



EUGENE OCCUPIER

THE NEWSLETTER OF OCCUPY EUGENE

Volume 2, Number 1

Jan. - Feb. 2013

SLEEPS Awakens Eugene to Homeless Issues

By Vickie Nelson and Chase May

SLEEPS, the new action kid on the block, is quickly gaining a reputation for toughness — especially when it comes to the rights of the homeless. SLEEPS, which stands for Safe Legally Entitled Emergency Places to Sleep, includes a diverse group of people, among them the unhoused, members of the faith community, Occupy Eugene activists, and many others.

Action-oriented and agile, SLEEPS holds its cards close, revealing plans only to those who need to know. On Dec. 10, before a City Council meeting that would hear public testimony on lifting the camping ban, SLEEPS set up tents in the Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza.

In response to the tents, on Dec. 11, Lane County Administrator Liane Richardson signed an order declaring the plaza closed at 11 p.m. for “health and safety” reasons. On Dec. 12 SLEEPS declared the protest a “constitutional victory” and pulled up stakes. The county put up barricades. The next day, Dec. 13, SLEEPS activists breached the barriers to protest the closing down of the plaza, a traditional free speech forum in Eugene. Alley Valkyrie, longtime homeless advocate and activist, volunteered to remain

behind when others left the plaza and was arrested without incident.

SLEEPS holds that the First Amendment protects the rights of citizens to use tents as a “symbol of protest,” and that the Eighth Amendment does not allow police to “attempt to wake” or “disturb” a homeless person sleeping in a public place. SLEEPS cites the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit case *Jones v. City of Los Angeles*, in which Judge Kim M. Wardlaw called sleep an “unavoidable consequence of being human.”

On Dec. 17, SLEEPS and its supporters delivered a letter (see SLEEPS LETTER, this page) to Lane County Administrator Liane Richardson near her office in the Lane County Building after a brief rally on the recently reopened Free Speech Plaza. Richardson accepted the letter but immediately entered and locked her office. Lee DeVea then read the letter out loud surrounded by activists. Several county security people stood by silently. With the letter read, the group left the building and held a candlelight vigil outside on the Free Speech Plaza.

Watch SLEEPS and other homeless supporters deliver



James Chastain and Hedin Brugh, two SLEEPS stalwarts, stand ready to roll.

their letter to Liane Ricardson: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kzHuLWhJcIE>

BRAVE BEATRICE’S FIRST AMENDMENT CASE DISMISSED

By Vickie Nelson

On Nov. 8 Brave Beatrice (Emily Semple) appeared in Federal Court before U.S. District Magistrate Judge Thomas Coffin. Beatrice had been arrested on July 11 for remaining behind on the plaza at the old Federal Building where Occupy Eugene had held a 60-day, 24/7 protest.

Beatrice’s arrest occurred after OE’s permit to be on the plaza had expired and activists refused to accept a permit from the General Services Administration that did not allow protesters to remain on the plaza overnight. At the time Occupy Eugene activist Mary Broadhurst said, “Occupy’s constitutional rights do not cease between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. except for compelling reasons.”

With 25 activists in attendance, attorney Lauren Regan argued for dismissal of Beatrice’s case on constitutional grounds, saying, “The First Amendment trumps all.”

After listening to the U.S. attorney, Coffin

said he was “struggling to understand the reasonable basis” for the overnight curfew the GSA was imposing. He also expressed concern that in creating this restriction on free speech the government was “looking at content,” which would create “unlawful prior restraint.”

After the U.S. Attorney asked for and was granted two weeks to gather additional information, Regan asked for a week in which to respond to the supplemental information. Coffin also granted this. Then on Dec. 11, Assistant U.S. Attorney Chris Cardani said federal prosecutors were asking that the charge against Beatrice be dismissed “in the interest of justice.” Activists see the request for dismissal of the case by prosecutors as an admission that they realized their charge was unconstitutional and their case would not prevail. The court has now dismissed the charge.



Team Beatrice smiles after a successful appearance in Federal Court on Nov. 8.

"I love #OccupyWallStreet. As John said, 'One hero cannot do it. Each one of us have to be heroes.' And you are. Thank you. love, yoko." ~ Yoko Ono via Twitter (@yokoono)

SLEEPS LETTER TO LIANE RICHARDSON

Dec. 17, 2012

Liane Richardson, County Administrator, Lane County:

Your decision to close one of Eugene’s two historic forums for protest, the Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza, on false allegations is a cause for concern to all citizens. On closing the plaza “temporarily and indefinitely” Tuesday at 11 p.m., you stated falsely that SLEEPS members had damaged the building and created a biohazard. County employees, television and print media and time and date stamped photos from SLEEPS have documented that your comments are erroneous and leave the county wide open to libel suits should someone determine in the future to pursue them. Your closing of the plaza further exposes the County to First Amendment suits.

The right to protest is essential to a democracy and we will continue to protest public officials who utilize “public safety” issues to shut down protests.

The SLEEPS camp as seen in the Register Guard, KEZI, KLCC, KMTR and KVAL NEWS videos, has been immaculately clean and peaceful. Protesters have spoken with reporters and the general public in a reciprocally respectful way. Because First Amendment rights are so critical to a democracy, the courts have held that protest sites cannot be shut down unless there is a highly “compelling” reason to do so. Generally, public safety hazards and interference with business are the two most used reasons. Your assertions, even if they were true, would not be considered by any court in the land as “compelling” reasons to deny citizens their right to protest.

We believe all public officials should play a responsible role in not perpetuating stereotypes that provoke fear or hate toward the unhoused. We believe that your comments were inflammatory and that the closing of the plaza was a direct violation of the constitutional rights of Eugene citizens to assembly and free speech. An acknowledgement from you that, despite your fears, the protesters neither damaged property, defecated in the planters nor interfered with County business seems appropriate and would be welcomed. An assurance from you that the traditional public forum, Free Speech Plaza, will not be shut down in the future before allegations of safety issues have been confirmed to be true would be an important step toward establishing trust in the community.

OE AND SLEEPS SUE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

By Vickie Nelson

Attorneys for Occupy Eugene and SLEEPS announced on Dec 19 that the two organizations have filed a lawsuit against the GSA for violating protesters’ right to free speech. The lawsuit refers both to SLEEPS activists’ current demonstrations on the plaza at the old Federal building and the demonstration OE held 24/7 last spring and summer at the same site.

Attorney Lauren Regan of the Civil Liberties Defense Center called the GSA’s demand that protesters obtain permits for demonstrations “flagrantly unconstitutional.” Regan also said the lawsuit could be “precedent-setting” across the U.S.

Welcome to the new issue of Occupy Eugene’s newsletter! We hope you enjoy our articles and find a place to join Occupy Eugene in our efforts to bring about our vision. If you are looking for a way to get involved please visit <http://occupyeugenemedia.org/volunteer/>

OCCUPY EUGENE EVENTS

Sundays

OE Media Group work sessions: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at CCTV*
Free Medical Clinic: 12 to 4 p.m. (Spanish interpreter available) at PB*
Finance Committee: 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. if request submitted. At CALC*

Mondays

HSSC (Houseless Solutions & Support Committee): 10:15 a.m. to noon at CALC*

Tuesdays

Newsletter Working Group: 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at GM*
Free Medical Clinic: 5 to 6 p.m. at PB*
OE Media Group production meetings: 7 to 9 p.m. at GM*

Wednesdays

OH-FAC (Housing & Foreclosure Actions) Committee: 5 to 7 p.m. at GM*
Occupy Medical business meetings: 7 to 9 p.m. at NDB*

Thursdays

Nonviolence Resources Committee: 2 to 3:30 p.m. at GM*
OH-FAC (Housing & Foreclosure Actions) Committee: 6 to 8 p.m. at GM*

Fridays

Kesey Square Revival: Noon to 6 p.m. at KSQ*
Bank of America protests: 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. at BOA*
General Assembly: 6 to 9 p.m. at GM*

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community allies

War Tax Resistance Workshop: Jan. 10, 7 p.m. at CALC. Refreshments served.

Social Justice, Real Justice Conference: Feb. 14 through Feb. 17 at EMU*. The conference will promote personal growth, leadership development, cultural pluralism, community education, positive social change, and the ending of human oppression by exploring ways to mobilize and organize.

Ongoing events

No Coal Eugene: Thursdays, 5 p.m at CMP*. First Thursdays, potluck at 4:30 p.m. followed by meeting.
Kesey Square Revival: Fridays, noon to 5 p.m. at KSQ*
SLEEPS: Daily at 7 p.m. when camping. Check <http://www.EugeneSLEEPS.org/> for info.

Occupy Eugene Committees

Dozens of activists put energy into Occupy Eugene. While the heart of our decision-making process lies in our General Assemblies, held every Friday upstairs at Growers Market, much of our work in specific areas, such as homelessness, foreclosures, and publicity, takes place at committee meetings. We have numerous committees and working groups. These groups meet regularly and carry out Occupy Eugene’s goals through a variety of actions and events. If you are interested in working with us, please come to one of our GAs or to any of our committees or working groups to see if any are a good fit for your interests and skills.

*Key to abbreviations:

- ABP: Alton Baker Park
- BOA: Bank of America, Pearl St. at 11th Ave.
- CALC: Community Alliance of Lane County, 458 Blair St.
- CMP: Charnel Mulligan Park, Charnelton St. at 17th Ave.
- CP: Cozmic Pizza, 199 W. 8th Ave.
- CCTV: CCTV studio, behind Sheldon High School
- CY: Café Yumm, 730 E. Broadway
- DL: Eugene Public Library downtown, Olive St. at 10th Ave.
- EMU: University of Oregon EMU, University St. at 13th Ave.
- EWEB: EWEB building, 500 E 4th Ave.
- FED: (Old) Federal Building, Pearl St. at 7th Ave.
- FSP: Wayne Morse Free Speech Plaza, Oak St. at 8th Ave.
- FUCM: First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St.
- GM: Growers Market, 454 Willamette St.
- KSQ: Kesey Square, Willamette St. at Broadway Ave.
- NDB: New Day Bakery, 449 Blair Blvd.
- PB: Park Blocks, Park St. and Oak St.
- UUCE: Unitarian Universalist Church of Eugene, Chambers at 13th Ave.
- WG: Wandering Goat Coffee, 268 Madison St.

Please look at our calendar for the most current information:
<http://www.occupyeugene.net/>

We’ve come a long way
in our first year

THANKS
to the many individuals,
businesses & organizations
who have given your
support and encouragement
to our Grassroots Movement!

OCCUPY
EUGENE
IS A COMMUNITY EFFORT
AND IT TAKES ALL OF US!

Occupy Eugene

Newsletter Staff

THIS ISSUE OF THE EUGENE OCCUPIER IS BROUGHT TO YOU THROUGH THE COLLABORATION OF CATHERINE SISKRON, CHASE MAY, GRAHAM LEWIS, JERRY BRULE, RALPH BITTER, VICKIE NELSON, AND THE MANY PARTICIPANTS AND COMMITTEES OF OCCUPY EUGENE.

Reader Feedback and Comments: We welcome your comments, suggestions, and feedback, as well as content and financial contributions for our newsletter. E-mail us at newsletter@occupyeugenemedia.org

We are a nonviolent, non-partisan, social-political movement for accountability and responsibility in government. We stand in solidarity with Occupy Movements around the globe and all people who will no longer sit back and watch corporate and special interests run their Government, and spoil the living Earth. For we, the people, are the government.
It is time to turn away from a culture of war and domination, and create a living economy which operates in harmony with our living planet. We must begin by opening our hearts to those the present system would discard and push into the shadows, because we believe that, in our United States, it’s we the people who are sovereign- not global corporations.
We have come together to create a community that expresses our common needs, to organize, network, and participate in solutions and to remind one another that, as a society, we have unfinished business in our pursuit of social and economic justice.
Note: This excerpt has been approved by the OE General Assembly. You can find Occupy Eugene’s complete vision statement at <http://occupyeugene.net/vision>.

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 744, Eugene OR 97440
General Inquiry: 541-525-0130
Website: www.occupyeugene.net
Newsletter: www.occupyeugene.net/occupier
OEV Location: Our office is at Growers Market, 454 Willamette St., where we also hold many committee meetings.

EUGENE FAVORS REVERSAL OF CITIZENS UNITED

By CHARLIE SWANSON

On Nov. 6, Eugene voted on an advisory question: "Shall Congress send to States constitutional amendment reversing negative impact of the Citizens United case and limit independent campaign spending?" Voters overwhelmingly answered yes (73.6% to 26.4%), even though Eugene's Register-Guard strongly recommended a no vote.

This call for an amendment was repeated throughout the nation and passed in every location the question was asked. Voters in more than 150 American towns and cities voted on resolutions calling for a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's Citizens United ruling. Many additionally called for prohibiting corporate campaign spending, eliminating corporate constitutional rights, or both.

Occupy had a big influence on making people aware of income/wealth inequality and how that ties to unequal political influence. In many locations, a call for an amendment is an important issue for Occupy. Often directly, always at least indirectly, Occupy is an important part of the call for an amendment succeeding everywhere.

Now is the time to continue the momentum. We should continue to lobby DeFazio, Merkley, and Wyden to sponsor a strong amendment to decrease significantly corporate influence over elections and government. In Oregon, we need to convince our legislators to pass a measure calling on Congress to send them an amendment. There are at least three versions of a measure that will be considered by the legislature in 2013. Two call for an amendment allowing Congress and the states to regulate campaign spending. The third also calls for ending constitutional rights of statutory entities (ending "corporate personhood") and says that leveling the playing field is a valid rationale for regulating political spending.

The legislature and Congress should think carefully about what principles to embody in an amendment. Some things to consider:

1. Should any campaign finance regulation be allowed, or should there be limitations on the power of Congress and states to regulate (for example, only if neutral regarding

content, candidate, and political party, or only to mitigate unequal influence caused by wealth disparities or to limit corruption)?

2. Should an amendment merely allow campaign regulation, or should regulation be required, or perhaps also prohibit corporate campaigning?

3. Should there be a broader prohibition on corporate influence on government, for example prohibiting uninvited corporate lobbying?

4. Should for-profit and non-profit corporations be treated differently?

Our City Council appropriately gave Eugene voters the opportunity to have our voice heard on this important national issue. We should continue expressing our will so that corporate- and wealth-dominated control of government decisions is scaled down to a fair and reasonable level.

DEC. 10, INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

By JERRY BRULE

This year, the spotlight of the commemoration of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is on the rights of all people — women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, the poor and marginalized — to make their voices heard in public life and be included in political decision-making. (See the complete statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay at www.ohchr.org/.)

In Eugene a dozen speakers talked about the need for healthcare for all as part of International Human Rights Day rally at Harris Hall. The human-rights principles of universality, equity, accountability, transparency, and participation must be applied to the healthcare system.

Every person is entitled to comprehensive, quality healthcare. Systemic barriers must not prevent people from accessing necessary



PHOTOS BY JERRY BRULE
Jean Stacey spoke out about the criminalization of the homeless.

healthcare. The cost of financing the healthcare system must be shared fairly.

The healthcare system must be transparent in design, efficient in operation, and accountable to the people it serves. As a human right, a healthcare system that satisfies these principles is the



County Commissioner Pete Sorenson told of his efforts to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a state law.

responsibility of government to ensure.

Some people spoke about other human rights. County Commissioner Pete Sorenson said that in 1999 he had submitted an initiative to the Oregon Secretary of State's office to adopt the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights as an Oregon state law, but it didn't get enough signatures to go to the ballot. Jean

Stacey talked about how

being without a home has become criminalized. Being caught with bedding can result in a \$200 fine, and a second offense can cost \$500. Eugene has only a few bathrooms accessible for the homeless, and being caught urinating three times in public can result in being branded a sex offender.

Contact your representatives and ask them to pass a resolution stating that healthcare is a human right. We should also tell our councilors that being homeless should not be a crime.



Local activist Ruth Duemler listens to the various speakers at the Human Rights Day rally.

OCCUPY MEDICAL OFFERS VACCINES, MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

By SUE SIERRALUPE

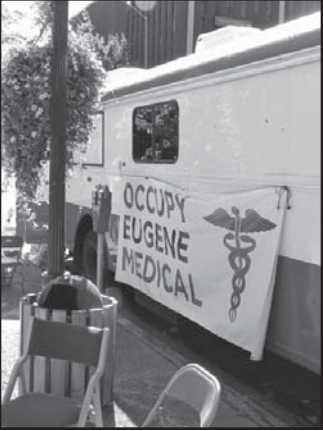


PHOTO BY DAVID GEITGEY SIERRALUPE
The Occupy Medical bus offers many new services, including vaccines.

techniques such as relaxation and anger management which make our lives a little easier.

One volunteer is offering a free Stop Smoking Support Group every Sunday from 1 until 3 p.m. in the big tent near our bus. Also, steadfast Occupier Plaedo plans to offer free workshops presented by volunteers who can share their skills.

Occupy Medical is gunning the engine of our Mobile Clinic bus as we hit the street to spread free, friendly healthcare to everyone who shows up. And we keep offering new services! Three skilled volunteers are teaming up to offer mental health support services during OM's regular hours from 12 noon until 4 p.m. every Sunday at the Park Blocks. These volunteers offer information on how to access more community services and on life skills

Occupy Medical's next free dental extraction clinic is scheduled for January 12, 2013 and requires advance sign up and approval. Our dental hygienist, Adrienne, will be examining teeth as part of the intake and screening process. Our third dental extraction clinic made possible by our alliance with St. Vincent de Paul and Medical Teams International.

Friday, Dec. 21, we held our new wound Triage Clinic. Nurse Karen leads this clinic at the St. Vincent de Paul Service Station at 450 Hwy 99 North in Eugene. Karen has assembled a skilled team of nurses to treat people's untended wounds.

Lane County Public Health is working with Occupy Medical to defend Lane County from a possibly imminent epidemic of Whooping Cough (Pertussis). Last year, Washington state reported 300 cases of whooping cough and this year, the number is closer to 3,000. This virulent disease in the Northwest poses an especially dangerous threat to the unhoused. Without proper bed rest and protection from the cold, Pertussis significantly increases the sick person's chances of contracting pneumonia. We are now assembling the proper paperwork and training our staff to administer 100 free doses of the vaccine. Our pertussis vaccine clinic will be saving lives. See our new Web site for details.

Occupy Medical always needs more volunteers from all areas of healthcare. Even if you can offer only two hours

a month, please contact us. We also depend on donations of cash and medical supplies. Make your checks to Occupy Medical and send them to 3575 Donald Street, Suite 230 (the Tamarack Center), Eugene, OR 97405. Occupy Medical is engaged in the long, arduous process of becoming an official 501(c)3

non-profit. Any volunteers who have experience writing grants, doing fundraising, organizing inventory, tracking accounting, or constructing bylaws are welcome. Find out more about Occupy Medical at our new Web site, <http://occupymedics.wordpress.com>

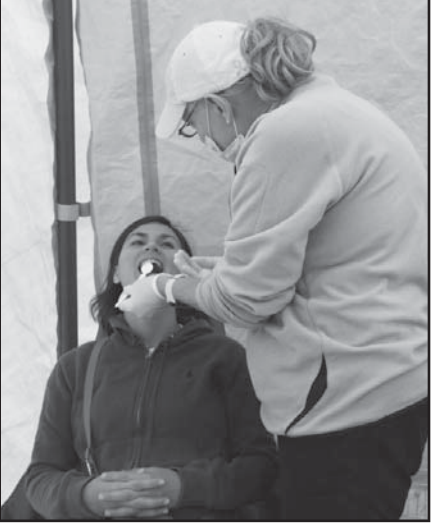


PHOTO BY RANDY CAINE
Adrienne shines as OM's volunteer dental hygienist.

OE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR SUNDAY WORKSHOP SERIES

By JASUN PLAEDO WELLMAN

Occupy Eugene Workshop Series needs volunteers to teach at the Park Blocks as part of Occupy Eugene Medical Clinic on Sundays between noon and 4 p.m. The workshops will offer free education and skill-building opportunities. Possible topics include cooking healthy food on a limited budget, herbal healing remedies, simple sewing, conflict resolution, meditation, and writing. (Volunteers are invited to come up with other ideas, too.) In a time of budget cuts and cutbacks, when the loss of funding is eroding the social safety net, we are coming together to help, to heal and educate each other, and to create a vibrant and resilient community.

Housing is a

N17: ACT AGAINST APATHY

By MARCUS FARLEY

We gathered in the pouring rain to act together and take a stand for the unhoused. After several passionate speakers, a bit of poetry, and incredible readings directly from the personal journal of a woman living "in the margins," we marched through downtown until we met another group of activists waiting at the old City Hall.

The old Eugene City Hall was closed just this year and is sitting empty and barricaded in the heart of downtown. Last winter, the City "negotiated" with Occupy Eugene in an effort to, essentially, close down the Occupy site at Washington-Jefferson Park without resistance. Part of the "deal" was that the City would invest

PHOTO BY GREGORY WALKER



PHOTO BY SCOTTY PEREY

IN MEMORIAM

Occupy Eugene OE Honors the homeless who have died on the streets of Eugene in 2011 and 2012 and asks the city to honor them by following through on their pledge to spend \$200,000 to shelter people in need this winter.

**Rick Youngblood
Bryon Powell
James W. Hawkins
James Smith
Space Cowboy
Jennifer Sells
Dana Crippen
Darin McEldowney
Craig "Cat" Geibel
Jesse Brown
Ken Brazaele
Dale Gainer
Suzette Husk
Jennifer Linney
Duke Cantrell
Bonnie Trader
Rick Jackson
Mark
Billie
Cloud**



Marcus Farley, Helen Shepherd, and Argus Northstar march as part of an N17 demonstration.

PHOTO BY GREGORY WALKER

CHOOSE EVOLUTION

By ARGUS NORTHSTAR

Abbreviated Version of Speech Delivered N17 at Act Against Apathy

There's an old story about a castaway in the sea, about a man stranded in loneliness and despair, and the waves are rolling him through turbulent waters and he is going down for the third time when he suddenly catches the attention of a passing ship. Gathering the last of his sorely spent energy and will to survive, he throws his arms frantically into the air and yells for help. Someone on board the vessel looks down upon this man in scorn, and shouts, "Get a boat!" Such is society today when homelessness is criminalized both in fact and in practice.

There are those living in gated communities behind barriers they mistake for security sealed with alarm codes and electric wiring, sealed with money earned in advance of their fellow human beings so they consider themselves more human than human. Higher up that fiscal food pyramid there are elite doppelgangers who siphon like vampires the wealth, prosperity, well-being, safety, and control telling the rest of us that we are better off with less than they have because at least we have something, and they tell us they know what we

need though never asked first if we agreed.

And what has our system created that seven out of every ten Americans are one paycheck away from homelessness, and those of us who are living on the streets are exposed not only to the encroachment of a frigid and wet winter, but also to the cold aspects of the human heart, to be excluded with a form of segregation they call 'social stratification', a system of their control by their own design. These people who hoard wealth are sickened with a psychosis of the mind and a paralysis of the heart, and we need to heal them.

And so we march today in solidarity, radically free because it is our right to be. We are patient but understand that there are times when waiting is not an option. We are slow to anger but quick to recognize injustice. And if we as a people are confronted by any force that would strike a blow to our liberty, our response is swift, premeditated, and organized.

This is the voice that is great within us, a voice that can never be detained for questioning, neither can it be held indefinitely behind bars never charged for a crime and given no contact with the outside world. Our voice is eternal because it is the voice of truth. And truth cannot be destroyed though it can, when good people decide not to speak, be silenced. Aligning human intention with truth can only help humanity to evolve. Opportunity Village is Eugene's opportunity to work for the evolution of the human species, and not against it.

No Place to Go

By JERRY BRULE

Another drizzly day in Eugene. Coming back from Jerry's on Highway 99, I saw a young woman walking down the road with her thumb out. As we drove to St. Vincent's Service Station I learned a lot about her. She looked to be about 15 but said she was 22. She had lived in Eugene for seven years but is homeless. She told me that she was "rolled" the night before. Her lip was broken where someone hit her in the mouth. She said she had a cat so they wouldn't take her in at the Mission.

I told her about the new Occupy Medical bus. I told her I thought it was terrible that there was no place for someone like her to go. While Occupy was in Washington Jefferson Park, I remembered meeting a brave woman who invited several young women to stay with her in her home, but that had made life difficult for her. I mentioned that I'd

heard about a women's shelter they were trying to set up, so women would have a safe place where they wouldn't have to worry about being attacked or raped. I just didn't know if it existed yet.

I wanted to hear more about her and why she was homeless, but I was also afraid the answer would break my heart. She thanked me for the ride and was gone, but as I drove off to my warm, dry house, I was ashamed that I hadn't opened my heart or my wallet. Ashamed that there was no place for her.

Apparently, 40% of homeless youth leave their home or are kicked out because of gender issues, and the only shelter in the nation for LGBT youth was destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. It is likely that at least 50% of homeless women are victims of domestic violence.

Now a site has been chosen for Opportunity Village Eugene at Roosevelt and Garfield to allow some of the homeless to build small shelters, but the village will help only 30-40 and may not get started for four to six months. The City Council has allocated \$225,000 to assist St. Vincent de Paul, Shelter Care, Looking Glass, and others to address some of these problems. Why not utilize all six sites, and maybe several vacant buildings? Eugene needs sites for families, sites for single women, sites for those with addiction problems, and places for people to store their stuff, to sleep, or go to the bathroom. The shelters are overwhelmed and the weather is getting nasty.

Eugene City Council okays \$225,000 to help local homeless population immediately - <http://tinyurl.com/d2lo5j9>

"We have too many high-sounding words, and too few actions that correspond with them. —Abigail Adams

Human Right!

and resources into addressing the needs of the unhoused in our community. This winter, there is still a lot of talk about action, but the rain has set in, the nights are getting cold and dark, and very little has changed. So, of course, you consider that the city now has a completely empty lot in its center so large it covers an entire city block.

While ago, activists and the families of people whose names were added on our city streets gathered to create a memorial. We hung signs and signs on the chain link fence to block off the empty lot building that used to house our city offices (a fence that cost the taxpayers nearly \$70,000). The

names of those lost to the cold and the streets were read aloud. The City of Eugene removed the entire memorial before the next morning.

On Nov. 17, we marched up to that same chain link fence and created the memorial anew. Again, the names of those lost to the cold and the streets were read aloud. As the names were read, we hung small white cards bearing their names on the fence. And then....

Event organizer Gwendolyn Maeve climbed up and over the gate near 8th and High streets and chained herself inside. Supporters gathered near her, bringing food and water, through the two nights she remained there.

Occupy Eugene and other homeless supporters thank Gwen for her work in bringing us together to help make a stand for people who need shelter, for her creativity and passion for community and change, and, ultimately, for being an example of courage, compassion, and action.

To see a video of the N17 activities, go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC3kLwd4OMM&feature=plcp>



Occupiers feed people at the N17 day of action in defense of the homeless.

PHOTO BY GREG WALKER



PHOTO BY GREG WALKER

Jennifer Harper stirs a pot as OE gets ready to feed the people on N17.

OCCUPY INTERFAITH CELEBRATES ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

BY PATTY HINE

“How are things going for you?”

The man is young, or is he? His dreds cover his forehead and hang by his rosy cheeks. He's layered-up because it's getting cold outside. He's part of the SLEEPS task force, housed and unhoused people, who are at City Council tonight to speak to Councilors about the need to decriminalize homelessness and to establish more safe places for the unhoused to sleep.

He smiles easily but with reserve and replies, “I'm doing pretty well. I have a place to sleep right now, in a warehouse . . . no running water or anything, but it's good. I have a hot plate. I get up and leave early and come back late at night.” He says he's had it better, but also worse. With few words, he shares emphatically that the people who are homeless downtown are some of the best people he's ever known. Some down on their luck and having made some poor choices, but good people.

One year ago, Occupy Eugene showed us that we have extreme problems with homelessness and a lack of human services in our community. It showed us there is ridiculous economic inequality and many people are falling through the cracks across the country — foreclosures, healthcare crises, hunger. Many of us were shocked into awareness that something is really wrong.

What do we people of faith do about an international economic system that manufactures poverty and injustice for the majority? We show up.

Since December 2011, people from the Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, St. Mary's Episcopal, Church of the Resurrection, St. Thomas More Catholic, Central Presbyterian, First United Methodist, Wesley United Methodist, Trinity United Methodist, Church of the Brethren, Christian Science, First Christian, Eugene Mennonite and Quakers (and others) have met to take action with Occupy Eugene and other allies. It's not enough to act out of charity alone. We must address the root causes of injustice, which is the biggest spiritual adventure after all. This is where we experience our connectedness and heal.

One year after our first gathering, we are involved in Homeless Solutions, Foreclosure Assistance, Opportunity Village, SLEEPS, Democracy School, a community bill of rights, and Health Care for All Oregon. At the October 15th Occupy Eugene One-Year Anniversary, we celebrated with dancing, shared a foot-washing and Eucharist service in the rain, and at the Homeless Memorial we witnessed to those who died in the streets last year. (The memorial was taken down by city workers, but was put back up on Nov. 17.) We educate and organize our congregations, support allies and fundraise.

It's our one-year anniversary! We are here to stay. See you at the City Council meetings!

Occupy Inter-Faith Eugene/Springfield meets the second Sunday of the month and works with Occupy Eugene and other allies to bring justice and equity to our world. Anyone of any faith tradition (or no tradition) is welcome! For more information, contact Patty Hine at 541-343-5091 or occupyinterfaith@gmail.com.

OVE MOVES FORWARD

BY JANEL KLINGMAN

Opportunity Village Eugene (OVE) continues to move forward in its pursuit of warm, safe, and secure transitional housing for homeless individuals or couples who want to live together in an organized, substance and violence-free community.

Several months ago, City of Eugene staff presented the City Council with five possible village sites. With cold, wet weather making temporary housing for the homeless even more urgent, on Monday, Dec. 10, after hearing testimony from over 30 SLEEPS supporters, the Council approved a site on N. Garfield near Roosevelt Boulevard.

Earlier on Dec. 10 OVE had displayed its Conestoga Hut on the East Park Block in hopes that the Eugene City

Council members, Mayor, and City Manager would examine it before their meeting that evening. The Conestoga Hut is an economical (\$250 to \$500, depending on the amount of donated or repurposed materials used), easy-to-build, insulated six-foot-by-14- foot structure roomy enough for two people plus some possessions. OVE Volunteers built the Conestoga Hut under the guidance of Erik de Buhr of Tine Hive.

OVE worked closely with St. Vincent De Paul to encourage the City Council to approve the Conestoga Hut for use in the existing car camping program (which allows RVs and tents on host property) and in the proposed Village. At its Dec. 10 meeting the Council also approved the use of the

Conestoga Huts in vehicle camping areas.

The OVE Vetting Committee continues to work on the application and interview process that will be used to determine the first residents for the Village.

OVE needs volunteers to help with building Conestoga Huts, bookkeeping, clerical tasks, website management, donated materials management and fundraising. OVE has applied for 501(c)3 status. In the meantime, checks can be made out to St. Vincent de Paul (designated for OVE), and mailed to 458 Blair Blvd, Eugene OR 97402.

Please see the website at opportunityvillageeugene.org for more information, or contact Joline Kessler at op.village@gmail.com to volunteer.

“The most dangerous man to any government is the man who is able to think things out ... without regard to the prevailing superstitions and taboos. Almost inevitably he comes to the conclusion that the government he lives under is dishonest, insane, intolerable.” —H.L. Mencken

NATIONAL MORTGAGE SETTLEMENT

By FERGUS McLEAN

Exactly why the Subprime Mortgage Crisis collapsed housing prices in 2008, wrecked the economy and destroyed 40% of Americans' wealth is not completely clear, but there is one thing 99% of us can agree on: It was bad. And it was crooked.

Millions of American homes were stolen from homebuyers in an orgy of ripoffs by the big banks and hedge funds hell-bent on building personal fortunes by repackaging millions of bad loans and selling them at ridiculous prices to gullible victims all over the world. Housing prices doubled, the bankers and traders got rich — and crashed the world economy.

Along with the trillions of dollars the Federal Reserve and the US Treasury handed the huge banks since the 2008 collapse, the attorneys general of 49 states have managed to wrest a small clawback for homebuyers' benefit under the National Mortgage Settlement.

Last February five of the largest mortgage lenders agreed, in light of their fraudulent “robosigning” practices, to pay \$5 billion dollars to the homeowners they'd ripped off under the National Mortgage Settlement. Oregon got \$18 million of those dollars and the money is up for grabs by the 21,000 Oregonians foreclosed on by the big five lenders from 2008 to 2011. This works out to at least \$840 per household. Not a lot, but enough to help with the deposit on a rental.

So if you or anyone you know was foreclosed on by Bank of America, Wells Fargo, CitiBank, JPMorganChase or Ally Financial between January 1, 2008 and Dec. 31, 2011, be aware that at least \$840 is available for the asking if you get your application in by Jan. 18, 2013.

If you received a National Mortgage Settlement letter from the Oregon Department of Justice, you need to fill out and return the application inside. You'll find a unique code on your envelope which you'll need to use on your application. Many eligible ex-homeowners may not have been notified. Call 1-866-430-8358 or go to www.nationalmortgagesettlement.com for an application.

Occupy Eugene's Occupy Housing-Foreclosure Action Committee meets Wednesdays at 5 p.m. at Grower's Market, 454 Willamette St. Come by if you have questions about your foreclosure, are worried about making your payments, or have stories to share.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact Occupy Housing-Foreclosure Action Committee. (541) 937-3034 or go to the Oregon Department of Justice website:

<http://www.oregonhomeownersupport.gov/en/find-resources/national-mortgage-settlement>

OE ENDS OCCUPATION AT 1191 LAWRENCE

By MAJESKA SEESE-GREEN

After 136 days, Occupy Eugene's longest occupation to date came to a successful conclusion on Dec. 10. A closing ceremony marked the return of the property at 1191 Lawrence, previously in foreclosure, to the control of its owner, Karen Atkinson.

Now out of state, Ms. Atkinson expressed great appreciation to Occupy Eugene for the occupation, which began July 27. She says that without it, she would not have become aware of the illegality of the bank's foreclosure actions. To the Eugene community, she says of Occupy Eugene, “I wish them continued success in their endeavors to inform, educate, and help correct the mortgage system, which not only failed myself but countless others, not only in this community but across our state and our great

country.”

Occupy Housing and Foreclosure Action Committee coordinated the ending of the occupation with Karen, following a fortuitous confluence of events. After a weekend of cleanup at the corner property in a residential neighborhood and the short closing ceremony, participants held a candle-light walk to the SLEEPS rally and first “Constitutional Camp” and Eugene City Council meeting.

The dearth of safe, legal places for unhoused people to sleep was a focus of testimony before City Council. Brief statements from OH-FAC and Karen were read. Unstated was the countless number of person-nights with a safe, legal place to be that had been provided by the occupation at 1191 Lawrence.

Throughout most of the occupation, 1191 Lawrence was referred to as Outpost A. (See the Sept.-Oct. Eugene Occupier for more information.) OH-FAC and the Fed-Up Committee, along with countless individuals, carried out the joint project at the location. As the weather changed, public outreach became more difficult, so OH-FAC coordinated the “changing of the guard” back to the owner for her next steps.

OH-FAC's ongoing activities include a support group for homeowners facing foreclosure, held every Wednesday at Growers Market, 454 Willamette St. Karen's legal situation was not unusual, and many more homeowners can be helped with the variety of maneuvers available.

ACTIVISTS STAGE “THE TRIAL OF PROMETHEUS”

By ARIA SELIGMANN

The Occupy Eugene Library Committee and the new Pulling Heater Theater street theater group staged a Solstice performance of “The Trial of Prometheus” Dec. 22 at Cozmic Pizza. The play is a musical adaptation of the classical Greek tale of Prometheus, the Titan tortured for stealing fire from Zeus. The performance was part of a program that included live music, theater, and poetry. Proceeds went to SLEEPS.

The play looks at strategies to deal with Eugene's restrictions regarding the use of fire and other warming devices by homeless people within the city limits.

Scotty Perey, a local music teacher, musician, and the creator of “The Trial of Prometheus,” is involved with SLEEPS, Occupy Eugene, and attempts to address both the city's ban on camping on public property and restrictive fire codes.

“I was inspired to do a street theater piece based on ‘Prometheus’ ever since last year around this time when the city rather disingenuously denied some simple and safe ways that folks living down at the Occupy camp could have used to keep themselves warm,” says Perey.

The city fire code allows outdoor fire to be used for recreation purposes only. Perey says he was, “rather awestruck by this almost Dystopian tautology that defines what technologies for staying alive we are currently allowed,” and adds, “My understanding is that code specifically targets anything used for the purpose of ‘living,’ and this extends all the way to a simple sleeping bag.”

As with fire, camping items are legally allowed if they are being used only in a recreational context, “but once the same tools are actually used for survival, that becomes the very pretext for their illegality,” says Perey.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER FRENZER-KNOWLTON

Scotty Perey, left, plays the role of Zeus to Derek Lewis's Prometheus in this adaptation of the Greek tale about the Titan, Prometheus, who steals fire from Zeus to give to human beings.

THE HEALTHCARE IN AMERICA BLUES, LYRICS TO A SONG

By SCOTT FIFE

It made me sick to find out all these other countries
All have better healthcare than me
The media tells me I should think it's really great
And shout it from the rooftops, “We're number thirty eight”
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

CHORUS:
Single Payer Now! Ask me how
Single Payer Now! It's like-wow
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

Don't want no tea baggers to have no embolism.
But isn't the military a kind of socialism?
Insurers swarm like flies to Washington D.C.
Denying us our care while with our money lobby
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

CHORUS:
You can keep your nice warm houseand lose that dead
end job

Keep your nice warm spouse
and there's no need to rob
Premiums keep going up and insurance we've discovered
Like a flimsy hospital gown, you'll find your ass ain't covered
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

INSTRUMENTAL CHORUS

While Pimping for Viagra, we see assisting politicians
Say women without birth control are preexisting conditions
Big pharma rigs the prices and on TV oversell
You don't need to be a doctor to still be mad as hell*
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

CHORUS

Health care liberation would really be more fair
than wealth care domination and endless warfare

It doesn't take a specialist, a surgeon to deduce
That we retrain insurers for a job that has some use
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

CHORUS

Sure blame the C.E.O.s and the leech-like H.M.O.s
but get up off your seat, get your feet in the street
Now's the time to fight for our moral right
Scare those politicians, from their fright shall come light
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues

LAST CHORUS: Single Payer Now! Don't have a cow
Single Payer Now! Ask me how
Single Payer Now! Will cure the healthcare in
America blues
*madashelldoctors.com/

WHAT WILL THE NEW YEAR BRING?

By JERRY BRULE

A new year. A time for considering what we have accomplished and what will come to be. Things have changed a lot this past year. Many of the things we have strived for over the past year, while not resolved, are progressing in the right direction. Occupy may be responsible for the many of the positive changes in attitudes that we are now seeing.

Occupy began because of outrage at the abuses of Wall Street, the undue political influence of the rich, and the economic inequality. Now the people have rejected a rich corporate raider that personified that injustice, and the tax rates are about to become more fair.

Occupy became advocates for the homeless, and while there are still few places for them to stay, there are the Egan Warming centers, the City Council is considering Opportunity Village, the City has allocated \$ 223,000 to help alleviate some of their problems, and the SLEEPS committee is working on other solutions.

There have been many other successes. Occupy Interfaith has hundreds of people working for homeless solutions, health care for all, and an end to corporate personhood. Occupy Medical has helped thousands and now have a bus and is expanding hours. Occupy Foreclosures has kept several homes from being auctioned off and the Owner of the home on Lawrence that OE occupied is now returning. The Newsletter is doing fine and Occupy Media is broadcasting successful TV programs.

So what will the New Year bring? As a starting point, Occupy engaged mainly in protests to make the public aware of the injustices we live with. The elections indicated that most of the public shares our concerns. There is still a need for protest, but now we need to diversify our approach. The real struggle will be in implementation. Now we need to find a way to influence the lawmakers. How can we make Tax reform more fair and impose a Carbon tax on polluters to slow Global Warming? How can we implement a Financial Transaction taxes to make Wall Street pay their fair share? How can we establish State Banks so the people’s money will finance Benefit Corporations or worker co-ops? What can we do to convert Obamacare to Single Payer?

It is time for some fresh ideas and tactics. Please join us and help build the world we want to live in.

MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT: RESIST PAYING WAR TAXES

By GRAHAM LEWIS

Along with CALC founder Marion Malcolm, Peg Morton is a Mother Superior of Eugene political activists. Now in her 80s, Peg can be found, smiling and singing, in anti-war and social justice demonstrations. She just published an amazing book of memoirs, *Feeling Light Within, I Walk* (\$15, Tsunami Books and Black Sun Books), in which she describes her experience as a war tax resister.

“Historically, in this country, war tax resistance goes back to 1637, when Algonquin Indians opposed taxation by the Dutch to help improve a local Dutch fort . . . Henry David Thoreau famously spent a night in jail for refusing to pay the Massachusetts poll tax levied for the Mexican War. Out of that experience, he wrote *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*.

After a 1980 divorce, activist Peg found herself facing the tax decision as a single mother. “I was scared. . . . [My daughter] Anna was twelve. . . If I were to be sent to jail, what would happen to her? I learned later that this [is] an almost totally unnecessary fear. The consequences of war tax refusal have almost always been financial.” But Peg does emphasize that “refusal to pay one’s taxes, if owed, is an illegal act” of civil disobedience. “Sometimes, we have to act alone, but a strong [tax resisters] group for action and support can be more powerful and effective.”

Peg moved to Eugene in 1989 and met Sue Barnhart. Sue had been a war tax resister since her 20s. Now 58, she says when she first started working and paying taxes, she was upset to realize how much she was supporting the Vietnam War. “I didn’t know that taxes were a choice until other activists explained it,” she says. “I resisted by living below the taxable income. Now I have a social work job where my employer reports [my earnings]. I do the paperwork for my taxes but do not send a check to the IRS. . . Eventually my taxes are collected by the IRS garnishing my wages or clearing out a bank account, but I don’t give it to them willingly . . . If everyone against war refused to pay even \$10 of the taxes they owed it would make an extremely strong statement.”

From a tattered list, Peg and Sue assembled what has become a vital group, Taxes for Peace Not War, that comes together during every tax season. They educate newbies and discuss where to divert funds requested by the IRS, including groups that serve the houseless as well as abused women, farmworkers, and peace efforts. Their strategies often include sending letters explaining their war tax stand to the IRS, to members of Congress, and to local newspapers. They often seek legislation that would legalize conscientious objection to war taxation.

If you have a local landline, you’ll notice a Federal Excise Tax on your monthly bill. It is usually less than a dollar, but it adds up. The excise tax was originally levied to help pay for the Vietnam War. About half the tax currently goes to the military budget. “At the end of each year,” says Peg, “several of us . . . combine our resisted excise taxes, and it usually [provides] a nice donation to a local group.”

As a demonstration that activists do not resist paying war taxes for selfish reasons, the “movement has always encouraged some sort of redirection” of the funds “for reasons of conscience.” Resisters keep records of their redirected funds. When the amount is sizeable, they can deposit it to a special “alternative fund” and contribute the accumulated interest to life-giving endeavors. When and if the IRS tries to garnish wages or put a lien on personal property, the alternative account can be accessed. Resisters do have to pay interest and penalties owed. If needed, people can apply for help from a Penalty Fund, which raises money for that purpose.

Tax Day actions at the downtown Post Office date back to the 1960s. Taxes for Peace Not War reinforces this tradition every year, gathering in a staunch coalition. You’ll find Michael Carrigan there urging citizens to try the Penny Poll to indicate how they would divide the federal budget. Resisters pass out literature that shows the actual federal budget pie chart, which shocks most people. The rally includes music, a march, speeches, and a public presentation to pro-social organizations of resisters’ checks for the amounts requested by the IRS. If you want to learn more about tax resistance or the TFPNW group, call Peg Morton at 541-342-2914 or email sarahandcarrie@comcast.net.

To the Mayor and City Council of Eugene

If you will not help the un-housed create a village to house the houseless, and if you will not help the un-housed create a garden so the houseless can feed themselves, then I would respectfully request that you work to create a cemetery for the houseless, because we're going to need it. As my representative municipal government I want you to understand that I would rather visit my friends while they are alive. But should that one day not be possible, I'd like a dignified place for my dead friends to peaceful rest, a place where I can come to visit them, talk with them, and leave flowers for them before I go.

Thank you.
Hedin Manus Brugh

Climate Change

Big corporations — and the staff of scientists they pay to back them up — claim that climate change or global warming isn't real. They deny that it will destroy civilization, but the process is already underway. I can say with sadness that maybe there was some justice in Hurricane Sandy coming up and hitting the East coast. We Americans have been the main cause of greenhouse gasses, and it’s time that the information which the media has so misrepresented came to everyone's attention.

My parents both live in NJ and had a power outage for seven days. A lot of innocent people are still suffering, unable to return to what’s left of their homes. I don’t mean to say that there is anything right or deserved about people’s lives being turned upsidedown; on the contrary. I think the government should clamp down on all groups profiting from climate crisis. That’s who deserves to be hit — by a superstorm of regulation. The process of revoking a corporation's charter used to be done quite frequently in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. When they stopped serving the public good, they were disbanded. Now those who are actually making our planet unlivable get away with nothing but a fine, the cost of doing business. Too many people seem to worship profit, letting the good of the planet languish.

There are lots of groups talking about climate change. Citizens Climate Lobby is one that is making progress. I found out in the last conference call that with more moisture retained in our atmosphere and the average temperatures rising worldwide, we can expect tropical diseases in our very own USA. For example, mosquito-carried malaria has already killed one third of the population that has ever lived on Earth. I support a carbon tax as one of the many measures that would make it cost polluters dearly to engage in activities which hurt us all.

Eugene Needs Restrooms

Downtown Eugene has 11 restrooms that the public can sometimes use. Two are below the Overpark (the only truly public restrooms), five at the library, and one at the LTD station. The restrooms under the parking structures are not well maintained, have no stall doors, and are frequently locked without any signage to indicate why. People have speculated that these restrooms are closed because they need cleaning and no staff is available to maintain them.

Of the five at the library, three are open during regular business hours (one on each floor), the one in the lobby is open during those rare times that the lobby coffee shop is open and the library itself is not (and then only for customers), and the one in the hallway leading to the Ruth Bascom room is only open when events are held in that room.

The restroom at the LTD station is open frequently, but only for those who have not been banned from the station for loitering (being there for any reason other than taking the bus), and frequently runs out of toilet paper during hours the station is not staffed.

The ninth restroom, at the Amtrak station, is open when the station is open, but is technically not public. It is for Amtrak customers, though others frequently use it. The tenth restroom is at the Greyhound bus station, but staff are pretty vigilant to keep non-customers out, and it is so dirty and unfriendly that most would not choose to use it. The eleventh restroom, next door to Pizza Pipeline, is not always open and does not have a posted schedule. I’m not sure who it belongs to. Some have suggested it is intended for the security guards that work at the apartment building there.

Many businesses in the area don’t have customer restrooms because ADA accessible restrooms are extremely expensive as retrofits in older buildings, and stores that do are pretty careful to keep non-customers out. I have heard that this is an insurance/liability issue.

Any local or visitor taking a stroll through downtown Eugene may at any given time be many blocks from an open restroom they can use. Even if they can find one, it is probably not clean, and may be out of toilet paper and/or soap.

This situation provides the opposite of a welcoming atmosphere for everyone, but especially parents with young children, older people, and those with mobility-related disabilities. Who wants to visit an area where you may have to leave at a moments notice to rush somewhere where you can use a restroom?

The Downtown Guides, in their cheerful red hats, are there to give directions and to call police if there is a situation that needs public safety intervention. But, it seems no staff is available to make sure the two actual public restrooms below the parking garages stay clean, well stocked and open. Why do you think that is?

Sabra Marcroft

Michael Carrigan urges people to use the Penny Poll to show how they would divide the federal budget.

PHOTO BY JAIN ELLIOTT



Gwen Iris Brings Attention to Homelessness

By Christina Bellini

With an act of civil disobedience, Occupy organizer Gwendolyn Iris gained local media attention, bringing, as she had hoped, greater public awareness to homelessness in Eugene.

In solidarity with direct actions for “N17” by Occupy Wall Street and other Occupies nationally, on Nov. 17, Iris scaled the chain link fence barring access to Eugene’s old City Hall and locked herself to it. Her 36-hour action ended before 2 a.m. Nov. 19, when nine Eugene police officers arrived to handcuff her and a second activist who had joined her in the last hours of protest. Officers removed both protesters from City Hall, charged them with criminal trespass, and released them.

Feedback from people in the community who “aren’t necessarily activists” surprised Iris. While she knew that many Eugenians are compassionate, also knowing that they think regularly about homelessness makes her happy. “I think the community, for the most part, is supportive of finding solutions,” offered Iris. She believes that City Council supported this notion with its recent 7 - 0 vote to allocate \$225,000 to the issue. While skeptical, due to City Council’s failure to keep previous promises to implement solutions, Iris says she remains hopeful.

Iris spoke candidly about planning the protest, when Occupy activists and other homeless supporters realized that City Hall was going to be vacated and sit empty before being demolished. “It was a resource that we felt could be used as space for warming shelters,” she said.

For a while no fence surrounded the vacated City Hall. But when activists started talking about it in public forums online and going by to check it out, the \$70,000 fence went up. “It came together in my mind that it would be a powerful symbolic action to call attention to the way we’re spending our money while there are much more constructive

ways,” said Iris, emphasizing that the money spent to keep people out of the public space could be used to help solve the homeless problem.

Iris was drawn to the Occupy movement by the “all-encompassing” issues of wealth inequality and “the power of the corporations over the individual person” that OWS has raised. She has been proactive in organizing events from the beginning of Occupy Eugene. “The homeless issue is something we’ve been aware of since the second day of Occupy Eugene. I wanted to bring awareness to that issue, since we’re going into winter.”

Many unhoused individuals and homeless activists feel frustrated that the state can take away a person’s right to exist, “simply by making it illegal to sleep without paying for a place, making areas and resources unavailable that should be basic rights,” says Iris. She thinks it’s ridiculous that city government and the community act like solutions to the problem are not simple. “They’ve convinced themselves and a lot of people that it’s not an easy fix, and it is: decriminalize being homeless. They’ve done it in countless other cities.”

When asked about her future plans in activism, Iris stated, “I want to give a lot of support to SLEEPS. I think they’ve got a valid purpose. It is direct action and civil disobedience, providing support to people in need. It’s this



Gwen sits behind the fence at the old City Hall

PHOTO BY GREG WALKER

amazing combination of different approaches to activism.”

“Other than continuing working in the area of homelessness,” Iris continued, “I want to start focusing more on the No Coal issue and some of the environmental issues that we’re seeing and dealing with in Oregon, because that is also directly affected by corporations and the loopholes that we as a society give them.”

Iris says she used to have a long list of people who inspired her, her “heroes”, but, the more she has been with Occupy, the more she is “amazed at what everyday people can do when they come together.”

Occupy Roundup

By Vickie Nelson

Occupy Public Lands

Erica Johnson, an organizer of OPL, located in Tucson, Arizona, tells us Occupy Public Land has spent the best part of the past year staging actions to catch the local government violating the rights of those who live on the streets. Organizers of OPL currently have two federal lawsuits pending addressing these issues in hopes of correction. OPL’s goal is to create a model that any citizen can use to ensure their personal rights are secured and they know how to redress their grievances when their rights are violated.

Occupy Roseburg

Occupy Roseburg creates a beautiful community space every Saturday (rain or shine) in Eagle’s Park at the corner of Jackson and Lane streets in historic old town Roseburg. Volunteers serve a hot potluck meal and while others run a free store. Local musicians often add to the festivities during this weekly Occupy Roseburg event. This meal begins at noon, and continues till “we run out of food.” OR stresses the meal is open to the whole community. “We make no distinctions between those who have homes and those who live in shelters or in parks. We are all part of the 99% and we are all in this fight together. We welcome all who come to eat, share stories, make real human connections, and spread love.”

Occupy Portland

On Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day, OP took part in a full day of events beginning at a 10 a.m. rally and press conference at City Hall with members and supporters of Right 2 Dream Too (R2D2), which has maintained a self-sustaining rest area for people who are houseless at NW 4th and Burnside since October 2011. R2D2 provides emergency shelter to dozens of people every night at no cost to the City of Portland. After a noon Stand in Support of Grocery Workers calling on Safeway, Albertsons and Fred Meyer to

recognize the value, hard work, and dignity of their employees with a fair contract, and a press conference and rally to pressure Sheriff Staton to stop using Immigration Customs Enforcement holds, activists joined Jobs with Justice, the Oregon AFL-CIO, the Northwest Oregon Labor Council, Oregon Action and Working America in a candlelight vigil to tell Senator Ron Wyden to end the Bush tax cuts for the richest 2%, and to make no cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, or other services for low-income people.

Occupy Chicago

In Chicago, in commemoration of the International Human Rights Day, the Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign announced the upcoming World Court of Women tribunal in Philadelphia to be held in Philadelphia, October 18-20, 2013. The tribunal will hear testimony of poor women from Pennsylvania and surrounding states about their economic human rights violations. Since 1992 the World Court of Women (WCW) has been holding public hearings internationally to share voices of survival and resistance from the margins. For more information, see www.worldcourtsofwomen.wordpress.com/.

Occupy Sandy

OWS activists drew on their social media and quick response skills to show up along with—and sometimes ahead of—FEMA and the Red Cross to bring food, water, blankets, and other comforts to people suffering the effects of Hurricane Sandy in NYC and NJ. Activists worked with local organizations and politicians, and gained the respect of many former detractors. News sources such as ABC news and the NYT praised OS for being as or more effective than larger, more established organizations. Watch “Occupy Sandy: A Human Response to the New Realities of Climate Change,” a 24-minute film by director Josh Fox on Occupy Sandy’s response to the hurricane here: <http://vimeo.com/54432527>

Activists Urge Consumers to “Buy Nothing” on Nov. 23

Compiled by Vickie Nelson with reports by David Adkins, Shelley Jensen, and Julie McDonnell

On the morning of Nov. 23 a group of Occupy Eugene activists, staged a Buy Nothing Day protest in front of the West 11th Walmart to bring attention to the 1% media blitz targeting the 99% and urging people to buy, buy, buy on “Black Friday.” The unfettered consumerism during the holiday season results in folks spending less time with their families and falling deeper into debt while the large corporations reap record profits, sometimes moving into the black or credit side of the accounting ledger for the first time that year, which gives us the expression “Black Friday.” Activists, who held great protest signs urging people

to “Shop Less, Live More” and “Step off the Consumer Treadmill” also note that many big box stores, including the retail giant WalMart, have abysmal employee wages and benefits.

A companion action took place simultaneously at the Green Acres Walmart held by the Eugene Springfield Solidarity Network (ESSN), the Pacific Green Party, the Peace Choir, the Teamsters, the International Workers of the World, Occupy Eugene, and other social justice activists.

Shelley Jensen, ESSN co-chair, reports in “Kicked to the Curb” on the ESSN website (<http://essn.weebly.com/walmart.html>)

that when she tried to deliver a letter about Walmart’s wages and working conditions to the Walmart manager, he said he was “not authorized” to accept it. The police arrived a short time later and told the protesters to leave, invoking private property rights. Jensen concedes that the parking lot is not public property, but questions why Walmart, which shares the lot with Dick’s Sporting Goods, Market of Choice, Little Caesar’s Pizza, and dozens of other tenants, gets to decide whether or not activists have the right to free speech in that entire parking lot.

Both these morning protests attracted

TV news cameras, which helped get our “Buy Nothing” message out.

Later that afternoon, at the Springfield Walmart, several of OE’s rowdier activists ventured inside and held a competition using a “Walmart Shenanigans Scorecard,” which listed activities that would earn competitors from 5 points (hula hoop for 1 minute) to 100 points (get arrested). No one got arrested, but we have seen proof that people did set up a tent (70 points), label food with GMO stickers (60 points), and try on underwear and ask someone how they looked (25). Julie McDonnell and Nick Ingram won.

DONATIONS WELCOME

Occupy Eugene asks for your financial support so that we can continue to build coalitions, pressure our elected leaders, and work together to end the inequality and injustices in our community and in our country. We welcome any level of support and hope that you will give an amount meaningful to you. Donations are always welcome! Use the WePay button on the Occupy Eugene website; mail a check written to “Occupy Eugene” to P. O. Box 744, Eugene OR 97440; or stop by the Oregon Community Credit Union to make a deposit to our account.

To donate or for more information, go to www.occupyeugenemedia.org/donate/.

Please continue to recycle this newsletter by passing it along to a friend.