

ple supporting 20-134 would vote against the measure if they thought that their property taxes would be increased.

Proponents argue 20-134 won't raise taxes; opponents say funds will be diverted from education, city and county services, which will result in these services having to rely on bond measures or tax levies that do raise our property taxes, and if voters don't approve the bond or levy the services will suffer even deeper cuts.

Our urban renewal district is 39 years old. It is not wise to extend it yet again another 23 years, especially when the economy is in such bad shape. In order for urban renewal to work without taking money away from schools and services, it needs to have an end. Otherwise it becomes a continuous siphon.

*Kathleen Leonard  
Eugene*

**RUN FROM COUGARS?**

In your Sept. 27 issue, a letter writer complains about what he says are "DANGER signs" about cougars posted at Mount Pisgah Arboretum. He misquotes the signs as saying "Don't walk alone or a cougar will kill and eat you! ... Run!" I wish he had read the signs before writing.

After our site manager, Tom LoCascio (who has lived on site for over 25 years), found six deer killed by cougars this winter and several staff and volunteers had actually seen a cougar, the Site Committee decided we should warn the public about its presence. The Board of Directors agreed. However, rather than wishing to scare people away, everyone's greatest concern was how to post the information without unnecessarily alarming our visitors.

Fortunately, our Executive Director Pete Barrell found the attractive brochure produced by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife entitled "Oregon is Cougar Country: Guidelines for Living with Cougars" which we have posted. It has lovely pictures of these beautiful animals and useful information. In particular it advises keeping pets on leash and children within sight. In the unlikely event you encounter a cougar it notes the animal will usually go away, but *you* should *never* run away.

No one on the committee or board expressed any personal fear of these animals. In particular, years ago, I prospected alone one whole summer in an area with numerous cougar tracks, kills and even dens, without any concern. We did worry about unleashed dogs and running children.

*Theodore W. Palmer  
Chair Site Committee  
Of Mount Pisgah Arboretum*

**REVENUE SUCKER**

Eugene can no longer afford the luxury of an urban renewal district. Besides diverting \$3.85 million in property taxes away from the city, county and local education districts, it has another more real effect. Last year the City of Eugene spent about \$2.75 million providing government services (police, fire and library) to the residents of downtown Eugene and the businesses that support them. Because of the urban renewal district, only \$233,484 in property tax revenue was available to pay for those services. The \$2.52 million short fall was paid for out of other city revenues, mainly the property taxes paid on non-urban renewal properties and reduced services.

The proposed downtown development will only make the situation worse; the 681 people we can expect to occupy the 300 proposed housing units will increase the shortfall by another \$873,355. And with the proposed extension of the district these revenue shortfalls will continue for the next 23 years.

In the upcoming election we are being asked to approve an increase in the local gasoline tax to raise about \$2 million to pay for much-needed street repairs. We needed to pass a special levy to operate the new library. Yet because of urban renewal we had the money to redo downtown, not once, not twice, but now three times. It is time we end this costly diversion of needed tax dollars. The first step is to defeat 20-134.

As to downtown, put a complete, finished, detailed proposal together that protects existing downtown businesses, with solid numbers and bond financing, and put it to a vote. If it is good enough, it will pass.

*David Hinkley  
Eugene*

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- 11.09 Sara Gazarek
- 11.10 The Magical Moombah! Gloria's Globe Trot
- 11.13 Mike Marshall/Choro Famoso
- 11.14 Alejandro Escovedo
- 11.15 John Mayall & The Bluesbreakers
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