



• It's Labor Day again and that means more than a day off and a barbecue, as Suzi Steffen writes in this week's cover story. The decline of unionization has a lot to do with the decline of wages in this nation. While corporate profits are soaring on the backs of increases in worker productivity, real wages have declined significantly in recent years, *The New York Times* recently reported. Meanwhile, union workers make about a third more than non-unionized workers. The solution to declining wages is, duh, more and stronger unions.

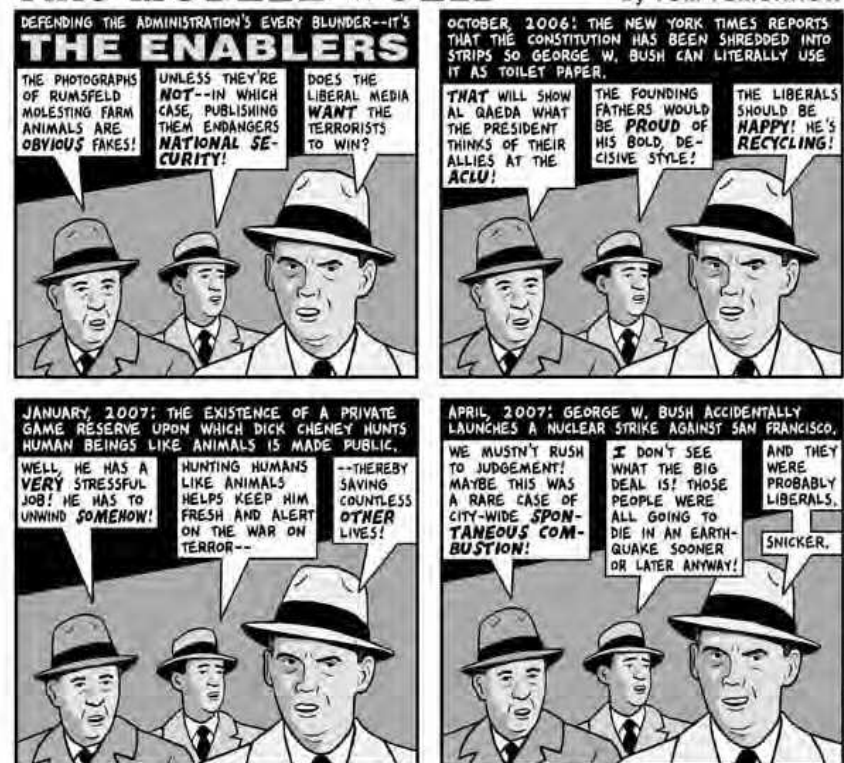
• The city of Eugene should look at building a new City Hall and police station in the old Sears pit across from the library, one of the top choices in the City Hall public forum last week. The site is currently being offered to developers for proposals, but there's been little interest and the deadline has been extended. To enlarge the site, the city could buy and/or condemn the rest of the block over to Broadway and even the old Bon/Symantec building across Broadway. The site has many advantages. The city owns a big chunk of the land already and most of the buildings could be acquired relatively cheaply from Connor & Woolley, who have said downtown buildings aren't worth much. It has enough room to allow for a quarter block park/plaza across from the library. It's across from existing city offices in the Atrium and library and takes advantage of the old Symantec offices that were renovated partly at city expense for Symantec. The site would allow for a restoration of the old Farmer's Market building encased in a modern facade at Broadway and Charnelton. It would be close to the LTD bus station, BRT line, and the huge, largely empty parking garage at the city's Broadway-Charnelton development, saving a ton of money on new parking garages. The development, which could incorporate ground-floor commercial space, would give a big boost to a dead area the city has struggled to enliven for decades. We can see the arguments for other choices such as renovating the existing City Hall, building on the county's butterfly lot or building all new on the existing site. But the Sears pit option offers many environmental, planning and cost advantages and should be explored fully.

• Now that the city has pooh-poohed the EWEB site for a new City Hall (and by implication other major projects) for being in a floodplain, too close to train noise and too inaccessible, the city should get serious about putting a park on the rare and endangered riverfront land. The land north of the tracks is far more valuable to Eugene now and in the future as a riverfront park than as any of the parking lots, condos, roads and convenience stores private developers might build on the site – and we just got confirmation last week that Arlie & Co. plans to make an offer on the EWEB land. There's plenty of developable riverfront land in the Valley River Center parking lot.



THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

CITY REJECTS SITES IT ONCE PUSHED

Remember when the city of Eugene was pushing McKenzie-Willamette/Triad to build a hospital at EWEB and the feds to build a new courthouse at the old cannery site? Well, the sites the city was extolling to others apparently aren't good enough for itself, according to officials' statements as part of dis-

cussions for locating a new City Hall.

Consultants hired by the city assumed the EWEB site wasn't suitable because it had too much railroad noise, limited access and was in a floodplain. Councilors dismissed building near the now under construction federal building because it was cut off from downtown by traffic.

Architect Jonah Cohen and landscape architect Doug Macy were very critical of the riverfront EWEB site at the council's Aug. 9 meeting. "It's one of the worst things we've done in our country to build in the flood plain," said Macy.

Cohen pointed out that underground parking anticipated for the building could fill with water in a flood.

Rick Siel, a former EPD lieutenant turned consultant, said that delays in crossing the tracks would be an issue for the police if they were located at the EWEB site.

The EWEB site also is plagued with train noise from up to 30 large freights a day, said

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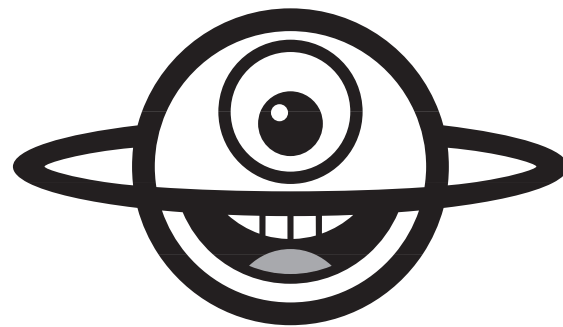
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