

SLANT

- Rumors of a **homeless person freezing to death** during the cold snap were false, says Doug Bales, director of the Egan Warming Center. The official cause of that death is a drug overdose. "Not many freeze to death since Egan, but over the past five years there have been some deaths of exposure on nights we were open," Bales writes. "We know we are saving lives on nights like we had last week, but we can't be open every cold night and we can't save them from the consequences of the lives they have led — no matter how much we would like to."

- Are some of the Eugene police using similar tactics to shut down the **Whoville camps** (see News) as, activists say, led to the shutdown of Occupy Eugene camp? Then, and now, campers say that cops were dropping off people released from jail and the Johnson Unit at the camps in an effort to cause trouble and give justification for shutting the camps down. EPD says, "The call caused us to take a closer look at the conditions in and around Whoville." As one commenter pointed out on our Facebook page, does the now nationally famous snowball fight at the UO mean they will take a "closer look" at the dorms? On the other hand, Whovillians just posted an awesome video of EPD dropping off a Christmas tree to the camp. Hooray for joy in Whoville!

- Our **underfunded school system** in Oregon is getting scarier by the year. We often hear "You can't solve this problem by throwing money at it," but that's just an excuse for inaction. Not investing in public education means we are divesting from future economic, social and cultural prosperity. Many educational programs are being phased out or have already been eliminated and it will not be easy or cheap to restore them, even with a reformed state tax system that boosts education funding over time.

- It's the time of the year for giving, and we encourage you to do just that, now or any time in our annual **Give Guide**. All the items pictured on this week's EW cover and more were donated to Egan Warming Centers and Opportunity Village via First Christian Church.

- **Cover Oregon** continues to plod along as Oracle Corp. techies fiddle with the buggy \$90 million health insurance website. We got a glimpse of what's going on behind the scenes from an insider whose observations were shared on an email list for health care activists. Her job as a contractor is processing a backlog of thousands of paper applications and sending out registration packets. She says crews are working 10-hour shifts plus overtime, around the clock. "We will do what the computers were not able to accomplish," she writes. "Many folks will have insurance for the first time in a long time. I love this job!" Looks like the paperwork will continue for a while even after the Oracle website is up and running. The state website has been called a "catastrophe," but about 7,500 Oregonians have been signed up so far and we predict the fiasco will soon be forgotten, except perhaps in the courts. Oracle really should pay for the 400 people hired to process paperwork, along with outside web specialists, but the California tech company may resist. Fortunately, the state of Oregon has withheld millions in final payments to Oracle.

- We hear the **Unitarian Universalist Church** at 13th and Chambers in Eugene has been damaged by a broken water pipe. It's not a flood of biblical proportions, but all events and services there during December have been moved to different venues or canceled while repairs are under way. Check out ueueugene.org or call 686-2775.

- We printed nearly 40,000 papers Dec. 5 and then the snowstorm hit, paralyzing Eugene, Springfield and much of Lane County. If you were not able to snowshoe out to a red box to grab that issue, we have a stack of leftovers at our offices at 13th and Lincoln. Lots of good content that week, including a critical look at Eugene's downtown security, our Holiday Hot List for shoppers, a Wine column about gift wines and great music and arts stories. Kudos to the Pedaler's Express bike couriers for getting our papers out even on snowy, icy days.

- You can learn a lot from **reading Dan Savage** — sometimes practicing safe sex will also keep you from getting robbed. This little story was on the Eugene police blotter for Dec. 10. "A 22-year-old man reported he met another male online and they began emailing back and forth. There was an agreement to meet at the 22-year-old's apartment to play a game involving being tied up. Once the 22-year-old realized the game was getting out of hand, it was too late. The suspect loaded up anything of value and left. It took some time, but the victim was able to free himself."

Consider this a PSA: Don't let strangers tie you up.

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

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