

VAGABOND IN TROUBLE

Friends and supporters of *The Oregon Vagabond* street paper should be aware that there is no October issue scheduled for publication. According to Ron, the longtime vendor and artist who is generally to be found stationed at the Kiva parking lot entrance on Olive Street, the editor of *The Vagabond* and friend of the homeless David Gerber has informed him that the funding has dried up. There is a possibility that funding will be restored in the future, but for now, the vendors will be without this important asset.

This paper, besides providing a revenue stream for street vendors, which can, in turn, provide an avenue into stability and housing, also provides a very important window into the homeless community in Eugene. The stories and poetry found in these pages, which reflect the experiences, hopes and fears of those scratching out a “living” on the street, must not be allowed to disappear from the dialogue concerning their future well-being, and thus, the future well-being of our entire community.

Ron and some of his fellow vendors intend to continue to publish the paper with the help of the friends and supporters who have previously made the *Vagabond* a success by generously giving money, advice and supplies. In order to accomplish this, a layout specialist and several other professional services are required.

Please step up, citizens of Eugene, as you always seem to do. You can talk to Ron most weekdays on Olive Street. Oh, and

buy another paper, even if you’ve already read the latest.

Bernard Yandel
Eugene

WHITE CANE DAY

Many white cane users have been noticing that many drivers have been choosing to ignore the white cane law. Recently, one of our members of the blind community had his white cane hit very hard by a car while crossing 10th at Olive. The Oregon statute states that cars must stop and remain stopped for anyone crossing a roadway with a white cane or guide dog. The penalty for failure to do so is \$300 to \$1,000.

Please join us in celebrating White Cane Day Oct. 15 by obeying this law every day of the year.

Marthana Guglielmo
Eugene

MONSANTO LIES

None of the supposed benefits claimed by genetically modified crops have materialized. Quite the opposite, in fact. GMOs have resulted in greater pesticide use and the emergence of herbicide resistant super weeds. Monsanto’s claim that the Bt toxic bacteria (inserted into corn, soybeans, sugar beets, squash and corn to kill insects) is broken down in the human digestive system is another false claim. Blood samples from 93 percent of the pregnant mothers and 80 percent of the fetuses show the presence of active Bt toxin.

The U.N. International Assessment of

Agricultural Science and Technology for Development, The Union of Concerned Scientists’ report, “A Failure to Yield,” and “The GMO Emperor Has No Clothes” — a Global Citizens’ report on the state of GMOs based on field research across the world — also found that genetic engineering has not increased yields. Yet, the propaganda continues that GMOs are the only solution to hunger because GMOs increase yields.

The American Academy of Environmental Medicine called for a moratorium on GM foods and concluded their study with “GM foods pose a serious health risk.”

Monsanto is lying. Very similar to the “don’t worry, be happy” propaganda of the fossil fuel corporations, the nuclear industry, the asbestos and coal and tobacco companies’ lies throughout the years. They lie about the danger of their products even as people are dying from using them and they shirk all responsibility for their products.

There is a “March Above and Beyond Monsanto for Food Freedom” at 11 am Saturday, Oct. 12, at the Wayne Morse Plaza. Don’t look for information in *The Register-Guard*. They are complicit with their silence and failure to report. Another example of “news service” as a modern oxymoron.

Sarah Ruth
Eugene

CALI-STYLE CONDOS

I am a River Road resident of 51 years and have lived on McClure Lane for 30 of those years. At the public hearing

on Oakleigh Meadow Cohousing Oct. 2 both sides presented their testimony respectfully, until the rebuttal testimony, which was only allowed to OMC.

OMC project consultant Katherine McCamant from California proceeded to belittle the Oakleigh and McClure Lane neighbors about the hearing held before ours. It was a land use change for 937 Irvington Dr.

She said she couldn’t understand why no one here protested about agricultural land at the airport being rezoned. If the California consultant were familiar with the River Road and Santa Clara area she would know that the land is in the middle of a neighborhood, and is nowhere near farmland or the airport.

Then Will Dixon, OMC project manager, proceeded to a personal, untruthful attack of one of our neighbors on Oakleigh, who has lived many years in the community. This was uncalled for! If that’s the type of people OMC is affiliated with, this speaks volumes to what type of development it will be.

We are a close-knit neighborhood that welcomed the idea of the original seven-to-10 unit cohousing. This has now turned into a high-end California condo project with people that are disrespectful and only tell half truths and what they think people want to hear, or no information at all.

Beware potential buyers into OMC: You’re not getting what you think you are.

Jill Buschelman
Eugene

VIEWPOINT BY JAN SPENCER

Downtown River Road

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR AN EMPTY BUILDING

A large mural on the former Goodwill building in River Road illustrates what an eco-friendly cluster of neighborhood scale local businesses might look like. There is a cafe, a bakery and small grocery with boxes of veggies out front.

The scene I painted 10 years ago is complete with images of real people from the neighborhood meeting and greeting each other and even favorite Eugene guitar player Eagle Park Slim.

The permaculture landscaping in the mural is all edible and includes container plants, veggie beds and trellises. Farther down the wall is a bike shop and finally a street car to the southeast corner. The mural extends almost 80 feet end to end.

Commonly referred to as the Goodwill building, the property will have potential for bringing the mural to real life. Several enthusiastic nearby neighbors have formed a committee to help, over time, find a new business or group of businesses to make use of the space in ways that can benefit River Road’s culture and well being.

The family that owns the vacant building lives nearby, is civic minded and would welcome a use for the building that can also benefit the neighborhood.

The building features 9,500-plus square feet on the

ground level with another 500 on the second floor, plenty of space to subdivide for multiple occupancy. The ideal would be to have one or two anchor tenants to sublease. There are a variety of successful examples of multiple small businesses sharing a larger space in Eugene.

For years, people in River Road have dreamed about a new casual meeting place like the former cooperative Solstice Bakery. Local residents would love a natural food store, bakery, bookstore, public meeting and performance place, office space, bike shop or small retail. At last December’s Holiday Dessert Potluck hosted by the River Road Community Organization, four out of five attendees identified a natural food store as the most wanted enhancement for the neighborhood. At the present time, there is no natural food store between Whiteaker and Corvallis.

Imagine a downtown River Road. This is the location. Hilliard Street, the cross street, extends to the west, with many side streets reaching deep into the neighborhood — easy access by bike and walking to “downtown” for the entire middle part of River Road neighborhood.

Hilliard also extends east a couple of tree-lined blocks to the River Bike Path. In addition to the surrounding neighborhoods, River Road is the most important thoroughfare connecting north River Road

and Santa Clara with downtown and west Eugene. Eugene’s EmX may also add to the transportation mix within a few years.

City of Eugene land-use policy is to create walkable neighborhoods. Making creative use of the Goodwill building is a timely opportunity to move smartly in that direction. Given trends in resources, climate change, economics and culture, it makes great sense to localize business to the neighborhood scale.

The neighborhood citizen committee is one example of an emerging green culture in River Road. In recent years, the River Road area has seen an upsurge in permaculture and building green community with an expanding level of mutual assistance networks and on the ground projects. There could be great synergy between River Road’s expanding green culture and like-minded businesses.

The Goodwill building presents a rare opportunity: 1) a welcoming local population that is underserved by exactly the same kinds of businesses that would be a good fit for the site, 2) historical trends are saying go local and green, 3) the building can accommodate a variety of interior design layouts, and 4) the owners would like to see tenants that would enhance the well being of the neighborhood.

The citizen committee is available to assist progressive businesses to find out more. Arrangements can be made to see the space, meet the owners and local residents. Please contact Clare Strawn at clarestrawn@gmail.com or me at janrspencer@gmail.com

Jan Spencer is a resident of River Road and a longtime neighborhood activist.