

• We've talked before in this column about **The Register-Guard's peculiar and ill-advised campaign** to discredit progressive county commissioners, particularly Bill Fleenor and Rob Handy who were elected despite the daily endorsing their opponents. We saw another blatant example on the front page Sunday, June 28: reporter Matt Cooper's big investigation of basically nothing. This 1,400-word piece was long on innuendo and short on substance.

County attorney Liane Richardson apparently raised an issue of whether Commissioners Pete Sorenson, Handy and Fleenor were making decisions improperly in light of open meeting laws. She asked the commissioners about it and was satisfied with their answers. That should have killed the story, or at least altered its accusatory tone and focus. The big headline "Meetings three commissioners held raise questions" was also misleading. Nowhere in the story does it say the three commissioners (a quorum) actually met at the same time in private.

What's ironic is that the current County Commission's progressive members are much more transparent, conscientious and open to public input than their predecessors. Most significantly, key committee work, once done behind closed doors, is now done in open sessions. And commissioners have gone out of their way to meet with community groups that have been ignored in the past.

• Was the county **decision to fund 84 jail beds** due to political or public pressure? Last week in this column we said it was political, but we've heard from one commissioner that it was actually a financial decision. Bill Fleenor tells us it was budget crunch time June 17, and if last-minute state revenue predictions had not been favorable, the decision could have easily gone the other way.

• **Local TV producers, listen up.** We laughed for an hour and a half Saturday night, June 26, at Tsunami Books with 80 other fans of an underground Eugene comedy group on par with *Saturday Night Live* and Jon Stewart. This is Live Matinee. With almost no advance publicity, they sold out four nights at Tsunami, competing with both Bach and track last weekend. Together since 1978, the players are Tamsin Morgan, Nancy Cave, Richard Cave, Barbara Embree and Bob Marquis. Betty Hemmingsen is technical director and Cheyney Ryan is the musical director whose piano magic links their acts. Not all of those acts would make it past TV censors, but they have uproarious fun with Kitty, Bonny and Betty at a City Council meeting; a dog who is a counselor; the "allergy Olympics;" "whoring for schools" and more – a total of 23 acts. Live Matinee wouldn't work on a big stage, but TV cameras could bring them to a larger audience.

• Is "Sunday at Noon," **KLCC's only local talk show**, going off the air? Rumors are flying that the one-hour-a-week program will be canceled for at least three months. Steve Barton, general manager of KLCC, confirmed the rumor this week, saying "both the hosts are leaving, and the show will be taking a short hiatus as we figure our next step." Host Claude Offenbacher says he expects the program to return in the fall. He's taking a sabbatical and his co-host Andrew Bartholomew has taken a job in Portland. Barton also confirmed rumors that KLCC is now fully digital, and "it would, from my perspective, be interesting to talk about the community radio aspect."

The lack of community radio in Eugene is frustrating for many of us. The closest we've come is when John Musumeci and Suzanne Arlie bought the commercial station KOPT 1600-AM, made it an Air America affiliate and hired local hosts to chat live with local people daily on every topic imaginable. KOPT was a money-loser and was eventually sold to Oregon Public Broadcasting. Despite calls for local content, OPB just made 1600 a relay for its Portland-based programming. Its weekday "Think Out Loud" program is top-notch, but it rarely has Eugene content or callers. KRVM at 1280-AM still broadcasts Jefferson Public Radio's "Jefferson Exchange" out of Ashland, with more Eugene content than OPB provides. In the end, one of the more intellectually vibrant cities on the West Coast is left without its own viable community radio station.

What would digital community radio look like on KLCC? Probably not a station you could pick up on your car radio, but maybe a station you could get on your computer, as a podcast (to add to Eugene's podcast-rich list) or on satellite radio. Stay tuned, so to speak.

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

Lane Area Herbicide Spray Schedule

• Please thank the Eugene District of the **Bureau of Land Management** at 683-6600 for choosing to manually control invasive plants species throughout BLM ownership in Lane County (ODF Notification No. 2009-781-50360).

Compiled by Jan Wroncy, Forestland Dwellers: 342-8332, forestlanddwellers.org

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