

wrist behind his back and unable to comply with officers due to the first Taser, also “an unjustified use of force.”

— Camilla Mortensen

CITY’S BIGGEST TAX INCREASE

On July 16 the Eugene City Council plans to discuss the largest tax increase in the city’s history, a \$81-million property tax, to fix potholes.

The council appears headed toward referring the tax to voters, but the tax doesn’t appear likely to pass. A more modest gas tax for potholes, more directly related to road use was shot down last year with 56 percent opposed. A city survey last year showed that a property tax for potholes would also likely fail.

But the Eugene Chamber of Commerce has pushed the property tax as a replacement for a tax that would count parking spaces or estimate vehicle trips so that big box retailers would pay more of their fair share for inducing road use and wear.

The city has not considered an apparently fairer approach that would use available data to calculate a truck impact fee for local businesses, industry and construction companies. Studies show that almost all road damage is caused by heavy trucks, not cars. Matt Rodrigues, the city’s pothole manager, told a *Register-Guard* columnist last month, “Cars have little to do with the damage inflicted on streets ... It’s all about trucks and buses.”

— Alan Pittman

PIERCY LEADS FIGHT AGAINST WARMING

Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy spearheaded an effort to fight global warming at the

U.S. Conference of mayors last month in Miami, Fla.

Piercy submitted a successful resolution calling for cities to oppose the purchase of high-pollution fuel from tar sands, liquid coal, oil shale and other unconventional sources, according to a city press release.

With oil prices at more than \$140 a barrel, corporations are looking to unconventional sources for fuel that were previously cost prohibitive. But extracting fuel from such sources requires much more processing, resulting in emissions two to five times higher than conventional oil.

“We don’t want to spend taxpayer dollars on fuels that make global warming worse,” Piercy said.

The resolution also calls for federal and state guidelines for tracking the origin of various types of fuel so cities will know what they are buying.

In the absence of federal action by the Bush Administration, cities have become leaders in calling for action on climate change. More than 850 mayors across the country, including Piercy, have adopted goals to reduce carbon emissions in their cities.

“There is incredible public momentum for energy innovation,” said Piercy. “Our cities are asking for environmentally sustainable energy and not fuels from dirty sources such as tar sands.”

— Alan Pittman

SLUG TRAIL 08

How about a scoop of slug ice cream? Or a slug latte?

To celebrate a quarter century of S.L.U.G. Queens at the Eugene Celebration, local businesses have put together a Slug Trail 2008 of slug-themed goodies, art and products for August 15-22.

Wandering Goat will offer a special Royal Slug Queen Coffee Blend; Prince Pücklers plans a Slug Queen ice cream flavor; Adam’s Place will have Slug Sliders; New Zone Gallery whimsical slug

Happening Biz BY PAUL NEEVEL

Hilary Anthony

In 1982, only two months after arriving in Eugene with a couple of friends from Florida, Hilary Anthony got a pass to her first Oregon Country Fair. “I was buying produce for Growers Market,” she recalls. “They sent me to a meeting, and I ended up coordinating a booth on local self-reliance in Community Village.” An avid juggler, Anthony organized juggling workshops and demos in Community Village for the following 10 years. But work in Eugene was hard to find, so for two years she went back to school in Florida (returning for the Fair in July) to get a degree in accounting. In the early '90s, she agreed to serve as treasurer for the OCF, a job she still shares with Steve Gorham. “He organizes the budgets, and I do the financial reporting,” she explains. Anthony also coordinates Chela Mela Meadow, which has been a center for kids’ activities since 1997, and such participatory venues as the Dharma Garden for Yoga practice and the Yes You Canopy for jugglers. “I love the Fair. It’s my major volunteer activity,” she says. “The friendships are rewarding and the shared vision of community feels healthy and positive to me.”



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• Let the debate begin! After the great events of the last two weeks, the track world is musing the possibility of Eugene becoming the permanent site of the **U.S. Olympic Trials**. Already *Oregonian* columnist Steve Duin not surprisingly has offered his view that if “that is the city’s (and the university’s and the shoe company’s) goal, it must be purposeful in fine-tuning the 2012 event so that it celebrates a sport that is still bigger, believe it or not, than the city, school and sneaker maker.” Anybody detect a little envy there? An astute local observer once said that Eugene does two things really well – track and Bach. Portland has nothing comparable to either. Anybody detect a little puffed up pride there? We come away from Eugene 08 with only a few tough questions for the brilliant problem-solvers who put it all on: Is there any way to bring more people of color to the audience? Is it possible to steer more business to local restaurants who added staff and supplies but didn’t add customers? Thanks for the big TVs, but is it possible to make tickets more affordable so more regular Eugene folks can actually get in the stadium? To sum it up, we quote the visitor from D.C., more a fan of sailing than running, who offered his take on the permanent site question after only one day at Hayward Field, “How could this show be any other place? It’s perfect right here.”

• The city is lucky to have five proposals to **fill the Sears pit**. Kudos to the City Council for pressing ahead to ask for proposals to fill the pit over city staff objections. The two leading candidates appear to be a proposal by Portland-based Opus to build a six-story student apartment building and a proposal by local developer WG to build a five-story office/apartment mix. Either would be great for downtown. Opus would infuse the area with almost 500 students, creating a boom for street life and downtown businesses. Opus said the market is strong for the project, it has the money and it will build it right away. Can any developer promise that in this economy? The best elements of the WG proposal are the superior design and the “quasi-public plaza” it offers facing the library, although exactly what that means will have to be clarified. WG also says it wants the land for free from the city, whereas Opus says it will pay about \$500,000. We favor the city giving WG the first shot at this important project, while setting a deadline to confirm and sign a deal. If WG fails to do that, on to number two, Opus. If either of these two don’t pan out, the city should quickly fall back to the other three proposals – a hip hotel, a green housing transit center or an energy village, community/housing center. We also like the idea of a city park and underground parking, or even filling the pit with leaf compost for a community garden. Nearly anything would be better than the pit. Fill it now.

• Not to beat a dead horse, but **what’s up with the mainstream media in this town?** *EW* had the scoop on the whole Homeland Security targeting local activists story (*EW* 6/26) for a good week before anyone else decided it was news. People all over town were talking about the feds’ part in the Taser for days before the *R-G* and KVAL realized there was a story there – that’s despite getting the press release that rally participant (and arrestee) Day Owen sent out after *EW* ran our “Big Brother” story. Even KLCC decided to wait until the *R-G* had the news – quoting the *R-G*’s article rather than use the *EW*’s news tip or protester press release. Maybe they were distracted. Local activist Josh Schlossberg quipped, “Homeland Security orchestrating arrests of protesters? Ho hum. Grand Jury convenes in Eugene? Boring ... Next! People running around a track in circles? Now that’s news! Tell me more!”

• If the county is so hard up for money, why is DA Doug Harclerod making the investigation of **pesticide protesters** at the recent EPD Taser incident a top priority? Why is the city giving the county millions of dollars for such spurious law enforcement priorities. The DA seems focused more on intimidating people who complain about police abuse than on public safety. Next time the county says it can’t prosecute a car thief or burglar because of a lack of resources, think of all the time it lavished on prosecuting protesters.

• Why did the city have to pay the county for **pothole money** from the road fund while Springfield got millions from the road fund for a parkway to subsidize sprawl for free? Eugene elected officials should demand an answer to this question at an upcoming interjurisdictional meeting next week. Every time the county complains of releasing another inmate from the county jail, voters should think about the millions the county wasted on the Rob Straub freeway to subsidize developers.

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