

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

with patients at the Birth Center and PeaceHealth pre-natal clinic regardless of a family's income or insurance status.

I urge PeaceHealth to uphold its financial obligations and promise to our community to relocate the Birth Center in 2009 to the new facility planned at RiverBend.

*Eleanor Vandegrift
Eugene*

PREVENTION VS. DESTRUCTION

I read with delight Bonny Bettman's assessment of Eugene's hidden government and budget murk (1/29) because on the evening of Oct. 27, 2008, several dozen animal welfare advocates were forced to gather and provide testimony to the Eugene City Council in order to prevent the city finance director from eliminating a nationally groundbreaking city program. The experience showed all of us who provided testimony that Bettman's assessment of Eugene's governance is spot-on.

The city Low Cost Spay and Neuter Clinic has been in existence since 1978. Tax dollars subsidize the spay and neuter of pets. By preventing animal overpopulation and reducing the number of unwanted animals, the city reduces costs for collecting, sheltering and killing homeless pets. The cost savings for tax payers is 3-1.

At the October council meeting city staffers were forced by Bettman to admit the clinic was funded through the end of fiscal year 2009 and that ending the service six months prematurely was imprudent.

City staffers were assigned to meet with citizens and make long range plans for the program. One meeting was held in November, but beyond that city staffers have lost interest in the program as well as the clinic's union-represented staff, who were previously and unceremoniously laid-off.

Due to hidden governance and budget murk, the city will claim the recession has forced it to cut the clinic when what really

will have happened was that our unelected city executive staff, with all the power and none of the accountability, will have acted upon their long standing plan to ditch this service program. City executive staff are neither progressive nor humane, nor do they comprehend our legacy and that long ago taxpayers chose prevention over destruction.

*Joan Walker
Eugene*

UNWANTED ROAD WORK

I would like to invite the citizens of Eugene to drive by Maple Street and Elmira Road to look at all the nice street trees posted with the dreaded city notice of removal. These trees (in my yard, two well-producing apples and an attractive birch) are being taken out for road work that nearly everyone who lives on the streets does not want.

We are being charged thousands of dollars we can't afford for work we wouldn't want if it were free. The trees that give our street character are being taken down and our property taxes increased forever.

Not only is insult being added to injury, but plague and a little famine, too. Charging locals (under threat of losing their homes) for so called "improvements" is a strange and regressive tax that other parts of Oregon are moving away from. Can't we do better?

We are entering a transition mandated by peak oil. Let's not yoke ourselves to serving the fickle needs of the internal combustion engine at the expense of the trees and the neighborhood. After you see our trees, contact the mayor and City Council, please.

*Gary L. Adams
Eugene*

OOPS, SORRY

I owe a public apology to *EW* film critic Jason Blair. My letter of some weeks past ("Love the Slumdog," 12/31) attempted humor and constructive criticism but

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