

NO FEAR NEW YEAR

Time to ring in a brand new year! It finds me still tryin' to make friends with fear. Learning to let go, let life steer. Life is not for the weak of heart, my dear. The Whit seems to be the place for a beer. And our downtown is definitely threatening to reappear. Let's come together and kick this thing into a higher gear.

Bijou Metro, glad you are here. And there's Freudian Slip for something sheer. There will always be those who leer and jeer. But the fog is lifting, the way is clear. Roll up your sleeves and be ready to help steer. Wrap it all up, let us make 2014 the year it came back, our downtown. I feel it in my bones, we are so near. Crank it up Petula Clark and let's go downtown! That elusive someday is here!

Tim Boyden
Eugene

STEWART VS. DEXTER

East Lane County Public Forum is to take place Jan. 9 in Cottage Grove [see Activist Alert]. Faye Stewart's proponents are showcasing him as professional, looking out for the interests of Lane County.

I think Stewart should be asked if he ever considered what the people of Dexter/Lost Valley are experiencing now that the quarry is in full production. Everything that is happening to this community was included in the testimony that we gave. It has all come true: speeding gravel trucks, unlawful lane changes, constant loud noise for those who live closest to Parvin Butte.

Loud noise on a constant level is used as a torture technique. Is that OK with Stewart? Many people cannot sell their homes, one of their largest investments. Is that OK with Stewart? I went to visit a neighbor the other day and the only peace he can get is inside his home; outside, the constant noise of backup horns and rock loading was horrible. Is this representing the needs of Stewart's constituents?

Stewart would best serve the East Lane district by not running again for office. He

doesn't live in the horrible environment he helped create for hundreds of his constituents.

Arlen Markus
Dexter

POSITIVE OUTCOME

At their meeting Dec. 17, Lane County commissioners agreed to change direction and stop additional planned logging along Mosby Creek in Blue Mountain Park in Cottage Grove.

I want to especially thank Kevin Matthews for the help he brought to the Cottage Grove community in achieving this result. His insight and comments both at the community meeting held by Lane County Parks in Cottage Grove on Dec. 10 and at the County Commission Board meeting Dec. 17 were critical in framing this positive outcome.

In addition to saving the remaining forest at Blue Mountain Park, the county commissioners have now pledged to take a new look at their recent general policy of funding county parks through logging them.

Merlyn Adams
Cottage Grove

GREENHILL STEPPED IN

"(Out of) Animal Control?" [cover story, 1/2] highlights some challenges Greenhill has faced since assuming responsibility for running Lane County's public shelter. This community has seen annual decreases in government funding for animals until 2012, when the system was at a breaking point. Fortunately, Greenhill was able to step in, ensuring homeless, abused and neglected animals continued to have safe shelter.

Greenhill absorbed an incredible amount of responsibility and risk. Despite having to build or rebuild nearly every system from the ground up, Greenhill's staff and volunteers have stepped up to help the most vulnerable animals.

In addition to the positive changes that were noted in the article — including

an increase in animal care staffing, volunteerism and facility improvements — animals are now reunited with their owners in less time, dogs and cats are adopted into homes faster, veterinary and behavioral care has increased and the shelter is caring for more animals than LCAS did in its last year.

Greenhill's shelters are Life Saving Shelters. The animals are well cared for, treated with compassion and are waiting for a loving family to adopt them. We encourage everyone to visit, to adopt, to volunteer and to support our community's animals. Visit green-hill.org to learn more.

Cary Lieberman, CAWA
Executive Director
Greenhill Humane Society

GREEN ALLEY LIFE

The city of Eugene has 26 miles of unpaved gravel alleys. Many of these alleys are improperly graded for drainage, overgrown with invasive plants or are places that encourage crime and drug use. Poorly maintained alleys can be more of a liability than a resource and are often dirty, dilapidated and unused. However, these are also the alleys that we use to access our homes or walk through to get around the neighborhood. These alleys are part of our everyday lives.

The Green Alley Project is a student-led initiative focused on implementing green alley redesigns that promote sustainability and neighborhood connectivity.

Studies have shown that gravel alleys with regular vehicle use can have unhealthy levels of heavy metal and other pollution from vehicles. Stormwater runoff from Eugene's gravel alleys accounts for nearly 55 million gallons of water a year. That is enough to fill 83 Olympic-size swimming pools. The water from these alleys flows untreated directly into the Willamette River or Amazon Creek.

So, please join the Green Alley conversation and share what you think about Eugene's gravel alleys and how we can improve them.

Take the Green Alley Survey at tinyurl.com/mlza5pf and find us on Facebook at Eugene Green Alley Project.

Jeffrey Luers
Green Alley Project
Eugene

ILLUSION OF CONTROL

Rouanna Garden [Letters, 12/26] noticed that during the week of snow, four-wheel-drive vehicles tended to create problems with bad driving. I agree. But she thinks it's just a matter of courtesy and says that 4WD cars are better in icy conditions. Actually she's wrong about that according to several websites, such as 4x4abc.com:

The problem is, that most 4WD/AWD owners think they operate a safer system. Once moving (on any slippery stuff) they drive faster than they should and not as carefully and slowly as they would in a 2WD ... more 4WD vehicles are involved in accidents on snow and ice than 2WD.

Since snow and ice provide only marginal traction (so marginal that you need 4WD/AWD to start moving) and not enough lateral force can be created to support the tires during a turn, they slip sideways and the vehicle falls off the road. 4WD does not prevent that. 4WD is not involved in the steering part of driving.

4WD is better for getting started rolling on snow or ice, but driving faster than 2WD cars on snow or ice because you think you have more control is delusional.

Chuck Kleinhans
Eugene

MORAL OBLIGATION

I think it is vital for our local citizens to realize what is at stake in the Civic Stadium controversy. Most important is the fact that the site was public property that was deeded to the Eugene School District with the promise therein by the district that it would always be used for the public benefit — not to enrich an out-of-state corporation, i.e., Kroger Inc.

It is most important that people know that "Freddies" was sold long



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