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WATERMELON BINGSU Photo by Eve Weston

editorial

PUBLISHER Jody Rolnick
EDITOR Camilla Mortensen
CALENDAR EDITOR Emma J Nelson
COPY EDITOR Dan Buckwalter
BRICKS & MORTAR Christian Wihtol
CONTRIBUTING ARTS WRITER Will Kennedy
CONTRIBUTING COPY EDITOR Jane Dods
ARTS EDITOR EMERITUS Bob Keefer
HAPPENING PEOPLE Paul Neevel
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
 Ester Barkai, Dan Bryant, Tom Coffin, Ayisha Elliott, Henry Houston, Will Kennedy, Chandra LeGue, Rick Levin, Susan Palmer, William L. Sullivan, Dorothy Velasco, John Zerzan
INTERNS Pierce Baugh V, Savannah Brown, Mirandah Davis-Powell, Mason Falor, Eve Weston
CATALYST JOURNALISM PROJECT REPORTERS
 Bailey Meyers, Emma J Nelson, Emily Rogers, Amelia Winkelman

art department

ART DIRECTOR/PRODUCTION MANAGER
 McKenzie Young-Roy
PRODUCTION INTERN Ryan Ehrhart
GRAPHICS INTERN Jade Wilkerson,
TECHNOLOGY/WEBMASTER James Bateman

advertising

ADVERTISING MANAGER Dave Newman
ADVERTISING/OFFICE MANAGER JJ Snyder
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING Bentley Freeman

business

ACCOUNTANT Kernutt Stokes
DISTRIBUTORS Bob Becker (lead distributor), Denise Novak, Pedalers Express, Norman Riddle, Jeff Tanner, Burt Tate, Tina Vellody, Alex Chappel
PRINTING APG Printing Solutions
HANDYMAN John Winings

HOW TO REACH US
 CALL 541-484-0519
EDITOR/NEWS TIPS Editor@EugeneWeekly.com
LETTERS Letters@EugeneWeekly.com
ADVERTISING Sales@EugeneWeekly.com
CLASSIFIED ADS Classy@EugeneWeekly.com
CALENDAR/EVENTS Cal@EugeneWeekly.com
CIRCULATION Distribution@EugeneWeekly.com

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OPINION

Letters

Keep the Fee

With new threats to democracy emerging daily on the national level, it's easy to lose sight of the ongoing need to protect our communities at the local level. Eugene's City Council recently approved the fire service fee to make our fire and emergency medical services more robust by charging an average of \$10 a month to homeowners and \$38 to businesses. All of the \$10 million generated annually will be used to fund fire and EMS. The fund includes monies for low-income assistance with the fees.

The L.A. fires were a wake-up call. Regardless of your insurance, if local fire systems are inadequate, your home may burn during a major fire event. I think most people agree that boosting fire services is a good plan.

However, not everyone agrees on how to fund the plan. Small-government conservatives want to send the fire service fee to voters and balance the budget by cutting \$11.5 million from city services across the board. City councilors who don't support funding cuts are being threatened with recall.

Remember Claire Syrett's recall? She was removed from her council seat by a small, vocal minority who know that voter turnout is often lower in recall elections. A similar group is trying these tactics again over the fire fee. As federal government funding is gutted, keeping local services strong is more important than ever. We owe it to ourselves to stay vigilant and vote in all city elections. Let's not allow the tail to wag the dog again.

Lily Pearl Johnson
Eugene

Don't Sign the Petition

As a former member of the board of the Eugene Chamber of Commerce, I was dismayed to see that the Chamber has spent \$27,000 to hire out-of-town

signature gatherers to put the fire service fee on the ballot.

Volunteer members of the community have spent over a year studying ways to balance the city budget, studying over two dozen alternatives before settling on the fire service fee. After presenting their recommendations to the City Council, our elected representatives voted in favor of the fee.

Now uninformed signature gatherers are using tax-scare tactics to try to erase this hard work. At a time when dedicated public servants are being eliminated from their jobs across the nation, causing disruptions to families and communities, it's shocking that some in our business community are trying to do the same here in Eugene. Though no one likes paying more taxes, we need to bear in mind that those taxes pay for the things that we enjoy in Eugene. Things like community gardens, animal welfare services, clean and safe parks and efficient delivery of vital services. To learn more go to EugeneSOS.com. I urge people to not sign the Chamber petition.

David Funk
Eugene

The Downside of Capped Taxes

When we moved to Eugene 17 years ago we were delighted to learn that because of Oregon legislation, property taxes were capped at 3 percent increase each year. Our previous abode in Texas had no such protection so we had to appeal the valuation every year if we thought the value exceeded property sales in the area.

After living here a few years we saw the downside to that legislation with degraded roads in Eugene but also with the (now) 17 different property taxes. They have other names, but they are still taxes. When I looked at the tax bill on our previous house in Texas, there are still only three taxing entities. And yes, the taxes are higher, but the services are better and more consistent along with excellent road repair.

I understand from convos with legislators here that Oregon has tried several times to install a sales tax but that it has failed. I think if the general population could be assured that 14 percent of the

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

GREETINGS, CITIZEN!
WHAT THE ABSOLUTE HELL--??

I AM YOUR PERSONALIZED INTERACTIVE GIANT FLOATING HOLOGRAPHIC HEAD OF HISTORY'S GREATEST PRESIDENT, **DONALD J. TRUMP!** EVERY AMERICAN GETS ONE OF THEIR VERY OWN!

I'LL KEEP YOU **CONSTANTLY** UPDATED ON TRUMP-RELATED NEWS AND PRONOUNCEMENTS! HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE **TRANS-GENDER MICE?** WHAT ABOUT THE 360-YEAR-OLD **SOCIAL SECURITY RECIPIENT?**

I'LL BE WITH YOU **NIGHT AND DAY--**AND THERE'S **NO WAY** TO TURN ME OFF! YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO GO A SINGLE **MINUTE** WITHOUT THINKING OF YOUR FAVORITE PRESIDENT, **ME!** YOU'RE **WELCOME!**

INCIDENTALLY, I'M POWERED BY THE **LATEST A.I. TECHNOLOGY**, SO THE EXPERIENCE IS GUARANTEED TO BE **FLORPLESS!** ER, I MEAN, **FLAWLESS.**

HA HA! MY GIANT FLOATING HEAD WILL BE, LIKE, FOLLOWING YOU AROUND AS WELL! YOU'LL NEVER KNOW ANOTHER MOMENT'S **PEACE!**

I STAND CORRECTED.

I BET YOU DID **NOT SEE** THIS COMING! HA HA! GET IT?

COMEDY IS LEGAL AGAIN, MANY PEOPLE ARE SAYING!

TOM TOMORROW @ 2025-03-10 ... JOIN SPARKY'S LIST: thismodernworld.com/subscriptions

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