

## TOXIC WATER IN WEST EUGENE?

Stormwater spilling into a tributary of Amazon Creek from the J.H. Baxter plant in west Eugene meets the numeric standards for toxics on the company's permit, but tests show the water being released might have toxic chemicals at levels dangerous for living organisms. Eugene's Oregon Clean Water Action Project (OCWAP) has filed an intent to sue on behalf of Willamette Riverkeeper.

Doug Quirke of OCWAP says he hopes that the enforcement action being filed on behalf of Willamette Riverkeeper "will not only result in J.H. Baxter eliminating ongoing Clean Water Act and Oregon water quality standards violations, but will also result in J.H. Baxter taking responsibility for its past violations by funding a project or projects that improve water quality."

Baxter, a wood preserving facility, is allowed under its National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit to discharge treated stormwater, treated groundwater and boiler blowdown water to a storm ditch that feeds into Amazon Creek, which itself flows into Fern Ridge Reservoir. Under the permit, Baxter is allowed to discharge limited amounts of arsenic, chromium, copper, lead, zinc and pentachlorophenol.

Pentachlorophenol, also known as penta, contains dioxin, a known human carcinogen. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) banned its production in 1987, except for its use in treating utility poles.

Bioassays — tests that use living organisms to check for the toxicity of chemicals — of J.H. Baxter's water from February through June 2011 show that fathead minnows, water fleas and green algae have shown either chronic or acute toxicity. In the most recent testing, covering the period June 1 to June 8, only 7.5 percent of fathead minnows survived exposure to Baxter's effluent, while 100 percent of those not exposed to Baxter effluent survived.

The letter sent to J.H. Baxter from OCWAP and Willamette Riverkeeper alleges Baxter has discharged wastes or conducted activities that cause or contribute to a violation of Oregon state law by introducing toxic substances above natural background levels in waters of the state in amounts,

concentrations or combinations that may be harmful. It also alleges the company did not conduct another toxicity test within two weeks of three tests that exhibited toxicity, as required by its permit.

"Private companies should not reap profits at the expense of the waters of Oregon, which belong to all Oregonians, and polluters should be required to improve water quality over and above the extent to which they've caused deterioration in water quality," Quirke says.

J.H. Baxter did not respond to press inquiries before deadline. The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has met with Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) test specialist and the compliance specialist for Baxter about the water quality issue. — *Camilla Mortensen*

## PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S NEW DIGS

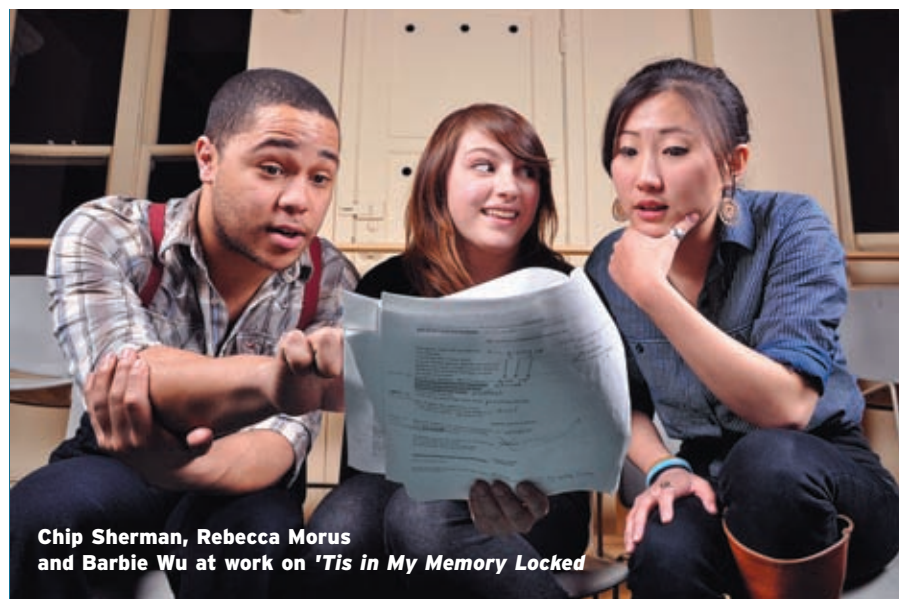
Across the U.S., Planned Parenthood has weathered the political climate much like Harry Potter and friends defending Hogwarts from Voldemort. And despite the best efforts of those bearing the dark mark, Planned Parenthood is "The Clinic That Lived."

"We're here. Our doors are open," Planned Parenthood of Southwest Oregon (PPSO) President Cynthia Pappas says. In fact, Southwest Oregon is one Planned Parenthood region that is brimming with good news. In September, construction workers will break ground on a new Regional Health and Education Center in Glenwood.

The need for the Glenwood facility became apparent, Pappas says, because PPSO's existing facilities weren't built to handle the volume of patients they now experience. "The Regional Health and Education Center is going to allow us to increase our client volume by about 50 percent," Pappas says. It will also provide meeting space for parent education classes, Planned Parenthood's youth council and its sex ed boot camp for educators.

The decision to build between Eugene and Springfield in Glenwood was made easy by the transportation infrastructure, according to Pappas. "There's an EmX stop right at our property, we're as close to the UO at the new location as the current High Street location and it gets us a little more of a direct route from the LCC campus," she says. In addition to a public transport-friendly location, the new building is aiming for LEED silver certification.

Despite PPSO's run of positive events, Pappas admits that the year has been a rough one. "There's really a very focused effort to discredit Planned Parenthood



Chip Sherman, Rebecca Morus and Barbie Wu at work on 'Tis in My Memory Locked

## UO Grad Stages Original Work In Edinburgh

At 22, Rebecca Morus is receiving a crash course in collaborative production and auteur filmmaking — not to mention fundraising, marketing, promotion, management, stage directing and starting her own theater company. Since graduating last spring from the UO's theater program, Morus has spent the past year readying her original stagework, *'Tis in My Memory Locked*, for a month-long run at The Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland, the largest arts festival in the world. Her final fundraising event is Friday, July 22, at OPUS VII Gallery, and she flies abroad July 28.

This is the quintessence of hitting the road running.

"I didn't really have a plan and didn't know what I wanted to do with my life," Morus said during an interview July 18. "I realized I should just do it myself."

So immediately out of school she founded the Second Earth Theatre Company and set her sights on Edinburgh's "Fringe," as it's familiarly known, where she and actor Chip Sherman will perform a multi-media work adapted from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Derived from a short play Morus first wrote as a senior at UO, *'Tis in My Memory Locked* is an imagined dialogue between Hamlet (played by Sherman) and Ophelia (Barbie Wu), who will be projected as a film loop on a movie screen.

According to Morus, the production has a *Groundhog Day* element to it, as Hamlet — stuck in a kind of limbo after death — tries again and again to reconcile his guilt in Ophelia's suicide. The script is composed entirely of lines lifted from *Hamlet* itself, making it a sort of reconstructed deconstruction of youthful angst and confusion.

"There's a lot of clues throughout the play that this was a really deep relationship," Morus said of Ophelia and Hamlet, whom she has always viewed as a fucked-up college-age kid stuck in a bad situation. "I felt like what Hamlet was saying a lot of the time was exactly what was going through my head."

Along with Sherman and Wu, Morus has collaborated closely with UO film student Brian Leonard, who shot and edited the Ophelia segment of the show. "It's a medium that's completely foreign to me," Morus said of film. She said that the working relationship she's developed with Leonard and several other artists has provided her with reams of useful experience. "It's like it's bigger than us," Morus said of the interactive production.

Not only was Morus accepted to the Fringe, her work will be staged at C Venue, one of the festival's most popular sites. Between Aug. 3 and Aug. 29, Morus and Sherman will stage 27 performances — more than one a day at an international festival that attracts some 500,000 attendees.

"Our focus is to establish ourselves as a new theater company that has some credibility," she said. To that end, Morus created "The Edinburgh Hamlet Project" on Kickstarter, a web-based fundraising platform for creative endeavors. "We've been continuously fundraising," she added.

The final fundraiser for Morus and her Edinburgh Hamlet Project will take place 7 to 9 pm Friday, July 22, at OPUS VII, 22 W. 7th Ave.; there will be food and live music, as well as wares from sponsors Ninkasi and Sweet Life; for more information, visit <http://wkly.ws/132> — *Rick Levin*

## LIGHTEN UP

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

Raising the national debt ceiling seems to have turned into a battle between the adult in the room and the adolescents from the moon

## ACTIVIST ALERT

- Jabali the Reuse Rhino will be one of the main attractions at **BRING's 40th birthday bash** from 10 am to 4 pm Sunday, July 24, in the Garden of Earthly Delights at the BRING Planet Improvement Center, 4446 Franklin Blvd. in Glenwood. The free festivities include live music, kids' activities, demonstrations, reuse crafts and plants for sale, art exhibit, community and food booths. LTD will provide free bus passes to the event. For more information, email [events@bringrecycling.org](mailto:events@bringrecycling.org)
- The second International **Copwatch Conference** will be July 22-24 at the University of Winnipeg in Manitoba. See the Copwatch website (<http://wkly.ws/12w>). For local Copwatch videos and information, search for "Picture Eugene" on YouTube or Google.
- The **Eugene Veg Education Network** is sponsoring a free talk on "Personal Food Choices and Climate Change" with speakers Dale Lugenbehl and Sandy Aldridge at 7 pm Thursday, July 28, at the McNail-Riley House, 13th and Jefferson.