

or sexually. In the survey, 19 percent of respondents reported being turned down for housing due to their gender expression.

“We see a lot of homelessness, particularly in young people,” Cleveland says. “They are asked to leave or feel like the safest thing to do is to leave the homes of their parents and guardians.” When that happens, she says, some people live on the streets and resort to unsafe survival tactics that further threaten their well-being.

While the amendment is partly a housekeeping measure to make Eugene’s code consistent with the state’s, advocates for transgender rights say that protections against discrimination in employment, housing and elsewhere are vital to protecting a group that experiences a lot of prejudice.

“This affirms to vulnerable populations within Eugene that the city of Eugene is there and supportive of this population,” Cleveland says. — *Shannon Finnell*

## CULTURAL BIAS IN THE COURTROOM

Cultural background can affect legal decisions in the courtroom. Alison Dundes Renteln, a professor of political science and anthropology at the University of Southern California will be speaking on minority rights and cultural bias in the courtroom in her talk “The Right to Culture as a Human Right: Religious Liberty, Gender Violence and the Cultural Defense,” at the UO Jan. 29.

Renteln says that in her opinion, actions that cause “inoperable harm” to another individual should not be changed due to cultural background. However, she says culture should help create the context in each case that is presided upon.

“I’ll be talking about a range of cases where people were motivated by cultural imperative or cultural considerations,” Renteln says.

Renteln, author of the book *The Cultural Defense*, specializes in discussing whether judges should take religion

as a defense in court cases and has been working the last 20 years to shine light on cultural bias in our legal system. For example, a baptized Sikh may be required to wear a ceremonial dagger called a kirpan as a symbol of religious commitment, but someone else might see a kirpan as a weapon, and that creates a cultural and possible legal conflict.

“It’s a question of how much adjustment should be made,” Renteln says. “I think we need to be flexible where we can, even if it’s beyond our comfort level.”

One of Renteln’s biggest accomplishments in creating more awareness is writing the article “Making Room for Culture in the Court,” which was published in *The Judges Journal* and received by every judge in the country.

Although she knows that not every person will agree with her on such a controversial subject, her goal, she says, is to get the conversation started.

“I’m hoping people will come away with an understanding of worldview and how that affects our legal system,” Renteln says.

Renteln’s free lecture, “The Right to Culture as a Human Right: Religious Liberty, Gender Violence and the Cultural Defense,” will be held at 3:30 pm Jan. 29 in the Ben Linder Room of the EMU at the UO. — *Kevin Sullivan*

## SOCIAL ACTIVIST HARSHA WALIA TO SPEAK AT UO

Author and social activist Harsha Walia is best known for co-founding the Vancouver chapter of the movement No One Is Illegal, a network of anti-racist groups that campaign for and represent non-resident immigrants. Her book explores immigrant rights movements through an international look at capitalism, labor exploitation, settler colonialism, state building and racialized empire. In it, she

CONTINUED P. 10 >>>

## ACTIVIST ALERT

- A film screening of *Ocean Frontiers* will begin about 5:45 pm Thursday, Jan. 23, at the UO School of Law, Room 175. Mayor Kitty Piercy will introduce the film and a panel of local experts will discuss the film at about 7 pm, followed by a reception. Live music, beer, wine and refreshments are planned. \$5 suggested donation. See [ocean-frontiers.org](http://ocean-frontiers.org) for more information.

- Local climate recovery activists and affiliated groups are forming a **new 350.org group** with a meeting at 7 pm Thursday, Jan. 23, at First United Methodist Church (small chapel), 1376 Olive St. Email [marydemocker@gmail.com](mailto:marydemocker@gmail.com) or call CALC at 485-1755.

- A three-hour “**Democracy School**” led by the Community Legal Defense Fund will be from 6 to 9 pm Thursday, Jan. 23, at Westminster House, 101 NW 23rd St. in Corvallis. RSVP to [dana@bentonCCRC.org](mailto:dana@bentonCCRC.org).

- A series of free workshops for trainers on “**Know Your Rights**” will begin from 1 to 4 pm Saturday, Jan. 25, at 214 McKenzie Hall on the UO campus. The series will continue at the same time Feb. 1 and Feb. 8. The series is open to anyone serious about learning to give training to others on exercising civil rights when interacting with police. Taught by Lauren Regan and sponsored by the Civil Liberties Defense Center, the Survival Center and the UO National Lawyers’ Guild. Bring a laptop and thumb drive to download materials. Email [lregan@cldc.org](mailto:lregan@cldc.org) or call 687-9180.

- A second public hearing on **Eugene city budget options** will be at 5:30 pm Tuesday, Jan. 28, at the Eugene Public Library (not Jan. 29 as we noted last week). Community members are being asked to respond to a list of Budget Committee options or suggest their own. Five of the six current options being put forward present different combinations of service reductions, while the sixth option calls for a citywide across-the-board reduction of 2 percent for all departments. See [eugene-or.gov/budget](http://eugene-or.gov/budget).

- The documentary *Take Back Your Power* will be shown free at 6:30 pm Wednesday, Jan. 29, at Tsunami Books, 2585 Willamette. Sponsored by Families for Safe Meters. Call 342-8461.

## LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY SCHEDULE

- Freres Timber Inc., (503) 859-2121, plans to hack and squirt unwanted trees on 160 acres near **Swartz Creek** with Polaris AC (Imazapyr). See ODF notice 2013-781-00610-C.

- Jason Klemp, 927-3118, plans to spray 5 acres near **Lake Creek and Triangle Lake School** for Dan Klemp, 927-3118, with 2,4-D Amine, 2,4-D Ester, Glyphosate and/or Imazapyr. See ODF notice 2014-781-00051.

Compiled by Jan Wroncy & Gary Hale, *Forestland Dwellers*: 342-8332, [www.forestlanddwellers.org](http://www.forestlanddwellers.org).

## lighten up

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

*Those who think the city has no plan for dealing with the Whoville homeless camp are wrong. The city has a well-thought-out plan. Step one is to let the camp operate for several months while keeping an eye on it. If only a few problems show up, close the camp down. For best results, close it before there is an alternative site available. This way 50 homeless people get dumped onto the downtown streets where they can get busy actually creating some problems. The beauty of it would impress Chris Christie.*



## HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL

### MIKE GRUDZIEN

“I started work as a bus boy when I was 14,” says Mike Grudzien, then a Catholic-school kid in Northwest Chicago. “I’ve never not worked.” A straight-A student, he pumped gas during high school, put in a year at Wright College, then joined the Marines. “I was looking for adventure and college benefits,” says Grudzien, who served on embassy security duty in Bucharest, Romania. He made sergeant in 22 months, but he left active duty to return to college and earned a master’s degree in advertising from the University of Illinois. He worked in ad marketing and in computer wholesale, then ventured into telecom after the breakup of Ma Bell. “In 15 years I worked for nine different companies,” says Grudzien, who moved to Eugene in 1995. “A thousand businesses knew me as Mike the phone guy.” During the past year he has become “Mike the Mead Guy,” national sales director for Blue Dog Mead of Eugene. “By the end of 2014 we’ll be in 20 states,” he notes. A dedicated community volunteer, Grudzien has served 30 hours at the Egan Warming Center this winter. He made his 100th blood donation earlier this month. Also a fitness buff, he does 1,000 crunches before 7 am every day, in the gym, at home or on the road. He plans to perform 12,000 crunches in a fundraiser for Womenspace on May 18. To learn more, look for Mike Grudzien on Facebook and LinkedIn.