

Abbott, who works with the Fellowship of Reconciliation Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean, is travelling the country to speak about her work putting her body on the line. She shows a film and speaks about her experiences at 7 pm Thursday, July 6, in 240A McKenzie Hall, the corner of 12th and Kincaid, on the UO campus. Her visit to Eugene is sponsored by Committee in Solidarity with the Central American People (CISCAP), Eugene Friends Meeting, the Eugene Area Fellowship of Reconciliation, and Faith in Action. — *Suzi Steffen*

## 'EPIDEMIC' DEBUNKED

Methamphetamine abuse in the U.S. has been exaggerated by public officials and the media, according to a 41-page report issued in mid-June by the Sentencing Project, a Washington, D.C. think tank. The report references and confirms a *Willamette Week* story by Angela Valdez that took issue with the award-winning *Oregonian* series on meth over 18 months that included 261 stories.

In *WW*'s "Meth Madness" published March 22, Valdez argued that Portland's daily paper had "sacrificed accuracy" in order to campaign against meth. The Sentencing Project report says, "*The Oregonian* series repeatedly referred to a 'meth epidemic' in Oregon without providing any statistical support, mischaracterized the significance of the growth in methamphetamine treatment admissions, and suggested a link between Oregon property crime rates and methamphetamine use that has been generally refuted by empirical research."

Here in Lane County, the "meth epidemic" is often cited as a reason for increasing funding for law enforcement, and Gov. Kulongoski used the word "epidemic" in a press release this week about meth and new restrictions on

pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient in the manufacture of methamphetamine.

The complete Sentencing Project report by analyst Ryan S. King can be found at [www.SentencingProject.org](http://www.SentencingProject.org) and the Valdez story can be found in *WW*'s archives at [www.wweek.com](http://www.wweek.com)

## CELEBRATE INDY BIZ

Independence Day may have come and gone, but *Independents Day* is just around the corner. On Thursday, July 13, many independent, locally owned businesses around town will be hosting contests, giveaways, drawings and discounts to celebrate their independent status.

Helios Resource Network, a local non-profit, is expanding its "Buy Local" campaign to include this celebration of locally owned, independent retail stores to show just how the local economy can be supported. According to the Andersonville Study of Retail Economics, for every \$100 spent in a locally owned store, \$73 stays in the local economy. And for every \$100 spent in nationally owned stores, only \$43 stays in the local economy. And for every \$100 spent in big box stores, only \$14 stays in the local economy.

The Corvallis Independent Business Alliance (CIBA) has tracked its community's dollars. There, a full 80 percent of dollars spent locally stays local and adds to what its report calls a "multiplier effect." One dollar spent at a locally owned business "will return five times that amount within the community through city taxes, employees' wages, and purchase of materials and supplies at other independent businesses."

In Eugene, City Councilor David Kelly says he has "tried for at least five years" to add buy-local initiatives to the City Council agenda. "I realize that a healthy economy will always include a mix of local, regional and na-

• The Wildish sand and gravel bunch have made a greedy land grab on 1,400 acres near Mount Pisgah. Using the legal blackmail allowed under Measure 37, Wildish threatened county taxpayers with a \$20 million stick-up unless the company is allowed to build whatever it wants on a key expanse of scenic land between the park and the river. Lane County should not roll over for such banditry. The county should fight back with a variety of strategies including: using federal environmental rules and local traffic safety laws to block development; refusing to extend roads, sewers and other infrastructure to the site; threatening to cut the corporate bandit off from public contracts (they make millions at the public trough); challenging the Measure 37 claim on grounds of lack of enforcement of regulations since no specific development has been proposed; blocking transfer of any regulatory waivers to people who buy property in the development since Measure 37 isn't transferable; and immediately and retroactively imposing higher taxes since Wildish now says the unregulated land is worth so much. If the county can't block the development, it should condemn all the land for an expanded public park. Tapping federal and private grants for natural area acquisitions, condemnation would be a lot cheaper and less ugly than the publicly subsidized urban sprawl Wildish is trying to extort from taxpayers.

• It's curious that Eugene's Art and the Vineyard this year did not include F-15 flyover flights by the Oregon Air National Guard on July 4. There's nothing quite so patriotic as screaming fighter jets scaring the crap out of everybody, making babies cry and terrorizing wildlife as they pollute the air and waste huge amounts of fossil fuel. Not that we are bitter or anything. Creswell's July 4th parade was scheduled for a flyover, along with some other towns that likely requested them from the Portland base. Maybe we should do it next year. It's good to be reminded of the shock and awe we inflict on people around the world.

• Last week we gave EPUD some strokes for its support of a new photovoltaic panel system on a commercial building in Junction City. Now we are hearing EWEB engineers are in cahoots with Western Beverage for its new offices and refrigerated warehouse in west Eugene. The project will include a thermal mass building shell; premium efficiency lighting, heating and cooling; and using ammonia as refrigerant instead of freon. The new building will save about 50 percent on energy costs and pay for itself in about five years. We'll tip a cold one to that.

• Mayor Piercy, along with mayors of Lowell, Creswell and Coburg, spoke to City Club recently about Eugene's "foreign policy," how all of us in Lane County are connected, or not. Lane County has 11 incorporated cities, so many were missing from the discussion. But it's worth noting that Piercy's sustainable business initiative is getting attention in at least some of our neighboring communities. Sustainability was not a priority expressed by Mayor Weathers of Lowell, however, who said his constituents love their big lots and semi-rural setting (a "legitimate lifestyle") and want to expand the town's developable land. Some regional issues were discussed, such as sewage, water, transportation and the economy, but the best questions went mostly unanswered. For example, how do the land-use policies in all our communities affect our shared environment and quality of life? Big town or small town, all our planning tends to be short-sighted and based on optimistic assumptions about transportation and energy costs, population growth, social stability, etc.

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