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Truffle Shuffle

30th Anniversary
SUNDAY FEB. 13th

ALTON BAKER PARK
EVENTS BEGIN 12:45

2 Mile Run/Walk
4 Mile Run
Kid's Race

Blast from the Past!

2011 1981-2011
Celebrating 30 Years of The Truffle Shuffle Truffle Trot!

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A BENEFIT
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TITLE SPONSORS:
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REGISTER IN PERSON:
• Eugene Running Company- Oakway Center
• CPY-BBBS Office- 935 Oak Street, Eugene

REGISTER ONLINE:
www.committedpartners.org

news Briefs

SINGLE-PAYER CONFERENCE IN PORTLAND

Should Oregon be among the first in the nation to lead the charge to single-payer health insurance? A Eugene contingency is planning to attend a statewide conference on single-payer insurance from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Saturday, Jan. 29, at the First Unitarian Church, SW 12th and Main in downtown

Portland.

Keynote speakers will be Congressman John Conyers of Michigan and Dr. Margaret Flowers of Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP). Conyers has presented HR 676, a plan for a national single-payer system, at every congressional session of the last decade. Flowers was one of many activists arrested at the 2009 hearings of the Senate Finance Committee for demanding the committee hear testimony on Conyers' bill.

"The single-payer movement is alive, getting organized and growing in Oregon,"

SLANT

• **One point is clear** after reading Coos County Judge Gillespie's opinion against Lane County Commissioners Rob Handy and Pete Sorenson on the Oregon Open Meetings Law: This opinion cries out for further clarification by at least the Oregon Court of Appeals. What's an acceptable use of email in coming to decisions? What are the hazards of serial conversations, one on one, in finding a way to a vote? A quorum on this board is three, but Commissioner Fleenor was excused from the ruling, so how can just two commissioners violate quorum rules?

Maybe it was the judge's intent to seek clarification in this technological age, and maybe rewrite the rules. But as the opinion stands, it defies understanding and logic and will certainly discourage good candidates from running for any public office in Oregon. The financial and political risks from chatting with your colleague around the water cooler or on the drive to Salem are too serious. Lane County has a duty to appeal and protect all its commissioners from financial ruin.

• The **Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce** is surveying its members to see if the chamber should support or fight an income tax for Eugene's two public school districts. The short survey asks if members think education is important to them and if the quality of local education has an affect on recruiting, training and retaining employees. Another question: Is education important to the quality of life in our valley? The survey is for chamber members only, so we won't give out the web address and skew the results; but if you know people who are members, it's fair to lobby them. Keep in mind that our local chamber fought the passage of Measures 66 & 67 last November. The chamber has, over the years, alienated many small business owners by touting the standard Republican dogma that government is the enemy of business. The chamber board could build a bigger membership if they ever recognize that a strong infrastructure, including education, creates a fertile environment for enterprise. Some small business owners balk at chamber membership because they don't want to see their dues fund lobbying efforts against their best interests. This survey is a good idea and gives us hope for a more enlightened approach from this conservative business organization.

• **The R-G lost another 2,008 subscribers** in 2010, according to the weekday circulation numbers posted in the new directory of the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. This is good news considering the daily lost 6,300 weekday subscribers in 2009 and 3,350 in 2008. We buy multiple subscriptions for our offices and many of us subscribe at home. We're trying to keep the daily afloat, despite our nearly constant criticism of the R-G for pretending to be objective while pursuing a malicious vendetta against some of our most conscientious public servants. The latest round of diatribes, including a silly "me-too" op-ed Jan. 23 from former R-G reporter Mike Thoele, could lose the paper even more subscribers. The anger against the R-G on progressive listservs is palpable and builds on many years of complaints.

Hey, EW is far from perfect as newspapers go, but we are now printing about 40,000 papers a week, up from 30,000 a decade ago. The new year is starting off well for us, and at this rate we'll catch up to the daily's 57,068 subscribers in a few years. Scary thought for them – and for us. Every community needs at least two strong newspapers with divergent views.

• Activist and Author **Van Jones** brilliantly challenged UO students filling the EMU ballroom Jan. 24 to "change the way we deal with fuel and food," creating green jobs with "our workers producing the products of tomorrow." One of his fascinating numbers: The U.S. has 80,000 coalminers, and now 80,000 workers in the wind power industry. Best-selling author of *The Green-Collar Economy*, Jones reminded the students that their voter bloc provided the winning margin for President Obama in 2008, but didn't turn out in 2010. He was part of the Oregon Humanities Center's "Sustenance" series, a yearlong campus wide exploration of the things that sustain us and the earth in every sense: body, mind and spirit.

• Check out **Garrett Epps' essay** in *The Nation* (www.thenation.com) called "Stealing the Constitution." Epps is a constitutional scholar from Eugene and his 3,500-word piece is all about "reclaiming our Constitution from the lunatic right." He writes, "Americans today are frightened and disoriented. In the midst of uncertainty, they are turning to the Constitution for tools to deal with crisis. The far right – the toxic coalition of Fox News talking heads, radio hosts, angry 'patriot' groups and power-hungry right-wing politicians – is responding to this demand by feeding their fellow citizens mythology and lies."

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