OIL SLICK

Thank you for Meerah Powell's article on the International Paper oil leak into the McKenzie ("Underneath the Oily Surface," 4/12). The evidence seems clear that IP delayed reporting the discharge to the state, and that this intentional act resulted in additional oil in the river.

Powell correctly notes that the Weyerhaeuser (now IP) mill has a history of violations. I often drift the McKenzie through the reach that is adjacent to IP. For years and years I have noticed the riparian zone there is clearly distressed. The Western red alder trees lining the bank have a yellow-orange coloration on their southern trunks, and they have an unhealthy appearance.

I have boated the McKenzie from Olallie landing below Carmen Smith into and below the confluence with the Willamette. I have seen nothing comparable in those many, many miles. I have no means to connect what I observe to IP; I can only report the coincidence that causes me concern.

David Jensen
Vida

LOTS OF INFO

The article entitled "Deeds from the Dead" (4/12) concerned county lands (outside the urban growth boundary), but the same thing happens within the UGB. A look at the Friendly Area neighborhood reveals that at least one developer has successfully turned 100-year-old "legal" lots (too narrow to meet current standards) into new buildable lots.

Plat maps of the Friendly Area neighborhood reveal that most current tax lots contain two or more "legal" lots as specified by dashed lines. Your article noted, "once landowners have established multiple legal lots … within their ownership, they can move the lots into a more development friendly configuration."

This means the internal boundaries of the two original legal lots can be erased and redrawn in any way the owner desires. Even if the dimensions of the two new lots bear absolutely no resemblance to the original two lots, the city will claim the new (developable) lots to be the very same legal lots platted 100 years earlier.

The result, of course, is that the savvy owner of a tax lot which would not by today's standards be large enough to be legally divided and sold as two buildable lots finds a great loophole.

No one would argue that there once were two original lots, and after the reconfiguration (or lot line adjustment) there are still two lots, but to say they are the same two lots is either an interesting existential argument or a legal conundrum.

Carolyn Jacobs
Eugene

POWER TO THE PRESS

The campaign for a city auditor stems from a perceived need for more robust checks and balances in our city government. Perhaps the most powerful tool for forcing accountability is independent, thorough and thoughtful local investigative reporting.

Communities across the nation have experienced dramatic declines in local print reporting, including ours. We will be better off as a community by recommitting to buying and reading the paper than with either city auditor measure. Nothing exposes laziness, incompetence or corruption and mobilizes a response from elected officials as effectively as a front-page story.

Steve Mital
EWEB Commissioner

CELEBRATING A WARRIOR

I met Lynn Bowers in 2006 when she worked with Jan Wroncy analyzing activity notifications from the Oregon Department of Forestry. They chose strategic sections of timberland and then paid for subscriptions to receive ODF mailings of logging, poisoning, fertilizing, stream-crossing, etc.

Bowers turned the raw data into finely drawn maps and colored yearly overlays that graphically displayed patterns of forestland poisonings upwind and upstream of homes, communities and schools. She soon founded Forestland Dwellers to protect people and wildlife from chemical trespass and contamination.

Bowers' accumulated efforts led to the only forensic analysis of post-poison spray records made, available at Beyond Toxics' website. The Triangle Lake data show massive overkill, with reckless and increasing use, all in an area under close scrutiny by ODF and the Oregon Health Authority. Her kind persistence also led directly to the 2017 ODF FERNS website, where all citizens can see for free what the chemical deforestation industries are planning for their watersheds.

Bowers loved being home and hated to travel after dark, but she did. She worked for years, unsuccessfully, to get Lane Electric Coop and then Lane County to adopt rational Integrated Vegetation Management policies. She made the connections between wildlife, biodiversity, rights of nature and human Community Rights, and became the chief petitioner for the campaign to ban aerial poisoning in Lane County.

Our leader Lynn Bowers left us with many loving memories and essential projects. A potluck celebration of Lynn's wonderfulness will be 4-7 pm April 29 at Hilyard Community Center.

John Sundquist
Coburg

AUDITOR TALK

The president of the League of Women Voters claims that the city already has an auditor. And that is true. But that is a financial auditor. And it is required of a city to have one. The numbers balance, and money is spent legally.

A performance auditor gives advice to the council — and manager — on ways that they can do their job better and maybe even save money in the process. How the city can give citizens better service is the real question.

For instance, should the police department have more officers, or could they do as good a job with the present staff? Could a performance audit by an outsider assist them to do a better job? Or should they "audit" themselves?

Should a police audit simply count the number of people in the city and its relation to number of staff? Should we just compare ourselves to other different cities? Are there new ideas that could be implemented to police the city that they haven't thought of yet?

It's like hiring a consultant. But our elected auditor would know all the city departments, not just the police department.

Bob Cassidy
Eugene

JACKED FOR ZACH

I am a strong supporter of Zach Mulholland for EWEB commissioner at-large position.

Mulholland's commitment to promote clean energy, with a goal of transitioning EWEB to 100 percent renewable electricity by 2030, is exactly the kind of bold leadership we need, and it's critical right now, as we face the very serious threat of climate change.

But I've also worked with Mulholland closely in his role as an advocate for the Clean Energy Jobs campaign, a pending bill in the Oregon State Legislature that would cap Oregon's greenhouse gas emissions and make polluters pay. He's chaired the Steering Committee for the statewide Clean Energy Jobs campaign and worked with the campaign's lobby team to line up over 30 co-sponsors for the bill.

He's done extensive community organizing on campus and through 350 Eugene, and has brought a variety of groups together to advance the bill. He's working hard to stabilize the climate, using an equitable approach.

If EWEB Commissioner is on your ballot, vote for Zach!

Megan Kemple
Eugene

VIEWPOINT BY OTTO POTICHA

Track Town Caterpillar

NEW HAYWARD FIELD DESIGN IS BRILLIANT AND ALL WRONG

The proposal for a new Hayward Field at the University of Oregon is innovative, special and brilliant. It will be hailed by the track world and will be published in all the architectural journals when it's built for the Track and Field World Championships to be held here in 2021.

But it's located on the wrong site.

It violates UO campus planning guidelines and criteria, it violates all of the city of Eugene urban planning goals and criteria, and it violates the partnership made with the nearby Fairmount Neighbors.

An early design standard we give to beginning architecture and urban planning students is understanding context and scale. Buildings, in an urban context, are not to be standalone objects.

Context and scale are not a part of the Hayward Field proposal.

What is proposed is out of scale. It is the "Caterpillar that Ate Agate Street" while squashing the law school and other adjacent structures.

The design is complete with a Mussolini-era-inspired tower, or perhaps a Bowerman phallic symbol.

But Nike co-founder and legendary coach Bill Bowerman never stood on the corner and beat his chest like Tarzan. He was a man whose habit was to be understated and make the most of what he had to work with.

The UO Athletic Department and its benefactor, Phil Knight, who have made some great building design contributions, do not want input — as demonstrated by the caterpillar's being displayed just two months before demolition is slated to begin.

It would be much less costly to build this new caterpillar on an open site adjacent to Autzen Stadium or on the former Civic Stadium site and return Hayward Field to the students and community. That would mean leaving the track where it is and making a glass-enclosed comverted East Grandstand building into the "Hayward, Bowerman, Prefontaine and Knight Track Museum" with entrance doors opening onto Agate Street.

The drawings of the proposed new structure show a cover that looks good but will not keep the rain off the lower third of the grandstand. It will also not protect spectators from the sun and glare. Incidentally, this campus seldom washes windows, resulting in a dirty and pollen-covered caterpillar.

Brilliant idea and design, wrong site!

Otto Poticha has been a practicing architect in Eugene for 57 years with 50 awarded design projects throughout the U.S., England, Netherlands, Chile, Brazil, Caribbean and Japan. He has also spent 55 years teaching architectural and urban design at the University of Oregon.