

became a state, the federal government designated about 6 percent of state's land to support K-12 public schools. Profits from mineral, timber, grazing and other resources go to fund schools, according to our state constitution. The Elliott State Forest is currently managed and logged by the Oregon Department of Forestry.

According to Jan Nelson, who attended the town hall, Walker talked about trees in the Elliott and said she wants to, "cut them, plant them, and then cut them again."

Nelson says, "I think this is something that is an unfortunate decision, and not very creative."

"Nobody's buying wood right now," Nelson says, so "it's a poor idea to pour more wood into the market." Nelson says there are other options, such as using the forest for carbon sequestration.

Nelson has sent out an appeal for concerned citizens to email Walker and "let her know she has a bad idea."

"If one cares about children and their future, would one so carelessly desecrate their environment?" Nelson writes.

Walker, who received a copy of Nelson's letter (see this week's Letters page), wrote in response to the accusation that she intends to log the state forests, "Of course I do. That is the purpose of our state forests."

Walker says that the 93,000 acre forest is already being logged, and she's interested in finding out if it and other Common School Fund lands are being managed to maximize revenues. According to the senator, the forest made a profit of \$34 million for the fund several years ago. As a member of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources, Walker says she will be reviewing the way those lands are managed.

"Oregon is rich in natural resources, and I made that point at that town hall," she says. "There certainly has to be a balance. It doesn't mean I'm going to log every tree; it doesn't mean I'm going to leave every tree standing.



Vicki Walker

I'm going to look at it," Walker says.

She says that she encourages citizens to attend upcoming meetings about the lands and their management. As for her comment at the town hall that the only tree left standing would be the one in her colleague's backyard, Walker responded to Nelson via email, "You knew as well as everyone else in that room that when I made the comment that I would only leave the tree standing in Sen. President Courtney's backyard that I was telling a joke. Your attempt to paint it otherwise is disingenuous and not appreciated."

The Elliott State Forest is currently the subject of a lawsuit by the Cascadia Wildlands Project, Umpqua Watersheds and other conservation groups. The groups' suit says the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service failed to reconsider the impacts of logging the forest's old-growth trees on the northern spotted owl in light of new information showing the owl is facing increased threats. The groups say that the Elliott could be managed to preserve the old forests and protect the spotted owl while fulfilling the need to provide funds for Oregon's schools. — Camilla Mortensen

CHIHUAHUAS FROM HELL!

Since *EW* published an exclusive interview with Cesar Millan (the Dog Whisper), Aug. 28, 2008, people have been asking: So what happened with El Diablo, the most vicious Chihuahua to darken a doorstep in Lane County?

As blog readers learned last week, according to the National Geographic channel you can see the "world premiere" of the "Chihuahuas from Hell" Dog Whisperer episode at 8 pm Friday, Jan. 30, (if you have

• Now it's time for the community to **organize Obama**. That's what former UO Law School Dean Derrick Bell suggests in his closing lines written for *EW* this week (see Viewpoint). That's also the theme of the People's Agenda for a New America, a series started last week by Progressive Responses, a program of CALC. About 70 local folks, some of them quite cranky, gathered in Harris Hall to talk about a new peace strategy in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Dan Goldrich, retired UO professor, and Stan Taylor, LCC professor, laid out options for solutions other than endless war in that region. Next session is 7 pm Jan 24, at the UO Law School, room 110, featuring David Bacon, who wrote *Illegal People: How Globalization Creates Migration and Criminalizes Immigrants*.

The underlying theme of this series is that all of us who supported Obama should trust him but organize ourselves to put our progressive agenda squarely in the middle of his administration.

• Some of the most moving lines spoken during the inaugural/Martin Luther King Jr. string of events came at the **dedication of the Rosa Parks statue** at the LTD station in downtown Eugene Jan. 19. The stirring program included local school-girls simply reading what Rosa Parks said: "Our mistreatment was just not right, and I was tired of it ... I knew someone had to take the first step and I made up my mind not to move ... When I made that decision, I knew that I had the strength of my ancestors with me ... I only knew that as I was being arrested, it was the last time I would ever ride in humiliation of this kind. ... Racism is still with us. But it is up to us to prepare our children for what they have to meet, and, hopefully, we shall overcome."

Dr. Ed Coleman was the master of ceremonies and Greg Evans was chair of the committee to honor Rosa Parks. Hundreds came, many on LTD buses, to honor her with a statue in our city center.



SHANNON BROWNING

• **Fix the economy by spending more?** What we heard from the Bush administration for eight years is that the solution to our nation's economic woes is for everyone to go out and shop. Obama has better solutions, but old attitudes and values die hard. Excessive consumption, particularly on credit, has been a major contributor to both our economic and environmental problems. What makes more sense is to focus individual and government spending on useful products and services. Money spent on warfare and prisons, for example, brings a lousy return on investment, as does money spent on the unrepairable plastic and electronic gadgets that overflow our landfills. But spending strategically on education, child welfare, preventive medicine, green energy, green design, infrastructure, the arts, organic agriculture, sensible and practical consumer goods – this is how we build a solid and dependable economy.

• Longtime *R-G* editor/manager **Jim Godbold** left the *R-G* in December, but if the paper published anything about his departure, we missed it. Godbold joined the paper in 1983 and rose through the ranks to become managing editor, overseeing 100 newsroom staffers when the paper was at its peak, then executive editor, then editorial page associate editor. Godbold had a big impact on the newspaper and was a candid critic of the paper's shortcomings (see *EW* news story, 5/27/04). He left quietly to join the PR staff at PeaceHealth. We remember some hoopla when Fred Crafts retired after decades as an arts critic at the *R-G*. Maybe Godbold got a party.

Godbold is not the first seasoned journalist to leave the daily paper for a PR job, and he likely won't be the last. Environmental reporter Lance Robertson took a PR post with EWEB several years ago, and his job was never filled; other reporters picked up some pieces of his beat. Tim Gleason, dean of the UO's School of Journalism and Communication, told a crowd at City Club last week that one of the great tragedies in journalism today is that "so much intellectual capacity and institutional memory" is leaving the profession. On the upside, we hear retired *R-G* editorial writer Don Robinson is back on staff editing letters to the editor.

• A sparkling and **energized downtown Eugene** is touted in the January *VIA* magazine put out by the AAA. Oregon is celebrated in the Northwest edition, and to read the "Weekender" story by Christopher Hall (www.viamagazine.com), you'd think our downtown is full of life and vitality. We will take his vision, knowing that every new visitor helps make it come true.

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

GABRIEL HAMEL

As a senior at South Eugene High School in 2000, Gabriel Hamel was the first from his school in 25 years to win a state championship in wrestling. He also joined the Army National Guard as a senior and found himself 20 miles south of Baghdad in 2003-04, patrolling Iraq's main highway. "It was a good personal experience; it grew me up," says Hamel, who got out in '05. "I'm thankful we made it back." Struck by the poverty he saw in Iraq and on trips to El Salvador, he launched Humans for Humanity, a nonprofit umbrella group to support projects that help poor people. HH's first project is Escuela Camino Claro (caminoclaro.org), a community education center in Pavones, Costa Rica, co-founded by Hamel's SEHS classmate Haley Whitely. ECC will hold its second annual Pura Vida fundraising event at the Fenario Gallery, 881 Willamette Street, on the evening of January 31, featuring a silent auction and music by four local bands. Since his return from Iraq, Hamel has also served as wrestling coach at South. "My first year back, there were four kids on the team," he says. "Now we have 22, mostly freshmen and sophomores." Last fall he began full-time work at the school, teaching a life skills class for special-needs kids.

