

SLANT

• **Mass shootings** are now part of our national identity, and each incident seems to trigger the next one. The solution to gun violence, we hear from folks like Rep. Dennis Richardson, is more guns. Arm those teachers with Colt .45s and Bowie knives! Install hitching posts in front of every school! But hardly anyone in the media talks about this tragic phenomenon in terms of lack of health care. When the topic of mental health does come up, it usually just adds to the false perception that mentally ill individuals are all dangerous. We wallow in fear as we turn our backs on the health care needs of people suffering with mental illness. We need to deal with the proliferation of personal weapons of mass destruction, but let's also train an army of psychologists and psychiatrists, and make their services widely available. Oregon has an average of 540 students per school counselor, making it very difficult to identify and treat students who have the potential to kill themselves or become mass shooters. Connecticut is nearly as bad with 519 students per counselor.

• Conservative Lane County Commissioners Jay Bozievich and Faye Stewart decided, as the county's Legislative Committee, that the commissioners don't need to vote on a **no coal/protect public health resolution** proposed by Commissioner Rob Handy. The no coal resolution was in response to an earlier Legislative Committee resolution that would have supported the Coos Bay Bulk Terminal's proposal to export coal. Coos Bay coal exports mean coal trains going through Lane County. Handy tells us, "It was interesting to note that one of the reasons stated for not sending the Handy resolution to the full Board of County Commissioners for discussion/decision-making was 'the lack of an actual project at the Port of Coos Bay.'" Handy says that logic was apparently not applicable at the time these same commissioners sent a pro-coal resolution to the full board for approval earlier this autumn. Last we heard Coos Bay was still trying for coal and liquefied natural gas, too. Handy's term is done in January, leaving Pete Sorenson as the lone progressive on the board. We hope pro-enviro, pro-public health folks are gearing up to campaign against Boz and Stewart in the next election when their seats come up!

• **Phil Knight** is known for his huge financial contributions to universities, particularly Duck sports, but he also gives to the campaigns of both Democrats and Republicans. The rush job getting his Nike tax break extensions through a special session of the Legislature got us curious to see if his campaign donations line up with the votes. Ten Democrats took donations from Knight during the last few weeks of the last election: Peter Courtney, Chris Harker, Jennifer Williamson, Jenny Burdick, Jeff Barker, Jules Bailey, Arnie Roblan, Chris Garrett, Mark Hass and Val Hoyle. Looks like they all voted "yes" on extending Nike's tax breaks. Only five Dems voted "no": Jefferson Smith, Alis Keny-Guyer, Lew Frederick, Carolyn Tomei and Chip Shields. How about the R's? Ten of them also took Knight donations in the final weeks of the campaign and they all voted for Uncle Phil's plan.

We don't expect all Democrats to vote in lock-step, and campaign donations don't necessarily mean patronage, but it is disappointing to see so many Dems buying into the discredited conservative idea that corporate tax breaks benefit Oregon's economy in the long run. One oddity in this equation is that Knight gave at least \$400,000 to Republican Chris Dudley, Gov. Kitzhaber's opponent in 2010 the gubernatorial race. Kitz doesn't seem to hold a grudge.

• **Chuck Sheketoff** was the strongest public voice we heard in the 10 minutes before Nike got its big tax promises in this lame duck Legislature. *The New York Times* was the loudest media voice with its fine investigation of how state tax breaks for big corporations fuel the race to the bottom in America today. Sheketoff, executive director of the Oregon Center for Public Policy, a progressive think tank based in Silverton, consistently shames our elected representatives with his well-researched and tireless effort to "improve economic and social opportunities of all Oregonians." We can help with gifts to the nonprofit OCPP, 204 North 1st St., Silverton, OR 97381.

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

ACTIVIST ALERT

• **Springfield City Club** will focus on key community health indicator data collected by health care experts and discuss community health priorities at 11:45 am Thursday, Dec. 20, at Willamalane Center, 250 S. 32nd St.

• A "Holiday Swarm" by bicyclists and walkers is planned from noon to 2 pm Saturday, Dec. 22, in support of businesses along south Willamette Street, and in support of a "better Willamette Street." Participating merchants include Arriving by Bike, Beaudet Jewelry, Down to Earth, Holy Cow, Jenny's Hair, Marina's Art and Nature's Pet.

• A concert benefit for the **Egan Warming Center** will be at 7 pm Saturday, Dec. 22, at Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette St., organized by the Eugene Caldera Songwriters Group and featuring a dozen

musicians, including David Jacobs-Strain, Beth Wood, Jeffrey Martin and John Shipe. \$5 donation at the door. Email remarkable.ent.group@gmail.com (This event was erroneously listed in our music section last week as happening Dec. 15.)

• Mayor **Kitty Piercy's initiative** to raise \$40,000 to assist 40 families in need over the holidays has met its goal, but it's not too late to contribute to the effort. To help a homeless family, email Rebecca Larson at rlarson@svdp.us or call St. Vinnie's at 687-5820.

• **Occupy Medical** is seeking monetary donations to make it through the long, wet winter. Checks can be made out to Occupy Medical and mailed to the Tamarack Center, 3575 Donald St., Suite 230, Eugene 97405. The group's nonprofit status is pending.

• Eugene's 2013 **State of the City Address** will be at 5:30 pm Wednesday, Jan. 9, in the lobby of the Hult Center.



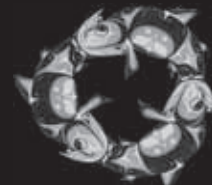
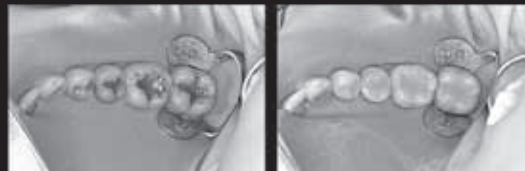
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