

## BLASTING AT PARVIN BUTTE

Lost Creek Rock Products has begun blasting at Parvin Butte, and neighbors say the noise is frightening people and their pets. The once-wooded land has been logged and the butte, which gives a scenic backdrop to boaters on the nearby Dexter Lake reservoir, is slated to be razed.

Neighbor Pete Helzer tells of a neighbor's dog that was so scared by the blasting noise that it ran through two fences before it could be stopped. He says destroying the butte harms not only the rural community but its history, as well as the water and environment.

Lane County did hear from neighbors about the blasting noise, says Shelley Kurtz, interim public information officer. But she says the county doesn't "have authority to cite for non-compliance given the distances involved."

Another neighbor, Arlen Markus, says when the April 10 blasting happened, his wife was feeding horses in the barn and felt the blast through the dirt floor. He says, "She was lucky that the horses did not spook and trample her to death." He says he is frustrated his County Commissioner, Faye Stewart, has been silent on the issue.

Another butte neighbor, Courtney Campbell, emailed the county that the blast "shook the entire foundation of my home, even knocking several items on tables over" and it made her animals frantic.

"This is outrageous and unacceptable," she wrote, "Isn't there anything the county can do?"

According to Matt Laird of the Land Management Division, right now there is not. "The code requires notice if blasting occurs within 500 feet of an occupied structure," he says and there is "no evidence that there are any occupied structures within 500 feet of the blast." He adds, "While I believe it would be courteous of the operator to provide notice to the surrounding neighborhood, it is not required by code."

Lost Creek Rock Products, a business of Greg Demers and the McDougal brothers, has argued to Lane County that it does not need a site review permit for the mine. A site review would allow neighbors input over problems the nearby mine could create for them such as dust, blasting noise and trucks.

Kurtz says the county is currently in a holding pattern over the issue and has until May 4 to decide whether to file an appeal challenging a decision made by the hearings official. The decision said a site review is needed if mining activity occurs in the 200-foot buffer around the mine, but not at the mine itself, where the blasting has occurred.

The legal system has relegated the Parvin Butte neighbors to the sidelines in the site review dispute, Helzer says, but "we do have a sense of what the landscape is and a historical sense of the landscape."

Helzer, who is a sculptor known for his downtown Ken Kesey and Rosa Parks statues, as well as the bronze relief sighting pedestal atop Mount Pisgah, wants to give the people of Dexter and Lost Valley a voice and give others "a sense of what's at stake."

Towards that goal, Helzer is working with other neighbors on an art exhibit, "Silent Witness" at Maude Kerns Art Center May 14-18, which will include photography by Dexter photographer John Bauguess as well as poetry.

— Camilla Mortensen

## TWO MOMS AT KIDS MARCH PEPPER SPRAYED

It was Kids Day, a part of Occupy the Trees, a weeklong Earth Day-oriented celebration. But the April 25 children's event ended dramatically with two mothers pepper sprayed by Eugene police and children crying, according to attorney Lauren Regan.

Kids Day consisted of a kids' march and a scavenger hunt for nature items, as well as speeches from children about the environment, according to a press release from Occupy Eugene.

The issue began with children playing in the shrubbery at the park. Regan says the "cops were pretty aggressive right off the bat," when they warned the mothers that their children were not allowed to play in the bushes at the Park Blocks.

The young mothers, who are in their twenties, according to EPD records, were given tickets for "Violation of Park Rules — Damaging Vegetation."

"It sounds ridiculous but it actually is an offense that can lead to exclusion from the downtown zone," Regan says.

She questions why mothers were ticketed for the actions of their young children and asks why the officer didn't approach "with a smile on his face and say, 'Hey kids why don't you get out of the planting area, we are trying to grow flowers.'"

According an EPD information officer, "When the officer contacted the women to talk about the children's behavior, the two became hostile and refused to comply with the rule or to provide their names. As a consequence, the officer issued the two parents" the citations for damaging vegetation.

EPD says later that evening, around 5:30 pm, "Roughly 20 people were gathered in the park blocks possibly to engage in protest activity although there was no clear indication of that." An officer was giving out police stickers nearby. According to EPD one of the mothers who had been ticketed "slapped his hand away telling the children to not accept stickers from the officer."

Regan says the mothers, who are low income and one is transient, were upset by the ticket, which has a \$155 base

fine. They told their children not to take the stickers and according to witnesses told the officers they didn't want their children to be given stickers. When the kid reached out to give the sticker, Regan says the mother, who EPD identifies as Angela Bartow, brushed the child's hand away, but says the officer "claims somehow she brushed his hand."

The incident is on video but has not yet been released. The children, Regan says, are around 4 years old.

Both mothers left the park and EPD says, "although she had committed the crime of physical harassment, because of the size and behavior of the group, the officer elected to not take action immediately." EPD says the officer "chose to wait for a calmer time and place to either arrest or issue her a citation."

Regan says Bartow "had her back to the police when all of a sudden the cop comes from behind and begins macing her without really saying anything to her about being under arrest or to put her hands behind her back." The other mother, Ashley Dicharry, came up and put her arms around Bartow and was also sprayed.

One of the mothers was yelling for someone to take the children away, Regan says, and as she was yelling the officer "lifts her up and does a wresting move on her and throws her on the ground." Both women were bruised, Regan says. She adds that witnesses say one of the officers pointed a Taser at the women's heads.

She says a number of people involved with Occupy Eugene who witnessed the event, including an attorney, say the police appeared to be trying to antagonize people.

"A bunch of kids started crying, and asking why the police ruined the event," Regan says. She adds "it was a totally legal children's event" and the police could have handled it differently. She asks, "What lawful justification does EPD have for using force and chemical weapons for people not placed under arrest, not resisting arrest and not a threat to the police?"

The charges the women were given include resisting arrest, disorderly conduct and harassment.

— Camilla Mortensen

## INDUSTRY BACKS FARR CAMPAIGN

County Commission candidate Pat Farr, running against incumbent Commissioner Rob Handy, has raised about \$91,000 so far, averaging \$1,000 per donation. Lindholm Company, a consulting and polling firm where Farr worked until taking a leave, has donated a total of \$4,060 in cash and in-kind services. Wildish Sand and Gravel Co. donated \$5,000, followed by \$3,000 from Delta Sand and Gravel and \$2,500 from Hamilton Construction in Springfield. Also donating \$2,500 each were Rosboro Lumber, Murphy Hardwood Plywood Division and John

## IT'S ABOUT TIME

BY DAVID WAGNER



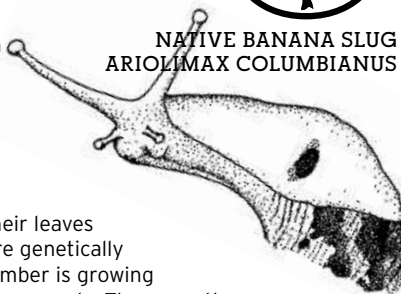
I know summer is close because the sun shines in our north windows. A sunny morning is a good time to go turtle watching in the Delta Ponds. They line up on anchored logs in early morning. The warm weather brings the cottonwood trees into final stages of bud burst. Inside the leaf buds – but not the flower buds – is a resin that smells very sweet. It is the American source of Balm of Gilead.

By the end of May the Oregon oak trees will finally have their leaves fully expanded. The last of the native trees to leaf out, they are genetically predisposed to avoid late season snow damage. The wild cucumber is growing fast, extending grasping tendrils upwards. All the early flowers are male. These are the ones on stalks. The female flowers appear later, singly in the angle between leaf stalk and stem.

Mowing and weeding, I love the smell of plants cut and torn off. I wonder if I am an instinctive gatherer, rather than hunter, with a sap lust instead of blood lust? Slugs are afoot these days, eating their way through the lilies and primroses. If you want to pick one up to toss away, you had better use a leaf or other wrap because they produce an alarm slime when disturbed. It is amazingly sticky and won't wash off with soap and water.

The Wildflower Festival at Mount Pisgah Arboretum is Sunday, May 20. Please join me for a plant walk at 1 pm.

*David Wagner is a botanist who has worked in Eugene for more than 30 years. The 2012 Willamette Valley Nature Calendar is the last one he will make. A few are still available; contact him directly at fernzenmosses@me.com*



NATIVE BANANA SLUG  
ARIOLIMAX COLUMBIANUS

## ACTIVIST ALERT

- Eugene's sixth annual **Global Marijuana March** will kick off with a list of speakers at noon Saturday, May 5, at the Free Speech Plaza, 8th and Oak, followed by a march at 1 pm. Speakers include Jim Klahn, Rick Staggenborg, MD, Lynnette Shaw, Shelley Fox-Loken, Bob Wolfe, Sam Chapman and Elvy Musikka. Organized by Jim Grieg and Dan Koozer. Other marches will be in Salem, Medford and Portland. Contact jimgreigineugene@gmail.com

- Phone banking, canvassing** and other activities in support of progressive candidates are being organized by the Oregon League of Conservation voters. Canvassing for Rob Handy will be from 11 am to 1 pm Saturday, May 5, beginning at the Handy campaign office, 354 W. 6th Ave. Calling for Handy will be late afternoons May 6, 8 and 13. Calling for Pete Sorenson, Kitty Piercy and Betty Taylor will be the evening of Wednesday, May 9. Email ashley@olcv.org or call 968-8269 for details and to sign up.

- Broadcast journalist **Belva Davis**, who overcame tremendous obstacles including abuse, sexism and racism to become the first black female news anchor on the West Coast, will speak at 7 pm Tuesday, May 8, at the second floor lounge of the Eugene Hotel, 222 E. Broadway. Complimentary appetizers, juice, wine and beer catered by Café Soriah. \$25 admission benefits Eugene PeaceWorks. Reception begins at 5:45 pm. Davis will also speak (free) at 1:30 pm Wednesday, May 9, at the LCC Longhouse Building 31, and again at 7 pm at the Lillis Building, Room 182 on the UO campus. Davis has anchored at CBS, NBC and PBS and currently hosts a political affairs program for KQED-TV in San Francisco.