



ROB HANDY IN THE RACE FOR COMMISH

Longtime Eugene neighborhood advocate and business owner Rob Handy is expected to announce his bid for the Lane County Board of Commissioners at noon Thursday, Dec. 6, upstairs in the County Courthouse.

He lives in District 4, which includes parts of west and north Eugene including River Road. He will likely face incumbent Commissioner Bobby Green, whose last serious challenger was Kitty Piercy. Green is considered vulnerable in 2008 due to his poor environmental voting record and his support last year for implementing a countywide income tax without first going to the voters. A recall campaign was launched against Green, but was dropped.

Handy says Lane County government "must prioritize budget decisions that put people first and build a sustainable economy that protects and enhances the resource lands that are the source of clean air, pure water and the soils that grow our food."

Handy owns and operates a landscaping contracting and consulting business and says he "understands the bottom line and the contributions of the many small and large businesses that are the backbone of our local economy — those who provide quality jobs without the benefit of government subsidies."

Handy has volunteered for decades throughout the community, mentoring at-risk teens, coaching youth sports teams and offering support to the elderly.

For five years he chaired the River Road Community Organization and served as co-chair of the Neighborhood Leaders Council. He has also served on the River Road/ Santa Clara Transition Project Task Force, the Raser Mixed-Use Center Citizens Advisory Committee and most recently on the West Broadway Advisory Committee.

Contributions can be mailed to: Elect Rob Handy County Commissioner, P.O. Box 41449, Eugene 97404.

BEEKEEPERS CALL ON CONGRESS

Beekeepers have been having a bad year, and some are hoping Congress will help them out. For the past year bee colonies have been



ABSCONDED ART PINS

The "greening" of the holidays is getting a new twist in the Eugene area this season with the sale of gift pins made from clippings from old art books and vintage magazines. The classic art is inscribed with peace messages and political statements.

The "Absconded Art Pins for Agitators & Peaceniks" sell for \$1, and all proceeds will go to the Civil Liberties Defense Center, Cascadia Wildlands Project and a variety of local peace groups.

Pins can be found at the ongoing "GREEN Holiday Scene" at 2510 Augusta St. in the Laurel Hill neighborhood every weekend through Dec. 23. More homes around town will also be selling the pins to friends and neighbors.

Organizer Carol Berg Caldwell, aka "Grindle GREENelf," says the slogan for the pin sale is "Corporate box stores will 'see red' when we all start shopping GREEN!" She adds that "Wal-Mart probably isn't losing sleep yet over this, but who knows where this could go? Maybe in 2008 homes all over America will be hosting GREEN Holiday Scenes."

Caldwell says the campaign has three "green" reasons: Recycling to create gifts avoids the traditional holiday "budget-buster" facing many families; dollars spent stay in the community; and the campaign is a way to avoid clogging the landfill with holiday packaging. "We promise not to wrap the treasures you will find at the GREEN Holiday Scene," she says.

For more information, call 337-3229.



• EW met with a large group of community leaders last week regarding Gustavo Arellano's "iAsk a Mexican!" column, and our staff reporter Camilla Mortensen writes about it in our news section this week. We all agree we want to dispel stereotypes and bigotry, but we disagree on whether Arellano's provocative style of satire helps or hurts the cause here in Lane County. The debate goes on in our Letters section this week, and we've invited the Latino community to contribute columns on the local, regional and national issues that are important to them.

This debate raises a basic issue in our community: How do we work effectively together to make life better for all of us — rich or poor, dark-skinned or light, advantaged or disadvantaged, educated or not, fluent in English or not, documented or undocumented, abled or disabled, gay or straight, young or old, male, female or transgendered? Even these labels promote divisions among us, and yet human nature is hard-wired to fear and mistrust people who are not of our family, not of our tribe, not of the "dominant culture." Is there no hope for us?

There is hope if we can rise above the stereotypes and ignorance of earlier generations — dispel the images and attitudes we learned mostly as children. There are multiple ways of doing that: serious community dialogue, diversity training in our institutions and businesses, legislation and legal action and even provocative satire that makes us cringe and laugh at ourselves.

We are a dynamic and evolving society. The culture of Mexico has permeated the U.S. so deeply that it's integral to who we are as a nation. Almost everyone speaks at least some Spanish, millions of non-Latinos have traveled south of the border, Mexican restaurants are everywhere, we sing "Feliz Navidad" at Christmas, and Spanish geographical names are ubiquitous (partially because a large section of this country used to belong to Mexico). Hispanic/Latino businesses and institutions are growing quickly nationwide. Brown is the new white when it comes to fashion models and style, and as a society we now find great beauty in the mix of skin colors and facial features.

American culture also includes African American, Asian and Native American experiences and influences, and we celebrate people like Tiger Woods and Barak Obama who symbolize a coming together of races where there was once insurmountable division.

Even though we want to be aware of (and report on) the challenges undocumented workers and others face during the political debates over immigration, we also want to encourage hope. We're making progress toward becoming world citizens who embrace our own cultural heritage while also understanding and appreciating other cultures, languages, values, appearances and ways of living and being on this planet.

• **It happens every few years downtown.** There's another measure on the ballot to open this street or that street or build a parking garage for a developer. And to pass the measure, proponents publicly blast downtown as blighted and crime-ridden. After more than a decade of this, no wonder downtown is suffering from an image problem. Ironically, there are far more assaults, car break-ins and other crimes at area shopping malls, but you won't see the shopping mall managers campaigning to advertise the fact.

• We hear **Kitty Piercy** might be running for a second term as mayor of Eugene. The rumor is still unconfirmed, but we suspect she's having a good time and wants to follow through on work she's been doing the past three years.

Piercy's also very upbeat about what's happening downtown and around town, and that was quite evident in her talk at the Citizens for Public Accountability annual meeting last week. She was enthusiastic about smaller, more incremental redevelopment downtown following the defeat of Measure 20-134 last month. She talked about creating new parks, connecting downtown with the UO, improving safety downtown, sprucing up stores and storefronts for the influx of visitors coming to the Olympic Trials next summer, addressing parking issues downtown, and doing more in the realm of sustainability. She even talked about an ordinance that would force owners of vacant storefronts downtown (read: Connor & Woolley) to maintain some degree of aesthetic appeal and upkeep.

She is not without her detractors, of course. Conservatives, assuming they field a candidate, will certainly attack her for her tie-breaking vote to shelve the West Eugene Parkway, for bagging the Mayor's Prayer Breakfast and other offenses. Progressives, assuming they field a candidate, will criticize her support for tax breaks for Hynix, siting a medical center on the northern outskirts, expansion of urban renewal to subsidize chain stores and other offenses. Piercy is viewed by some as too unwilling to challenge Eugene's entrenched and bloated city bureaucracy. Regardless, this popular mayor will be hard to unseat.

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

