

## COAL, COAL, GO AWAY

While Eugene braces itself for possible coal trains and their choking dust, citizens of other states are already well aware of the high costs of coal to the environment and to human health.

The Port of Coos Bay's coal export proposal that would require open-car coal trains over a mile long chugging through Lane County may have hit a snag. It will cost millions of dollars to repair the Coos Bay Rail Link, the railroad track that goes from Eugene to Coos Bay, enough to carry the loads of coal.

The *Coos Bay World* reports that a \$190,000 assessment outlined three scenarios involving from two to six trains coming in and out of Coos Bay. The study was paid for by Project Mainstay, the code name for the anonymous coal company looking to export coal through Oregon. The repairs, aside from deferred maintenance, would be paid for by private companies, not the port, according to a Port of Coos Bay representative.

Coal took another blow at the national level last week when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced its first carbon pollution standard for new power plants, a move that analysts say will discourage new coal-fired plants from being built and reduce domestic demand for coal.

Oregon is on track to shut down its coal-fired power plant in Boardman, but utility companies also buy coal-fired power from other states.

Eugene attorney, Charlie Tebbutt, working on behalf of the Sierra Club reached a landmark settlement with a coal mine and power plant in New Mexico in late March. Megan Anderson of Eugene-based Western Environmental Law Center was also an attorney in the case.

The multimillion dollar settlement seeks to stop ground and surface water contamination that the Sierra Club alleges comes from toxic coal ash waste and other sources at the

San Juan Coal Mine and San Juan Generating Station coal-fired power plant operated by the Public Service Company of New Mexico.

Tebbutt says the settlement will call for spending about \$8 million on projects to restore the San Juan River basin watershed, control existing pollution sources at the facilities and monitor downstream waterways.

"The essential goal to of the settlement is top stop the pollution now," Tebbutt says. He says the settlement seeks not just "a continual pump and treat system," but "sets out a more in-depth mechanism for getting the problem to away."

Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign is working to retire coal-burning plants across the U.S., and is also working to stop the coal trains through the Northwest.

— Camilla Mortensen

## ENVIRO JUSTICE FROM ALL ANGLES

Eugene's environmental groups are not necessarily known for reaching out into the Latino community, but Beyond Toxics is looking to change that. The group is organizing a series of forums, panels and discussions on how toxic pollution affects the West Eugene community that runs April 11-13. Lisa Arkin of Beyond Toxics says events will include the academic and the experiential. "It will be a trip into environmental justice from all different angles," Arkin says.

The events run the gamut from an all-Spanish forum at the Iglesia Bautista Hispana to a panel at the UO's John E. Jaqua Academic Learning Center (aka the big glass jock box). Beyond Toxics has been working with Centro LatinoAmericano, the EPA and other businesses and organizations to bring together a diversity of perspectives on toxics issues such as how pollution can disproportionately affect lower-income residents.

On April 11 Luis Olmedo, executive director of Comite Civico del Valle, a California group whose mission focuses on addressing environmental health related problems in the farmworker community, will speak at 6:30 pm at an event called Voces Unidas at Iglesia Bautista church, 1105 River Road.

Alison Guzman, environmental justice outreach coordinator for Beyond Toxics, says Olmedo's "cutting

edge approach to environmental justice is a bold model for our work in Eugene."

Olmedo will next speak at the UO with Carleen Sisk of the Native American Winnemum Wintu and Ben Duncan, chair of Gov. Kitzhaber's Environmental Justice Task Force on April 12. Arkin will moderate the panel, which begins at 7 pm at the Jaqua Center and is free and open to the public.

An environmental justice bus tour April 13 — a tradition in other areas but a first for Oregon, Arkin says — will be followed by neighborhood community forum at 1:30 pm at Cascade Middle School. Seating is limited for this event and it requires an RSVP by April 9.

For more information on the events call Guzman at 465-8860. Para obtener más información sobre Voces Unidas, llame al Centro LatinoAmericano 687-2667, pregunte por Alison.

— Camilla Mortensen

## PEEING TOXIC CHEMICALS

The chemical atrazine can turn a boy frog into a girl frog. It's a pesticide commonly used in forestry that's been found in the urine of residents of Triangle Lake, a rural community in the Coast Range west of Eugene. Residents have been trying for years to put an end to the aerial sprays that they say drift on to the farms and homes, as well as manual pesticide applications that can affect drinking water.

Oregon's PARC (Pesticide Analytical Response Center) will be holding a town hall meeting at 6:30 pm Tuesday, April 10, at the Blachly Grange Hall to discuss a pesticide exposure investigation that began in the spring of 2011.

"We have no idea what their purpose is in holding a meeting," says Amy Pincus Merwin of STOP Oregon (Standing Together to Outlaw Pesticides). She says she is frustrated with PARC and what she sees as a lack of effort over the past 30 years by the agency to listen to those who are affected by the sprays, and to deal with the issue.

PARC began to investigate the pesticide exposure issue after a study by Emory University researcher Dana Barr showed 2,4-D and atrazine in the urine samples of Triangle Lake area residents. This "sparked concern among public health officials," PARC says. Atrazine is an endocrine disrupter, meaning it can interfere with the hormonal system, and 2,4-D is an ingredient in Agent Orange.

Rather than use Barr's data, PARC began its own study. But on March 8, PARC announced the spring 2012 urine and environmental sample collection was suspended.

PARC says the study was suspended because it was "not able to recruit enough participants to ensure that the data resulting from the effort are a valid test of potential exposure among local residents," citing the study area's remote nature with "few residents."

"The industry thwarted the study, as we predicted they would," says Eron King of STOP. The pesticide spray foes say once the timber industry became aware of the study, it simply didn't spray atrazine in the areas to be tested.

PARC is now asking residents who participated in the Barr study to allow their data to be used by the agency, according to an email from Karen Bishop of PARC to Day Owen of the Pitchfork Rebellion, another group fighting the toxic exposures. PARC is setting up meetings on April 9 for residents who wish their data to be used.

"They had previously refused four times over a six-month period to even look at the Barr study urine sample results," Owen says. He adds, "I am happy that they are taking this one step in the right direction but we want more. We want them to not just look at the results, we want them to take action and stop the poisoning."

King says PARC will also be conducting "passive air sampling," but that the agency stressed that this was "not a drift study." Pesticide drift means that the toxics sprays can move from what they are supposed to target, such as a clearcut, onto another area, such as an organic farm or a home.

CONTINUED P. 8

## SPORTS



SACRED CITY SCORER/JAMMER THE 4CLOSER POW-  
ERING HER WAY BY EMERALD CITY BLOCKERS REX  
HAVOC AND ROCKA ROLLA

## SACRED CITY SACKS EMERALD CITY 227-90

For the first 25 minutes of the hour-long March 24 bout between the host Sacred City Derby Girls of Sacramento and the Emerald City Roller Girls, the seating in the small, crowded venue seemed superfluous. Four lead changes and one tie kept the crowd on its feet. Sacred City opened up leads. Emerald City obliterated them. Up 26-24, Sacred City took a 21-point lead off 10-0 and 9-0 scoring runs by Jamn' Jewlz and The 4Closer respectively. But Emerald City was not going down easily. They regained the lead on the next two frames. Jala Pain Yo (31 points for the bout) posted Emerald City's best run, a 14-0 effort. Golden followed that up with a 10-2 jam. It was 51-47 Emerald City with 5:30 to go in the half. But, a couple double-digit jams by Jamn' Jewlz gave Sacred

City a 72-55 lead going into the half.

The second half was all Sacred City. For the first 16:30 of the period, Sacred City went with their most effective scorers, Jamn' Jewlz (91 points for the game) and The 4Closer (102 points). During that run, Sacred City outscored our girls in green 82-17 putting the score at 154-72 and virtually out of reach. Sacred City's star scoring duo seemed oblivious to which direction they were facing as long as they continued to zip around the track in the counter-clockwise direction and stayed in bounds after Emerald City's ineffective hits. This was the story of the second half and how Sacred City managed to turn a nail-biter into a 227-90 drubbing.

You can catch the Emerald City Roller Girls April 21 at the Lane Events Center.

— James Brains (formerly James Warmels)