

MISTAKEN IMPRESSION

To the Eugene mayor and council: I'm very much in favor of Eugene building a new City Hall, but I don't believe you have to waste the present building's combined economic and historical worth in the process to do it.

I also don't think Eugeneans presently understand or would approve of the total cost commitment of your two-phase, headquarters-hindquarters concept if they did.

Most people I've talked to are under the mistaken impression that they are getting a new City Hall for \$15 million. They don't realize it's just a down payment and will require another \$25 million to \$40 million second phase office building connected behind the new building to bring back and house the city services that are now spread out in leased space downtown to support private development.

They don't realize that without buying that Phase II, the City Hall project ends up all hat and no cattle, all honey and no hive, and carries the continued burden of leased space that needs to be able to become more economically productive.

I think it's time to step back from awarding each other cedar plaques and make sure the community understands the magnitude of the costs and long-term commitments they are being asked to make.

If we buy the honey, we're on the hook for the hive.

Jerry Diethelm
Eugene architect

OUR BROKEN SYSTEM

On Sept. 15 ShelterCare's Royal Avenue Program (RAP) is closing. Located at Highway 99 and Royal Avenue, for 28 years RAP has provided crisis respite services to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis whose needs are severe enough to warrant being in a supervised, therapeutic environment, but not severe enough to warrant prolonged hospitalization.

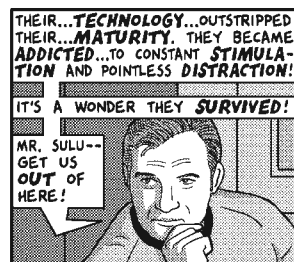
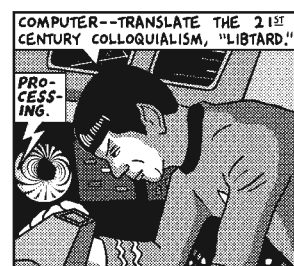
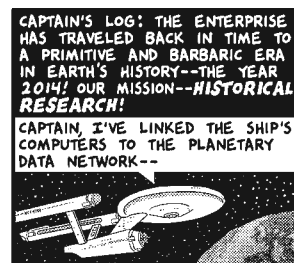
For hospital mental health staff, RAP has been a more accessible and affordable alternative to inpatient psychiatric services, such as provided by Sacred Heart's Johnson Unit. The JU, overwhelmed by a mentally ill population with increasingly severe needs, is mainly for those with the most extreme suicidal ideation, mania or psychosis. Many people who are good candidates for RAP but not the JU will now be discharged back to bad circumstances.

The program I work for (but do not represent), CAHOOTS, has always had a special relationship with RAP; helping RAP staff manage the complex issues of their guests while they help us to provide shelter and respite services to clients ranging from battered women fleeing abusive situations to homeless schizophrenics who may freeze to death in the winter without such a resource.

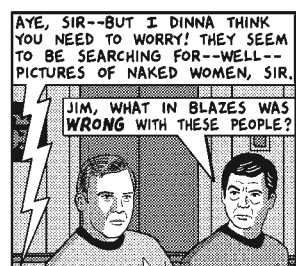
RAP is closing, of course, because of money. As usual, with this broken system of ours, the closure of a service such as RAP means a bigger workload for much more expensive jail and hospital services, while service providers are left with fewer options to help those in distress. Things are about to get uglier in Eugene.

Brenton Gicker
Eugene

THIS MODERN WORLD



BY TOM TOMORROW



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HIDDEN COSTS

Pushed by Oregonians for Food and Shelter, a pro-pesticide group with board members from Monsanto and Syngenta, and by the Oregon Farm Bureau, which accepts 28 percent of its contributions from those two chemical giants, the Lane County commissioners are considering eliminating the county's no-spray policy along county roadsides.

The commission majority will doubtless claim that spraying poisons will save the county money. But chemicals, equipment and their maintenance are expensive and the continued die-off of bees, which has been traced to pesticide use, will be environmentally and economically catastrophic. Toxics litigation won't be cheap either.

Chemical poisons along roadsides harm people and a diversity of wildlife, including pollinating insects such as honeybees. Moreover, water run-off from county roads ends up in streams and rivers where the pesticides it carries can harm fish and other aquatic creatures.

Why fix what isn't broken? The Public Works Roadside Vegetation Program under the leadership of Oren Schumacher has done a good job of managing roadside areas. It would be irresponsible and counterproductive to negate the years of work spent developing this excellent program. Since the no-spray policy has been in place, there have been no health complaints and no chemical litigation. That saves the county money.

Lane County has developed excellent partnerships with agencies, watershed councils and other partners to manage roadside vegetation. Those good-faith and effective relationships should not be squandered to line the pockets of individuals and corporations bent on re-poisoning a county in recovery.

Robert Emmons & Nena Lovinger
Fall Creek

SOLID OLD BUILDINGS

It seems pretty clear that our City Hall is

a stylish and well-made building that could, if renovated, be beautiful and practical. They just don't make 'em like they used to! The materials used in that building are no longer. Old-growth lumber is gone.

Builders used to take more time, with better materials, and be proud of their work. The old Public Works projects from 90 years ago look great and work well.

I painted a mural for River Road School some years ago and was inspired not only by the vision of social justice that the school cultures but by the quality construction of the building. It's old and in fantastic shape. The doors are solid and fit perfectly into place. The halls are wide, the windows are huge and open up to fresh air. They really don't make 'em like that anymore.

That school is slated for demolition! Not up to code. How many buildings on the Historic Registry are up to code? How much would it cost to make the changes?

If we don't want to be surrounded by wasteful, ugly new stuff, let's take care of the well-made old stuff and be more thoughtful when we do build.

Kari Johnson
Whiteaker

FLAWED DECISION

Congratulations for the easy-to-understand "Pop Quiz" [9/4] on the proposed City Hall! Personally I don't want to look at another parking lot in downtown Eugene. I also don't want the new building that is only housing the city administration and have to continue paying for department offices spread out over the city. That is no way to have an efficient government.

I also don't appreciate this complete lack of consideration of environmental planning when the valuable underground parking lot and complete structure is mowed down. It does need changes with seismic structuring costing less than \$1 million, and the estimates of design for entrance on 8th Avenue, and of most importance, insulated walls, windows and roof would cost less than \$15 million. The new plan for total new construction is three times this amount. Maybe we should sell it

and locate City Hall where Jerry Diethelm suggested in the Aug. 28 EW on the North Park Block and let someone else rebuild?

Ruth Duemler
Eugene

CIVIC VS. CITY HALL

I am excited and impressed about the Eugene Civic Alliance's work towards preserving Civic Stadium. I am also impressed by the City Council's requirements both for fundraising and a detailed business plan for this project before it will agree to purchase the Civic Stadium property from the 4J School District. I appreciate how carefully the City Council is protecting our city funds by ensuring that this will be a viable project before spending our money on it.

But then a question came to mind: Why is the City Council not using the same stewardship approach with respect to City Hall? As far as I am able to ascertain, there is no approved budget or plan either for building a new City Hall, or for the option of renovating the existing building. This project represents an unknown investment of city funds substantially larger than the Civic Stadium project. Yet city government is taking steps to demolish the existing building anyway.

As a Eugene homeowner and taxpayer, I am astounded that city officials could believe that this is an acceptable approach to such a significant financial project. The residents of Eugene deserve responsible and transparent money management with respect to this and every project that requires our city funds.

Pam Dillehay
Eugene

NOT FUNNY

I was quite surprised under the "Best Drinks" category in the Best of Eugene ballot to see a space for "Best DUI Lawyer." Really, Eugene Weekly? Is drunk driving a joke to you? Because I am sure it is not to the many people who were killed, injured, or lost loved ones to drunk driving related accidents. Here are some statistics from MADD that are sobering:

- Every two minutes someone is injured in a drunk driving crash.
- On average, two out of three people will be involved in a drunk driving crash in their lifetime.
- In 2011, 226 children were killed in drunk driving crashes. Of those, 122 (54 percent) were riding with the drunk driver. See wkly.ws/1t6.

You obviously placed this category with intention. By doing so you might have gotten some laughs, but you are also perpetuating the idea that drunk driving is a laughing matter, even socially acceptable.

Many of us aren't laughing.

I encourage you to correct this error in judgment, realize the implications of your actions and eliminate this category from the Best of Eugene.

K. Harnedy
Springfield

BETTER ADVICE NEEDED

It's unsettling to see that you've created a spot for "Best DUI Lawyer" on the Best Of Eugene ballot this year. If people want to make the reckless and stupid decision to