



May 2009

# Laurel Hill Valley Citizens

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## **Spring General Meeting to Spotlight Gardens and Growth**

The Spring General Meeting of LHVC will take place Thursday, May 21st at the Korean Adventist Church, 2335 Riverview. A Plant Exchange will precede the meeting, which begins at 7:00pm. The meeting will feature a Master Gardener presentation on gardening in the Laurel Hill Valley and information about the Northwest Youth Corps Community Garden and Food Stand. Discussions about methods for sharing surplus produce in the neighborhood and possibly starting a tool library will follow. Updates on the I-5 bridge construction, area homeless camping, the Neighborhood Summit, and the Summer Picnic will keep you current on neighborhood doings. Our City Councilman Alan Zelenka will also provide a report on City activities. Come join in with your neighbors!

## **Annual Spring Plant Exchange at General Meeting**

Continue a tradition of neighborhood exchange and sharing and bring your spring cuttings, seedlings, potted plants, bulbs, edible plants and small shrubs and trees to the Plant Exchange. The Plant Exchange will take place at 6:30 pm, right before our General Meeting, Thursday May 21st.

Please ID your plants with a label on reused plastic cutlery, specialty plant markers, or wooden sticks. Recipients will appreciate knowing the plant's name, variety and bloom color.

## **Neighborhood Open Space Restored**

*by Kathy Frazier*

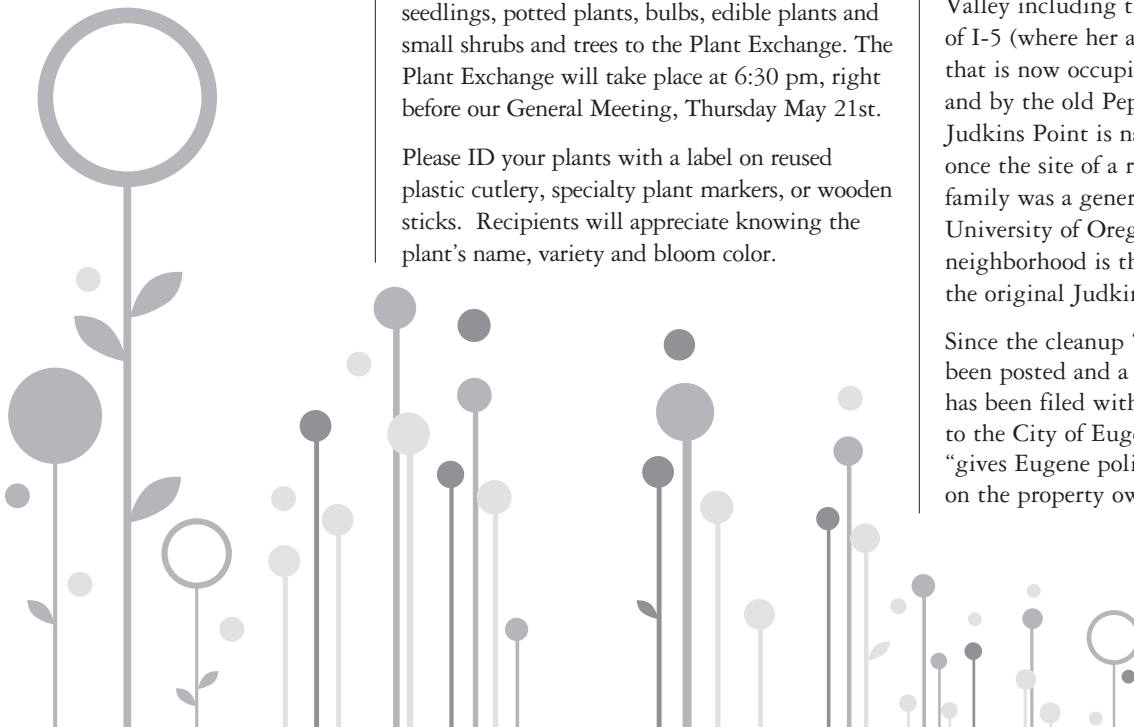
In January Eugene Police cleared out illegal campers from the 23 acre open space between Augusta Street, Laurel Hill Drive and Moon Mountain Drive. The evictions were in response to criminal activity and other problems, including menacing, noise, campfires, drug abuse, and arson.

Dave LaFollette, the property owner's son-in-law, has since had the area cleaned at a reported cost of \$7,000. Trash from the cleanup filled two industrial-sized dumpsters. Jim Potterf, a long time resident of Laurel Hill Drive, personally cleaned up an adjacent portion of the area between on the east side of Moon Mountain and Laurel Hill Drive. In addition to the trash he also removed some brush to make any illegal camping more visible.

The land on the east side of Laurel Hill Valley is owned by Marcia Stevens of Salem. She is a fourth generation descendent of the Judkins family who homesteaded this area about 100 years ago, first in Monroe, and then in Eugene after a flood forced them to move. They originally owned 300 acres in and around the Valley including the Laurel Hill Cemetery east of I-5 (where her ancestors are buried), and land that is now occupied by the NW Youth Corps, and by the old Pepsi-Cola bottling plant. Judkins Point is named for the family and was once the site of a rock quarry. The Judkins family was a generous donor to both 4J and the University of Oregon. The 23 acre parcel in our neighborhood is the last undivided section of the original Judkins property.

Since the cleanup "No Trespassing" signs have been posted and a "Trespass Letter of Consent" has been filed with Eugene Police. According to the City of Eugene's website, this letter "gives Eugene police officers permission to act on the property owner's or manager's behalf in

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## Better Things Than Grass

by Rich Hazel

Grass is work. A lot of work. In Eugene a well maintained lawn requires mowing at least once a week (twice is better) from May through September, and a handful of Spring mowings as well. A few years ago I started questioning why I was doing all that work. Grass in the front yard alone was costing me bucks and bother to water and fertilize, and hours and hours of lawn mower time.

Recognizing that I didn't use the grass as a putting green, I didn't practice lawn bowling, and I didn't have a croquet set, I said, "So why keep it?" A few years ago I started removing my grass, gradually expanding flower beds, the vegetable garden, and native and friendly ground covers. The transition will take me a couple of more years (I'm slow about these things) but that grass is going away in favor of a healthier landscape that's easier to maintain. I'm happier, and the yard is, too.

*"Think of your lawn as a large family of closely packed plants, growing together as a mat or a green carpet to beautify your front yard. But mat is probably the better word because the roots are encouraged to grow together in a tangle—the tighter the tangle, the more dense and thick the lawn. You water and feed your family of plants frequently to keep the roots from starving, then you trim their tops before they can go to seed, which is, when it comes down to it, their biological destiny. So the crowded plants continue to grow frantically, fighting for air and food, trying madly to reproduce. Or at least to take a nap, which they normally do in the heat of mid-summer, when most grasses fade to pale buff as they experience a natural dormant period. But the poor grass plants—all their efforts are to no avail because you keep feeding and watering them to keep them "healthy".*

—Liz Primeau in Front Yard Gardens

trespass situations. Officers who observe trespassers on private property can then immediately address the problem rather than be delayed in acting or be unable to take action at all." Marcia Stevens' hope is that neighbors will feel free to take walks through the area and that it would remain safe and free from refuse and illegal campers. Neighborhood residents have been invited to keep an eye on the property and to call the police or Marcia's son-in-law in response to misuse, including illegal dumping, so that they can stay on top of any problems. Numbers to call are Dave LaFollette at 503-320-7413 or the police non-emergency number at 682-5111.

Remember, the "no trespassing" signs are for illegal campers, not for neighborhood folks.

## Stevens Property to Host Campers for Security

Since cleaning up a huge mess from illegal campers and trash dumpers, Dave LaFollette wants to prevent a reoccurrence. LaFollette is managing the 21 acre Stevens property adjacent to Laurel Hill and Moon Mountain Drives. Police responded to complaints in January and evicted three illegal campers, arresting one on an outstanding warrant. To help watch over the large space, sponsored campers will be staying on site and walking the property daily to check for trespassers and illegal activity.

The sponsored camping is administered through a partnership with St. Vincent de Paul under Eugene's Permitted Overnight Sleeping ordinance. Initially, one camper will stay at an improved site adjacent to Laurel Hill Drive. LaFollette had worked with neighbors, LHVC representatives, and Eugene Code Enforcement Officer Doña Nowakowski on campsite locations.

## Neighbors Meet to Hear About Sound Wall

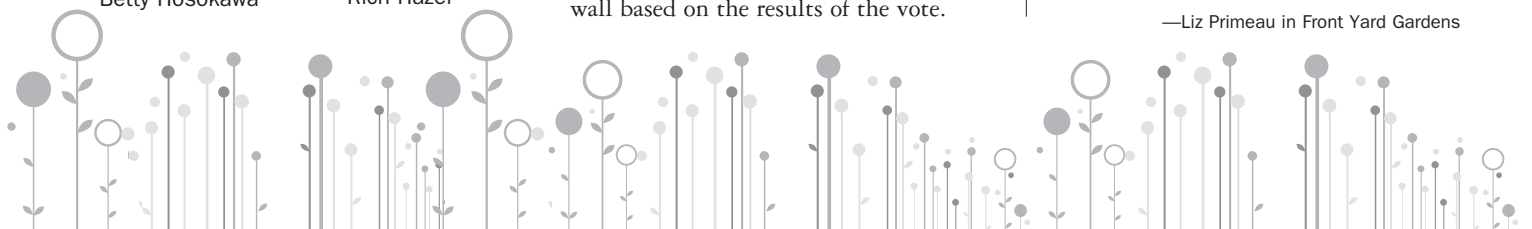
About 24 Valley residents met at the Riverview church April 8th for a presentation by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Presenters at the meeting used large photos and maps to illustrate the effect and appearance of a planned sound wall on the west side of I-5. The sound wall is proposed to be built from Riverview Street to a point near the power line crossing over Laurel Hill Drive.

After ODOT representatives explained that only homes near the wall will benefit from reduced freeway noise several neighbors from throughout the Valley expressed their disappointment. Some were also worried that the wall could focus freeway sound into other areas of the neighborhood. Noise experts said there should be no concern about the wall itself causing any increase in sound, but admitted that most areas of the neighborhood are likely to hear more noise from increased traffic in the future. ODOT "sound modeling" predicts a significant increase in freeway traffic by 2030, the end year for the study.

Property owners in the affected area (the north end of Riverview and Augusta Streets) were scheduled to receive ballots during late April to cast their vote for or against the sound wall. ODOT will make a decision on whether to build the sound wall based on the results of the vote.

### Executive Committee Members

Jan Wostmann, Co-Chair	Deborah Kelly
Stephanie Midkiff, Secretary	Elise Ferrarese
Betty Hemingsen, Treasurer	Jake Bradshaw
Betty Hosokawa	Johanna Mitchell
	Sandy Tilcock
	Rich Hazel



## Op-Ed

by Rich Hazel

*"I'd love to change the world, but I don't know what to do... so I'll leave it up to you."* —Alvin Lee

I was listening to KRVM this afternoon, and was struck by the relevance of that Ten Years After lyric to the LHVC.

In fairness, I should say that regardless of how they feel about changing the world, most neighbors I speak with aren't interested in changing the neighborhood. They're happy with the way things are. That's fine by me, but the "I don't know what to do... so I'll leave it up to you" attitude concerns me.

LHVC is run by its Executive Committee, a small group of concerned neighbors, interested in what happens here. Most of them put a dozen or so hours a year into LHVC work. Some do a bit more, taking on extra projects such as editing this newsletter. Jan Wostmann is another member who puts in extra time: he is the Chair of LHVC. Technically, he's the Co-Chair, but the second Co-Chair position has been empty for 18 months since I stepped down and no one else stepped up. Jan previously announced he's not running for re-election this Autumn. Also, I'm ending my term as Newsletter Editor.

Looking after your own (and your neighbors') best interests isn't rocket science, and it's not particularly hard. I've found that I can squeeze it in among a full-time job, parenting, and involvement in other civic affairs. The point is that some members of the Executive Committee have been doing this for several years. Simply stated, it is time for other neighbors to get involved.

Will you help? Will you do your fair share? Maybe you have concerns about being a committee officer, or editing and writing. No problem: become a Member-at-Large on the Executive Committee and see what it's all about. In any role, your help is welcomed and needed.

## Coyote Spotted

Laurel Hill Drive resident Glenn Arntzen reported he and three other neighbors have seen a large, healthy coyote roaming the neighborhood. The coyote was spotted on Moon Mountain Drive, and also on Brackenfern.

Coyotes can be common in urban areas. You may have seen one and not realized it, thinking it was a dog. Coyotes have large, upright ears and bushy tails, and bear a resemblance to a small German shepherd or collie.

The National Wildlife Federation says coyotes generally aren't considered to be a direct threat to humans. The only known modern day fatality is a young girl attacked by a coyote in suburban Glendale, California, in 1981. The coyote was being fed intentionally as part of a homeowner's misguided nature-watching strategy.

Don't discard edible garbage where coyotes can get to it, because they will take up residence in areas with reliable food sources. Coyotes are highly adaptable and will make a meal of almost anything, including cat and dog food, as well as cats and small dogs. Protect your pets by accompanying them outside, especially at night when coyotes tend to be more active.

## Turkey Trouble?



Laurel Hill's wild turkeys are probably out and about as you receive this newsletter. Wild turkeys (especially males) become more aggressive during their Spring breeding season, and should be given a wide berth.

Their long legs are tipped with sharp claws, and when they feel threatened they may attack cats, children, and even large dogs and adults. If you come across a rafter of turkeys, don't try to wade through them or you might find yourself running for safety!

## Trash Fires Continuing in Laurel Hill

There have been several trash container fires in the Laurel Hill Valley within the past year and as recently as the end of March 2009. Here is some information from Diane Warnock of Sanipac to help prevent fires and keep your home safe:

The best and easiest way to prevent problems with trash and recycling containers is to prevent access to them by anyone outside of the household. Never leave containers out at the street all week long. In some cases it may be necessary to not only pull them up to the house but remove them entirely from view to anyone passing by. For maximum security put carts out just before 7:00am on pick up day instead of the night before (which is usually more convenient).

Do not put items in the containers that attract the attention of kids, transients or anyone else. Returnable cans and bottles are an attraction to some. Any item in the trash or recycling that provides personal identity information, such as credit card offers and bank statements, should always be shredded and properly bagged. Shredded paper should be placed in a paper bag for recycling, but can be put in a plastic bag if the material is going into the trash. Consider adding your shredded paper to your home compost pile.

Animals may be an undesirable visitor, too. Keeping food waste frozen and placing it in the garage just before pick up will reduce the possibility of critters pawing through your trash.

### LHVC 2009 Meeting Schedule

**SPRING**  
May 21

**SUMMER PICNIC**  
August 23, Laurel Hill Park

**FALL**  
November 19

Policy Statement: This is the official newsletter of Laurel Hill Valley Citizens. Newsletters are published and mailed courtesy of the City of Eugene. Newsletters are produced by neighborhood volunteers and are free to residents and businesses of the neighborhood. Space is available for letters to the editor and editorial comments from neighbors. All signed letters will be published as space permits. Editorials express the author's views, not the position of the Neighborhood Association, the City's elected officials, or City staff.



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## Street Makeovers Take Differing Format and Timelines

Eugene voters passed a bond measure last November to fix city streets. The measure allocated money for 32 street preservation projects throughout Eugene, including repair of Augusta Street. Although on perfunctory inspection Augusta appears to be in good condition, it is in the early stages of pavement failure. Preventative maintenance in the near future will preclude the need for the more expensive option of complete rebuilding a several years from now.

Eugene's climate limits street repairs to a period of less than half of each year. In order to complete hot asphalt work, street surfaces need to be reasonably dry and the ground temperature should be 40° F and rising. As a result, the Surface Maintenance Crew completes most of this work when inclement weather has subsided, typically from June to October. The amount of work included in the large number of projects funded by the repair bond will be scheduled over four of these summer street repair seasons. The Augusta Street repairs are currently scheduled for the summer of 2013.

Nonetheless, the Laurel Hill neighborhood will see street repairs this year. In response to numerous and ongoing concerns and complaints about the condition of Riverview Street and Floral Hill Drive, a major pothole fix is scheduled for early July. The repairs will take place within a special \$1,000,000 allocation for pothole repair authorized by the Eugene City Council last year.

Riverview from East 16th Avenue to Floral Hill Drive and Floral Hill Drive from address 3087 to address 2855 were selected to receive repairs as part of this program.

Matt Rodrigues of Public Works says an inspection of Riverview found that conventional pothole repair procedures won't be practical. When the number of potholes rises to a certain point a "maintenance overlay" is preferred to individual patching. Because some Riverview residents have characterized the street as wall-to-wall potholes, the overlay would seem to be the obvious choice. The overlay technique has its own limitations, however, including a maximum thickness. The vertical variations of Riverview's pavement heights must be reduced before paving is practical.

Public Works will use a recycling process called full-depth reclamation (FDR). In this process the existing road structure is dug up by a large specialized machine. The old asphalt, rock, and some soil are mixed in-place with cement to create a stabilized road base, and then a chip seal treatment is applied to the surface. Work is tentatively scheduled to begin in early July, and completed by the end of the month, weather permitting.

Riverview and Floral Hill will be periodically closed to through traffic during the full depth reclamation and chip seal treatments. The closures should not last more than one to two days each.



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All uncredited material by the Newsletter Editor: Rich Hazel. Please send letters, articles, comments and concerns to [rhazel@yahoo.com](mailto:rhazel@yahoo.com)  
Newsletter design by LHVC neighbor Katherine Getta, [www.gettadesign.com](http://www.gettadesign.com)

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Laurel Hill Valley Citizens is Eugene's oldest neighborhood organization, chartered by the City Council in 1974. General Meetings are held quarterly to learn about and discuss issues relating to the quality of life in our neighborhood. The LHVC Executive Committee meets at other times to discuss and represent the interests of the neighborhood. [www.lhvc.org](http://www.lhvc.org)

For more information: Jan Wostmann, LHVC Co-Chair, 485-1394, [jw@efn.org](mailto:jw@efn.org)