

Most contractors in Lane County are happy to provide would-be customers with their license number from the Construction Contractors Board (CCB), and many contractors even include it on their business cards. But that information might be out of date or just wrong. If you hire a contractor who is unlicensed and things go wrong, it can get very expensive. See our 2008 cover story “Cutting Corners” in our archives at wkly.ws/1s9. You can check the CCB website and see the status of contractors, but now it’s even easier. Just text the contractor’s CCB number to [503] 444-8898 and you will get a message back verifying whether the contractor is licensed and can legally do work in Oregon. The state website at Oregon.gov provides more information about complaints, disciplinary actions, bankruptcy, etc.

Saturday Market and Farmers Market will, of course, be open during the Oregon Country Fair. Sounds like the market crew gets that question a lot. Saturday can be crowded at the Fair, and temps in Veneta are predicted to be pushing 90, but Saturday Market is always cool. See the market’s music lineup at eugen Saturdaymarket.com.

The nonprofit **League of United Latin American Citizens** (LULAC) of Lane County installed its new Youth Council in a ceremony July 7 at Harris Hall. The purpose of the council, the first in Oregon, is to “create a nurturing peer-supported environment for Latin@s of middle school, high school and college age, and encourages them to stay in school and develop their leadership skills,” says Juan Carlos Valle, president of the council. “The LULAC Youth Councils provide youth with a positive alternative to gangs, violence and dropping out of school.” See lulaclanecounty.org or call 337-6294.

A free session on “How to **Create and Protect Business and Product Names**” will be at 6 pm Thursday, July 10, at the Eugene Public Library downtown. Speaker will be Frank Plaisted who will talk about trademarks and trade names and how to use them. Sponsored by the LCC Small Business Development Center and SCORE. Call 682-5450 for information on this and other free clinics for small business.

The next free ride for **Cycling for Veterans** is the Row River Trail in Cottage Grove on Saturday, July 12. The ride starts at 10 am at the Mosby Creek Trailhead, riding to the end of the trail and back, a distance of approximately 25 miles. The ride is open to veterans, their adult friends and family members. Participants are encouraged to bring their own water, food and snacks. RSVP to Ree McSween at 337-3710 or email cyclingforveterans@gmail.com.

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

The cover story “The Glass Menagerie” [6/26] stated incorrectly that local company Glass Prodigy manufactures glass sex toys. Glass Prodigy does sell locally made glass sex toys but does not manufacture them. See glassprodigy.com for cute little glass dildo pictures.

NEWS



LANE COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICERS CUT LOOSE A PROTESTER LOCKED DOWN TO A TRUCK DUMP AT SENECA'S BIOMASS PLANT

PHOTO: CAMILLA MORTENSEN

EARTH FIRST! PROTEST SHUTS DOWN SENECA

With banners reading “Buy the Elliott State Forest, Expect Resistance” and “Stop this ecocide,” protesters organized by Earth First! and Cascadia Forest Defenders descended upon Seneca Sustainable Energy on the morning of July 7 to call attention to what they say is the company’s pollution in a low-income area and clearcut logging in the Elliott State Forest.

A group of protesters entered the biomass-burning plant in the morning, dropping a banner and locking themselves down to a conveyor belt and a truck dump, temporarily shutting the plant down, according to Forest Defender Cordelia Finley. Dozens of protesters (police estimated as many as 100) chanted and held signs outside.

Three activists that entered the plant were later arrested according to the Lane County Sheriff’s Office (LCSO), one of the many agencies that responded to the protesters. Ben Jones, Richard Hayley and Chad Kemp of Eugene were arrested on charges including trespass and disorderly conduct.

Sgt. Greg Rice of the LCSO says 18 county staff members responded to the protest. The Eugene Police Department also sent officers and vehicles, as did the fire department and Oregon State Police. EPD spokeswoman Melinda McLaughlin says the agency sent 45 units because the protest was “initially reported to be more than 200 protesters fighting with employees,” the scope of the property and “the unpredictable nature of large group protests.”

Finley calls the Seneca-Jones companies “bad neighbors” for the plant’s emissions of air toxins into the West Eugene community and its nearby schools. She says Seneca is also a bad neighbor for its role in the privatization of the Elliott State Forest. The state of Oregon has begun selling parcels of the public forest and Seneca-Jones Timber purchased 788 acres called East Hakki Ridge, Finley says,

not only shutting the land down to recreation but also endangering the federally protected marbled murrelets that Coast Range Forest Watch documented as nesting in the trees. Cascadia Wildlands and other environmental groups have sued over the timber sale.

Seneca-Jones co-owner Kathy Jones (or as the company calls them, one of the “Jones girls”) raised hackles when she told *The Oregonian* that the company didn’t need the timber from East Hakki and submitted the bid because “eco-radical” environmental groups had promised lawsuits to protect the marbled murrelet.

Todd Payne, Seneca’s general manager, says, “this is a radical group of activists who are obstructing the everyday activities of working Oregonians at a family-owned business.”

Interaction between protesters and law enforcement was largely peaceful, and the protest was watched over by legal observers from the National Lawyers Guild and the Eugene-based Civil Liberties Defense Center. The protest concluded after the protesters locked down in the plant were cut loose and arrested and law enforcement told the outside protesters to clear the street or risk being cited for trespass.

Lauren Regan of the CLDC, who observed the protest, says, “Public right-of-ways are protected First Amendment areas and cops can’t just clear the streets because they feel like it, and no one in the public demonstration was doing anything illegal — just peacefully exercising First Amendment rights.”

Rice says protesters “cannot block the flow of traffic and block the entrances to businesses.” While protesters did gather at Seneca’s gates, they stayed off the roadway and it was the police who set up roadblocks on each end of East Enid Road.

Regan commented that perhaps “Seneca-Jones should build a free speech zone outside their facility because the public is outraged at the threats to human health and detrimental climate impacts caused by their profit-driven actions and lawful protests are sure to be a regular occurrence at the plant.” — *Camilla Mortensen*

BUDGET CUTS TRIM PARK SERVICES

Fiscal year 2014 went out with a bang in Eugene July 1 and took park bathrooms, irrigation, trash service and jobs with it. Restrooms at three parks — Hendricks, Sheldon and Sladden — will close and neighborhood parks will see less watering and garbage pick-up, as \$300,000 in reductions to park maintenance set in.

Eugene’s City Council approved the cuts June 9 as part of a balancing act to fill a \$1.9 million deficit in the city’s general fund.

Neighborhood parks will be watered 75 percent less often and mowed half as frequently, according to a notice on the city’s website. Trash cans will be emptied two days per week less in parks that previously had trash service between five and seven days each week. The budget also eliminates two recently vacant park maintenance jobs.

“Because previous cuts have already reduced maintenance to below intended service levels, the impacts of this year’s reductions will likely be more noticeable,” the notice states.

City of Eugene Park Operations Manager Scott Milovich says the restrooms were chosen for closure because they’re near other restrooms. He says one bathroom will remain open at Hendricks Park; 21 bathrooms will remain open in the 78 neighborhood and community parks maintained by Parks and Open Spaces.

Jean Stacey, a local homeless rights advocate and member of SLEEPS (Safe Legally Entitled Emergency Places to Sleep), is organizing a protest — spurred by the park restroom closures — against what she says is an example of the city’s “mixed up priorities.” The dissent could take the form of protesters sitting next to large piles of manure bags or pulling toilets, labeled as the three parks, in wagons downtown as a penny tossing game.

“Keeping a bathroom open is not a huge budget item,” Stacey says. “And [SLEEPS] believe there are many things that are being done that are not as essential to the public health and safety as this is.”

Stacey says she hopes the protest will occur before the next City Council meeting July 14. “All of us in the public need to start communicating with our councilors,” Stacey says. “And that’s why we’re doing these things.”

The new fiscal year also brings less hours at the downtown library — which now opens at 1 pm on Sundays, rather than 10 am — and promises less funding for neighborhood newsletters, \$50,000 less in recreation program scholarships for low-income individuals and families and an increase in some recreation program fees.

To get involved in the protest, Stacey suggests participating in an independent act of opposition or emailing contact@eugeneSLEEPS.org. — *Missy Corr*