

A MAJOR PLAYER

I find it odd that Lane County residents are required to support a lobbying group with their tax dollars (News Briefs, 3/5). I have looked into this group, the Association of O&C Counties (AOCC), and found that it is NOT a public body and not bound by laws for public meetings or public disclosure. It doesn't even have a website accessible by the public.

AOCC was one of the parties that brought suit against the Northwest Forest Plan, and it introduced legislation in 2006 to sell off half of the O&C lands to private interests, which fortunately failed. It is considered a stakeholder in Oregon timber policy and consulted by BLM and the state on timber legislation. It is a major player for various O&C counties in determining how Secure Rural Schools funds are utilized.

In spite of AOCC's effort to renew SRS funding, this was in fact accomplished by Sen. Ron Wyden, not AOCC. And the O&C Counties already belong to the Association of Oregon Counties, a public body that divulges its proceedings and promotes the interests of Oregon's counties and regional blocks.

Lane County has the option of withdrawing from AOCC, as did Benton County over 10 years ago. Conservation Leaders Network, headed by a former Curry County supervisor, can supply information and many good reasons why Lane County should follow suit.

Not only do we pay dues to AOCC, but we pay for the time of our commissioners who attend its meetings and take trips to Salem and D.C. to lobby for special interests. Not to mention that AOCC uses its moneys at will to commission studies and make donations.

It donated \$500 to the Temperate Forest Foundation in '06 and made at least one grant to a private school, among other expenditures. Why?

I personally object to my tax dollars being spent on a lobbying group. If this is accepted policy, I ask Lane County to also fund groups that represent conservation and recreation uses of our forestland, as well as groups endorsing fair taxation on Oregon's timber industry.

Mora Dewey
Cottage Grove

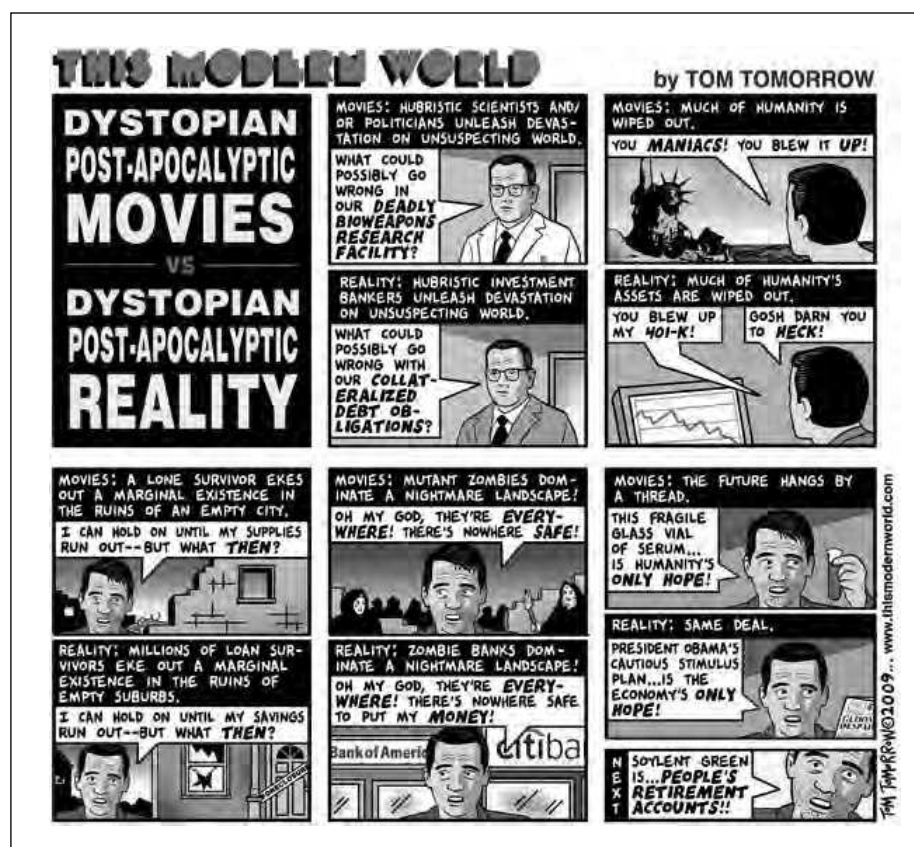
WHAT ABOUT RYE?

Michael E. Hoekstra's dismay (letters, 3/5) at finding no paczek on Fat Tuesday in Eugene merits his alarm. But more to the point, what about our daily bread? Has anyone ever eaten a good Polish rye bread in Eugene? I have, but I brought it in my luggage when flying back from my longtime home on Chicago's Northwest side. For that matter, has anyone ever found a good rye bread of any kind in this town? Not to mention Polish sausage or pierogies. And don't get me started on Greek food!

Chuck Kleinhans
Eugene

ANY MUQUAM WILL DO

Yahshi mu siz? I am a simple Uighur tribesman drawn to Eugene's supposedly progressive culture. As everyone knows, after a hard day we like to relax with a simple meal of sweetened congealed goat's blood. But after a few hours searching two of Eugene's "alternative" markets, I had to wonder how open-minded they really were when I couldn't find fresh, only canned.



Later, I went to Market of Choice and simply asked that they change their music to that of my culture. This proud Uighur-American wasn't picky; any muquam would do, but they refused to honor my request.

Will I ever live in a community where people think of others first?

Kiyin korishayli!

Kashgan
aka Bruce Stern
Eugene

POLISH TREATS

Regarding Michael Hoekstra's letter (3/5): I read the letter twice searching for signs

of sarcasm or wit, but I am convinced you intended neither.

In a town where men wear dresses, pot smoking is all but ignored, transvestites get their own bathrooms, witches and warlocks are welcome and we have schools where 10-year-old children dictate the curriculum, you managed to find one mother-f&%@*%! bakery that didn't serve a particular dish from your country, and now you are "outraged ... grossly ignored ... underrepresented," and doubting just how progressive we really are?

I am going to guess that you are the same kind of guy who wants to get the 19-year-old kid at McDonald's fired for forgetting to



Police Site Options

Advice on putting the police in their place

Let's say you wanted to site a new police building downtown, and even though voters had been strongly against the project in two separate elections, you still believed that it was past time to resolve the problem.

Let's say you thought this was a good time to go ahead and build a new building downtown and that you wanted to keep the police operation in the downtown area, even though it meant having to figure out how to include 90 to 100 cars.

Let's say you had a building reserve of \$26 million and you thought you could build a bare bones beginning of what was needed for \$16 million with enough left over to take care of the earthquake and other basic needs of the present City Hall.

And let's say you were looking for the best site for this new facility, hoping to find that the best or at least a decent fit would be on existing city-owned land such as the triangle east of the new U.S. Courthouse or the parking lot across 8th Avenue from City Hall.

I share the first of these views and I think we should fix City Hall. A downtown the size of Eugene's deserves to have an important set of public buildings (and open spaces) - including a new central police station, an art museum, a natural history museum, an indoor Farmers Market, a new 300 seat theater and a better DIVA - jewels for the civic crown.

Some of us also believe that we'll need a 21st century trolley on Willamette that travels down 5th Avenue to the new downtown riverfront in order to tie it all together.

The point is that each of these public buildings is an opportunity to add centers of lasting quality to Eugene's downtown. We've been able to do just that with the

new library, fire station and Hult Center. Do we now have enough of a budget to do justice to a new police station?

And is the time ripe politically? No. I think the leadership of

the police association will have to agree to attend charm school before Eugeneans will ever support a new police project.

Economically, the money might be better held in reserve to protect existing jobs and social services during the hard times ahead. Or, how about seriously considering an investment of city money in a new PV plant on the Hynix site? We could walk the PV arrays built there directly over to the new EWEB buildings and save a lot of carbon in the process.

There are serious problems with using both the triangle and 8th Avenue sites. Storing 90 cars with a building on 8th gets in the way of plans for a "Great Street" pedestrian connection to the riverfront. It just creates another dead civic block full of sleeping cars after everyone goes home at 5 pm.

Any building on the city's triangle site is destined to become an important partner to our new courthouse, so we won't want some cheap police box there that Judge Hogan has to cringe at from his corner office. This triangle is also a key to riverfront access and development because of the way the railroad pinches the eastern end of the downtown riverfront. Developing this site in isolation would rob it of its larger potential to play an important role in a courthouse/riverfront plan that unites both sides of the railroad corridor.

My first choice is still adding new layers of parking to the county garage on 6th and buying or leasing the state office building next door - the one being remodeled right now - as a temporary police station until the time is ripe for creative destruction and rebuilding.

I'd also like to see us consider an extra layer of parking on that same county garage in order to free the North Park Block from its "butterfly bondage."

A longer version of Jerry Diethelm's column including a map of the triangle site can be found on his website www.uoregon.edu/~diethelm Look for "Eugene Weekly Articles" at the top of the website.