

news Briefs

The discussion ranged from health care plans for emerging microbusinesses to the effects of tax credits. Nathanson said “A yacht credit, do we really need that?” But pointed out that giving tax credits to a business is wise if Oregon puts “sunset dates” on them when they no longer function as a business incentive.

Incentives of another sort were of concern to Hoyle who discussed Lane County’s upcoming participation as a part of a pilot program for Oregon’s potential health care exchange marketplace and the need to give incentives for people to be healthy. The Oregon Senate passed SB 99 on April 25 that would create the Oregon Health Insurance Exchange. “Oregon is a perfect incubator for companies to be big fish in a small pond,” Hoyle said. The program, she said, would allow small businesses to buy into affordable health plans.

After the discussion, the Bus Project joined the celebration at a warehouse on 1st Avenue for Arcimoto and its zero-emission SRK that Fillion (known to many fans at “Captain Tightpants”) said he will use to commute to his set for the TV show *Castle*. The car, according to Frohnmayer, is made for the 90 percent of drivers who drive alone and commute within a 40-mile range. Frohnmayer said in his speech at the unveiling that Arcimoto was inspired by a car he saw in a Eugene Celebration parade — the three wheeled BugE. He pointed out, dryly, that a vehicle for one to two people going a short distance and carrying minimal stuff had already been invented — the bicycle — but that isn’t what people are using, since given the bike option, they continue to drive.

The Oregon Legislature is currently looking at a per-mile tax for electric and plug-in vehicles to balance the funding lost through the cars not paying for roadway wear and tear through gas taxes.

— Camilla Mortensen

NEW ELECTRIC CAR UNVEILED

Easter weekend marked the return of Zombie Jesus for some Eugeneans. It also marked the rising of hope for new small businesses in the area. While Fashion Week (see photos page 32) dominated stages at Agate Hall and Opus VII promoting local fashion designers, Arcimoto’s newest electric car prototype hit the Whiteaker, along with stars of TV’s *Castle* Nathan Fillion and Jon Huertas, promoting local alternative vehicle production.

Arcimoto founder Mark Frohnmayer unveiled the “Red 5” or SRK (aka the Shark) to a crowd of over 100 from members of the Whiteaker Bike Brigade to supporters of the Bus Project, who came to town from Portland for the unveiling following a discussion of the role of public policy in stimulating economic innovation as part of the Bus Project’s “Le Tour d’Innovation.”

Eugene Reps. Nancy Nathanson and Val Hoyle led the Bus Project’s discussion at Sam Bond’s before the Arcimoto event, moderated by political thinker Dan Carol of The New Policy Institute. About 25 young business entrepreneurs, congressional staffers and community organizers attended, though the attendance by the under-30 crowd was heavily weighted toward the Portland contingent.



PHOTO BY ARMANDO SENIRA

PHOTOG KILLED IN LIBYA

Award-winning conflict photographer Chris Hondros was killed, along with documentarian Tim Hetherington, in Misrata April 20 while covering the conflict in Libya.

Hondros, who was shooting for Getty Images, realized his dream of photographing wars and conflicts all over the world. Dan Morrison, a UO photojournalism instructor who also works in war zones, describes Hondros as among the world’s elite conflict photographers, a job description that understates the risks these people take to bring us the news.

“They do it,” Morrison says, “because they believe in democracy. And a democracy without an informed citizenry is not a democracy at all.” But to imagine the dangers, consider one basic difference between journalism and photojournalism: “A print reporter can describe a battle without ever actually seeing it,” Morrison says. “But a photojournalist must be in the killing zone.”

“I strongly believe,” Hondros wrote in an alumni-directed publication at North Carolina State, “that we re-fight the same wars over and over again ... I’ve seen reoccurring themes and grievances in all the conflicts I’ve covered, even those seemingly dissimilar, like say the Serbs in Kosovo and the rebels in Liberia. Even right now, in Iraq for Americans ... it’s all more alike than we often realize.”

Hondros leaves behind a fiancée and family who have requested that anyone wishing to show support donate to the Chris Hondros Fund, which will provide scholarships for aspiring photojournalists and raise awareness of issues concerning conflict photography:

The Chris Hondros Fund, c/o Christina Piaia, 50 Bridge Street, No. 414, Brooklyn, NY 11201. More of Hondros’ work can be seen at chrishondros.com — *Ulrick Casimir*

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

RABBI MAURICE HARRIS

“My mom was one of 12 siblings,” says Maurice Harris, who grew up in St. Louis but spent summers in Israel visiting family. “I spent lots of time on the beach and playing with kids.” Harris was active in peace and reconciliation work at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He worked half a year on a kibbutz, then moved to San Francisco, where he eventually directed the shoestring-budget Bay Area Holocaust Oral History Project. “I did the videography for 40 or 50 interviews,” he says. “It was eye-opening.” After five years at the progressive Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia and ordination in 2003, he found work as associate rabbi and head of the religious school at Temple Beth Israel in Eugene. “I support Israel-Palestine reconciliation as a member of the J Street Rabbinic Cabinet,” says Harris, whose work for GLBT equality with the Religious Response Network earned him the Heneini (“I am here” in Hebrew) Award from TBI’s Queer Chavurot. “Gay equality is not a secular versus religious issue,” he says. Though he is stepping down as rabbi at the end of July, Harris will stay on in Eugene. “I hope to make a living teaching and writing,” he says, “and doing political work.”

