

TRIALS OF ROD ADAMS BEGIN NEXT WEEK

Local homeless man will contest his trespassing charges before a jury

A Eugene homeless man is trying to convince a judge to dismiss three trespassing charges he received after Eugene police arrested him late at night for sleeping on public property.

Rod Adams, the 61-year-old defendant, and his lawyer, Joe Connelly, argue that his arrests violate the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution and involve the broader issue of criminalization of homelessness.

Adams is charged with three counts of criminal trespass in the second degree, a low-level misdemeanor under Oregon law.

“This is exactly the venue to educate people in,” Adams says. “Who can do the jail time? I will.”

Adams has been awaiting his day in court since May, but his trials have been postponed several times. He originally sought to invoke the defense of choice of evils, or the “necessity defense,” arguing he had no choice but to commit a crime due to a threat of imminent danger, a necessity to act and no practical alternative, but a judge excluded that defense from the trial.

Instead, according to its motion to dismiss, the defense argues that there are insufficient beds for the number of

homeless in Eugene; that Adams is not eligible for many of the available beds; and, on the nights in question, there were no beds available at the Eugene Mission.

Eugene Weekly first wrote about Adams’ trials in May this year in an article titled “44 Counts of Homelessness.” Since he moved to Eugene nine years ago, police have arrested him 40 times for a variety of minor crimes that may have been avoidable had he had a place to stay.

Adams is also controversial for yelling at and filming Eugene police officers’ interactions with himself and others downtown.

As of press time, the first of Adams’ three trials is scheduled for 9 am Wednesday, Nov. 15, at the Eugene Municipal Court. The other two are scheduled for December, but he and Connelly filed a motion to dismiss all three charges.

Adams and local homeless advocate Ken Neubeck invite members of the community to support Adams at the trial.

“If we get a hung jury or an outright ‘not guilty,’ then my guess is they’ll dismiss the other charges,” Adams says. “But if not, good; we may educate a further 12 people, which I’m all for that.” ■

SLANT

- What about the footbridge across Franklin Boulevard from the new Knight campus at the University of Oregon to the science buildings on the other side? That was one of many questions asked of former state senator Chris Edwards when he described the **Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact** to the City Club of Eugene on Nov. 3. Why not make it a two-tier bridge so it connects more than the science buildings? It could be a route for students to go to Duck games at Autzen Stadium or simply a way across busy Franklin for all students. Whatever the design, this prominent footbridge could be a great place to hang protest banners. We’re looking forward to 2020 when the \$1 billion project opens.

- This weekend’s best leak is the internationally important **Paradise Papers**, which expose not only tax evasion by various members of Trump’s Cabinet, but also that commerce secretary Wilbur Ross hid his

business relationship with Vladimir Putin’s son-in-law. Less telling but also interesting is the information that a Lithuanian shopping mall partly owned by Bono of U2 is under investigation for potential tax evasion. We will be following the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists as they dive into the 13.4 million documents. Locally, we’re unsurprised to find out that **Nike** is avoiding taxes by shifting profits and trademarks to offshore entities.

- Investigative journalism gets results: A story in *Sports Illustrated* last month by recent *Eugene Weekly* intern Kenny Jacoby detailed the fact that a University of Oregon basketball player was allowed to play an entire season while under investigation in another state on charges of forcible rape. This week, **Sen. Ron Wyden sent a scathing letter to UO President Michael Schill** demanding an explanation for the university’s apparent lack of concern for student safety. “If these reports are accurate they raise major questions about the university’s commitment to creating and maintaining a safe campus environment,” the senator wrote. Wyden gave a Nov. 20 deadline for Schill to answer a detailed list of questions, including this: “Is there a written policy describing the disciplinary policies and enforcement actions related

to UO employees’ failure to follow standard operating procedures?” We wonder that, too.

- There’s a lot of news in this town and we can’t always fit it all in our print edition. **In case you missed it**, go online to eugeneweekly.com and read this week’s posts about the furor over Seneca timber’s move to join the board of directors at GreenLane Sustainable Business Network, an update on Catalan independence from a Eugene student in Barcelona and our coverage of the liquefied natural gas pipeline protest at the Nov. 3 Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) meeting in Eugene.

- **Election results are in**, and it’s resounding “yes” across the board — except Creswell, where the voters stood up to corporate sleaze and voted a resounding 85 to 15 percent no against One Gro’s proposed weed store. Around Lane County, voters said yes to fire and school levies as well as to the Eugene street bond and Springfield jail levy. Nationally, the Dems took a lot of state races. We take heart at news such as Sikh Ravi Bhalla becoming mayor of Hoboken and a transgender woman, Danica Roem, winning a seat in Virginia’s House of Delegates. We hope this all reflects a swing back to reality and normal human decency.

HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL



MICHELLE HOLMAN

“I thought I’d go to law school,” says Michelle Holman, who grew up in Medford, majored in sociology at the University of Oregon and then worked briefly at Zoozoo’s Restaurant in Eugene, “but then I met Richie.” Richie Gross was a Hoedad tree planter living in Deadwood, an unincorporated community in the Coast Range. The pair got married and purchased a parcel of land six miles up Deadwood Creek in 1979. “We lived in a teepee for one wet winter,” she says, “then in a school bus for two years, and in a funky camping trailer with two kids for eight years, until we finished building our house.” Gross took up cabinet making and fine woodworking, and for 17 years the couple traveled to craft fairs with their renowned Coyote Collections multi-layered wooden puzzles. “At one time we had four workers,” she says. “We were the largest employer in Deadwood.” Holman’s current craftwork can be seen at deadwoodcreekmezuzot.com. She has served 25 years on the board of the Mapleton School District, where her own three children went to school, and she has taken part in several unsuccessful efforts to halt unannounced aerial spraying of herbicides on adjacent industrial timber lands. “The problem is that corporate lobbyists write the laws and government officials enforce the laws,” says Holman, a co-founder of Community Rights Lane County, an organization that aims to empower citizens to enact their own laws through the ballot initiative process. “Six other counties in Oregon have active chapters. We call ourselves the civil rights movement of our times, challenging corporate power and privilege.” Learn about current campaigns and events at communityrightslanecounty.org.