

ACTIVIST ALERT

- “**Building Equity and Inclusion** at the UO and Beyond” is the topic at City Club of Eugene at noon Friday, April 11, at the Downtown Athletic Club, 999 Willamette. Speaker is Yvette Alex-Assensoh, VP for equity and inclusion at UO. See CityClubofEugene.org.

- The annual **Bee Weekend** will be from 9 am to 5 pm Friday, April 11, and from 9 am Saturday, April 12, at GloryBee Factory Store, 29548 B Airport Rd., directly off Highway 99. During the two-day event, more than 700 packages of bees will be placed with local beekeepers. The event also includes demonstrations, honey sampling and family-themed activities. Call Kristin at 689-0913, ext. 181, or email Kristin.Kokkeler@glorybee.com.

- County Commission candidate **Kevin Matthews** will be available for an informal discussion from 8 to 10 am Saturday, April 12, at the Pantry & Pub Restaurant, 1810 Chambers St. Call 514-4766 or visit FriendsOfKevinMatthews.org.

- **Community Rights Lane County** will host the third monthly Community Rights Conversations from 3 to 4:30 pm Saturday, April 12, at LCC Downtown, Room 105. Topic will be “The Myth of the Regulatory System: Why Government Agencies *Won't* Protect Us.” Materials at communityrightslanecounty.org.

- The 25th Annual **Shy Persons Talent Show** and fundraiser for David Oaks will be from 6 to 9 pm Saturday, April 12, at Sam Bond's Garage. A sliding scale donation of \$5 to \$500 is requested. Email shypersonstalentshow@gmail.com to participate, or if you are too shy, consider a donation through supportdavidoaks.org.

- **On tax day April 15** at the downtown Post Office, 520 Willamette, a broad coalition of peace, justice and labor activists have organized a series of actions calling on Congress to redirect war dollars to fight climate change, fund education, job creation, universal health care and other vital services. Events begin at 11 am with the annual “Penny Poll,” inviting passersby to allocate where they would want their taxes to go. At noon will be a rally with speaker Kelsey Juliana and music. Sponsored by CALC, ESSN, WAND, Taxes for Peace, Not War, IWW and Veterans for Peace. Contact CALC at 485-1755 or calcpeace@gmail.com.

- **Grupo Latino de Acción Directa** is hosting a panel with all five of the candidates running for the East Lane County commissioner position at 5:30 pm Thursday, April 17, at Cesar E. Chavez Elementary School, 200 N. Monroe St.

POLLUTION UPDATE

The city of Eugene sent a “request for corrective action” letter to **Gibson Steel Fab, Inc.** last month for various Clean Water Act violations, citing Gibson for deficiencies in employee education and monthly inspections, storing several hazardous materials without secondary containment and failing to contain overspray from painting operations so as to prevent it from coming into contact with stormwater. All these violations were characterized by the city as “significant violations of Oregon environmental law.” Stormwater from Gibson's facility discharges to Amazon Creek. The city also sent a second notice to **Oregon Ice Cream Company** last week due to its failure to respond to the city's previous notice [EW 4/3, goo.gl/fYaGc2] within 30 days.

Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project

lighten up

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

The Eugene City Council won't be nominated for a Mother Teresa award this year. A few days ago the city tore down a functioning homeless camp — before having an alternative site available — and dumped the camp's desperate residents on the street. The technical term for the thinking behind such a move is DUMB, DUMB, DUMB. Don't we already get enough dumb from the Supreme Court?

NEWS

BIAS REPORTS MAY NOT REFLECT ACTUAL NUMBERS

Fifty-five bias-related incidents were reported to Eugene's Equity and Human Rights Center (EHRC) in 2013 — an increase of four reports from last year. Equity and Human Rights Analyst Lindsey Foltz says a lot of bias-related activity is unreported, in part because of a lack of trust of the government or police.

She says she received a report in 2013 that “would have been an assault, and maybe even an assault with a potentially deadly weapon. So, it's a fairly serious crime. But she absolutely did not want to go to the police — she did not feel safe sharing with them.”

In those cases, Foltz shares general non-identifying things with police but no personal information or location of incident.

“It made sense why she didn't want to,” Foltz says. “But at that same time, it's like, ‘Oh, I wish you would.’ Because there's still that person out there who could do that to someone else.”

Foltz says some people will tell her they have experienced incidents previously, which they have not reported.

Juan Carlos Valle, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens, is certain there are unreported incidents. He says minorities often lack trust in governments or police.

“Some who have grown up in this community have gone through that experience,” Valle says, “or we bring that from other communities.”

Race was the most commonly reported reason for bias-related incidents, accounting for 42 percent of criminal incidents and 56 percent of non-criminal incidents in 2013.

Reports are categorized based on race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, association, sexual orientation or disability.

There were 13 reports of incidents motivated by sexual identity — more than double the amount reported in 2012.

“I don't know that there's more of it going on. It's just hard to say,” EHRC Manager Michael Kinnison says. “I think we're also getting better at the reporting parts of it.”

He attributes the increase in part to the department working more closely with Eugene Police Department.

“We just think that officers are probably being more efficient in flagging and routing bias crimes,” Kinnison says. “That could also produce higher numbers.” — *Missy Corr*



PHOTO BY ATHENA DELENE

WHOVILLE SHUTDOWN SCATTERS CAMPERS

The city of Eugene paid 60 staff members to shut down the Whoville homeless camp on the corner of Broadway and Hilyard streets April 4 — a move that campers and homeless rights advocates say put many of the Whoville residents back on the streets alone.

“They've taken old, they've taken veterans, they've taken everybody who has a problem, said ‘You have to go,’ instead of giving them a place to sleep at night and giving them some sort of peace of mind,” Whoville camper Jacob Baird says.

Whoville camper and organizer Nathan “Red” Showers says the Whoville campers are like a family and many of them relied on the emotional support, on-site warming center and food donations available at the camp.

“It was all donations from churches and organizations that support us. They paid for tons of propane that we went through,” Showers says. “It was beautiful how many people were just out there, ready and willing. We need another chance.”

A traffic advisory issued by EPD Public Information Director Melinda McLaughlin says quality-of-life crimes and calls for police service have increased around Whoville. Calls about traffic hazards and crashes near the site have increased and nearby businesses have also reported a decrease in business and an increase in anti-social behavior.

“It gets a little sketchy and hairy sometimes,” says Baird, who has been at Whoville since September. “But for the most part it's a good place. There's good people there.”

The Egan Warming Center was open for two nights following the closure of Whoville.

“You got all these people that are back on the streets,” Baird says. “So what was that one night or two nights worth, ultimately? Nothing.”

City of Eugene Community Relations Director Jan Bohman says the city sent 60 staff members from Eugene Police Department, Public Works, Facilities, Operations and other departments to clear Whoville because advocates told them 50 people were camping there.

“Staff estimates there were actually approximately 19 people on the site at 9 am this [Friday] morning,” Bohman writes.

Whoville camper Megan Ludwig says she was told she would be able to leave to store some of her belongings, then return to gather the rest.

“When I came back, there were two bulldozers,” Ludwig says. “They were all gone — all my friends, all the people. The cops that I had talked to were gone.”

Ludwig says she was left without clothes, a blanket or a tent. “They told us it's at the police impound and we can go pick it up eventually. But if you go look at Whoville, there's Dumpsters full of tarps and bikes. Tell me they put everything in storage — bullshit.”

Ludwig's boyfriend was one of three arrested Friday at Whoville. He was released from jail on Monday.

“For three days I've been alone,” Ludwig says. “They didn't just take my shit. They took my boyfriend and my sense of security, you know. I've been alone out there.”

Community Alliance of Lane County Community Organizer Michael Carrigan says the city wasted a tremendous amount of money shutting down Whoville. “Money that could have been spent building a safe place for people to be, instead of tearing one down,” he says. — *Missy Corr*