

• Doug McVay has been active in drug policy reform efforts since 1983 and worked with Voter Power on the Oregon Marijuana Initiative/Ballot Measure Five campaign during the 1985-1986 election cycle as their petitioning coordinator and assistant director.

• Claire Syrett is the field organizer for the ACLU of Oregon and her organizing efforts are focused in educating and activating civil liberties supporters on many issues.

• Laird Funk was a chief petitioner for marijuana legalization measures in 1986, 1988 and 1990.

• Christine McGarvin, MSW is vice-chair of the Advisory Committee for Medical Marijuana and Chair of the ACMM Outreach Committee.

• Elvy Musikka is one of four remaining recipients of federal medical marijuana, and has spoken throughout the world about hemp and medical marijuana.

Following the rally will be a 4 pm party at the Voter Power office, 687 River Ave., with live music. \$5 admission.

NEW RULES FOR 'TERRORIST' PRISONS

In an April 7 letter to *EW* from the secretly established Communications Management Unit (CMU) in Marion, Ill., where he is housed, ecosaboteur Daniel McGowan announced he has filed a lawsuit against the federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP). McGowan was one of a group of activists who committed arsons and other acts of ecologically motivated sabotage across the Northwest, destroying property but not harming humans or animals. The FBI pursued the group in an investigation they dubbed "Operation Backfire."

McGowan is part of *Aref, et al. v. Holder, et al.*, a federal lawsuit filed against Attorney General Eric Holder, federal BOP officials and the BOP itself. The suit challenges the units' policies and conditions, as well as the way the CMUs in Terre Haute, Ind., and Marion, Ill., were established, which the suit says was in violation of the Administrative Procedures Act. Rachel



Daniel McGowan

Meeropol of the Center for Constitutional Rights represents McGowan in the case.

McGowan was sentenced to seven years in prison on June 4, 2007, for being a lookout on one of the actions, and setting a fire on another. He has 38 months left on his sentence.

The so-called "terrorist unit" is made up primarily of Muslim men, which has led to allegations of racial profiling. Meeropol says, "Many of our Muslim clients seem to have been transferred only for practicing their religion."

McGowan requested to be transferred out of the unit, but was denied, despite the fact that he has not received any conduct violations. "My guess is it's some vague reason related to my charges," he writes.

McGowan, like the four other men in the case was not allowed to examine or refute the allegations that led to his transfer to the CMU. Meeropol says, "It is extremely disturbing that the BOP is transferring prisoners into these experimental isolation units without any meaningful explanation, or way out. Daniel has a completely clean disciplinary history, so it is hard to escape the conclusion that he was transferred to the CMU primarily because of his politics and writings."

According to the CCR, the special prison units did not undergo the required process that gives the public notice and an opportunity to comment.

A recent announcement in the Federal Register indicates the BOP is now taking public comment on the CMUs. McGowan writes the new proposed rules would restrict him and the other inmates at the

• Look for **our election endorsements** next week, May 6. Ballots for the May 18 primary should be arriving in your mailbox soon. If you flip through your Voters' Pamphlet you will see an abundance of issues and candidates in the primary. Remember that in local nonpartisan races, the candidate who gets at least 50 percent plus one vote goes on unchallenged in the November general election. So many candidates (17) have filed for the three Lane County Commission races that we expect to see some fall face-offs between the top two vote-getters. But anything can happen, good or bad, so it's important to pay attention and vote in the primary. Some important measures are also on the ballot.

This week we're covering the County Commission races and the Extension Service measure, and we will continue with more election stories later. Most of the local media coverage of the commission races has focused on fixing the budget, creating jobs and maintaining public safety services. Those are all important issues, but the daily grind for the board revolves much more around land use and other environmental issues. Load the commission with advocates for urban sprawl, digging up more farmland for gravel pits, recruiting more polluting industries, etc., and we'll end up with a very different landscape 20 to 50 years from now. Economic development is another big issue and just calling for creating jobs doesn't actually do anything. We create local jobs for local people through bolstering our education system and the arts, supporting small businesses, and creating a healthy environment where people want to live, work, do business, play and raise families.

• Journalists affect **climate change** through their reporting. Dennis Dimick, an OSU grad, native Oregonian and *National Geographic Magazine's* executive editor for the environment was in Corvallis last week giving a talk on climate change. He also sat down with members of the media for a chat. *National Geographic* is not an "activist magazine," he said, but he pushed journalists to get the real word out on the science behind global warming and stop reporting on climate change as if there were a valid alternative to the research showing its existence.

Dimick said that journalists don't know how to report the climate change story, and that while newspapers will support a sports staff, they don't fund science reporting. Many journalists, he said, create a false sense of balance when reporting on the environment and cite both sides equally. A scientist with years of study should get more credence than a "climate skeptic" from a think tank. "You can't cover the environment like it's sports or politics," he said. "It's not the home team versus the away team." Count: How many environment reporters versus sports reporters does your daily paper have?

• Hemp and **pot activist Jack Herer** died April 15 (see story last week) and there's still no word on a local memorial gathering. We did hear this week that his prolonged illness following his heart attack in September 2009 has been a big financial drain on his family. So friends and supporters are organizing an "I Love Jack Herer" music tour and fundraiser that will kick off in Seattle April 30 and arrive in Eugene May 9. The event begins at 4:20 pm at The Muse, 21 W. 6th Ave. Janice Johnson is helping organize the tour and can be reached at 485-7646 or Google "We love the hemperor" for more information.

• We haven't **picked on the cops** for long time (well, maybe a few weeks) but stories keep coming our way. The latest is from the mother of an adolescent in Eugene. Her "happy-go-lucky, smart and polite" son got busted for some minor infraction involving riding his skateboard, his primary source of transportation to school and back. No warning for his first offense; he got a summons to Juvenile Court, and his prized skateboard was confiscated. Weeks later the kid is still feeling intimidated and traumatized; he's lost respect for the law; the case has gone into limbo, and he doesn't know if he will ever get his skateboard back. Are Eugene streets now safer? Maybe. But one more young person now cringes when he sees a badge, gun and uniform.

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



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