

ACTIVIST ALERT

- A community forum on possible improvements to Hwy. 126 between Veneta and Eugene is planned for 6 to 8 pm Thursday, Oct. 6, at Elmira High School cafeteria. RSVP by email at info@highway126.org or call 345-5091,
- Eugene's Nobel Peace Park Project is inviting the community to an "Over-the-Top" dinner gala from 5:30 to 8:30 pm Saturday, Oct. 8, and LCC's Center for Meeting & Learning. Author and noted human rights activist John Prendergast will speak, along with Claes Nobel. Tickets for \$60 a person available at www.nobelpeacelaureates.org or call 485-1604.
- The Oregon League of Conservation Voters is planning parties around the state Oct. 13 for the release of OLCV's Environmental Scorecard for the Oregon Legislature. See olcv.org for information.

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traffic." The draft calls for advanced warning signs when bike lanes or sidewalks must be closed for construction, cones marking four-foot wide new bike lanes through construction and/or placing "bikes in roadway" or "share the road" warning signs when closing a bike lane is unavoidable.

Unnecessarily and dangerously blocking bike lanes and sidewalks for

construction projects is already illegal under state and local law.

Eugene Code (7.100) adopts rules in an ODOT handbook that states: "avoid placing bicycles and pedestrians in conflict with traffic." The handbook and code require advanced warning, a lane with a "4-foot minimum width for bicycles," and bikes on roadway warning signs. — Alan Pittman

WILL WOPR EVER DIE?

The Western Oregon Plan Revisions (aka the WOPR) has been killed, reborn and killed again. The latest skirmish in the battle over the Bureau of Land Management's effort to increase logging on 2.2 million acres of public forests in Western Oregon is another death blow, one that conservationists hope will draw things one step closer to killing the plan once and for all.

The timber industry argued the WOPR wouldn't log enough trees — the plan calls for about 500 million board feet of wood a year — and sued. Environmentalists said the plan, which would increase logging by 700 percent, is bad for old-growth and mature forests. Enviro sued arguing that the plan was illegal because there was no Endangered Species Act consultation. Some of the forests that were included in the WOPR are home to ESA-listed species such as the northern spotted owl.

Susan Jane Brown of the Eugene-based Western Environmental Law Center

argued the case along with attorneys from Earthjustice.

In 2009, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar withdrew the WOPR, calling it legally indefensible, but a federal judge in the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., ruled in April 2011 that Salazar acted illegally when he did not ask for public comment when he withdrew the WOPR. So the WOPR returned and WELC and Earthjustice re-filed their ESA-based complaint, Brown says.

On Sept. 29, U.S. Magistrate Judge Dennis Hubel in Portland recommended that the plan be vacated, agreeing that the BLM should have consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Brown says Hubel's opinion and findings must now be endorsed by a federal judge. "I don't expect her to do anything different than Judge Hubel did," Brown says

Because of the Center for Biological Diversity, more species in the Northwest are moving toward the ESA protection that is trying to help keep the spotted owl from extinction. The group recently reached an

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• What does "overbuilt" mean when we talk about new apartments in Eugene, especially around the UO campus? We keep hearing from sources who should know that **developers have overbuilt demand**, while we also hear hammers pounding away on yet another project. Maybe the best indicator is all those "for rent" signs we still see on little houses around the campus usually full of students by early October. We're wary of market forces and tax breaks from the city these days.

• Downtown Eugene is booming with exciting new construction that should reinvigorate the area. But the downtown is at risk from a continuing effort at **downtown "crapification"** by the city itself. Locking trashed bicycles to city landscaping isn't likely to scare away street people. Stepping around the unsightly city nuisance will, however, hurt efforts to bring more business people and shoppers downtown. Hying downtown crime to justify the "trash downtown to save it" approach does little to help the area.

• It's great to see the **Occupy Wall Street** protests heating up in New York and in other cities across the nation including Eugene. It's about friggin' time. It's been three years since greedy corporate fat cats drove this country over an economic cliff. The corporate executives got billions in bailouts, big bonuses, tax breaks and no new tough regulations. Regular Americans got mugged with the Great Recession. The populist rage at Wall Street is felt by Tea Partiers and lefties alike. Hopefully, it will bring some real change.

• The west Eugene **LTD EmX** got yet another official stamp of approval last week, this time from yet another ODOT analysis of the project. It's past time to get this project built. A few anti-public transportation wingnuts shouldn't be able to block hundreds of construction jobs and a rapid, livable, green way to move for tens of thousands of people.

• Two columnists, often far apart, recently wrote in *The Oregonian* words of high praise for UO President Richard **Lariviere and his raises** for

administrators and professors. Columnist Steve Duin said, "Lariviere has campaigned for increased autonomy in a state with a diminished interest in supporting higher education. He has emulated Knight's unapologetic commitment to run the university like a business." Lane Metro Partnership director Jack Roberts, identified in his every-other-Thursday column as "a Eugene businessman and former Oregon labor commissioner," concludes: "The fact that President Lariviere's action is so controversial says less about the economy than about a state that talks excellence while pursuing mediocrity." In a Sept. 22 Slant, we praised the needed raise for faculty but called Lariviere's raise for administrators an "arrogant mistake."

• So many social justice issues churning out there today, and so many good documentary films spotlighting them. A really good documentary should move us to do something about the issue or at least think hard about it. That perspective, plus a new Eugene party time, is what motivates the **Good Works Film Festival**, starting Friday, Oct. 7, at the Bijou theater and moving to the Hult Center Saturday afternoon. The event was created by Cynthia Wooten, a former Eugene activist for social justice and good times (she helped start the Country Fair and the Eugene Celebration) and by Linda Blackaby from the San Francisco film festival. The Eugene festival will be a model for the rest of the country. After the showings relevant community groups will lead discussions, always provocative and usually fun in this diverse city. For an artistic advanced look, be sure to read John Locanthi's fine reviews in this issue.

• Word is that tireless local defenders of civil rights at the **Civil Liberties Defense Center** could use a little boost to the group's cash flow. Check out the CLDC's work — both locally and nationally — at cldc.org and click on its link to donate or go to the Chipln page at <http://bit.ly/q5Y9fq>

• **More thoughts on banning dogs** on 13th and downtown, as suggested by Councilor Mike Clark: Nobody likes slipping on fresh dog turds, but bigger

issues are at play here. People who are homeless can't leave their dog companions at home, so banning dogs is in effect banning people who are homeless. Is that the unnamed agenda here? One more way to discriminate against the unkempt and disenfranchised members of our community? And more than a few women in Eugene feel safer on our streets with their trusty canines at their sides, particularly after dark. The 13th Avenue dog ban is making our streets less safe and less welcoming for pedestrians out for an evening walk or going to or from work around campus.

• **PBS this week** is airing filmmaker Ken Burns' five-hour documentary series *Prohibition*, and we expect to see a lot of parallels with the counterproductive War on Drugs that Richard Nixon imposed upon us 40 years ago in the spirit of Prohibition. The 18th Amendment banning alcohol was short-lived, but our nation's four-decade-long drug policy has created a massive, violent and untaxed underground economy, international organized crime, an overloaded court system, civil rights violations, corrupt prison industry and border strife. Time to end our idiotic obsession with drugs. Legalize them, regulate them, tax them. Put a fraction of those trillion dollars spent on cops, courts and incarceration into drug education, intervention and treatment. We'll all be better off.

• If you really like to be scared, read this warning from a recent **National Rifle Association** mailing: "Your constitutional right to own a gun is under attack by anti-gun politicians and Obama's hand-picked political appointees, global gun ban diplomats at the U.N., militant anti-hunting extremists, radical billionaires and the freedom-hating Hollywood elite."

• **Wall Street got you pissed off** and you want to join the growing street protests? Bank of America and other national banks added fuel to the fire with their announcement of new fees for debit cards. Hit them where they hurt. Move your money to a credit union or other local financial institution.

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com