

SLANT

- Packed audiences at the local **Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations** heard speakers from Rep. Peter DeFazio and the UO's President Michael Gottfredson to Giancarlo Esposito of *Breaking Bad* honoring MLK's legacy. Less honorable were the folks who showed up at the Springfield celebration holding a sign that read "Diversity is a code word for white genocide." We posted the picture on our blog, which became inundated with defenders of white pride. Despite some comments that many will find offensive, we're leaving the thread open. Feel free to weigh in.

- The link between **homelessness and mental illness** is the focus of our cover story this week by Rick Levin. Not having a predictable and safe place to sleep each night would drive anyone over the edge, even so-called "normal" people. And for people who already suffer from addiction, depression or any of the "disorders" described in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, being homeless exacerbates those symptoms.

We're already doing more than many other cities, but still not enough. Our first priority as a community in dealing with these issues should be to provide warm, safe shelter, free or low-cost. It makes sense morally, ethically and even financially. Phoenix, Ariz., and now Salt Lake City are engaged in a broad-based commitment to end homelessness in 10 years, saying it's cheaper to provide people with free rooms — even drug addicts and alcoholics — than to pay for their drain on police and ambulance services, courts, nonprofits and hospital emergency rooms.

- **Kesey Square issues** understandably morphed into broader pressing homeless issues at the City Club of Eugene meeting in the DAC Jan. 17. But the proposal came up again that we fill the square with a private building, thus wiping out the public problems at Broadway and Willamette. That's not a good solution. Eugene can do better than that with precious public space downtown. Panelists were Rob Bennett of Bennett Management Co., John Rowell of Rowell Brokaw Architects, Craig Opperman of Looking Glass and Ben Brubaker of White Bird Clinic and CAHOOTS.

- **Bump the minimum wage** nationally to \$10.10? Martin Luther King Jr. said in a 1968 speech, "What does it profit a man to be able to eat at an integrated lunch counter if he doesn't earn enough money to buy a hamburger and a cup of coffee?"

- The controversial artwork "School Days" by Linda Cunningham, which depicts classic '50s characters Dick and Jane and a handful of shell casings and was censored by the Emerald Art Center, is now on display at New Zone Gallery. The **censorship debate and the issue of gun violence** got national attention. Also getting national attention in gun-related news is Eugene's John Zerzan, anti-civilization theorist and host of *Anarchy Radio* on KWWA. Newtown shooter Adam Lanza may have called into Zerzan's show — a year before he killed 26 people — to talk about a chimp that had torn off a woman's face, according to *New York Daily News*, a media outlet that is known for its tabloid journalism.

- **Republicans in Multnomah County** planned a gun raffle for their Feb. 15 dinner in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Lincoln, both victims of gun violence. In response to this idiocy, the church that had rented space for the dinner canceled the rental. This week the Multnomah County GOP sent out a carefully worded press release, not even mentioning the gun raffle but apologizing "if people were hurt by the message being marred by insufficient wording and/or cynical misinterpretation by those who disagree with us politically." Huh? Adding to the GOP's insensitivity, the press release went on to talk about how "our freedom to defend our lives under the Second Amendment" is under attack, apparently as some kind of justification for the gun raffle. The Feb. 15 Lincoln Day dinner will go on, assuming a new venue can be found, and no assault rifles, handguns or armor-piercing bullets will be given out as raffle or door prizes.

Speaking of prizes, gun-packing crackpot Rafael Cruz will be event keynoter. The elder Cruz, father of Sen. Ted Cruz, is on record saying he'd like to send Obama "back to Kenya," Obama is "just like Castro" and gay rights is a government conspiracy to destroy families. The GOP keeps shooting itself in the foot, but the gun raffle brouhaha has a bright side: boosted raffle ticket sales. Crazy like Fox.

- Surprising **robocalls from Obama** rang into Eugene last week, and presumably other small U.S. cities, praising Hillary Clinton's job as secretary of state. After Obama's words of praise, another voice asked for dollars for her campaign for president in 2016. What's a president doing boosting a candidate for his job two years out? Not pretty.

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

NEWS

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offers strategies for social movement organizers to develop strong communities whose ultimate goal is liberation.

Walia will speak at a launch for her book, *Undoing Border Imperialism*, an event presented by UO's Multicultural Center, Survival Center and Native American Student Union. The book launch will take place at 7 pm Monday, Jan. 7, in McKenzie 240C on the UO campus, 12th Avenue and Kincaid Street.

Border imperialism is "the processes by which the violences and precarity of displacement and migration are structurally created as well as maintained," Walia writes. Four major structures are part of this definition: displacement and exclusion of migrating peoples, criminalization of migrants, entrenched hierarchy of status and state-legislated exploitation of migrant labor.

"It's important to understand immigration in the context of global border issues," says Paige Corich-Kleim, co-director of the Survival Center. This campus organization aims to provide support for different campaigns and activists, specifically those concerned with both social and environmental issues.

The organizers of the event want the community to know about the history of the land that today we call Eugene. The Willamette Valley was the traditional homelands of several Kalapuya tribes, but through the Willamette Valley Treaty of Jan. 22, 1855, most of the tribes ceded their land to the U.S. in exchange for certain rights. The peoples of these tribes were removed to the Grand Ronde Indian Reservation in 1856. Today, they keep a strong connection to their homelands as members of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.

After the event, which will include a presentation, Q&A and potential discussion, Walia and local contributors will be available for book signing. Books will be on sale for \$16-\$18, cash only. — *Carolina Reid*

CITY COUNCIL WORKING ON NEW FIREWORKS RULES

They're pretty, they're loud and they can be dangerous. The Eugene City Council has been discussing changes to fireworks rules for more than a decade, but when the council called for the Jan. 27 work session on the topic after a fireworks-induced blaze destroyed a home in July, the discussion pointed to problems getting worse.

Eugene Fire Marshall Al Gerard will present information about fireworks and safety to City Council at the work session. "Over my career, which started in 1991 in Springfield, I've seen a gradual but very steady increase in the use of illegal fireworks," he says. Oregon law prohibits fireworks that fly more than a foot into the air, with a fine of up to \$1,000 per violation. Washington law is more permissive, and some Oregonians travel north to purchase the illegal incendiaries.

Legal fireworks used correctly are less of a safety issue. "What we try to do is educate on proper techniques and safety usage of legal fireworks," Gerard says. "If proper procedures are followed, we have very little problem with legal fireworks. We do receive some complaints about noise."

"The problems we have with legal fireworks are inappropriate use," Gerard says. "Anybody who modifies a firework of any type is violating a federal law and manufacturing an explosive device."

Other complaints about fireworks center on noise, which can distress some animals, little kids and veterans. Legal fireworks can be sold each year June 23 through July 6, and Gerard says changing that time frame is something that City Council may consider.

EPD keeps records of the number of calls it receives about fireworks during the annual fireworks sales period. From 2009 to 2013, calls in the Eugene area numbered 174, 133, 214, 177 and 247, chronologically. Springfield calls numbered 40, 89, 84, 111 and 103. — *Shannon Finnell*

'I've seen a gradual but very steady increase in the use of illegal fireworks.'

— AL GERARD,
EUGENE FIRE MARSHALL



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