

• Where is she now? Former Lane County **Commissioner Anna Morrison has resurfaced.** She appeared at a recent showing of the local environmental film *Boom, Bust and the BLM*, apparently representing the Association of O&C Counties. The group of county commissioners is known for their logging and timber industry advocacy. The association was part of a lawsuit that has led the way to the possible reopening of the logging of formerly protected old-growth forests in western Oregon. Conservative commissioners on the association have even called for selling large tracts of O&C lands to private timber companies.



Anna Morrison

• We hear **Beppe & Gianni's may have a full orchestra** playing its backyard next summer. Some Fairmount Neighbors are proposing to use a matching grant from the city of Eugene to help construct a bandshell in Washburne Park, with one idea put forward that it could host free Bach Fest-associated concerts. Bandshells are an attractive addition to any park, but would especially complement the sloping grounds of Washburne. We hope this project finds the funding to get rolling soon to debut before or during next year's Olympic Trials.

• We've been running statistics in our News Briefs section on the **casualties of the Iraq occupation** nearly every week since early June, and these numbers come from the best sources we can find. Several of our readers have pointed out that the number of civilian deaths calculated by the British Iraq Body Count (IraqBodyCount.org) is lower by hundreds of thousands than estimates by other groups and reports. Iraq Body Count says it updates its numbers when the organization has "located and cross-checked two or more independent approved news sources for the same incident." The group admits its numbers can "only be a sample of true deaths unless one assumes that every civilian death has been reported. It is likely that many if not most civilian casualties will go unreported by the media. That is the sad nature of war."

So how many Iraqi civilians *have* died as a direct or indirect result of the U.S. invasion? We will never know, but we recall the British medical journal *Lancet* last October reported on a survey of Iraqi households conducted by Iraqi physicians, overseen by epidemiologists at John Hopkins University. The study concluded that 655,000 civilians have died of war causes. Of that number, 601,000 suffered violent deaths. Those numbers will soon be a year out of date. Hundreds of Iraqis die each day and more than a billion dollars a week are squandered as Congress and the White House bicker over benchmarks and study public opinion polls.

• Kudos to **CNN and YouTube** this week for organizing one of the liveliest and most unpredictable presidential candidate forums we've seen yet. Ordinary folks submitted videotaped questions via YouTube, and some the questions put the Democratic candidates on the spot. Despite some dodging and squirming, the Ds' responses gave us hope for the future. The election of anyone on the stage Monday night would mean a monumental improvement in White House accountability, diplomacy, and environmental and social consciousness. We're looking forward to seeing Republican candidates facing even tougher questions in their YouTube forum September. We can't really call these debates. Despite the innovative format, the candidates were allowed little sparring among themselves.

• Lane County Animal Regulation Authority (LCARA) has recently earned kudos from local animal lovers for its attempts to move towards a No-Kill philosophy. To go along with its kinder-gentler approach to animal control, unofficial reports say **LCARA will also move to a kinder-gentler name:** Lane County Animal Services (LCAS). No announcements have been made, but several of the agency's vehicles are reported to be sporting the new name.

• **How green is our brain power?** Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy has been contacted by the producers of The Science Channel seeking ideas for environmentally advanced inventions and initiatives. The popular cable and satellite network is featuring a new program with the best ideas to share with communities across the nation. Peace Point Entertainment is the producer of the new show, and the contact is Michael Chong (televisionresearcher@gmail.com).

One idea that comes to mind for the TV show is the local Community Climate Stewards (CCS) program, formerly the Neighborhood Climate Councils, a program of the UO Climate Leadership Initiative. Already the city of San Francisco and a nonprofit reaching out to multiple cities in the Bay Area are looking at replicating the program and using CCS materials. CCS is also gearing up for a 35-student fall Climate Masters training. Email climlead@uoregon.edu or call 346-0786 for more information.

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

COUNCILOR CHANGES TUNE ON PROJECT

Opponents of a plan to kick out local businesses and redevelop downtown with chain stores and condos and \$50 million of public subsidies managed to chip away a councilor this week from the majority block pushing the project forward.

Councilor Andrea Ortiz broke away to vote July 23 against a proposal to use \$8 million in federal anti-poverty funds to help fund the project. The council voted 5-3 to support the project with Councilors Ortiz, Bonny Bettman and Betty Taylor voting against.

Ortiz said she'd wondered when she'd get to the point of joining opponents and remains

troubled that the big developer subsidy won't be referred to a vote. "It still takes my breath away to think of how much money we're asking taxpayers to spend without their little check at the ballot box."

During the meeting Bettman tried to find out from staff what the total taxpayer tab was.

But city Finance Manager Sue Cutsogeorge said that tally wouldn't be available until mid-August.

Bettman questioned how other councilors could vote for the project without knowing its cost or what else the money could be used for.

Ortiz also expressed concern that the project could fall through and the city get stuck with property that it couldn't sell for the high prices it paid for it. She said she was "really concerned what direction we're going in the amount of money on the premise of what if."

City Development Manager Denny Braud said if the project fell through, the city could have to "resell the properties in a fire sale." He said the city would have to make up for the loss by taking money from urban renewal funds to pay back the federal government.

Ironically, Braud argued that using the federal anti-poverty money for the upscale project is allowable because of the low-wage retail and service jobs for poor people the

Andrea Ortiz

