

EDITOR'S NOTE: Too many letters, too little space. Check our website (www.eugeneweekly.com) last week and this week for additional letters.

YEAH, GO TORREY!

As a progressive political activist, I am thrilled to hear of Jim Torrey's flirtation with a mayoral write-in campaign for several reasons.

First, as the most polarizing, conservative, Bush-supporting Republican politician in Eugene, Torrey will inspire progressives to vote. This means more votes for Kerry, DeFazio and even Nader. In fact, Eugene progressives will be more motivated by Torrey than by anyone since Lon Mabon, whose last anti-human-rights measure brought out vast numbers of Clinton voters in '92.

Second, a Torrey campaign will inspire progressives not just to vote, but to contribute time and money to Piercy and other candidates. This letter, for instance, and the check I'm about to write to Piercy's campaign, are but the beginning of the contributions I plan to make, if Torrey runs.

Third, a Torrey campaign would do much to continue the traditional entertainment value of Eugene politics. Running again after announcing his retirement is a little silly, but running against Piercy *after* congratulating her on her victory is downright absurd.

We progressives have too often played the fool in the past; it's nice of the conservatives to take a turn. Finally, Torrey will either opt out of this campaign, or lose decisively. Either outcome will hearten us progressives (defined as people who value people over profits) to continue to take back our city.

In short: Run, Jim, run.

*Martin Champion
Eugene*

REPUTATION SUFFERS

Indeed Jim Torrey worked hard to establish his reputation as a community leader who strove to build consensus and create a climate of success through innovation. Every day that passes without his denouncing efforts to conduct a write-in mayoral campaign diminishes his reputation.

Contrary to a full page ad in the *R-G* (8/17) which states, "Since his name wasn't on the May primary, only one name will appear on the November ballot," Kitty Piercy will be the sole candidate on ballots this fall because the democratic process is alive and well in Eugene.

The voters were faced with a choice in May: Nancy Nathanason, who was endorsed by Torrey and thereby presumably expected to carry his strategies and agenda forward; or Kitty Piercy, a candidate who offers the community a fresh approach to civic matters and leadership. Eugeneans chose Piercy by a clear majority. Since the May primary, Piercy has been working hard – identifying issues, assessing needs, building coalitions, and forging partnerships all with a respectful and responsible demeanor. The rest of us would do well to follow her example.

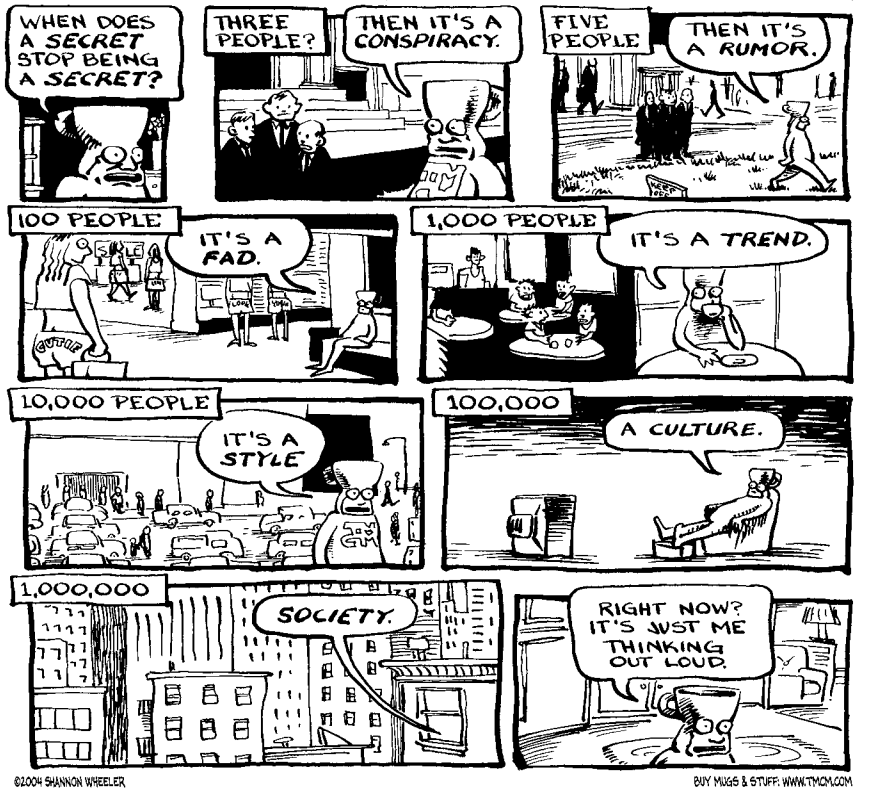
*Laurie Trieger
Eugene*

ANOTHER INDY

Comments regarding Seth Walker's "Facing the Music" article (8/12): It is 100 percent negative. It does not accurately acknowledge the breadth of indy record stores in Eugene and assumes that they are all failing.

The article is laced with falsities. Walker's

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



article refers to CD World and Face the Music as independent and Green Noise as large. All false.

It fails to acknowledge that all small businesses are suffering under the weight of corporate domination of the retail world. Not just record stores. There's no justification for one store to take center stage in our weekly newspaper to whine about how difficult it is to be in business.

It doesn't mention what is apparently Eugene's only growing indy record store, The Museum of Unfine Art and Record Store, now in its third year of business. I make no bones of saying that the Museum

takes pride in stocking the most independent and least commercially viable/subsumable musics that there are: avante, no-wave, noise, free jazz, skronk, glitch, electro-clash experimental, etc.

Maybe the Museum isn't going under because it doesn't pander to the outmoded aesthetics of the rock 'n' roll industry and offers music that is not only economically independent but aesthetically independent of pop-rock.

People are tired of generic indie rock and bratty punk-rock. They're tired of being condescended to by an industry that favors image over substance and marketing by genre over

viewpoint BY PHILL CARROLL

Cutting the Old Ones
Our urban forest is not a wild ecosystem.

An Aug. 5 Slant piece in this paper mentioned Whitey Lueck's July 30 presentation to the City Club of Eugene and his "radical" notion that mature urban trees may be removed, for reasons other than hazard abatement or disease control, to avoid problems in the future. This idea is not radical, but rather standard practice.

Eugene's big old trees are removed every week of the year, and many problems are solved, among them: the challenge of operating heavy equipment on construction jobsites where trees are to be preserved; the burdensome need for arboricultural consulting during development; and avoidance of non-standard site plans which make room for mature trees. In existing landscapes, views can be opened and landscapes can be rid of falling debris, such as leaves and seeds, when large-canopy trees are cut. We rarely hear of anyone having such problems, and this is a testament to our effective, pre-emptive tree removal practices.

These practices are due for a change.

Trees are readily removed for two main reasons: because the substantial benefits of trees, especially large ones, are not widely known; and because Eugene's Land Use Code exempts many parcels and development sites from regulation.

Big old trees play an important ecological role, even here in town, in that they possess microhabitats that younger trees are unable to provide. Dead limbs, rough bark and hollows make for happy dwellings for organisms from beetles to birds. There is also a certain spiritual microhabitat big old trees provide people. In the ancient and spreading limbs of oak, we all can find a bit of solace.

The old trees standing in Eugene are connections to our landscape and cultural history. The Chase sequoia on Garden Way, the Oregon white oaks on Gillespie or Skinner's Buttes, and the weathered old firs in River Ridge golf course, site of the Ayres home-



stead, are all windows to our past. Eugene is sprinkled with such fine old residents. The Tree Foundation has created the Legacy Tree Program, to be unveiled this fall, which will make these trees and their value more accessible to all.

So what of Mr. Lueck's remarks? In the context of his talk, he mentioned tree removal several times. Whitey can "accept" certain tree removal, he said, and we might consider cutting trees depending on our goals for any specific portion of our urban forest. Logging parts of Spencer Butte Park to promote age and habitat diversity is one example he provided. Removing tall fast-growing individuals in a landscape in order to promote growth of longer-lived, slow-growing ones may be another. Such tree removals can understandably cause consternation. After all, every tree is a potential Legacy Tree. But we have less to fear from intelligent action than we do from passive outrage and mistrust.

We live in an urban forest. *Forest* because it is comprised of interrelated trees, vegetation and soils sharing a common environment. *Urban* because it's where we are. The human component of our forest's dynamics is the largest and, to me, most engaging. In addition to questions of botany, climatology and ecology, we can ask "Who?" and "Why?" when pondering our landscape's bounty. Think of all the trees downtown, in yards and alleys and parks, and know that they were all, with few exceptions, *planted*. We are not merely forest denizens, but stewards. We may scurry and chatter when trees fall because of ignorance or economy, but we have the wherewithal to improve our situation.

The formerly treeless plain that is now Eugene has long since abdicated its wild destiny. It is through the actions of people that much of our surroundings have formed. As we strive to improve Eugene's urban ecosystem we must look for lessons not only in the forests and prairies of our valley but also in the policies and practices of our city. It is not radical that some tree-lovers would advocate occasional tree removal, but that this city of tree-lovers would be so ill-prepared for the future.

Phillip Carroll is a horticulturist at the UO, a certified arborist and president of the Eugene Tree Foundation.