

• What's up with the R-G's beef with **Commissioner Pete Sorenson**? The daily is filling its pages with unrelenting spin trying to sway the public into thinking Lane County's green and liberal commissioner is somehow both a political mastermind and utterly incompetent. To read the Feb. 18 R-G article about the Democratic Party of Lane County (DPLC) endorsements, you would think Sorenson engineered the whole event just to get a nod from the Dems. And you'd think the reporter who wrote it actually showed up to the event he was writing about. Apparently not.

The Feb. 18 article failed to mention that this was a regularly scheduled meeting of the DPLC that also endorsed Kitty Piercy for mayor of Eugene, Denise Bean for mayor of Springfield, George Brown for Eugene City Council, and Nephi Perry and C.J. Mann for Springfield City Council. The R-G's follow-up editorial Feb. 21 was also based on this sketchy, second-hand reporting.

Sorenson's opponents complained they weren't notified of the meeting until late, but if they wanted the endorsement why weren't they keeping close track of key groups like the DPLC? If they can't figure out how the election process works, you have to wonder if they can figure out how to run the county.

• Many in Eugene are mourning the death Feb. 16 of **Ellen Bombaro**, a former Eugene resident and one of the people who made possible Lane Independent Living Alliance. "Ellen will be remembered as one of the unsung heroes of the local disability rights movement," says Lynne Braverman McKinney, who wrote a tribute to Bombaro on our website this week. "She is a shining example of a person with a significant disability who helped empower and support others." A remembrance gathering is planned for 11 am Saturday, Feb. 25, at the LILA Peer Support Club at 10th and Oak in Eugene. Call 461-4057 for more information.

• We've been hearing casual comments around town that the **UO is awash in money**. Seems unlikely when K-12 education, human services and the state budget generally are so austere. But *The Oregonian* confirmed the comments in a front-page story Feb. 20. According to Harry Esteve, former R-G reporter now in Portland, "Record enrollments coupled with higher-than-ever tuition rates have helped give Oregon's higher education system something almost unheard of in this time of civic austerity: a fluffy cushion of cash reserves." We have some suggestions: How about lowering tuition for Oregon kids? How about figuring out a way to send some of that fluff to K-12? Maybe the UO should cap its growth, considering the physical plant and setting. All unlikely possibilities.

• The world's leading **environmental conference** happens in Eugene each March, but it gets very little attention in the local mainstream media. Why is it ignored? Some of the topics of the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference are a bit wonkish, which scares off lazy reporters, but most of the workshops and keynote lectures are timely and highly relevant to the biggest issues of our time (and no, we're not talking about whether Angelica Swartout really had a baby, or whether Whitney Houston's daughter got high for Mom's funeral). We'll be there to join the 3,000 or so environmental attorneys, activists, professors and students who are gathering for the 30th annual PIELC March 1-4 on the UO campus. The schedule is now available at [pielc.org](http://pielc.org) along with a new video about PIELC.

• **Should city councilors** and county commissioners get involved in national politics? This issue comes up a few times a year. Last week the Eugene City Council voted on a resolution in support of a national citizens' campaign to overturn the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision. Councilor Pat Farr says it's not city business, but reform in national policy often comes from the bottom up more than from the top down. Local governments and individuals have a right and an obligation to weigh in on issues that affect us all.

*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)*

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