

# news Briefs



## CORPORATE WELFARE

The Eugene City Council plans to vote March 7 on a tax break proposal that could give Hynix Semiconductor a future windfall of as much as \$100 million.

The Hynix windfall would be a direct hit on state school funding. Thousands of school supporters recently rallied in Salem calling for cutting such corporate tax break schemes as a way to restore funding for education.

The council vote, without a public hearing, will likely be the only public vote on the potentially huge tax give-away.

The enterprise zone program that the council plans to vote on could also give millions of dollars to corporations building sprawl-inducing warehouses and call centers with low-quality jobs in wetlands and meadows on the edge of town. Factories that

threaten the community with pollution or toxic chemical stockpiles could also enjoy the break.

Decades of research has shown that such tax breaks rarely "create" jobs, as proponents claim, but rather simply give millions in public money to companies who would have come anyway for business reasons. Widely accepted research has also shown that most of the new jobs go to people moving to the area rather than the local unemployed.

Under state rules for enterprise zones, Hynix could get \$100 million in tax breaks for expanding and/or retooling its computer chip factory, even if it only adds one low-wage job. Companies can close and move when tax breaks end and not have to repay the public subsidy.

Passing the corporate tax break could also make it difficult for the city to pass tax increases for everyone else. Voters in past elections have voiced complaints that it's not fair for the city to ask for tax increases for school support, libraries and a new City Hall, while at the same time giving away millions to polluting corporations.

The City Council appears evenly split on the tax break proposal and is being heavily lobbied by business interests hoping to cash in on the massive give-away. Possible swing votes include Councilors Andrea Ortiz and David Kelly and Mayor Kitty Piercy.

— Alan Pittman

## MONDAYS AT COZMIC

A new free media-film-discussion series titled "Public Interest Mondays" runs throughout March at Cozmic Pizza at 8th and Charnelton in Eugene. It features a variety of programs using media, music and discussion to promote the public interest and to encourage participation of the entire community. All events begin at 7 pm.



Randy Kehler and Betsy Corner of Colrain, Mass., in *An Act of Conscience*.

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

**NOTHING TO SEE HERE**  
MOVE ALONG, MOVE ALONG

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT A CONSERVATIVE REPORTER ASKING A FEW QUESTIONS AT WHITE HOUSE PRESS BRIEFINGS?  
SCOTT, WHY DO LIBERALS STUBBORNLY REFUSE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRESIDENT'S SHEER GREATNESS AND OBVIOUS INFALLIBILITY?  
WHY, I'M GLAD YOU ASKED THAT QUESTION, JEFF!

WHO CARES IF HE WAS ACTUALLY A PRETEND JOURNALIST WORKING WITHOUT PAY FOR A PARTISAN REPUBLICAN WEBSITE?  
JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE DOESN'T HAVE A "JOB" OR ANY "WRITING EXPERIENCE"—  
—IT DOESN'T MEAN HE CAN'T BE A BIG-TIME "REPORTER!"

WHAT DOES IT MATTER THAT HE APPEARS TO HAVE GAINED REGULAR ACCESS TO THE WHITE HOUSE UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME AND WITHOUT A STANDARD BACKGROUND CHECK?  
THAT SORT OF THING HAPPENS ALL THE TIME!  
WHITE HOUSE SECURITY PEOPLE ARE VERY EASY GOING!

AND SO WHAT IF A BACKGROUND CHECK WOULD HAVE REVEALED WHAT LIBERAL BLOGGERS SOON DISCOVERED--THAT HE APPARENTLY HAD A SECRET LIFE AS A TAX-DELINQUENT, PORN-SITE-OPERATING MALE PROSTITUTE?  
IT'S OUTRAGEOUS--THE WAY THESE BLOGGERS VIOLATED HIS PRIVACY, I MEAN!  
IT'S GETTING SO A MAN CAN'T EVEN POST NAKED PICTURES OF HIMSELF ON THE INTERNET ANYMORE!

THERE'S ONLY ONE EXPLANATION FOR THE LIBERAL OBSESSION WITH THIS STORY--  
--THEY HATE GAY PEOPLE! LEFT WING INTOLERANCE IS THE ONLY REAL SCANDAL HERE!  
OTHER THAN THAT--NO SCANDAL WHATSOEVER!  
NO, SURE! NONE AT ALL!  
OKAY, THEN.  
YEP.

Global Trends-Local Choices, a one-hour live TV talk show hosted by Jan Spencer, will discuss compelling trends, issues and actions. Global Trends will alternate programs with the new Eugene Media Action film series. On March 7, Global Trends will feature public interest activists Jeanne Marie Moore and Ray Wolfe. Moore is a community activist, with interests ranging from land use, transportation, and diversity to accessibility. Wolfe, a retired UO chemistry professor, has been an activist in Eugene since the '60s.

March 14 will be the film *An Act of Conscience* narrated by Martin Sheen. This

documentary chronicles a war tax resisting couple's five-year struggle to nonviolently resist the seizure of their home by the IRS.

March 21, Global Trends will feature a panel discussing U.S. afflu-

ence, militarism and tax resistance. And March 28, Eugene Media Action presents *Weapons of Mass Deception*, a new film by Danny Schechter.

For more information, call 686-6761 or 343-8548.

## FOREST RULES COMMENTS DUE

Comments are due March 7 on the new National Forest Management Act regulations. These rules "eliminate the most fundamental wildlife protections, open up millions of acres of national forests including old growth, roadless areas and sensitive wildlife habitat to harmful activities, disregards science and shuts the public out of meaningful input," according to a statement from the American Lands Alliance.

Comments can be sent to: USDA Content Analysis Team, Attention: Planning CE, P.O. Box 22777, Salt Lake City, UT 84122 or fax (801) 517-1015. Talking points are available at [www.americanlands.org](http://www.americanlands.org)

## SLANT

• Bonny Bettman's taking a lot of guff for her recent comments favoring Triad's hospital plans over Arlie & Co.'s proposals for the EWEB site. But Bettman's right on target, and Arlie's Musumeci is up to his old Gang of 9 tricks of exaggeration and blame, trying to turn public opinion against progressive leaders. Bettman's support for Triad is based on a string of council decisions favoring a hospital at the site, and months of due diligence and negotiations regarding the property's access, infrastructure and easements. Arlie's "offer" of \$28 million for the site has little credibility. We don't see Arlie going through detailed negotiations; nor do we see that the company is actually building anything in the valley, just moving dirt around at its Crescent property. Blaming Bettman for future EWEB rate hikes might be shrewd politics, but scratch the surface and it becomes a silly and bizarre contention.

• This week's cover story on salmon is timed to go with the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference. Salmon and many other issues will be covered in depth by the PIELC on the UO campus (see story, page 10). Anyone can show up for free. Check out the tables at the Law School on Agate, buy a cool T-shirt, learn about biopharming, climate change, mining in Peru, ecofeminism, Native American environmental issues and public interest media. We can't think of any other event in Eugene that compares to the PIELC for energy, inspiration, diversity of thought and sheer volume of cutting-edge information on some of the greatest issues of our time.

• One of our favorite pastimes between sessions at the PIELC is scanning for spooks. In years past FBI agents were reportedly spotted slinking through the

crowds looking for "eco-terrorists." The shiny black shoes and jacket bulges might have been the give-away. Or maybe it was just paranoia. The suits in the crowd were more likely corporate attorneys (with PDAs bulging their pockets) who would rather be enviro lawyers but still have kids to feed and \$100,000 in student loans to pay off. Besides, any agent worth his or her pension is likely to show up in ratty sneakers and dreadlocks. Of course the real eco-terrorists are not at the PIELC. They are hanging out in the board rooms of lumber, mining, chemical, oil and energy corporations.

• In a note that came in too late for the letters section this week, Kathy Ging wrote urging people to get involved in the pending decisions regarding the property next to the WOW Hall. The issue comes before the City Council Monday evening,

March 7 at City Hall. A public hearing is scheduled on a proposed 94-unit high-density housing project. Ging is concerned that the demolition of the Ridenour Building next door could damage the foundations of the historic WOW Hall, and she's even more concerned that the new residents of the five-story apartment complex will complain about the music and force the city to curtail WOW Hall concerts. Guidelines "generally prohibit HUD support for new construction of noise sensitive uses on sites having unacceptable noise exposure," she says, quoting from the HUD "Noise Guidebook." Ging says the developer's engineer admits that noise attenuation efforts "still will not prevent decibels from penetrating windows while neighbors sleep!" Is Ging exaggerating the housing project's threat to WOW Hall? Maybe, maybe not, but this is the time to talk about it.