

namic. "It may not seem right to some people that we would reward big energy users by charging them less for wind," he said.

Mitchell noted that EWEB may soon impose a wind rate hike to cover maintenance costs associated with the wind turbine facility in Wyoming and the loss of a federal tax credit. "It was never promised that wind rates would stay the same forever, but the fact of the matter is that they've stayed the same for seven years," Mitchell said. "It's looking like a double-digit rate increase could be likely."

— Kera Abraham

GTFF SETTLES CONTRACT

The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (AFT Local 3544) and the UO wrapped up contract bargaining the night of May 2, and the GTFF presented the tentative agreement at a general meeting May 16.

Basic wins for the GTFF, organizer Dave Cecil says, include a reduction in student fees by \$72 each year, a "historically unusual" 10% raise over the two years of the contract and a continuation of the health care agreement through the 2007-2008 school year. "We are reasonably confident that health care will remain free to GTFFs for the next two years," Cecil says. The UO will pay for any increase in health care premiums up to 20% and pay 90% of any increase over 20%.

One sticking point came around what Cecil called "non-monetary issues." Some GTFFs don't receive free copies of books (desk copies) for classes they teach, know their teaching assignments much before classes begin or have access to an office or a telephone. GTFF President Courtney Smith says, "The UO says these things are unreasonable, which seems bizarre." The UO contended that "offices and telephones are for safety only, not for meeting with students," Cecil says.

But now, Cecil adds, "the words desk copies and photocopies are in the contract" for the first time.

The UO agreed to form a committee of three GTFFs and three UO representatives to look into "best practices" for graduate teachers and researchers.

The UO also didn't want to bargain around child care because student fees help subsidize child care for some UO students. Despite the child care and office issues, Smith thinks the contract is strong, and Cecil says, "It's probably the best contract the GTFF has signed in 20 years." — Suzi Steffen

CAGE-FREE CALL

The local chapter of Students for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (SETA) continues its campaign to pressure University of Oregon food services to purchase only cage-free eggs for use in cafeterias and school-catered events.

SETA met with Tom Driscoll, director of food services, and Allen Gidley, associate director of housing and director of business affairs, on March 10 to ask the UO to only use cage-free eggs. The request is still under ad-



visement, according to Carrie Freeman of SETA.

"It's not a very controversial campaign," Freeman said. "It's more animal welfare than animal rights."

The use of small cages is considered by activists one of the top three most objectionable practices of the commercial farm industry alongside veal and bovine gestation crates. If the SETA campaign succeeds, it would add the UO to a list of over 75 other universities that choose to purchase eggs only from farms that allow laying hens space to spread their wings, dust bathe and scratch with their claws.

Freeman acknowledged that the cost of purchasing cage-free eggs is often a source of hesitation.

"We don't really know what the cost would be," Freeman explained. "Eggs are an invisible product. You know when you are eating an omelet, but they are in everything. The university currently spends \$50,000 on eggs each year. It is hard to know what the actual cost would be to the students because we would be buying in volume, but it would be cents per

person."

SETA hoped the campaign would generate results by the end of the school year, but representatives have not been granted a second meeting with Driscoll or Gidley. Freeman encourages community members to contact the UO in support of the cage-free movement.

"If the campaign needs to go into the fall term, I'm willing for that to happen, but that's just more hens sitting in cages," Freeman said. "This is the kind of practice that is getting phased out in the European Union. If entire countries can phase it out, I don't see why we can't."

For more information about the SETA campaign, visit www.uoregon.edu/~seta.

— Adrienne van der Valk

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

- A news brief last week, "Big Cop Increase," reported that Eugene police patrol and investigations could increase 35 percent by 2006. The date should have been 2010.

- Regarding a May 4 news brief, "River Moves Toward House," Randy Mathews tells *EW* that he did not install riprap along the river's edge, as originally reported, but that he simply replaced lost rocks in an Army Corps revetment around 1996. "I didn't change anything," he said, noting that FEMA installed jetties and a bar upstream in 1997, which may have accelerated the erosion of the riverbank toward his house.

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL



STINA WATKINS

At age 12, Krystine "Stina" Watkins was a charter member of the LEAD (Leadership, Education, Adventure and Direction) teen program. LEAD offers weekly dinner meetings and semi-monthly weekend outings to help low-income young people develop leadership skills. "Stina was so shy, she didn't open her mouth," says program founder and director Maj Rafferty. "Now she speaks in public wherever anyone wants to learn about LEAD." After graduation from Willamette High in 2003, Watkins stayed with LEAD as a volunteer. "We have five volunteers for each group of 15 kids," she says. "They meet Wednesday and Thursday evenings at Station 7." In 2004, Watkins was hired part-time as fundraising director. She is also a full-time student at the UO with a Ford Family Foundation Scholarship. In the long term, she hopes to build an endowment to provide stable funding for LEAD and to start programs in new locales. In the near term, she looks forward to LEAD's annual five-day raft trip on the Deschutes River in June. Volunteer training begins in August. Learn more at leadteen.com.

- The big local news from the elections Tuesday is the smashing defeat of arch-conservative County Commissioner Anna Morrison by Bill Fleenor. With Fleenor as a swing vote, the county could swing more to the public interest and the environment on a host of issues including the West Eugene Parkway (WEP), corporate tax breaks and crime treatment and prevention.

We're also pleased with progressive Alan Zelenka's solid victory over Bruce Mulligan for the Eugene Council Ward 3 seat. Mulligan got the endorsement of the pro-sprawl *Register-Guard* but only 23 percent of the vote. Zelenka will continue councilor David Kelly's progressive stands against the WEP and on other issues but, unlike Kelly, also opposed the Whole Foods garage.

- Who cares about regional transportation planning? Only 60 people showed up May 11 at a cavernous hall at the Fairgrounds for the return of Osprey Group consultants Dennis Donald and John Huyler. They were here to talk about their assessment of the West Eugene Parkway impasse. But 60 people might have been enough. We left the two-hour meeting hopeful that it is possible to avoid years of litigation. The consultants told us they see collaboration as a workable option, even though "the hurdles are serious," and include a "history of animosities and polarization" and an "undercurrent of suspicion." We don't mind squabbles and partisan bickering – it's a sign of a healthy and vibrant public process – but this WEP quagmire is growing tiresome, draining time and energy from progress on a host of other community issues. What we've been doing with the WEP over the past 25 years simply hasn't been working. Here is a way out, and it doesn't even require that we trust each other! What it requires is getting two dozen good people around the table for 10 to 18 months to nail down the facts and examine various transportation solutions for west Eugene. Is that too long? Not when you consider the lawsuits that would certainly drag out a top-down decision for many years. Will key players ODOT and the FHWA cooperate and support collaboration? Transportation agencies have traditionally balked at collaboration, but we heard from both the state and federal agencies at the May 11 meeting that they are open to the process. The Osprey Group has provided us with a clear mirror to look at ourselves regarding the WEP. A collaboration process leading to agreement on the WEP can provide a foundation for resolving other metro planning issues that will come before us, and there are many on the horizon. Let's not blow this opportunity.