

the public safety of Oregonians: "It will result in a large amount of people driving without a license and insurance." Last week's rally against the measure drew 3,000 people, Sorensen says. — *Camilla Mortensen*

NOVICK GETS LOCAL NODS, BEER TIME

U.S. Senate candidate Steve Novick this week received the endorsement of Lane County Commissioner and former gubernatorial candidate Pete Sorenson as well as the Cottage Grove Blackberry Pie Society. Novick, a Democrat, is running in the May primary, hoping to unseat incumbent Republican Sen. Gordon Smith. His main opponent in the primary is fellow Democrat Jeff Merkley.

If you haven't figured out who Novick is yet, you're in the minority. His T.V. commercials, which have been airing locally, have gotten national press, including a spot on FOX News. His "Beer with Steve" ad, featuring Novick popping a beer open with his hook while discoursing on politics, has 70,000 hits on YouTube. Novick is missing his left arm and uses a hook, which has become emblematic of his campaign.

"I'm proud to throw my support behind Steve Novick," says Sorenson. "We both have been willing to stand up to the political establishment and demand real results for regular Oregonians. With the big challenges we face on health care, the faltering economy and the war in Iraq, we need a fighter in the Senate who can achieve the real changes we need to turn this country around. And that person is Steve Novick."

The Cottage Grove Blackberry Pie Society, a grassroots, progressive political action committee, declared its endorsement for Novick last week. "Novick gives you the feeling he will never be outworked or outstudied and will always fight for the rights of all us 'little guys' and the quality of life in this state we love," the group noted in its endorsement release last week.

Novick also has the support of state Sen. Bill Morrisette, former state Sen. Tony Corcoran and children's advocate Joy Marshall.

Novick and Merkley are scheduled to debate at City Club of Eugene in March. If you want to meet Novick sooner, you can have "a Beer with Steve" from 6:15 to 7:15 pm Tuesday, Feb. 19 at Steelhead Brewery. "Drink up, Eugene. The Hook is here, and he's ready for beer," says the campaign.

LCC PLANS BIG CONFAB ON PEACE

Medea Benjamin, cofounder of Global Exchange and CODEPINK, and Bob Wing, cofounder of United for Peace & Justice, are among the keynote speakers planned for the

Peace and Democracy Conference Feb. 29 and March 1 at LCC.

The annual conference is designed to bring together educators, students, spiritual leaders, activists, community members and political leaders "dedicated to building a peaceful society and nation."

CODEPINK is a women-initiated grassroots peace and social justice movement "working to end the war in Iraq, stop new wars and redirect our resources into health care, education and other life-affirming activities," according to the group's mission statement. "We reject the Bush administration's fear-based politics that justify violence and instead call for policies based on compassion, kindness and a commitment to international law with an emphasis on joy and humor."



Steve Novick

United for Peace & Justice is a coalition of organizations that coordinates protests and other actions nationwide and locally. The group is calling for and supporting a set of activities on and around the fifth anniversary of the Iraq occupation "that will manifest the intensifying opposition to the

war and help strengthen our movement." Coming up is a mass nonviolent direct action March 19 in Washington, D.C., and corresponding demonstrations in cities across the country.

Information on the upcoming LCC conference can be found at the Peace Center's website (www.lanecce.edu/peacecenter).

FORUM ON BASKETBALL ARENA FRIDAY

Student activists on the UO campus frustrated with a lack of public input into the proposed new UO basketball arena are planning their own public forum from 5:30 to 7:30 pm Friday, Feb. 15, at 180 PLC on campus. Notes taken at the forum will be compiled and submitted to the UO administration and the state Legislature, according to one of the organizers, Cimmeron Gillespie of the *Student Insurgent* newspaper.

Gillespie says the meeting's agenda includes discussion on the costs, location and plans for the new arena, as well as the plans for Mac Court. "We hope to get a diverse group of people there," he says.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

The first week of Oregon's first-ever attempt at annual sessions "felt like the last month of a regular biennial session," and "has been a whirlwind so far," says Rep. Phil Barnhart.

Barnhart says the Legislature this month will push forward a bill to "crack down on property crimes and protect abused and neglected children" and will continue work on rebuilding the State Police. "In the 2007 session we provided funding for 100 new state

• Bob Cassidy has filed for the **EWEB Board primary election** race representing Wards 2 & 3. Patrick Lanning currently holds the seat and is not expected to run for reelection. Lanning has reportedly missed about half the EWEB Board meetings since taking a job with Chemeketa Community College in Salem. Lanning says he plans to serve out his term, but we wouldn't be surprised to see an early resignation and board appointment after the primary.

The deadline for filing for the May ballot is March 6, and two other EWEB Board positions will be on the ballot. So far, only incumbent John Simpson has filed for Wards 1 & 8; and only Rich Cunningham has filed for Wards 6 & 7, a seat currently held by Mel Menegat.

• **Why keep an eye on the EWEB Board?** The City Council gets much more attention, but in some ways the EWEB Board has more clout than the council on key environmental and land use issues. Plus, every month Eugeneans write big checks to EWEB, and those checks may get bigger.

The public utility is proposing a major investment in new facilities on Roosevelt in west Eugene, seeking approval for \$85.5 million in electric revenue bonds on top of the \$15 million or so of bonding already approved. That's a big debt, and once the bonding is approved by the City Council, the EWEB board will decide how its residential, commercial and industrial customers will pay it off. Will the bond proposal slide through quietly on the council's consent agenda Feb. 25, or will the council refer it to the voters? Citizens will also have 60 days to petition to put the bonding on the ballot.

EWEB is moving ahead on its master plan for its riverfront property. Will it be sold as a hospital site, parkland or mixed-use commercial and residential development? Big decisions with big implications for Eugene's quality of life. Board members will also be dealing with major issues regarding power generation and distribution that could have a big local impact on global warming. EWEB decisions also affect fish, riparian habitat and recreation on the McKenzie River. Serving on the board is a huge responsibility.

• The Oregonian and the Oregon Daily Emerald have done a fine job of telling a story the UO clearly would rather not be told. It's all about **the power of big money** in the academy and its games today. It comes out now in the Knight agreement that their \$100 million gift will go away June 1 unless the Legislature approves \$200 million in bonding authority to completely cover the cost of what is promoted as the country's most expensive basketball arena. What kind of public policy is that? Because the bonds are backed ultimately by the taxpayers, the UO has to show that arena revenue will cover yearly bonding costs, and that backup funds are in place if it doesn't. It comes out next, thanks to a faculty member's request under the Oregon open records law, that the UO administration essentially hid from the relevant faculty committees a report showing much lower revenue projections than subsequent reports showed. What kind of university policy is that? Maybe it's the only way to bring in \$100 million, \$200 million, many more millions. But it doesn't do much to build yellow and green trust.

• Hey, let's kick the struggling poor kids out of their school and give it to the "successful" rich kids! That's the "Schools of the Future" plan that 4J has come up with in **closing Harris Elementary** to make room for alternative school kids from Eastside and Fox Hollow. Harris is 67 percent free/reduced lunch while Eastside is 5 percent and Fox Hollow 10 percent. The future for 4J looks unfair.

• **Project Homeless Connect** came together again last week at the Fairgrounds, drawing nearly 1,200 "guests" and more than 800 community volunteers. It's likely a thousand more homeless and near-homeless people did not show up for a variety of reasons. Some were working and couldn't come — yes, the homeless among us include people with part-time or even full-time jobs. The large number of people who did show up is disturbing, but there is encouragement to be found in the large number of volunteers who also appeared. The enthusiastic volunteers indicate the level of care in our valley and also show support for further action. A publicly funded shelter is needed in Lane County, along with more affordable housing and more financial support for social services and veterans' benefits.

• As we go to press this week we are hearing that the sale of Churchill Media's **KOPT AM 1600 radio** has been finalized, and the commercial Air America programming will switch to Oregon Public Broadcasting Feb. 20. Churchill Media tells us they were "hoping to find a buyer for the KOPT brand and switching it to 1450 AM for the new broadcaster." No takers, so far.

Rachael Carnes had her not-so-young audience of Eugene City Club members dancing around the DAC last week when she talked about **"The Brain Dance: What Little Kids Already Know."** She's the founder and executive director of Sparkplug Dance in Eugene and the excellent dance writer for *EW*. Stressing the importance of "movement exploration" by infants and young children, she added that we should all move more. The best piece of play equipment, she said, is a clean floor suitable for "tummy time." Carnes' message: "The arts broaden our perspective on what it means to be human," and that includes dancing to build our brains.