

make recommendations to the City Council for final action as early as March. The council is expected to hold public hearings. — *TJT*

STINKING SCHOOL BUSES

What's poisonous, carcinogenic, threatens global environmental disaster and around our kids every day? School buses and the sooty diesel exhaust they cough up.

New federal rules going into effect in 2006 and 2007 could help reduce the pollution problem. Lower sulfur diesel fuels reduce emissions, but cost 12 cents more a gallon to truck in. Retrofitting bus engines and the cleaner fuel can reduce emissions by about 90 percent, but costs \$7,500 a bus.

To help pay the cost of retrofits for its most used buses, School District 4J staff are pursuing a grant of about \$400,000 from Toyota Motor Company, which set up the grant program to settle a lawsuit. Combined with state grants, the cost to the district for retrofitting buses and providing cleaner fuel might be under \$20,000. But the Toyota money isn't enough for all the school districts applying and will be awarded to the districts by lottery. — *Alan Pittman*

SLUDGE TREES DRIED, DIED

The local sewage plant's efforts to set up a \$3.7 million poplar tree plantation on 420 acres north of Eugene where it can spread its sludge as fertilizer has started with a costly mistake. About a third of the plantation's trees have died, according to a staff report.

Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission (MWMC) staff blame a faulty irrigation system and dry weather for the mass die off. The MWMC plans to hire a contractor to grow, deliver and plant new poplars to replace the ones that dried and died — at an additional cost of \$115,000. — *AP*

SHAKE IT, BABY

We all like to remember the holidays. You know, like when we all got food poisoning from Grandma's homemade eggnog and spent Christmas wringing ourselves inside out?

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

Moray Povey

After her husband died of an aneurysm in 1960, 31-year-old Moray Povey brought her four children, ages 6 to 12, from Redmond, their home town, to Eugene, where she enrolled at the UO. "I went to school for 10 years, but didn't graduate," says Povey. She raised her kids and worked several jobs, most recently as a secretary/clerk in the nursing department at Serenity Lane. In the early '90s, when her elderly mother lived in a local foster home, Povey got to know a volunteer ombudsman visiting the facility. Following her retirement in '98, she took a training course and became certified by Oregon's Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Currently, 22 certified volunteer ombudsmen visit Lane County facilities. Each puts in 10 hours per month for at least a year. "It's a complex job that entails investigation, mediation, and resolution of problems," she says. "It appeals to people who want to devote time to a cause." Since 2000, Povey has served on the local recruiting committee. The next training course in Eugene starts on Jan. 20, she notes. For details, call Povey at 344-1256 or visit <http://egov.oregon.gov/LTCO>



Remember when the tree became so bone dry that the minute the lights were plugged in it became a giant Roman candle? Ahh, memories...

But to avoid the more painful memories, take a few precautions this holiday season and spend the time intensely caring, not in intensely care.

Christmas trees: Nothing says "the holidays" like feeling the fresh spikes of a healthy tree as the needles dig into your flesh while you try gamely to get the cat out from the branches. Nothing beats the smell of an evergreen out of context, so go out and hunt down that tree.

There are three methods to tell if a cut tree is fresh: Take a needle off the tree and see if it snaps when you bend it. If it's not flexible (or "sproingy" in medical terms), the tree is too dry, so pass it by. Wrinkled bark on twigs is another indication of a dry tree; and finally, grab the tree and shake it like a Polaroid picture. If the needles fall off like in Charlie Brown's Christmas, keep looking.

Once you have your pet tree home, saw a quarter inch off the bottom to expose fresh tissue. That's like the tree's tongue, and boy is it thirsty! Like Oliver Reed, it can drank quarts upon quarts in a single sitting, so give it plenty. A dry tree is an angry tree, just waiting for its

chance to wreak havoc in your home. So keep your tree as cold and wet as possible, and away from heating vents and drafty doorways

Homemade foods are a mark of kindness on the part of grandparents, and a badge of courage for those with weak constitutions. Even some of the most traditional holiday offerings can be the causes of food-borne illnesses, like eggnog, made from — you guessed it — eggs! Raw eggs in fact, which can also be found lurking in homemade mayonnaise and Hollandaise sauce, not to mention cookie dough.

OK, so eggnog's out. Now let's eat! Not so fast, Attila. Some cheeses can also be harmful, especially to people with suppressed immune systems. Cheeses made from unpasteurized milk include feta, Camembert, blue-veined cheeses and some others.

No problem. You think you're beginning to feel lactose-intolerant anyway. Bring on the cold plate! Smoked meats, that's the answer. Those things last forever, that's why the pioneers smoked everything! Sure. And they also died at 35. Sorry, even smoked meats, if sold refrigerated, can be risky.

Once you've tossed out scary foods, remember to keep hot things hot and cold things cold until just before serving. Lukewarm, like

the reception you get to your poetry readings, makes bacteria frisky.

For more information, contact the Extension Office at 682-4243, or visit <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/lane>

— *Laird Goodman*

HOLD THE NAGCHAMPA

Used as a meditation aid, an ambience-maker and a sweet-smelling stench-quencher, incense is a staple for hippies and ascetics alike. But new research suggests that it may be carcinogenic.

A team of scientists from National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan found very high concentrations of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in a badly ventilated temple where incense is burned constantly. According to the report, levels of PAHs inside the temple were 40 times higher than in houses where people smoked tobacco, creating more pollution than traffic at a busy intersection. And concentrations of total suspended particles were 11 times higher than outside the temple.

One of the scientists conducting the study, Ta Chang Lin, told *New Scientist* magazine, "We truly hope that incense burning brings only spiritual comfort, without any physical discomfort. But there is a potential cancer risk."

For incense-burners who want to keep up the practice, Lin suggests ventilating well. So when you light the nagchampa, crack a window. — *Kera Abraham*

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

• A news brief last week ("Tortillas Ricas") incorrectly identified the new supermarket on 7th Avenue as Productos Latinos. The market is called Plaza Latina.

• In Vanessa Salvia's music column Dec. 2, her sarcastic last paragraph knocking the touring band Wishbone Ash has generated numerous calls and complaints from fans of the band. Vanessa knows the band's music and doesn't like it (she is a music critic after all). But the reference to enemas was probably a bit over the top. Fans also tell us Andy Powell is the only original member of the band. Our apologies to the Jungle, a venue voted by our readers as "Best place to shake your booty."



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Dr. Mazure-Mitchell performs physical exams (check-ups, annuals, well-child, sports), laboratory testing, nutritional assessments and other diagnostic tests. She refers patients to and coordinates care with other medical doctors as appropriate.

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Miriam Mazure-Mitchell, N.D. graduated from Bastyr University in Seattle, a nationally accredited naturopathic medical school, and is state-licensed as a primary care physician by the Oregon Board of Naturopathic Examiners. She also has a BS and MS in public health education from the U of O. In addition to many years of community involvement, Dr. M co-teaches in the Phlebotomy technician-training program at LCC. She is a member of the American Association of Naturopathic Physicians.

For prevention and to build and/or restore your health, call today for an appointment or to schedule a free "Meet the Doctor" (5-minute interview).

Spotlight on Small Business