

Welcome to BEST OF EUGENE

Come in, dear readers, come closer. Snuggle right up to these pages, which wouldn't be possible without you — or at least without the opinionated among you who took the time to fill out our ballot. And so rather than babble at you for a good while about the never-ending carnival of ups and downs and zigs and zags that is life in Eugene, we'll let you take the reins right quick. You voted, we counted; let the show begin!



Tightrope Walkers and Trapeze Artists



FOOD for Lane County volunteers

PHOTO BY DENISE WENDT, FOOD FOR LANE COUNTY

It's no surprise that Mayor Kitty Piercy has endeared herself to many Eugene residents. She's accessible, good-natured and progressive on social issues. Piercy is present at just about every community gathering in the valley, and she's built bridges between businesses, environmental interests and labor through her Sustainable Business Initiative. Our readers say she's a good fit for a city split down the middle on a hundred issues.

BEST PLACE TO VOLUNTEER

1. **FOOD for Lane County**
2. **WOW Hall**
3. **Greenhill Humane Society**

Volunteers give FOOD for Lane County 6,000 hours a month in the kitchens and organic gardens that help eliminate hunger in our area. People want to help because "food is such a basic need for families," says volunteer coordinator Sheyla Norte. FOOD for Lane County offers a variety of options for volunteers from monthly to daily shifts in the warehouse, office, kitchen or garden. Half of the food supplied by FOOD for Lane County goes to children. "We always need more help," says Norte. "Our need is not decreasing."

BEST FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATION

1. **First United Methodist Church**
2. **Unity of the Valley**
3. **Unitarian Universalist Church**

Boy, Eugeneans hated on this one ("They're all evil!" was one response), so it might be that the First United Methodist

First United Methodist Church on their Lake Charles trip



Church is the only winner in this one, like, ever. But let us tell you how not evil the FUMC is: It hosts homeless folks several weeks a year; church staff plan and produce the "That's My Farmer!" meeting in late winter so CSAs and people can connect; the church sent a bunch of people to Lake Charles, La., to help in the Hurricane Katrina/Rita recovery effort; it's super affirming and welcoming to LGBT folks; CALC holds annual meetings there; it hosted the Portland Gay Men's Chorus a couple of years ago; and generally it's socially aware, liberal and as lefty as you can get and still be a mainstream Christian denomination. On the FUMC website, a statement about the Lake Charles trip says, "We believe that God calls us not only to pray for those that have been victimized and left behind, but to be God's hands and feet by repairing homes and lives." The EW readers who aren't freaked out by the word "faith" (or "God") say, "Hurray for your good works!"

BEST STUDENT GROUP

1. **OSPIRG**
2. **LGBTQA (UO)**
3. **Alpha Phi Omega (UO)**

BEST CAUSE OF LOCAL UPROAR

1. **Downtown**
2. **Hospital locations**
3. **Eugene Police Department**

In this age of malls and sprawl, just about every town of any size in America is confronted with how to revive its once-bustling downtown. Eugene is unique in that even progressives are split on how to do it, and that makes for a particularly lively debate with lots of finger-pointing. A lot of the contention boils down to trust in government. Some of our readers are willing to trust our city officials and city staff with huge bags of public money, while others are saying, "Wait a minute! Are we going to get even more ugly, empty parking garages?" Add confusion over how urban renewal works, toss in rowdy street people prowling downtown, factor in stubborn property owners who let their

buildings sit vacant and deteriorating, mix in some threatened local businesses and you've got one hell of an uproar that will likely continue regardless of how the November ballot measure plays out.

BEST COMMUNITY EFFORT

1. **FOOD for Lane County**
2. **Downtown concerns**
3. **Save Madison Meadow**

BEST PERSON MAKING A DIFFERENCE

1. **Kitty Piercy**
2. **Cindy Ingram**
3. **Peter DeFazio**

BEST LOCAL POLITICIAN

1. **Kitty Piercy**
2. **Peter DeFazio**
3. **Floyd Prozanski**



Kitty Piercy