

SLANT

The growing cost of **building a new City Hall** is no surprise; we reported on the seismic and cost changes back in January and the lack of offices for city councilors in February, but the issue goes back even further. When the city manager and his hired architects argued in 2014 that we could tear down the old City Hall and build a high-tech, energy efficient new City Hall for \$12.5 million (plus demolition and design costs), we were skeptical. The cost per square foot did not pencil out for such high-quality construction. Now, city staff is hesitant to estimate how much the new City Hall, with its very limited space, will end up costing. We predict the bids coming this spring will bring sticker shock; and of course Phase II, if it's ever built, could be another \$25 million or more. As Don Bishoff wrote in these pages back on Sept. 4, 2014, rebuilding our grand old City Hall would have saved taxpayers \$17 million.

And should we spend millions more to make the new City Hall more earthquake-resistant so that it will still function after The Big One? That was never the plan. If we have the money to spend, it would be better to invest in seismic enhancements to our older public schools. Those buildings shelter thousands of children and would naturally become neighborhood centers for people to gather and organize in times of disaster.

- If you stopped to get coffee at SeQuential Biofuels near **Lane Community College** Friday, March 25, or tried to have a beer at McShanes bar, you were out of luck. Businesses in the area who get their water from Willamette Water Company tell us that the water main break at LCC reduced the pressure in their water lines, and neighbors got a note telling them to boil water because "harmful bacteria" could be present. WWC gets its water through EWEB, which is where LCC also gets its water. Lance Robertson of EWEB tells us, "LCC's issues caused water pressure to drop in our system to below state-mandated

levels, requiring us to curtail service to six other EWEB customers" as well as the 180 customers of WWC "until we could test the water to make sure it was OK, as per state regulations." Things were up and running by Saturday night, but until then LCC was on lockdown without water for fire suppression only days before the start of the term.

- Last week's cover story on the **Hillary Clinton campaign** in Lane County drew some angry reactions from readers who assumed the story was an endorsement of Clinton (nope) and that we have ignored Bernie Sanders (also nope). Our Bernie cover story ran Feb. 18, and it's fair to also write about that other candidate in the race. Emotions are rising among lefties regarding who should be the Dem's choice in November. Let's hope that passion leads to high voter turnout in both the primary and in November.

- From the distant perspective of April Fool's Day, **we predict that Bernie will win** the May 17 Oregon primary, maybe by as many as 12 points. Not that our delegates will make much of a dent in Hillary's numbers, but we could be headed to brokered conventions, both R and D, next summer. So, could that lead to Paul Ryan vs. Joe Biden on the ballot for president? Any other suggestions?

- Have an **empty room or guesthouse**? How about a tool shed with a cot? We hear every motel, hotel and advertised B&B room in the area is already booked for the Olympic Team Trials in Eugene July 1-10. Some families plan to rent out their entire homes through an online service and leave town. You might end up with strangers in your bed, but a few thousand bucks in your pocket. Parking and traffic near campus will be awful, so rent out your bicycles as well. And speaking of track events and full motel rooms, the 10th annual **Eugene Marathon** is coming May 1 and it's billed as "one of the prettiest and flattest USATF certified marathons in the country," according to eugenemarathon.com. Our miles of riverfront bike paths will make it a very scenic run.

animal shelters.

"The bigger breeds, the ones that are harder to place, the ones that have a public perception of higher aggression and the ones that have bigger litters, those are animals that need to be spayed and neutered, or we are going to have an even bigger problem in the shelters than we do now," English says.

Since last year, SPOT, which for several years was funded through large grants from national foundations, no longer receives two of its largest grants, which have ceased to exist. Last year, SPOT funded just over \$31,000 in spay and neuter surgeries, and the nonprofit projects a need for \$40,000 this year.

English explains that without spaying and neutering, dogs face potential health risks. Female dogs are at risk of developing a fatal uterine infection called pyometra, which can be prevented through spaying. Male dogs are at risk of developing common testicular or prostate cancers, and can have less aggression if neutered before the age of six months.

At the fundraiser, guests can participate in a silent auction that includes the opportunity to be named as a character in author David Rosenfelt's new psychological thriller. Attendees can also win a collection of the complete series of *Downton Abbey*, among other prizes.

SPOT's fundraiser begins at 5:30 pm Saturday, April 9, at The Shedd, 868 High Street. Tickets are \$45 for one ticket, \$40 each for two and \$35 each for three or more. Find more info at spotspayneuter.org/events. ■



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