

TWEAKING GRAVEL RULES

If you were concerned about Eugene Sand's plans to site a gravel mine off River Road, don't relax yet.

The gravel industry and its supporters claim erroneously that two recent Appeals Court decisions, including the Eugene Sand case, have created supply problems for the state that need to be "fixed" by easing the rules for siting mines on prime farmland. However, evidence from the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries and elsewhere shows that there is an abundant supply of road building and sanding material in the state. The aggregate industry attempted to gut restrictions on mine siting in the recent legislative session, but its efforts failed.

Now the industry has launched a new offensive, this time a push for an emergency rule by the Land Conservation and Development Commission, meeting on Sept. 18 and 19. The location of the meeting, not yet announced, is likely to be Ontario, as far away as possible from the people and the Willamette Valley farmland that would be most affected. No draft of the proposed rule changes is available for public review. Oregon citizens expect honesty, openness, decisions based on facts, and fair play from their government. LCDC deserves our outrage if it allows itself to succumb to special interest pressure to rush through adoption of permissive rules for gravel mine siting without a demonstrated need for a rule change, and without adequate citizen review.

If the industry gets the rules it wants, a mine off River Road would be unstoppable.

*Karen Reed
Eugene*

JUST DO WHAT?

The arms race in sports spending and the UO's coming high-tech research expansions

have merged. Already at the Autzen locker room players are being used as guinea pigs for testing Phil's latest Nike "smart clothes" prototypes.

These nanotechnology related sports projects are eerily similar to military nanotechnology "future warrior" wearable computers and armor. If these Nike prototypes may lead to military applications in the future, are the athletes informed of these details? Does the proposed athlete's bill of rights address testing and full disclosure? The locker room fingerprint entry system (biometrics), supposedly to help recruitment, is actually a system deployed at sensitive government facilities.

Even worse, the UO appears to be steering deeper into eerily uncharted waters with the emergence of nanobiotechnology. Future capabilities under discussion involve ideas like the molecular replacement of matter in athletes' bones to form titanium inside them. Mac Court's replacement, if built, will undoubtedly have human testing capabilities like Autzen now includes. The no-bid contract procedure to have the arena built demands close scrutiny so that no inside favors are involved.

Building sites are a key point in this development scheme. The Nike research and development nanotech centers are planned for various locations in east Eugene. The R-G (8/31) described one of the preferred sites, east campus family housing. Another site targeted by Phil Knight and David Frohnmayer is the scenic Willamette riverfront greenway near campus. The city is busy trying to set up corporate welfare to speed development of the river even though a massive, recently built Riverfront Research Park building sits empty.

Ron Wyden and Frohnmayer promised to preserve the Willamette greenway several

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



years back. This coming Friday at the World Trade Center in Portland they intend to plan — without students — widespread intense industrial development in Eugene. So much for the new shared-governance policy that Frohnmayer agreed to with student leaders.

*Zachary Vishanoff
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BAIT AND SWITCH

I am appalled at the content of one of only two feature articles in your (8/21) Health and Fitness issue (I discounted anecdotal

references to what randomly polled pedestrians eat for breakfast). The feature article touted "The Reconnection," a hands-off healing technique trademarked by chiropractic physician Dr. Eric Pearl. I expect that there have been, are, and will continue to be individuals who claim supernatural healing powers and this I can accept. I cannot accept reckless, so-called journalism for attempting to disguise an infomercial as reputable health reporting.

The author notes that her personal experience was with a "licensed Eugene

REASONABLE DOUBT BY TOM LININGER

Cashing In

The Man in Black dies at age 71.



Johnny Cash often performed for a captive audience. In fact, he played his best gigs at prisons. When he entertained the prisoners at Folsom in 1960, the audience included a 22-year-old inmate (and future country music star) named Merle Haggard. "I was impressed that Johnny could take 5,000 convicts and steal the show away from a bunch of strippers," Haggard remarked.

Progressives don't have too many heroes in country music. If you tune in a country station these days, you're likely to hear an encomium to a pickup truck. But Johnny Cash was different. His lyrics were dark, raw and powerful. He used his music to reach out to downtrodden people, especially prisoners.

Cash's empathy for the down-and-out arose from his own experience surmounting many hardships. He was born in Arkansas to a family of sharecroppers in the middle of the Depression. Over the next seven decades, he had more troubles than the Boy Named Sue. Alcoholism, drug addiction, divorce, a criminal record — he hit for the cycle. The lined face and the gravelly voice were well earned.

He ran afoul of the law more than once. In 1965, he was arrested at an airport with 668 Dexedrine and 475 Equanil pills in his guitar case. Later that same year, the federal government sued Cash for accidentally setting fire to more than 500 acres of forest while he was under the influence. (Don't you just hate it when that happens?)

In his autobiography, Cash said that his own misfortunes led him to speak for "voices that were ignored or suppressed in the entertainment media, not to mention the political and educational establishments." A born-again Christian, he believed that everyone had a chance at redemption. Maybe that's why he played so many free sets at prisons. During the Folsom gig, Cash exhorted his audience "lay off the whiskey and let that cocaine be." He reminded the prisoners that "the door to God's house is always open."

When it came to politics, Johnny Cash walked the line. He performed in the White House for Richard Nixon, but he also recorded lyrics that criticized the war in Vietnam, the mistreatment of Native Americans, and the abandonment of the underclass.

Cash strongly opposed the death penalty. In 1995, he wrote a song for the movie *Dead Man Walking*. In 2000, he recorded a song called "Mercy Seat" that offered a chilling first-person account of an execution in the electric chair.

Cash's sympathy for death row inmates first became evident in 1977, when the state of Utah executed Gary Gilmore (whose résumé included not only robbery and homicide, but also a brief stint as an art instructor at Lane Community College). As the sun set on Gilmore's last day at the Utah State Prison, the phone rang. It was Johnny Cash. Cash had learned that Gilmore liked his music, and Cash called to sing Gilmore a song. While Cash certainly did not want to glorify Gilmore's misdeeds, he also felt that even the most contemptible criminal deserved solace in his final hours.

We'll all miss the Man in Black. I hope the dress code isn't too strict in Heaven.



Tom Lininger's band has been known to clear the room with inept covers of Johnny Cash songs.