

• The **NAACP national convention** was earlier in July, and City Club of Eugene will have a report at noon Friday, July 24, at the Downtown Athletic Club, 999 Willamette Street. Speakers will include Eric Richardson, president of the local NAACP, and members of the Eugene-Springfield faith and social justice communities. \$5 for non-members.

• The **Oregon AFL-CIO** will be doing statewide canvassing Saturday, July 25, talking about why raising the minimum wage is important for Oregonians and their families. “We’ll also be asking folks to pledge their support for raising the minimum wage,” say organizers in an email to supporters. “We need to send a strong message: It’s time to raise the wage to lift up half a million Oregonians and their families, and create an economy that works for all of us.” The Lane County activities will begin at 10 am at the AFSCME offices at 688 Charnelton Street. RSVP to the Fair Shot for All website, wkly.ws/21r or call 682-4288.

• **Kari Norgaard**, Ph.D., will speak on “Living in Denial: Climate Change, Emotions and Everyday Life” at 4 pm Sunday, July 26, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1685 W. 13th Ave. Free. Norgaard is an associate professor of sociology and environmental studies at UO. She is widely published and her lecture title is also the name of her book published by MIT Press in 2011. Her lecture is a follow-up to the presentation June 24 by professor Guy McPherson (see our cover story last week).

• Eugene **Mayor Kitty Piercy** will hold her monthly community outreach meeting from 5 to 6 pm Tuesday, July 28, at Albertsons, 311 Coburg Road. The meetings are held in different parts of the community each month to make them more easily accessible.

• Springfield is now eligible for a second representative to serve on the board of **Lane Regional Air Protection Agency** due to an increase in Springfield’s population. The representative will be appointed by the Springfield City Council with a term ending Dec. 31, 2018. To apply, visit the Springfield City Manager’s Office, 225 Fifth Street, during regular business hours, or visit the city website. Deadline to apply is Sept. 4.

POLLUTION UPDATE

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is accepting comments through 5 pm Tuesday, July 28, on two proposed Clean Water Act permit modifications for Georgia-Pacific Consumer Products and Cascade Pacific Pulp, which both discharge pollution to the Willamette River via the same outfall near Halsey. The proposed modifications involve the relocation of the outfall approximately 1,300 feet downstream, and a decrease in the size of the “mixing zone” for the discharges. (A mixing zone is a specific area of a river or other waterway in which DEQ allows polluters to violate Oregon’s water quality standards for that waterway.) The current mixing zone extends 300 feet downstream from where pollution is discharged, while the proposed mixing zone would extend 40 feet downstream from the discharge point. Visit goo.gl/ott3SM for more information on commenting.

Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project

LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY SCHEDULE

• ODOT is currently **spraying roadsides**. Call Tony Kilmer at ODOT District 5 at 744-8080 or call (888) 996-8080 for often inaccurate herbicide application information. Highways recently sprayed include I-5, 36, 99 and Beltline.

• Weyerhaeuser, 744-4600, plans to helicopter and backpack spray 5.8 acres near **Taylor Butte** south of Cottage Grove with glyphosate, imazapyr, triclopyr, metsulfuron methyl, sulfometuron methyl, MSO Concentrate, Crosshair and/or No Foam. See ODF notification 2015-771-10308, call Tim Meehan at 726-3588 with questions.

• The **Fox Hollow** Lane Electric Substation is to be sprayed this week with Oust, Diuron and Milestone.

Compiled by Jan Wroncy and Gary Hale, ForestlandDwellers.org, 342-8332.

PARKING LOT APPEARS ON RUBBLE OF OLD CITY HALL

A fenced-in parking lot complete with stripes on the gravel has appeared at the site of the leveled City Hall downtown, leading passers-by to wonder what’s going on. Turns out the parking will not be for the public or even the architects and engineers working on plans for the new City Hall.

“We had a request from the Federal Courthouse to accommodate overflow parking for jurors for two weeks,” says city spokesperson Laura Hammond. City Code 9.5800 “allows up to two weeks of temporary parking three times per year,” she says.

Normally, gravel parking lots are not permitted in downtown Eugene. New parking lots must have an impervious surface (paved with asphalt or concrete) and provide for drainage and adjacent features to cool and clean runoff before it hits the stormwater drains to the river. Gravel parking does not allow cleaning of oil spills and is a safety hazard for bicycles, wheelchairs, walkers and high-heel shoes.

Other gravel parking lots can be found around town, such as the peculiar lot under the Ferry Street Bridge, which seems to fall through the cracks in the code. Cars and trucks park wherever they can find space around the bridge pillars. Hammond says that site is “on the public right of way, which is considered an extension of the road, and therefore

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is not subject to the same land use code requirements.”

Other gravel parking areas might be “legal, non-forming sites” as defined by Code 9.1220, Hammond says, or the property owner may have illegally created gravel parking. She says in order for the city to intervene, the city

would need to receive a nuisance or zoning complaint. The city has a website for such complaints at wkly.ws/21q. Complaints can be confidential if requested.

Is there an upside to gravel parking lots? Maybe not, but permeable parking is getting a lot of attention around the country. Even the Environmental Protection Agency is experimenting with “green” parking lots that allow rainwater to

seep into the soil and refresh aquifers, rather than adding to stormwater systems that can overflow during storms and lead to raw sewage pollution.

The city of Chicago has torn up many miles of paved alleys and replaced them with permeable surfaces in order to reduce polluted stormwater flowing into Lake Michigan. The city of Ashland has allowed permeable parking in certain areas for decades. Some small businesses mow their brick parking lots. — *Ted Taylor*

PET ECONOMY FLOURISHES IN EUGENE AND PORTLAND

“Business has been booming,” says Jody Maddox, who owns Wags Dog Emporium off Coburg Road. This is no surprise, based on the \$58.51 billion the American Pet Products Association (APPA) estimates Americans spent on their pets in 2014.

Oregon happens to be near the top of the list for pet-owning states and ranks fourth overall, according to the American Veterinary Medical Foundation’s 2012 survey numbers, and those high ownership numbers seems to have translated to good business for pet-related industries operating in Eugene and Oregon in general.

Rachael King, head of communications at DogVacay, an online service connecting dog owners with dog sitters across all 50 states as well as Canada, writes that “Oregon loves dogs.” This is evidenced by Oregon having the “sixth highest per person spend out of all the states on DogVacay,” King writes.

According to King, the biggest cities for DogVacay in Oregon are Portland, Beaverton, Eugene, Hillsboro and Bend, in that order. According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Eugene has the lowest per-capita income of the group, so despite a discrepancy in income, Eugene residents appear to have no problem shelling out money for their pets or buying supplies from pet specialty stores.

Opened in 2005, Wags Dog Emporium has become a staple in the local dog supply industry and is “doing great,” Maddox says. The store opened just a few years before the recession struck, when most people began to tighten their purse strings. “I really thought we would be the first to close,” Maddox says.

But, she says, she found it to be “quite the opposite,” and Wags experienced “growth every year.” According to *Forbes*, pet-related industries are “recession proof,” a label with which Maddox agrees.

“In bad years people stop going on vacation and start nesting and staying at home” and they might end up getting a puppy, she says. When that happens, the owners then buy all manner of items to keep their pet alive and well, and Wags offers a diverse amount of dog supplies, from dog clothing to water bottles.

Maddox also notes how diverse the pet supply industry is in particular. She cites chicken treats, hot items due to the increasing popularity of urban farming, seen at industry trade shows as evidence of the industry’s diversity.

Another local business plugging right along is Nature’s Pet Market in south Eugene. The business “is doing OK and holding [its] own,” owner Mark Dunn says. Business is only “OK” because three years ago a PetSmart, or “Pet-Stupid” as Mark calls it, moved in about 75 feet away.

“I was here first, and they moved in,” Dunn says. This Nature’s Pet location opened five years ago and is store number nine of the Portland-based franchise.

The allure of Nature’s Pet Market is that it has specialty foods, including certain kinds of frozen raw pet foods that aren’t available in big box stores (à la PetSmart). Nature’s Pet sources from smaller manufacturers that only work with independent companies.

“If you go to a bigger store, you have to increase production, and when you increase production, the quality goes down,” Dunn says. “Companies I work with try to source from within 75 miles, and two-thirds of the pet food comes from those kinds of sources.”

This higher quality pet food might be more expensive, but it’s worth it because in the long run you end up saving money due to the higher quality food helping reduce your pet’s visits to the veterinarian, Dunn says.

Dunn notes that the pet supply industry is a “growth industry,” and unless you are really bad at business, you’ll have a relatively easy time. Dunn attributes this to the fact that some people “treat pets better than they treat their kids,” adding that it’s “amazing the appeal pets have for humans” and that pets have the ability to “become a major part of the family.” — *Mike Bivins*