

PARVIN BUTTE MINING TO RESUME

On Valentine's Day Lane County Hearings Official Gary Darnielle ruled that Greg Demers and the McDougal Bros.' Lost Creek Rock Products can go ahead and mine Parvin Butte, despite possible negative effects on the rural community that surrounds the butte.

Lane County staff fined LCRP for mining without a site review in November and December. The quarry appealed the fines. A site review is a process in which those living close to a mine can have input on the hours the mine operates, how many trucks leave the mine and go through neighborhoods and at what speeds, and addresses other effects that an operation that involves dynamiting and rock crushing can have on its neighbors.

"The Big Boys win again, smash the little people, disenfranchise them from their own neighborhoods just so greed can again rear its ugly head again," frustrated Parvin Butte neighbor Arlen Markus says. "Give corporations all the rights but the people none."

Darnielle ruled that the language in the Lane County code is unclear on the site review issue. He suggested the code be rewritten "to more evenly balance the protection of existing mineral resources with the protection of surrounding neighborhoods."

The butte is in Commissioner Faye Stewart's district. Stewart says he has no comment at this time on Darnielle's decision, but that he has asked over the past seven years that the code be clarified. He says if a final decision of no site review needed is reached, the neighbors could turn to agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality or Lane Regional Air Protection Agency for enforcement of environmental issues.

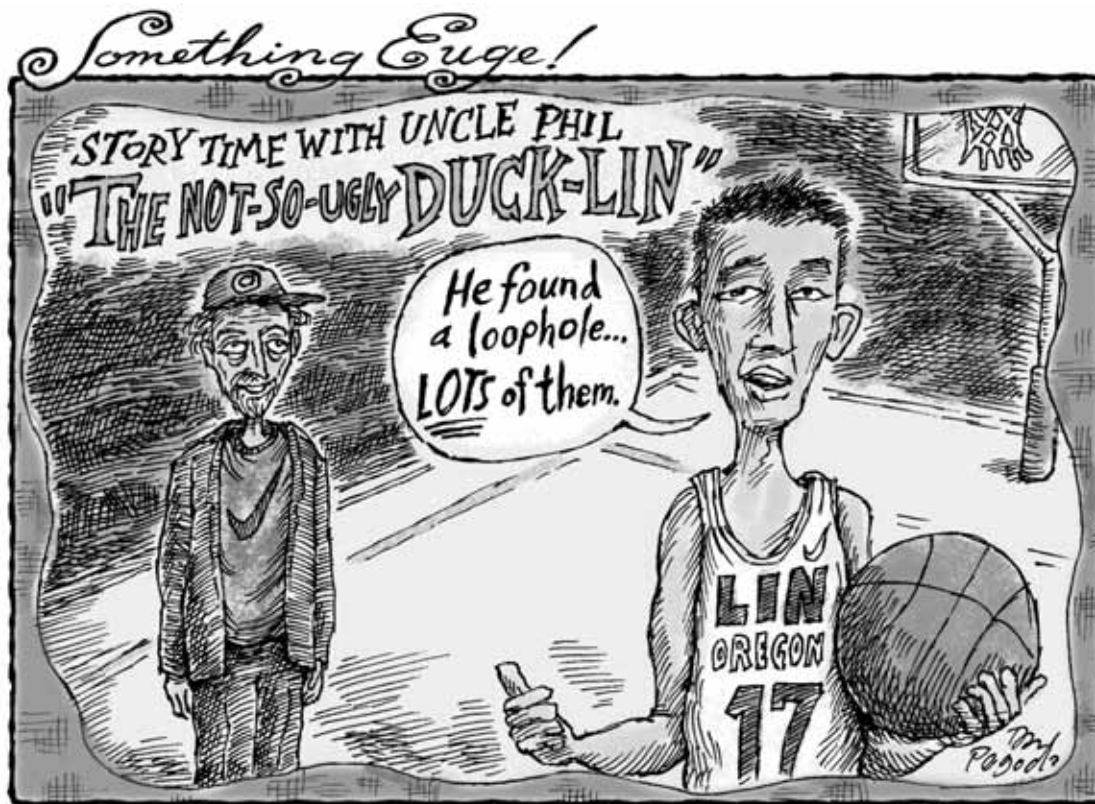
Dan Stotter, who has been representing the Parvin Butte neighbors in their fight against the mine, says that site review is needed because a 200-foot buffer is not enough to protect neighbors from the noise, dust and environmental impacts of the mine. It also doesn't address the effects that large truckloads of gravel racing through neighborhoods might have on residents and their children.

Stotter says county staffers were right to demand a site review and the "county board should support their staff by seeking review of this decision."

If the board decides to review, the decision would then move either to the Land Use Board of Appeals or Lane County Circuit Court. The commissioners have scheduled an executive session to discuss the issue for Feb. 22, as *EW* went to press.

Stotter was not the attorney in this dispute, as it was between Lane County and the developers, but he is the attorney for a Parvin Butte-related case involving a bridge.

Darnielle also decided on Feb. 14 that the bridge LCRP



wants to build leading to the butte is permissible. The neighbors are involved directly in that case and have challenged the bridge because of issues including worries over flooding and effects on endangered salmon in a stream through the property. LCRP says the permit for the bridge isn't needed because the bridge is for "forestry" on the property, not for the mining. Stotter says, "That's strange because it (the bridge) leads straight to the quarry mine."

Demers and the McDougals have been making headlines over the past year, not only for their efforts to mine Parvin Butte, but also for an attempt to get a massive water right out of the McKenzie River that would allow them to control and sell water to rural Lane County towns, and in Demers' case, for owing millions of dollars in taxes while applying for federal grants to fund a project associated with the mine.

— Camilla Mortensen

PEOPLE UNITED IN EUGENE

It's not every day that a majority of Eugene's City Council, Stephen Colbert, Oregon Country Fair and Occupy Eugene have a cause in common. But the far-reaching, unpopular Supreme Court decision on *Citizens United* has given those concerned about the future of democracy a reason to come together.

Last week the council voted 6-1 to call for a resolution supporting an amendment to the Constitution that would clarify that corporations aren't people. This week democracy activists are holding People United: More than

a March, at 11 am Feb. 25 at the Free Speech Plaza.

"It started as a protest that's become a celebration of human personhood," says event organizer Marcus Farley. "We're asking everyone to bring a simple sign that says my name is 'blank' and I am a person."

"The regal fiction of corporate personhood is unacceptable," he says. "It represents a tilting of power in our country right now that has basically rendered democracy a joke."

To see Stephen Colbert's take on the joke, go to <http://wkly.ws/17a>

— Shannon Finnell

DEFAZIO BILL LOGS FOR COUNTY MONEY

Congressman Peter DeFazio's long-awaited forest plan has gone public, but the bill is under fire from conservation groups, and it's questionable whether the controversial proposal that aims get funding for Lane and other cash-strapped counties will go anywhere at all.

The draft plan put forth by DeFazio and Reps. Greg Walden and Kurt Schrader called the "O&C Trust, Conservation, and Jobs Act" is billed as a "balanced forest health and jobs plan," but Eugene-based Cascadia Wildlands and other conservation groups are casting a critical eye upon it.

It was thought by many that DeFazio's timber and conservation trust plan would be a part of a bill put forth by Washington Republican and chair of the House Natural Resources Committee Doc Hastings. The Hastings bill,

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