

FLAMING BUSH TROUSERS SIGHTED AROUND TOWN

As part of a nationwide tour, George W. Bush is spending a week in Eugene — at least in effigy. A towering Bush likeness in full flight suit arrived in Eugene Monday, Sept. 27 and will tour the city until Saturday, pants ablaze, thanks to a blower and colored fabric. As the car tours, a digital ticker board scrolls Bush's lies.

Stephanie Detwiler said she and other local volunteers learned of the project, named Pants on Fire, through Truemajority.org, and signed up to drive Bush around town. Organizers at Ben & Jerry's headquarters (Pants on Fire is founded by Ben Coen) were stunned at the Eugene squad's quick response to get involved, Detwiler said.

A run-in with vandals with wire cutters in Spokane is causing some electrical headaches here, said Detwiler, but that won't stop the car's tour. Next stop is Reno where Coen reunites with his car. See www.pantsonfire.net for more info or to order "the doll." — *Jeffrey Stout*

FOXY AIRPORT TV DRAWS COMPLAINTS

Media watchdog Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) has decried the news program as "the most biased name in news" for its "extraordinary right-wing tilt." But that hasn't kept the Eugene airport from pumping Fox News into its departure lounges.

The Bush boosting, pro-war station's political rantings forced on airline travelers by the airport have attracted citizen com-

plaints, but Fox has apparently paid the city for exclusive broadcast rights and city officials refuse to change the channel or turn the TVs off.

City Councilors Betty Taylor and Bonny Bettman joined citizen complaints about the biased broadcasts at a recent meeting. Bettman said the lounges should be silent. "It's a very serious matter for some people." — *Alan Pittman*



FORESTED PLOT'S FATE UNCERTAIN

The city is poised to purchase one of the last big pieces of undeveloped land in Eugene, but the deal's not yet sealed. The 39-acre plot — bordered by Nectar Way, Garnet Road and

Dillard Road in south Eugene — includes steep hills, seasonal creeks, large trees and wetlands.

According to planning project manager Andrea Riner, the city's first priority is to protect the stream corridors that connect the plot with 54 acres of open space that the city bought several years ago. The land can then be integrated into the Ridgeline Trail system.

The city was interested in acquiring the plot when Portland developer Joe Green bought it for \$325,000 last spring. Now Green is offering to sell it to the city for \$600,000, or he will develop it. Preliminary discussions about development include building new roads and more than 100 houses.

Southeast Eugene resident Lisa Warnes is furious that the city didn't purchase the plot last spring, when the pricetag was lower. "The city could have bought it at a much better price, and they didn't. They dropped the

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by TOM TOMORROW



ball on it. They owe it to the city to buy it now, at any price," says Warnes.

The city has earmarked \$300,000 — a combination of stormwater fees and funds from the 1998 Parks and Open Space bond measure — to purchase the property. Oregon State Parks recently matched this amount with an additional \$300,000. But there is one last obstacle before the city can finalize the purchase by Green's Oct. 1 deadline: appraisal of the property at or below \$600,000.

Riner is optimistic about acquiring the plot, but she says that if the appraisal does not support the purchase price, the deal may fall through. "In terms of property acquisition, we're in a pretty good place," says Riner, "but obviously, the appraisal's outcome is important."

The neighbors of southeast Eugene urge concerned citizens to contact the Parks and Open Spaces Division to voice support for the city's purchase of this property. To do so, call Riner at 682-4909, or e-mail andrea.g.riner@ci.eugene.or.us.

— *Kera Abraham*

SOLAR HOME TOUR IS THIS SATURDAY

October is Energy Awareness Month and each year at this time local solar energy advocates collaborate with the state of Oregon to organize a tour of solar installations, including water heaters, space heaters and photovoltaic electricity generators.

The Lane County Solar Tour of Homes will be from 10 am to 4 pm Saturday, Oct. 2 and will begin with a talk and slide show at

SLANT

- Eugene's Police Commission is currently undertaking a major 18-month project to review the complaint and internal review process of EPD, and to look at various models from other cities of civilian oversight of police. But we hear concerns from Whiteaker neighborhood watchdogs that this project itself needs oversight and greater transparency, and that the cop-friendly commission may not be inclined to give adequate consideration to truly independent models. Let's keep an eye on both the process and the results. An open meeting on the topic is planned for 7 pm Wednesday, Oct. 6 at the Whiteaker Community Center.

- Bobby Kennedy Jr. was in town for an hour or two last week (see news story this week) and we had a few minutes to chat with him after his press conference. We asked about the disparity between Americans wanting to protect the environment and also supporting Bush. Kennedy blames the corporate media, particularly television. "They are not covering the issues, not informing the public, they are no longer the forum of our democracy, the marketplace of ideas, they are simply the marketplace of commerce," he says. "They've fired their investigative

reporters, gotten rid of their documentary staffs and foreign news bureaus, and are appealing to the lowest common denominators in order to attract viewership to sell products. The lowest common denominators are sex, celebrity gossip and fear. So we see Michael Jackson, Kobe Bryant, Laci Peterson and terror alerts every five minutes. What we're not seeing are the real problems such as that one out of every six women in our country now can no longer safely have a child due to excessive mercury levels." Are Eugene-area media guilty as charged? The *R-G* has no enviro reporter these days, and on local TV news the motto is still, "If it bleeds, it leads."

- When was the last time (outside the Chamber of Commerce) you heard the word "developer" used lovingly and with respect? Noted Kansas City "green" architect Jason McLennan was in town Sept. 15 to give the keynote speech at the Friends of Eugene annual meeting, and the UO grad presented several stunning examples of sustainable development and redevelopment projects around the country and in Canada. He predicts that what we see now as pioneering, environmentally friendly design will soon become stan-

dard practice. McLennan's work can be seen at www.ecotonedesign.com

- Oregon's Measure 36, a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, comes on the heels of gay marriage debates in other states. Massachusetts and Oregon are currently the only states that recognize same-sex marriages as legally valid, but Vermont found another solution for the conundrum: Call same-sex commitments "civil unions." Vermont's civilly united couples receive many of the 1,000-plus legal rights and responsibilities as heterosexual spouses, but not the dignity of the term "marriage." The decision distantly echoes the "separate but equal" ruling that segregated black and white citizens in 1896's *Plessy v. Ferguson*. A century later, aren't we more civilized?

- How many people in Lane County read *Eugene Weekly*? Most people we ask (including some of our advertisers) haven't a clue. We're not great at self-promotion, but you will be seeing some interesting numbers appear in our paper over the next few weeks. Every year we hire Media Audit, an independent survey company, to poll 720 households in the county and run pro-

jections to estimate how many people are regular readers, and other demographics. We print 37,000 to 39,000 papers each week, but the survey shows that a remarkable 91,300 people are regular readers (picking us up at least once over the past four weeks). That's up from 84,039 regular readers in 2003 and 73,484 in 2002. The survey does not include our thousands of readers in the Corvallis area. Next week: How many voting Republicans read *EW*? You might be surprised.

- While news of the Olsen twins starting school in New York is making the front page of the society section, we'd like to point out another headline we'd like to see played larger. The doe-eyed twins are now promoting Happy Meals in France, just months after Mary-Kate got out of treatment for eating disorders. With hundreds of thousands of young women suffering from eating disorders we'd like to give McDonald's and the twins a hand for sending women yet another confusing and contradictory message: You can have your Happy Meal and a size 2, 18-year-old figure too, as long as you puke it up later.

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, editor@eugeneweekly.com