

THE NOISE SCENE

In response to the cover story about Eugene's music scene (3/12), I would like to mention Eugene's potent noise scene. Even though you can't dance to it and it has no melody, noise and related experimental improv has a small but dedicated following here in Eugene. Names like Chemically Restrained, I Died, Hobby Knife, View and the Estrangers are little known outside of their circle of noise-artist friends and on internet noise boards.

Noise is a catch-all genre that can include elements of metal, ambient and electronica; it can be ethereal and subtle but also can be screaming harsh walls of sound. It can run the gamut instrumentally from standard electric guitars plus effects pedals to medical equipment and even children's electronic toys.

There are at least a dozen noise artists in Eugene who play out occasionally at such venues as Samurai Duck, New Zone gallery and DIVA. In fact, DIVA has been the host of the Eugene Noise Fest since 2005, which has featured two to three days of noise enthusiasts from the Pacific Northwest and beyond. So next time you hear about a "noise show," come check it out and bring your own earplugs.

In order to build this scene there need to be more venues willing to host noise acts, perhaps as warm-ups for metal or improv jazz acts. Venues need to take a chance, which I know is asking a lot in these tough times. Galleries are good venues for noise, but folks pretty much have to "pay to play" as there are fees for the use of gallery space.

*Hobby Knife
aka Marilyn Kent
Eugene*

MY SHITTY LITTLE BAND

Wow, I wish my dad was EW's director of sales and marketing. Maybe my shitty little band can get their picture in his paper twice in a month, too! GFY!

*Jeff Albertson
Springfield*

ESTABLISHMENT BIAS

I started to listen to a recent broadcast of KLCC's "Sunday at Noon" program (3/22) concerning the decline of print media readership both locally and nationwide, then turned it off in disgust after about a half hour because I realized there was only one point of view being presented: that of the establishment press.

While Paul Neville of *The Register-Guard* and UO journalism professor Scott Maier were there barking for corporate news, Ted Taylor, editor of *Eugene Weekly* and arguably one of the best alternative voices in the region, was noticeably missing from the cozy little confab. Had he, or another *Weekly* representative, been invited, but couldn't or wouldn't show? No information, one way or another ... but that's pretty characteristic of "reporting" these days in the Chamber of Commerce house organs we call the mainstream media, which is one of several reasons why so many of us have dropped the R(A)G and others of its ilk.

And is should also be noted that Ted's absence didn't stop the pair from slamming his contention that the *Weekly's*

circulation had risen while the *Guard's* had fallen, without giving him the courtesy of a response to their weak reasoning *why* it was inaccurate to compare the two. Now it's possible he did call in during the last half of the program and defend his position, but by then I was gone. Just like I've been gone from the R-G for years.

*Bill Smee
Springfield*

EDITOR'S NOTE: EW was not invited to participate in the panel. For the record, it is tricky to compare the circulations of a paid daily and a free weekly. However, according to the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, the R-G has lost 12,600 weekday subscribers in the past 10 years. During that same time, EW has increased its free distribution by about 10,000 papers, and about 95 percent of those papers are picked up.

IT'S A FED DECISION

Recent EW articles (2/26, 1/22) about plans to widen I-5 included errors.

Title 23, U.S. Code, mandates that the Federal Highway Administration has the authority to approve boondoggles such as the widened I-5 Willamette bridge, the \$4.2 billion Columbia River crossing between Portland and Vancouver, Wash., and other federal aid highways — they are not local initiatives requiring City Council approval.

Lane County and the cities of Eugene and Springfield are united in supporting about a billion dollars in highway expansions in our metro area. These projects include widening Beltline (\$250 million), Route 126 in Springfield (\$200 million), I-5 Beltline interchange (\$175 million), I-5 Willamette bridge and Franklin interchange (\$200 million?) and I-5 from I-105 to Route 58 (\$100 million).

Gov. Kulongoski wants \$18 billion for "modernization," more than half for Portland area highways. These projects have bipartisan support from politicians who claim concern for climate change while funding highway expansions.

Climate change is not the primary issue for the I-5 widening approvals. Federal transportation law requires that planners consider the traffic demand 20 years in the future. Since we are past peak oil, the continent-wide rush to build more bypasses, wider bridges, outer beltways and NAFTA superhighways will not be needed.

No U.S. community has cut plans for more highways because of peak oil and climate change.

Local, regional and national highway plans are detailed at www.sustaineugene.org and www.naftahighway.org

*Mark Robinowitz
Eugene*

HIT SINGLES NEEDED

I've been a practicing musician in this area for a little over 10 years. I think there are a couple of things we can do to make our scene big, the biggest and most important being emphasis on songwriting and in specific, writing singles. A lot of local bands, mine included, are very self-indulgent when it comes to songwriting (although I think I'm getting better at this).

The single needs to be studied by local bands and songwriters. Singles are what drive record/CD sales. They are why people will go to see a band: to hear that "one" song. Crafting a single is incredibly hard, thus the need for study. Bono in the most recent

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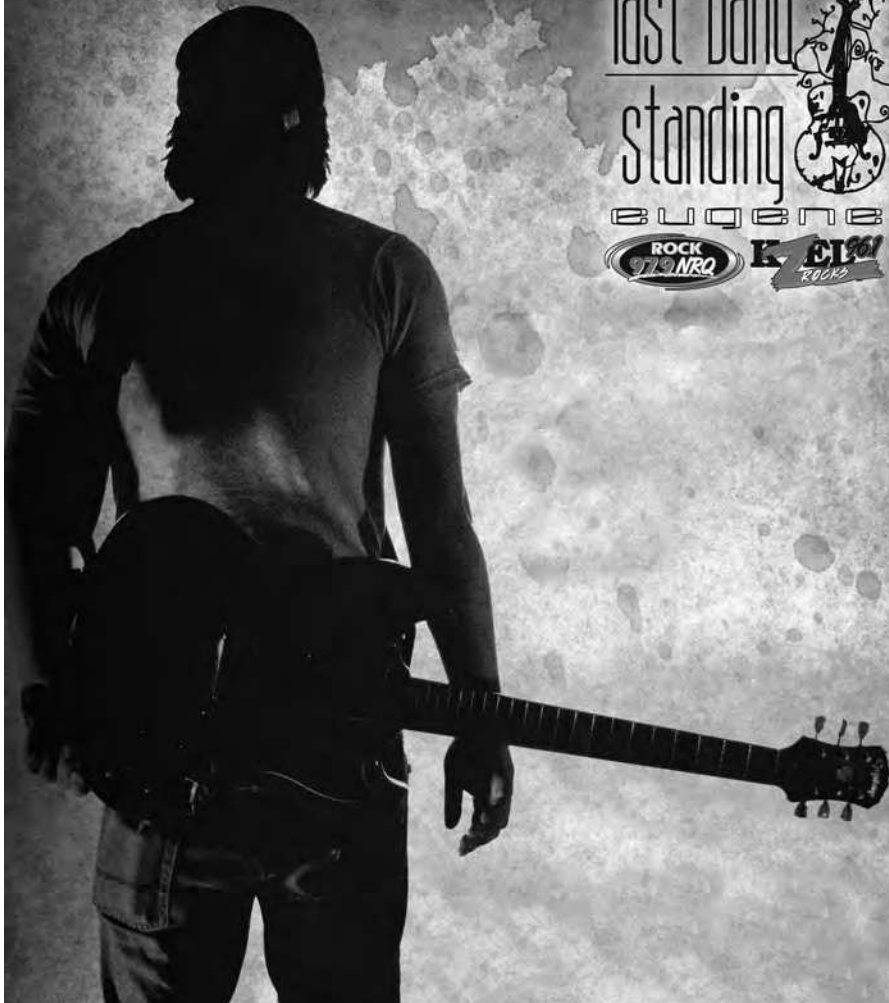
Rob Whicker DDS



last band standing

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