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news Briefs

has nearly doubled to about 8 months and that prices are down 8 percent, compared to last year. The number of closed sales were off 20 to 30 percent this summer.

While developers and Realtors may hate it, falling home prices may not be such a bad thing. Some economists consider any home that costs more than three times household income to be unaffordable. According to the U.S. Census, Eugene's median home price in 2006 was \$224,900, more than five times the local average household income of \$40,499.

— Alan Pittman

processing fee, at www.hultcenter.org or 682-5000. Tickets for the next two concerts will be available Sept. 2.

ACTIVIST ALERT

• **Barack Obama's acceptance speech** at the Democratic Convention Thursday can be seen at various home parties around the county and also for free at the McDonald Theater downtown. The viewing is sponsored by Oregon for Change. The time of Obama's speech has not been announced, but is expected to be around 7 or 8 pm.

• A public hearing on **ODOT's federal**

Earmark priorities for state highway modernization projects in Lane County will be at 1:30 pm Wednesday, Sept. 3, at the County Commission conference room, 125 E. 8th Ave. in Eugene. More info at lanecounty.org or call 682-6935.

• **The Ralph Nader campaign** announced this week that the Oregon secretary of state has recognized the creation of a new party in Oregon, the Peace Party. Party activists announced the nomination of Ralph Nader and Matt Gonzalez for president and vice-president. Those interested in the campaign can contact the law office of Kafoury and McDougal at (503) 224-2647, or visit VoteNader.org

• **Local blind and visually impaired** residents are gathering to initiate a new chapter of the American Council of the Blind of Oregon, beginning at 11 am Saturday, Aug. 30 at Hilyard Center, 2580 Hilyard St., in Eugene. For more info, call Rob Cook at 741-4367 or email robcook@comcast.net

FREE TIX FOR DIRECTOR SEARCH

Want to hear some great music for free? Get over to the Hult, where the Eugene Symphony offers up three nights of orchestral tryouts for the community.

The three finalists for the Symphony's music director position head into town beginning next week for days of rehearsals, meetings and interviews, which culminate for each of them in a concert with the orchestra. Each will conduct the first movement of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony (Symphony No. 8 in B Minor) and one movement of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 in C Major, with Alexandre Dossin as the soloist. The candidates round out the evenings with some choices of their own.

First to the plate on Friday, Sept. 5 is Nir Kabaretti, currently the music director of the Santa Barbara Symphony. Kabaretti has worked extensively with choral music and has international experience ranging from Austria to Spain, Italy and Israel, where he serves as principal conductor of the Raanana Symphonette Orchestra. His program includes Mozart's *Impresario Overture*, Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio Espagnol*.

A week later on Sept. 12, Bulgarian conductor Danail Rachev steps to the podium. Rachev is currently assistant conductor at the Philadelphia Orchestra after three years as assistant conductor at the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, where he wowed critics and audiences with his performances. He added Schubert's *Overture to Rosamunde* and Borodin's *Symphony No. 2 in B Minor* to his program with the Symphony.

Finally, on Thursday, Sept. 25, Tito Muñoz will show his skills with a program including Bernstein's *Candide Overture* and Beethoven's *Symphony No. 7*. The young American conductor currently serves as assistant conductor to the Cleveland Orchestra.

Free tickets for the first performance are available at the Hult Center or, for the Hult's



Rachev



Kabaretti



Muñoz

EARLY DEADLINES

EW offices will be closed for Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 1. Early deadline for reserving display ad space in our Sept. 4 issue will be Thursday, Aug. 28. Classified deadline will be Friday, Aug. 29. For more information, call 484-0519.

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

• In last week's Slant column the last dozen words were cut off in the last item on the S.L.U.G. Queens and contender Constance Van Flandern. It should have read, "The S.L.U.G. Queens traditionally use their 'rain' to raise money for causes like homeless pets, not big out-of-town developers."

• The Free Shakespeare in the Park play, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, closed on Aug. 24 and will not run this weekend.