

CAR-FREE 5TH ON SUNDAY

The city will close a 3-mile route downtown Sunday, Sept. 18, for the city's first ever street celebration of biking, strolling, rolling and fun.

"It's going to be a really great event," said organizer Lindsay Selser with the city's transportation planning department. "It's super, super fun."

The Eugene Sunday Streets event from noon to 4 pm will close 5th Avenue to cars so people can take back the streets for their exercise and enjoyment.

The free event, which includes music and fitness classes, is modeled on similar street closures in hundreds of other cities including Portland to fight the obesity epidemic and promote active transportation, community, the environment and livability.

The moveable street party stretches from the 5th Street Market to the Whiteaker neighborhood and includes a loop around Skinner Butte.

A pedal-powered stage at Washington/Jefferson Park will include performances by indie folk rock band Kingdom County, Alseny Yansane's Won Tan Nara Drum & Dance Ensemble, DJ Dream Dusters Experience and bluegrass band the Conjugal Visitors. Activities in the park also include a African dance class, a bike safety rodeo, a family bike ride, bicycle drag races, a hula hoop class and slackline rope walking.

At the Campbell Community Center activities include line dancing, dancing to a DJ, a guided history walk of the Skinner Butte historic neighborhood, and exercise, yoga, and Tai Chi classes, all for free. At the Lamb Cottage in Skinner Butte Park, the city will provide a free arthritis fitness class and field games and activities for kids including face painting.

For more information or to volunteer to help with the event go to <http://bit.ly/qQ9dIR> or call 541-682-5094.

— Alan Pittman



SLANT

• Will Eugene lose its **major UO off-ramp** from I-5 for two years? ODOT hasn't made it public yet but we hear from multiple reliable sources that ODOT's Major Projects team is working with local transportation folks on a plan to close exit 192 that drops northbound freeway traffic onto Franklin Boulevard during the next phase of reconstruction associated with bridge replacement. Fortunately, the 191 Glenwood exit a short distance south also drops onto Franklin, though not so conveniently. Why two years? We hear ODOT's thinking is to get drivers in the habit of using the Glenwood exit instead of opening and closing the UO exit multiple times during the construction, leaving freeway drivers confused. Various dates have been mentioned, but this change could happen as early as Oct. 3.

• Rumors have a new owner lined up for the **old Eugene Clinic** building at 12th and Willamette, but PeaceHealth tells us some buyers are interested in the property, but no deal yet. "Believe me, no one will be more excited than us to announce the sale of that site," says spokesperson Jenny Ulum. "it will be wonderful to see it put into use along with all the other exciting developments downtown." Meanwhile, PeaceHealth Medical Group downtown docs are getting ready for their big move to the University District Campus by UO.

• **Bob Bussel's classy speech** to City Club Sept. 9 suggested that American media talks too little about workers and unions. We agree. As the director of LERC (the UO Labor Education and Research Center) and an associate professor of history, he has closely watched the decline of private sector unions to 7 percent of the workforce. The country is not really talking about the problems that brings, partly because mainstream media management has a history of conflict with labor unions. They don't much like them. So, the American worker needs other avenues to tell his/her story. Let's circulate the Bussel speech through high schools and college classes in this community. That's a small start for organized labor to spread its story.

• Well known in Eugene for his brilliant work founding the Oregon Bus Project, **Jefferson Smith** has announced that he's running for mayor of Portland against former city councilor Charlie Hales and New

Seasons Market co-founder Eileen Brady. Mayor Sam Adams, who grew up in Eugene, is not running again. Smith's decision is quite a shocker. A Democratic state rep. from East Portland, he is considered a smart, charismatic trainee for governor, senator, whatever. Maybe his decision makes sense if you remember Neil Goldschmidt, another Eugene native, who went from Portland mayor to Oregon governor to U.S. secretary of transportation to big-time power broker. Smith is close to Gov. Kitzhaber, so the decision could also mean that Kitzhaber intends to run for another term after the goodwill this one has generated so far. The big question: Can Smith win the mayor's race or will Brady beat the two men?

• Amid all the dramatic **9/11 observances** this past weekend was something more subtle and unique, the 120th consecutive monthly gathering of the Interfaith Prayer Service at the 100-year-old First Christian Church downtown. This was a refreshing and hopeful event for those of us who have grown weary of seeing terrorist mug shots and watching people jump out of the flaming Twin Towers over and over again. The theme of the prayer service was "Compassion and Unconditional Love: The Way to Peace." We could use a healthy infusion of compassion into our fear-based foreign policy today.

Some related news came out of this interfaith event. We heard from UO professor Steven Shankman, UNESCO chair in Transcultural Studies, Interreligious Dialogue and Peace, that a resolution in support of the "Charter for Compassion" will be presented to the Eugene City Council in October. About 76,000 people have signed onto the document at <http://charterforcompassion.org> and Mayor Kitty Piercy tells us the document "seems to fit with our human rights city work."

• **Pay raises for UO administrators** are discussed in a highly critical new report from Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503 titled "Holding OUS Accountable: A Question of Priorities" (<http://wkly.ws/141>). The 11-page white paper says "Oregon's underfunded public universities have compounded their fiscal plight by squandering resources on a bloated administrative bureaucracy and debt service for a veritable building spree, jeopardizing students' educational needs and short-changing faculty and front-line staff." The report calls for reduced supervisory ratios, administrators sharing in the "sacrifices," and a full review of OUS spending priorities.

David Smith

WARRIOR OF WARMTH AND SAVVY CONSUMER OF ENERGY-SAVING PROGRAMS.

At the Eugene Water & Electric Board, we're empowering citizens with resources to save money and energy in their homes and businesses—like David Smith, a homeowner who uses insulation to keep the temperature in his house just right. By taking advantage of EWEB's weatherization rebate program, David was able to shrink his carbon footprint and his heating costs by as much as 20%. To find out about EWEB's energy-saving programs for your own home, visit eweb.org/saveenergy or call 541-685-7000. Maybe yours will be the next powerful tale we tell.

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