

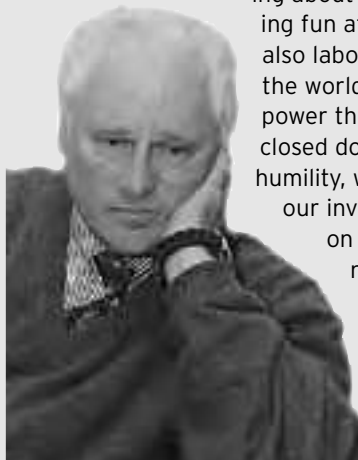
# SLANT

• In 1995 when Hyundai/Hynix landed \$50 million in tax breaks for building in the west Eugene wetlands, hundreds of outraged citizens packed meetings. How could so much public money be given away to a mega-corporate factory using tons of toxic chemicals without a vote or even a hearing? The answer then was that the state enterprise zone (EZ) program that the city had signed up for almost a decade earlier provides corporate welfare without public accountability. Unless there's a similar outpouring of public outrage before April 11, history could very well repeat itself. The City Council is poised 7-1 to set up a new enterprise zone that would potentially give Hynix another \$100 million. If Hynix expands, it will qualify for another huge tax break, without a vote or public hearing. Proponents argue that tax breaks create jobs, but almost all economists and researchers tell us that corporations come and go based on cheap labor, access to markets and other factors more important to their bottom line. State employment economists have found that most of the new jobs go to people moving here rather than the local unemployed. Proponents claim the EZ mostly helps local small businesses, but 95 percent of the breaks have so far gone to Hynix. Proponents say they'll attach local standards to the breaks, giving companies that aren't providing sustainable, family wage jobs less money. But state law doesn't allow meaningful or significant local standards and Hynix is likely to get its full break, despite its history of layoffs, employment discrimination, environmental destruction and massive use of chemicals, water and power. In the end, the EZ amounts to little more than an unfair corporate hand-out. Some of the more progressive councilors say the resolution they will vote on April 11 represents a valuable compromise, but the EZ boundaries were only reduced by 10 percent and Hynix, still stands to suck

up 95 percent of the potential hand-outs. The majority of people in Eugene believe corporations should pay the same taxes they do. The council vote should reflect that.

• Congrats to *Willamette Week* and reporter Nigel Jaquiss for winning a Pulitzer Prize for the paper's exposé on Oregon power broker Neil Goldschmidt's sexual relationship with a 14-year-old girl when he was mayor of Portland. This prize is a big deal for *WW* and Jaquiss and is well-deserved. Kudos to Jaquiss for taking on the most powerful figure in Oregon and hats off to *WW* for supporting his risky work. It was a brave and difficult undertaking considering Goldschmidt's intimidating legal and political resources. Our own Sen. Vicki Walker deserves a little piece of that Pulitzer. She supplied Jaquiss with some of the critical documentation that sent him and *WW* on their gutsy investigation. We at *EW* particularly relish success in the growing genre of journalism we call alternative newsweeklies. In this business we

have lots of fun each week writing about quirky stuff and poking fun at convention; but we also labor digging deeply into the world of money and power that operates behind closed doors. With some humility, we like to think that our investigative reporting on government, business and the environment also brings about positive change. *WW*'s stories on Goldschmidt (and



more recently on the secret PGE papers) are embarrassing *The Oregonian* into doing more thorough reporting. Likewise, we hope *EW*'s scoops and depth of reporting are encouraging the *R-G* to become a better, more relevant newspaper. Competition is a boon for readers, and for democracy.

• Several of our readers have complained about our Date Girl column a few weeks back (3/10) that featured a letter written by a man who admitted his sexual attraction to pre-adolescent girls. So we asked writer Judy McGuire what kind of reaction she got from the same column in *Seattle Weekly*. She tells us she got a great many responses, and every one was positive. It seems people in Seattle welcome open discussion on sensitive topics.

• A couple of hate letters came in this week regarding the pope, and we won't be publishing them, not because of their arguments regarding birth control and homosexuality, but rather because of their seething tone. Come on, people. It's always open season on religion and politics, but let's show the man a little respect.

• Saturday was a great day downtown with the opening of a bustling and lively Saturday Market and lots of activity at the new Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza. Appropriately enough, some free speech happened, sponsored by the Wayne Morse Youth Program downtown. The program was followed by drumming, dancing, Frisbee-tossing and other Eugene-style celebrations of spring and community. Lane County Farmers Market is also up and running. Not a lot of fresh produce yet, but this is a great time to meet local farmers, buy some fruit trees, and sign up for Community Supported Agriculture programs. Nothing beats local produce.

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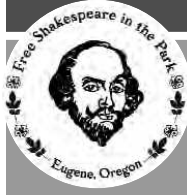
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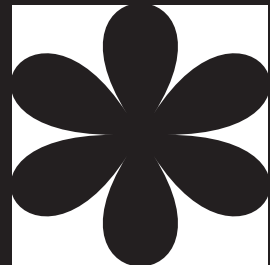


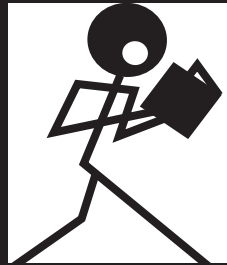
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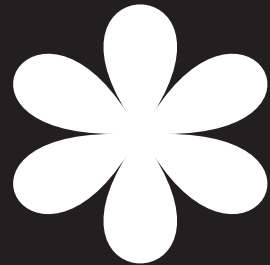
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