

• This week's court ruling on whether **redistricting can go to the voters** was delayed until just after we went to press. We didn't hear a reason for the delay but we do know that Circuit Court Judge Charles Carlson does not have any easy precedents to support whatever his decision might be. County administration, perhaps at the urging of the conservative majority on the commission, claims redistricting is simply administrative and therefore not subject to referral to voters. But redistricting is done by ordinance and according to the Lane County Code, "a referendum on any ordinance enacted by the board shall be held following the filing with the county clerk responsible for election matters according to the proper form and procedures of a referendum petition." The only exception is for ordinances containing an emergency clause, which this one does not. Seems clear to us, and if it's not clear to the judge, we hope he errs on the side of democracy and sets a precedent for other cities and counties fed up with gerrymandering.

• Imagine this **grassroots campaign**: Faculty, staff and students at the UO who advocated so fiercely for Richard Lariviere joining with Occupy Eugene activists to repeal Measure 5, the property tax limitation that voters passed in 1990 and continues to cripple Oregon's tax structure. That repeal could help reach into the pockets of the 1 percent, direct more revenue into education at all levels and lift funding for human services. It should be possible for all of us to direct our combined energy, frustration and anger toward a goal of real progress and excellence in Oregon.

• Several people have suggested to us that the unused **Civic Stadium** would make a near perfect long-term home for Occupy Eugene and our local homeless population. EW reader Michael Hinojosa points out that the sturdy old stadium and its grandstands were built to accommodate thousands of people, and the grounds are fenced and gated to provide some control over who comes and goes. Of course School District 4J, which is trying to find new owners for Civic, is in no position to take on the utilities, security, maintenance and liability of such an Occupation. But the move would give a whole new meaning to the activist cry of "Take a stand!"

• No simple solutions exist to deal with homelessness, but one of the best temporary program that Lane County has come together on in recent years is the **Egan Warming Center**. Various locations in Eugene and Springfield are now up and running, providing a safe and warm environment for homeless people to stay overnight when the temps drop below 30 degrees. Let's not be complacent and think this community effort is any kind of long-term solution to our growing population of people without adequate housing. But it does save lives. The next volunteer training is 9 am to noon Saturday, Dec. 10, at First Christian Church, 12th and Oak, Eugene. See eganwarmingcenter.com for more information.

• **Suicide rates among veterans** in Oregon have been updated and the news is disturbing. Vets account for 20 percent of our nation's suicides and 27 percent of Oregon's suicides, according to the Oregon Partnership, which operates a free 24/7 Military Helpline at (888) 457-4838 or online at www.MilitaryHelpline.org Post traumatic stress disorder is a huge contributing factor, the poor economy exacerbates issues, and many troubled vets balk at seeking help. Friends and family will often observe depression or anger, but don't know how to help before it's too late. Check out www.orpartnership.org for advice and resources. And of course we can work to end our endless wars. Talk about trauma, just last week more than 130 U.S. military personnel were wounded in action in Afghanistan.

• **Climate change?** What climate change? It's frustrating to see that the U.S. is once again sidestepping and delaying any kind of substantive action on climate change through the U.N. or even nationally. California, on the other hand, is not waiting for Congress to act and is implementing its own tougher restrictions on the pollutants that contribute to global warming. When progress bogs down on the national level, regardless of whether it's the environment, health care or any other big issue, it's up to individuals, cities, counties and states to fill the leadership void.

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



Later on, Eugene Taiko, a popular local Japanese drumming ensemble, will play its unique rhythm using multiple drums.

We "always try to incorporate music into the event," said Sorom.

The event is free with a donation of three nonperishable food items to FOOD for Lane County. Following the event will be the museum's free Open House Weekend from 11 am to 5 pm Dec. 17-18.

— Ted Shorack

AWARDS TO LOCAL LATINO FARMERS

Eugene's Latino community has been farming its way to national acclaim. Huerto de la Familia, a local nonprofit, received a \$132,000 grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust. Furthermore, Heifer International selected a business founded by Huerto, the Small Farmers Project, to receive its prestigious Golden Talent Award.

Executive Director Sarah Cantril founded Huerto de la Familia ("Family Garden" in Spanish) in 1999. She says she is thrilled to have received such a "hugely competitive" grant. Huerto has offered the local Latino community instruction in organic gardening for the last 12 years. Currently, Huerto works with 51 families in three different locations in the Eugene area. With the grant money, Cantril plans to expand the scope of the group's current project and to initiate a micro-development program that teaches Spanish-speaking families the skills they need to independently capitalize on agricultural business ideas. "We see what we do as social justice," Cantril says.

The Small Farmers Project (SFP), an independent business, grew out of a partnership with Huerto in 2008. Based in Santa Clara, SFP is a farm that cultivates organic strawberries and raspberries. Five families work for the organization — they market their produce and preserves to local farmers' markets and businesses. SFP was the only project in the U.S. to receive a Golden Talent Award in 2011. This honor is given to an organization that has successfully converted minimal resources into a sustaining source of income while also positively impacting the community. Speaking in Spanish, SFP's President Margarito Palacios says that he dreams to continue "helping more people succeed in agriculture ... that way we can change the world."

GROUPS ENDORSE OCCUPY EUGENE

Several community organizations have come out in support of Occupy Eugene and will be represented at the City Council meeting Dec. 12 when councilors decide whether or not to extend the OE camping permit.

Among the groups publicly endorsing OE is We the People-Eugene, a grassroots organization intent on abolishing the Supreme Court's "corporate personhood" decision, aka Citizens United.

"If the U.S. wasn't in such dire straits, economically, socially and politically, the Occupy movement would probably have never happened," reads a statement from We the People. "Consequently, the city of Eugene would not have to decide whether to extend its compassion in the form of allowing a large group of committed activists to spend the winter camping in the mud."

The statement goes on to say that in OE's "inclusive and often rocky endeavor to live the democratic process, they have begun to recreate the United States of America, literally from the ground up."

Eugene Friends Meeting has also released a public statement that says, in part, "We support Occupy Eugene and other current nonviolent protests and actions seeking justice, equitable ways of organization and communication. We support OE in continuing to peaceably assemble at Washington-Jefferson Park and encourage the City Council to continue the exemption to the 'no-camping' ordinance."

LIGHTEN UP
BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

Message from the State Board of Higher Education: Go Ducks! President Lariviere won't be going with you because he made a paper hat out of the organization chart.