

more students into the burgeoning urban farm program while adding harmony to the changeover area between the university and the rest of the Fairmount neighborhood. “I turn away literally hundreds and hundreds of students every year because they can’t fit into the class,” he says.

Most students in the class are the fourth-year seniors who register first, Keeler says, and while no major or program requires the course, students from more than 93 different disciplines have taken it over the past decade. “This transcends interest groups and skill sets. Everyone wants to know how to grow food and work outside and work in the community.”

The garden at Moss Street, known as “The Grove,” has a three-year memorandum of understanding with UO, while the “Columbia Green” has a five-year memorandum. Keeler says this could allow UO to physically expand in the future while making use of its current space in the meantime. “The university planning department is working hard to create a graceful transition between university-owned properties and privately owned properties,” he continues. “We’re using this green space idea, but we’re adding a

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- HARPER KEELER, FARM DIRECTOR

food-production feel to it.”

Among the first projects at the Columbia Green is Project Tomato, a collaboration between campus dining services and First Year Programs. “Freshmen are going to harvest tomatoes and learn how to make pizza sauce and host a local food dinner with it,” Keeler says. Students eat the food that they grow as “direct feedback,” he says, but any extra produce would be donated to local nonprofits.

Local architect and UO instructor Lorri Nelson, who was an instrumental part of the now-dismantled Courthouse Garden, founded the School Garden

Project with fellow architect Robin Selover as part of the College of Education’s Service-Learning Program. The garden will teach UO students about school gardens and elementary school students about food and gardening in general.

Elements of the Courthouse Garden, including its soil and tools, were removed from the site and are now used in other sites, such as UO gardens and FOOD For Lane County’s Grassroots Garden. “The energy that was harnessed at the Courthouse Garden and transforming that site has been reincarnated elsewhere,” Keeler says. “The phoenix is rising over at Edison.” — *Shannon Finnell*

SLANT

• The **debate over the city services fee** has generated a renewed awareness and interest in how our fair city is managed, and that’s a good thing. Letters to the editor this week offer suggestions on how budget priorities can be adjusted. Our city Budget Committee members are getting public input and have ideas on how funds can be reallocated. Budget Committee Chair Laura Illig suggested this week that the city use one-time money that originated from the General Fund (but was set aside for projects such as a new City Hall) to pay for vital services now while the committee and city staff take the next year to take a deep, critical look at the budget. That’s smart.

But whatever decisions the committee recommends will require more detailed information than we have seen previously from the city manager’s office. We were told 100 positions have been cut, but were those warm bodies or vacant positions? Were lower-paying positions or higher-paying positions cut?

Related to future budgets are broader management questions: Why does Eugene have 390 more employees (full-time and part-time) than Salem, a city the same size? Why were non-union staff given raises in recent years even though a budget deficit was looming? Why doesn’t the City Council, rather than the city manager, negotiate with unions on pay, benefits, working conditions and overtime?

Speaking of Salem, that city held meetings from January to May to work on its budget. Compare that to Eugene’s Budget Committee, which started discussing the upcoming budget May 23 and will deliver its recommendations to City Council June 5. Even with the uncertainty of the May 21 vote, the committee should have had much more time to prepare.

One big question remains: What fundamental changes do we need to make in our city structure to deal with the growing complexity of city government? We have outgrown our weak council/strong manager form of government, but are we big enough for a mayor/council form of government? Our current city councilors are forbidden by law from any involvement in the daily management of our city, while our unelected city manager oversees a bureaucracy of 1,712 employees. Our councilors tell us they sometimes feel like kids in car seats with toy steering wheels while “dad” drives. Cities our size have different models of governance, but it’s clear that democracy would be better served if we had a full-

time mayor and council and a better balance of power when it comes to planning, public safety, social services and other key city functions. We may get there eventually; meanwhile we can pursue incremental changes through charter amendments, such as an independent performance auditor, more oversight powers for our councilors, more pay, staff aides, etc.

• **Friends of David Oaks** organized an event May 18 at the Eugene Hotel that raised \$4,500 toward a goal of \$80,000 to help Oaks meet ongoing medical expenses. This was a lively, good-natured and memorable community effort that brought out hundreds of caring people for an evening of music and speeches. Oaks is the founder of MindFreedom International who broke his neck in a fall and just returned from a rehabilitation center in Colorado. David Zupan, one of the organizers, tells us, “The highlight was David giving a particularly moving speech thanking everyone for coming and making clear that despite his spinal cord injury confining him to a wheelchair, he will continue working as an activist and called for a nonviolent revolution around the world.” A video about Oaks can be found on our blog this week or see SupportDavidOaks.org

• Here’s to a **little more hope in Oregon** for the birds and the bees ... and for healthy kids and any other beasts romping around on state lands. On May 28 the Oregon Legislature, with prodding from feisty local group Beyond Toxics, passed HB 3364, which calls for integrated pest management (IPM) for the state of Oregon. This means that pesticide use on state lands, from forests to roadsides to universities (a school IPM bill passed in 2009), will be minimized and other biological and mechanical controls, will be considered. And it means that sometimes, a few natural weeds and bugs are acceptable. People eat dandelions, don’t they?

• **Memorial Day** has come and gone with the obligatory images and stories in the media about fallen soldiers and heroes from wars past and present. That’s fine and we honor our citizens in uniform and their sacrifices, but we also need to maintain a broader perspective. Some of our wars have been justified but many others in recent times have been motivated by twisted ideology and the corrupted interests of commerce and industry. We don’t have a draft these days to suck the unwilling into foreign policy debacles fueled by war profiteering, but we do have something just as effective: economic disparity that makes the military an attractive option to poverty. Rich kids go to college; poor kids go to boot camp.



LaVelle Vineyards is relocating its Eugene tasting room after 14 years at the Fifth Street Public Market, according to founder Doug LaVelle and winemaker Matthew LaVelle. The new location as of July 1 will be at the International Marketplace at 400 International Way, just off I-5 and Beltline in Springfield. The winery and vineyard are in Elmira, along with a tasting room featuring Friday night events. The LaVelles write on the winery’s blog that “We have never benefited much from the general foot traffic at the Market” and they were hoping for a boost from the new boutique hotel, but “neither the Inn nor its guests have become a significant part of our sales.” He also says the rent was going up in July and “the Market imposed constraints on how we conducted business at that location. We have no real kitchen facility and the Market preferred that we not build one out.” The new space is twice the size and adjacent to Willie’s Lebanese and Northwest Cuisine, “one of the finest dining spots in the Eugene-Springfield area.” See lavellevineyards.com or call 953-9406.

The **SmartUps Pub Talk** this month will be at 5 pm Thursday, May 30, at the Oregon Electric Station, 27 E. 5th Ave., featuring an entrepreneurial spotlight on Eimar Boesjes of Moonshadow Mobile and Charles Williams, assistant VP for innovation at UO talking about the Regional Accelerator Innovation Network. See SmartUps on Facebook.

The **Healthy Living Expo**, a gathering of health professionals and vendors, will be from 11:30 am to 6 pm Sunday, June 2, at Eugene Yoga, 3575 Donald St. The event is free but donations go to support Living Beyond Breast Cancer, a nonprofit that provides education and support for women diagnosed with breast cancer. Yoga, meditation and other classes will be offered by Kimby Maxson, Donna O’Neil, Diane Butera, Robin Rice, Ariell Bertolone, Melinda Settles, Jean Nelson and Danielle Butera. Call 520-8771 or visit eugeneyoga.us.

A fundraiser and dance party for **school children in Guatemala** is being planned for 5 pm Sunday, June 2, at Belly Restaurant, 30 E. Broadway Trevor Emmett and Tiffany Freamon of Eugene volunteered at a little school called *La Esperanza* in Guatemala and are now raising money to support the school. They have raised \$4,000 so far and are hoping to raise \$6,000. Email tiffanyfreamon@aol.com for more information or see the fundraising site at wkly.ws/1hh.

POLLUTION UPDATE

Last week, Oregon DEQ assessed civil penalties against **Prize Properties** and **Bennett’s Drain Savers**, both of which DEQ sent pre-enforcement notices to in March (*EW* 3/28, goo.gl/jEZwT; *EW* 5/2, goo.gl/gz1FR). DEQ assessed a penalty of \$15,417 against Eugene-based Bennett’s Drain Savers for performing sewage disposal services without a license and surety bond, including disposal at **Heard Farms** on Airport Road in Eugene. DEQ assessed a penalty of \$11,118 against Prize Properties for discharging untreated or partially treated sewage to a roadside ditch from residential property located at 649 Quarry Road in Springfield. It appears that this problem dates back to at least September and continues despite city, county and state efforts. Comments to DEQ regarding **Timber Supply Explosives’** (Philomath) industrial stormwater pollution control plan are due by 5 pm on June 3. Visit goo.gl/ScwdH to see stormwater plans, and goo.gl/IMDQb to comment. — Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project

lighten up

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

In his recent talk in Eugene, the Dalai Lama said that people in their 70s are members of the “bye-bye” generation. Well, as I write this on my 78th birthday the only things I’m saying bye-bye to are hopes for a sensible Republican party — and bowling.

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