

SLANT

• **Nearly a foot of snow** followed by an ice storm created chaos in Lane County this past weekend and shows us how unprepared we are for disasters large and small, whether brought about by climate or earthquakes. This week we heard an audit of the Oregon Office of Emergency Management indicated the agency has not completed its statewide disaster plan, among other deficiencies. We need to demand better performance from local, state and national agencies, but we also need to be better prepared in our neighborhoods for climate weirdness and seismic events. We've said this before but it's worth repeating: Get to know your neighbors, even the ones with obnoxious kids and furry critters that crap in your yard. Find out who has a wood stove, chainsaw, snow shovel, four-wheel drive, spare bedrooms, camping gear, extra food and water. Who has medical training and first aid supplies, booze and drugs? Who can provide emergency childcare? Resilience starts at home.

Meanwhile, kudos to **EWEB, EPUD, SUB** and other local crews, Public Works, police and fire personnel who have been working 24-7 to restore power, clear the streets and deal with other storm related emergencies. Some regional utilities also brought in crews and rigs from other cities and counties not affected by the storm. But not everybody is happy with EWEB's performance. Check out the utility's Facebook page to read numerous grumpy comments from people still shivering in the dark, days after the storm.

• A decision on **Civic Stadium** is expected at the 4J School Board meeting at 7 pm Wednesday, Feb. 19, and Fred Meyer is running ads and mailing flyers promising 250 jobs and \$8 million in wages and benefits. Maybe temporary construction jobs? Eugeneans will only buy so much food, clothing and plastic stuff from China. Boosting Eugene's tax base could create some government jobs and some folks from Veneta and Springfield might get hired at the store. But independent businesses nearby are likely to lose jobs. And Kroger/Fred Meyer is an Ohio company, so profits and the jobs related to those profits will say bye-bye Eugene, hello Cincinnati.

• **What's up with the budget?** The city will be tapping reserves again to fill the assumed \$3 million deficit in FY 2014, but is eyeing new revenue sources in FY 2015 and 2016. The city is quietly holding a series of five meetings of the Revenue Team of the Budget Committee and few people know about it. The first meeting had only one citizen in the audience. This subcommittee is similar to the odd Financial Investigative Team (FIT) that met last fall and was described by one observer as "3.5 hours of life wasted." This new panel is looking at some very limited proposals for increasing city revenues in the future, such as a business license fee and a motel/hotel tax. A personal income tax is *not* on the list, even though it might pass if it were to target only the highest earners in Eugene.

Some healthy brainpower is on this panel: John Barofsky, Ken Beeson, Jen Bell, Rob Bennett, Bob Clarke, Chelsea Clinton, Jill Featherstonhaugh, Gerry Gaydos, Dave Hauser, Deborah Noble, Andrea Ortiz, George Poling, Greg Rikhoff, Claire Syrett and Marty Wilde. The next meeting is 5:30 to 7:30 pm Thursday, Feb. 20, at the Atrium.

• Rumblyings from our neighbors to the south: What if California **Gov. Jerry Brown** runs for re-election and wins? What if he can hold his governorship and at the same time run against Hillary Rodham Clinton in the 2016 presidential primary. What if?

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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Meanwhile, local architect and historic preservation advocate Otto Poticha is moving forward to put the shuttered City Hall on the National Register of Historic Places. "I just got word last week that they thought it was meritorious and clearly they would recommend me going on to the next phase," Poticha says of the state Historic Review Board. "They did say that the National Historic Review board doesn't like reviewing things that might be torn down."

John Rowell of Rowell Brokaw says that tearing down the current structure will allow the firm to retain the elements City Council wants while making the building more energy efficient and cheaper to operate. One major change from the old building will be Rowell Brokaw's target for energy efficiency. The old City Hall used about 130 EUI (energy use intensity, a measure that normalizes for square footage) during its last seven years in use — including inefficient steam heat — and the firm's target for the new building is 30 EUI.

"The council made it really clear that what was supposed to be retained was the council chamber, public art and parking, to the degree possible," Rowell says. "What we found looking at reusing the existing structure is that there were a lot of the problems with that. They have to do with cost, the risk of using the structure, the fact that phase one needs are only 20,000 to 25,000 sq. ft. and we have 80,000 sq. ft. of building space."

"That's not what the citizens committee said, but that's what the council voted on," Poticha says. "It became fairly clear that staff and the city management needed flexibility, and that flexibility has now come." — *Shannon Finnell*

RADICALLY REIMAGINING THE ENVIRONMENT AT OSU

Using science and creative writing, OSU's "Transformation without Apocalypse" symposium will discuss different ways mankind can improve its relationship with the planet. The Spring Creek Project will host the symposium this weekend in Corvallis.

The symposium, which is free and open to the public, will feature keynote speakers such as Tim DeChristopher, who is known for sabotaging a 2008 auction of public lands in Utah, authors Ursula K. Le Guin and Kim Stanley Robinson and philosopher, author and co-founder of the Spring Creek Project Kathleen Dean Moore, who will talk Saturday morning about different scenarios of combating climate change.

"I'm going to start by saying that we are going to be the writers of the story of this decade," Moore says, "a decade that is critical to this planet." She says that her "suggestion is to make it a love story."

Moore says that she hopes her talk will provide "hope and determination and a little bit of strategy" to her guests.

"We know our keynote speakers are going to knock people's socks off, make their hair stand on the back of their necks and leave them inspired and go home and think, 'Man, what can I do to help change the future?'" Spring Creek Project Director Charles Goodrich says.

The symposium will also offer workshops where guests will be able to take the ideas they learn and engage them with their community. Over 30 environmental and social justice groups will be tabling and providing activities so that guests can use "radical reimagining" when it comes to the environment.

"We hope everyone will go home with connections that will help them stay involved and put their shoulders to the wheel," Goodrich says.

The symposium begins at 1 pm Friday, Feb. 14, at the LaSells Stewart Center C&E Hall and at 10 am Saturday, Feb. 15, at the center's Austen Auditorium. For more information and to register for workshops go to wkly.ws/1or. — *Kevin Sullivan*



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