



ON MONDAY, FEB. 15, JULIAN 'ZEUS' MCCLURKIN OF THE HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS SPOKE TO THE KIDS AT THE EUGENE YMCA ABOUT THE ABCs OF BULLYING PREVENTION (ACTION, BRAVERY AND COMPASSION). KIDS WERE OUT OF SCHOOL FOR THE PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY.

PHOTOS BY TODD COOPER



Helzer says Lanker went around to the community with a letter for citizens to sign to get the sculpture made — everyone from Phil Knight to UO basketball coaches signed on.

"People who signed said this is what we want to do and this is where we want it to go," Helzer says. "I would like to see it stay there."

Helzer continues: "The proposals [for Kesey Square] I've seen treat [the statue] like a painting. It was designed as a 3-D piece so people can move around it."

He says the square should remain public but should be improved. "I think there are some possibilities to transform that square into a more fully functioning public space," Helzer says. "I'd like to see it a little more art-friendly, a little more family-friendly, but I think that could be accomplished without turning it in to a [six]-story building."

Mayor Kitty Piercy was asked if she was aware of the deed when the City Council and the city manager held an executive session Oct. 12 to consider an offer from a private local development group to purchase the square. "All we know is what is in the proposals we have received," Piercy writes. "It would have been good if we had received a memo on this prior to it being discovered by the R-G and actually prior to council deciding to take a look at the merits of the application for development."

The City Council will review options for Kesey Square Monday, Feb. 22, during a 5:30 pm work session and 7:30 pm public forum in Harris Hall, 125 E. 8th Ave. — *Alex V. Cipolle*

HORSE NEGLECT CASES CAUSE COUNTY CRITICISM

Frustration is growing with the way Lane County Animal Services is handling horse neglect cases, says horse rescuer Darla Clark of Strawberry Mountain Rescue and Rehabilitation Center.

Although Clark is in Douglas County, she gets frequent calls from concerned Lane County residents about horse neglect situations here, including a case in which horses were wandering on a roadway near a school in Cottage Grove and another situation in Elmira in which a herd of horses were alleged to be starving. Many of the Elmira horses were sold at the Eugene Livestock Auction on Feb. 14.

In the case of the horses on the road, Karen Sinclair, a teacher at Child's Way Charter School near Row River Road, says that for three months several horses have been showing up in the schoolyard and in the road.

Sinclair and some of the students would chase the horses out of the schoolyard, but she says an aggressive one would "offer to kick or bite." On one occasion, she says, a Cottage Grove High School student came into her classroom crying because she had nearly hit one of the horses driving past the charter school.

"An animal like that can cause a fatal accident easily," Sinclair says. Nearby residents report that at least one of the horses has been hit.



Sinclair and concerned people in the area say they called the Lane County Sheriff's Office and other agencies several times and never heard back.

Clark says callers were told by LCSO that animal services handles such situations and, in turn, LCAS said it was the sheriff's job.

Meanwhile, Clark says the horses are malnourished and very much at risk. Strawberry Mountain was getting calls but, she says, "a rescue organization has no legal authority to pick up horses without following the proper channels. In this case, in rural Lane County, that means callers must continue to report equine neglect and abuse to Lane County Animal Services."

County spokesperson Devon Ashbridge says, "When it is a matter of traffic safety rather than suspected neglect it is the responsibility of law enforcement. The most recent complaint mentioned that at least one horse looked underfed, which means that LCAS is now looking into the situation."

In January, Clark was also fielding calls about a herd of starving horses in Elmira. She noticed on the Eugene Livestock Auction's Facebook page that some of those horses were to be sold at ELA's monthly horse auction. Along with regular horse purchasers, ELA is frequented by "kill buyers" who buy horses and then ship them out of the country to be slaughtered for meat.

Ashbridge says, "The owner was given the opportunity to thin his herd." She says, "The owner has chosen to work with the auction. As long as he continues to comply with agreement and reduces his herd to an appropriate number, he will not be cited."

In Lane County most horse neglect cases are handled as code, not criminal violations. Clark says this leads to a lack of criminal history for those with repeat violations.

Images posted on social media by those who purchased some of the horses show skeletal animals with lice and fungal infestations. According Bruce Anderson of the Eugene Livestock Auction, the man who allegedly neglected the animals had previously purchased several of them at the auction, and several owners repurchased animals they had previously sold. Local group Oregon Horse Rescue aided in one of those sales.

Anderson says he does not know of a legal way he could prevent the man from buying animals at the auction again.

Ashbridge tells *EW*, "Our animal control officer and staff continue to be in contact with the owner to help ensure the agreement is kept. We have also ensured that there is adequate feed for the animals while the owner makes arrangements to reduce their numbers."

Clark says that the number of calls Strawberry Mountain is receiving from Lane County residents "has reached an all-time high."

She says, "County residents have shared with us that they feel unheard and are often argued with when reporting neglect to LCAS. That exasperation leads to a community that no longer has faith in their county leadership and citizens who feel that animal welfare is not a focus for Lane County." — *Camilla Mortensen*