

## LANE COUNTY REPUBLICANS SHIFT LEADERSHIP

Thanks to a disagreement over Robert's Rules of Order, the Lane County Republicans have recently acquired new leadership in the form of chair, vice-chair and secretary to fill the seats of Paul Barnett, Bill Young and Kristy Cooper, who have all resigned. This split happened as the races heat up for three Lane County Commission seats in the May primary.

New Republican Chair Matthew Nelson describes the debate as "a yearlong power struggle essentially between a small group of far-right Republicans." He says, "To be honest, it was pretty intense."

Nelson says despite the disagreements, he valued the former leadership. "I'm very thankful for the work and dedication that they gave," he continues.

This local split echoes another divide at the statewide Republican level. Social conservatives skipped the annual Republican Dorchester Conference, where attendees voted on March 8 to endorse a pro-gay marriage ballot measure, and instead held a separate gathering.

However, Nelson did not think the happenings at the Dorchester Conference are a concern. "Dorchester is a conference for moderate Republicans. That's literally the theme of the conference," he says.

County Commissioner races are nonpartisan but fundraising and campaigning tend to occur along party lines. Nelson thinks that voters speaking out about what they want in elected officials will determine the county commissioner races over anything else.

"I don't think our elections, or their resignations, are going to affect [the county commissioner race] to be perfectly honest," Nelson says.

In an opinion piece in the *R-G* March 29, Nelson explained that he wanted to change the "Grand Old Party" to the "Great Opportunity Party." "What I want to do is focus on issues that are important to the community and communicate them better," Nelson wrote.

Vice Chair of Lane County Democrats Chris Wig says that it is too early to tell whether Nelson's leadership will make Republicans stronger or weaker.

"Until the Republicans are able to convince the voters of [their vision of the future], I'm not really interested in the PR piece or who are today's Republicans," Wig says.

In the *R-G* piece, Nelson writes that a "fresh" Republican perspective means Republicans who bike to work, eat "their healthy sustainable lunch at Café Yumm" and fight against unconstitutional legislation.

Wig says that he does not doubt that Republican individuals come from all walks of life. "I think it's important to look at what our candidates stand for and what our platforms stand for," Wig says. — *Kevin Sullivan and Camilla Mortensen*

## UNHOUSED TO SPEAK ON HUMAN RIGHTS PANEL

Unhoused Eugeneans will speak at a panel during an April 7 event that the Eugene Human Rights Commission's (HRC) Homelessness Work Group hopes will help deconstruct stereotypes people commonly apply to the homeless.

Six people who currently reside at Whoville, Opportunity Village Eugene and the city-approved rest stop at the intersection of Garfield and Roosevelt Streets will respond to a prompt and then answer questions from the audience.

"I hope at this event that we're hearing the voices of the homeless, but they're not going down a well," homeless rights advocate and work group member Jennifer Frenzer-Knowlton says. "They're going into a framework that says this is a human rights issue."

Human Rights Commissioner Ken Neubeck says he hopes to hear panelists share how they became homeless, experiences they've had since becoming homeless and why they should be sheltered where they currently live. He says diversity in panelists is important.

"My other concern was that we have not just the old men, but we have some women too," Neubeck says. "Because one of the stereotypes we're trying to break down is that heterogeneous lump — transients."

Panelists and organizers hope local public officials and Eugene Police Department staff will attend.

"There's areas where Eugene has done some really great things and then there's areas where they almost are misinformed," Frenzer-Knowlton says.

She wants this event to give unhoused citizens, homeless rights advocates, community members and elected officials a place to start forming a productive human rights framework — one that is focused on problem solving.

Members of the unhoused community will perform music and display their art. Photographs of Whoville residents will be projected onto a wall as part of a work titled "Who's Who of Whoville."

HRC member Richie Weinman says he wants the public to know the goal of the event is not to keep Whoville, which Eugene City Council decided will close by April 15, or earlier, open.

"I don't see them coming together and changing their mind on this at the last minute," Weinman says. "The council's already pretty much swallowed the pill on this one."

Twelve advocates for the unhoused were arrested April 1 after refusing to leave Eugene City Manager Jon Ruiz's office without speaking to him about the city's planned Whoville closure.

"Voices of the Homeless: A Town Meeting" will take place from 6:30 to 8:30 pm Monday, April 7, at First Christian Church, 1166 Oak St. — *Missy Corr*

*'I hope at this event that we're hearing the voices of the homeless.'*

— JENNIFER  
FRENZER-KNOWLTON



**Sustainable Cottage Grove** and the Oregon Food Bank are holding a community event called FEAST [Food, Education, Agriculture, Solutions, Together] from 10 am to 4 pm Saturday, April 5, at the Cottage Grove Community Center, 700 E. Gibbs. The event focuses on promoting and supporting local food systems. Numerous panel discussions and speakers are planned for the free event, looking at "building a secure local food system so our local community can thrive no matter what the future brings." Those participating are asked to bring a fresh food item that can be added to a "stone soup" and salad lunch. Call (503) 703-2198 or email [Thornberry@oregonfoodbank.org](mailto:Thornberry@oregonfoodbank.org).

**Belly Restaurant** at 30 E. Broadway is holding its inaugural "Astrologically Feasting" evening from 5 to 9 pm Sunday, April 6. The event, featuring a Cajun buffet and New Orleans cocktails, is a benefit for the **WJ Skatepark + Urban Plaza** being constructed under the Washington-Jefferson Bridge. Tickets are \$36, \$39 at the door and 30 percent of proceeds will go to the skatepark, which will open at 3 pm April 4 with a grand opening celebration June 21. Call 863-5896. Find updates on WJ Skatepark on Facebook, along with notes about other businesses such as Falling Sky, Hop Valley, Oakshire, Tactics, Ambrosia and Wandering Goat that are also fundraising.

**Rabbit Games**, Eugene's newest independent game development studio (founded in August 2013), is a husband-and-wife team of Roger and Amy Billingslee, who are about to release their first game this week, *Cafeteria Clash*. In the game, "it's your first day at your new school and it's not what you were expecting," says game designer Roger Billingslee. "Every day at lunch there are massive food fights, with the whole student body participating. Arm your friends with powerful foods so they can defend you, and keep your reign going for as long as possible!" He says *Cafeteria Clash* "mixes classic Tower Defense gameplay with TCG elements." Find a demo of the free web-based game on Facebook at [wkly.ws/1pw](http://wkly.ws/1pw). The Billingslees earlier produced the *Keep Battles* game before forming Rabbit Games. *Keep Battles* was downloaded by more than 200,000 players on iOS and Android.

We went looking for John Tibbetts of **Art's Watch and Jewelry Repair** at Fred Meyer on River Road, but he's no longer there. He's one of the few people around who can change batteries in Swiss Army watches and some other tricky timepieces. He's moved to a nice new store this winter at the Village Plaza Market Place across from Kendall Honda on Goodpasture Island Road. Tibbetts has expanded his repair shop to offer watches and locally made jewelry. His phone number is 689-2481. Another, much larger shop that does difficult watch battery replacements and repairs is the **Clockmaker's Gallery** at 987 Garfield, just off West 11th. Phone number is 687-0192, [clockmakersgallery.com](http://clockmakersgallery.com).

**Global Delights** is expanding and changing its name to Arabella, named after Arabella Drummond, the infamous female pirate of the 1700s. Global Delights is a local coffee-roasting company that currently has a drive-up coffee shop at 1038 River Road and hopes to open a café soon along with a mobile kiosk in a VW bus. Call 689-2518.

The **Lane County Cultural Coalition** is looking to fill three committee positions, representing the districts of West Lane County, North Eugene and East Lane County. The committee evaluates grant applications for Oregon Cultural Trust funds. Applications are due April 15. Email [kuri.gill@oregon.gov](mailto:kuri.gill@oregon.gov) or call (503) 986-0685.

**South Eugene Robotics Team** and its two alliance members "overcame all odds, wrangling home the second place trophy for the first time in history in FIRST's FRC Robotics Competition 2014," according to team member Sophia Dossin. The Wilsonville, Ore., event March 21-22 featured competition from all over the Pacific Northwest. The team will be competing again April 4-5 at Gil Coliseum on the OSU campus. See [wert2521.com](http://wert2521.com).

## WTF?

Reader and Emerald City Roller Girls fanatic James Brains tells us he's puzzled by this peculiar gate sign on his morning jog behind the Lane County Fairgrounds. What's the purpose of the sign? It's there even when the gate is open. "That's some fine use of our tax dollars," he quips.



Email your WTF? submissions to [editor@eugeneweekly.com](mailto:editor@eugeneweekly.com) or drop off a print photo to be scanned at our offices.