

## BARE-ASS BIKE RIDE

You may find yourself riding down the streets of Eugene for a cause this weekend. And you may be completely in the nude. Eugene's annual World Naked Bike Ride (WNBR), a mass protest of cyclists against oil dependency, initiated in 2006, is upon us again.

While it is a naked bike ride, you aren't necessarily expected to be naked. In fact, clothing is absolutely optional, says Eugene's current WNBR coordinator Ralph Forrest-Ball. Colorful costumes are encouraged, he says, allowing for better visibility by motorists. "A good superhero costume would be great," he says. And wearing your helmet when riding a bike is always encouraged.

About half the riders (between 60 and 80 riders total in past years) go completely naked, says Forrest-Ball. "Or they wear nothing but body paint." They'll be riding naked to emphasize their "indecent exposure" to automobiles, he says. "We ride our bikes naked, or nearly so, to remind fellow travelers that cyclists are vulnerable when sharing the road."

And people of all ages are welcome. Forrest-Ball says, "Anybody can spontaneously join, if they want to," he says, adding that he can only assume that anybody under 18 would be joining with parental permission.

Police spokeswoman Jenna McCulley says Eugene police aren't particularly concerned about this year's WNBR. "This isn't the first time they've hosted it," she says, "and past rides were peaceful and law-abiding."

While the route changes across years, all potential riders should expect to meet at the corner of Lawrence and Cheshire, one block west of Skinner Butte at 4 pm Saturday, June 9. The event is slated to start at 4:30 pm. It will probably be over around 6 pm, Forrest-Ball says, but that depends on what the riders decide.

"Last year the ride was about 7 miles; this year I think we're going to go a little bit longer," he says, somewhere between 8 to 8.5 miles. "We're operating by consensus," Forrest-Ball says, "if everybody wants to quit, OK, let's just quit."

— Stacey M. Hollis

## ODFW TRAP DECISION

Last August a Gresham family's border collie named Maggie was caught and killed in a lethal trap set 45 feet from her backyard. A husky named Bella chewed off her own foot after being caught in an unmarked trap in the Boise National Forest.

These incidents and others like them spurred Predator Defense, Cascadia Wildlands, the Humane Society of the United States and other groups to petition the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to strengthen its trapping regulations. The ODFW Commission will listen to public comment on June 7 and make a decision, but most of the staff recommendations are not to change the regulations.

Scott Beckstead of the Humane Society, who will be testifying at the meeting, says, "I can't even say they are throwing us a bone; they are not even throwing us a scrap."

If an animal is caught in a trap, the trapper can wait 48 hours to seven days before going and checking, Sally Mackler of Predator Defense says. This means, if it isn't killed outright, an animal, whether it's a coyote or a pet dog, can suffer for two days to a week before someone comes along to find it.

The groups asked that the time between trap checks be reduced to 24 hours. In its June 7 "Oregon Furbearer Regulation Proposals" ODFW responded that staff proposed the time between checks not be reduced, citing issues such as travel costs for the trapper.

"The majority of states have 24-hour trap check time,

and there's no reason we can't as well," says Mackler.

Beckstead says at least seven dogs and one cat have been caught in traps this year, but the number is probably higher because "let's face it, when trappers catch pets in their traps the incentive is not to report that at all."

The groups also proposed that traps be set back 100 feet from public trails. ODFW proposes to make the setback 50 feet from trails, 300 feet from public trailheads, and public campgrounds and picnic areas. ODFW says in its document that roads and waterways would not require the setback and adds an exemption conservations say renders the setback useless.

The trap that killed Maggie was set to kill nutria and was 45 feet from her back gate, along a waterway. "It's like landmines out there," Mackler says of the trapping on public lands.

Tagging the trap with the trapper's name and phone number was another of the suggestions the conservation and animal groups put forth. Currently traps are marked with the owner's license number. ODFW sees "no law enforcement advantage" for this change and the document says trappers fear people would Google their phone numbers and harass them.

Finally, the groups petitioned to have signs posted within a 5-foot radius of the traps, warning of the dangers. ODFW writes that 33 other states do not require signs to be posted and the other states had questions about increased trap theft and the difficulties of enforcement, as well as whether the signs were "littering." ODFW staff recommends not making the change to post signs.

"They can put these deadly devices out there that constitute a known risk and a known safety hazard, and they call signs littering," Beckstead says.

He says, "Hopefully the commission will heed their statutory mandate and make a decision that is balanced," adding that the staff recommendations are "completely in favor of the trappers, letting a small minority put all of Oregon at risk."

— Camilla Mortensen

## SLANT

- **Tough economic times** fuel anti-government sentiment. Under stress, we tend to look for simple solutions to complex problems. Vote "no" on any new taxes for public safety and start packing a handgun; that appears to be the dominant attitude in Josephine and some other counties that have grown dependent on O&C timber revenues for decades. Seven of those counties, including Lane, are in crisis, cutting even essential county services. Our property taxes are among the lowest in the state due to our historic reliance on O&C payments, but many county voters are loathe to raise property taxes, even to the minimal limits imposed by Measures 5, 47 and 50.

We might fare better than Josephine County in a tax levy to support county public safety, depending on how much of the money would be dedicated to crime prevention vs. punishment. But in the long term, the best strategy to raise our county tax base is to play to our strengths. Supporting education at all levels is vital to our economic future. Buying, banking and investing locally will keep money circulating in Lane County. Growing and consuming our own food is huge. And perhaps our greatest treasure is our county's livability. Let's protect our farmlands, water, air quality, our educational and cultural assets and support our small, independent businesses. They are all we have to carry us into the future.

- You gotta love **Lane Community College** President Mary Spilde and her elected board. They've taken a big leap to put up six stories of student housing across from the library in the middle of downtown Eugene. They hope 250 students will be living in Titan Court in the fall of 2012. Not dormitories, these are furnished apartments intended for students from LCC, the UO and even NCU. With no dining hall and no designated parking, these are truly urban apartments next to the bus lines and bike path. Rents will run from \$650 to \$850 per month, and a few will be as large as four bedrooms. They can be a big boost for our recovering downtown and, ultimately, a profit center for LCC. Both the apartments and the classroom/administrative building they adjoin are designed to be green learning environments for students and the community. Next question: What happens to the old LCC center in downtown Eugene?

- The huge turnout for the first home game of the Eugene Metro **Azul Women's Fútbol Club** last Friday indicates high-level soccer has a big future in Lane County. More than 600 people showed up to enthusiastically cheer the team to victory, despite the rain and on the same night as the world-class Prefontaine Classic at Hayward Field, First Friday ArtWalk downtown and a dozen other events. The next game, against Portland's club, will be at 7 pm Friday, June 15, at South Eugene High School.

- Not surprising that our own **Gov. John Kitzhaber** leads the nation in honesty with 100 percent of his statements being ranked true or mostly true, according to a recent ranking of governors as reported by the Uppity Wisconsin blog (see <http://wkly.ws/lan>). Kitzhaber's stellar ranking by Politifact got little media attention due to embattled Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker being named "the #1 most dishonest governor in America" with only 22 percent of his statements getting a thumbs-up. Walker was followed in the bottom rankings by other "Pants on Fire" governors: Rick Perry, Lincoln Chafee and Chris Christie. Looks like Walker's lies, obfuscations and massive out-of-state funding prevailed as he survived a recall election this week. Another reason to cherish Oregon's relatively uncorrupt politics.

- Quaker scholar **Peg Morton** is one of our favorite local peace activists. She's a longtime community leader who has been involved in Taxes for Peace Not War, Community Alliance of Lane County (CALC), the Latin American Solidarity Committee, the decades-long campaign to close the notorious School of the Americas, and much more. Now she's writing a book about her lifetime of nonviolent peace activism and her numerous arrests and jail times. She's financing the printing of her book by selling copies in advance. Send a check for \$10 to her at 510 Van Buren St., Eugene 97402.

*SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact*