

busy chatting, someone brought it to your attention and you thanked them and went and picked it up. Not so much in Eugene.

People read, study, chat, run, sleep, play — but not a whole lot of poop being picked up despite bags, shovels and scoops being available. I was met with many dismissive, shrugging shoulders — not what I expected from Eugene — when I pointed out their dog had done its business, so I am not surprised to read stories of dog poop on sidewalks, trails and yards.

I live in the country. I pick up after my dogs here at home or at the beach because it is my responsibility!

Step up, pet owners, and clean up after your pet.

*Victoria Mahue  
Eugene*

## THE PEOPLE MUST LEARN

In response to Mika Scott's letter, "Will We Ever Learn?" (1/9): What we all must learn is that we do not live in a functioning democracy. As such, we cannot afford to wait, hope and plead that our legislators

and regulators will ever learn much about how to achieve sustainability.

Right now, we (the people) need to learn that our system of government and structure of laws are designed to benefit corporations and the relentless resource extraction that makes them profitable. Extensive corporate constitutional rights and privileges have been recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court over the past 200 years. The regulatory system's genesis came at the behest of railroad executives, not to curb corporate activities, but to buffer corporate interests from the rabble (that's us) that was demanding public accountability and government action to address corporate harms.

Sustainability means curtailing corporate activities that deplete our planet's resources and contaminate our water, air, soil and all life forms. Our government does not have the legal authority to pass laws that advance meaningful sustainability because existing corporate rights and privileges can have these laws declared unconstitutional. Yes, in many cases, protecting our communities and our planet is against current U.S. law.

We must come together as a community and frontally challenge the corporate rights that are more powerful than our individual rights and that prevent our communities from saying "no" to corporate harms.

Please come learn more about the burgeoning community rights movement at a presentation called "Changing the Game with Community Rights: A Democracy Workshop" with Kai Huschke of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF.org) from 6 to 9 pm Friday, Jan. 24, at LCC Downtown campus, Room 105.

*Ann B. Kneeland  
Eugene*

## THE FOLLY OF LOGGING

In about 1989 in Harris Hall in Eugene, I listened as Dr. Jerry Franklin forcefully discussed the dangers of global warming as part of his public presentation regarding federal forests. I was impressed and moved.

Today, Franklin and K. Norman Johnson are demonstrating "ecological" (their term) forestry by designing clear-cuts (with retention) of mature trees (circa

80-plus years) in federal forests.

But recent science emphasizes the imperative to sequester carbon in forests, which are the key terrestrial sink for carbon. Logging forests changes a powerful carbon sink into a source of greenhouse gas, CO<sub>2</sub>.

The sensitivity of the climate to a doubling of CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations, as seen in new scientific information, has risen and is now in a range of 3 to 5 degrees C. Projections of future warming are now much higher, with a likelihood of 4 degrees C (7.2 degrees F) by 2100 or earlier. Four degrees C is said to result in global unmanageability.

Logging any forest is folly; logging public forests is simply unacceptable.

I urge Franklin and Johnson to respect the science and keep public forests growing.

*Tom Giesen  
Eugene*

## RISING ABOVE NEIGHBORS

Could someone from the "sustainable" community who wants to fill in part of the Willamette River floodplain to put their house above flood level, and make

## MIC CHECK! BY ALLEY VALKYRIE

# If I Ran the Zoo

HOW TO IMPROVE DOWNTOWN EUGENE

Recently both *EW* and the *R-G* have been covering the problems facing downtown Eugene. Here are some changes I would make to improve the situation, focusing on inclusivity, safety and getting the most bang for the city's buck.

First, I would replace the Downtown Guides with a pedestrian team of CAHOOTS-style crisis-intervention workers. I would expect this change to have a quick effect, and it wouldn't cost the city a penny more.

Downtown property owners pay a Downtown Services District fee that funds the Guides program. The city gives some of this revenue, more than \$200,000 a year, to Downtown Eugene, Inc., to run the Guides program under contract. The Guides' main function is to move people along and call the police when folks don't comply.

Originally, the city funded the Guides to compensate for the lack of police downtown, back when there was only one officer. Downtown now has nine officers and a police station. Why spend \$200,000 a year on a security force that has a hostile relationship with street folks, when so many downtown problems involve behaviors that stem from mental illness and addiction? Security forces, such as the Guides, are inappropriate substitutes for trained professionals.

A patrol of people who are trained to deal with mental-health and addiction issues and that has a good relationship with the people they serve would do wonders in keeping downtown calm. This patrol would free up the police from having to act as social workers or as a crisis-intervention team.

I would also open a day center at 942 Olive St., a city-owned building next to the police station. Bradford's High Fidelity currently occupies this single-story building and the city has been trying to sell it for



a few years. Put in computers, couches, books, coffee, tea and sandwiches and, perhaps, a kennel in the back for dogs. Keep it open 24 hours a day for anyone who agrees to follow the rules. A center would take pressure off the library and Kesey Square and provide an invaluable nighttime resource for anyone on the streets who feels unsafe. Being right next to the police station will reduce the negative behaviors that might

otherwise occur inside or outside the building. I think the downtown police station, or a small police kiosk, should be open 24 hours a day.

More safe and legal places to sleep where people can also stay during the day would help. Right now, 50 unhoused people sleep and live at Whoville, many of whom would be downtown if not there. Long-term, we need more transitional housing, more SRO housing and a public shelter, not right downtown, but somewhere accessible to downtown.

We also need to mandate long-term treatment for addicts who commit crimes instead of putting them in our revolving-door jail that costs us a fortune. These things all cost money, but, long-term, they save money and they're better for all parties involved.

We need more shops downtown that attract a wider demographic of people. Bars and coffee shops are great, but I see a generational split — young people go downtown, but older folks still stay away because not much is there for them. And the downtown population could use a general goods store. I live downtown, and I have to go to Safeway if I want to buy a mop or trash bags.

And how about a micro-enterprise program targeting the youth downtown? It would give young people an activity, job skills and a potential source of income. Art vending is legal on the sidewalks downtown and in Kesey Square. A lot of panhandling youth would sell their art and poetry — not drugs — if they had a place to produce and to sell their work. Studies on homeless youth show that, if they have the opportunity, most will choose a legitimate way to make money instead of dealing. Street vending is a potent instrument to revitalize downtowns. Let's make Kesey Square a place for art vending, not for food carts. We have many half-empty and unused parking lots nearby, such as the one next to the Kiva; fill them with food carts instead.

Finally, put the benches back, for goodness' sake. Taking away benches does not displace the homeless. What it does is keep the elderly and mothers with children from coming downtown.

*Alley Valkyrie is a long-time social activist and a tireless advocate for the unhoused.*