

SLANT

• The city of Eugene spent **\$20,000 to remove a low ledge** at the corner of Broadway and Willamette where people often stopped to sit, people with “undesirable behaviors” according to a recent KVAL news story on the wall’s demolition. KVAL quoted a business owner as saying the wall was a “magnet for drug dealing, and drug use, alcoholism.” The city is apparently looking to replace the wall with bike racks ... or, interestingly enough, seating. Let’s start with the fact that places to sit are a needed part of the urban environment. Next, we wonder if there isn’t a better way to spend \$20,000 to improve downtown than tearing down a wall? (It did wonders for Berlin, but this is Eugene.) Finally, does the city have a plan for building urban seating that magically repels alcoholism and drug use? If so, there’s money to be made there.

• Where will the **Winter Olympics** be held in 20 years? Or 40 years? The outdoor events do require a certain chill factor. A recent report by *The Daily Climate* shows that the five sites in contention for the 2022 Olympics, Almaty, Kazakhstan; Beijing, China; Krakow, Poland; Lviv, Ukraine; and Oslo, Norway, could all be at the upper half of the hottest weather records they’ve seen over the 150 years if something isn’t done to curb greenhouse gas emissions. And the snowboarders think the snow is slushy now?

• **Good news for Dawn Lesley** that Jack Roberts has endorsed her candidacy for the Lane County Commission. A former commissioner himself, Roberts has long been a leader of Oregon Republicans, especially the moderates. Lesley is a Democrat, also a moderate, but her opponent, Commissioner Jay Bozievich, is a Tea Party R. Maybe this means Oregon moderate Republicans are joining the struggle across the country to take back their party.

Maybe it simply means that Lesley, a well-educated engineer who is new to politics, is the best candidate. She is.

• Some good news from **Douglas County**. The Friends of Mildred Kanipe Park has signed an agreement with Douglas County commissioners to hopefully nix the commissioners’ proposals to build roads and log in the much-loved county park. (See this column Jan. 16.) The nonprofit needs to raise \$65,000 by July 31 to pay for a campground in the park, but we hear that figure is not an unreasonable goal. This agreement shows what a small group of dedicated volunteers can do in a conservative county where chainsaws rule.

• Gov. Jerry Brown of California is **too old to run for president!** That’s one response we got last week after suggesting that he could win re-election in California, hold the governorship and run against Hillary in 2016, at least pushing her to the left. Born in 1938, Brown will be 78 in 2016 and 82 four years later. As this country ages, 78 could be the new 68.



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

lighten up

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

The latest Republican charge against Obamacare is that it will make people lazy. That’s speculation. What we already know is that just the thought of Obamacare has made conservatives crazy.

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Malcolm X and the Lure of Post-racialism



Assessing the ‘Nightmare’ 50 Years Later

Thursday, Feb. 27, 4 p.m.
Knight Library Browsing Room

Featuring **Saladin Ambar**, assistant professor of political science at Lehigh University. His most recent book is *Malcolm X at Oxford Union: Racial Politics in a Global Era*.

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