NOT WORTH DISCUSSING?

I watched the Feb. 8 proceedings of the Lane County Commissioners, stunned, as three of our elected officials (Jay Bozievich, Sid Leiken, and Faye Stewart) thwarted the efforts of Commissioner Rob Handy to have the board even consider possible salary reductions for county employees earning more than $90,000 a year.

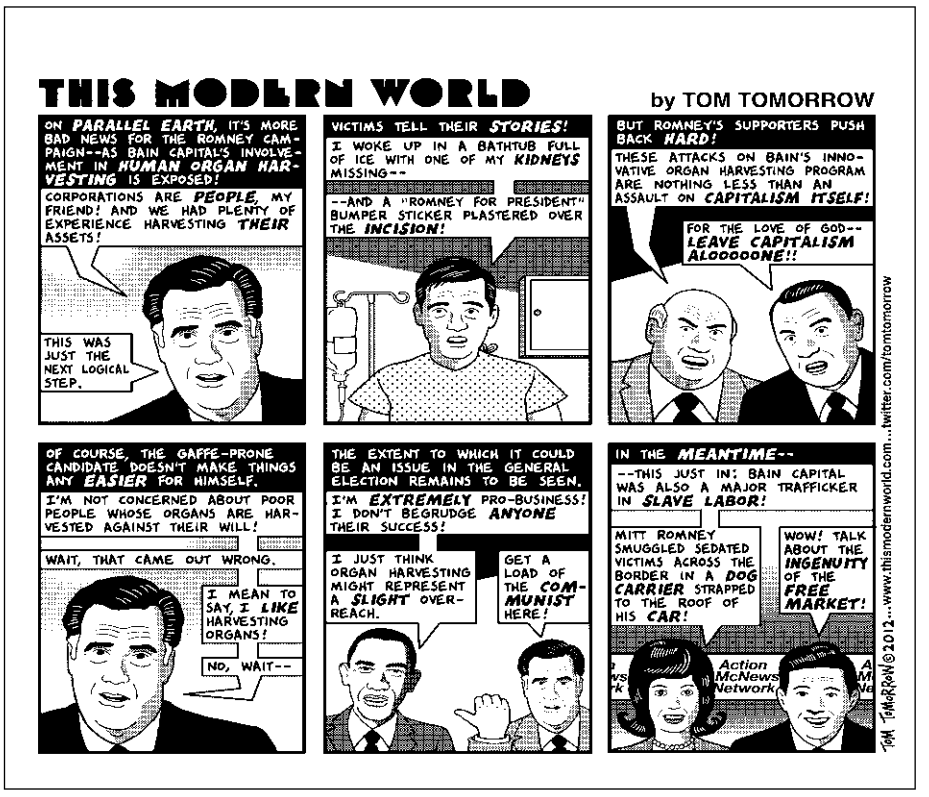
Aren't these dire economic times for the county? Why should any area of the budget be immune from discussion?

Robert Young
Eugene

VACANT PROMISE

When I see our city government proposing to grant huge property concessions to a private corporation, justifying their move on the grounds that it will create jobs or promote general development, I cringe. Have we not had enough experience locally with this sort of funding to realize that getting such concessions, milking the business for maximum profitability during the period when they are in force, and then pulling out, leaving unemployment and empty buildings in the wake, has become a standard corporate strategy?

There are many reasons for being skeptical that granting massive tax concessions to an out-of-state investment consortium to build luxury student housing in downtown Eugene will provide any net benefit to our community. Others have pointed out that, aside from short-term construction jobs, there will not be any increase in local consumption, because the money these people are spending downtown would have been spent elsewhere in the area anyway. Actually, the expected result is decreased local spending, because these are luxury units with very high rents. Without an increase in personal income, other purchasing must necessarily decline, and this development is projected to siphon a larger proportion of revenue out of area than most businesses.



Such a development does generate additional costs to the city, and these must somehow be borne by the remainder of the population, either through increased property taxes or through decreases in other services. The city already has a property tax structure that is burdensome to individuals and existing businesses, and this is primarily because four out of five of our largest employers are either government entities or nonprofits, and the share of maintaining the infrastructure that would fall to a for-profit manufacturing entity falls directly on the employees of the UO, PeaceHealth, and the 4J school district.

Martha Sherwood
Eugene

SUPPORT HISTORIC VENUE

Eugene has two unique assets that help make it the special place it is, and both are owned by Eugene School District 4J. Unfortunately, the district is leaving both dependent upon public fundraising for their survival.

KRVM radio has launched its spring fundraiser. Having lived in rural Oregon communities from Jacksonville to John Day, I assure you that there is nothing like KRVM-FM on the airwaves anywhere. The variety of music, the lack of obnoxious commercials and the volunteer DJs make KRVM so unique that it can be difficult for those who have never heard it to believe that such a radio station exists when it is described to them.

The Eugene School District also owns historic Civic Stadium, which currently sits empty and unused, and offered for sale, lease or trade. There is an organization that is working to change that. Save Civic Stadium was organized to prevent 4J from demolishing our historic Civic Stadium, and they continue to seek to secure a new future for this wonderful, historic public venue.

If you traditionally support KRVM radio, please also consider supporting Save Civic Stadium. If you have never supported KRVM or Save Civic Stadium, please consider doing so. Both are valuable community assets, and neither can survive without ongoing public support. To learn more, please go to KRVM.org and SaveCivicStadium.org

Lonnie McCulloch
Eugene

PETE'S CHARACTER

I'm writing in support of Commissioner Pete Sorenson's re-election campaign. He's been there in many ways for the environment, education and for a sustainable economy. Last year, I saw him in action when he was hosting a town hall event, along with Commissioner Rob Handy, in favor of ending the distribution of single-use plastic bags.

He brought together the recycling industry, the grocery stores (even the big ones) and environmental advocates for an informative program. Meanwhile, his ratings by the Oregon League of Conservation Voters have consistently been at 100 percent over the last decade!

But what really convinced me of Pete's character — and his ability to stand up for what's right — was watching a politically motivated lawsuit against him and Commissioner Rob Handy unfold last year. The lawsuit was a blatant conservative smear campaign that highlighted Sorenson's long history of standing up against powerful interests and standing with the people. The lawsuit was funded by the timber industry, launched by a core of conservative Eugene residents and targeted the most progressive members of the Lane County Commission.

When it comes to elected officials, you don't get much better than Pete. Please join me in voting for Pete Sorenson on May 15.

Nathan Howard
Eugene

KEPT ME LAUGHING

Rick Levin must have left his funny bone at home when he went to see LCC's latest play *Exploding Love* (reviewed 2/2). I'm a dedicated theater fan who attends nearly every play that opens in Eugene