

**EYESORES**

I have to say, I was deeply disappointed in some citizens of our supposedly compassionate city when I passed the I-5 overpass near Franklin Boulevard and saw the people who had made it their home being evicted and having their belongings thrown away. I rode past the area most days for the last year, and every time the “bridge people” smiled and waved. They were never anything but friendly, and I never saw garbage littering the area, only a couch and the occasional bicycle, which one can see on a good portion of the lawns downtown.

But some people took it upon themselves to report them and they are now on the streets again. Strange, it seems the city would rather have them sleeping in doorways and parks than gathered together in an unused spot on the outskirts of town.

The news report said that residents deemed it an “eyesore” but the only thing there that was eye-catching were the green and gold flags that had been hung up. If Duck colors are an eyesore, why aren’t we evicting every frat house in the city? Speaking of, one of the biggest eyesores I’ve noticed in this city are the piles of empty beer cans and other trash that pile up on the lawns of fraternities and dorms on campus. Does no one report this or does no one care so long as it’s well-to-do students and not the misfortunate homeless? Either way, it’s sad to see people who had respectably made use of

a dry area for over a decade being thrown back onto the rainy streets.

*Jesse Holum  
Eugene*

**BURIED GARDEN**

Spring is the right time to start a vegetable garden with prices rising. So I entered the lotto and scored a plot at Mathew’s Community Garden along the Amazon Trail. The former tenants planted perennial herbs and a strawberry patch, although resident gardener Kurt Koivu said the berries “don’t do very well here.”

A couple weeks later I arrived to erect a small greenhouse and found a sheriff’s work crew digging up the plot and dumping city leaves laced with rocks and pine cones on the spread. My strawberry patch was gone and the herbs were tossed aside. Fresh cigarette butts sprouted in their place.

I protested. The deputy pulled out his map of vacant garden plots slated for special treatment. Our whole outer row was on it. Costing the city \$850 a day, they had received orders to “do us a favor.” How could I complain? The city needed to get rid of its old leaves, and we didn’t exist.

So, I’ll look for a small rototiller to shred the matted leaves that should have been applied last fall. Then I’ll make raised beds and post a Keep Out sign for slugs, snails and sheriff’s gangs. Now I can see

why Koivu said strawberries don’t do very well around here.

*Chris Piché  
Eugene*

**EUGENE SLUTWALK**

On April 4, women in Toronto, Canada marched in a SlutWalk after a member of their police force publicly stated women could avoid rape if they didn’t “dress like sluts.” I participated in a small SlutWalk in downtown Eugene donning panties, fishnets, a garter belt, and a T-shirt with “SLUT” written on it.

I discussed the term “slut” with people in the community and learned some things. 1) Slut is rarely used to describe how many people someone has slept with. 2) It is often used to describe how a woman dresses, moves, talks, etc. regardless of how many people she has slept with. It’s used to police and shame women’s bodies, choices, and actions. 3) People from many backgrounds slut-shame, including those who claim to reject the religious right’s tendency to discourage sex outside of marriage.

It was empowering to reclaim the word slut, but more importantly, clothes do not equal consent to any or every sexual act with whomever comes along. “Yes” equals consent to one specified sexual act and can be retracted or extended any time. Let’s focus on policing rapists rather than “slutty” women!

*Casie Clausen  
Eugene*

**OVERSTEPPING BOUNDS**

Regarding the county lawsuit settlement (Slant, 4/7): Standard lawyer blackmail — they should have appealed all the way. The state Legislature *must* settle this issue and not accept this blackmail. This was *not* an interpretation — it is nothing but legislating from the judicial branch of government — and clearly unconstitutional.

I ask you — who do you want to be governed by? Lawyers in black robes or your elected representatives?? It is definitely time to prohibit lawyers from having anything to do with the judicial branch of government. Nothing in the Constitution mandates that “only” lawyers can hold positions in the judicial branch of government. The practice of law, which is a “for profit” occupation, should be totally separate from the judicial branch of government — which is owned and paid for by the people — *not* the lawyers. Let’s put scientists and engineers in every position in the judicial branch of government. Lawyers are not scientists.

*Frank Skipton  
Springfield*

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**Kumbaya Dammit** BY DAN CAROL

**The Real Score on Civic**

A winning game plan buys time

**S**o does your head hurt trying to follow all the different players and the curveballs being thrown about as 4J decides the fate of the Civic Stadium property? Well, then this column is for you — unless you hate corny sports analogies.

**Who am I rooting for?**

Nobody yet. 4J is currently choosing between three very imperfect proposals. Ideally though, some all-star heroics by the City Council and the city manager will turn our frowns upside down.

**Who am I rooting against?**

4J. Two years ago the School Board simply wanted \$70,000 a year in expenses removed from its books when the Ems and their lease payments left for PK Park. Now they are seeking millions from the sale of the Civic property, and from the sale of Willard School property at 29th and Lincoln, and they are seeking \$70 million plus for school construction on the ballot May 17. Honestly, it’s time for the School Board to get off the field; we need a new manager on the field named Jon Ruiz.

**Are we really in the bottom of the 9th?**

At its last work session, some councilors expressed concern that it’s too late for the city to get involved. That’s just off-base. The notion that there is a fast track for this project if 4J chooses the Y or Fred Meyer, when the next stage is clearly messy zoning battles and demolition permit wars, needs to be dispelled. Let’s remember we are in Eugene, the town that turned away a downtown Whole Foods! There’s plenty of time to get this right, so long as the School Board doesn’t get it wrong.

As one of the school board members pointed out at the recent meeting, 4J’s “process” doesn’t require them to choose any of these three proposals if they don’t suffice. So don’t.

We could have a Y, keep the sports fields and figure out the stadium’s future without a bum’s rush led by the School Board, and have local housing developers get the work and develop the site in concert with the neighborhood, not against it. But only the city is in the position to steer the community to such a great result.

**The city? Is this a fantasy league?**

I know many of us are inclined to think that the city and the council will swing and miss whenever they step up to the plate. But the fact is the council is on a roll, filling two pits and creating buzz by getting things done downtown. We now need the city to buy this property outright and appoint a new public-private commission to figure out how to utilize this great open space for family recreation, rather than let a cash-hungry School Board take land it got in trust for \$1 and sell it to the highest bidder. Councilor Alan Zelenka’s proposal to relieve the old Save Civic Stadium crew who has kept the idea alive, and bring in a new dream team of community leaders better able to develop the site and welcome the Y, is a major league idea.

**The secret weapon: We’ve got a loaded bat (and money in the bank)**

Remember 2006 when we all voted for a major



parcs and recreation bond? Well, guess what, it passed — and there’s more than \$9 million sitting in the bank that could be used for acquiring Civic from 4J. Sound too good to be true? Well, it wasn’t for John Musumeci, Suzanne Arlie and their creditors. Just last November, the council in a moment of unanimous kumbaya voted 8-0 to spend almost \$2 million to acquire more than 500 acres from Arlie & Co. south of LCC. This remote property, if it is ever used, will be used by the public far less than a family recreation center and sports fields will be at the Civic property.

**A winning game plan**

A smart fix on Civic is doable, if the city steps in and simply uses funds that the voters have already approved for community and family recreation. This also happens to be the only option that would put money back in 4J’s bank account anytime soon and actually save a couple of teachers this fall; all the other options will involve contingencies and delays of one kind or another. (A quick fix on Civic is not going to fix our schools; voting for the school ballot measures on May 17 will.)

To reach this goal, city councilors (especially Andrea Ortiz, Mike Clark, Pat Farr and Chris Pryor) and the city manager (Jon Ruiz) need to hear from everyone (baseball fans, soccer rooters, Kidsports field users, history buffs, 4th of July grass sitters, beer garden alumni, Y supporters and other open space fans) with an unusual message: we like what you are doing downtown — do more!

*Dan Carol served on the Mayor’s Committee on the Civic Stadium site. He urges that citizens who love Civic and the Y should call on the City Council to step up and just buy the property at the next council meeting and write the School Board to make that their goal, too.*