

in this matter, he would have filed a complaint months and months ago after my request of him for a donation.”

Though the handwritten note that spurred the allegations was received by John Brown months ago on Feb. 21, he and Thayer waited until shortly before the May 15 election to release the information, Handy said.

Handy said the allegations were also timed to detract from the recent revelation that his opponent Pat Farr was convicted of drunk driving after blowing a .32 — four times the legal limit of .08 that leads to a DUI conviction.

According to a letter from Handy’s attorney, Dugan, to the Department of Justice, “Criminal charges would require probable cause that Mr. Handy violated the relevant statutes willfully ... there does not appear to me to be any evidence of willfulness on Mr. Handy’s part, and I urge that the criminal investigation be quickly terminated in Mr. Handy’s favor on that ground if none other.”

Dugan wrote that she was disturbed that the DOJ investigators “did not seem to understand some very basic and central factual and legal points,” and that she was troubled that one of the investigators did not appear to be coming to the investigation with an open mind.

Dingle, the county’s supervising attorney, who is a recent hire, previously worked for the DOJ.

This is not the first time the liberal minority of the county commission has been targeted in what has been called “the politics of personal destruction.” Handy said he will be exonerated, but pointed out that won’t happen until after next week’s election.

— Camilla Mortensen

GOOSE GOES TO COURT

The controversial Goose Project might have its day in court. Local environmental groups Oregon Wild and Cascadia Wildlands are suing to stop the timber sale, charging that the Forest Service failed to properly analyze the impact of 2,100 acres of logging to areas around waterways and endangered species habitat. The dispute centers on a 17,421-acre project area around McKenzie Bridge. The Western Environmental Law Center filed suit on behalf of the conservation groups.

McKenzie District Ranger Terry Baker says the project balances multiple agency mandates — including

sustainability, wildfire reduction and commercial timber production — by treating the forest as a whole. Baker and Willamette National Forest Supervisor Meg Mitchell say that multiple federal agencies, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, signed off on the plan, which, the foresters say, has appropriate stream buffers and will affect individual northern spotted owls without reducing the overall population.

“If all we do is go cut in plantations that we’ve clearcut before, that doesn’t equal landscape-level treatment,” Baker says, adding that the project will thin natural tree stands with an average tree age of 60 years, opening up the canopy to prevent high-intensity crown fires while lessening the potential for root rot and bug infestations.

The plaintiffs argue that many targeted stands of trees are perfectly healthy and should be left alone. Cascadia Wildlands Campaign Director Josh Laughlin says the plan uses “questionable science” to mask aggressive logging of maturing, diverse 120-year-old stands as forest health treatments and that forestry in the world-famous McKenzie watershed should be restricted to restoration.

“While there are some restorative components to the Goose project that we support,” says Laughlin, “the Forest Service chose to pair them with aggressive logging in endangered species habitat, and within a potential wilderness area.” He questions why the agency didn’t choose a different logging alternative in the area that would have focused on restoration work without the clearcuts and without logging in a roadless area.

Laughlin says the roadless portion of the forest has the potential to be a federally designated Wilderness Area. The current sale calls for “punching a road” into the forest, he says.

Public interest forester Roy Keene calls the Goose a flat-out timber grab. He says the trees — which will be sold by the ton instead of graded and sold based on quality — will bring taxpayers about a third of their true market value, while the logging will increase wildfire danger.

“They cherry picked it,” Keene says. “Miraculously, all of the unit boundaries are drawn around the best timber.”

— Ephraim Payne

NEPALESE SISTER CITY VISITS EUGENE

A delegation of nine city officials will visit Eugene from Kathmandu, Nepal, May 13-17. The problems of Kathmandu are “a microcosmic view of what the entire planet is going to be facing before we know it,” says Dennis Ramsey, president of Eugene’s Kathmandu Sister City Association.

The visiting delegation will include the mayor of Kathmandu, its city planner and the director of Kathmandu’s environmental program. A photo exhibit featuring Kathmandu at New Zone Gallery on Monday, May 14, is also part of the visit.

By viewing Eugene’s municipal facilities, the visitors from Kathmandu will see how Eugene’s examples of success on issues such as waste management can be used toward creating a more sustainable, healthy city of their own. “Waste is one of our biggest issues on an overpopulated planet,” Ramsey says. And Kathmandu is deep in it.

As a result of civil unrest thanks to lack of resources, Kathmandu has seen a 100 percent increase in population over the past five to seven years. Unless the human need for basic resources is met, Kathmandu will endure more riots, says Ramsey. Overpopulation puts severe pressure on Kathmandu’s city services such as garbage and sewer facilities, and increasing air and water pollution affects the health of Kathmandu’s citizens. Humans need to have a close look at areas of high population like Kathmandu, Ramsey says. “We’re all going to be in the same boat if we don’t snap out of it.”

In addition to meeting with Mayor Kitty Piercy and touring Eugene’s city offices, the delegation will tour various municipal-scale waste management facilities, including COVANTA Waste-to-Energy Plant, Rexius Commercial Composting, EWEB and the Hayden Bridge Water Treatment Plant. “We can show them best practices and how very-well-developed programs look,” says Ramsey. He says the goal is that they are left with a “very clear picture in their minds on how they go about creating [similar facilities] in Kathmandu.”

The public is invited to view photos taken in Kathmandu over a period spanning three generations. This will be an opportunity for anyone to meet the Nepalese delegates and

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• **If you haven’t already voted**, chances are that ballot is still hanging out on your kitchen table or by the door, feeling neglected. It’s not a big ballot with a string of confusing measures — that comes in November. This ballot will only take a few minutes, but primaries are important in Oregon because in nonpartisan races, such as County Commission, City Council and EWEB, candidates getting more than 50 percent of the vote go on unopposed to the general election. The same holds true in the Oregon AG race since both candidates are Democrats.

Last week was our election/endorsements issue and you can find a recap of our endorsements this week. We’ve made extra space for election letters this week and the leftovers can be found on our website. Let’s get those ballots in the mail, or drop them in one of the white boxes around town. Don’t forget to flip them over and mark your votes on the front and the back.

• **The Rob Handy vs. Pat Farr** race for County Commission has turned nasty. Last week we wrote about the “politics of personal destruction” regarding Commissioner Pete Sorenson, and the same disturbing dynamic is at work in the Handy-Farr contest, maybe even more so this week. We’ve written about the Lindholm Company push-polling that tried to discredit Handy with blatantly biased and misleading questions. Now the pro-Farr PAC is trying to smear Handy with potentially libelous allegations of sexual discrimination

and other statements that are simply not true. Handy has not been accused of sexual discrimination against anyone, but you wouldn’t know that to read the latest mailer sent out by the PAC, with no meaningful comment from Farr (we asked).

Farr’s campaign, including the latest and highly questionable accusations of ethical violations, is the sleaziest and most aggressive we’ve seen in a long time, and perhaps it’s an attempt to draw attention from his DUI arrest in 2006 when he blew .32 blood alcohol, four times the legal limit and approaching brain damage and death.

We can dismiss mud-slinging as “just politics as usual,” but it’s hard to ignore Farr’s positions and dismal voting record on the council. Handy gets consistently high marks from political groups, but Farr has earned a 20 percent rating from the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, 36 percent from the Oregon Education Association, 38 percent from the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon and 38 percent from Oregonians for Immigration Reform. Farr did get high rankings from the Associated Oregon Industries and Oregon National Federation of Independent Businesses (see VoteSmart.org).

• **A race we haven’t given much attention to** is to fill the **House District 12** seat being vacated by Rep. Terry Beyer. Former Springfield mayor John Lively, a household name in the district, is the likely shoo-in for

this race, but his fellow Democrat in the primary, Sandra Mann, should not be ignored. Mann (not to be confused with Springfield council candidate CJ Mann) is a bilingual substitute teacher with a master’s degree and an extensive background in social services, workers’ compensation, education and political campaigns, mostly out of state. Mann has solid progressive ideas and positions but few people know her. We hope she follows Lively’s example and gets on some city or county committees or boards and gets to be better known in the district.

• **Is Dwight Holton** out to kill or gut the Oregon Medical Marijuana Act if he gets elected as Oregon’s AG? That appears to be the mindset of the pro-pot people who are campaigning for Ellen Rosenblum, but the accusation is just a pipe dream. As we reported April 26, Holton says he has no intention of “gutting” the OMMA, but he would like to see it improved. “We passed this law for very compassionate reasons,” he says. “We were trying to get relief to people who were in desperate need. That’s what the law’s about and I’ll enforce it and uphold it.” Meanwhile, bigger issues are being ignored, such as who is best qualified to run the AG’s office and push crime prevention and prosecution of environmental crimes. Rosenblum would be good; Holton would be better.

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