

SLANT

• As we enter into this election season, it's time to ponder the question of how much power a **non-elected official** should have. Appointed City Manager Jon Ruiz appears to be making changes to the

new City Hall without keeping the elected City Council in the loop (see News this issue). Maybe the issue of offices seems like no big deal on the surface, but it affects how our government will run in the future and how public money is spent on this project. Across the country, in Flint, Michigan, thousands of families and children are affected by lead poisoning thanks in part to an appointed emergency manager who switched the water supply for the city from Detroit to the Flint River. All the blame doesn't rest squarely in manager Darnell Earley's lap, except for this: The Flint City Council voted to switch the water back, more than six months before the governor intervened, but the un-elected manager overrode the vote.

• **Oregon Business** magazine features Eugene on its cover this month and recognizes Eugene as a "haven for happy hippies," and asks, "Could that peace and love image change with the influx of investment and new development?" The story by Anthony St. Clair features Red Wagon Creamery, Tsunami Books, Palo Alto Software, Concentric Sky, Silicon Shire, Fertilib Thinkubator and others. One thing that grabbed our eye was the interview with Sarah Bennett of Bennett Management Company, who also sits on the board of the Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce. She is quoted saying Eugene can attract more businesses "by having a different political balance in the community." She notes that progressives in Eugene aren't "anti-capitalist," but they tend to "lean too far to the left." Such comments do represent a common view in Eugene that our economy is somehow held back by liberal attitudes. But more and more research confirms that economic health in cities is not driven by tax breaks and new development, but rather by high quality public education and a livable environment. We would love to see our chamber and business leaders focus on these elements for a change.

• The list of **candidates for local elections** is filling out a bit, but several positions in the May Primary are going unchallenged so far. On the City Council, incumbents Claire Syrett in Ward 7, Betty Taylor in Ward 2 and Chris Pryor in Ward 8 have no opponents. At the EWEB board, Dick Helgeson is unopposed. County Commissioner Pat Farr has a challenger in Tony McCown but Commissioner Pete Sorenson has no competition, nor does Sheriff Byron Trapp. What happens when candidates have no opponents? The public doesn't get a chance to compare them with others, or question them on their voting records and values. It's how our representative form of government is supposed to work. Case in point is Ward 5 Councilor Mike Clark who is running for mayor after nine years on the council, but has never faced a challenger nor been grilled in a debate. The deadline for filing for local elections is March 2, so there's not much time left.

• Big changes ahead at the **UO School of Law**. Dean Michael Moffitt announced to the Oregon law community on Jan. 29 that he will step down from the deanship at the end of the next academic year in about 18 months. He's been top guy at the Oregon law school for the last five years, a tumultuous time of falling enrollment, rising costs, shortage of law jobs and desperate moves at law schools all over the country. Some of Oregon's law faculty is even teaching undergraduate courses about the law, courses traditionally done by political science profs and other faculty. Big search ahead.

Meanwhile, law school student volunteers are gearing up for the big Public Interest Environmental Law Conference starting March 3, an inspiring event that draws thousands of students, lawyers, scientists and activists from all over to Eugene.

• **Which Democrat** can beat Ted Cruz, Donald Trump or, ever more likely, Marco Rubio next November? That's the question bedeviling us. Not one of those Republicans acknowledges climate change, indebted as they are to the dark money and power of the Koch brothers and friends in the oil, gas and coal industries. Science has no sway with these candidates, only money and ideology. We can only imagine the court appointments they would make, the health care they would dismantle, the international agreements they would reverse. Bernie Sanders' amazing numbers in Iowa give us heart. On to New Hampshire, Nevada, South Carolina and the rest of this unpredictable country.

LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY SCHEDULE

• M Three Timber Company, 767-3785, plans to aerial and ground spray 66 acres near **Muslin Creek** with 2,4-D, atrazine, hexazinone, sulfometuron methyl, clopyralid and/or Induce. See ODF notification 2016-781-01311, call Brian Peterson at 998-2283 with questions.

• Seneca Jones Timber Company LLC, 689-1011, plans to spray about 3.5 miles of roadsides near **Fish Creek** with 2,4-D acid, 2,4-D ester, 2,4-D amine, glyphosate, metsulfuron methyl, tryclopyr, aminopyralid, Brush & Basal Oil, Conquer, Crop Oil Concentrate, Forest Crop Oil, Hasten and/or MSO Concentrate. See ODF notification 2016-781-00195, call Robin Biesecker at 998-2283 with questions.



HEAR YE,
HEAR YE !!

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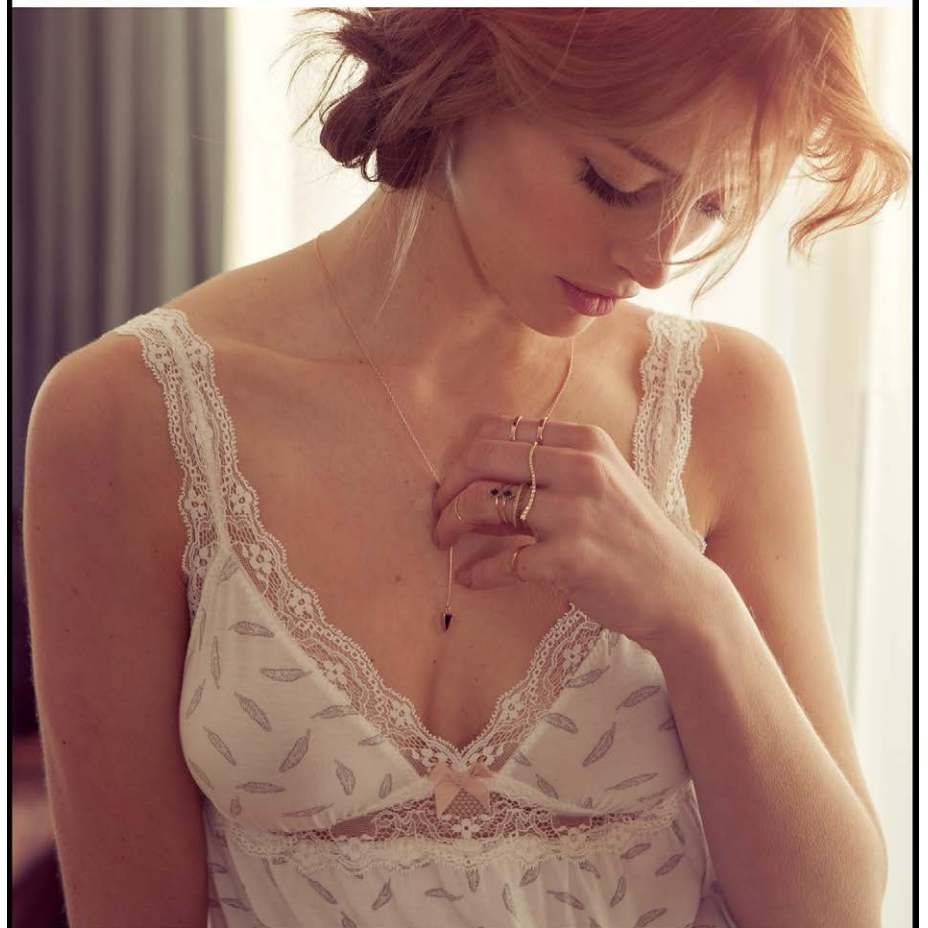


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