

KILLING MY BEES

As winter sets in I spend my evenings worried about my honeybees. I have been noticing a lot of dead bees on the bottom screen boards and it alarms me. I know my bees have visited all my neighbors' yards. The city of Eugene and some of my neighbors are not only poisoning our bees but our water supply.

I live in the River Road area and it has come to my attention the city of Eugene has been spraying pesticides in the parks along the Willamette River. I live within 200 yards of the new salmon restoration project. When the city started the project they sprayed poison on the blackberries and other invasive species. Since they started the project they have sprayed poison yearly to combat these invasive plants. The last time they sprayed they did it in the fall of 2012 when the berries were finishing off. The signs they put up to notify the public were very small so people wouldn't notice them and complain.

When confronted about the issue, the woman in charge of the project admitted that these practices weren't sustainable. For those of you who have eaten blackberries along the river you probably have eaten poison. EWEB has notified us now that we

are all now drinking poison in our water. I have always believed the quickest way we can destroy life on Earth is to poison our water supply. We must stop the use of pesticides immediately.

Doug Hornaday
Eugene

QUESTION OF TRUST

"Public safety" at what cost? It's difficult to put a price tag on violent crime. Is the \$15.9 million in new taxes for five years, which the Lane County Commissioners have decided we should pay, more than the cost of the crime it would prevent? In case they are unable to do the math, it would provide \$120,455 per year for each of the 120 beds they propose to open in the jail. Since the going rate for incarceration is about \$30,000 per year, that must be one fancy institution! The proposed tax would also generate \$1.45 million per year for youth services. On nine previous occasions "public safety" taxes were rejected, ostensibly because voters did not trust the Lane County government to use their money effectively. If the commissioners think that asking four times as much as they need for each jail bed will improve that level of trust, I suspect they are in for a rude awakening!

Much as I would like to know that law

enforcement has the ability to deal with real threats to our society, in a county whose residents don't even have access to a library, I believe that if we were to provide the county \$15.9 million annually, \$10.9 million more than needed, the money could be better used to prevent crime than simply to support incarceration.

For example, how about providing a large dormitory facility to provide for the needs of those who have been left homeless by the continuing economic crisis?

Marc Shapiro
Eugene

GAY MEN SOCIALS

Your cover story Feb. 14 on same sex dating was both wonderful and sorely lacking all at same time. It missed two very important points that would have been so simple to include and so appropriate given the timing of your article!

There are actually several groups in town that have regular socials for gay men. There is a movie group, a men's potluck group, a sports group, and every Wednesday at Cowfish a regular meet-up from 5 to 8 pm.

The Pride Equality group (sponsoring group of Eugene's annual Summer Pride at Alton Baker Park every August) hosted its

first annual Winter Pride event at Cozmic last week, an event made possible by a generous grant from the Pride Foundation. Aug. 10 will be Summer Pride. Please plan to have a nice, prominent article for our summer event!

Brian Lewis
Member, Eugene Gay Men's
Social Network Board
and Pride Equality Board

SOCIETY MISBEHAVES

Please join me and hopefully the entire city of Eugene and 25,000 UO students to prohibit and abolish Oregon Administration Rule 581.021.553. This rule specifies the use of "seclusion rooms," the locking up of our littlest students and innocent children in elementary schools who misbehave.

This week the Oregon House will have a public hearing to prohibit such a law that stood for nine dark years. The number is HB 2756.

It is not our innocent children who are "misbehaved" and therefore being locked up, but foremost the parents, then the schools and all of society. These children only mirror our non-behavior and misconduct. Just look around.

HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

Eye on the Legislature

WHO'S RUNNING THE SHOW THIS TIME?

No more "Insider Baseball." I'm not an insider any more, and my knees don't allow for softball, much less baseball. But I continue to watch the Salem political game from afar; shoveling horse pucky here in the south hills of Lane County and reflecting on the days when horse pucky was my day job in the Legislature.

I still visit Eugene occasionally just to observe its downtown's glacial recovery toward normalcy, or to gaze at Civic Stadium dying like a nine-acre beached whale while Pat Kilkenny and the Ducks await their NCAA football fate. Or, sometimes I go to Springfield if I need to feel culturally uplifted. Coburg I only go to if I want a speeding ticket.

So I'm still keeping a close eye on the Legislature for you. The current Salem version of the Hot Air Society began in earnest on Feb. 4. Amid all the posturing over PERS and guns, I noticed my friend Brad Witt, a good labor Democrat from Clatskanie, introduced the first stunner of the session. House Bill 2783, pushed by a coalition of "nanny state" humane treatment groups, would make it a violation for a lobbyist to tether a legislator with a short leash or a choke collar or to keep a legislator tied up outside for an extended time. It would become a misdemeanor if tethering a legislator leads to injury or death. (It's just a matter of time, folks.)

According to *The Register-Guard*, we've all seen them — "or at least heard them. Legislators chained up for hours outside, barking their heads off." The bill would prohibit leaving a legislator on a tether for more than five hours a day, or 10 hours if attached to a zip line. I've personally seen lobbyists leave a lawmaker outside waiting, while he goes in and has a latte with the lawmaker's *opponent*, and then comes back out, unchains the lawmaker, then pretend he's his best buddy, and promises to send him a check! That's how lobbyists are — we've all seen the cruelty, it's time to curb this behavior. I'll track this one for you. It's a promising start, but only a start!

This week, I'll walk you through some of the leaders of the session, and in future columns, we'll delve into how well this particular 77th edition of Salem's Hot Air Society functions.

As you know, each Hot Air Society session has a life of its own, much of it determined by the leadership in both chambers and both parties. The guy who rents the offices in the middle of the Capitol, Gov. Kitzhaber, is the same guy I started out my political career with in 1994. His work is well known, the Oregon Health Plan and the Salmon Plan have already established his legacy. This time around he seems to really be enjoying himself. Remember, during the eight years I served with him, we never had a Democrat majority in the House or the Senate. This time, with a slim Democrat leadership in both chambers, we should all be cautiously optimistic — really we should.

Senate President Peter Courtney — the dean of the building. Been around since Christ was a corporal, longest serving Senate president in Oregon history. During my last session when we did PERS reform in 2003, he managed a 15-15 tie as Senate co-president with Republican Lenny Hannon. This time around he has a narrow 16-14 D majority, with some seats to protect in two years and some things to get done this session, especially mental health issues.

Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosebaum — strong Portland labor Democrat, started in the House in 1998;

jobs and women's issues are her forte — straight forward negotiator.

Senate Minority Leader Ted Ferrioli — I knew him when he was a Creswell Democrat back in the '80's. Now he's described as an East Oregon Republican rancher with a concealed weapons permit. Whoop-de-doo! He's already laid down the gauntlet on PERS, telling *The Oregonian* that Courtney has to produce 16 Democrat votes for reform or he won't give him one vote! Wow, brinksmanship in February! He's like Mitch McConnell with a shorter rifle (and no filibuster).

House Speaker Tina Kotek — I've only met her a few times. Val Hoyle and others speak highly of her. Fourth-term legislator. A 34-26 majority is nice, but it's a slim majority; e.g., you need 36 votes in the House for any revenue reform.

House Majority Leader Val Hoyle — more on her later, just take my word on this for now: Lane County is lucky to have this plucky Irish broad as one of our representatives.

House Minority Leader Mike McLane — Powell Butte Republican, the new guy, elected to the House in 2010, already their leader. By most accounts, the governor's office at least, thinks he's a guy who can be reasonable. That's saying a lot when you consider the House Republican caucus he manages: everyone from Vickie Berger — a reasonable moderate — to Dennis Richardson — famously, immoderately, not reasonable.

Tea bags will be flying. One of my (few) friends sent me a bumper sticker response to Richardson's recent proposal that we arm our teachers in the aftermath of Newtown: "A teacher in every gun shop!" Yay! Verily! Talk to you soon.

Tony Corcoran is currently a state employee, but his observations in this column are those of a private Oregon citizen. While he served in the state Senate he wrote a column for EW called Insider Baseball.

