

# NEW NEIGHBORS

*Southeast Neighbors to vote on a new rest stop in South Eugene*

Representatives from Nightingale Health Sanctuary met Aug. 29 with the Southeast Neighbors Board to discuss turning the one car camp in South Eugene into a full-functioning rest stop to provide shelter for the homeless.

A rest stop is “somewhere for people on the streets to go, be safe and rest while they get connected with services, jobs and eventually permanent housing,” said Nightingale co-manager Nathan Showers.

Eugene has four active rest stops, all located in or near the Whiteaker neighborhood. A rest stop at 3500 Hilyard Street would be the first outside the Whiteaker area, part of a city effort to bring help for the homeless to other parts of the city.

While the four rest stops benefit from being close to the Eugene Mission and its services, the one in South Eugene would be on the Good Samaritan parking lot — an organization that seeks to “provide exceptional care and services to seniors and others in need in our community” — and Good Samaritan, owned by the Lutheran church, says they support plans for the new rest stop entirely.

The rest stop would be made up of Conestoga huts — “essentially tiny homes,” Showers said — fit for one person. The huts cost between \$1,000 and \$2,500 to build.

Showers and co-manager Tracy Forest began the meeting by sharing the process for admittance into the rest stop: Potential residents must fill out a detailed application — discussing their previous living situations, their reason for wanting to stay in the rest stop, their goals for different timelines down the road — and complete a background check and an interview.

Forest and Showers emphasized that they’ll pay close attention to the new residents of the rest stop, but they’ll likely go unnoticed by other residential neighbors — seemingly one of the neighborhood board’s biggest hesitations.

Residents would likely leave the property from 9 am until 4 pm to find a hot shower, look for a job or go find and receive various treatments and services. “It is the secure, safe place to sleep that allows residents to seek out other resources during the day, and we have processes in place to ensure they will,” Showers said.

Different local services would come in each Monday and Tuesday to meet with residents, help sort out what treatment or services they may need, and get them on a path to receiving them. Laurel Hill Center, Willamette Family and ShelterCare are groups that would frequently help.

Attending frequent meetings, following rules that include “no

dumpster diving or being a bother to any other neighbor” and taking part in “gate duty” — four-hour shifts monitoring the gate into the area — would be requirements for living at the stop.

“Having gate duty in different shifts as well as the other mandatory requirements teaches commitment and responsibility, and helps create community,” Forest said.

If residents fail to comply, there is a write-up policy in place and residents would eventually be asked to leave. According to Showers, that’s rarely a problem at other rest stops.

The Southeast Neighbors Board presented hesitations about the location of the rest stop, as it would be in “fairly close proximity” to residential areas. Regan Watjus, a representative from the city of Eugene, says the challenge is to find passable sites.

“An ordinance in 2015 declared rest stops shouldn’t be close to schools or residential areas, which together make up a lot of Eugene,” Watjus said. “So it’s been a challenge to find viable sites, but this one works.”

If the stop is approved, Forest and Showers say they want to have up to 20 huts for residents, adding two per month until they’ve hit full capacity. “But while we want to take in as many as we can, if the board only wants 12, we’ll do 12,” Forest said.

Currently at the car camp, water is given from Good Samaritan, any electricity comes from solar panels, and clothing, food and resources for Conestoga huts all come from donations. Showers says he will attend a training next month to learn to build the huts himself, and he has a friend who has offered his shop as a place to build.

“We have a lot of friends who have transitioned out of living situations like this, and it’s a beautiful thing to have them now come back and help,” Showers said. “We want to show that this can be created and succeed with very little money but a lot of volunteers and community support.”

According to Watjus, an “Outreach Handbook” is available online and by request from the city manager’s office that discusses everything one needs to know about a rest stop. She says she is in full support of helping with outreach efforts because having community support will “greatly help the chance of success when presenting this to City Council.”

Forest said that the duration residents stay in rest stops commonly runs anywhere from three months to one year. “The goal is that people come, we help them get on their feet and then they transition out,” Watjus said. “The only thing we’d continue to ask from the neighborhood is friendliness, the same kindness you’d offer to any other neighbor.”

If the Southeast Neighbors Board votes to recommend the rest stop, the matter will be presented to the Eugene City Council immediately, with the hope to begin building huts before winter.

The Southeast Neighbors Board vote takes place 7 pm Tuesday, Sept. 19, at the Hilyard Community Center. ■

**Sunrise**  
Asian Food Market

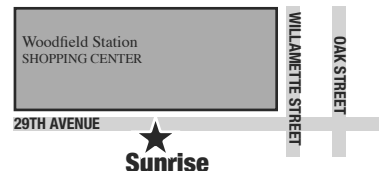
**Now Featuring Middle Eastern Food & Vegetarian Items**

Including Vegetarian Seafood, Meat Substitutes & Snacks

**Asian Groceries**

Seaweed, rice, noodles, frozen products, deli, snacks, drinks, sauces, spices, produce, housewares, and more.

Sushi & Asian deli take-out



[www.sunriseasianfood.com](http://www.sunriseasianfood.com)

M-Th 9am-7pm • F 9am-8pm • Sa 9am-7pm • Su 10am-6pm

70 W. 29th Ave. Eugene • 541-343-3295

**EVERGREEN NUTRITION**

**Additional 20% OFF\***

**NEW CHAPTER**

**IN SEPTEMBER**

**Fermented whole-food nutrients that are easily absorbed & utilized to help support overall health & wellness.**

New Chapter offers a full line of herbs, mushrooms & multivitamins that are formulated to meet specific health needs.

• Non-GMO Project Verified

\*OUR REGULAR PRICE IS 10% OFF SRP.

1653 Willamette Street  
M-F 9-6 • Sat 10-5 • Sun 11-5  
**FREE OFF-STREET PARKING**

541-485-5100

[www.evergreennutrition.com](http://www.evergreennutrition.com)

**Harlequin**



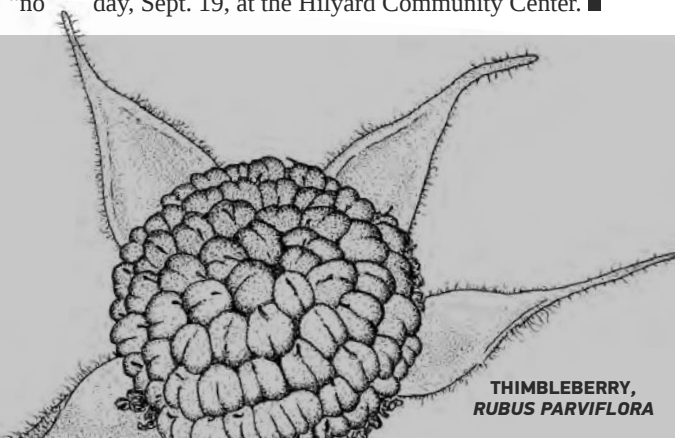
2833 Willamette • (541) 683-5903

[www.harlequinbeads.com](http://www.harlequinbeads.com)



# IT'S ABOUT TIME

BY DAVID WAGNER



THIMBLEBERRY,  
RUBUS PARVIFLORA

The solar eclipse in August was a rare and spectacular event, predicted with the same accuracy as the timing of the equinox this month (1:02 pm, Sept. 22). A hurricane like Harvey is a rare and spectacular event but predicting hurricanes is much more complicated than calculating the timing of celestial events. It is remarkable that people who accept the prediction of celestial events even when they cannot fathom the math behind them are willing to challenge scientists who predict climate change. When political leaders are climate change deniers, catastrophic damage to natural ecosystems and human habitation is inevitable.

Nature lovers are suffering the effects of warming when entry into our favorite wilderness and forested areas is closed due to fire. In normal years we would be able to camp around

high mountain lakes and enjoy berries alongside bears, squirrels and birds. Wet meadows in the old Cascades are full of flowers and butterflies. Many such places are likely to be closed to public access until the fall rains come. May rain please come by the first week of October!

End of summer has brought the goldfinches, chickadees and bushtits back to our garden. Their fledglings add to the flurry around the suet cages and birdseed feeders. It is a delight to watch the fuzzy teenagers figuring out how to land gracefully.

One of the berries still accessible is thimbleberry. Thimbleberries are abundant along lower forest roadsides. Yes, it takes an hour to gather enough for jam, but it’s worth it.

*David Wagner is a botanist who works in Eugene. He teaches moss classes, leads nature walks and makes nature calendars. He can be contacted through his web site: [fernenmosses.com](http://fernenmosses.com).*