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SLANT

- A local politico raises the old question of the city of Eugene buying the EWEB building on the river for the **new Eugene City Hall** instead of proceeding with the itty-bitty city hall on the former site with all its problems of money, space, seismic safety and so on. Back in the day Councilor Mike Clark (now mayoral candidate) favored buying the EWEB building.

Councilor Betty Taylor (unopposed for re-election to the council) strongly opposed EWEB because of the location. She preferred the present site with architect Otto Poticha's suggested rebuild. Maybe that decision is history? Maybe a new council and mayor will want to take another look?

- No surprises here: The **Eugene Chamber of Commerce** endorsed Mike Clark for mayor, Josh Skov for the City Council seat vacated by George Brown and Pat Farr for the Lane County Board of Commissioners. The chamber committee was so generous in praise of Lucy Vinis for mayor that it makes us wonder why they didn't take the leap and endorse her.

- Every candidate running for office, statewide and locally, that EW has talked to tells us that **solving homelessness is a key issue** for the voters they meet while knocking on doors. Yet Eugene has put fencing under bridges that effectively denies shelter to the unhoused and on April 4, Springfield voted to ban panhandling. Are our city governments losing their compassion even as concern grows among their constituents? Under the changes to Springfield city code, motorists who transfer money, food or property to a pedestrian while on a street or highway in the city can be fined up to \$50. The move was justified, just as the fencing under bridges was, as a safety issue.

According to a presentation by lawyer Chad Jacobs at the 2015 League of Oregon Cities meeting, "Panhandling is a form of free speech protected by both the Oregon and United States Constitutions. Regulations of panhandling are therefore often challenged and found to be unconstitutional by state and federal courts." Jacobs said there is "very little chance of a federal or state court upholding a prohibition on panhandling." We should spend money on helping those in need, but instead, someone needs to take this to court.

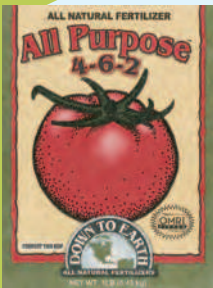
- We were saddened to hear last week that the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife **killed four wolves** in northeastern Oregon's Imnaha pack, including OR-4, father of famous wolf wanderer OR-7. The ODFW claimed the wolves were "involved in chronic livestock depredation" and authorized "lethal control," taking out OR-4, his mate and two yearling pups. This killing was a particularly hard blow to wolf advocates after Gov. Kate Brown signed a bill into law that legislatively removed wolves from Oregon's endangered species list and blocked pending litigation from environmental groups.

The ODFW estimates 110 wolves live in Oregon, and it's laughable to think that so few wolves constitute a stable population. Now that number has dropped by four. Shame on the ODFW and state officials for instating a plan that does not require nonlethal conflict prevention measures, and shame on Gov. Brown for trading away the protected status of wolves.

- It's good news that **more young people are coming into the political arena**, both as activists and candidates. We have been watching that in Lane County from school board to city council to county commission races. Nationally, young voters have been fueling the Sanders candidacy, prompting concerns about where they will go if Bernie is not the nominee. Will Berners support Hillary if she wins the nomination? Or Joe Biden? Or Elizabeth Warren? We hope so.

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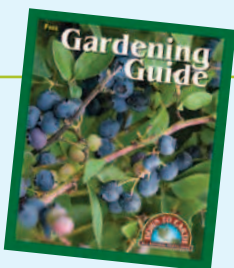


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