

INVESTIGATE NOW

Didn't we vote for a Civilian Review Board (CRB) to investigate police happenings such as questionable Taser use? Tasers have killed more than 350 people in our country. They are a dangerous weapon. It should make everyone concerned when we read of cops Taser-ing non-English speaking, sleeping, unarmed college students in our community. We need the CRB to investigate this case now and not leave it up to the Police Commission, City Council or anyone else.

Ruth Duemler
Eugene

GATHERING DUST

In the Sept. 19 *EW* was a letter to the editor from Mia Nelson expressing her feeling that she was "underwhelmed" by the new public safety study by Jean Tate and Dave Frohnmayer. I too have some reservations about the study, but I know and respect Jean Tate from our days on the Oregon ACLU Chapter Board. I think this group will spend a lot of time and effort on this study; however, my reservation is about what will happen to the completed study.

In 2004, I was one of nine citizens of Lane County appointed to the Service Stabilization Task Force and was given a mandate to study the entire budget of the Lane County government. One of the first things we found out was that about 70 percent of the budget was for public safety including the Lane County Jail.

We met for more than three months, and David Piercy (yes, that David Piercy!) wrote a report that was submitted to the commissioners in November 2004. The members of the task force each received a nice certificate thanking us for our service, and I assume David's report joined the other such reports in someone's cabinet at the county.

I hope that before Tate's and Frohnmayer's report is finished that they will ask the county administration to locate all these prior reports and make them available to the committee to review prior to writing their own reports. I also hope that the present commissioners and administration will try to implement some of these ideas.

G. Dennis Shine
Springfield

RAKE THAT MUCK

Hooray for Amy Goodman (cover story, 11/19)! What we need right now are modern muckrakers to hold government accountable by telling the truth as it is. This really is not new; such journalists muckraked back in the 1940s etc. Keep muckraking alive!

Jane Grimaldi
Eugene

PAYING FOR SPIRIT WORK

As a shamanic practitioner who charges for his work, I felt it appropriate to respond to Thomas Lightning Bolt's letter regarding shamanism (11/19).

I certainly agree that the Arizona tragedy is deeply saddening and speaks to the need for appropriate training.

Thomas correctly says that shamanic realms contain dangers. However, shamanic practitioners are trained to handle them.

Modern shamanism is a living, evolving

tradition and is not about exploitation, but about bringing these powerful healing techniques to our dangerously spiritually alienated times.

Payment for spirit-based work is a passionately debated issue. The shamanic practitioner does not sell ceremony, Creator's blessings or power. The universe is composed of energy and its flow. Money and gifts are forms of energy. The practitioner is exchanging their energy and risk to seek a boon from Spirit on others' behalf, which may include ceremony, blessings and gifts of power. Typically other cultures that do not allow payments will allow the shaman to be the caretaker of gifts to Spirit — i.e. food or a blanket.

If the shamans who don't accept payment are doing shamanism full-time, then someone has to be "paying" their way in the world. After all, shamanic work is not effortless nor risk free. And, like others, shaman still have to make ends meet.

In truth, spirit work is not the best path to money. Making some money allows practitioners to continue offering their piece of the spiritual path on a full-time basis.

If the intention is simply to make money, then I'd suggest working for the U.S. Mint.

David Lang
Urban Shamanism
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: A longer version of this letter can be found as a Viewpoint on our website this week.

CAHOOTS DOES IT

Your article "Town Hall to Examine Issues of Homelessness" (11/19) states that activist Paul Prenskey "envision[s] a paid hotline coordinator, a network of volunteers to take one or more 7 pm to 3 am shifts on-call to offer transport to available shelter and a street patrol to assist people in connecting with unmet needs and in weeding out predators."

While any efforts to reduce poverty and homelessness in the community should be applauded, it is worth noting that CAHOOTS largely performs the functions that Prenskey envisions.

CAHOOTS stands for "Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets" and is a collaborative project between the White Bird Clinic and the Public Safety Department. CAHOOTS is a non-law enforcement entity, staffed by a mental health crisis worker and an emergency medical technician, to provide assistance around issues of substance abuse, mental illness and homelessness as well as non-emergency medical care and transportation to social services.

CAHOOTS can facilitate accessing emergency shelter, such as Buckley House Sobering and Detoxification Center for individuals who are intoxicated; Shelter Care's Royal Avenue Program for those suffering an emotional crisis; the Eugene Mission homeless shelter, and more.

CAHOOTS is in service from 1 pm to 1 am every single day and can be dispatched anywhere in Eugene city limits through the Eugene Police Department non-emergency line, 682-5111. White Bird Clinic's 24-hour crisis hotline can provide emotional support and information and referral by calling 342-8255.



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