

## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAPE

The 2009 arrest of Josh Schlossberg as he protested Umpqua Bank was carried out with excessive force, a federal jury ruled Monday. An earlier ruling confirmed that EPD Sgt. Bill Solesbee violated Schlossberg's civil rights by viewing the contents of Schlossberg's video camera without a warrant after the arrest. Schlossberg was never formally charged in the incident.

Schlossberg says he is pleased with the recognition of the police actions as a violation of his civil rights and likens his 2009 protest to the work that the Occupy movement has done in bringing attention to problems and corruption in the financial system. "If there was true justice in this world, I would be able to sue clear-cutting, toxic herbicide-spraying, native forest-logging, biomass power-profiteering, one-percenter Umpqua Bank Chairman of the Board Allyn Ford, CEO of Roseburg Forest Products — not just the tool (Solesbee) Ford and Umpqua Bank used against me in violence," Schlossberg told *EW*.

Oregon law and the U.S. Constitution don't prohibit the videotaping of police officers, but Oregon law does require that they be made aware of the videotaping. Schlossberg's recording includes Solesbee asking if he was recording, Schlossberg saying "Yes, and I did say that to you twice," and Solesbee saying "No, you asked me if you could. You didn't inform me you were." Solesbee demands the camera as evidence just before the end of the clip.

Unlike the federal jury, an internal affairs investigation of Solesbee's actions did not find that Solesbee violated Schlossberg's rights. Instead the EPD investigation said that Schlossberg violated the police officer's rights by recording him unlawfully. The police auditor found the case inconclusive, according to Schlossberg's attorney, Lauren Regan of the Civil Liberties Defense Center.

The federal jury unanimously awarded Schlossberg \$5,583 for medical expenses and non-economic damages.

Melinda McLaughlin, EPD's public information director, told *EW* "at the time of the incident, under the laws that existed at the time and the search and seizure standards that existed at the time, the officers' decision to arrest and search Schlossberg was within policy and complied with the law."

Asked whether the results of the internal review would be different today, it's unclear if EPD would still take and examine a camera without a search warrant during a protest: "Legal minds differ on whether searching a camera incident to arrest is allowed in today's search and seizure environment," McLaughlin replied on behalf of Police Chief Pete Kerns.

— Shannon Finnell

## SORENSEN STANDS ON HIS RECORD

Lane County Commissioner Pete Sorenson says, "I get up every morning and say 'I'm glad I'm a Lane County Commissioner and I get to help people,'" and that's one of the many reasons he is seeking re-election.

Sorenson says he has no interest in trading barbs with his opponents or getting "involved in what Clinton called the politics of personal destruction" in the race for the south Eugene commission seat he currently holds. He says he is running "because I have a lot of accomplishments but I still have a number of things I'd like to do."

Sorenson faces opposition for the first time in more than a decade. Environmental advocate Andy Stahl and Sponsors, Inc., board member and retired painting contractor Kieran Walsh have entered the race, both citing the timber-funded open meetings lawsuit against Sorenson and other commissioners as motivation.

Sorenson says the positions he has taken on issues from logging to sprawl to the Strong Schools initiative over the years have reflected the views of the people in his district but have "infuriated really powerful interests."

"I have a role to be an advocate for strong, progressive politics," he says. Sorenson cites among his list of accomplishments major expansions of both Lane County Veterans Services and public health services. "Before I became commissioner, Lane County had no role in primary health care," he says.

He says he has also been involved in other issues that matter to his district, such as saving the Lane County ice-skating arena, which was drastically affected by the downturn in the economy. He cites improvements to Lane County Animal Services and his work to make aggravated animal abuse in Oregon a felony when he was in the Oregon Legislature, because studies show animal abuse is often linked to child abuse and other violence against humans.

Sorenson says he is proud of the work he has done to promote sustainable small businesses in Lane County. Before the current board majority reversed it, the county was giving money to local, environmentally friendly businesses including electric carmaker Arcimoto. He says the more conservative board now has gone back to the "big fish idea." Rather than giving money to support growing smaller businesses, the county saves the money to lure in big fish, such as Hynix, the semiconductor manufacturer that has since left town. "When I was the board chair we got more people employed more quickly," he says.

Sorenson says even the votes he has lost to the conservative majority are important, such as to keep the Lane County Human Rights Commission, because they represent the dominant point of view of his district and causes that south Eugene cares about.

— Camilla Mortensen



- It would be an important change in Eugene if a chief of police would **support the courts of law** when they find against one of his officers as a federal jury did Jan. 23 against Sgt. Bill Solesbee. The jury decided Solesbee used excessive force against Josh Schlossberg. Chief Pete Kerns could have issued a neutral statement or resorted to "no comment" instead of saying Solesbee's actions were justified. Maybe the police association or the radical conservatives in this community demand support of the police, no matter what they do, but that's hardly the way to build a climate of trust for all those Eugene cops who do good work.

- Maybe all those thousands of words from speculating sports writers haven't nailed **the REAL reasons Chip Kelly** was at first leaving for the NFL, then staying to coach the Ducks another year. January in Oregon makes the Florida sun very inviting; a lot of Eugeneans escape to Mexico this time of year. A quick glance at NFL coach salaries show most of them don't make more than the cool \$3 million that Kelly is pulling in this year. Or maybe Kelly's staying because he wants to occupy his new house reportedly under construction in the Delta Oaks area. Rumors have big numbers around it: 9,000 square feet, \$2 million price tag, not gated, athletic facilities. We hope it has a jump-gym where Chip can train for the BCS championship game next year.

- **If a Tree Falls**, the documentary film about the ecologically motivated arsons across the Pacific Northwest, is up for an Oscar nod. The film features the work of Eugene videographers Tim Lewis, Albie Nash and Randy Shadowalker and features Civil Liberties Defense Center attorney Lauren Regan and longtime enviro-activist Jim Flynn, among others. The film's garnered praise from law enforcement and activists alike.

- **Waldo Lake** is one of our favorite canoe and hiking getaways, despite mosquito swarms reminiscent of Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*. But while skeeters are both natural and irritating, motorboats are only irritating. An advisory committee of the Oregon Marine Board is currently reviewing OMB's 2009 decision to ban gas motors on Waldo, presumably because of technical complaints about the decision-making process and who has legal jurisdiction over boats and floatplanes on the lake. But the people have spoken here, along with our elected officials. What sense is there in endangering one of the most pristine lakes in the world? One proposal before the committee is to allow four-stroke engines, which are cleaner, but can still pollute through leaking gas lines, dripping oil and underwater exhaust. Motor boats can sink, motors can fall off, and people can be careless handling gas and oil on docks. Let's keep Waldo as clean as possible, and leave the whining to the mosquitoes.

- Kudos to Dave Fidanque and his staff at the **American Civil Liberties Union** of Oregon for bringing Dan Savage from Seattle to be the keynote speaker for the 2012 Liberty Dinner at the Portland Hilton on Saturday, March 10. If you read "Savage Love" in the back of our paper every week, you know his persistent call for tolerance, openness and honesty. He's become a national leader in supporting gay teens in their tough journey. Plus — he's a brilliant and hilarious speaker.

- The **Oregon Conservation Network**, a coalition of 50 environmental organizations in the state, unveiled its "Priorities for a Healthy Oregon" Jan. 19 in Salem. The group, associated with the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, called for preserving Oregon's Renewable Energy Standard, a program that responds to climate change by driving a shift to clean, renewable energy sources. Another priority is expanding Oregon's marine reserves established in 2009. OCN also calls for restoring the budget of the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Find out more at [olcveducationfund.org](http://olcveducationfund.org)

*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](mailto:editor@eugeneweekly.com)