

Golden is an author, former Jackson County commissioner and longtime host of a public radio talk show heard in both southern Oregon and Eugene. Golden left his position with Jefferson Public Radio in late June when it was reported he was considering a run for the Senate.

In a letter to supporters, Golden said Oregonians are "fed up with the political manipulation and shortsightedness of both political parties and know that if we really want our country back we have to demand more of our leaders and ourselves. They're hungry for a call from leadership more meaningful than to 'keep shopping so that the terrorists don't win.' Many of them agreed with me that our problem is not Sen. Smith but rather the rigged political system he's been serving the last 11 years, and that the solution involves more than replacing him with a Democrat."

Golden said his message hasn't been well received by campaign professionals and party officials. "They generally recognize Oregonians' restlessness," he said, "but aren't encouraging a hard look at how

and why the system's broken, perhaps fearing that people might be distracted from the simple task of voting for their candidates next year."

What's next? Golden has set up an interactive forum called "REALLY Taking America Back" (realltab.blogspot.com). "Anyone ready to trade cynicism for open-minded creativity on behalf of our country's future is welcome there," he said.

CLIMATE DOWN UNDER

Australian rainforest activist Kelly Tudhope is bringing her organization's "Climate Despair and Empowerment" road show to Eugene at 7 pm Sunday, Aug. 26, at EWEB.

The 90-minute multimedia presentation "seeks to catalyze, invigorate and support grassroots study and action on climate change and encourages people to engage in social and political change," according

to organizers.

Included in the presentation is video footage of Al Gore speaking on the importance of building a grassroots movement and the necessity of "coming together to bring about real and lasting solutions to our climate crisis."

Tudhope works for the Rainforest Information Centre in Australia and will be speaking about the impact of global warming in both Australia and New Zealand.

"It doesn't matter how many wind-mills and solar arrays we build unless these are accompanied by reducing the more than 70 million tons of CO₂ we pump into the atmosphere worldwide each day," says Tudhope. "In the midst of rising alarm, we must not fall prey to political and business leaders eager for 'business as usual,' who want us to believe that we will be able to pay the environmental costs of a new coal mine by screwing in energy efficient light bulbs or planting trees."

Local contacts for the road show are Kate Gessert (katerg@igc.org) and Jacque Travis (JTravis@peace-health.org).

Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq began on March 20, 2003 (last week's numbers in parentheses):

- 3,707 U.S. troops killed* (3,689)
- 27,279 U.S. troops injured* (27,279)
- 118 U.S. military suicides*
- 297 Coalition troops killed* (292)
- 417 contractors killed** (417)
- 76,623 Iraqi civilians killed*** (75,723)
- \$453.7 billion cost of war (\$451.7 billion)
- \$129 million cost to Eugene taxpayers

* through Aug. 20, 2007; source: icasualties.org; some figures only updated monthly

** estimate; source: icasualties.org

*** highest estimate; source: iraqbodycount.org; based on confirmed media reports; other groups calculate civilian deaths as high as 655,000 to one million

SLANT

• As we go to press Wednesday the **West Broadway Advisory Committee** is about to present its recommendations in a public workshop at the Atrium. The suggestions will then go to the Eugene City Council. We get a preview of the panel's thinking in Jerry Diethelm's "Design Matters" column this week. Kudos to the WBAC for some thoughtful work that will help the City Council and city planners in working with downtown developers now and in the future.

• Just imagine if you had **\$100 million** to give away. What would you do with it?

• **Impeachment** was the word that wouldn't go away last week at one of Congressman DeFazio's town meetings that packed the EWEB conference room. Full of passionate and sometimes unruly energy, the crowd provoked Peter to suggest the shouting and interruptions were "kind of fifth grade." He said impeachment of Bush and Cheney isn't going to happen, but Gonzales probably has committed impeachable offenses and, if he were removed, "then we would get the Justice Department back. ... We're in the absurd position now where Gonzales won't enforce congressional subpoenas." At best, though, DeFazio estimated a 2 percent chance of impeaching Gonzales. Jay Inslee, the Washington Democrat who has introduced a resolution on impeaching the attorney general, has only 27 co-signers in the House.

Move on, DeFazio urged, to higher priorities: restoring integrity to the electoral process, undoing the damage of earlier telecommunication deregulation, getting more votes in September to end the Iraq War, keeping us out of war with Iran and partnering again with communities to fix infrastructure. DeFazio is chair of the transportation subcommittee and said ODOT is way ahead on bridge safety in this state. In the last highway bill, DeFazio steered \$200 million in additional funds into fixing Oregon bridges.

Closer to home, City Councilor Andrea Ortiz asked for his help in cleaning up pollution and assisting residents in the railroad neighborhoods of west Eugene. One constituent asked if DeFazio could do anything about train whistles disturbing the peace. DeFazio said a process is in place for a community to silence whistles, but crossings probably would have to be improved, and that would cost more money.

• The list of measures on the **upcoming Nov. 6 elections** is growing with the addition this past week of a Eugene measure on expanding the limits on urban renewal to subsidize downtown redevelopment. The local gas tax will be on the ballot, along with state Ballot Measure 49 (dealing with "fixing" Measure 37) and Measure 50 (tobacco tax to fund universal children's health care). All of these measures, regardless of how they play out, help raise public awareness of the issues.

Looking ahead to 2008 we'll see Eugene's mayor, some city councilors, some county commissioners and state lawmakers on the May primary ballot. Too early to predict the lineup, but you can bet the political wheels are already turning. Will conservatives, or even progressives, challenge our popular Kitty Piercy, or will activists put their energy and money into other races? Sounds like Bonny Bettman would like to find someone to take her turn at the wheel in 2008. Betty

Taylor, Chris Pryor and Andrea Ortiz are all up for reelection – any or all of those seats could be hot.

At the county, Bobby Green's up to bat again. It's been hard to run against him in the past, but he's walking a tightrope this time following his vote to impose a county income tax without a vote. He's got some 'splaining to do. Term's up in '08 for the ambitious Pete Sorenson as well. He's a shoe-in for reelection, but don't be surprised if Sorenson goes for a state post again.

• Why was it that only *Eugene Weekly* and KLCC bothered to show up at this year's coronation of the **S.L.U.G Queen**? As far as we could tell, no other media were there Aug. 11 for one of Eugene's most colorful, outrageous and unpredictable traditions. It's not easy to get a reporter or camera crew out to cover events on a Saturday evening in August, but come on, media people! This is one of the cultural happenings that makes Eugene unique. Long live the queen. Queen Glorious Gastropause and her entourage will be making several public appearances, including the S.L.U.G. Queen Silver Jubilee from 6:30 to 7:30 pm Friday, Sept. 7, at the downtown library. And look for her glowing countenance in the Eugene Celebration Parade Sept. 8.



• A gaggle of Eugene bicyclists flocked to PDX Aug. 12 for the big **Providence Bridge Pedal**. Every summer for 12 years now the city has closed lanes on all the big city bridges, including I-5, from early morning to late morning, and bikers and walkers have taken over. Some 19,000 people showed up for this all-ages circus with its massive bottlenecks, scary collisions, flat tires and screaming children. It was a beautiful thing. Eugene could do something similar to encourage biking and walking and raise awareness that the public roads and bridges belong to all of us.

• We're usually eager for **science-based research backing environmental decisions**, but here's one study that shouldn't happen. The next Oregon Legislature should not fund a \$90,000 study on field burning that was recommended last week by the Environmental Quality Commission. That study would be pure Oregon "pork," a little diversion and delay from the inevitable decision to snuff out all field burning in the Willamette Valley. As Dr. Robert Carolan, a respected Eugene pulmonologist, told the EQC, \$90,000 doesn't buy much real research and we already have millions of dollars worth of peer-reviewed, highly creditable studies on the health hazards of field burning. These come from the *Journal of the American Heart Association*, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, to mention a few. Maybe we should use \$90,000 to assist growers to transition out of torching their fields, if, indeed, they need financial assistance. That would be a more creative and credible use of political bucks.