east — are being primed for redevelopment through a complex tax-increment finance system that would spur growth in the area.

Urban renewal is a state-authorized program designed to help communities improve and redevelop areas that are physically deteriorated, suffering economic stagnation, unsafe or poorly planned.

The area around Portland State University (PSU) has been devastated over the past decade — seeing a decline in crime along with the constant growth of Portland State University.

One of the rougher neighborhoods in Portland also connects with the area — the infamous South Waterfront neighborhood where Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) is housed.

It's also thought that the Portland Art Museum, along the Oregon Historical Society — which passed a \$12 million life-saving levy this year, is being overrun with



An overview of the proposed Innovative District, and area so obviously blighted, entire blocks appear as black voids and rubble.

blight.

"I can't even bring my kids down here anymore," says one tourist.

A resident that lives in the blighted area says that it's hard to imagine it getting any worse.

The City of Portland, the Portland

Development Commission and other business leaders are thought to have chosen the location that will receive millions of dollars, because the rest of the city is holding its own.

Meanwhile, residents in East Portland are saying that they are hoping to be annexed in the near future, and to have their name changed to East Berlin after getting screwed over every year since 1851.

Not to be outdone, Gresham is asking the county to rename its city — "East of Eden."

The City of Portland is hoping that by offering the assistance to the area that people will one day be able to enjoy the area without feeling overwhelmed with blight and urban decay.

"I'm just hoping that one day the Art Museum actually creates a world-class venue that doesn't charge an arm and a leg for its blighted art collection," says one resident.

A spokesperson for the PDC says it has three decades worth of history that shows how much it has helped poor communities throughout the city, and is excited to get to work on the new project.

"We're just chomping at the bit," says officials with PSU and OHSU. "We can hardly breathe down here. Maybe after all this is said and done, the business community and the universities can stop saying Portland is anti-business. It's a stretch, but anything is possible. We're hoping for the best."