

• The debate goes on over **where to locate the new McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center**, despite the dogged commitment by Triad to build way the hell out at the north end of Delta Highway, isolated from Eugene's population on a road known for gridlock. We see that an online petition by North Delta Neighbors (www.petitiononline.com/NDN2006/petition.html) has generated more than 600 signers so far. Several local email lists are carrying discussions about the hospital's flawed plans and optional sites, some new and some old. New in the discussion is the Connor-Woolley property downtown, now available through the city. As much as we would love to see something big and new to replace Broadway blight, that area is really best suited to mixed commercial and housing use with some small parks to break it up. The undeveloped area along the tracks east of the new U.S. Courthouse toward the Riverfront Research Park is being discussed as a variation on the old EWEB site plans. Might work, but some of the original access problems with that area remain, particularly for eastbound traffic. Glenwood keeps popping up, along with PeaceHealth's clinic site on 13th, but looking at geography, population and existing hospitals, the real need for a full-service hospital is in south or west Eugene not far from downtown. The idea of bulldozing Civic Stadium hasn't gotten any traction. Land near Chambers and 2nd makes sense, and we keep coming back to the Lane County Fairgrounds. But would the county sell and maybe relocate the financially struggling fairgrounds to Glenwood? Springfielders would love that idea, but Eugeneans would miss their easy-access fairgrounds.

• Speaking of the Fairgrounds, we wandered down over the weekend to the **Good Earth Home, Garden & Living Show** and noticed nearly every parking space was taken, which is a bit ironic, but then most people are not purists when it comes to sustainable living. Inside, some aisles were so packed that parents pushing strollers had to stop and grease their babies' heads to push through. Congrats to Karen Ramus and other organizers, businesses and community groups who pulled together this high-energy extravaganza. It was great to hear people debating the finer points of water-permeable driveways, non-toxic moss treatments, native plants, bee-keeping, natural soaps, bidet systems and combinations thereof. We predict the success of this show will rub off on other home shows and even the Lane County Fair next summer. Green is gold.

• Is there a **better use for the roughly \$10 million** the city was prepared to spend on a parking garage next to Whole Foods? We asked that question in Slant last week and heard from Cole Andrew Southworth that a city multiple-use venue downtown would provide a multitude of benefits. "It could provide the Farmer's Market a year-round location where the people of Eugene would buy local products and support local merchants. We could help Lane's homeless by using it as a soup kitchen on particular dates. Eugene could host an annual middle school science fair there or have summer concerts and plays. Build it downtown, and we begin to fill the empty void in our city center with a beautiful community building. I like to envision a smaller, more inclusive version of Seattle's Pike Place Market."

• **What's it like to be poor in Lane County today?** Some of us know it all too well; some of us have never felt the pain of poverty. We got a note this week from a woman expressing her frustrations with having a job and still being down and out. There are "just a few things that suck about being poor," she writes. "Shut-off notices, food boxes filled with limp produce and stale bread. Being the proud owner of a 20 year old piece of shit Mazda with wiper blades that don't work, no heat or A/C, that leaks oil, water and brake fluid and has some weird buzzing sound that goes off nearly constantly." She also expresses her distaste for Top Ramen and hot dogs and complains about "only being able to afford one gallon of gas and hoping it will get you to work and back. Buying your kids Dollar Store toys, running out of everything always, and payday. FUCK! That won't even cover rent. Now I have to decide what I can *not* pay now; what about FOOD? FUCK!"

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

BRIDGING COMMUNITIES

Should all city planning be left to city planners? What happens when the scale of planning is so large that it encompasses two cities, county and federal land, a state highway, an interstate freeway, a university, a transit system, a utility, a major river, Native American sites, riparian habitat, parks, neighborhood groups, bicyclists and kayakers, dozens of developers and

hundreds of property owners? (Have we left anyone out?)

A group of local architects, students and civic activists are hoping to not leave anybody out as they embark on the Franklin Corridor Study 2007, a free design workshop that kicks off at City Club of Eugene luncheon Friday, Feb. 2 at the Hilton; continues with an open house and keynote talks Friday evening at the Atrium Building at 10th and Olive; leading to a design workshop from 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, also at the Atrium. Details can be found at www.franklincorridor.org

The area of study includes Franklin Boulevard from downtown Eugene to downtown Springfield, with the Willamette River alongside and all the land in between. "Many studies have been done regarding different parts of this important stretch of roadway, open space and riverfront," reads a statement on the web-

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

JONATHAN RENICH

After graduation from Churchill High School, Jonathan Renich studied children's social services in a modular program at the Kona, Hawaii, campus of the University of the Nations. "We spent three months in class, then six months as an intern with a non-profit," says Renich, who served one internship with the French agency Pour un Sourire d'Enfant in a training program for kids who worked at the city dump in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. When he finished his degree, Renich stayed on as a staff member and led two groups of students to the town of Barunburen in Mongolia. Returning to Oregon in 2005, he launched Edurelief, a program to help Mongolian kids who had dropped out of school. "The government had cut support for school supplies," he notes. "All they needed was \$20 per kid for a packet of books." Renich recruited some UO students, printed fliers, and raised \$10,000 in four months. "We sponsored 525 kids," he says. "When people found out, it exploded. We got calls from New York, LA, Europe, and Asia, asking, 'What can we do?'" Find out what you can do at edurelief.org

