

## RECALCITRANT PACHYDERMS

For the last eight years it has been my pleasure to serve on the Lane County Parks Advisory Board, and last year I was the chair of the Advisory Committee. I am writing to complain about the recalcitrance of right-wing Republican commissioners who for months neglected to even nominate any candidates for the three openings on the board and caused the Advisory Committee to be basically handcuffed from any activity. This right-wing ploy resulted in a whole year being wasted because there was no quorum to enact any motions. It wasn't until the board went directly to the commissioners and begged them to act, that two of the elephantine commissioners finally came up with their appointees.

Faye Stewart *still* has not even put anyone forward — just told the county to “pick someone” — after all these months of inaction! This is the same commissioner who supported Seneca Timber's fabricated and flawed lawsuit against Democratic commissioners, and who is trying to hoodwink the county into giving his developer friends the McDougals and Demers our drinking water from the McKenzie!

This is a reflection of the same “calcified partisanship” that national Republicans

have shown, dragging their pachyderm feet on everything, effectively negating the governance of this country!

Enough of this Republican runaround! We need new commissioners, ones who will actually do their jobs, and not just do favors for their moneyed friends! We need commissioners like Kevin Matthews, who cares about Lane County and who's been working to help our area for years!

Cat Koehn  
Fall Creek

## OUR CURRENT NEEDS

Mayor Kitty Piercy says that there may be a million dollars available to build a new shelter for the homeless. She says that the city has a revenue source from a developer.

The mayor says it is time for the city to stop fooling around with camping and meet the obvious need to provide a safe legal place for homeless persons to be.

Her statement is precipitated by Eugene Mission turning itself into more of a rehab and no longer being an emergency night shelter as of this August.

The service community could expand this, perhaps getting matching grants to help with several distinct shelters, not just one big one.

Wet beds, accessible shelters for disabled persons, a women's shelter, expanded spaces for families, expanded spaces for

unaccompanied children, a place focused on working people (including night shift), parking access for people with vehicles, places for homeless students, a place for together couples now accommodated only at the short Egan Warming Centers stays, etc. All are current needs.

St. Vinny's, Shelter Care, LILA, First Place Family Center, Looking Glass, Station 7, Womenspace, etc., are services with histories of offering shelter and might attract additional foundation moneys if they get some of the city's million for shelter.

The homeless persons support community needs to get proposals together quick. Campsites are being destroyed now.

Remember “the \$100,000 for homeless people” the homeless never got? It was spent for other city efforts, including a dog shelter!

Jerry Smith, MSW  
Eugene

## DIRTY WARS

Liberal peace marchers and Ron Paul supporters alike should be able to agree on the utterly simple fact that the U.S. military is creating new terrorists faster than it can kill the existing ones. As though we need further reminding, I encourage patriotic U.S. citizens of all stripes to go see *Dirty Wars* playing at the new Bijou Metro theater downtown.

Journalist Jeremy Scahill has covered the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Trying to expose the dark and secretive Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), Scahill went to Yemen, Somalia and elsewhere and learned more about a branch of U.S. foreign policy that can easily be described as psychopathic. Exhibiting towering arrogance, JSOC goes where it wants showering cruise missiles and predator drone strikes on anyone it deems a threat — including U.S. citizens. Many innocent civilian men, women and children are killed in these strikes. JSOC hires mercenaries, arms warlords and sanctions torture. The bitter, anti-American sentiment is palpable on the screen.

If you want the U.S. to be safe from the threat of terrorism, please go see *Dirty Wars* and learn how the “War on Terror” is having just the opposite effect.

Robert Bolman  
Eugene

## BALANCING ACT

As a newcomer to Eugene, I'm seeing lots of things I've never seen before.

I love the “stack” — people don't take a bag to the store and they don't buy a bag, they just stack their groceries and walk them home. The preferred shape seems to be a square column supported on double

## HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

# Grand Bargain ... Really?

THE LEGISLATURE'S WINNERS AND LOSERS

When the press reports that the Oregon Legislature adjourned *sine die*, it does not mean physician-assisted suicide by trigonometric function. Gov. Kitzhaber's not that kind of doctor. *Sine die* is Latin for “without a day,” meaning in this case that the 77th session of the Salem Hot Air Society is done for this year, kaput. There will be an additional \$1 billion for schools, some half-hearted PERS reform and no additional background checks for guns. Next session, next February, unless there's a special session.

As always there were winners and losers in the process. Gov. John Kitzhaber 2.0 lauded the achievements of the Legislature — the additional school money, lowering health-care spending inflation, flat public safety projections for prison beds in the next five years, infrastructure projects with jobs and some PERS stability — but he also pointed to the failure to get additional revenue tied to some further PERS reform needed to “prime the economic pump.” He not only called it “unfinished business,” he said he'd call a special session of the Legislature if he can muster the 18 Oregon Senate votes and 36 House votes necessary for a revenue/PERS package. I think the governor had a good session and I hope he's motivated to run again.

New House Speaker Tina Kotek had a pretty good session. She's a tough negotiator. She kept her caucus together. House Minority Leader Mike McLane, on the other hand, found out what it's like to be a Republican rookie with a whole bunch of dysfunctional deposed leaders in your caucus who lost their majority last

election. That dude had a tough job.

I didn't think Senate President Peter Courtney had a particularly good session, nor did Senate Minority Leader Ted Ferrioli. Courtney got what he wanted, a state hospital in Junction City, but he couldn't control his caucus enough to force the gun votes. Majorities in both chambers and we couldn't get a background check vote? Really? Republican Sen. Bruce Starr, who ran unsuccessfully against Secretary of State Kate Brown two years ago, has already sent out his Second Amendment-defender fundraising letter to constituents. And he's in a swing district! He's also the only Senate Republican to vote for revenue increases, before changing his vote to a “no” when the bill was failing. Ferrioli was almost clownish. We toasted him at our last Hot Air Society beer meeting at Cornucopia (remember, we only toast bad guys) for complaining about a do-nothing session, when he was the biggest obstructionist in the building!

Our local legislators had a good session. House Majority Leader Val Hoyle had her speaker's back; that's her job and she did it well. I bet you won't see her or Speaker Tina Kotek telling the press anytime in the near future that they have the votes prior to the next proposed revenue measure: Lesson learned — don't trust a Republican on a revenue measure. Floyd Prozanski, Lee Beyer and Chris Edwards helped the Senate bring some bacon home to the district, along with good work by our House delegation, Phil Barnhart, Paul Holvey, Nancy Nathanson and John Lively. A billion more for K-12, \$135 million for construction projects at the UO, \$80 million for construction of the Oregon

State Hospital campus in Junction City, \$8 million for construction projects at LCC and \$12 million for LTD to extend the EmX rapid transit service. (I love driving those 11th Avenue anti-EmX'ers businesses crazy. I've never set foot in an anti-EmX business and never will.)

So, in summary, Salem's Hot Air Society won't meet again until it meets again. In February if not earlier. I'll keep you posted.

My head was not into writing a column this week, but I had to *sine die* with the Legislature. Jeannie and I are mourning the loss of a dear friend, Michael Convey, who died July 12. A former teacher at LCC, Michael was a master educator, a master craftsman, an incredible neighbor and friend. We've known Michael and his wife, Stevie, since I worked at DHS in the early '80s. As we speak, I'm typing this column on the clear vertical grain Douglas fir dining room table he built for us 10 years ago. Countless years of kibitzing about politics, about the Ducks, the Giants, the 49ers and carpentry project after project. So funny. Such a clever man. And a good man. All our love to Stevie.

Peace. Out. ■

Former state senator Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is currently a state employee and his observations in this column are those of a private citizen.

