

pected colony of the destructive Gypsy Moth. Agencies who use Btk for this purpose make claims that imply it is specific for Gypsy Moth, but this is not true. Not only can spraying kill moths or butterfly caterpillars of any species feeding in the area, but certain caterpillars (Tiger Swallowtail for example) are far more sensitive to Btk than is Gypsy Moth.

Sunlight degrades Btk quickly, suggesting that effects should be short-lived, yet a Michigan State University study showed that droplets of spray shielded from the sun could kill caterpillars up to 30 days after spraying. Non-lethal doses also affect the fertility of resulting adults. Paul Severns, who has studied effects of Btk on butterflies after a Dexter spraying, says there is not enough research to predict non-target effects of Btk, and suggests it would be of benefit for people who butterfly-garden to keep track of what butterflies they see and how many of each they count. The data could contribute to anecdotal records of what happens in urban spray areas (see story on butterflies this week, page 31).



— Rachel Foster

ITALIAN PEACE FLAGS GROW IN POPULARITY

Colorful “Peace” flags have been seen in the Eugene Celebration parade and elsewhere around Eugene at peace demonstrations since the Bush administration announced its plans to invade Iraq. Where did these flags come from?

Eugene peace activist Betsy Steffanson says she first saw the 3-by-5-foot cloth Italian flags with the word “Pace” (“peace” in Italian, pronounced pah-che) when her friend Sharon Schuman brought 20 back from Italy last year. No other country was making the flags, so she got the name of the manufacturer in Italy, and called them.

“They speak English,” she says. “I asked them if they could make the flags with ‘peace’ in English, and they asked me if I could buy 500.” She agreed and is now working her way through her second shipment of 500 and says the flags are being displayed and carried all over the country.

Steffanson figures \$15 covers her costs, including shipping from Italy. Flags can be purchased from her by calling 686-2531 or e-mail nfp@efn.org — TJJ

STUDENTS COMPETE IN ACADEMIC PURSUITS

In the late 1970s, Vernon Jarrett, renowned author and journalist, initiated an “Olympics of the Mind” to promote and reward African-American students as academic achievers in the same way sports heroes are honored. Twenty-five Eugene and Springfield high school students of color will continue this tradition of competition Sunday, March 14 in the annual Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO), sponsored by the Eugene/ Springfield chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Local students will compete in 14 of the 24 categories in sciences, humanities, performing arts and visual arts. Competitions will begin at 9 am in the Hult Center, with a visual arts exhibit and performing arts presentation open free to the public at 7 pm. The evening event will include performances in dance, oratory arts, music (vocal) and dramatics. Student poets will also present their work during the evening program.

“With such a small population of African Americans in the area,” says Dr. Snell Fontus, local NAACP’s ACT-SO chairperson, “giving these students a venue to exercise their gifts and present their talents is important. It develops self-confidence in what they are capable of doing.”

Eugene student winners will be awarded with bronze, silver and gold medals, and advance to compete in the nationwide ACT-SO competition in Philadelphia in early July. Fontus says, “The national competition takes place the same weekend of the NAACP conference. So, not only do the kids get to compete with the best and brightest, but they get to rub shoulders with activists from across the country.” National winners receive scholarships and educational aid prizes such as computers.

ACT-SO centers around the dedication and commitment of community volunteers and business leaders to serve as mentors and coaches promoting academic and artistic excellence among African American students.

— Bobbie Willis

CORRECTIONS/ CLARIFICATIONS

Vanessa Salvia’s music column last week referred to Against Me! releasing “seven percents;” of course, that should have read “seven-inch” recordings.

SLANT

- Our news story this week on the city attorney and his amicus brief on behalf of PeaceHealth raises all kinds of issues, some old and some new, but all related. What’s wrong with our city charter that creates a powerful city manager and allows our private city attorney to represent our best interests one minute, then turn around and facilitate competing interests the next minute? And who’s really running the city when our assistant city manager is meeting with our city attorney to talk about intervening on statewide policy issues? And what does it mean for Eugene to lose a major medical center to Springfield? How do we calculate the cost of lost jobs, lost medical services, lost opportunities and lost prestige, not to mention lost street and road funding that will be sucked out of Eugene to accommodate a huge, sprawling development in Springfield? ODOT and LCDC dropped the ball in this court case, but fortunately we have 1000 Friends of Oregon, CHOICES and the Jaqua family fighting for Eugene’s (and Springfield’s) best interests.
- The city’s plans to divert property taxes away from schools and into urban renewal projects along the Willamette River in Eugene could go to voters if local citizens can get the 3,722 valid signatures required. Will it happen? EW’s coverage of the topic (including last week’s page 11 news story) appears to have stirred some interest in people beating the streets. E-mail lists are buzzing and at least one person, Zach Vishanoff, has volunteered to gather signatures on campus every afternoon. Once the council has given final approval to the expanded Riverfront Urban Renewal District, petition gatherers will have 29 days to gather the signatures. One of the major concerns with the new urban

renewal plan is vagueness about how the money can be spent. Here’s a radical idea: How about opponents agreeing to abandon their referral efforts if the City Council amends the plan to make it more palatable?

- Looks like Mayor Torrey is going to become Citizen Torrey for the foreseeable future. Torrey’s a personable guy with good intentions, and he’s been a strong advocate for education. But we’re not sad to see him go. His tie-splitting votes on development and other land-use issues have contributed to a lowering of quality of life in Eugene, and for many of us, that will be Torrey’s legacy. What will be our next mayor’s legacy? It won’t be guesswork. Our two leading candidates both have clear voting records over time on a broad range of issues.
- We’ve been stealthily probing our buddies down at the R-G to leak us some hints about what’s the buzz in the newsroom, but they are keeping mum. We think the R-G owes its readers the courtesy of outlining the new pecking order. Who ya gonna call with questions, complaints and story ideas? Titles have changed on the website and it looks like management is trying the trendy “team” approach once again, and feature writers are now also knocking out hard news. Margaret Haberman is no longer city editor and Executive Editor Jim Godbold is now working under Jackman Wilson on the editorial pages. Who’s covering 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, or email editor@eugeneweekly.com

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