

To end my 48 hours of relaxation, I headed up to Skinner Butte with friends and joined yet again another jubilant community gathering of gazers waiting for the rare eclipse of the decade. There was even an awesome jug band playing for free. Note to the city: Portable potties would have been smart in this park for this unique evening. I've got plenty to bitch about as well regarding the struggles of living in community, but this recent weekend exemplified for me what is so great about Eugene.

*Eva Kronen
Eugene*

NRA COWARDS

The people who want to do something about guns and gun control are usually not in a position to do anything, and the people who are in a position to do something won't.

The National Rifle Association (NRA) knows more about guns and gun ownership in this country than any other agency. NRA President Allan Cors and Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre, along with other members of its executive staff, are in a position to help do something about all of the mass shootings in this country. They have the knowledge, the resources and the expertise to work with Congress to draw up meaningful, sensible gun legislation. But they are cowards. They are afraid of losing a portion of their membership base, which equates to losing income. However, if they took a sensible approach and worked with Congress, they might appeal

to a broader constituency. As it stands now, and has for as long as I can remember, they are a somewhat radical organization that uses scare tactics to make their members believe the government wants to take everyone's guns away.

On a related note, the FBI, the CIA and the NSA all monitor the internet on a daily basis to find threats by terrorists against the U.S. Why can't they dedicate some man hours to monitoring social media sites for these shooters who like to post their hate-filled manifestos and even telegraph their plans? For that matter, why can't all law enforcement agencies dedicate some man hours to looking at social media sites, even obscure ones?

*Chuck West
Eugene*

CONVOLUTED FINANCES

I fully support funding for our libraries. As others have pointed out, having a well-run public library system helps us become a better community. My concern is that the city is more and more inclined to fund basic city services like libraries and park maintenance through ever-increasing fees, taxes and special levies. The rationale for doing so is, of course, a lack of sufficient revenue in the city's general fund. This is where our property tax dollars go and has traditionally been the primary source of revenue to fund city services. Given that the city's political leadership has taken it upon itself to transfer significant sums out of the general fund to finance a variety of questionable endeavors, is it any wonder

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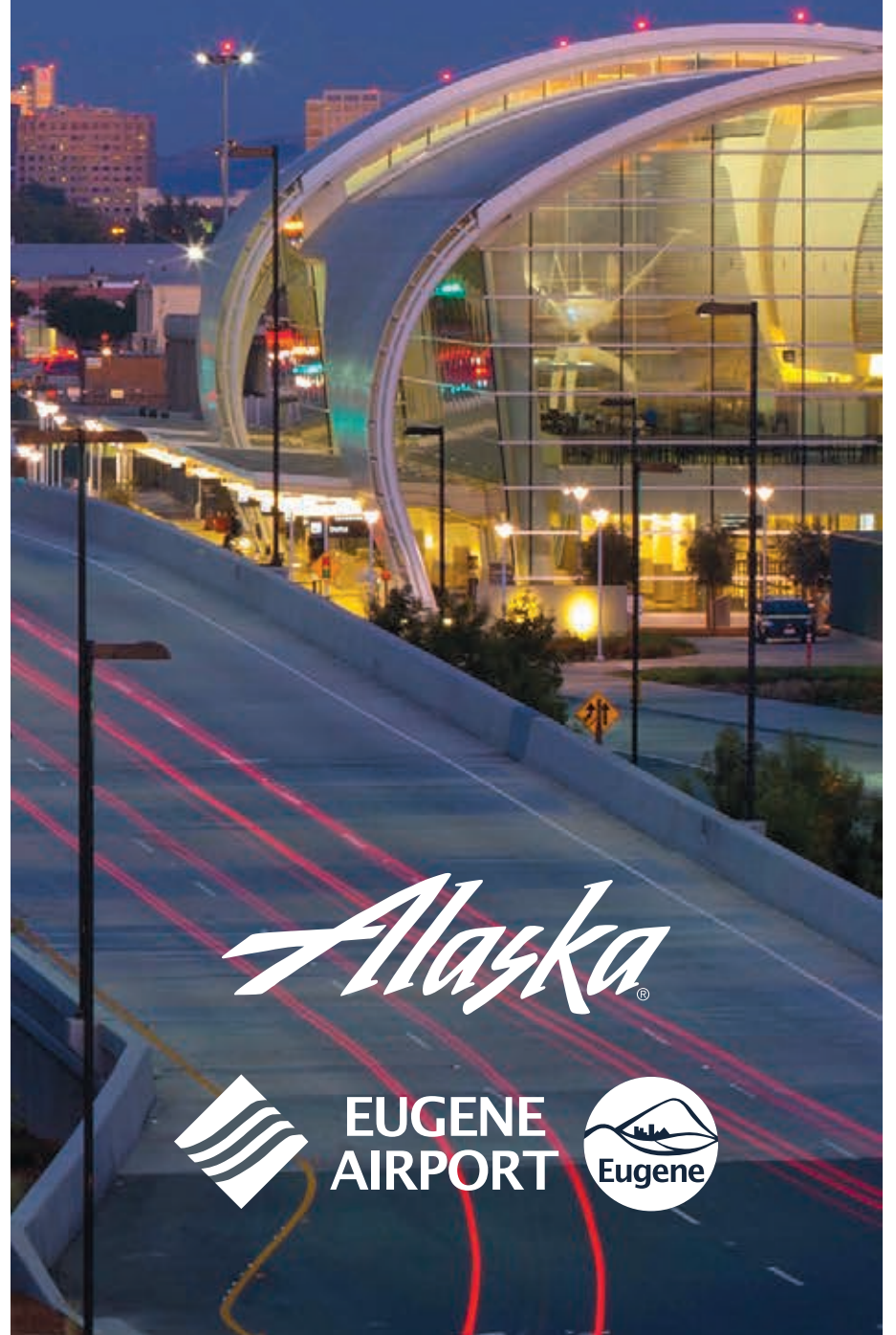
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