

ACTIVIST ALERT

• Some **4J Board members** are holding informal conversations on a variety of topics around town from 4 to 5 pm on Fridays. The next will be May 17 at the Arts & Technology Academy, 1659 W. 22nd Ave. Last week's Activist Alert blurb had outdated information about the locations for the May 10 and May 17 meetings.

• A free lecture on "Historical and Projected Patterns of Change in **Pacific Northwest Streams**: Implications for Persistence of Threatened Bull Trout" will be at 7:30 pm Friday, May 17, at 100 Willamette Hall on the UO campus. Speaker is Jason Dunham, aquatic ecologist with the U.S. Geological Service in Corvallis. Call 484-4477. Sponsored by the UO Department of Biology and the local Sierra Club.

• "Decolonize This!" is the annual **Environmental Justice Conference** starting at 10:30 am Saturday, May 18, at the Global Scholars Hall and East 15th and Moss behind Matt Arena. Features Latino/a and American Indian indigenous peoples panels, a performance and keynote speakers. Topics will include food justice, decolonization, free trade and fossil fuels. Free. Donations welcome.

• A special concert to **welcome home David Oaks**, a veteran mental health human rights activist, will be held from 6 to 9:30 pm Saturday, May 18, at the Eugene Hotel, 222 Broadway. Performers include Don Latarski, Walker T. Ryan, the Eugene Peace Choir and others. Sliding scale of \$10 and up. Proceeds will go to help meet the major medical expenses Oaks faces because of a spinal cord injury. Call 484-9167 for more information.

• Tree-huggers will be in their element at the **Wildflower and Music Festival** from 10 am to 5 pm Sunday, May 19, at Mount Pisgah Arboretum. Lots of guided nature walks, live music, food, etc. See mountpisgaharboretum.org or call 747-3817.

• A free public forum on "Microwave Impacts and the **Wireless Smart Meter Threat**" regarding EWEB's pending smart meter contract will be at 6:30 pm Wednesday, May 22, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 13th and Chambers. Email info@familiesforsafemeters.org or call Kathy Ging at 342-8461.

• Doulas of Lane County, in honor of International Doula Month (May), is hosting its third annual **Bellies, Birth & Babies Fair** from 6:30 to 8:30 pm Thursday, May 23, at First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St. Features community resources and complimentary health practitioners such as bodyworkers, chiropractic, parenting and postpartum help. Call 515-5990 or email jannaslack@gmail.com.

LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY SCHEDULE

ODOT spring spraying is under way, but calling the 888 number below indicates the plan is not followed closely.

• The week of May 13, the **Veneta section** including Hwy. 126 west of Eugene, Highway 36 and Territorial Highway.

• The week of May 20, the **Florence section** of Hwys. 126 West, 36 and 101.

Call Tony Kilmer at ODOT District 5 (Lane County area) at 744-8080 or call 1-888-996-8080 for herbicide application information.

Compiled by Jan Wroney, Forestland Dwellers: 342-8332, www.forestlanddwellers.org

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

• Due to misinformation submitted to *EW*, our Slant blurb last week about the cost of sponsoring a plaque at the **Nobel Peace Walk Park** was incorrect. The cost is \$5,000. Email jnhattig@efn.org for information on sponsorships.

• In **Happening People** last week the reference to University of Washington should have been United Way. The author had written UW and the editor assumed it was that other UW.

NEWS

WILL OREGON PROTECT MONSANTO?

There's a "Monsanto protection act" in the Oregon Legislature, and opponents say that due to its vague language its repercussions could affect not only seed growers but also city and county governments managing vegetation. SB 633 passed out of the Oregon Senate May 1 on a 17-12 vote. Sen. Floyd Prozanski and Chris Edwards voted against it.

SB 633 appears to be in response to local efforts to protect farmers and consumers from genetically modified (GM) foods. Kai Huschke of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) says it's "quite likely that the move by the agribusiness boys was to sharpen up the preemptive law in response to the ballot qualification in Jackson County and the rights-based effort in Benton. It's usually what they do."

Efforts in Jackson County have led to a measure on the ballot for May 2014 that will let voters decide if they want to ban GM crops in the county, and people in Benton County have been working on a community rights initiative to protect the heritage and vegetable seed industry there. GMO Free Oregon has discussed putting forth a

similar measure in Lane County. CELDF gives advice and training on these efforts.

Melissa Wischerath and Mary Beth Williams of the newly formed, Eugene-based Center for Sustainability Law are concerned about SB 633. Wischerath says the bill is based on corporate-funded American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) proposed legislation from 2007.

Williams says a Monsanto attorney came to Oregon to testify for the bill. She says that the vague language in the bill that calls for regulation of seeds and "products of agricultural seed, flower seed, nursery seed and vegetable seed" to be done by the state could lead to local governments not being able to do simple things like dealing with invasive species and could ban county-funded local food initiatives. Other ALEC pro-GM crop bills do not have the language "products of agricultural seed" in it, she says, and that "products" could mean anything from canola oil to flour.

Williams says having a state permitting system for genetically modified organisms would actually be a good thing since the federal regulations for GM foods are so weak, but SB 633 simply "creates a mess."

There will be a March Against Monsanto at 11 am Saturday, May 25, starting at the Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza. A Facebook event giving the details can be found at wkly.ws/1g9 — *Camilla Mortensen*

DALAI LAMA ON THE ENVIRONMENT

When the Buddha was passing on his teachings more than 2,000 years ago, 400 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere wasn't an issue. The Earth was a far cry from the present day environmental degradation and climate change that it now faces. But we reached 399.89 ppm on May 9, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and that's a concern for the Dalai Lama.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, who Tibetan Buddhists believe is the reincarnation of the bodhisattva of compassion, participated in an environmental summit in Portland as part of his trip through Oregon May 9-11. The discussion between Gov. John Kitzhaber, scientist David Suzuki and Andrea Durbin of the Oregon Environmental Council ranged from local issues, such as coal trains, to global warming.

Many believe that journalists are responsible for the tenacity of climate change denial because they reported denial as being as valid as the science showing global warming exists. Earlier in the day at a press conference attended by *EW*,

the Dalai Lama told reporters they must have long noses "like elephants" to smell things out, both in front and behind, and to be honest, truthful and unbiased. He also called government censorship harmful and morally wrong.

During the environmental summit the Dalai Lama called for people to cut their consumption, pointing out that the Western lifestyle is a problem, as is overpopulation, and he called on people to think about a planet with 10 billion people with 10 billion cars. He said human life is very precious but we face threats from too many "precious lives."

He said on one side there is greed. "The other side: be careful, awareness." Education is key he said, though in one of his many humorous moments, he called modern education "bull crap."

On a personal level, the Dalai Lama said that he never leaves a light on in a room, and takes showers, not baths, to highlight the importance of ecology on personal level. But for more advice than that, he said, ask an expert. Suzuki, who has a doctorate in zoology, called for people to reinsert themselves in nature and be "ecowarriors."

The environmental summit was followed by a speech similar to the one the Dalai Lama gave in Eugene, a Q&A and a performance by the Red Hot Chili Peppers. — *Camilla Mortensen*



THE DALAI LAMA, WHO OFTEN DONS CAPS OR VISORS WITH EMBLEMS OF THE PLACES HE VISITS, CAME TO EUGENE MAY 10.