

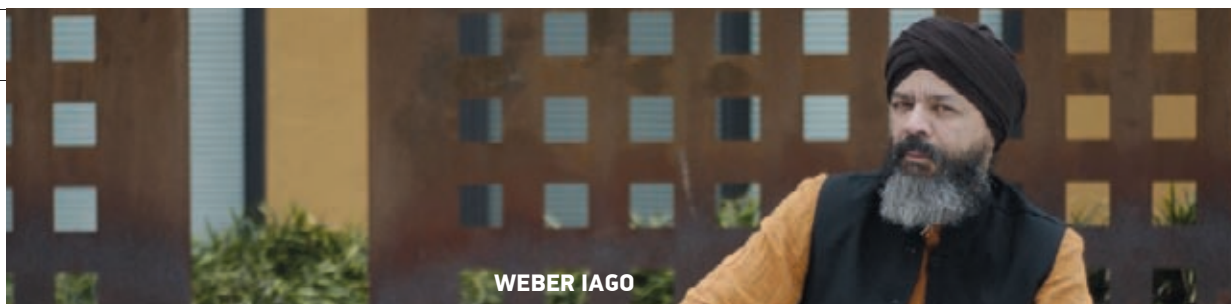
victimized both by the government and by the citizens of Eugene and the criminal element, which preys on them.”

What some Eugeneans don't know, Clark says, is that the homeless population of the wetlands is about 30 percent veterans, mirroring a national trend. “There's quite a few, including some elderly Vietnam-era veterans and other people who are severely disabled — a lot of displaced people who did nothing wrong except to happen to get sick or injured or some other misfortune occurs to them that is out of their control,” Clark says.

SLEEPS activist James Chastain's camp in the wetlands was cleared earlier this month, and he's protesting because he feels like homeless people have no choices in where to sleep, especially with overflowing shelters. He says that in his experience, the rights of homeless people are routinely ignored, and he wishes that Eugene had a locally produced homeless bill of rights that included the names of court decisions protecting homeless people. “I think a lot of those should be on there because it's federal law, and when it's federal it should be for every state in the union,” Chastain says. — Shannon Finnell

COUNTY HIRES LIVELY AS ECONOMIC EXPERT

While the conservative Lane County commissioners are still prone to supporting controversial timber and mining efforts, work continues to bring other businesses to the area. As part of its economic development efforts, the county announced it has hired Springfield legislator John Lively as Oregon economic development specialist. The commissioners also voted July 23 to give \$200,000 in video lottery dollars to local business efforts and \$100,000 to Canadian company Apel. Waiting in the wings are projects such as “Project



OPPORTUNITY VILLAGE FUNDRAISES & BUILDS

The opening date of Opportunity Village Eugene (OVE), Eugene's pilot project for a safe, sustainable community for homeless people, is fast approaching, and a series of fundraisers begins 6 pm Sunday, July 28, with “Keys for the Village,” a piano and keyboard concert featuring Grammy-nominated pianist Weber Iago.

“We're getting toward crunch time,” says Cary Thompson, an OVE board member and president of the Helios Network. He says the committee and village members are making decisions on details like sanitation and finishing vetting the last two occupants; 15 people will live on the pilot site at N. Garfield and Roosevelt. The city plans to use the vacant site in the next few years, so the location is temporary. “If we do well, I think we'll have a good chance of being able to move the structures and move the infrastructure,” Thompson says.

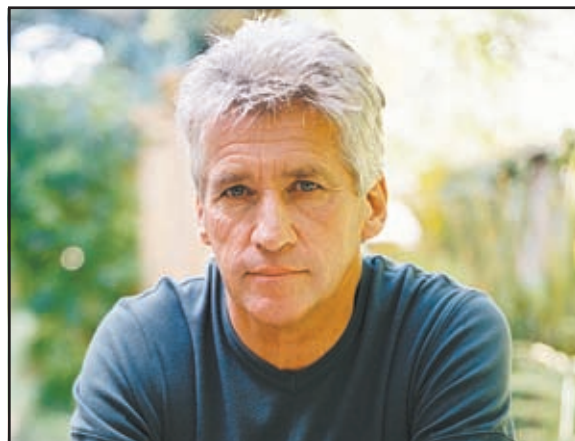
Thompson stresses that OVE will be a village, not a camp, and they're creating community agreements that the residents will use to govern. “It's going to be fairly well-regulated,” he says. Drinking and drug use won't be allowed on the site, though adults are free to consume alcohol at a bar just like other Eugeneans, as long as they don't return drunk and disruptive.

OVE isn't getting any financial breaks as a humanitarian organization, which is one of the reasons it's holding a benefit. “We just paid the city \$7,000 on the conditional use permit,” Thompson says. “We want to do it right, do it legally and make as sure as we can that it will be a model that can be replicated.”

Local musicians including Dario LaPoma will open the Keys for the Village benefit. Retired chaplain and OVE board member Wayne Martin says he's looking forward to hearing “Jerry the homeless guy” play. “He's in his 60s and he's been quite the pianist, and now he's homeless,” Martin says.

Following the first half of the concert, Wesley United Methodist Church's Conestoga hut residents will hold an open house to show how structures like those planned for OVE can function. Weber Iago, who was nominated for a Latin music Grammy, will close the concert, combining “elements of classical, jazz, Latin, pop and sacred music.” “I just love what he's been doing as a composer,” Martin says.

The Sunday benefit concert will be held at Wesley United Methodist Church, at the corner of Oakway and Cal Young. Suggested donation is \$10-\$20, but no one will be turned away. Future OVE events or fundraisers include a groundbreaking, a grand opening, the Eugene Celebration Parade and a Kickstarter or Indiegogo project. For more information, check out opportunityvillageeugene.org. — Shannon Finnell



Working
Oregonians
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Savings
Options

For many hard working Oregonians, retirement feels unaffordable and unreachable, but it doesn't have to be that way.

That's why AARP fought for state legislation to develop sensible and sustainable ways to save for retirement in the workplace. These recommendations will go a long way in getting all hard working Oregonians access to the retirement they've earned.

AARP and the Retirement in Reach coalition would like to thank these legislators and state leaders for championing the bill to help in that fight. We will continue working to make sure Oregonians get the solutions they need for a secure retirement.

Thank You:

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Senator Lee Beyer of Springfield
Senator Peter Courtney of Salem
Representative Tina Kotek of NE Portland
Representative Val Hoyle of West Eugene
Senator Diane Rosenbaum of Portland
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward of Beaverton

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