



TED TAYLOR

a bicycle trip from Paris to Istanbul this summer. He suffered a fractured pelvis and a broken leg and spent four weeks in a German hospital, according to an email sent out to his fellow congregation members at the local Unitarian-Universalist Church.

Van Steenberg was flown back to Eugene last week and was at Sacred Heart Medical Center for a few days before being transferred this week to Eugene Rehabilitation and Specialty Care on Chambers Street.

The injury was also reported on the blog of the Orient Express Bicycle Expedition (tourdafrique.com). One fellow rider wrote of him:

Once or twice in a lifetime, if you are fortunate, you come into the presence of a human being who seems to possess, with such grace and ease, the attributes of a celestial being ... non-judgmental, compassionate, intelligent, humorous, respectful, endowed with infinite optimism and joie de vivre and the ability to make everyone feel they're worth more than a billion dollars. One of the 2008 OE riders, Neil Van Steenberg, is one such rare being. And for the past 18 days we were indeed a fortunate and privileged group. His free-spirited, curious and enthusiastic approach to living seems to be his secret to ensuring that every moment of every day is an adventure. Neil had an accident on the road yesterday just outside Passau,

Germany, and is sadly unable to continue with us onto Istanbul.

Van Steenberg served for years on the Eugene Human Rights Commission, wrote about racial issues and social justice, and has testified at numerous public hearings. He took up long-distance bicycling when he retired and set out to bike around the world a few years ago.

In his own blog entries just before the accident he wrote:

I am sitting on the steps of the great church in Regensburg, Germany, writing in the sun and watching people on the Dom Plaz take pictures of me. I suppose they may want the Dom in the background as well. I smile a lot. I am in exactly the right place in my life. Life is good. And I am content. — TJJ

ATOM BOMB: NEVER AGAIN

On Aug. 6 and 9, 1945, the U.S. dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing an estimated 220,000 people, with thousands more dying later from radiation exposure. Each year Lane County residents gather to honor the victims and to action to help ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again.

The annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki commemoration is being held from 7 to 9:30

• We hear two old-time **downtown Eugene developers** have tossed a challenging prospect to our new city manager: Why not entice both the Opus student building and the WG mixed-use building to the downtown? Does it have to be either/or? We prefer the WG proposal across from the library and the student housing in another site, maybe a little closer to the UO but still bringing nearly 500 new residents to the center city. Probably a dozen bureaucratic reasons, plus several economic ones, block this discussion, but this is an opportunity for Manager Ruiz to show he can act creatively and shred red tape. When he spoke to the City Club several weeks ago, Ruiz said Eugene should not sacrifice long-term benefits to expedite short-term gain. Good goal for a peopled, pitless downtown Eugene.

• **Cris Beamud** will be leaving us soon as our first independent police auditor, much to the delight of some city employees, but the fight just moves to round three. Round one was getting an ordinance creating the auditor position voted into the charter. Round two was hiring an auditor, writing up procedures and appointing the Civilian Review Board. Round three will be carrying on the work with a new staff, likely under the capable direction of Assistant Auditor Dawn Reynolds. Round four will be passing a charter amendment in November to strengthen and solidify the auditor position. Regardless of who's in the ring, the public stands to win or lose this dragged-out fight for transparency and accountability.



It's also vital that voters re-elect Mayor Kitty Piercy who has strongly supported the independent auditor, while Jim Torrey has called for the auditor to not be independent but rather under the control of the city manager. Torrey, who has received strong financial campaign support from the police union, recently called for the council to "take a step back" and re-examine the auditor position.

Beamud has shown exceptional bravery, resolve and grace under attack during her critical first year in this new position. After what she's put up with, we can't blame her for taking a better job in a bigger city where her impressive talents will be more appreciated. Looking back, the public would have been better served if Beamud had been given the respect, support and cooperation she deserved from city staff, including the police chief. We like to think Beamud has broken new ground in Eugene and paved the way for a smoother road ahead. Throwing up roadblocks against much-needed independent police oversight needs to end. If entrenched police attitudes don't change, then police management needs to change.

• Any ideas on what to do with the soon-to-be-vacant **Hynix facilities**? We're not holding our collective breath waiting for a solar panel company to buy the huge complex and do expensive retrofits, particularly since solar plants in Portland are currently expanding to meet demand. How about a prison? Good wages, non-polluting, sustainable even in recessions, and the prisoners can wear the old bunny suits left behind by Hynix. The inmates won't be eating in local restaurants and staying at local motels, but visitors certainly would. It's also a dandy site for a new state mental hospital. How about a regional storage and distribution center for all kinds of materials? The site is already being used to store tons of toxic chemicals. Warehousing toys from China would be a good fit. How about low-cost student housing? If all else fails, the site would make a world-class paintball palace.

• The debate over an **exclusionary zone** is back in the news as the Eugene City Council considers a proposal to ban certain troublemakers from the city core if they have been cited by police, even before convictions. This so-called solution has basic flaws. If downtown really is a magnet for criminals, crime and hate, we already have laws in place and 170-some sworn police officers to deal with it. If downtown is a police priority, the chief needs to get more cops out of their cruisers and walking the streets downtown. It's a form of community policing and it would save the city a lot of gas money in the process. If indeed 10 percent of city crime happens in the city core, why are only a few extra officers on the streets downtown?

Excluding habitual criminals from downtown is something judges can do after convictions without violating civil liberties. And judges are in a better position to evaluate whether a convicted offender is truly a menace to downtown. Banning someone charged with a minor offense could have unintended consequences. That person, despite a moment of poor judgment, could have a job or do business downtown or need to provide transportation downtown to family members. Leave it to the judges.

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

Happening people

BY PAUL NEEVEL

RAVEN MOON

"This is my 23rd year at the Saturday Market," says Raven Moon, purveyor of spirit rattles, shakers, masks and fantasy animals, hand-made of papier-maché and gemstones. "I love it. Life is great!" A sociology grad of Arizona State, Moon was a letter carrier in Corvallis and the single dad of two young daughters in 1983, when he met spiritualist and Tarot reader Yana Breeze, who encouraged him to change his line of work and his name. "At first I was thinking, 'Moon Raven,'" he says. The pair got started in crafts by making "gemulets" (gemstone amulets) to sell at the market. "I wanted to make my own rattle for a ritual with Yana," Moon recalls. "I quickly found my artistic medium. I loved it and others liked it too." Moon and Breeze moved to Eugene and got married in 1993, 10 years to the day from when they met. For the past 10 years, Moon has transported his market booth and merchandise to the park blocks in a garden cart strapped to his recumbent bike. He and Breeze gave up their car altogether in 2000, when they noticed that their pre-Y2K fill-up had lasted into summer.

