

## A RIVERFRONT VISION

Following the UO Foundation's disappointing renege on its winning bid to be the project manager for the Willamette riverfront EWEB development, I am encouraged by new voices promoting again the notion of a last chance for the city of Eugene to "take control of a project that will affect us forever" and buy that property from EWEB.

Another voice encourages the notion that the steam plant is the perfect host building for a world-class tourist destination museum and visitor's center, touting the primary historical developments of Eugene over the last 175 years, including timber/lumber, food production and processing, the railroad, the UO, clean water, energy and the recent growth of the Silicon Shire, Eugene's response to the Silicon Valley in California. The Lane County Historical Museum and the Science Factory could both be included in such a new museum energy.

In the interest of better understanding the now fenced and vacated EWEB property (except for three buildings — the steam plant, the bow-truss warehouse and the river's edge meter-calibration building), what if we hold the Eugene Celebration on the 17 acres in question this fall, giving one and all the opportunity to know what is at the river's edge property. At this stage

of the game, it seems like EWEB and the city of Eugene are the folks with the controlling interest in the property, so let's organize a group of interested, passionate people to ask "what if" to some of these possibilities?

Tom Snyder  
Moments In Time Exhibits  
Eugene

## SPRAY VACATION?

No, "spray vacation" is not a typo of something as benign as a spring vacation, but something much worse. After attending a monthly speakers' forum held by the volunteers with the Blackberry Pie Society (a much appreciated and needed service to the community), I had to write this letter. As speaker for the month of June, they hosted State Rep. Cedric Hayden Jr.

When the Republican politician answered questions about aerial spraying of forest pesticides (atrazine and glyphosate) over humans and their waterways, he replied that it was too bad that people were not given more notice so they could go on vacation or leave the state while timber companies are aerial spraying near their homes. Many outraged citizens responded immediately to his suggestion to take a spray vacation.

A woman from the Cottage Grove [South Lane] school board asked if profits

were more important than people and clean water. She also asked how families were going to move all their livestock and pets on such a vacation. One may need an ark for that spray vacation.

Another gentleman shared how a right-of-way for powerlines had been sprayed above a water district that served 100 homes and 300 people. These folks would need a cruise liner for their spray vacation.

One couple explained how they removed their children from summer camp after they found the water they were swimming in had been contaminated by drift from an aerial spray. Where do summer camps go on spray vacation?

It was disappointing that Hayden Jr. seemed totally out of touch with this issue which is so important for rural Oregon. Luckily he is up for re-election in 2016.

There is a way to learn more about how rural communities are being poisoned by aerial spraying "drift." Watch on OPB how the small community of Tiller on the South Umpqua was sprayed: [wkly.ws/214](http://wkly.ws/214).

Patrick Starnes  
McKenzie Bridge

Editor's note: Starnes attempted to get on the ballot against Hayden in the 2014 election but didn't collect enough signatures.

## LINDENS IN BLOOM

Please, let's not make the same mistakes as last year! Linden trees are blooming now, and the wonderful scent they have is causing domestic and wild pollinators of all kinds to flock to them. Mine are buzzing with bees today. These trees *do not* get aphids, or any other pest that I have seen. I have two in my front yard that are 15 years old and I have never seen any sticky dripping sap below them. I park my car under one and the windows stay clear.

Please, no neonicotinoid use on these. There is no reason to use any pesticides on these trees!

Mike Koivula  
Springfield

## EMPATHY TENT

A teacher who touched our lives deeply passed away this year. After he died, around 30 of us locals met to discuss how to keep Marshall Rosenberg's energy alive and growing. Through his training in nonviolent communication he gave so much, so clearly, on how to live a full life, seeing more fully and connecting with self and others.

One idea was to have a space at the Saturday Market for people to be listened to in an empathic way as he taught. I volunteered to get it going, and our first

## HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

# Zombie Apocalypse

PAID SICK LEAVE LEGISLATION INSPIRES FRENZY

June is a tough month for Oregon legislators for a variety of reasons. There's pressure to get out of the building by the 4th of July. Since it is a citizen Legislature, many of the members are missing work, and employers want their employees back. And, five months into session, members have listened to their colleagues' positions and those of the other three caucuses *ad infinitum* and *ad nauseum*.

To make it worse, it's a time when most committees have completed their work and are shutting down, leaving most members waiting on posturing caucus leaders trying to read political tea leaves to decipher the upcoming election year. In other words, it's intellectual water boarding. Psychologically, you feel like you've been stuck *much* too long on a cruise ship off the coast of Borneo, besieged by pirates, stuck onboard with the faculty of Bob Jones University listening exclusively to Don Ho's *Tiny Bubbles* and *Forever in Blue Jeans* by Neil Diamond. *So your head really hurts*, but you're not hung over!

This underlying anger reared its ugly head last week during the House debate on SB 454, the bill that would require Oregon employers with 10 or more employees to provide paid sick leave. Earlier, during the Senate debate, Republican leader Tim Knopp predicted "this [SB 454] is going to kill job creation in this state." During the House debate, Republicans tried every stall tactic and remonstrated vociferously about the Oregon financial crisis that would ensue if we dared to allow a

low-income single mom at McDonald's to get paid to stay at home with a sick child, for example.

Finally, Rep. Shemia Fagan, a Portland attorney, born and raised in Dufur, had had enough. Enough of your "zombie apocalypse" ranting, she told the naysayers on the House floor. Well, like I said, tempers are short these days, so the Republicans did what any dignified adults would do in this circumstance: They huffed off the floor and threatened to deny the House the quorum it would need to vote on the bill. They accused Fagan of impugning their dignity (as if one could insult something that doesn't exist), the speaker told them to pack sand, and finally the bill passed.

All kidding aside, everyone in this state should acknowledge the excellent work done by Rep. Paul Holvey and Sen. Michael Dembrow in shepherding SB 454 through the process and on to Gov. Kate Brown's desk for signature. Paul is one of the hardest working and persistent legislators I've known. I remember advising him a couple of years ago to quit fighting windmills with his futile efforts to end field burning. Look how that worked out.

House Majority leader Val Hoyle praised Paul for his hard work and his excellent floor speech, bragging that Oregon now has the most progressive legislation in the country on paid sick leave. And Paul deserves much of the credit for calmly addressing the merits of the bill, rather than succumbing to the same zombie apocalypse rhetoric that probably accompanied legislation that got us the 40-hour workweek and child labor laws 90 years ago.

Floyd Prozanski, Human Rights Violator  
Val Hoyle, Human Rights Violator

By now you've seen these billboards that sprouted up in the last month or so. If your reaction was anything like mine, your first thought was: Damn, I kinda like those two progressives, how could I have been so blind not to recognize human rights violators in my own damn midst? The second thought was: Who's behind this cute character assassination and the accompanying recall efforts? It's the usual suspects, folks — Kevin Sterrett and the single-issue gun nuts who hate SB 941. (And no surprise that Art Robinson's son, Matt, is coordinating the printing and distribution of the billboards.)

This is the same tactic gun nuts in Colorado used to recall two state senators who had the *cojones* to vote for firearm background checks in that state in response to the Columbine massacre. I applaud Floyd and Val and the other legislators targeted by these morons for having guts enough to do the right thing. Winston Churchill once advised a colleague: "You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood for something some time in your life." I've always fantasized that Sterrett's organization, Oregon Firearms Federation, would join forces with the Oregon Fisheries Underground Cable Corporation. Their acronym would be awesome and we could send them a message — OFUCC-OFF! Violate this! ■

Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is a former state senator and recently retired state worker.

