

EW runs “Activist Alert” in our pages and online as often as space allows and events demand. Wondering what you can do to battle the evils and insecurities of a Trump administration? Activist Alert is a list of the actions people around Lane County are undertaking to make the world a better place. Send events to editor@eugeneweekly.com with Activist Alert in the subject line.

- **Congressman Peter DeFazio is holding community forums** 10:30 am Saturday, Feb. 25, at Lane Community College’s gym in Bldg. 5 and at 2:30 pm at the LaSells Stewart Center at OSU in Corvallis. After the Eugene forum ends at noon, DeFazio will join Sen. Jeff Merkley for a rally to save health care at noon, also at LCC.

- Joe Cirincione, president of the global security foundation Ploughshares Fund and author of *Nuclear Nightmares: Securing the World Before it is Too Late* will speak about “**Nuclear Policy in the Trump Administration: Real Dangers, Real Possibilities,**” via Skype 4 pm Sunday, Feb. 26, in Rm. 145 Straub Hall, 15th and Onyx, on the UO campus. For more information: CALC at 541-485-1755 or calclane.org. For more background on the issue read an online viewpoint, “Nuclear issues in the time of Trump,” at eugeneweekly.com.

- “In an effort to build a **network of activists working in solidarity,**” the group Disrupt Eugene says it is “hosting a general assembly [GA] with the focus of forming a group that can effectively organize against the current political climate threatening so many.” The GA is 4 pm to 6 pm Sunday, Feb. 26 at Whirled Pies, 199 W. 8th Avenue.

- Conservation group Oregon Wild is holding an **Oregon Wild Ones Advocacy Training** 6:30 pm Tuesday, Feb. 28, at Claim 52 Brewing, 1030 Tyjinn Street, Suite 1. Chandra LeGue of Oregon Wild says, “The Oregon Wild Ones advocacy training program is all about giving people who want to learn how to be more engaged and effective in advocating for Oregon’s wildlands, wildlife and waters, the skills they need to do so.” The trainings address letter writing, giving public testimony and using social media. An RSVP is requested at oregonwild.org/events, or call 541-344-0675 for more info.

POLLUTION UPDATE

Cottage Grove Fined for Violating Clean Water Act

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) recently fined the city of Cottage Grove \$4,500 for Clean Water Act violations committed in the city’s operation of its wastewater treatment plant, which is located along the Coast Fork Willamette River on North Douglas Avenue. Specifically, the city discharged high temperature effluent to the river on multiple occasions in June; applied “recycled water” that was high in bacteria to land on multiple occasions in July; and was late in submitting annual reports to DEQ for 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. The city’s Clean Water Act permit expired in 2014 (see story in news this issue), however DEQ allows the city to continue discharging to the river pursuant to the terms of the expired permit.

Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project



NEWS

BY CORINNE BOYER

RON WYDEN HOSTS TOWN HALL, ADDRESSES PROBLEMS WITHIN THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Oregon’s U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden entered a crowded Lane Community College gymnasium Feb. 19 with the statement that “no topic is off limits.” He was met with loud applause and cheering from the packed town hall meeting.

An estimated 1,500 people showed up at LCC on Sunday afternoon. Since the inauguration, thousands of people in the Eugene community have shown up to protests, marches and activism workshops to denounce recent actions taken by President Donald Trump.

Wyden, a Democrat who has held the senate seat since 1996, is hosting town halls across the state through the end of the week. He took more than a dozen questions in an hour and addressed a plethora of concerns voiced by attendees, ranging from the role of big money in politics to what Wyden is doing to protect democracy under the Trump administration.

With regard to “dark money” — large sums of money spent anonymously in political campaigns — Wyden said that “Citizens United is an abomination.” He added that he voted for a constitutional amendment to limit campaign spending.

“We’re going to have to address a whole host of issues relating to opening up democracy,” Wyden said of the Trump administration. He told the crowd that he doesn’t believe 3 million people voted illegally, saying there’s “zero evidence” supporting the president’s claim.

Wyden addressed the president’s treatment of the press. “A lot of publications are looking at how this administration is fighting leakers, when they are really objecting to people writing things they don’t like,” he said. “Censorship is a problem, and self-censorship is going to be a problem.”

In a recent press conference, Trump confirmed his administration’s leaks were real, but nonetheless called the news about them fake news.

Speaking to *Eugene Weekly* later by phone, Wyden addressed censorship. “I’m going to use all of the tools at my disposal starting with being the co-chair for the Whistleblower [Protection] Caucus to look for ways to protect those who are speaking out.”

When asked about the Trump administration’s attacks on the media, threats to civil liberties, a travel ban and whether Trump’s administration and its actions are rep-

resentative of a democracy, Wyden said, “Well, look, the president won the election.”

He continued: “What I’m saying now is political change is not top-down — it doesn’t start in Washington D.C. and trickle down to the grassroots. It’s bottom up as people begin speaking up.”

The fact that thousands of people have begun showing up at town halls and becoming involved “is what the founding fathers wanted government to look like,” he added.

Russian ties to the Trump administration and the U.S. election came up several times during the town hall. Wyden told the crowd that “we are headed toward a special prosecutor” to investigate the administration’s ties to Russia.

About the Russian investigation, Wyden later told *EW*, “We’ve asked for [U.S. Attorney General] Jeff Sessions to recuse himself, and we’ll have to see what he says.”

The final question during the town hall meeting was asked after members of the crowd began chanting “Immigration!”

“I’m a first-generation Jewish kid,” Wyden said. “I think we ought to start by saying we are a nation of immigrants.” Wyden’s father escaped from Nazi Germany and the senator lost family members in the Holocaust.

He said the debate over immigration has gotten bizarre. “These thinly veiled religious tests are unconstitutional.”

When asked about Trump’s latest failure to denounce anti-Semitism at a press conference last week, Wyden responded by calling it “troubling” and said that, in reality, “all discrimination is very troubling.”

The senator said that the reluctance to mention the Holocaust “is getting to be a pattern. I think that Americans increasingly are going to be speaking out against these kinds of policies. That’s why they are coming to these meetings.”

On Tuesday, Feb. 21, Trump made his first comments addressing anti-Semitism threats, calling them “horrible” and “painful and a very sad reminder of the work that still must be done to root out hate and prejudice and evil,” according to Reuters. ■

A list of Wyden’s statewide town halls is at wyden.senate.gov. Congressman Peter DeFazio is holding community forums 10:30 am Saturday, Feb. 25, at Lane Community College’s gym in building 5 and at 2:30 pm at the LaSells Stewart Center at OSU in Corvallis. After the Eugene forum ends at noon, DeFazio will join Sen. Jeff Merkley for a rally to save health care at noon also at LCC.