

HEADS IN THE SAND

City Club of Eugene Jan. 30 had UO law professor Mary Wood speaking on the Children's Trust and how the children are suing the states because nothing is being done to stop climate change. Nothing! In fact, I have to question why our elected officials are doing the very opposite! They are enlarging roads, allowing heavy truckloads that damage them, have little in the way of truck emission controls, have trains that only unload in Portland so more trucking is needed, build pipelines that destroy farm land and increase methane and then enlarge cities using vital farm land! Every inch of farmland is important.

Only Councilors Betty Taylor and George Brown voted against enlarging the urban growth boundary. Many in the audience expressed their pessimism about life 10 years from now. Will it take that long before our planet is unlivable?

Ruth Duemler
Eugene

NOW IN SPRINGFIELD

White Bird Clinic's mobile CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets) program began operating in Springfield and Glenwood Jan. 13. CAHOOTS operated exclusively in Eugene for 25 years and finally moved into new territory after many years of discussion about the need for such a unique and innovative program to expand beyond Eugene.

CAHOOTS was formed in 1989 as a collaboration between White Bird Clinic and the city of Eugene to help address the needs of the impoverished, homeless, mentally ill and addicted — populations that frequently have counterproductive contact with 911 services that may be avoidable — and others in distress, and to provide an auxiliary or alternative to 911 when a social-service response may be needed instead of or in addition to a police or fire department response.

CAHOOTS in Eugene continues to be funded by the city and dispatched by Eugene Police Department non-emergency dispatchers at 682-5111. Services are

available in Eugene from 11 am to 3:30 am daily, with two vans in service from 3:30 pm to 10:30 pm.

CAHOOTS Metro in Springfield/Glenwood is funded by Lane County and is dispatched by the Springfield Police Department non-emergency dispatchers at 726-3714 from noon to 11:30 pm daily.

But CAHOOTS staffers are not cops, they don't carry weapons and their services are voluntary. They are emergency medical technicians, nurses and mental health workers contracted to provide mental health counseling, medical care and other services, with a priority focus on assisting or substituting the police in mental health crisis situations that may involve people feeling suicidal or experiencing psychosis or having intoxication problems, etc. This helps to therapeutically address issues of mental illness and addiction, and reduces chances for bad encounters between the mentally ill and the police.

This free service provides an appropriate and effective response to a broad

variety of problems, helping to alleviate suffering while saving taxpayers money and preserving exhausted emergency resources. Visit whitebirdclinic.org.

Brenton Gicker
Eugene

NOISY BREWERY

It seems to me that many people in our community are so enamored by Ninkasi (or as I call them, Ninshwazi), that they are willing to get on their knees or bend over to show their affection. Most people are probably unaware though of the endless and obnoxious amount of noise that constantly bellows from their brewery expansion at 220 Blair Blvd. The dozens of families that live in the neighborhood behind the brewery are subjected to non-stop noise that is reminiscent of a jet airplane taxiing on the tarmac around the clock.

Since May 2014, Nikos Ridge (one of Ninshwazi's czars) has promised me on multiple occasions that a sound retention wall would be installed to stifle the noise.

HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

Joint Smoke & Mirrors?

HAVING FUN EYEBALLING OREGON POLITICS

As Oregon Democrats sadly watch federal politics in our country slide to the right in most states with little to say — Oregon being only 1 percent of the country's population — it will at least be fun to watch President Obama wield the veto pen as he enters his last term facing a Republican majority in both chambers of Congress. In just three weeks John Boehner and Mitch McConnell have already stumbled on abortion and immigration. Who knows what's next, another government shutdown? Anyway, since I'm approaching 66, I feel I'm at an age where, to paraphrase Roger Daltrey and the Who from 40 years ago, I shouldn't get fooled again. So I'm having more fun watching Oregon politics. It brings back warm memories. At home, Oregon's a flip-flop of the national scene, and we should be proud of the fact that we're the only state in the union to gain Democratic seats in the Oregon House and Senate and elect a Democrat governor in the last election cycle!

What a difference 20 years has made in Oregon politics. In 1995 Dr. John Kitzhaber was walking into the governor's office for the first time after serving 20 years in the Oregon House and Senate, leaving as Senate president. I was crawling into my first term in the Oregon House. And 1995 was the first time in 40 years that both chambers of the Legislature were controlled by Republicans; in fact, in my entire 10 years in the Oregon House and Senate I never served in the majority. Is my political timing impeccable or what?

So, back in 1995 Republicans had a majority in both the House and the Senate, but the Democrats had a backstop: Kitzhaber became known as "Dr. No" in his first two terms because he issued a record number of vetoes. Imagine that, even back then, Republicans had bad public policy ideas that the conscientious governor had to veto.

Flash forward to this week, the governor has a

Democratic majority in both chambers as the 78th session of the Legislative Assembly begins and he's WHAT?! — advocating for temperance? Moderation? By Democrats?! I read it in *The Register-Guard*, so it must be true. Oh, dear. But I'm not too worried. As Grattan Kerans used to say, when Democrats are in control, they'll tax anything that moves! Democrats sorta have the numbers, a 60 percent supermajority in the Senate, but, unfortunately, a 58.3333 percent majority in the House where a 60 percent supermajority is required for any revenue measures.

Fortunately, the Republicans appear clueless (go figure, Art Robinson is the chair of the Oregon Republican Party). Despite losing seats in both chambers, they re-elected the same leaders. In an obvious attempt at a Kumbaya bipartisan tribute to minority leaders Rep. Mike McLane and Sen. Ted Ferrioli, the newly elected Democrat Sen. Sara Gelser from Corvallis has proposed a bill authorizing driverless vehicles to be driven on Oregon roads. Furthermore, to protect Oregon citizens, she authorized only Ferrioli's Senate district be used for test-driving the vehicles. She has bent over backwards to accommodate! If we're lucky Ferrioli will invite Art Robinson, Dennis Richardson and Monica Wehby out to his district for a tea party in a driverless Hummer! They've got a lot of time on their hands these days.

Anyway, Senate Republican leader Tim Knoop is blaming the Democrats for a "Portland agenda." But Republicans should keep their eyes on the Lane County delegation; we could steal the rest of the state blind! With Val Hoyle as House Majority Leader, Phil Barnhart chairing the House Revenue Committee,

Nancy Nathanson co-vice chairing the Joint Ways and Means Committee, Paul Holvey chairing House Business and Labor, Lee Beyer chairing Senate Business and Transportation, Floyd Prozanski chairing Senate Judiciary, Chris Edwards chairing Senate Environment and Natural Resources and John Lively chairing House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness — how's that for positioning? Even Republican Cedric Hayden is a vice-chair on the House Health Care Committee for gosh sakes! How'd he sneak in?

Anyway, should be a fun session with a transportation package, education funding, minimum wage increase and recreational marijuana. We need a

Joint Smoke and Mirrors Committee. Wow, man. Stay tuned!

Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is a former state legislator and soon-to-be retired state worker. The views expressed herein are his alone. Find links to his earlier columns at wkly.ws/1xb.

