

news Briefs

Y CIVIC STADIUM OF CHOICE

Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka this week handed the 4J School Board a bag of lemons for lemonade.

Zelenka called proposals to tear down the historic Civic Stadium lemons and said combining the YMCA and Save Civic soccer proposals with backing from the owner of Market of Choice presented an opportunity. "This is your opportunity to make lemonade out of lemons," he said and handed over the bag of fruit he bought at Market of Choice.

Zelenka said the proposal from Rick Wright to consider a YMCA and Save Civic collaboration with Wright's financial backing was financially and legally doable for the school district. "I'm pretty sure they can do it, whether they will choose to do it is a different story," he said. "It's a significant game changer."

Zelenka said the city of Eugene does not legally commit to having to choose among offers in its requests for proposals for selling property, and 4J could open a new process that would give the YMCA/Civic collaboration time to put together a detailed offer.

The collaboration could offer 4J more financial certainty than the Fred Meyer

proposal, according to Zelenka. The shopping center is contingent on getting permits for a controversial demolition and a store that could compete with other area businesses.

Zelenka said that the collaboration still needs to figure out its financing for a combined project that could cost roughly \$30-\$40 million. But he said combining YMCA and Save Civic fundraising with local business backing will help. "It becomes more of a community project," he said.

The city could also help by working with the collaboration to allow off-site parking at the adjacent high school to meet city code requirements, according to Zelenka. The city has given the UO similar waivers for its arena and stadium projects.

The city could also help by finding another site for the Fred Meyer proposal. Nearer to downtown, "there's a lot of underdeveloped areas," Zelenka said.

Asked about whether the city could help Fred Meyer locate at the large, former Eugene Clinic site on Willamette, Zelenka said, "that's an interesting idea." — Alan Pittman

KIDS: DON'T DRINK THE TOXIC WATER

Triangle Lake residents say that not only have their bodies tested positive for herbicides, a recent test showed the chemical imazapyr is in the water their children drink at Triangle Lake Charter School. School officials say the levels are too low for concern.

Day Owen, along with his rural activist group the Pitchfork Rebellion, has been an outspoken critic of toxic herbicide use in the Triangle Lake area in the Coast Range west of Eugene. He says after the school

went ahead in December with a "chop and squirt" technique of applying herbicide to plants growing in a clearcut that surrounds the school, a concerned parent decided to take a sample of the drinking water.

Owen says he and other parents had asked the school board not to apply Arsenal, an herbicide containing imazapyr, within 60 feet of the school. "It should never be used near a well," Owen says. He says that the chemical "sinks deeper into the ground than other herbicides and has a long track record of polluting groundwater and wells."

The first day his daughter, Ivana, returned to school after the chemical application, Owen says, she had to go home sick after spending 45 minutes in a classroom with an open window near the recent chemical application. Owen says his daughter's throat was so swollen she could hardly breath.

The water sample, taken in April, was sent to the USDA for testing, Owen says, and the result was a positive result for imazapyr. According to an article in the *Journal of Pesticide Reform*, formerly a publication of the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, the chemical breaks down into quinolinic acid, which is a neurotoxin that causes headaches and depression, nerve lesions and symptoms similar to Huntington's disease.

But school Superintendent LeAnne Raze says, "I have been in contact with both DEQ and USDA and unofficially they have told me that the testing result is 1,000 times lower than a level that would initiate safety concerns for our students."

"The children have been drinking some level of imazapyr from drinking fountains, and that same well water is used to prepare the food in the kitchens," Owen says.

He says the parents involved brought the information from the test to the school board May 18 and let it know about these results.

Owen says, "We don't want our children drinking any amount of weed killer," and that he wants parents to be notified of the test as well as for more testing to be done. "It's important for parents to know and make an informed choice," he says. He says he is also concerned about the effects and interactions of unnamed "inert ingredients" in the chemical mixture that was applied as well as interactions with 2,4-D and atrazine, the herbicides found in the urine of 21 Triangle Lake area residents, including Owen and two children.

Raze did not respond to a question of whether the school intends to conduct its own test for the chemical. — Camilla Mortensen

CITY UNSAFE FOR PEDESTRIANS

Eugene-Springfield ranks as the most dangerous metro area in the state for pedestrians. In the past ten years, drivers killed 63 pedestrians in the area, according to data released by Transportation for America (TforA) this week.

In Eugene, drivers have struck and injured 141 pedestrians in the last five years, killing 11 people, according to state accident data gathered by the city.

Amid such street carnage, the city of Eugene will hold its first-ever Pedestrian Safety Summit from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm Wednesday, June 1, in the Library Bascom-Tykeson room.

TforA's "Dangerous by Design" study faults politicians and transportation planners for not funding and building streets that are safe for humans: "Sadly, it is the elderly, children and minorities who are killed and injured in disproportionate numbers, due to this failure to build roads with everyone's safety in mind."

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

MO BOWEN

On Friday, May 27, artist and gallery owner Mo Bowen celebrates the first anniversary of her Voyeur Gallery with an opening reception for her own exhibit of photographs, paintings, mixed media and scanography. "I just recently heard the name 'scanography,'" she says. "But I've been doing scanner art since I was a kid on the Xerox machine in my dad's print shop in Chicago." Bowen earned degrees in photography and psychology from Dominican University in her hometown, then moved west and spent a year rock climbing in the Sierras before joining her sister in Eugene in 2004. She continued to photograph and have exhibits while working various jobs until early last year, when her boyfriend noticed a recently-vacated small storefront at 547 Blair. After three months of carpentry and painting, Voyeur Gallery opened on May 28, 2010. "Every month we have a new show. We do an artist discussion and an audience critique," she says. "Those are great nights to engage the community and challenge the artist." Bowen's 6 pm opening coincides with other Whiteaker-area gallery receptions on the Last Friday Art Walk. She will offer a free gallery talk at 7 pm on June 9 and a \$30 scanography workshop at 7 pm on June 16.

