

ACTIVIST ALERT

• A community event will share preliminary findings from a Health Impact Assessment of an upcoming **Farm to School and School Garden bill**. The Legislature is considering providing public schools with \$23 million to buy and serve Oregon sourced food in breakfasts and lunches, and establish school gardens. The event will be from 9 am to 12:15 pm Thursday, Feb. 10, at the 4J District Administration auditorium, 200 N. Monroe St. The forum is first, followed by a garden tour at Chavez School.

• An open conversation with Lane County **Commissioner Pete Sorenson** will be from 5 to 6:30 pm Thursday, Feb. 10, at Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette St., 345-8986 or on Facebook at <http://wkiyws/112>

• New Lane County **Commissioner Jay Bozievich** will be hosting three "community conversations" Thursday, Feb. 10. The first is from 9 to 10:30 am at Robbie's Window Box Café, 88267 N. Territorial Road in Veneta. Next is from 2 to 3:30 pm at the Noti Pub and Grill. The last is from 4 to 5:40 pm at the Walton Store.

• Final recommendations on the **West Eugene EmX** rapid transit route are on the agenda of LTD, the Eugene City Council and the Metropolitan Policy Committee. The MPC meeting is from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm Thursday, Feb. 10, at the Eugene Public Library. The City Council work session on EmX is Feb. 23 and a vote is expected in early March. LTD has scheduled a decision March 16. See www.ltd.org for more information.

• Catch that feral cat! Then neuter it and let it go. Greenhill Humane Society is offering a free **trap-neuter-**

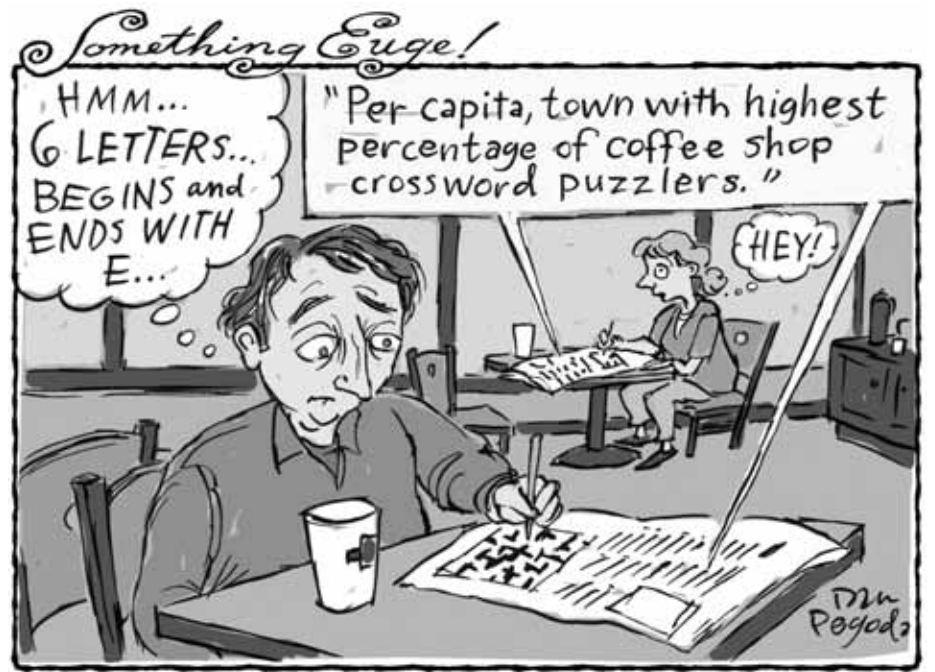
return training class to assist those who want to help reduce the feral cat population in Lane County from 11 am to 1 pm Saturday, Feb. 12. Class is free, but space is limited. Sign up at volunteer@green-hill.org

• **Heart of Oregon Pageant** and Drag Show sponsored by the Pride Foundation will be at 7 pm Saturday, Feb. 12 at Cozmic Pizza, 8th and Olive in Eugene. Doors open at 6. Suggested donation is \$10.

• Journalist and author **Robert Whitaker** is returning to Eugene to speak at 4 pm Sunday, Feb. 13, at UO School of Law, room 175. Cost is sliding scale \$1 to \$10. Whitaker is the author of *Anatomy of an Epidemic*, an investigation into America's mental health system. Co-sponsored by UO School of Law and Mindfreedom International. Contact David Oaks at oaks@mindfreedom.org or call 345-9106.

• The **League of Women Voters** of Lane County is planning a special free program on domestic violence deaths at 12:15 pm Thursday, Feb. 17, at Mallard Hall, 725 West 1st Ave. in Eugene. The Stop Violence Against Women Clinic Project will be discussed and speakers will include Merle Weiner and Pat Vallerand. A buffet lunch will be available for \$12. For reservations, call the League office at 343-7917, or e-mail league@lwvfc.org for reservations.

• **Project Homeless Connect** is preparing for its fifth annual event March 17 at the Fairgrounds. Organizers are collecting coats, hats, gloves, scarves, socks, sleeping bags and backpacks, along with personal hygiene products. Donations may be dropped off at any St. Vincent de Paul store. Checks can also be sent to United Way of Lane County, 3171 Gateway Loop, Springfield 97477.



SLANT

• We, too, are overwhelmed with powerful forces in thinking about the loss of two **South Eugene High School boys** on the rocky headlands near Yachats last weekend. First is the relentless force of nature, in this instance the Pacific, never to be controlled and only slightly comprehended or heeded by all of us. Second is the profound power of compassion and love, and neighborhood and community. A parent with two family members on this tragic trip told us "the school has been incredible in supporting the families and all of the students." Sadly, that's ultimately all that our school and broader community can do, support the families and all of the students, but it is not to be minimized. It is our great strength, our own powerful force.

• A historic stadium, a new YMCA or a Fred Meyer – the 4J School District fortunately has a lot to choose from in proposals for the **old Civic Stadium site**. A place to buy underwear without driving to the edge of town makes some planning and livability sense. The run-down Y clearly needs room to grow and a new facility. But Civic Stadium is a community treasure and historic gem, the last of its kind anywhere. We hope that professional soccer could take off there as it has in Portland. It makes sense for the Y to build next to South Eugene High School and share facilities and parking. With a little creative density, there should be enough room for a new Y, apartments and the old stadium at the site. The stadium and Y groups should get together and pool their fundraising. As for underwear, the city should work hard to find Fred Meyer another central Eugene site. With much of downtown vacant or underused, it shouldn't be hard.

• The **4J School Board** expressed surprise last week that so much attention was paid to school closures rather than the deep budget cuts forcing crowded classrooms and lost school days. But this was the school district's own mistake. The district should have separated the school closure issue from the budget. Closing schools is an operational decision that saves little money. Whether large schools or small schools actually best serve children and the community is debatable but much of that debate was lost by jumbling closures with the budget. Also lost was board and public focus on rallying around a real solution for schools – a city income tax.

• Got an opinion about the **West Eugene EmX** and have not yet expressed it? Last chance. The Eugene City Council, the Metropolitan Policy Committee and LTD are all gathering final public input and preparing recommendations for decisions that are expected in March (see Activist Alert).

Our "Green Dragon" cover story Nov. 24 outlines what we see as the major issues. Most of the objections laid out by the "No Build" folks deal with short-term problems: worries about construction hurting businesses along the route, concerns about building new routes when regular bus routes are being cut, etc. But we urge everyone to look ahead 10 to 50 years when mass transit will become vital to the economic and environmental health of our community. The cost and inconveniences of creating dedicated bus or light rail lanes will only increase over time. Right now we are fortunate to have federal and state transportation funds to make it possible; those funds will generate local jobs.

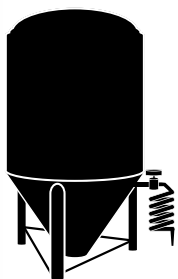
We also appreciate the diligent work by LTD staff to design a route and construction plan that would have the least possible negative impact on commercial properties and residences in west Eugene. A remarkable amount of public input has gone into this process. It's not a perfect plan, but it is a solid step toward reducing traffic congestion in west Eugene and connecting West 11th to the rest of the metro area. Let's not throw away this opportunity.

• Cutting **constituent service assistants** for Lane County commissioners might make some small sense financially, but from a practical standpoint, these are the folks who help when you have questions about county services. The commissioners are buried in the growing complexity of county business and can't possibly respond to the dozens of calls and emails they get each day. Need help accessing economic development or mental health services? Need to know how to contest your property tax assessment? Getting a runaround from a county bureaucrat? You will now need to hang out in line at a courthouse window.

• A new local blogger worth checking out is **Dr. Sharol Tilgner** of Eugene, who describes herself as "an herbalist, physician, farmer and lover of life" who is happiest when she is in her garden. She writes about everything from herbal medicine, gardening, farming and self sufficiency to the problems with the Federal Reserve. Find her at <http://dreamingabeautifulworld.blogspot.com>

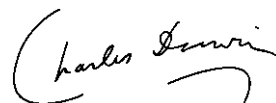
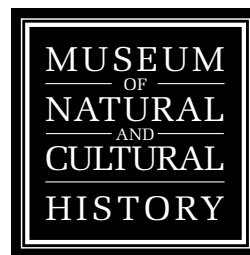
SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com

Saturday, February 19th – 11am-4pm



ZWICKELMANIA
OREGON BREWERY TOUR
oregonbeer.org/zwickelmania

2011 President's Day weekend, almost 60 of Oregon breweries and brewpubs will open their doors to visitors for the state's 3rd annual **Zwickelmania** — a free statewide event that offers visitors a chance to tour Oregon's breweries, meet the brewers and sample their favorite beers.



Happy Birthday, Darwin! Family Day Celebration

Saturday, February 12, 2011, Noon-4:00 p.m.

Bring the family to celebrate Darwin's birthday with a day of science and nature activities!

- Make a mask of your favorite animal
- Join a scavenger hunt
- See fossils from the paleontology vaults
- Eat cake in celebration of Darwin's birthday

Admission is \$5 families (two adults and up to four youths). MNCH members are admitted for free. You can become a member for half-price today!

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