



State Capitol tree-sit

the crowd of the Internet-based plans of daywithoutgay.org (“Call in Gay”), which is encouraging queer folks and their friends to do community outreach in place of economic activity of any kind on Dec. 10, and the larger strategy of “10 months, 10 people, 10 conversations” for LGBT Americans to explain themselves, their lives, and their rights to the people they know.

Brown says the immediate goal in Lane County is to contact 150,000 people to work for gay and lesbian marriage rights.

— Grant Cogsdale

TREE-SIT SET AS WOPR STOPPER

The housing market is slumping, and the demand for timber to build new homes is decreasing, but the Bureau of Land Management under the Bush administration continues to move forward with the Western Oregon Plan Revisions. The WOPR threatens to drastically increase logging on Oregon’s public lands. Local conservation and activists groups also continue to move forward with their own plans for putting a stop to the WOPR, including a recent tree-sit at the state Capitol in Salem.

Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky, a UO student and member of Cascadia Rising Tide, climbed a western white pine in the state park near the Capitol to call attention to WOPR, which opponents says will log old growth, reduce habitat for endangered species, reduce buffers around fish-bearing streams and increase logging, rather than use trees to store carbon.

Rather than pepper-spray her out of the tree, as happened to protesters during an urban tree-sit in Eugene in 1997, the state police in Salem monitored the sit but did not interfere. Zimmer-Stucky descended the tree Nov. 14 during an anti-WOPR rally on the Capitol steps, according to Samantha Chirillo of Cascadia Rising Tide (CRT).

Chirillo estimates there were about 300 people at the rally. “It was a large turnout, people from all over western Oregon,” she says. During the four days Zimmer-Stucky was in the tree, Chirillo and others did outreach about the tree-sit and the WOPR.

Some of the people they spoke to were loggers and members of the timber industry she says, and the conversations were “respectful and good.”

Zimmer-Stucky was issued a citation when she descended the tree, Chirillo says — a ticket for overnight camping without a permit.

The tree was unharmed during the sit, but according to Chirillo, the state police did not let CRT take down the sit. “They insisted on taking the sit down using a fire truck ladder and, in the process, broke a limb off the tree.” Aside from that, Chirillo says interactions with the park manager,

police and media “were all positive.”

According to Chirillo and Zimmer-Stucky, the purpose of the sit was to call the public’s and Gov. Ted Kulongoski’s attention to their objections to the WOPR. Kulongoski’s review period of the WOPR ends Dec. 8. Chirillo says “Obama can suspend the WOPR even after the BLM’s decision and will be more likely to do so upon the governor’s rejection of the WOPR.”

Chirillo and CRT are urging people to call the governor at (503) 378-4582 and urge him to stop the WOPR.

— Camilla Mortensen

ODOT RESPONDS TO SIGN ISSUE

In last week’s News Briefs, Eugene architect Otto Poticia was quoted saying the big signs installed on the new cable-stayed bike and pedestrian bridge over I-5 near Gateway indicate that “ODOT has absolutely no taste.” Poticia went on to say the bike bridge “has been vandalized and ruined by its maker.”

After *EW* went to press last week, the state highway agency responded to Poticia’s comments. Joe Hardwood, ODOT’s public information officer, said federal guidelines require ODOT to install overhead signs for exit-only lanes on freeways. “The new bridge is located right where we needed to install an overhead sign for the flyover on-ramps,” he said.

Hardwood said moving the signs to the north of the bridge “was an option, but not a practical one because the bridge would have blocked drivers’ ability to see the signs.”

The choice, he said, was “to put the signs on the bridge or build a sign structure immediately south of the bridge. Building an overhead sign structure south of the bridge would obscure the view of the bridge and create even more of a visual/ aesthetic distraction than placing the signs on the bridge.”

Hardwood said the agency early on considered moving the bike bridge farther to the south, “but that would have had a much larger impact on the Gateway Mall and required the relocation of large utility tower, so that option was discarded.”

DAPHNE GABRIELI

After high school in Coral Springs, Fla., Daphne Gabrieli studied ancient religions at New College in Sarasota, then moved to California and spent several years as a substitute teacher and environmental activist, living in a trailer in the woods outside Santa Cruz. She came to Eugene in 1997, earned an interdisciplinary MA in folklore in 2001, and was hired the same year as a writing composition instructor at LCC. This winter term, Gabrieli will teach two sections of “Writing for Scholarships,” a course she helped develop in 2003 as part of a “learning community” called “Show Me the Money.” Students in the learning community also enroll in a companion course called “Scholarships: Money for College,” that helps them with the logistics of finding scholarships and getting applications in by the March 1 deadline. “I went to school on scholarships,” says Gabrieli. “Now that college is so expensive, it’s increasingly important to help students find funding. In one of our classes, 60 percent got scholarships.” All available spots for the upcoming winter term are taken. Students hoping to join “Show Me the Money” in winter term 2010 should sign up on the first day of advance registration in September 2009.



SLANT

• It’s no secret that **some city employees and elected officials are resisting independent oversight** of our police department. They may say they support our police auditor, but they do everything they can by tweaking or ignoring the devilish details that diminish her effectiveness. It’s disturbing to see Councilors Ortiz and Zelenka and Mayor Piercy now playing along with this devious game, particularly since Eugene voters Nov. 4 overwhelmingly supported strengthening the auditor function.

Councilor Bettman has proposed a dozen common-sense code rules to deal with the obstacles that interfere with the daily functioning of our police auditor. They include provisions such as “The police auditor shall have complete, unrestricted and direct access to the necessary EPD offices,” and “The auditor shall have exclusive authority to classify and route complaints.”

We haven’t heard of a single legal or ethical problem with these 12 new rules, and a public hearing on them was already scheduled. But this week the City Council voted to form a committee that includes the police chief and members of the police union and Police Commission to craft these rules over *four months* and bring back their recommendations. This bogus, cop-heavy committee will delight in trying to sabotage the auditor’s already very limited role in police oversight. Inviting police to help write the rules violates the intent of independent oversight. And who among the auditor supporters wants to sit across the table from five cop backers to argue about access rules for four months?

Kudos to Councilors Bettman and Taylor for standing up for the will of the voters. Want to weigh in? Monday, Nov. 24, is the next time for public comment to the council. Sign in to speak before 7:30 pm.

• Federal, state and local governments are all talking about stimulating the economy with **billions in transportation** spending. With Congressman Peter DeFazio chairing a key House committee, a lot of the spending could come here. The challenge will be to make sure that this transportation spending does not just pay lip service to green transportation. Construction corporations and union workers and their lobbyists may love big new highway projects; but this nation and this community will not be served by yet more big ugly freeways. Rather than stimulating the economy, such projects do more to stimulate pollution, global warming, dependence on Middle East oil, urban sprawl, natural area destruction and unlivability. Many or more jobs and stimulus can be had through transit projects such as high speed rail, trolleys and bike and pedestrian projects. The lasting extra benefit will be a huge boost in transportation efficiency beyond polluting, expensive gas guzzling freeways. Green projects will give the region and the nation a competitive boost in the world economy.

We should watch carefully that state and federal Democrats don’t try to slip freeway capacity projects through in the guise of “safety” or reducing pollution through less idling in traffic jams. These justifications are mostly bogus. Freeways are far more dangerous than mass transit, and freeways induce sprawl that just creates more polluting traffic jams. The vast bulk of the transportation stimulus should go to green transportation.

• **On a more upbeat note**, *EW*’s fun and funky Best of Eugene Awards Show Oct. 24 was a benefit for **White Bird Clinic**, and when the final accounting was done, *EW* wrote a check to White Bird for \$3,179. This agency provides numerous direct services to the most down-and-out in our community. Another memorable benefit event and coat drive is happening this weekend for CAHOOTS, a White Bird program. See Activist Alert.