

next two years.

"With the exception of corporations with profits over \$10 million, this rate gradually decreases back to the current 6.6 percent by 2013. If adopted, Oregon's overall state business taxes will rank fourth-lowest instead of third-lowest in the nation."

Barnhart says Oregon businesses benefit both directly and indirectly from the infrastructure and services the state provides, whether it's by providing an educated workforce or by maintaining the transportation and utility infrastructure that they rely on to do business.

"It is only fair they help pay for these services. Furthermore," he says, "larger corporations should pay their fair share and we should shield Oregon's small businesses as much as possible because they will be key players in Oregon's economic recovery."

"Oregonians have flooded my office with emails because they are horrified by the proposed cuts to schools, human services and public safety. I am too," he says. "We passed these revenue raising measures to ensure those cuts will not be \$733 million worse. Unless you want more teachers to lose their jobs, more school days cut, college tuition to go up, more seniors without vital services, more prisons closing and more prisoners released back onto the streets, Oregon needs this revenue. Most people reading this report will be unaffected by these changes, which will make our tax system more equitable."

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ICE RINK TO GO EXTINCT?

Anybody have \$3 million to spare? The Ice and Sports Center at the Lane County

Fairgrounds is in need of major repairs and might close indefinitely with the wrap-up of the ice hockey season in March 2010.

Lane County is hurting financially and every department and every facility has been asked to make cutbacks. "I was approached to shut it down now," says Cindy Jensen, manager of the Ice Center, "but we already have contracts through the summer." She says the decision was made to stay open with reduced hours and reduced staff through the summer and the next hockey season.

The Lane County Board of Commissioners will make a final decision next spring on the future of the Ice Center. Jensen says the board will have options. Minor repairs could be made to try to keep the Ice Center open a while longer, \$200,000 could be spent to replace the perimeter boards that contain the ice, or another \$1 million could be spent to replace the 6-inch concrete slab under the ice and repair the PVC water pipes that control ground temperatures beneath the slab to prevent ice heaving. For \$3 million the county could do it all, she says, including replacing the aging compressors.

Or the county could shut it down. Despite a very busy winter season, the Ice Center is a high-maintenance money-loser for the county every year, says Jensen. The electric bill alone is \$14,000 a month.

About 1,000 county residents use the rink for UO Ducks hockey, Junior A-Team hockey, figure skating, recreational skating and youth skating programs.

— Ted Taylor

ACTIVIST ALERT

• A master plan for **Eugene's latest Ridgeline acquisition** is being developed and the first of several public workshops is from 6 to 8 pm Monday, June 29,

at the Hilyard Community Center, 2580 Hilyard St. Public input will be sought regarding trails, recreation, habitat and other topics. A requirement of the purchase agreement is that the master plan be completed by July 1, 2010.

• A free film, **Little Brother Big Pharma**, will be shown at 6:30 pm Tuesday, June 30 at the Eugene Public Library Bascom-Tykeson Room. The showing is sponsored by VALID, MindFreedom and Opal Network. Part of the film was shot in Lane County with local mental health workers and activists. Following the film will be a discussion with film director David Heine and a panel

including mental health professionals, psychiatric survivors/consumers and family members, with audience participation.

ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

• **On the blog:** Camilla posts a JibJab animated video of Obama "here to save the day." Ted blogs on the closing of the Tango Center, free lectures on the web, and comments on the real estate concept of "buying up" in hard times.

• **iAsk a Mexican!** is web-only this week.

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

LAURA POUUEYMIROU

"We're like cheerleaders for families," says Laura Poueymirou, an early intervention and early childhood special education specialist with EC CARES, a Lane County agency affiliated with the UO College of Education. "We teach parents and preschool teachers about child development and how to adjust for each child with individual needs."

Poueymirou grew up near Saratoga in upstate New York, majored in psychology at SUNY Geneseo, and worked four years at a group home for kids with special needs. Then she, a friend, and a dog spent six months exploring the northern states in her VW van. "I wound up here and haven't left," she says. "It'll be 14 years in October." A volunteer at the WOW Hall since she arrived ("I found out about it from Frog"), Poueymirou retired earlier this month after four years on the Hall's Board of Directors. A grad of the county's master recycler program, she also volunteers on the recycling crew at events such as the Oregon Country Fair and the Eugene Celebration. She will take a leave of absence in September for a year of adventure in South America, where she plans to learn Spanish and to volunteer for an organization that's turning ranch land into national parks.



SLANT

• **Lane County commissioners** gave in to political pressure last week and voted to dedicate \$3.2 million of the county's shrinking federal revenues to funding 84 more jail beds. We heard lots of talk about criminals being let out early and killing someone; but little talk about people in need dying from lack of county services. Let's not forget that the jail funding decision was due to *political* pressure, not public pressure. If the public really felt unsafe and wanted to fund more cops and jail beds, voters would have happily approved at least one of a string of public safety funding measures that have failed in recent years.

County officials know the \$3.2 million won't last long, so they are pondering a \$20 million, five-year local option levy on the ballot either in November of this year or next. Sheriff Burger wants to wait, but the earlier election has two advantages: Jail beds are currently in the public eye, and public safety advocates are already organized. An election in 2010 is a mixed bag: No double majority is needed to pass money measures in general elections; but the economy could further disintegrate, and voters could be even more anti-government and anti-taxes.

The county can refer a measure to the ballot, but county officials would much prefer that the citizenry rise up and organize a petition drive and campaign to pass a measure. No polling has been done lately, but we imagine funding jail beds with federal taxes is more popular than local taxes. Some package of taxes and fees will be needed soon to replace federal timber payments and provide stability to county government. But any measure that favors punishment over prevention is bound to fail.

• A parallel to the county quandary can also be found in the political pressure to spend \$16 million on a **new police headquarters** for EPD, despite alarming deficits looming in our city budget and the need to make cuts in police personnel. City councilors, city staff and the police union do not want a public vote on this issue; previous attempts to fund cop shops at the ballot box have failed miserably. What happened to the idea of elected officials representing the will of the people?

• Here's a tip for reading the **big glossy mail ads** about our Oregon senators and health care that are landing in our mail boxes these days. First, look for the tiniest print. It's the most important. It identifies who paid for the mailing. We've received two expensive mailings from AFSCME, the labor union for state, county, and municipal employees; one from the Wyden for Senate committee; and one from America's Pharmaceutical Research Companies and FamiliesUSA, otherwise known as "Big Pharma." The type on the last one is truly tiny. We asked Sen. Merkley's office to comment on the Big Pharma piece which cleverly paired him with Wyden and his health care plan. Merkley had neither seen nor approved the mailing. That's possible under section 527 of federal campaign finance law. That's why it is so important to follow the money when you're reading the ads.

• June is **LGBT Pride Month** (yes, President Obama even issued a proclamation about it) though we tend to cede local celebrations to the big city a couple of hours up the interstate. One local event to attend is Monday night's Celebration of the Heart: Embracing Diversity. That's where you can see all three of the Community Alliance of Lane County (CALC)'s traveling photo exhibits, including the one that freaked out a couple of Meadowlark parents because of the words "trans" and "queer" in one caption (see News Briefs last week). CALC's event, which runs from 6:30 to 8 pm at the First Christian Church, stands as an attempt to promote some sort of "healing" after the trans hate spewed both privately and quite publicly in reader letters and comments on the R-G's articles and op-ed pieces. Violence against trans folk is all too common, and with attacks rising on LGB people as well, it's important for sane Eugeneans to stand up and say we embrace and cherish trans, queer, bisexual, lesbian and gay members of our community. More info at www.calclane.org and see our Calendar Friday and Saturday for Corvallis events.

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