

HYPED RELEASE OF SHOPLIFTER

This summer jail boosters successfully hyped the early release of an inmate later convicted of rape as a political bludgeon to increase jail deputy funding.

But what was the dangerous crime the inmate, Paul Dawson, was convicted of before he was released due to jail overcrowding? Court records show it involved shoplifting and scuffling with security guards.

Last August, Dawson stole a pair of shoes and a lanyard from the UO Duck Store, according to court records. When confronted, he apparently pushed a guard. For the shoplifting and scuffle, he was convicted of Robbery 3 (the least serious robbery), Theft 2 (of property greater than \$50 in value) and Assault 4, the least serious violent crime involving a non-serious intentional, reckless or negligent injury to another. Assault 4 is a misdemeanor.

It's unclear if Dawson would have been released after the shoplifting and misdemeanor incident even if the 84 jail beds hadn't been cut due to a reduction in federal funding. The county has given early release to thousands of inmates involved in minor crimes over the past decades due to cuts in federal funding and local voters repeatedly rejecting tax increases for the jail.

But Lane Circuit Court Judge Gregory Foote claimed the release of the shoplifter and the subsequent rape was "as a result of a political decision" by progressive county Commissioners calling it the "irresponsible actions of a group of politicians." Conservatives, including *The Register-Guard* and laid-off jail deputies and their friends, echoed the political attack.

But it didn't appear that Foote's colleagues thought Dawson was especially dangerous before the rape. Dawson was released after his arrest with a promise to return for his trial, which he did. In sentencing Dawson to one year, Lane Circuit Court Judge Maurice Merten ordered, "the defendant is eligible for all alternatives" and "may be considered" for "any form of temporary leave from custody, reduction in sentence, work release alternative incarceration." The court "is not opposed to alternative sentencing sanctions at the discretion of the supervisory authority."

The case file indicated that Dawson, 23, had a criminal history of earlier convictions for misdemeanor Assault 4, theft and criminal mischief, some as a juvenile.

Dawson spent only a day in jail before sheriff staff decided he was the safest person to release due to federal limits on the number of inmates the facility can hold.

Ironically, if Dawson had been convicted of less serious misdemeanors, he may have spent more time in jail. The city of Eugene pays the county to reserve about 20 beds at the jail for people convicted of minor crimes by the city's municipal court. Neither the city nor the county will allow more dangerous offenders from Eugene to fill those beds reserved for minor offenses. — Alan Pittman

ELF GOES MAINSTREAM?

The former spokesman for the nebulous Earth Liberation Front, Craig Rosebraugh, is celebrating the national launch of *Resistance: the Journal of the Earth Liberation Movement*, an eco-friendly new magazine. The most recent issue features stories such as "Ecoterrorist of the Season: Shell" and a story called "Solidarity Actions ... thanks but no thanks" discussing the Romania arson that was set in response to the Jeff "Free" Luers trial for his own Romania fire.

Rosebraugh, one of the magazine's co-editors, made headlines as the Portland-based spokesman who issued press releases of ELF actions both locally and across the Northwest.

The magazine will be available locally at Borders and other major bookstore chains as well as at smaller independent bookstores and infoshops, Rosebraugh says. The choice to go with larger, corporate distribution stems from the goal to create "an effective, diverse and large movement to protect the planet," he says.

The magazine is a "response to an urgent climate crisis that needs immediate and effective action," he says. It shares its name with a newsprint publication from about nine years ago that Rosebraugh worked on here in Oregon that documented ELF activity during that time.

Rosebraugh says, "*Resistance* was created to inform readers not only of the dangerous state of the planet, but also the urgency of action." The magazine, he says, features discussions on the strategy, theory, news and frontline actions of a new emerging environmental movement, which "realizes that when governments and politicians refuse to act to protect the planet, it is up to all of us to step in and protect our home." The goal, he says, is to "remove the profit motive that is driving environmental destruction."

With the recent upholding by a federal appeals court of the convictions of six Stop Huntingdon Cruelty activists as terrorists under the Animal Enterprise Terrorism act, despite arguments that their website's activities were protected by the First Amendment, it is unclear whether the new magazine will encounter free speech and press issues of its own. Rosebraugh says, "If this were a just country and government, no, we would not. But when has this government ever been truly just?"

For the full interview with Rosebraugh, go to blogs.eugeneweekly.com

— Camilla Mortensen



news Briefs

STOVETEAM EXPANDS FACTORIES

Remember field burning? Imagine smoke like that in your house, every day, whenever you wanted to cook food or make tea.

Indoor air pollution kills 1.6 million people a year, according to the World Health Organization. In developing countries, indoor smoke can be a bigger killer, especially of children, than malaria. One thing that can help? More efficient stoves.

When the *Weekly* wrote about Eugene's StoveTeam International in July 2008, founder Nancy Hughes and board member Gerry Reicher were excited about expanding production of their Ecocina stoves into more countries. Hughes says that measurements have shown the Ecocina reduces particulates by 70 percent and wood consumption by at least 50 percent.

StoveTeam began serious work in El Salvador, where factory owner Gustavo Peña was enthusiastically attempting to expand production last year. "We thought the factory would produce and sell maybe 150 stoves in the first year," Hughes said in an interview. Instead, the factory made 6,000 stoves.

Now, there's a factory in Guatemala (owned and operated by Guatemalans), and StoveTeam International is working with a technical school in Honduras. Volunteers and board members just returned from a trip to El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua, where they're collaborating with a group to set up a factory in Leon.

StoveTeam International scatters the seeds but doesn't collect the fruit. "We provide information, help find the money, provide the stove design and molds," Reicher said. Then the factory is on its own, and only if the owner wants to call the stoves "Ecocinas" does StoveTeam hold the group responsible for sticking with the design.

With the economic downturn in the U.S., funds, which have mostly come from Rotary groups and Rotary International, have dried up a bit. Local groups still provide money for factory start-ups, Hughes

and Reicher said, but the international group no longer matches the donations. So they're working harder on fundraising from individuals.

In El Salvador on their most recent trip, the vice minister for the environment spoke enthusiastically about the stoves, Reicher said. Hughes said that the last vice minister, a man, was dismissive — "He thought the Ecocina looked like a toilet!" The new vice minister, Reicher said, saw it differently.

"The Ecocina is so much hotter and does all of the things faster than before and with much less money for wood," he said. The women and men who buy the stove see that "they can breathe, and their kids don't get burned." The vice minister will visit the Salvadoran factory in early November, and Hughes and Reicher have hopes for government-supported expansion.

For more information about donating or volunteering for StoveTeam, call go to www.stoveteam.org or call 729-9223.

— Suzi Steffen

CLASSROOM BUCKS GO TO DUCK ATHLETICS

The UO has long claimed that its lavish athletics department is financially self-sufficient.

Turns out that's not really true. The UO Athletics Department is receiving a \$1.54 million dollar subsidy in 2008-09 from state coffers, according to the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE) budget. That's a 32 percent increase in the athletic subsidy from the year before.

Meanwhile, the state has slashed services in a budget crisis, jacked up college tuition, shut offices and packed classrooms with the second highest pupil-to-teacher ratio in the nation. The UO spends its athletics money on a \$7 million contract for its football coach, the most expensive basketball arena ever built and a paneled football locker room with a waterfall, video game consoles and other amenities that rival extravagant spas.

The athletic subsidy comes out of lottery money that the state could otherwise use to backfill its budget and avoid cuts to schools and other services. The Legislature voted in 2005 to dedicate a bigger cut of lottery proceeds to intercollegiate athletics in the state. The UO gets the biggest cut of the subsidy pot, which totaled \$6.4 million in 2008-09.

The 2005 bill almost tripled the subsidy

Lane Area Herbicide Spray Schedule

• A massive herbicide spray program is proposed by the BLM. Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for vegetation treatments using herbicides on BLM lands in Oregon are due on Dec. 1. Call BLM's Ken Denton, EIS team leader, at (503) 808-6443 or call the BLM Eugene District Office at 683-6600. View documents at: www.blm.gov/or/plans/vegreatmentseis/

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