

# Time for Cohesion

Rethinking northwest Eugene neighborhoods

The Santa Clara-River Road Outreach and Learning project (SCRROL) will host two forums from 6:30 to 9 pm Oct. 4 and Oct. 13 in the Santa Clara neighborhood. The first Forum will be held at Madison Middle School at 875 Wilkes Dr. and the second at the River Road Annex, 1055 River Road. The purpose of the forums will be to build a cohesive voice for our residents' vision for the future of our communities. Pizza and beverages will be provided, but please RSVP at [info@SCRROL.org](mailto:info@SCRROL.org) or call 688-1406.



The SCRROL Leadership Team emerged at the beginning of the year to help our neighbors rethink our neighborhoods as we transition into the coming decades. We have functioned for 30 years with a patchwork of properties under the governance of either the city of Eugene or Lane County. With citizens of countries around the world taking the initiative to question their governance, it seems natural that we, too, should consider how our neighborhoods could become less confusing and more fair to all. As Lane County properties transitioned to the city of Eugene, the taxbase for our services districts for River Road Parks and Recreation, Santa Clara Fire and Lane Rural Fire has eroded. Our land use laws have allowed the construction of houses and strip malls but the development didn't grow in a fashion that enhanced the sense of community or provided goods and services needed. Our current situation allows more cars to travel faster without taking into consideration the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. In some instances, it doesn't allow unincorporated properties to build granny cottages in large backyards.

When a neighborhood has become stagnant and edges toward decline and deterioration, some residents and businesses seek ways to learn what neighbors think the problems are and what possible solutions could streamline and protect properties and allow the neighborhood to grow in a healthy direction. The SCRROL Leadership Team has undertaken the task of talking with hundreds of our residents. More than 70 volunteers have assisted in collecting our neighbors' stories and the options they suggested. We have participated in 14 community events to listen to neighbors concerns and held deeper conversations at home gatherings.

We are interviewing local businesses and Latino neighbors to gain their perspective on community needs. SCRROL hosted with the city of Eugene the first Concert in Park in Santa Clara and a crime prevention stop for the Police Caravan for National Night Out at North Eugene High School. We conducted interviews with our service districts to learn their strengths and what they need to continue to serve us.

SCRROL has communicated with elected officials from the city of Eugene and Lane County Commission. We met with city staff to keep them informed of our progress and to discuss our information needs to educate our neighbors about our unique and confusing circumstances.

SCRROL is now planning these forums to meet with as many neighbors as possible and share with them what we have learned about our confusing governance, unusual land use patterns, transportation concerns, and parks and recreational needs. The purpose of the forums will be to build a cohesive voice for our residents' vision for the future of our communities.

The culmination of this work will be to use this information to advocate for neighborhood priorities and inform the updating of new regional planning for our areas. Planning that the neighborhood undertakes will provide us predictability about how and where we will grow and protect the valued trees, natural stormwater drainage, larger lot size, and other amenities.

This is an exciting time, and we need as many neighbors participating in the forums as possible to accurately represent their views as we build a vision for our neighborhood. If we don't make plans for ourselves, others will.

*Carleen Reilly is secretary of SCRROL and writes on behalf of the SCRROL Leadership Team. She can be reached at [carleen@scrrol.org](mailto:carleen@scrrol.org) and the website is <http://www.scrrol.org> Jerry Finigan is the chair and can be reached at [jerry@scrrol.org](mailto:jerry@scrrol.org)*

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### NOT A RACIST

I'm writing in response to the alleged hate-crime accusations about Emilio Nichols. Emilio is a very good friend of mine; I went to high school with Emilio and have spent time with him recently. Emilio is not a racist. Maybe he punched this kid in the face, and that's not cool at all; but it was not a hate crime. I've watched Emilio give hugs and genuine smiles to friends of all skin types, and he's been kind and generous to many people; he's not a bad person.

I think a lot of hearsay has contributed to the accusations, some about Emilio using "racist terms/phrases." I've heard him use the term "nigg" while referring to a friend, and I have used the phrase myself, but that doesn't mean we are racists; it means we were being insensitive assholes. There is a big difference. Emilio would never hurt a person, or think any lesser of them based on their skin color. I know this for a fact, but when I look on the news I see my friend being made out to be a monster, and it worries me.

I don't want my friend to spend time in prison for a hate crime that he didn't commit. If he really did assault the kid, then charge him with assault, but don't blow this out of proportion and ruin his life.

*Stephen Batura  
Eugene*

### MONEY CORRUPTS

As *EW* pointed out recently, one-third of the total values of all the buildings on the UO campus are sports-related. Moreover, during the 2010-11 fiscal year more than one-third of the gifts donated to the university (\$43.6 million), a \$1.1 million state subsidy and a \$1.5 million student-fee subsidy went not to academic departments but to the athletic department.

Chip Kelly and his assistant coaches are paid astounding salaries, plus perks. Palaces are built only for athletes. Recent large raises for top-level administrators on campus are railroaded through. Those who do the teaching, their assistants and their staffs are asked to do more with less. And more for less. A troubling pattern is emerging here and nationwide: The well-fed athletic tail in schools is wagging the woefully underfed academic dog.

Football teams in particular have become symbols of the American Empire and, inexplicably, of institutions of higher learning. Football — a gladiatorial sport based on brute force, speed, and deceit — creates in many of its followers a passionately unquestioning, competitive, bullying, at-times bloodthirsty attitude that is totally and essentially at odds with the inquiring, scientific, humanistic, rational and cooperative values at the heart of the mission of colleges and universities.

Money corrupts. Sports can, should, and sometimes do, of course, teach important lessons and impart decent values. The more big bucks are involved however, the less it seems that sports do so.

*Jerome Garger  
Yachats*

### MORE THAN JUST A BARN

Although the Cottage Grove Historical Society announced recently that they have halted their effort to purchase Dr. Pierce's Barn, the Historic Preservation League of Oregon (HPL0) remains an active partner in seeking out alternatives to the building's unnecessary demolition. Listed as one of Oregon's "Most Endangered Places," the barn is not just an artifact of days gone by, but a prime example of a significant resource ripe for innovative adaptive reuse.

In an increasingly global marketplace, Oregon's small towns must differentiate themselves from others in order to stay competitive. Dr. Pierce's Barn is unique in western Oregon and sets Cottage Grove apart to attract its share of Oregon's \$7 billion annual tourism industry. This unique icon gets people off I-5 and into the community to stroll, shop and dine.

The HPL0 and other public and private preservation organizations offer grants, tax incentives and technical assistance to property owners to help offset the regulations that some local governments place on historic properties because those places benefit the community.

The HPL0 would like to see a civic-minded investor purchase and repurpose Dr. Pierce's Barn as an income-generating property, thus providing extensive environmental, cultural and economic benefits

