

• Will Lane County's "butterfly" parking lot downtown across from the county courthouse become a site for an expanded year-round Farmers Market? UO landscape architecture professor Ron Lovinger and his students offered compelling proposals this week to the County Commission, and we hope all sides are amenable to some creative arrangement. Deed restrictions from city founder Eugene Skinner and his wife, Mary, make it near impossible to sell the property, and the county uses the half-block for court parking. Perhaps a long-term lease to Farmers Market and the city allocating some land for parking? Or retaining some court parking on the property? Meanwhile, Eugene voters approved an urban renewal expansion in 2010 that earmarked \$500,000 for Farmers Market expansion downtown. Whatever happened to that \$500,000?

• Rep. Peter DeFazio isn't the only Oregon congressman willing to stand up and give big bankers and Wall Street a hard time. **Sen. Jeff Merkley** recently got props from Matt Taibbi of *Rolling Stone* for not brownnosing J.P. Morgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon during his testimony before the Senate Banking Committee. Taibbi writes that rather than show how Chase used "the crutch of government support to gamble recklessly in search of huge profits, with the public on the hook for any potential downside," the committee members "mostly cowered and cringed and sat mute with thumbs in their mouths, while Dimon evaded, patted himself on the back, and blew the whole derivative losses episode off as an irrelevant accident caused by moron subordinates."

Taibbi says, "If not for Oregon's Jeff Merkley, who was the only senator who understood the importance of taking the right tone with Dimon, the hearing would have been a total fiasco." Oregon could use more politicians like this on the state and local level, too.

• Opening day of the 2012 U.S. **Olympic Team Trials** for Track & Field is Friday, June 22, drawing thousands of athletes and track fans from all over the world. We're happy to see that local folks who don't have tickets for the eight days of competition can get a free taste of what the Trials are all about at the TrackTown 12 Festival that opens at 11 am Friday, June 22, with competition beginning at 1 pm. Festival-goers will not be in the stands but can watch Friday's track events live on jumbo screens, and a drawing will be held at 12:30 pm for eight pairs of free tickets. We hear the TrackTown 12 Festival will be a crowded event, so

arrive early (about 11 am) and expect to go through the security check. It appears frisking has become an Olympic event.

• They don't Tase dogs do they? Let's hope not because it looks like under the reorganization of Lane County Animal Services the **cop overseers will be overseeing the animals**. Animal advocates have been asking for an oversight committee for the newly rearranged animal services - Greenhill will be managing the actual shelter. The advocates want to make sure that dogs and kitties don't get offed because they're a little old or sick. According to a recent email from the city of Eugene "The city's animal services will have the oversight of the existing Police Commission, which acts in an advisory capacity for the Eugene Police Department. The Police Commission can offer a forum for the public to give input on city of Eugene's animal services program which includes shelter and adoption services, licensing, animal code enforcement and field services, and spay and neuter services."

So wait, the cop commission is going to be overseeing spay and neuter and euthanasia? This seems a little strange. Eugene and Lane County need to put an animal oversight committee into place with experienced animal advocates and veterinarians.

• **Bye-bye Binky.** We heard from cartoonist Matt Groening this past week that his comic strip "Life in Hell" is ending after 32 years. "The time has come to let Binky and Sheba and Bongo and Akbar and Jeff take some time off," he tells us. "I hope to use my newfound freedom to stare off into space and maybe come up with another project or two. Thank you for giving me space in *Eugene Weekly*." His gay characters Akbar and Jeff gave us a look at love and sex that was both disturbing and hilarious. We published his angst-ridden, satirical cartoons every week for at least 15 years, but have cut back recently, running them as space is available. Groening, of course, has deep Oregon roots and is the creator of the phenomenal *The Simpsons* and *Futurama*. Not surprisingly, his career started at an alternative newspaper, the *Los Angeles Reader*, where he was a typesetter, editor and music critic.

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

FORECLOSURE SUPPORT

Every little bit counts. At least, that's the way the folks at Project REconomy see it when it comes to foreclosure. The Oregon-based organization is holding a rally from 4 to 7 pm Sunday, June 24, at Reality Kitchen, 245 Van Buren, to "celebrate, affirm and tell the stories of victories" against the foreclosure machine, says Communications Director Michelle Glass.

The gathering will cover topics such as rights, illegal foreclosures, protections, solutions and effects on the community. Glass says that recognizing victories brings up an important question: "What does victory look like?" For some, it's speaking out about what's happened; for others, it's a successful court case.

Not just homeowners suffer because of foreclosure, but one in 73 Oregon homeowners received a notice in 2011. Glass says that it affects everyone from neighbors to renters (rental prices go up when banks hold onto "shadow inventories"). She also says it's particularly hard on kids. More than 8 million kids have been affected nationally by the foreclosure crisis, according to the Brookings Institute and First Focus.

"We got a phone call in our office recently from a single mom of three," Glass says. "She was being evicted because the rental property was being foreclosed on, and she was the last one to know."

— Shannon Finnell

LIGHTEN UP

If Abbott and Costello were alive today, they would want to live in Oakridge.

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE



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AUDITIONS

Lord Leebrick Theatre
will host open auditions for roles in its 2012/2013 Season
Auditions are by appointment on **Saturday, June 30**
Call **541-684-6988** to schedule an audition.
These auditions are open to the public and are intended for actors who have NOT recently worked at Lord Leebrick.
Roles are available for women and men ages 16 - 70.
For more information, please call or visit our website at www.lordleebrick.org



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