

ing to the Friends of Buford Park & Mt. Pisgah and the Youth in Nature Partnership.

The Friends of Buford Park have a solution to indoors-induced illness — they're going to help kids get over their "nature-deficit disorder" by getting them back outside at Mount Pisgah, rain or shine, according to the group's executive director, Chris Orsinger.

Orsinger says the events are inspired by Richard Louv's 2005 book, *Last Child in the Woods*, which first put forth the idea of nature-deficit disorder. Since the book's publication, a "leave no child inside" movement has started to get kids back playing in the outdoors (the ubiquitous outdoor toy, the stick, was just initiated into the Toy Hall of Fame, after all).

A study published by the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* has researchers theorizing that staying indoors could lead to increased rates of autism. The study showed a link between children who live in areas of high precipitation, like Oregon, and high autism rates. Counties west of the Cascades have four times as much rain as the east side, and autism rates on the west side are twice as high.

The researchers have not determined what about rain could lead to autism in kids, but one speculation is that the rain could bring down chemicals in the atmosphere that could trigger the condition in "genetically vulnerable," kids. Another theory is that the large amount of rainfall keeps kids inside and in front of the televi-



A hillside of winter oaks at Buford Park

sion, which means they get less vitamin D and are exposed to more indoor chemicals.

If you want to know more about getting kids into the outdoors and "nature-deficit disorder," come hear Martin LeBlanc's talk "Why leave no child inside?" at the Friends of Buford Park's 17th Annual Fall Celebration, at 7 pm Thursday, Nov. 20, at The Shedd's Jaqua Hall. LeBlanc will discuss how the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual benefits for children of playing outdoors. LeBlanc is one of the founding members of the Children and Nature Network, which works with people and programs to get kids off the sofa and into the woods.

Then on Saturday, Nov. 22, round up the kids and bring them over to Mt. Pisgah Arboretum's White Oak Pavilion at Buford Park between 10 am and 2 pm for hayrides, horse rides, campfire cooking, nature crafts, and map and compass treasure hunts. Both events are free and open to the public though it costs \$2 to park at Mt. Pisgah. — *Camilla Mortensen*

Happening people

BY PAUL NEEVEI



UO FAMILY AND HUMAN SERVICES STUDENTS

"Since 2004, our students have logged over 253,080 hours of field work," says Kelly Warren, field study coordinator for the UO College of Education's degree program in Family and Human Services. "That has an economic impact of more than \$3 million, based on \$13 an hour." The FHS program is designed for students considering careers with community service or government agencies, in fields such as social welfare, drug and alcohol treatment, recreation and special education. Students enter the FHS program in their junior year, after they have completed the basic course requirements for graduation. In addition to professional coursework, they serve three internships, one per term, with local agencies. As seniors, they choose one of those agencies for an extended year-long internship. "FHS is unique in giving undergrads the experience of internships in the community," says senior Linda Cathey, who worked in the Southern California movie industry before moving to Eugene in search of a new career in 2004. "This year, I'm working with fourth and fifth-graders at Adams School. Last year, I also worked at Head Start and at Senior and Disabled Services."

- *The Register-Guard* continues to **beat up on Mayor Kitty Piercy** after the election with a Sunday news story and sour grapes editorial that talk about Piercy riding Obama's popularity to victory, the city is still divided, she has damage to overcome, "lessons to learn," she needs to admit that Jim Torrey's supporters "may be right," etc. — enough crap to fill every trash can in Eugene's dog parks.

The daily fails to comprehend that Torrey's half a million dollar campaign has been a hugely divisive force in this community. His six-month-long misleading campaign, with the help of the R-G, pitted north Eugene against south Eugene. He falsely accused the mayor of doing nothing for the local economy, being anti-business, not supporting the police, not fixing roads and alienating other cities in Lane County.

Piercy's victory is all the sweeter in that she survived a massive onslaught of negative campaigning, lame reporting and negative editorials. In the end, a majority of Eugeneans saw through the deceptions. Voters picked the candidate who is focused on quality of life issues and a sustainable economy.

- Eugene voters Nov. 4 overwhelmingly approved solidifying Eugene's **independent police auditor**, and outgoing Councilor Bonny Bettman has been busy drafting a dozen code amendments. The election affected the charter language; the proposed amendments deal with the details of how the charter will be implemented. The changes primarily assure unfettered access so the auditor can do her job. Monday's vote on the amendments was 4-4 with Mayor Piercy breaking the tie. She would probably have preferred a 5-3 or 6-2 vote, but breaking ties on an ideologically split council is what Eugeneans elected her to do. Jim Torrey did it many times during his eight years as mayor.

The four city councilors who are objecting to these common-sense amendments need to step back and listen to their constituents. The charter measure passed by two-thirds of the vote, indicating strong support for the independent auditor in every ward.

- We expect **Rob Handy** to be declared the victor this week in his very close race to unseat County Commissioner Bobby Green. Handy is leading by 200 votes as we go to press. What will happen with Commissioner Handy as a progressive swing vote? We're hoping to see better protection of our county's resource lands, transportation planning with peak oil and bicycles in mind, a shift in public safety priorities from punishment to prevention, and more progressive taxation. We also expect north Eugene to get a more accessible commissioner. Green had a reputation for not returning phone calls and not showing up for community events.

- **The perfect encore** to the emotion of election week moved much of the audience in Beall Hall to tears last Sunday afternoon. Jeffrey Kahane, the brilliant pianist who is one of the Bach Festival's most popular soloists, performed music by Mendelssohn and Schubert, ending with Rachmaninoff. Returning to the stage for his single encore, Kahane gave the audience his own tender and emotional improvisation of "America the Beautiful." How wonderful that our country is so deserving of this tribute this November.

- This election has seen the **Bus Project** rise to power in Oregon as a creative force for getting young people excited and involved in political work. Jefferson Smith's innovative leadership getting out the vote with the Bus Project and his successful bid for a seat on the Legislature show he has a big future in Oregon politics. The Oregon Bus Project registered 23,000 new voters this year, increasing the Oregon youth electorate by 7 percent. Bus trips all over the state this fall knocked on 60,000 doors, including thousands in Eugene.

- **Enrollments at the UO** are going up with the downturn in the economy, but Lane County and the city of Eugene are making it harder for commuting students to get to school. LTD is discussing cutting several routes to the UO campus, and Eugene just raised the parking meter fees around the UO to a dollar an hour. In an ideal world, we'd all walk and bike, but commuters need to get to school somehow.

- Oregon **TV stations** have made untold millions on eight months of presidential and Senate campaigns, and local TV stations have also raked it in on the mayoral and County Commission races, all coming at a time when national and local ad revenues have been slipping. What will next year look like? Don't be surprised to see more layoffs and cutbacks in broadcast newsrooms. On the up side, we no longer have to suffer through endless and repetitive back-to-back political ads. Gotta love the mute button.

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