

## ROBINSON LAWSUIT A PUBLICITY STUNT?

Congressman Peter DeFazio's campaign is calling a \$1 million lawsuit filed by Tea Party challenger Art Robinson in Josephine County "meritless." The Robinson campaign also sent out an email to supporters that insinuates that Lane County engaged in voter fraud in the 2010 election, which Robinson lost to DeFazio.

Robinson's campaign did not respond to a request to confirm its allegations. It also did not send a copy of the suit to DeFazio's campaign before issuing its press release.

"Art Robinson has a longstanding pattern of filing or threatening lawsuits — most notably against Oregon State University's Linus Pauling Institute," says Liz Cooney, DeFazio's campaign manager. "While the campaign has yet to be served with the complaint, we stand ready to defend ourselves vigorously against its meritless claims," she says.

Robinson's lawsuit alleges that DeFazio's primary campaign strategy in 2010, and again in 2012, has been to falsely depict Robinson as a "pathological" "nut job," who lives and works in a "survivalist compound." The suit says Robinson is falsely depicted "as a candidate who has paid for billboards and other publications seeking to convey to voters of the district messages and beliefs that plaintiff [Robinson] does not espouse in his congressional candidacy."

DeFazio said to supporters watching the final presidential debate at Cozmic on Oct. 21, "He sued me for putting up billboards with his quotes on them."

Robinson, whose campaign has gotten a quarter of a million dollars from out-of-state hedge-fund millionaire Robert Mercer, is a climate change denier who has told *EW* he thinks that a little nuclear radiation can help keep the immune system in shape. The billboards feature photos of Robinson and quotes from emails, interviews and issues of the newsletter he edits, *Access to Energy*. The Robinson quotes include "OSU is a liberal socialist stronghold" and "Public schools should be abolished."

On the "voter fraud" issue the Robinson campaign wrote in an email to supporters that "The mail-in ballot system in Oregon has many opportunities for vote counting fraud. We studied this carefully during recounts of the 2010 election, and what we saw was very disturbing." The email, which originates from Art Robinson's son Noah, singles out Lane County for criticism and calls for volunteers to video and photograph "to watch for cheating."

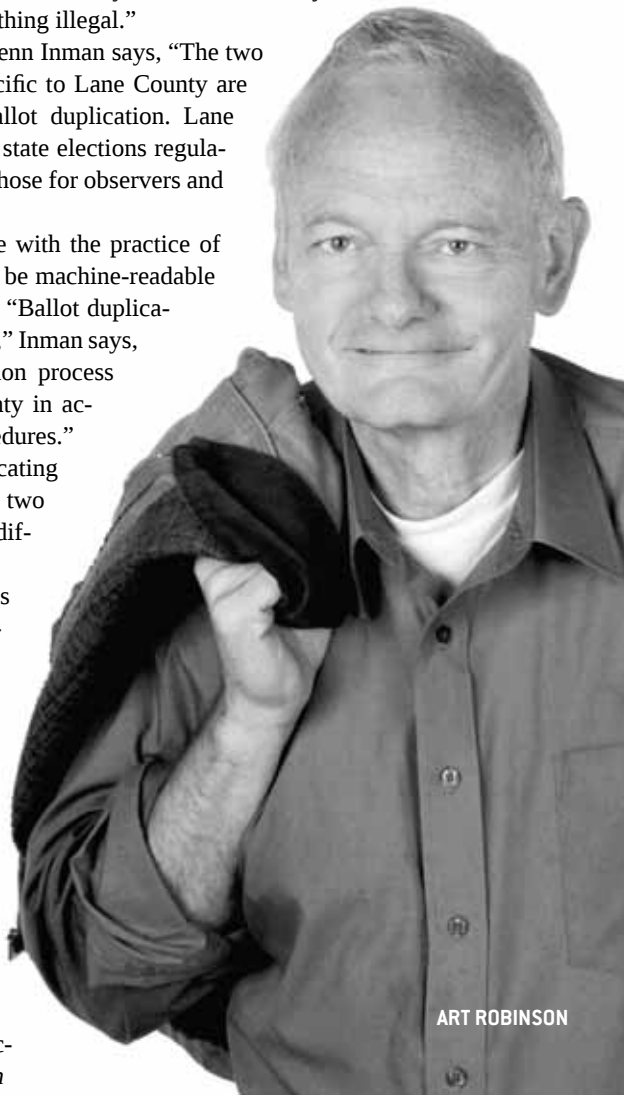
The email says, "I shouldn't have to say this, but obviously we would not ask you to do anything illegal."

Lane County spokesperson Jenn Inman says, "The two areas the messages discuss specific to Lane County are vote count observation and ballot duplication. Lane County Elections adheres to all state elections regulations and guidelines, including those for observers and ballot duplication."

Robinson's email takes issue with the practice of duplicating ballots that may not be machine-readable to ensure the votes get counted. "Ballot duplication is not nefarious or an oddity," Inman says, "but part of the ballot inspection process and administered in Lane County in accordance to state elections procedures." Those procedures include duplicating and proofing done by at least two election personnel each with a different party affiliation.

Inman says, "Observer rules are intended to protect the integrity of the vote counting process including eliminating distractions, interference with or intimidation of vote counting staff," and she says observers are asked to leave phones and cameras outside.

From accusing OSU of retaliating against his son Matthew to Matthew filing to run against DeFazio in the Democratic primary, Robinson's campaign has had a history of publicity stunts. — *Camilla Mortensen*



ART ROBINSON

# SLANT

- Find our **condensed endorsements** on page 15 in this issue, a 350-word version of last week's 3,500 words of analysis and recommendations. Our short picks are a handy way to compare our endorsements with those of the *R-G*, which were also compiled this week. We differ from the daily on the regulate pot measure, corporate kicker measure, the Circuit Court write-in, Court of Appeals, Eugene City Council Ward 2 and House District 7. The *R-G* tries to be "balanced" with an occasional conservative thrown into the mix (or occasional liberal thrown under the bus). We don't feel that need, particularly since the R's have been hijacked by the radical right.

- The daily didn't endorse in the **three EPUD races** and that lack of comment might be due to EPUD's political landscape which is an impenetrable fog bank these days. It's hard to discern the real issues amidst the personality clashes, the flying accusations and the conflicting information being circulated. The board meetings would make a lively TV reality show. Despite the drama, EPUD customers still love their home-grown utility and can look forward to a new general manager in January, and hopefully a better functioning board after the election.

The new board will need to look not only at EPUD's investments and strategy in energy management and conservation, but also issues of transparency and that tricky topic of board compensation. EPUD Board members get paid \$134 for every meeting they attend, plus full medical benefits with zero co-pays. Board member Katherine Schacht tried to bring up the health insurance issue but her motion died for lack of a second. Oddly enough, we hear that motion is nowhere to be found in the board minutes.

- **Is campaign spending** overwhelming our treasured citizen initiative process in Oregon? That's our question after hearing the update of the Citizens' Initiative Review Oct. 19 at City Club of Eugene. Made permanent, but not funded, by the 2011 Legislature, the review is a good-faith effort using 24 randomly selected citizens to evaluate and clearly explain the actual effects of statewide ballot measures. This year, \$85,000 was raised to evaluate only two measures, one the "Grange" casino proposal recently abandoned by its Canadian advocates. Meanwhile, massive out-of-state money pours in to mislead us on the measures. Not exactly what Oregonians intended in the early 1900s when they adopted the initiative.

- Our **Best of Eugene Awards Show** is at 7:30 pm this Friday, Oct. 26, at the McDonald Theatre downtown and everyone's invited to Eugene's answer to the Oscars. Doors open at 7. Advance tickets are \$8 [available at *EW* offices at 1251 Lincoln] or \$9 at the door. Proceeds will go to the "best nonprofit" category winner, as picked by our readers. Following the awards at around 9:30 will be party with music by Dreamdog, Sol Seed and Volifonix, our Next Big Thing 2012 winning band.

- From our jock drawer: Oregon **Duck footballers** are picked to beat the Colorado Buffs by 45 points Saturday at Autzen. Not much drama there, so we turn to other pressing questions. Will Chip Kelly be the next coach of the Dallas Cowboys? Will Kenjon Barner run far enough to become a bona fide Heisman contender? Will Oregon's defense outscore the Colorado offense? A good defense aims to stop the other team. A really good defense aims to stop the other team and force turnovers. Oregon's defense takes it one step further — aiming to stop the other team, force turnovers, and turn those turnovers into touchdowns. Watch for Oregon's defense to score a touchdown to help the Ducks beat the Buffs by 30.

- Get your fungus on! **The Mushroom Festival** at Mt. Pisgah Arboretum is one of our favorite local events and it's from 10 am to 5 pm Sunday. The rains came late this year, but we hear hundreds of varieties of mushrooms have been popping up on the Coast, in the Cascades and around the valley. The folks at Pisgah tell us the long dry season means some unique 'shrooms are expected this year. The savory wild mushroom soups might go quickly, but lots of other great foods will be available, along with live music, art and plant vendors. Our Slug Queen, of course, will be there. Kids under 12 are free. Google "Mushroom Festival Eugene" for more information.

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

*lighten up*  
BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

In his last run against Peter DeFazio, Art Robinson said Social Security was bad and he would try to end it. This time around he complains that Social Security isn't paying out enough in benefits. Isn't this like the guy who told his waitress that his meal was awful, and then complained that the portions were too small?