

**SPRAWL HITS WALLETS AND ENVIRONMENT**

Just as Congress is debating renewal of a massive federal transportation bill and beginning deliberations over the budget for the Transportation Department, a new report documents the negative impact of sprawl on American families' budgets.

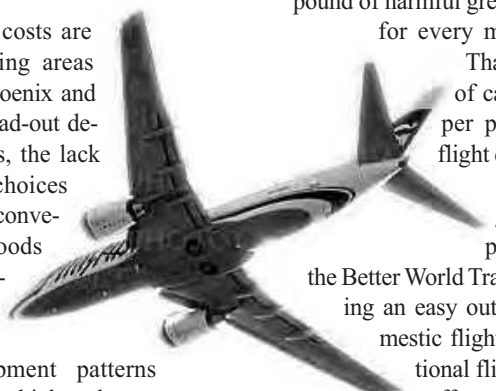
A July 23 report from the nonprofit Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) shows that America's families spend more than 19 cents out of every dollar earned on transportation — an expense second only to housing and greater than food and health care combined.

The report says that the nation's poorest families are particularly hard hit, spending more than 40 percent of their take-home pay just to get around, an expenditure that has risen 33 percent since 1992 and is making it all the more difficult for lower income families to afford housing, health care, and other critical services.

Transportation costs are highest in sprawling areas such as Tampa, Phoenix and Dallas, due to spread-out development patterns, the lack of transportation choices and the absence of convenient neighborhoods within walking distance of shops and schools.

These development patterns force people into vehicles, the report says, with negative impacts on air and water quality, as well as wildlife and habitat.

"It makes no sense to build transportation systems that exacerbate income and wealth inequalities," says Rich Stolz, senior policy analyst at the Center for Community Change. "It is time for Congress and state and local planners to make policies that place the needs of people ahead of automobiles." See the complete report at [www.transact.org](http://www.transact.org)



**FASTING CONTINUES ON THE CAPITOL STEPS**

Inspired by Peg Morton, another Eugene woman is fasting on the steps of the state Capitol building in Salem this week. Kathleen Piper started a four or five day water fast Monday afternoon after Morton finished her week of juice fasting to draw attention to Oregon's shrinking funds for human services.

Piper is the widow of a man who died from multiple sclerosis after suffering through cuts in assistance during the Reagan presidency. A member of the Eugene Peace Choir, she has worked with Progressive Responses, Justice not War, and has volunteered at White Bird Clinic. She has lived in Eugene for four years.

**GUILT-FREE FLYING**

The average airline flight pumps one pound of harmful greenhouse gas into the air for every mile flown per person.

That's about 1,700 pounds of carbon dioxide pollution per person for the average flight distance of 1,660 miles.

If that makes you feel guilty for a recent (or planned) summer flight, the Better World Travel Foundation is offering an easy out. Donate \$11 for a domestic flight or \$22 for an international flight and they say they'll offset your pollution.

The foundation funds projects that reduce global warming emissions, such as replacing oil burning heaters in Portland public schools. For more information, surf to [www.betterworldclub.com](http://www.betterworldclub.com) or call (866) 304-7540.

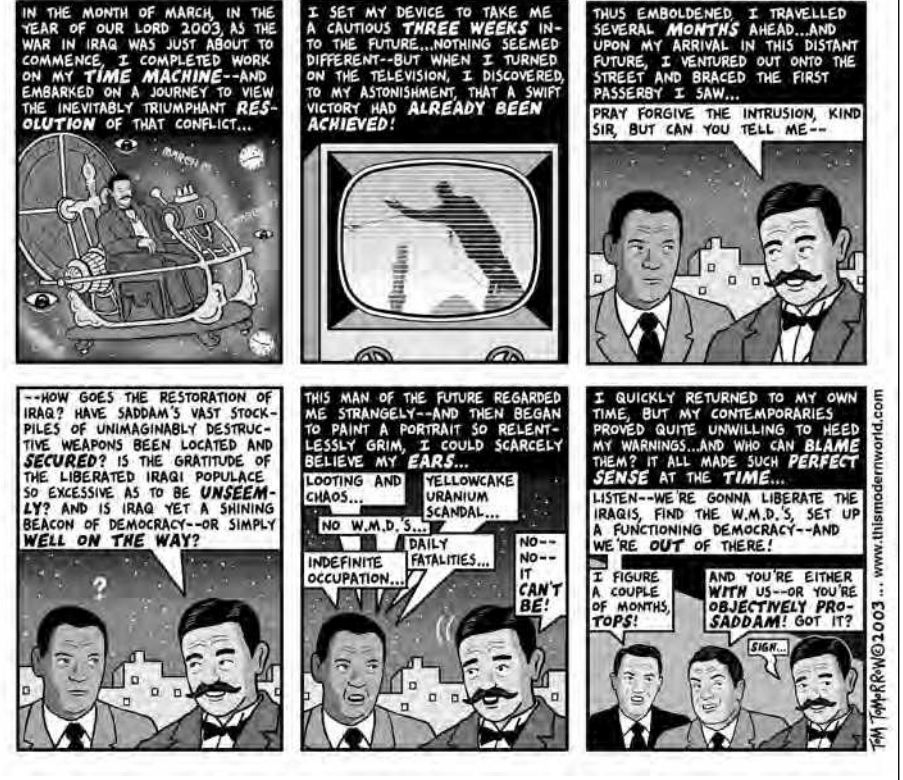
— Alan Pittman

**CITY SEEKS APPLICANTS**

The city of Eugene is now accepting ap-

**THIS MODERN WORLD**

BY TOM TOMORROW



plications for two vacancies on the Budget Committee, one seat on the Planning Commission, five vacancies on the Police Commission, five seats on the Human Rights Commission, two vacancies on the Toxics Board and one opening on the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission.

Deadline to apply is 5 pm Sept. 26. Application and supplemental questionnaires are available at the City Manager's Office, Room 105, City Hall and at [www.ci.eugene.or.us](http://www.ci.eugene.or.us) Finalists may be interviewed by the City Council in early October.

**CITY COUNCIL SLASHES RESOURCES INVENTORY**

The Eugene City Council turned its back July 28 on a 5-1 recommendation of the Planning Commission by adopting a dramat-

ically reduced natural resources inventory. The inventory, required by state law (and delayed since 1992 by a series of political maneuvers), was adopted to include only 1,100 acres. The planning commission recommendation covered about 3,500 acres.

The agreed-upon acreage includes about 440 acres of the Willamette River. The adoption of the inventory does actually protect the areas. City staff will now begin an economic and environmental analysis of each listed location, and return to council with an analysis and recommendations for what protection or regulation, if any, should be applied.

"Eugene should be developing using a model of growing up, not out, while protecting our valuable natural areas," says Councilor David Kelly. "This decision was a sad day for Eugene that will lessen our quality of life and our distinctiveness as a community."

**SLANT**

• PeaceHealth is wanting to break ground on its \$350 million medical center in north Springfield while waiting for "final" approvals that are still at least six months away. Allowing bulldozers to start ripping up such a sensitive environment near the McKenzie River is an absurd idea, particularly in light of PeaceHealth's pending legal challenges.



• A comforting old adage seems to be what Oregonians like to hear these days. Gov. Kulongoski put it out in a major speech a few months ago that our Oregon glass is half-full, not half-empty and that's how we should continue to look at this state as we work to solve its problems. Positive responses poured back to him after The Oregonian gave his half-full glass big play. City Manager Dennis Taylor used the same line July 25

to describe Eugene in his speech to the City Club after 100 days on the job. Same warm response from the audience to the view that Eugene's glass is half- full. Candidates, take note. Oregonians may be suffering from too much doom and gloom. No matter what the numbers, it's time to recycle that half-empty glass.

• Too bad the "Harvard News" website is defunct, no longer publishing funny headlines. The R-G had a good contender July 23 with "Indians fight to get crack at old air base."

• It's sweltering and smoky right now and people's energy levels are low, but some invigorating events are ahead with cooler weather. The third annual Peace, Justice and Media Conference will be Oct. 9-12 at UO with national speakers lining up, followed by a Eugene appearance by columnist Molly Ivins Oct. 25. Check out [www.justicenotwarcoalition.org](http://www.justicenotwarcoalition.org) for updates.

• President Bush is balking at releasing all

of the congressional 9/11 report on the grounds of national security. But with this administration's track record, we bet the reasons are purely political. The censored parts apparently concern Saudi Arabia's role in 9/11. The terrorist attacks were a turning point in U.S. history and we deserve full disclosure of why it happened, even if it embarrasses our current administration.

• The precautionary principle is a common-sense response to scientific uncertainty. We should avoid practices that have the potential to cause severe damage, even when we do not have scientific proof of harm. The Bush administration thinks this principle is silly, of course, except in foreign policy. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz invoked the precautionary principle on "Face the Nation" July 27 when he justified the attack on Iraq by



saying that if we wait until there is absolute evidence of terrorism, we'd have to wait until after the fact of terrorism. Now, if we can just get the administration to

apply that principle to the environment.

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519.