

THE WAYWARD ARTS

Alex Cipolle's excellent article on the state of the arts in Eugene neglected to mention the emergence of a vibrant art scene in Springfield.

It is true that the city of Eugene has chosen to cut its already minimal arts funding in favor of making Eugene a destination city for spectator sports such as Ducks football and the track and field championships. The idea, I assume, is that sports fans would be more interested in swilling microbrews and scarfing down some Sizzle Pie than they would be in looking at a work of art.

While this has happened, however, Springfield's arts scene has become much more interesting. The Springfield Museum regularly has fascinating exhibits, and its annual art show and monthly art walk distinguishes itself from Eugene by having more interesting art and patrons who actually show an interest and enthusiasm for art. I cannot help but be reminded of the way that Brooklyn developed a vibrant art scene when gentrification displaced the arts from Manhattan.

Of course, gentrification then displaced the arts from Brooklyn. This seems to already be happening in Springfield. I guess we should just enjoy the Springfield arts scene while it lasts.

Art Bollmann
Eugene

EPD IGNORES CODE

The Eugene Police Department has refused to issue any citations to businesses and managers of businesses who willingly and knowingly block handicapped parking. This has been the case for nearly 15 years. There has been the same person at the head of EPD for that same period.

Recently I made a complaint to the city of Eugene because of handicapped parking spots that were removed from the EPD lot. In all, there were three spots removed. Two of those spots were for staff and one was removed for the public.

My complaint pointed out that the city code makes it illegal to remove parking spots because it shows that the EPD will not hire people with disabilities. I also pointed out that removing those spots

actually creates barriers to employment. These things are, in my opinion, obvious.

I was contacted by EPD and told that they were in compliance regarding handicapped parking, even though they had removed the spots. I believed them but decided to check for myself. I was astonished to find that there were actually 26 parking spots, and the law requires two handicapped spots with an unloading zone for 26 parking spots.

I am very saddened that the EPD would stoop so low for just one spot in the front; and to deny employment based on disability is, again, illegal. Additionally, the spot for the disabled that was removed in the front was legally required and was already there. The removal of that spot was an illegal action according to city code as well as state and federal law.

I was told by a city employee that all spots were removed by the authority of the police chief. Are you surprised?

Fred W. Williams
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: Melinda McLaughlin, EPD's spokesperson, tells us police headquarters has one handicapped parking space for the 24 public parking spaces "which is

the code requirement." Regarding EPD employee parking, she says only two out of 86 spaces are handicapped parking and "depending on whether the employee parking surface lot and secure underground lot are counted as one parking facility or two, we would be short either two accessible spots or one accessible spot. ... We will be speaking with the building official and determining the exact number of accessible spots that will be added. ... We are thankful this has been brought to our attention."

SUBSIDIZED ARTISTS?

As I read the cover story Feb. 4 on the travails of the art community in Eugene, the same conclusion keeps coming to the fore (and this is nothing new): The city of Eugene *doesn't care* about supporting the visual arts, or any arts, for that matter, nor should they. It is not the job of any government entity to support artists. In fact, for an artist, this is a very dangerous situation.

History is replete with artists who were "supported" by governments, religions or the wealthy. Their art may have been monumental and noteworthy in the world of art history, but it (and the artist) were also controlled by the persons paying their way. I think it's great if dancers, actors, musicians or sculptors can organize, fund

HOT AIR SOCIETY BY TONY CORCORAN

Intimidation Tactics

GORILLA THEATER COMES TO LITTLE COTTAGE GROVE

When I returned from my last visit to Malheur in early January, my friend Gail Hoelzle told me about another Cottage Grover named Jessica Campbell, who was over in Burns during the occupation, working as a community organizer for Oregon's Rural Organizing Project (ROP). Gail's description of what this young woman has been through was compelling. What follows derives from two interviews I did with Jessica Campbell.

Most of us here in Oregon didn't know much about Cliven Bundy and his sons, Ammon and Ryan, until the boys staged an armed takeover of the Malheur Wildlife Refuge headquarters last Jan. 2. And most of us have never experienced the face of *American* terrorism up close and personal. Granted, terrorism in other places is much uglier than in Oregon; but now, we can at least see its scummy shadow. After all, Burns is only 250 miles away.

Think about being a public employee over there; public employment accounts for nearly half of the jobs in Harney County. It's now almost six weeks into the standoff and the last holdouts of the Bundy Bunch and their supporters continue to hold Burns hostage with their national call for armed support. The Pacific Patriot Network, Three-Percenter, Oath Keepers, the Constitutional Sheriffs and Police Officers Association — maybe 100 outsiders total — are in Burns making their presence known to the locals. Think about trying to live a normal life and one day Franz Kafka shows up to write your story. You're being followed into the Safeway and harassed, you're being followed home by nameless strangers. WTF?

For years, Community Alliance of Lane County and the ROP have kept tabs on Oregon hate groups. ROP organizer Jessica Campbell began tracking many of these same folks as the result of a similar call to arms by the national militia groups in Josephine County over a BLM mining dispute in April of last year. Campbell is a 27-year-old graduate of Cottage Grove High School (2006) with a degree in bioinformatics and genomics from Oregon State University (2011). In 2006 Campbell was identified as one of Oregon's five "emerging leaders" with a grant from the Ford Foundation. Also in 2006 she joined ROP's board of directors.

In March and April of 2015, Campbell helped organize in Josephine County against the same militia groups that would arrive in Malheur this January. Last March, she attended and spoke at a Southern Poverty Law Center conference in Louisville, Kentucky, that had been infiltrated by the militia. By March 2015, the militia started targeting her. On Facebook and Twitter, she was misidentified as an FBI undercover agent. One email suggested that she and Gov. Kate Brown be dismembered.

When she returned home from the conference, the militia turned up the heat. They tracked down her address. One night at 3 am, an unrecognized pickup truck parked next to her driveway gate, left the engine idling, then pulled away when her partner opened the front door. Another very late night, two people with flashlights walked in her pasture near her rural house. When she arrived a few days later in Grants Pass, she was openly followed to and from appointments. Several times after community meetings at a bakery there, hostile men would be sitting on her car, only to walk away when she approached. In another incident, she suspects someone loosened the lug nuts on the front wheels of her 2014 vehicle.

I asked Campbell what she was doing to protect herself. She was advised by the Southern Poverty Law Center folks to report all of these incidents to local law enforcement, Oregon State Police and the FBI. She has done so. She and her partner have placed motion-detection cameras on her property and on her mom's adjacent property. Both women have loaded weapons in their homes and both have been advised by law enforcement to apply for concealed weapons permits, which they have done.

Sadly, this is how domestic terrorism works. Each event weighs on you cumulatively. Studies tell us we don't think as clearly under these circumstances; anger and fear narrow our human responses during a threat. Our flight-or-fight response goes on alert. We react more stridently, more illogically.

As a 66-year-old geezer, I have to say I'm encouraged that there's a next generation of progressives like Jessica Campbell fighting the good fight. On the other hand, I worry for her and the foes she faces in the future. So should we all.

Tony Corcoran of Cottage Grove is a former state senator and a retired state employee.

