

MOMS FOR LIBRARY

Almost four years ago, we made our way to Baby Story Time at the Eugene Public Library. One minute the librarian was quieting a room full of babies with a slide whistle; the next he was eliciting coos and giggles (from babies and parents alike) revealing in a pop-up book *Dog* (“All dogs pee!”). We showed up weekly and learned to use classic nursery rhymes and the newest board books to build a foundation of literacy. Just as importantly, it gave us time and space to connect. At the library, a community formed. Ten of us started a playgroup — a group that has brought an immeasurable amount of intention, knowledge and joy to our parenting and, in turn, to the lives of our kids.

We are all changed because of the space, time and knowledge shared at the Eugene Public Library. We continue to imagine in its play corner, discover in its courtyard and fill tote bags of books in which we can curl up and find new worlds. A vote “yes” on Measure 20-235 will support critical programs that build a foundation of reading and sense of community in young families. As moms, we urge you to support this measure.

Carolyn Williams, Hannah Vasey Vehrs, Jodie St. Clair, Leia Runner, Melanie Manning, Sara Starlin, Shannon Hartly Eugene

ALREADY PAYING

Regarding the Eugene library levy measure: Since the owners of many of the most valuable properties in Eugene have been released from their obligations to pay property taxes, do I consent to help pay their share for them? Since the city has declined to include adequate funding for the library in the city budget, instead choosing to spend the library’s share of funding for city planners and their Portland consultants who conduct endless circuses during which they claim to be consulting with Eugene citizens about destroying our City Hall and destroying neighborhoods by replacing small businesses and homes with massive, ugly, tax-exempt apartment buildings, do I consent to pay a special tax for the library?

No, I do not. I like the library, but I already am paying my share. It’s not my fault that those developers and investors aren’t paying their share.

Ann Tattersall Eugene

LIBRARY USER FEE?

I’d like to explain in greater detail why I’m voting “no” on the library levy, but I’m only allowed so much room, so here are my reasons in brief:

- Adding more operating hours adds more dollars to the PERS payroll — enough said.

- The vast majority of my income is Social Security. My property taxes are 20 percent of that income — nearly two and a half months of my Social Security income. My property taxes increased by \$60 and the new tax would add to that increase. SSA isn’t giving a cost-of-living adjustment this year, so it’s another

hundred bucks or so less than I had last year.

- What about a user fee? \$5 or \$10 a year for a library card isn’t outrageous. Children can be exempt, and I’m sure all those expounding the value of the library would agree it’s well worth it. I use the library and would gladly pay for my card; after all, it’s just a couple of beers or coffees.

- By far, the hated MUPTE. There would have been plenty of money if the City Council hadn’t given away all those millions in tax breaks, and they’re poised to give away more. Voting “no” is the only weapon I have to voice my extreme displeasure with this giveaway. Is it fair to take more of my Social Security to pay for services while wealthy development corporations pay nothing?

No, I’m not singling out the library. I intend to vote “no” on *all* tax increases or bond issues until this practice is stopped and we’re all taxed equally.

Ted Chudy Eugene

SEND A MESSAGE

The library levy is important, but for different reasons. The supporters are correct in the value of access to books computers, etc. It is rare that anyone disagrees with these reasons and the value of libraries. Their platform suggests the levy is about if we want more services or not. It’s incorrect.

What the supporters don’t get and why I’m voting against the levy is about the funding source. Basic services need to come out of the general fund.

We are on our second street levy. No doubt there will be a third and fourth. There is an idea of a levy for park maintenance and railroad quiet zone.

The economy is improving, housing starts are up, commercial real estate is booming, so why do property owners need to pay more for basic services? Spending patterns and reduced revenue due to corporate tax breaks are the reason for the funding shortage.

Please vote “no” on the library levy to send the message that fairness and a new funding formula is needed.

Don French Eugene

WEIRD VENUE

Why in the world would anyone go to LCC to see the “Flying People” exhibit? Out of the airport context, it would seem like a weird, pointless waste of space. But, unfortunately, not weird enough.

Todd Richard Eugene

CRITICAL COLLABORATION

Thank you for the Oct. 15 feature “Invest in Kids.” The in-depth coverage of the collaborative work of Kids in Transition to School, Head Start of Lane County and the UO Brain Development Lab is critical. It underlines the benefits these efforts provide not only to children and families but to the community as a whole. Everyone benefits when children successfully transition to school. Positive learning outcomes increase and concrete

steps toward closing the achievement gap are taken.

The news gets even better. Ground-breaking research into the effects of extreme adverse childhood experiences confirms that not only academic but also long-term health outcomes improve when children and families are supported early. Fostering academic and physical and mental health from the start builds the foundation for lifelong wellbeing. To learn more, including about free community workshops about adverse childhood experiences, I encourage readers to visit “Lane County Adverse Childhood Experiences/ Trauma” at lanecounty.org/aces.

Katharine V. Gallagher Adverse Childhood Experiences Community Education & Engagement Project

OTHER POLLUTERS

Lots of ink has been spilled about the camping along the Willamette River’s waterline, and a suggestion that the campers come up to “the top of the bank and at least protect the waters,” which, for anyone living near the area knows, would be folly. It would lead to immediate arrest. The out-of-sight/out-of-complaint method seems to work, until it doesn’t, and the issue of river detritus rises up. The suggestions from those who would prevent the riverside pollution are disingenuous. Try suggestions that would actually work: for instance, campsites along Goodpasture Island Road?

Little ink has been spilled about the pollution created by the well-to-do non-camper mansions on the upper Willamette and McKenzie rivers who clear their property past the riparian zone right down to the river’s waterline, delivering the detritus from their chemical lawns and faulty septic systems directly to us. Perhaps these polluters could pull back their activities to “the top of the bank and at least protect the waters.” And they wouldn’t even get arrested.

Richard Guske The Whiteaker

GUNS PROTECT CHILDREN?

As a preschool teacher I am heartbroken over needless deaths from guns. I am not just talking about the horrible mass shootings which happen far too often, as tragic as they are. I am talking about accidental child deaths from guns. There are those who tell us that adults with guns will protect our children, but will more guns prevent children from accidentally shooting themselves and others?

The recent findings of two Boston surgeons drawing on pediatric records found about 500 deaths of children and teens per year, and an additional 7,500 hospitalizations from gunshot wounds. I weep for those children as I do for anyone who is the victim of preventable gun death. When I look at our children and all our fellow citizens, I think of how great teachers have told us that we should love one another and that we are responsible to help each other. Our country is in dire need of healing love and help when it comes to guns. A majority of people favor minimal gun control and more gun safety education.

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