

EUGENE CITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

January 14, 2010



City of Eugene

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AROUND THE CITY

Community Journalism Offers New Ways for the City to Tell Its Story

One of the fast-emerging trends in news reporting is the use of "citizen journalists." These are people who are not employed by television stations or newspapers but who are able to publish news via community "blogs" and online video services. KVAL-TV is an example of a local television station that has embraced citizen journalism and opened the door to new ways for the City of Eugene to get information to residents that is important for them to know yet, traditionally, hard to make interesting.

How this new technology helps Eugene tell its story can be seen in a video news story titled *Eugene's sewer team: 'New Experiences Every Day.'* (To view this story, go to www.kval.com/news/local/80954167.html, or link to it via the Public Works home page at www.eugene-or.gov/pw.) Two University of Oregon students, Sam Abrams and Laura Fong, produced a four-minute segment on the crew members who keep Eugene's wastewater system flowing smoothly and the types of work they do. The segment is posted to KVAL's community news section.

While the story didn't make the 5 o'clock news, it did allow the two journalism students to capture interesting human interest aspects of the wastewater cleaning crew and present them to the community. The news-gathering process also was less intimidating to the line staff, who often tend to avoid professional reporters looking for controversial angles to the news. The less-formal approach allowed staff to "be themselves" and believably explain the service they provide.



Maintenance worker Lloyd "Fugi" Ngariki is on crew featured on KVAL Community News at www.kval.com/news/local/80954167.html

At a recent meeting of the Greater Oregon Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, local TV, radio and newspaper reporters encouraged public information professionals to use media-based social media tools such as citizen journalism to communicate directly with community members. Public information staff in several City

departments increasingly are using these new tools effectively. For more information, contact Public Works Public Affairs Manager Eric Jones at 541-682-5523, or Community Relations Director Jan Bohman at 541-382-5587.

University Greek Houses Undergoing Fire Safety Re-inspections

The 22 fraternities and sororities in the University of Oregon's Greek system all have at least a little work to do – and soon – in order to meet fire safety codes. The houses, which together accommodate more than 1,000 residents and another 2,000 or so members, participate with the university and the City's Fire & EMS Department in a fire safety program that helps ensure their adherence to fire code regulations and is intended to prevent the type of deadly fire that has occurred at Greek houses elsewhere in the country. The university contracts with the City for the notifications, inspection, education, and follow-up services. In recent weeks, the houses received a checklist of safety requirements, and were advised to self-inspect and make corrections to see that the conditions listed were met.

Re-inspections have now begun, officiated by Fire & EMS personnel. Common violations found have included blocked fire sprinklers, missing smoke alarms (or missing smoke alarm batteries), combustibles stored too close to heat sources, unsafe exit door hardware, in addition to other violations. No house received a clean bill of health. However, follow-up will continue until they do. Failure to make the required corrections comes at the risk of civil penalties and possible loss of official recognition by the university. The City's Greek housing inspection program has been operating since the 1990s, but has become more formalized in recent years. It includes not only the inspections described above, but also an annual fire safety academy for fraternity and sorority members. For more information, please contact Deputy Fire Marshal Sandra Johnston at 541-682-5420.



Storytelling Workshop for Adults

The Eugene Public Library invites adults who live or work with young children to a free workshop, "Tell It Without the Book: Oral Storytelling and Puppetry," on Saturday, January 23, 2:00 p.m., at the Downtown Library.

This informative and inspiring program will teach participants how to develop and tell stories that build early literacy skills; choose developmentally appropriate books and stories; and "explore your creative spirit." Workshop leader Stephen Engelfried is an early childhood librarian and the director of the Raising a Reader program at Multnomah County Library in Portland.

Due to limited space, pre-registration is required. For more information or to pre-register, call the Eugene Public Library at 541-682-8316.

Recreation Swims Fill the No-School-Day Gap

While schools are closed for the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday this Monday, the Aquatics program will be in full swing with a no-school-day Recreational Swim at Sheldon Pool from 1:40 - 3:40 p.m.

Sheldon Pool will also hold no-school-day swims on Eugene School District 4J no-school days: January 29, February 15, March 22 - 26, and April 16. Echo Hollow Pool will hold special recreation swims from 1:30 – 3:00 p.m., on Bethel School District no-school days: January 29, March 22, 24 and 26, and April 9.

The cost is \$3 for youth, ages 3 - 17; and \$3.75 for adults, age 18 and older. Family passes can be used. For more information, call Rich Fay at 541-682-5331.

Residents Invited to Comment on Master Plan for Public Art

A draft of the City's first Master Plan for Public Art is now available for public comment. The 10-year plan provides a vision for the City's public art program and assets, and a roadmap for integrating that vision with other City planning and development efforts.

A public art plan was identified in the 2007 Cultural Arts Policy Review (CPR) as a tool needed to help "enhance Eugene's physical environment through public art in the downtown and throughout the City." The CPR called the development of a plan a key ingredient in reinforcing Eugene's emerging art identity and a means to "integrate arts and culture into the fabric of Eugene's downtown and neighborhoods."

The process of developing a comprehensive public art plan was guided by the consulting agency, Barney and Worth, and a 14-member steering committee. The foundation of the plan is a result of broad-based resident input. The plan was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

To view the draft plan online, go to [click here](#). Hard copies are available for review at the Downtown Public Library second floor reference desk and at the Planning Department front desk, 99 West 10th. The comment period is open until **5:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 19, 2010**. Send comments to clark@barneyandworth.com. Residents may also comment at the final meeting of the Public Arts Plan Steering Committee at noon on Wednesday, January 20, in the lobby of the Hult Center. For more information, please contact Assistant Community Events Manager Isaac Marquez at 541-682-2057.

Thousands Respond to Eugene Neighborhood Survey

More than 4,600 community members responded to the recent Eugene Neighborhood Survey, providing useful information about what they like in their neighborhoods and what they would like to improve. Conducted during the summer and fall of 2009, the survey was developed in partnership with neighborhood associations. Neighborhood associations, as well as City staff and other community groups, distributed the survey with a special emphasis on reaching under-represented groups. These efforts paid off, as results indicate that survey responses are a good representation of the city population in terms of age, income, race/ethnicity, gender, and home ownership.

Overall, respondents had positive views of the quality of life in Eugene's neighborhoods. When asked about what they would like to improve, safety was by far the most frequent response, followed by traffic, biking/walking, parks and natural areas, and neighborhood appearance.

Just over half (54 percent) of respondents had not participated in their neighborhood association, but 38 percent expressed an interest in being connected. When asked what would encourage them to become more involved, the top answers were knowing other people who attend meetings and events, and receiving more information about their neighborhood association.

Neighborhood surveys are considered a best practice in neighborhood planning initiatives. The survey provides a wealth of information for neighborhood associations and the City of Eugene, as they work to increase involvement and participation in neighborhood associations and improve neighborhood livability. The full results of the Eugene Neighborhood Survey will be posted online at <http://www.eugene-or.gov/neighborhoodsurvey> and neighborhood-specific reports will be provided to each association as they become available. For more information, please contact Lorna Flormoe at 541-682-5670 or lorna.r.flormoe@ci.eugene.or.us.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Award to be Presented

The Human Rights Commission recently selected the 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Leadership award winner. The award presentation will take place January 18, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., in the Hult Center Lobby. In addition to the presentation of the award, the Lane County celebration will include guest speaker, Damali Ayo, as well as music and dance. The event promises to be fun and a great way to honor one special, local individual and the incredible mission and work of Dr. King. For more information, go to <http://mlkcelebrationlaneco.org/> or contact Holly LeMasurier at 541-682-5619.

Leaf Pickup Service in Eugene Ends for Season

Eugene's leaf collection program is finished for the season. The last official day of the leaf pickup program was Tuesday, January 12, and residents have been advised via a news release that no new materials should be placed in the streets. Residents are responsible for removing leaves and other debris left in the streets in front of their homes or businesses.



Approximately 17,200 cubic yards of leaves were collected by loaders and leaf vacuums over the course of the 11-week collection program. Of that total, almost 10,000 cubic yards of leaves were delivered to residents, with the rest going to community gardens and local recyclers. None of the leaves went to the landfill.

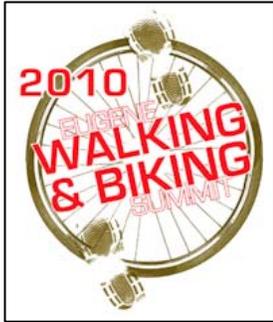
A key focus for this year's program was keeping leaves out of bike lanes, and the City continues to remind residents that no debris, including leaves, should be placed in bike lanes. Residents with leftover leaves or other yard debris can recycle them in home compost piles, take them to Lane Forest Products or Rexius Forest By-Products, which recycle leaves and woody debris for a small fee, or contact their local solid

waste haulers for information on the curbside yard debris pickup program.

For more information, contact Surface Maintenance Supervisor Damon Joyner at 541-682-4835.

4th Annual Walking and Biking Summit Slated for January 23

The 4th Annual Walking and Biking Summit will be held Saturday, January 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Sheldon Community Center, 2445 Willakenzie Road. Doors will open at 8:30 a.m. for registration.



This year, the summit will help kick off Eugene's new pedestrian and bicycle master planning process. Speakers include Mayor Piercy, pedestrian expert Ellen Vanderslice with the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition, and Bill Nesper of the League of American Bicyclists. Nesper will present Mayor Piercy and the City with the Bicycle Friendly Community - Gold Level Award.

A fun fashion show will highlight local walking, biking and skating gear, and many area organizations and businesses will be on hand to showcase their goods and information. Free childcare will be provided for children over two-and-a-half years-old (please RSVP to Tracy at 541-682-5291). Free valet bike parking will be provided on-site along with breakfast and light refreshments for all participants. For more information, please see www.eugene-or.gov/walkbike or call Lindsay Selser at 541-682-5094.