

'BA-ROCK' SPIRIT AT BACH FEST

Applause for Will Kennedy's "Bach for the 21st Century" (July 13). I especially appreciated Kennedy's "outsider" probes about the festival's relevance, audience and programming.

As a living (!) composer, I'll add some insight: Matthew Halls comes to Eugene on a European wave of authentic performance and research that has produced some amazing work and challenges our sense of history. What we hear in these cases, as Kennedy testifies, is pretty rock 'n' roll. Authentic performances remind us where rock came from, and confuse the source of (current) classical performance.

But I'm not sure bringing "real" rockers to the OBF stage will alleviate concerns or

doubts about the future of ticket sales or keep the festival "relevant." Anyone remember Bang On A Can's live interpretation of Brian Eno's tape-loop, *Music for Airports*? There is a universally deplored realization of Eno's genre-defining work.

If that only raises an inquisitive eyebrow, you'll groan at the idea of Aphex Twin as performed by the BBC Orchestra. Yes, that happened.

On the other hand, there is a strong list of contemporary composers OBF could employ who would illuminate the "baroque" spirit of Bach as it flourishes today.

Drawing on the energy of Authentic Early Music Practice, the "new" OBF has potential to change the game for Eugene music culture across the boards. Imagine a new generation of folk and pop artists

influenced by Early Music exploration and bringing Eugene to a ... Harry Partch-esque era. (I can dream, can't I?)

Nicholas Chase, *Composer Eugene*

CITY NEEDS INTERNAL AUDITOR

Recently I was handed a flyer suggesting Eugene needed an "independent" auditor. The auditor would be responsible for providing unbiased verification of public spending, strengthening internal controls and increasing trust of government. Sounds like a good idea.

Yes, transparency in government is necessary. That's why a majority of Eugene residents voted for Mayor Vinis, who ran on a platform of transparency in government.

Looking over the flyer I was given, I noticed one serious flaw. The "City Accountability" group advocating for an internal auditor calls for a ballot measure to make this an elected position. This would be a big mistake.

A politically elected independent auditor, by definition, cannot remain independent. This could provide opportunities for serious government mismanagement with behind the scene deals. An elected independent auditor is not a wise way to go.

Another possibility is to appoint an internal auditor. Also not a good idea, because we all know the temptation would be to appoint a "connected" friend of city administration. Not the way to insure transparency and trust.

For a true "independent" auditor, the

VIEWPOINT BY BOB WARREN

It's The Jobs, Stupid

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE ABOUT STABLE EMPLOYMENT

Why write a column about economic development? Lots of people just yawn when they hear the term. But, as they say, write about what you know, and I do know economic development. I did it for a living. And, besides, I actually find it interesting.

But here's why I write the column: There is a lot of nonsense that masquerades as economic development, and someone needs to call "them" on it.

It's often used as an excuse for almost anything when someone in power is trying to help someone make a buck or get re-elected. For those guys, just about everything qualifies as economic development. And, because a lot of people find it boring and no one really knows what it is anyway, it often gets a pass, regardless of how ridiculous it is.

In his recent novel, *The Whistler*, John Grisham writes: "Bribes weren't necessary in their part of the country. Take any kind of growth, from high-end, gated communities, to low-end shopping centers, fix up a slick brochure filled with half truths and call it economic development with the promise of tax revenues and jobs, and elected officials reached for their rubber stamps."

This brings to mind the recent attempt by the city of Springfield to absorb Seavey Loop and zone it industrial. Or the current scheme by the city of Eugene to create yet another business park on prime farm land on Clear Lake Road. Both of these efforts are touted as economic development and approved by the rubber-stampers.

Neither of these efforts actually have much to do with economic development. They have more to do with helping land developers snuggle up to the public trough.

I recently asked a friend what he thought was meant by the term economic development? He said "jobs." He got it right — it's jobs. While economic development is often used as a cover to help someone make money or get re-elected, creating jobs is what it should be about.

And that's why I got into it. I wanted to help create jobs. I didn't do it to expand urban growth boundaries to help land developers make a buck. I didn't do it to help private water companies create customers. I did it to help create jobs, and not just any jobs, but good jobs. The kind of jobs that change people's lives for the better. The kind of jobs that support and enrich families and communities.

I originally got into it during Oregon's Great Recession of the 1980s. This was a tsunami that sucked the economic air out of many of Oregon's rural communities. Forest product processing mills represented most or all of the high-wage manufacturing jobs in these communities. When the recession of the '80s shut down Oregon's forest products industry, the rural mills were among the first industries to go and the last to come back. Many never came back.

My first economic development project was as a district aide for Rep. Peter DeFazio in the late '80s. By then, the statewide recession was waning, but not

in rural Oregon. Rural communities that had lost their manufacturing jobs were desperately seeking alternatives.

I worked on the successful recruitment of a company called Entek to the community of Lebanon. We didn't know it at the time, but the recruitment of Entek to Lebanon would prove absolutely critical to that community, changing its economic trajectory for the next several decades. It was the most significant economic development project Lebanon would see for the next 20 years.

Entek is a cutting-edge manufacturer of membranes used in batteries, doing high-technology research and development and manufacturing. The community and the company proved the perfect match for each other. These were high-wage jobs with benefits. The local workforce matched Entek's needs to a remarkable degree.

Entek proved to be a firm that believed in community development and support. The city and community-based nonprofits would benefit from an employer that acted as a citizen of the community.

The successful recruitment of Entek to Lebanon was personally fulfilling. I knew I had made a difference for the workers, their families and the community. That's what economic development can be about.

It's July 3, 2007, 20 years after the Entek recruitment and I am at the grand opening of the new Lowe's million-square-foot distribution center in Lebanon — the most significant economic development project in Lebanon since Entek. This, too, was my project. I had worked on it for two years.

Lowe's would be providing 500 nearly recession-proof jobs. I didn't know another great recession was about to land in rural Oregon but, when it did, these jobs proved to be secure.

And Lowe's, along with Entek, helped insulate Lebanon from yet another economic disaster.

I'm walking into the big Lowe's building with a large group of new employees and their families. There is an air of excitement as men and women show off their new locker room to their children, proud to be part of this. They are positive about the future. There is joy and happiness in the air. And it's real.

These are jobs that will not be dependent on the wild fluctuations of the forest industry, in a community that was as timber dependent as any other in the state. Lowe's, like Entek, acts as a responsible citizen of the community.

I had the privilege of helping both Entek and Lowe's locate in Lebanon and, to this day, maintain about 1,000 good jobs with two responsible companies. Other companies, also located in Lebanon, attracted by Entek and Lowe's, create yet more jobs. As I looked around on that day 10 years ago, I realized this was a new Lebanon. I knew this is what economic development should be about.

For a brief moment I wondered why I felt such pride in being part of what was happening on that day in Lebanon ten years ago. But it was obvious, I told myself: It's the jobs, stupid.