

## THE BEST SOLUTION

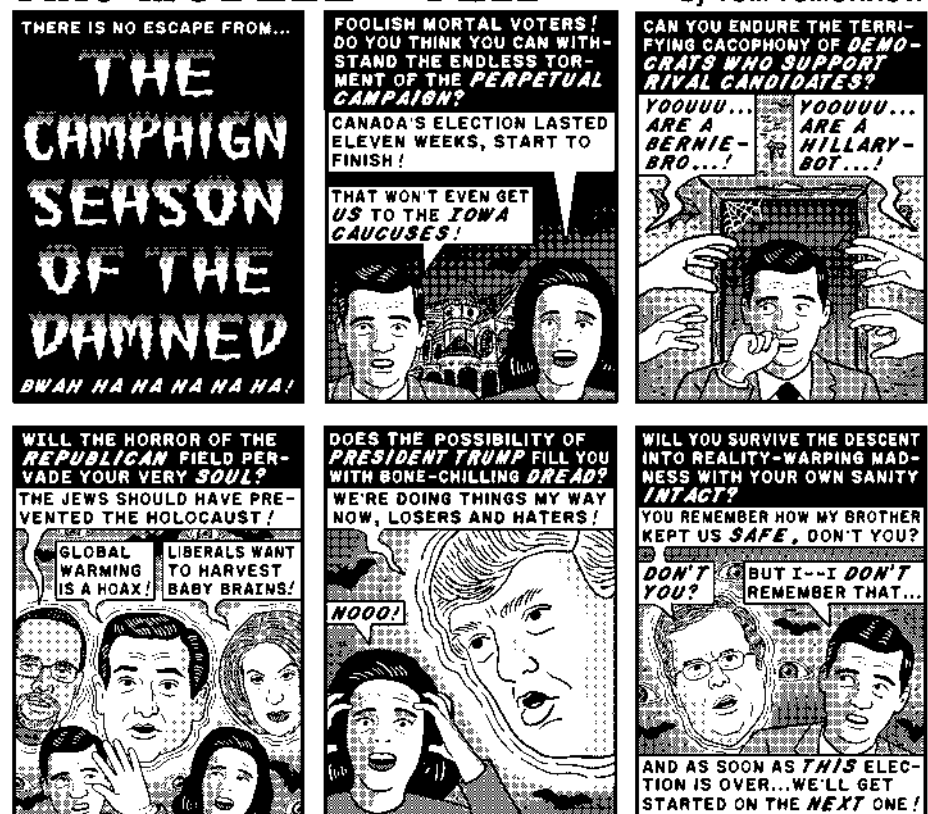
I served as a volunteer citizen Eugene Budget Committee member when we made the agonizing decision to reduce library hours. The City Council opted not to continue our longstanding library levy during the recession. We carried the library hours on General Fund dollars and reserves as long as we could. We pared back the cuts from closure of both branch libraries to only reduced hours. No one wanted to cut those library hours, but it was the best of several bad options.

I also served on the Revenue Committee when citizens asked us to restore those cuts. Our existing revenues are not adequate to provide the services that people expect and deserve. A property tax levy is more progressive than fee increases or other taxes, and it has the advantage of being familiar and transparent to the voters.

My first job was as a shelving assistant in a public library, when it was merely a place to find books. These days our libraries are so much more! Students can do homework, job seekers can find work and we all benefit from having a quiet place to relax, read and research. Please vote "yes" for the libraries!

Marshall Wilde  
Eugene

## THIS MODERN WORLD



## THE LIBRARY QUANDARY

On the one hand, I like our new library, I'm proud of it, I am a cardholder and I use it. I'd like to see our library expand

and operate at full capacity. On the other hand, I have a tough time justifying rewarding the city of Eugene, which has squandered millions of dollars destroying

a still-serviceable City Hall and lining the pockets of politically connected developers by handing them another \$2.7 million.

Why didn't the City Council consider support for libraries (and parks, streets and homeless shelters, for that matter) when they passed MUPTE (Multiple Unit Property Tax Exemption program) and razed City Hall?

So I'm in a quandary. I don't know how I will vote, and I suspect I am not alone.

Tom Arnold  
Eugene

## A SMARTER COMMUNITY

Support the Eugene Public Library; it benefits everyone. We can all enjoy better services and help our neighbors, especially those with little money. We've already invested in the buildings, books and staff training; a little more money would keep the doors open longer so we could enjoy these investments. It will cost the average household only 10 cents a day (\$36 a year) to open the branch libraries on Sundays and Mondays, and provide programs that help kids read, get teens motivated and support job hunters. We need everyone functioning at his or her best as the world is getting more competitive. The library levy is a very cost-effective way to have a smarter, more productive community.

Nancy Cheng  
Eugene

## VIEWPOINT BY KITTY PIERCY AND VAL HOYLE

## Why Vote for the Library?

THE STORY BEHIND THE IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS

It's Oct. 29. Have you voted yet? There's only one item on the ballot, and it's really important. Measure 20-235 will restore critical funding to Eugene's public libraries, and we urge you to vote "yes."

Over 150 years ago, Henri Amiel said, "Everything you need for better future and success has already been written. And guess what? All you have to do is go to the library." Think about it. Public libraries are, and have always been, a stepping-stone to a better life for anyone who walks in their doors.

Reading programs for kids, a quiet and safe place to do homework, GED support for teens and adults, information on how to start a business, plant a garden, become a teacher; whatever your question or quest, our public libraries are there for us. It's time for us to be there for them.

Voting "yes" on Measure 20-235 means saying "yes" to young readers, to a community with access to information and opportunity, to internet access for job searches and school reports and to programs that faithfully serve members of our community, both young and old.

In Eugene, we love our libraries, and we really use them — 3,000 visitors every day. That's over one million visitors every year checking out over three million items in all parts of the city. Here are some of the people who use our libraries each day:

In Bethel, a teacher of a special needs class regularly walks his students over from school

because the neighborhood library is nearby, quiet and comfortable for his students.

Downtown, people with no computers at home get help and computer access to apply for jobs. Young parents who feel isolated at home bring their children for free story hours and make friends and introduce their children to literacy.

At the Sheldon neighborhood library, eight senior living facilities are within walking distance, and seniors make the trip often. The library is a gift to thousands of people in so many ways. We are guessing you know this.

Will we lose what we currently have if this levy does not pass? The answer is no. More than 200 community members came to the City Council to testify about the importance of our three libraries during the last budget cycle. As a community, we said we would work towards reintroducing a new library levy to fund expanded hours, increased programming and access to new technology. So this is not about fear of losing anything. Measure 20-235 is really about what we want for our kids and our community. It's really about progress and equity.

This levy is a small and progressive tax that amounts to an average of \$36 per year for homeowners. It directly pays for expansions of library services. You get to direct your tax dollars to what you want — and we believe you want a library that can better serve all our children and our entire community. That's why hundreds of people came again and again to ask

the city to put the levy back on the ballot. The city responded to the people with this measure.

Kids who want a safe, enriching environment after school shouldn't be on a waiting list. All children should have access to technology, the very tools that will allow them to develop the skills to join the 21 century workforce, regardless of where they live.

The levy will give people of all ages and incomes access to technology that they otherwise would not have. This levy will help us reach out to more of our youngest to ensure they too have access to early learning opportunities no matter where they live. In the words of Lady Bird Johnson, "Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library. The only entrance requirement is interest."

And this community supports the measure; don't just take our word for it. This levy is endorsed by *Eugene Weekly*, *The Register-Guard*, Eugene Education Association, Eugene/Springfield NAACP, Stand for Children, League of United Latin American Citizens, Lane Grupo Latino de Action Directa (GLAD), the Democratic Party of Lane County, AFSCME Local 1724 and hundreds more (see [voteyesforlibraries.org](http://voteyesforlibraries.org)).

So go get that ballot! It's too late to mail it, so get it in a drop box by 8 pm Tuesday, Nov. 3. I urge you to join us in voting yes for our libraries, our kids, our community.

Kitty Piercy is mayor of Eugene and Val Hoyle is the state representative for District 14.