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community's will" the "only outlet at the moment is to take action at the local level."

To learn more about this local action against GMO foods, go to "What You Need to Know about GMOs in your Food and Farms" at 7pm Wednesday, May 30, 177 Lawrence Hall at the UO and check out www.gmofreeoregon.org

— Camilla Mortensen

NOT ANOTHER MAPLE TREE?

A lone maple tree remains near the 5th Street Public Market and the new boutique Inn at the 5th. But not for long. Cutting Eugene's urban forest has long been a sore point in town, and once the orange signs were posted warning of the tree's fate, people began to question why this tree has to go.

Like the maple trees that once lined Pearl Street, this last maple is considered by the city of Eugene to be dead and dying. In April the decision was made to cut it down, according to Urban Forester Mark Snyder with Eugene Parks and Open Space. "I've been noting the tree's decline for a number of years," he says.

Last summer Snyder recalls the tree beginning to show a lot of dying branches and yellowing. As of right now the tree is considered a safety issue because there's the possibility that it might fall down, he says.

Last year several bigleaf maples shading the Community Center for the Performing Arts' WOW Hall were slated to be chopped down by the city, which cited safety issues. The WOW Hall hired an arborist and tree risk assessor to give a second opinion and worked out a deal with the city that allowed two of trees to be maintained for long enough to give replacement trees a chance to grow.

Urban trees, or street trees as they are often called, provide shade that reduces cooling costs in the summer and

are said to reduce stress for urban dwellers as well as improve air quality in cities.

The main reason that Snyder has been monitoring the 5th Street Public Market tree is because of prior topping. "When you top a tree it's a bad pruning method — in fact it's illegal — but it still gets done," he says. "It's an old-time practice." He suspects that the topping on this particular maple might have first been done all the way back in the 1940s. Over the years the branches have gotten progressively worse because of the practice, he says.

According to Snyder, topping results in new branches sprouting that are only attached to the outer ring of wood. Most healthy branches come from within, internally. The shallow branches as a result of topping end up dying.

The work order to cut the tree down has gone through, but Snyder is uncertain when the contract will fall in to place and the sawing carried out.

Last fall, the maple trees that were cut down near the hotel were repurposed as furniture in rooms and the lobby.

— Ted Shorack

PISGAH BURSTS INTO FLOWER

If you want to enjoy an inordinate amount of wildflower-frenzy this weekend, Mount Pisgah is the place to be for the Wildflower Festival Sunday, May 20. Not only can you look forward to a languishing in a splendor of earth-borne colors in peak petal form, you may also wish to wander the native plants sale or sniff out the food vendors while taking in a different bands' set-list at the top of every hour starting from 10 am and ending with marimba beats at 4 pm. Parking will be free but a \$5 donation from those over 12 will be asked at the entry.

Three tours will be offered by both Mount Pisgah Arboretum and by Friends of Buford Park and Mount

Pisgah. Be sure to bring the entire family; there's enough to keep everyone satisfied: dancing, exploring, or relaxing to live music in the outdoors. Leave dogs at home, please, organizers say.

The idea is to bring "wildflowers closer to the people of Eugene," says Rainee Tiske, office manager at Mount Pisgah Arboretum. There can be up to 500 types of flowers, she says, and last year's festival saw more than 300. "It varies year to year," she says.

The festival offers an opportunity to identify local native plants up close with the help of resident experts from Eugene's Native Plant Society, which gives the community a chance to see what really does grow in the area around Eugene, Tiske says.

The 1 pm tour will be conducted by *EW*'s "It's about Time" author and artist David Wagner.

— Stacey M. Hollis

SCYP TO DO FOLLOW-UP

The UO's Sustainable City Year Program (SCYP) will be continuing next fall with follow-up work on various projects under way in Springfield, Salem and possibly Gresham. The combination will fund the program for another year, says Robert Liberty, executive director of the Sustainable Cities Initiative that oversees the SCYP. This will be the first year the program has not had a single city focus.

The SCYP is a unique town-and-gown collaboration linking city government projects around Oregon with the expertise and work of hundreds of UO students and professors, along with architects and other professionals in the community (see *EW* cover story, Feb. 2). Cities get a boost in their efforts to become more efficient and sustainable, and students benefit from hands-on, practical experience.

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