

news Briefs

BRING'S SPRING FLING

BRING Recycling is gearing up for busy spring of fund-raising events as a May 31 deadline nears for a \$250,000 matching challenge grant from the Gray Family Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation.

Money raised in the year-long capital campaign will go to help build the Planet Improvement Center on Franklin Boulevard in Glenwood. The \$1.8 million project on nearly three acres will provide a comprehensive salvage, recycling and education center that is expected to become a model for other cities nationwide. More than half the cost of the project has been raised so far, says BRING manager Julie Daniel.

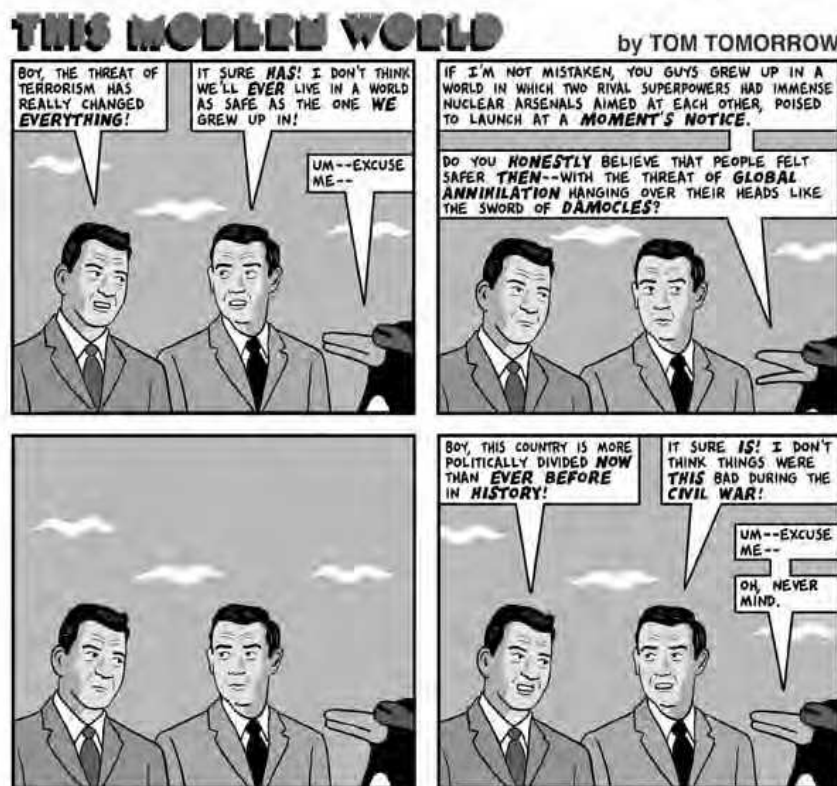
Buildings and grounds at the new site will demonstrate green building techniques including a green roof, bioswales for on-site storm water management, passive solar design and the incorporation of used building materials.

BRING was founded in 1971 to promote what was then considered a radical concept — recycling. Today, 90 percent of Lane County households recycle, and more than 200,000 tons of waste are recycled every year.

The next BRING event is a Bar-B-Q Bash and Fun' Raiser at 7 pm Friday, March 11 at 918 Lorane Highway. Entertainment will be provided by Slug Queen Scarlett O'Slimera and "Musical Outlaw Friends." RSVP to 344-1008 or 913-9257.

Author Barry Lopez and Mayor Kitty Piercy will speak at a major fund-raiser for BRING from 6 to 9 pm Thursday, March 31 at Oveissi & Co.'s new location at One East Broadway. Reservations are required for the \$100-per-person event that will be catered by local restaurants, with wine provided by Territorial Vineyards. Guests will receive a limited edition letterpress keepsake of an excerpt from Barry Lopez's new book, *Resistance*, designed and printed by lone goose press. Guitarist Don Latarski will provide music.

To reserve a ticket for the March 31 event,



call BRING at 746-3023. For more information, visit www.bringrecycling.org

LAND USE UPDATE

- Senate Bill 897 introduced in the Legislature would make statewide land use planning goals "advisory" instead of mandatory. These goals are considered the "backbone of Oregon's land use planning system," according to a statement from 1000 Friends of Oregon. "This is a major rollback to Oregon's land use planning system that protects farmland, preserves neighborhoods, and improves the livability of Oregon." The bill, opposed by 1000 Friends and the Bicycle Transportation Alliance, has been referred to the Senate Environmental and Land Use Committee. No hearing has been scheduled.

- The Oregon House is expected to vote on two Senate bills this week that 1000

Friends says are an "overt attack on our basic land protections." SB 2458 and SB 2549 respectively allow residential development and commercial and industrial development on productive farm land.

Bills in the Legislature can be read and tracked at www.leg.state.or.us

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

- An artist's name was misspelled in our Galleries listings last week. Jerry Wagner and Desree Royster are exhibiting their work at the Downtown Lounge Gallery.

- Due to an editor's error, a Slant item last week mentioned a public hearing scheduled for the March 7 City Council meeting. A public hearing was *not* scheduled, only suggested, on a proposed housing development next to WOW Hall. The council voted in favor of the project after hearing testimony during the time allotted for citizen comments at the beginning of the meeting.

Hynix Hand-Out

Council vote may mean \$100 million tax break for corporation. ■ By Alan Pittman

The Eugene City Council voted 7-1 March 7 to in effect offer Hynix Semiconductor about \$100 million in tax breaks if it builds later phases of its chip factory in the west Eugene wetlands.

Councilor Betty Taylor was opposed and councilors Bonny Bettman, Andrea Ortiz, David Kelly, George Poling, Chris Pryor, Jennifer Solomon and Gary Papé voted together for creating the enterprise zone tax give-away.

Councilors removed some "greenfield" land near the current Hynix plant from the enterprise zone but city development staffer Denny Braud said the factory still has room to build later phases on it's adjacent land within the 5,000-acre tax break zone. "It's all in that boundary."

Mayor Kitty Piercy said in an interview that giving Hynix an additional \$100 million in tax breaks is a good idea. Piercy said she was "pleased" with the vote and praised Hynix as a good "example" of a company providing jobs while taking care of its land.

Hynix (formerly Hyundai) has been highly controversial since it came to Eugene in 1995. Hundreds of citizens flooded meetings to object to the \$50 million in tax breaks given to the corporation under a previous enterprise zone, it's destruction of a large swath of rare west Eugene Wetlands and the corporation's heavy use of toxic chemicals. Hynix has been fined and/or settled large lawsuits for employment discrimination, water pollution and worker injuries. At one point the corporation laid off nearly all its employees for six months while it teetered on bankruptcy.

Many of those who voted and campaigned for Piercy, Bettman, Ortiz and Kelly were

critical of the tax breaks and environmental impact of Hynix and could be disappointed in their votes.

While Hynix could pocket millions in profits from the huge tax break, state school funding will take a direct hit. A recent school funding rally in Salem called for an end to such enterprise zone tax breaks. About half the Hynix give-away would come from state school funding with the rest coming from local government funding.

Such tax breaks have many costly disadvantages, but most economists agree that they rarely "create" new jobs (see "Corporate Welfare" story last week).

Any new Hynix tax break would end after five years, but by that time the factory would have lost about 80 percent of its taxable value due to the rapid depreciation of high-tech equipment.

The council vote included a provision for later creating job quality standards. But even for the lowest quality jobs, the standards could reduce the total tax break by only a small fraction under state laws. Under state law a dirty factory built in a rare ecosystem and polluting the city with toxic chemicals could still get its full tax break of millions of dollars while creating only one new low-wage job.

Councilor Bettman said she voted for the enterprise zone as part of a political compromise to remove some greenfield sites on the edge of town. But the zone still includes large tracts of land that have never been built on. The largest greenfield site removed was in fact a poplar tree farm owned by the sewage treatment plant for waste spraying that was unlikely to be developed anyway.

Councilor Betty Taylor called for a public hearing before voting to give away so much money, but not a single councilor supported her motion. "People have forgotten the previous experience" with Hynix, she said. Taylor called the enterprise zone tax breaks unfair to other taxpayers and "absolutely wrong."

The council vote directed staff to bring back a enterprise zone application to the state for council approval on April 11. That vote could be the last on the massive tax give away program for 10 years. State enterprise zone law does not allow votes or hearings on individual tax breaks which are given automatically.

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