

patient services, given the seemingly large amounts of cash reserves on hand that made them so attractive to Centene.

Oregon should take their lead from Washington, California, New York, Missouri and Massachusetts, which have successfully secured premium refunds totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars in the form of rebates from their respective health insurers back to the consumer.

Mark Hudson
Eugene

HIT OR MISS METAL CROWD

In response to Steve Boggs' letter [Letters, June 23], I, too, went to the Voivod show. I was happy to see a band that I have listened to since I was a teen (43 now). All the openers were good, but my only qualm was the crowd.

The Eugene metal community can be hit or miss at times, unless it's a big name or a more well known name. The half-empty floor made me wish more people showed up

for such a great band such as Voivod. Yes, Voivod is well known to the hardcore fans, but maybe not as much to others. I just hope this doesn't sway other big names to skip Eugene to go to PDX instead.

Jason Gast
Eugene

RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

Christopher Michaels [Letters, June 23] will be happy to learn that there is currently a campaign to bring ranked-choice voting to our neighbor Benton County. They need volunteers and donations to get it on the ballot and pass it! The backers intend this as a start toward bringing it statewide. For more info go to betterballotbenton.com.

Alan F. Zundel
Eugene

GOD'S WRATH

Well, I feel very sorry upon hearing of the tragedy at Orlando. But as I took up my Bible, I opened at the story of the

destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. After re-reading chapter and verse, I can't help but think God is giving us an example of his punishment for perverts and deviants. You cannot escape the eye of the Lord!

Lon Miller
Drain

DANGEROUS BREED

What's with the continual pit bull love affair that *EW* seems to have ["Puppy Love," June 23]? With all the angst spewed about firearms in virtually every issue (deservedly so in some instances), I would feel much safer in the presence of a firearm than a pit.

In fact, the only way I'd feel remotely safe around one of these "bear traps with a body attached" is with a gun at easy reach. Naifs like Sophie Gamand can try to rehabilitate the image of this dangerous breed 'til the cows come home, but it won't change the fact that society's best interest would be served by complete eradication.

I'd be happy to provide the flowers for the funeral celebration.

Karl Stout
Eugene

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Wow, we have a new American record, at least 50 killed in a mass shooting by a sick, ignorant man with allegiance to ISIS. Certainly a portion of the Jewish and Christian world will now find more reason to hate Muslims, but before they do, they themselves must understand they share responsibility.

Yes, all you self-righteous Christians, if you are going to waltz around this planet and tell everyone they are going to burn in hell if they don't worship your version of God, you must share the blame for the hate.

Furthermore, all of we Americans that consume more than our share of the planet's resources, must also acknowledge

VIEWPOINT BY LYNNE FESSENDEN

Local Food for All

DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS COMES TO LANE COUNTY

Summer is here, with heat that is ripening berries and tomatoes. For we locavores, lovers and eaters of local food, paradise is at hand. However, local farm fresh foods are still far from the default choice for most, and for many households, fresh produce is unaffordable.

To help get more locally grown fruits and vegetables into the hands of those struggling to put food on the table, Willamette Farm and Food Coalition is partnering with the Lane County Farmers Market to bring Double Up Food Bucks to Lane County.

Double Up Food Bucks is a nutrition incentive program that encourages SNAP participants to shop at participating farmers markets. Starting July 2, any SNAP participant who spends \$10 of their benefits at the Lane County Farmers Market will receive an additional \$10 in "food bucks" to purchase fruits and vegetables from market vendors.

Formerly referred to as "food stamps," SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. SNAP provides financial assistance to low-income households to supplement the monthly cost of purchasing food. Within Oregon, SNAP is sometimes referred to by the name of the electronic benefits transfer (EBT) system card — the Oregon Trail card — that is used to deliver SNAP and other benefits to residents who qualify. Most farmers markets in Lane County have the capability to accept SNAP benefits.

Helping more households buy fresh, healthy food from local farmers is a simple yet powerful concept. In Eugene-Springfield, 40,600 low-income households receive federal SNAP benefits, totaling more than \$8 million per month. Any portion of those federal dollars that can be redirected to our farmers will do double duty, providing a dollar in new sales for area farmers and a dollar in real nutrition assistance, improving community health and keeping food dollars circulating in our local economy.

Originated by Fair Food Network in Michigan, the Double Up Food Bucks program has been adapted for use throughout Oregon by the Portland-based Farmers Market Fund. Double Up has transformed agriculture in the state of Michigan by supporting a massive increase in SNAP use at farmers markets.

Michigan farmers made more than \$5 million from SNAP sales in the last five



years and they are growing more produce because of it. Annual SNAP sales at farmers markets across the state have grown to \$1.7 million, placing Michigan among the top five states in the nation.

Although we know that eating more fruits and vegetables can improve our health, it's often hard to prioritize them when grocery budgets are tight. In Michigan: 87 percent of Double Up participants report eating more fruits and vegetables, 69 percent report trying new fruits and vegetables, and 66 percent report decreasing the amount of

junk food they eat.

Increasing access to locally grown food for low-income Lane County residents is integral to the mission of Willamette Farm and Food Coalition. As part of the statewide effort, the Eugene-based nonprofit plans to expand the Double Up program to all farmers markets in Lane County over the next two years.

Double Up Food Bucks is a three-way win:

1. SNAP shoppers will purchase more fresh healthy foods for their families.
2. Farmers market vendors will sell more produce.
3. More federal benefit dollars will stay in our community, strengthening our local economy.

With food assistance making up the greatest single expenditure in the federal agriculture budget, redirecting even a small percentage of SNAP funds toward healthy, locally grown food can be a game changer.

Lane County Economic Development recognizes the positive impacts of SNAP incentives on individuals and the local economy and has committed \$20,000 toward establishing Double Up at the Lane County Farmers Market this season. Private foundations, businesses and individuals are also stepping up to support this program.

Make a gift today — invest in our food economy and help us expand access to locally grown produce for those who can least afford it.

Lane County Farmers Market will begin offering Double Up Food Bucks on Saturday, July 2. Other area markets offering Double Up Food Bucks this season include: Creswell Farmers Market, Spencer Creek Growers Market, and the FOOD for Lane County Youth Farm stand in Springfield. For more information or to make a contribution, see LaneFood.org.

Lynne Fessenden is the executive director of Willamette Farm and Food Coalition, a community nonprofit connecting farmers and consumers in Lane County.