

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS

Eugene should open a publicly funded, secular homeless shelter, say members of a city-sponsored human rights group.

"We strongly suggest that the city and the community begin efforts to provide a publicly funded shelter as a responsibility of our community," the seven-member group wrote to the City Council Dec. 27. The group is a Eugene Human Rights Commission support system subcommittee on homelessness.

Eugene has a private, religious shelter, the Mission on 1st Avenue. The Mission provides about 400 beds but requires those seeking shelter to attend gospel services. The mission does important work, but the religious requirement "raises significant concern," the subcommittee stated. "Eugene has too long relied on a private shelter for the homeless."

The subcommittee, which includes four members of the Eugene Human Rights Commission, applauded the City Council for its recent launch of a homeless initiative. The group called for broadening the planning effort including involving a street police officer, White Bird representatives and more homeless people.

The human rights group also said the city should address training for city staff to avoid stigmatizing the homeless. "An attitude of judgement, condescension, or arrogance by city employees, as an example, toward homeless individuals has been described by many in the homeless community as offensive and prejudicial." — Alan Pittman

CIRCLE CLOSES

Eugene's Circle of Hands Collective members met New Year's Eve "to make the hard decision to close our store and disband the collective in its present form," says collective member and "keyholder" Diane McWhorter. "The downtown economy just hasn't been good enough to keep us afloat. We're all healthy individually and looking forward to regrouping in some future incarnation or other."

McWhorter says the organization's landlord Jeff Geiger "has been really supportive and the space is wonderful, so it will be interesting to see what moves into that block." The collective is 14 years old, and has rented space on Pearl Street, on Broadway, and currently at 1030 Willamette.

The collective has about 60 members currently at various levels of involvement. No one was paid, says McWhorter. "We all got a percentage of our sales from 55 to 70 percent, depending on whether we were partners or just consignees." The manager is Sue Theolass.

Circle of Hands is planning a party Friday night, Jan. 6 during the First Friday ArtWalk and the doors will close after the party. The office number is 342-4957. — TJT

DUELING STATE OF CITY TALKS

The mayor's State of the City Address at 5:30 pm Thursday, Jan. 5 at the Hult Center lobby will be followed by the fifth annual Citizens State of the City Address at noon Monday, Jan. 9 at the Eugene Public Library. The alternative address will focus on broad views on progressive issues.

This year's alternative presentations will include Full Circle Farm's Kate Perle discussing "Food Security," First United Methodist Church's John Pitney on "The Economics of the Food Industry," The Bus Project's Adam Petkun on "Bringing More

SLANT

• Former Congressman Charles O. Porter died this past weekend at the age of 86 from complications of Alzheimer's disease, leaving behind a legacy of personal integrity, visionary thinking and courageous activism. The world could use more Charlie Porters, and we hope his life will continue to inspire others. Porter was a maverick in his thinking and was lambasted for ideas that were considered by many to be outrageous at the time: admitting China to the U.N., opening trade with China, reforming our failed policies in South America, halting nuclear testing, decriminalizing marijuana, challenging corporate power abuse, and one of the big issues locally: restoring the separation of church and state as symbolized by a giant cross on a public butte. More recently, Porter led the Oregon Democratic Party's call to impeach five Supreme Court justices. As an attorney, Porter took on many pro bono cases, and stood up for the powerless in our community. He was also one of the visionary founders, along with Jerry Diethelm and Jerry Rust, of the Emerald Canal project, a \$20 million scenic waterway through Eugene that might someday become reality and transform the entire West University Neighborhood. Shall we rename it the Charlie Porter Canal?

• Eugene City Club's getting lots of attention in this column lately, but then the programs have been particularly good. This last Friday we were happy to see a standing ovation for Mayor Kitty Piercy in response to her Sustainable Business Initiative (SBI). The applause was also in her defense. Piercy and other progressives on the council have been under recent attack by former Mayor Brian Obie and other entrenched advocates of business as usual. City Club President Tom Lininger gave Piercy a rose in response to the lump of coal she received from Obie earlier in December. The topic of Friday's program was sustainability and David Funk and Rusty Rexius of the SBI Task Force did a commendable job of making sense of a topic that tends to be complex and wonkish. The bottom line is that conserving resources and thinking ahead about the impact of our actions makes economic as well as ethical sense. Polluting our air and water and bulldozing farmland for short-term gain is a rotten and unsustainable business model. Piercy and the SBI are attempting to plan ahead on a modest scale for a more livable future. The mayor's sustainability initiative is neither radical nor revolutionary; it's just a shift in perspective. If anything, the SBI discussion to date could stand to be more radical. For Eugene to catch up, and then become a leader and a model for sustainability, we need bold action on a broad scale. Meanwhile, hats off to the many people in our community who are involved in this initiative.

• In our Dec. 22 issue we wrote in this column about the Dartmouth senior who was grilled by the FBI after ordering a copy of Mao's *The Little Red Book* from a college library. Molly Ivans also mentioned it in her column that week in the *R-G*. We read on-line in *The Standard-Times* of New Bedford, Mass., that it was all a hoax. The student has confessed to fabricating the elaborate tale. What remains true, alas, is that our government is spying on us in violation of our Constitution's Fourth Amendment, and most Americans don't seem to have a problem with that.

• Is RiverRidge north of Eugene a done deal for Triad's new hospital site? The city of Springfield doesn't seem to think so and is working on putting together a package of properties in Glenwood for hospital development. And what about the UO's Riverfront Research Park? Triad officials this week declined to confirm the rumor that Triad and the UO are talking about the sale of a big chunk of land between the river and the railroad tracks west of the Autzen Bike Bridge. The RRP is a failure as an economic development project, but the site is zoned for development, access is easy, and it's near downtown and existing medical offices. Folks who want this site preserved as parkland will make a fuss.

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

JAMES CLOUTIER

Artist and native-born Oregonian James Cloutier poses with the cartoon creatures in his newly completed volunteer project, a mural that enlivens the outdoor play area at St Vincent de Paul's First Place Family Shelter. The small figure on the left is Hugh Wetshoe, the soggy Oregon every-

man popularized by Cloutier in his *Orygone* cartoon books. More than 100,000 copies were sold, he notes. Following high school in Portland and two years in the Navy, Cloutier first arrived in Eugene in 1958 to study art on a UO baseball scholarship. He fell in love with Africa on a summer trip to build classrooms in Ethiopia, then returned after graduation as a member of the first Peace Corps group in Kenya. "I used art a lot, illustrating brochures for farmers," he recalls. "It was a formative experience." Cloutier returned to the UO for an MFA, then made a splash in the '70s with his "Oregon Ungreeting Cards." He founded Image West Press in the '80s to print the *Orygone* books. In 2004 he updated his 1985 cartoon map of Eugene, incorporating 300 local businesses. "The original had 75," he says. "It easily took six months longer than I expected."

