

BEST OF EUGENE STAFF PICKS

BEST CAT POTATO

If you think Ebert is chubby, check out the Bijou movie theater's in-house cat. Rumor has it the two-lap cat gave the recent documentary *Super Size Me* two paws up.

BEST WRITE-IN

The Run Frog Run campaign has Mayor Jim Torrey green with envy. There's a bevy of green-shirted followers pushing the well-known comic book salesman to run as a mayoral write-in with promises of a quarter million in campaign contributions. Frog hasn't said he won't run, but may announce his decision in three weeks, according to a rubber chicken close to top campaign officials.

BEST OUT OF BODY EXPERIENCE

Hitting a nutria on the bikepath at 30 mph

BEST NEW POLITICAL GADGET

Local home improvement stores are now selling a new kind of carpenter's level specially designed for politicians. When placed plumb against a politician, the bubble indicators will clearly show whether the person is "left-leaning" or "right-leaning." When turned, the device can also indicate if a person is "forward" or "backward" thinking. The PoliticalLevel® is expected to be popular with politicians scrambling for the center and retails for \$29.95. By Christmas, hardware stores promise they will also have the new sperm-counting stud finders available.

BEST PERSONAL FITNESS TRAINER

Jeff Miller's repeated calls for the mayor to "Run Jim Run" will take inches off his honor's waist and add years to his life. With so much focus these days on celebrity diets and radical surgery to reduce weight, it's nice to see a public example of a more traditional, conservative approach to shedding unwanted pounds.

BEST PANHANDLER SIGNS

Why lie? I need weed.

Take my resumé

BEST WAY TO LOSE VOTES

Whoever stole hundreds of City Councilor Betty Taylor's lawn signs during her re-election campaign last spring must now regret the political crime. The campaign caper brought Taylor lots of sympathetic media attention and denials of involvement from her opponent Maurie Denner. Taylor ended up winning with 59 percent of the vote.

BEST PLACE FOR LAWYERS TO SKATEBOARD

The city of Eugene has formed a partnership to build a new dual-use ramp/skatepark at the gleaming new federal courthouse downtown. The \$70 million facility will provide a much needed downtown venue for attorneys to practice their rad board slides and mute grabs. Many attorneys are now taking up the sport, seeking more exercise than just "all rising" when the judge walks in. To avoid lawsuits, attorneys are asked to use the proper jurisprudence in not boarding when wheelchairs are present.

BEST WAY TO CATCH A COLD

Frenching strangers at the Slug Queen coronation

BEST BULK BUYING

The UO Athletic department has decided on a new policy of paying its football recruiters royalties by the pound. The Ducks are hoping to field an offensive line of 400-pound student athletes this year and are particularly interested in picking up former Sumo wrestlers from Japan. To bring the big men to campus for recruiting visits and extra feedings, the department has made arrangements with an alumni involved in helicopter logging old-growth forests. Go Ducks!

BEST BUMPER STICKER

"Against abortion? Pull out now!"

BEST POLICE REFORM

The city of Eugene has moved quickly to respond to officer sex scandals ... by planning a \$36 million new cop shop. A consultant hired by the city manager for an "external review" of the abuse scandals has determined that the lack of deluxe offices for cops lead to undue workplace tension that officers then had to relieve by forcing oral sex from vulnerable women.

BEST PLACE TO GATHER PRETTY BROKEN GLASS

Parking area at Spencers Butte trailhead

BEST SCOOP

Willamette Week's investigative report that former governor turned corporate lobbyist Neil Goldschmidt committed statutory rape of a 14-year-old while serving as Portland mayor rocked the state this year. Goldschmidt was already infamous locally for sleazy lobbying for Hynix. *Willamette Week's* scoop also shamed *The Oregonian* newspaper, which Goldschmidt used to sugarcoat the sex abuse. The big daily is now busy trying to Goldschmidt every possible politician before *WW* scoops them again.

BEST PLACE TO SHOW OFF YOUR NEW LINCOLN NAVIGATOR SUV

Whiteaker after midnight

BEST COP COME ON

When Eugene Police Officer Roger Magaña was pushing for oral sex from one of his victims, he bought her Valentine's flowers with a card, "Think about my throat lozenge idea." Apparently, romantic pick-up lines, along with a lot of other things, aren't included in EPD training. Magaña got 94 years for forcing sex from a dozen women, the city got more than \$10 million in lawsuits.

BEST MEDICAL JOLT

The area's two local hospitals plan to switch cities in a half-billion dollar dance that's sure to send already flying local medical bills through the roof. PeaceHealth CEO Alan Yordy says all the money spent on his new hospital will provide a more "healing" environment. Meanwhile, rising health insurance costs threaten to cripple the local economy.

BEST PLACE TO WEAR A GO BEAVERS SHIRT

Steelhead Brewery on game day

BEST USE FOR THE "TEMPORARY" I-5 BRIDGE

Shelburne Falls, Mass., converted an old trolley bridge into a "Bridge of Flowers" attracting 35,000 visitors a year. Eugene could do the same by laying irrigation and dumping dirt on the temporary I-5 bridge when the replacement span is done. The "floating garden" would have great visibility next to I-5, could be connected to Alton Baker Park and would become one of the state's greatest tourist wonders.

BEST PLACE TO CATCH CRABS

Florence jetty (fooled ya, didn't we?)

BEST USE FOR EWEB'S LAND

Forget about a big ugly hospital. It will cost way too much in taxpayer and ratepayer subsidies and pollute the riverfront with parking lots and a new highway. Instead, how about a beautiful people's park along the river? Besides a cascading millrace, it could include a merry-go-round like in Salem's new riverfront park and a large changing fountain like in Portland and Corvallis for kids to play in. EWEB's old steam plant could be converted into an indoor water park with a pumped river running through it (like in Portland). Urban renewal could pay much of the bill, and the park would be a huge draw for people to come downtown.

BEST PLACE FOR A QUICKY IN PUBLIC

In a canoe in the Millrace

BEST DOWNTOWN BOOST

Re-opening Willamette and Broadway has been a bust, as the empty storefronts attest. But using urban renewal funds to build a new, year-round indoor Farmer's Market downtown would provide a big boost to the urban core. There are plenty of vacant lots and empty buildings along the old pedestrian mall to serve as candidates. One building, at Chamelton and Broadway, even once served as a farmer's market and might be restored.

BEST MOTORCYCLE OUTFIT

Ducks band uniform

BEST POLITICAL BOOSTER

EW is investigating the background and special interests of a major Jim Torrey supporter, Phukyo Gymn. Mr. Gymn's name appeared twice in full page *R-G* ads listing supporter's of the Republican mayor's aborted write-in campaign for mayor. Sources indicate Gymn

may be a Far East investor speculating in Eugene real estate, or a developer contemplating a new chain of fitness centers specializing in mud wrestling in the west Eugene wetlands.

BEST PLACE FOR THE NEXT STARBUCKS Oregon Country Fair

BEST EW AWARD

Why do local development, anti-environmental and conservative interests have to spend so much on their campaigns? To counteract coverage by the *EW*, the *R-G* reported in December. "It's worth money, and it doesn't get counted" in campaign finance records, Eugene Mayor Jim Torrey complained to the *R-G* about *EW's* campaign coverage. The glowing pro-Torrey and pro-developer coverage in the *R-G* and on local TV must just not be worth nearly as much.

BEST UNDERCOVER WORK

At a Lane County Sheriff's deputy Christmas party, officers put two naked passed-out deputies together in bed and took a picture. The wild party included officers allegedly grabbing women's breasts and buttocks, dry-heaving, fighting, and intimidating witnesses, according to an internal investigation of the 2001 party that was covered-up until this year. "Wow, those cops really party it up," a rookie female deputy said.

BEST PLACE FOR HOMELESS TO SHOWER

Ducks locker room at Autzen Stadium

BEST FREE BUZZ ON FRIDAYS

Several local markets and delis offer free wine tasting on Friday afternoons. You can start out at New Frontier Market and Monroe Street Café, which do tastings from 5 to 7 pm, and then hit up Cornucopia from 7 to 9. All three stores put out crackers and cheese with their wine. And just to keep the ball rolling, you can return to Monroe Street Café on Saturdays for free beer tasting from 5 to 7. But for even the cheapest among us, it can be hard to stagger away without buying a bottle or two.

BEST NAME OF A LOCAL ACTIVIST

Eugene Organ (of Lane Independent Living Alliance)

BEST WAY TO TERRIFY A NEIGHBORHOOD

During a 2002 drug raid in the Whiteaker neighborhood, 59 officers drove an armored truck to three residences and exploded "flash-bang" grenades, shaking the windows and waking neighbors. SWAT police smashed through the doors of three homes without knocking, then forced the residents out of bed without clothes while police ransacked their homes. No drugs were found and no charges were filed, but now the victims are taking the police to court and seeking at least \$25,000 in damages.

BEST LOCAL SHOT AT A WORLD RECORD

On Cinco de Mayo this year, patrons at Taylor's Bar and Grill attempted to set a world record by simultaneously drinking the most tequila shots, aiming to trump the 2001 record of 191 shots. And they did; at 11 pm, partygoers slammed 195 shots of tequila. Unfortunately, the organizers of the event didn't know that they'd already been beaten. Students at Australia's Macquarie University drank 1,049 simultaneous shots of tequila in October 2003.

BEST USE FOR WHACKED-OFF DREADS

Stuffing SUV tailpipes

BEST WAYS TO CLEAN UP EUGENE

Ban Styrofoam take-out containers
Mandatory emission inspections for all vehicles
Composting toilets in the city manager's office
Put some teeth in local government ethics rules
End the contracting out of city legal services
Hire cops with expertise in conflict resolution

BEST USE OF LOCAL SWAT TEAM

Cleaning up at dog parks

BEST STRESS-RELIEVING BREAK FROM WORK

The swing on 12th street between Lincoln and Lawrence is right between the sidewalk and the street and very close to the *EW* offices. Nothing's better than taking a short break on deadline day and going for a quick swing. Sure puts things in perspective.

EUGENE ARTIST TIM BOYDEN CREATED THESE "STONEHEADS" SCATTERED AROUND HIS YARD.

