

WOW HALL TREES SLATED FOR REMOVAL

Eugene is known for its big, leafy urban forest as well as for the brouhahas that arise when the trees begin to fall. Recently, two bigleaf maple trees planted in the early 20th century on Lincoln Street near the WOW Hall were placed on the chopping block.

Jon Pincus of the WOW Hall facilities committee said in an email to *EW*, “Many people in Eugene have been uncomfortable with the rate at which large street trees have been cut down by the urban forester in the last few years.”

These large trees provide shade to help the WOW Hall keep energy use and cost to a minimum. Without these trees, Pincus is concerned about how much more energy the venue will be forced to use in the warmer months. Each tree is approximately 40 inches in diameter and 70 feet tall.

According to a Feb. 9 study by Matt Rivers, city staff inspector, there were several signs of death and decay: open cavities, small depressions, several dead branches in the upper canopy as well as two different kinds of fungus.

The report said the trees had fruiting bodies of *Ganoderma Spp.*, a wood decaying fungus, and mushrooms of the *Armillaria* shoestring root rot fungus on and near the base of the trees. According to Mark Snyder, Eugene’s urban forester, both of these fungus types are a concern because they eat away at the heartwood, sapwood and roots of the tree. Resistograph tests showed that only about half of the wood in both trees is structurally sound, the report said.

One of the trees (the fourth tree north of the intersection at West 8th Avenue on Lincoln Street) earned a rating of nine on the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) scale of three to 12; 12 is the most hazardous. The other (fifth tree north of

the intersection) earned a rating of 10.

Currently, the WOW Hall committee is taking quotes for a consulting certified arborist in order to gain a second opinion on the trees within the next few days. Pincus is asking the date of removal to be pushed back to get this additional expert opinion.

“We won’t know if the trees are unsafe and irreparable until we have an independent assessment done,” Pincus said. Getting the assessment has been complicated because Pincus said it appears some local arborists have already seen the report, which might bias the findings.

Snyder, who approved the report of the WOW Hall trees on April 20, said that the main issue is safety. Although it is difficult to predict where or if the trees may fall, according to Snyder, there are possible targets in almost every direction, including the WOW Hall, buildings across the street, the parking lot, streets and sidewalks.

“We recently gained an opportunity to witness a test of the trees’ strength during the recent very strong wind storm here in Eugene,” Pincus said. He said the trees showed no signs of stress and did not drop any branches.

Plans for replacing the trees are in the making. “However, these trees will start at 2 to 3 inches in width and require special protective measures installed to give them an opportunity to survive. It will be several decades before they provide significant shading for the WOW Hall,” Pincus said.

Pincus said the WOW Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and these trees “are called out in the nomination document.” He encourages those concerned to contact city staff and ask for time to allow for the independent evaluation of the trees.

For background information on urban tree removal in Eugene, check out the previous *EW* story at <http://wkly.ws/124>

— Chelsea Fryhoff and Heather Cyrus



COMPLETE THE CYCLE

Jeff Willensky of Eugene has found a way to put the recycling in cycling.

Bothered by throwing away old tires and tubes from his environmentally friendly transit mode of choice, Willensky said he found for a better way to “Complete the Cycle” with recycling.

He started asking local bike shops to set aside worn out tubes and tires. Then he found a local company, the Tire Factory, that was willing to take the bike tires/tubes for a fee and send them to Portland along with their auto and truck tires for recycling. RB recycling in McMinnville grinds the tires and makes rubber products including mats and recreational surfaces.

According to Willensky, at least six bike shops, some of which may ask for a small donation or fee, participate in the recycling effort: Arriving By Bike, Blue Heron, Collins, Life Cycle, Simple Cycles, and Wheelworks.

Willensky said he also plans to collect bike tires and tubes from 1 to 5 pm Saturday, May 21, in the parking lot of Wheelworks at 11th and Lawrence. — Alan Pittman

(A version of this story first appeared at EugeneCycles.com)

CHEMICAL TRESPASS

Day Owen, his family and neighbors have been saying for years that the toxic herbicides sprayed on nearby private forestlands drift onto their homes, farms and bodies and make them sick (see *EW* cover story, 2/28/2008). Owen says their concerns have been met with an “absolute denial that we are really sick and being chemically trespassed upon.” So Owen and other pesticide opponents came to the April 27 meeting of the Oregon Board of Forestry with proof.

Urine from Owen and 20 other Triangle Lake area residents, many of whom are members of the forestland dwelling group the Pitchfork Rebellion, all showed the herbicides 2,4-D and

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