

• We just confirmed an outrageous rumor that the misdemeanor trespassing case against Perry Patterson – tossed out of Eugene Municipal Court by Judge Alan Lyman – is being prosecuted by the city of Eugene in Lane County District Court with a date set for Feb. 16. This was an idiotic case to begin with. Patterson had a ticket to the Dick Cheney rally at Monaco Coach in Coburg last September and was arrested when she blurted out the word “no” when the VP said Bush has made the world safer. “I think the city fears we may sue them,” Patterson’s attorney Lauren Regan tells us. “Why else would they bother to waste the time and money prosecuting a citizen with no prior record at all?” Good point. What can the city possibly gain from this case other than more ill will and providing critics with one more blatant example of selective prosecution? We haven’t heard back from city prosecutor Mark Haight.

• In case you missed it, our cover story last week looked closely at the internal strife at Lane Transit District and complaints against General Manager Ken Hamm. Hamm resigned the next day. Our story generated several positive calls and notes from readers, but we also got complaints about the cover, and one reader demanded that we apologize to Hamm for putting “monster ears” on him. Actually, the photo illustration was LTD’s creation. The image is from an LTD meeting flier, and was apparently Hamm’s self-deprecating attempt to show he really *does* listen to employees – a response to one of the chronic complaints against him. We mentioned the big-ears flier in the story, and had a note about it next to the image on the cover, but some readers assumed it was *EW*’s creation. We *never* ridicule public figures. Well, not this time.

• Regarding our Slant blurb last week on the Sid Leiken exposé in the *Springfield News*, we heard from *SN* Editor John Finn that George Beres’ source for the research in the piece was not from the *SN* staff. Most likely it was a *SN* contributing columnist, says Finn. Meanwhile, Leiken, in response to the accusation in Beres’ commentary that he is “shifty” in supporting, then opposing Commissioner Bill Dwyer, notes, “Didn’t John Kitzhaber and Vicki Walker both endorse Ted Kulongoski before?” Leiken also noticed our news brief on Dwyer calling for Triad/MWMC to build in Glenwood, and says, “I am glad Bill feels the same way I do ... I don’t know if he just realized this all of sudden or if he is finally up to speed with the vast majority of Springfield citizens.” This is all pissy little stuff. The big issues coming up will be how Dwyer and Leiken differ or agree on sprawl, corporate candy, public safety funding, GLBT rights and natural resources management.

• One view of the Oregon open primary plan that Phil Keisling and Norma Paulus are pushing for the ballot next year comes from former Gov. Barbara Roberts. She is flat-out, unequivocally opposed to it. She appointed Keisling to be secretary of state but she hesitated not one minute to blast his plan when she was in Eugene recently for a Democratic fund-raiser. In Keisling’s primary, all candidates would appear on one ballot. Regardless of party, the top two winners would move to the general election in November. Roberts is a fierce advocate and product of the party system. The open primary would virtually wipe out party power.

• The race for Position 6 on the Oregon Supreme Court is looking a little wild. Judge Virginia Linder of Salem, who’s on the state Court of Appeals, just filed. The Oregon Supreme Court has no women, but Judge Linder may be too conservative for most feminists. Gene Hallman, a lawyer from Pendleton, also has filed, and some say the court does need a member from rural Oregon. More liberal, he’s supported by the Oregon trial lawyers. And Jack Roberts of Eugene, Republican candidate for governor last round and current director of economic development for this metro area, is talking about filing. Next?



Jack Roberts

• Anybody down here know the only collegiate team in the state of Oregon that won a Division One national championship this year? The women’s soccer team at the little University of Portland. And if you watched their match on Sunday against UCLA, you saw a great sporting event. *The Oregonian* has given the Pilots lots of ink, but most of the media doesn’t get it that hordes of kids and parents are playing and watching soccer in this state.



THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

EPD YET TO COME CLEAN

Roger Magaña was convicted last year of raping, sexually abusing, assaulting and harassing a dozen women over six years as a Eugene police officer. After the verdict, Police Chief Robert Lehner promised at a press conference that the department would publicly come clean. The chief said he would conduct a thorough internal investigation of the department’s failings in hiring, supervising and disciplining Magaña and another convicted officer, Juan Lara, and release the results to the public.

A year and a half later, no such public accounting has occurred.

Lehner told the Eugene City Club last month that he won’t reveal the department’s failings while the department is being sued by women victimized by the two police officers. “The right time to get that information out is not while these investigations [by the women’s lawyers] are under way and these trials are under way,” the police chief said.

Lehner said the department still has an “obligation” to explain to the public how it failed and will do so “as soon as the civil litigation is concluded.”

The city has so far paid out \$1.06 million to settle six civil lawsuits by the officers’ victims. Another six cases are still pending, with the women asking for about \$32 million in actual and punitive damages.

Without a settlement, such civil litigation can drag on for years and years with

long trials and appeals.

Although Lehner refuses to provide a public report of EPD failings in the sex scandal, he appears to have already concluded that other officers and city officials should not be held responsible for hiring and failing to turn in, supervise and discipline the two criminal cops for so many years. A lot of “systems” within EPD contributed to the failure, Lehner said. “There’s no smoking gun.”

That explanation and the lack of a full public report on whether other officers were complicit or culpable in the officer sex abuse scandals may do little to satisfy the public. As a *Register-Guard* editorial noted May 4, 2005, “a full accounting is essential to restoring the public trust.”

While fessing up could increase the city’s liability to the women victims, the lack of public trust stonewalling creates also has its costs. Critics have said a lack of public trust can make a city more difficult and expensive to police, result in voters declining to increase police funding, and lead to high jury verdicts. — Alan Pittman

BIKE PATH EXPANSION

When President Bush signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), he not only reinforced the federal government’s obsession with acronyms but also jumpstarted the process of connecting Springfield bicyclists with the rivers and ecosystems surrounding them.

Willamalane Park and Recreation District, working with the city of Springfield, received \$3 million in federal transportation funding from SAFETEA-LU to design, engineer and build a bicycle and pedestrian path along the north bank of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River in Springfield.

The three-mile Middle Fork Willamette