

- There will be a “good old-fashioned teach-in” on **U.S. civics and fighting oppression** 3 pm Friday, Nov. 25, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1685 W. 13th Avenue. Lane County Humans for Respect holds the event the day after Thanksgiving, partnering with the Adult Religious Education program at the church. Search for the event “Teach-in” on Facebook for more info.

- BEST (Better Eugene-Springfield Transit) is part of a diverse collaboration of 10 local groups hosting Jarrett Walker, a Portland-based consultant who has been helping communities all over North America, Australia and Europe improve their transit service. Walker will discuss **“Abundant Access: Public Transit as an Instrument of Freedom”** and talk about his experiences improving transit. Wednesday, Nov. 30, 4:45 - 6:45 pm, Downtown Athletic Club.

- From 7:30 am to 3:30 pm on Sunday, Nov. 27, **Morning Glory Café**, 450 Willamette Street, will donate 50 percent of its sales to Eugene’s **Civil Liberties Defense Center**. The CLDC is helping to provide legal support and representation to the land and water protectors in North Dakota. CLDC says, “We are working with the Water Protector Legal Collective/NLG-formerly Red Owl Legal Collective to defend the hundreds of activists who have been arrested at Standing Rock.”

- Looking for ways to let your neighbors and business patrons know that you are **pro-minority, pro-immigrant, pro-LGBTQ, pro-Muslim, pro-women and anti-bigotry and anti-hate**? Check out page 23 of this paper for a poster you can tear out and hang in you window courtesy of Lisa Magnum of OKO gift shop in Portland and Jason Leivian of Floating World Comics. The couple designed and letter-pressed the “welcome to all” posters at the Independent Publishing Resource Center. Also, on page 2 you can grab a poster from The Main Street Alliance, a national network of small business coalitions working to build a new voice for small businesses on important public policy issues, which says it is “deeply disturbed by hateful rhetoric and violence aimed at our Muslim and Arab community members, at refugees fleeing violence, at immigrants, at women and at people of color in our communities.” Fight hate.

LANE COUNTY AREA SPRAY SCHEDULE

Oxbow Timber 1, 679-3311, plans to hire RRC Forestry Roseburg Resources, 541-679-3311, to aerially apply urea fertilizer to 708 acres south of Noti and Vaughn Road, near Warden and Hardy Creeks. See ODF notification 2016-781-12752; call Dan Menk at 541-935-2283 with questions.

Compiled by Gary Hale, *Forestland Dwellers*: 342-8332, forestlanddwellers.org.

INSTA
TWEETING
THE GRAMS
TO YOUR FACE
IN CYBERSPACE



@EUGENEWEEKLY

BY KELLY KENOYER

CALL FOR DOWNTOWN HOMELESS SHELTER

The presence of the homeless in downtown Eugene has long been a contentious issue. But the idea of sheltering the unhoused in the heart of the city instead of trying to drive them out has not received much attention.

The majority of shelter options are in other areas, particularly in Ward 7, home to the Whiteaker, Trainsong, River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods.

On Monday, Nov. 14, the Eugene City Council decided to expand the Rest Stop Program into every ward in the city, creating six new Rest Stops and opening 120 new spots for the homeless. However, with most services located in or near downtown, there is a pull in opposite directions for the homeless who need to access resources such as counseling, food and medical care.

Emily Semple, the councilor-elect for Ward 1, says that eight out of 10 of her constituents say their biggest concern is homelessness. Her ward makes up most of downtown Eugene. Semple would like to see a shelter built downtown but says there aren’t enough funds in the budget currently.

Village housing, Bryant says, residents stay during the day, using wi-fi to search for jobs or do school work. According to Bryant, “having a [day-use] drop-in center may be a greater need.”

Though Bryant isn’t certain of the best location for a shelter, he says that having shelter available decreases crime in adjacent areas. “Because we do not have adequate facilities is why we’re having those problems,” Bryant says.

In order for these facilities to be built, Bryant says the city and the population need to make a commitment to create and fund a program. The challenges after the commitment are funding and location, but without a commitment from the government, nothing will be done.

Homelessness in this area is covered by the jurisdiction of a few different governments: Eugene, Springfield and Lane County government. Lane County is the main governmental organization involved in efforts to house the homeless, according to Steve Manela, the Lane County human services division manager, who says the county has a long-term goal to add “150 year-round beds and 150 seasonal beds”

‘It’s already cold. It’s already rainy. We need something last month. I would love to see a greater sense of urgency and a greater sense of community engagement.’

— HEATHER SIELICKI, HOMELESS ADVOCATE

“When I went to the budget committee, [city manager] Jon Ruiz said to put in \$500,000 for something attractive for the games” in 2021, Semple says, referring to the IAAF world track championships coming to Eugene. “I suggested that we take that and use it to start planning for a shelter. I think that’d be a wonderful thing to do for the city. It’d revitalize downtown, and it’d make downtown more beautiful for locals and visitors.”

Semple says, “They decided to use the \$500,000 differently.” City Manager Ruiz could not be reached for comment.

The city budget to support those living in poverty was a little more than \$1.2 million in 2015, and the budget for affordable housing and job creation combined in 2017 will be \$2,854,000. This is less than 1 percent of Eugene’s total budget of \$327.9 million for 2017.

The 2016 point-in-time count of homeless people by Lane County numbered 1,451, and of those, 934 were neither in transitional housing or emergency shelter.

According to Dan Bryant with the First Christian Church of Eugene, there is a difference between shelters and the Rest Stops. “In theory, Rest Stops are supposed to be gone during the day.”

Bryant, who is executive director of SquareOne Villages, says that’s a big problem for the homeless. At Opportunity

of emergency shelter, in addition to 600 units of permanent supportive housing.

The goal, Manela says, is that “everybody in Lane County has a housing or shelter option available to them. It doesn’t mean the end to homelessness, but everyone has the option to come inside.”

This plan would be implemented over the next five years, but doesn’t include specific plans for a downtown shelter.

According to Semple, “I think it’s important that [a shelter] is close enough to downtown that it’s walkable from the bus station, the train station and to social services.”

These plans aren’t fast enough for Heather Sielicki, a homeless advocate in the West Eugene neighborhood. “It’s already cold. It’s already rainy. We need something last month. I would love to see a greater sense of urgency and a greater sense of community engagement,” Sielicki says.

Last year Sielicki created a petition advocating for a public shelter in Lane County that has nearly 1,000 signatures. She’s hoping to get 3,000 by the end of the year and bring it to the City Council and the mayor.

As for the city, Sielicki says, “I don’t think they’re doing enough.” ■

Those who want to express their concern about the issue can give public comment at City Council meetings. Those who want to offer property for tiny house communities to help the homeless can contact Heather Sielicki’s program at winterstrategies@gmail.com.