

enter your property to do a “sneak and peek” search, all without your knowledge. As well, Marston explains, “On the order of the FBI director, police can search medical, financial, educational, library records and bookstore purchases with little, if any, judicial oversight and without evidence that you’ve been involved in criminal activities.” The keepers of the records cannot deny access and they cannot inform you of the search, because according to the UPA, they will be committing a felony.

“We have to take the helm at this point,” Marston says. “We need to be working together in creative ways to shine a spotlight on what’s really going on, naming things for what they really are. Because what’s happening is our government has become a very secret and closed place.”

In his talk, Hassan says he has lived in the U.S. since 1961, in Eugene since 1991. “There are no better people ... People here are powerful because they are free.” In spite of some incidents of harassment after Sept. 11, Hassan stands firm that people’s rights must be protected, that the beauty of the U.S. is its firm foundation on justice.

“With the punishment of these people [who bombed the Trade Center],” says Hassan, “we are being punished too, by the curtailing of our freedoms ...” He insists we must first understand one another so that we may stand together, unified in the fight against a disappointing government attempting to limit freedom. “I love this country,” he says. “I will fight for it. I will die for it, and certainly, I will die in it and become part of the soil of this country ... We the people have more power than we think ...”

If you think that the UPA doesn’t really apply to you, that there really isn’t any reason the government would even request such information, consider Peebles’ story. Recently she had her wisdom teeth pulled. In the oral surgeon’s office, she was asked to sign a “privacy” document. She looked at the piece of paper, and politely told the receptionist she didn’t feel she had the legal background to sign such a document.

After the surgery, when Peebles went to pick up medication at the pharmacy, she was again offered a “privacy” document. Reading through, she found that signing the document permitted the pharmacy to “ ... disclose your health care information to the following entities ... to authorize federal officials’ use for intelligence, counter-intelligence and other national security activities authorized by law ...”

“I’m just really not sure,” Peebles says, “what the FBI wants to know about my prescriptions ...” Such a document, however, will be presented to anyone who goes to the

pharmacy to fill a prescription. This was *not* happening five years ago.

Peebles emphasizes the work that LCBORDC is doing to protect everyone’s rights, explains that though her status as a “young, white female” might make it easy to ignore governmental infractions, she cannot feel truly free until we are all truly free, and that UPA keeps us all from that true freedom.

Peebles says, “I was told that the Constitution is the law of the land. Presidents come and go, but I stand with the Constitution ...”

Cara List explains that implicit in the right to freedom of speech is “the freedom to listen, the freedom to read, the freedom to have an education ...” She says, “Democracy has its strongest foundation in an educated electorate.”

List says that part of an education is seeing an issue from different sides, finding out about maybe less-than-politically correct perspectives. “If you want to see both sides of an issue ... if you want to have some understanding, you have the right to do that without anyone looking over your shoulder and making the assumption that your knowledge is somehow ... creating an action that you have not participated in ...” To pursue

these things, List explains, privacy and protection guaranteed by the Bill of Rights is key. On June 13 of this year, the Oregon Library Association signed a resolution to protect library users’ privacy from the UPA.

## TAKING A STAND

There are more than 100 cities, towns and counties that have taken a stand against the UPA. Three states — Alaska, Hawaii and Vermont — have also rejected the act. Things closer to home look hopeful: Last November, the Eugene City Council voted unanimously to adopt a resolution rejecting the USA PATRIOT Act. LCBORDC has been working recently on a similar effort to pass a resolution at the county level.

East Lane County Commissioner Tom Lininger says, “I strongly support the idea that we should reaffirm our commitment to civil liberties. I think Hope Marston and the rest of the Bill of Rights Defense Committee have done a great job showing that people throughout Lane County are concerned about this issue.”

But Lininger also touches on the complexity of the issue: “This county has a proud history of standing up for civil liberties ... At

the same time, we need to be careful that we’re not villifying the federal prosecutors and FBI agents in Lane County. These people have done a good job protecting our community and prosecuting important crimes such as white collar crime, violence against women, civil rights violations, environmental crimes, and organized crime. I am very concerned about John Ashcroft’s policies, but I’m thankful that our local federal law enforcement officials have shown some restraint by comparison to other areas.”

When asked about the resolution, Springfield Commissioner Bill Dwyer replied simply, “I love it. The Bill of Rights and Constitution are tremendously important.”

The BCC heard public testimony earlier this week and as Lininger says, “We’ll need to hammer out the details of the resolution, but you can bet that the Lane County Board of Commissioners won’t be on the sidelines of this debate.”

For more information about the UPA and what you can do to protect your rights, visit [www.lanerights.org](http://www.lanerights.org). If you are in a position to donate time or money to the LCBORDC, please contact Dawn Balzano Peebles at 485-8972. **EW**

# DEFEND THE BILL OF RIGHTS!



HOPE MARSTON

‘We have to take the helm at this point...what’s happening is our government has become a very secret and closed place.’



FAHRID HASSAN

‘I love this country...I will fight for it. I will die for it, and certainly, I will die in it and become part of the soil....’



CARA LIST

‘Democracy has its strongest foundation in an educated electorate.’



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