

SLANT

thing that's calcified is the *R-G's* perspective from the outskirts of town. There's no doubt the celebration, even with its flaws, is much loved in the region, as demonstrated by the immediate community response to fill the void left by Kesey Enterprises. Creative ideas are being vetted and many of them make sense, particularly a focus on local music talent. It's clear some kind of celebratory weekend is coming the weekend of Aug. 22 and/or when the students return in late September. Meanwhile, it is curious that the City Council and city manager were apparently not consulted about the celebration being canceled.

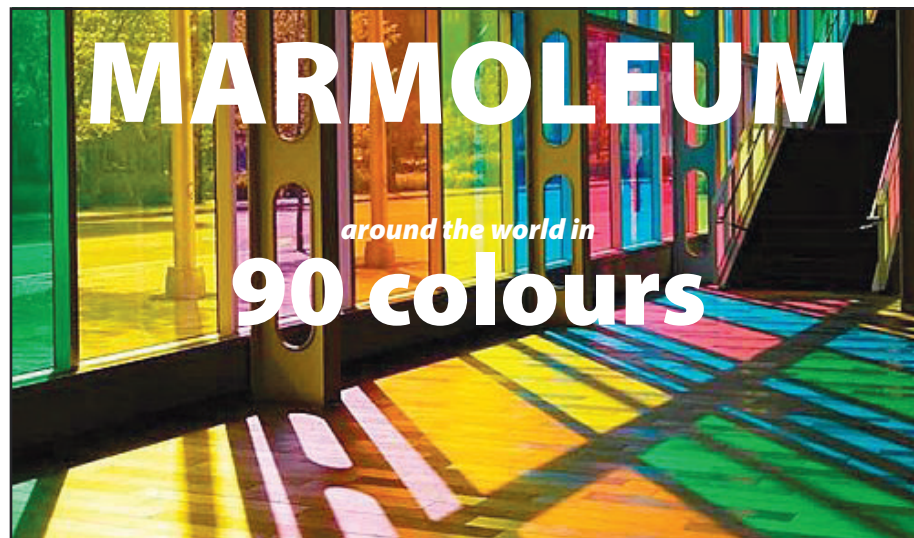
- Makes us proud that **McKenzie Funk** grew up in Eugene. One of the leading writers in the U.S. on the global environment, he spoke at the Eugene Public Library June 5 about the issues in his new book *Windfall*, which looks at some of the international conflicts and profits unfolding from global climate change, raising fascinating and tough questions. When he talked about climate change in this country, we heard that too-familiar story about the rich-poor gap. For instance, some major U.S. insurance companies are forming their own fire-fighting teams to save mansions in jeopardy from climate change. Why are we surprised!

- **The VA medical system** is getting bashed and heads are rolling, but the Eugene VA Clinic has a highly professional and dedicated staff, from what we've heard and experienced. The clinic's phone lines are often busy, but the doctors and their nurses respond to web-based emails, prescriptions can be ordered online and are delivered quickly by mail, lines for lab tests are short and appointments are not excessively delayed. Any local vets out there who have had different experiences? Despite its problems, the VA provides medical care relatively efficiently and inexpensively, a source of irritation to those who despise socialized medicine. It's ironic that Congress authorizes massive debts for bloody, maiming wars but underfunds the VA and education for doctors and nurses — a shortage not only at the VA but also for the growing number of patients who now have insurance under Obamacare.

- **Here's a crazy idea:** Let's start a write-in campaign. The Lane County Commission races were disappointing for progressive candidates with the final vote counts barely avoiding run-offs. But the primary only determines whose name goes on the November ballot when the turnout will be much larger. Jay Bozievich squeaked by with 7,708 votes, beating Dawn Lesley by just 25 votes. Could a write-in campaign for Lesley this fall change the final outcome? Bozievich's win represents a minority of eligible voters. Back in November 2010, more than 30,000 voters cast ballots in that same district race, and the same can be expected in November. Likewise, Faye Stewart was elected with only 6,998 votes and as we go to press we hear the Oregon secretary of state's office says Stewart's seven-vote lead has triggered an automatic recount.

- **New climate hazards** including shrinking and restless glaciers are threatening mountaineering guides and their clients. That's what the deaths on Everest and Rainier tell us this spring. Extreme climate change will even affect fishing guides and their clients in our region, to say nothing of much deadlier consequences around the world. Climate change deniers will disagree. But we are applauding President Obama's recent climate initiatives, however late and minimal they may be. And we are pleased to see the May 31 episode of *Cosmos* with Neil deGrasse Tyson debunking climate deniers in a visually compelling analysis. Missed it? Watch it online at cosmosontv.com.

- Check our website this week for an **additional column from architect Jerry Diethelm** outlining the pros and cons of various City Hall options, and his preferred alternative.



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1 PASS is nontransferable.
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