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According to the Department of State Lands (DSL), which regulates recreational placer mining, "Prospectors are limited to removing less than one cubic yard of material from within the bed or wet perimeter of any single state scenic waterway or essential salmon habitat stream annually." No prospecting is allowed when fish eggs are present. Armendariz says the digging he has already seen is more than one cubic yard. The DSL also says that landowner permission is required, even when the land is publicly owned.

Lane County Parks Manager Mike Russell says that permission has not been given to anyone to dig in the parks, and in fact Lane County regulations do not allow for the removal of anything from the parks, from gold mining to digging through trash to metal detecting, because of possible damage to the parks. He says signs will probably be posted, and there is "absolutely an ecological concern" with digging in the riparian area.

Russell says it appears that "word has gotten out" that the park is a good area to prospect and that the parks office has been getting complaints.

"Thirty years on the McKenzie from Olallie to the confluence," Armendariz says, "I have never seen anyone doing anything that could be called mining or panning for gold." He thinks the change is due to a moratorium on motorized suction-dredge mining in California. Two bills that would have placed a moratorium on suction-dredge mining in essential salmon habitat and considered adding rivers to the scenic waterways designation were in the Oregon Legislature this session. The moratorium bill was scheduled for a work session June 20 in the Joint Ways and Means Committee. — Camilla Mortensen

SPORTS

ULTIMATE TEAMS SHINE AT NATIONALS

Track and Ducks football make a lot of noise, but they aren't the only sports getting national recognition these days. Lesser-known, but ever-growing in popularity, Ultimate Frisbee has carved out a niche. Fugue, the UO women's Ultimate Frisbee team, won nationals at the USA Ultimate College Championships in May, while the men's team, Ego, entered nationals the top-ranked team but was eliminated in the semifinals.

Dylan Freechild, a UO junior and in his first year as a captain for Ego, won the Callahan Award for his performance this season, an honor that is considered the Heisman of Ultimate. To put his winning this award into perspective, he went up against some of the more than 12,000 athletes on the more than 700 teams who participate nationwide and annually in the USA Ultimate College Championship Series, according to usultimate.org. Women's team player Bailey Zahniser was also a Callahan finalist.

Frisbee isn't just a game friends play in a neighborhood park anymore; it is a rigorous, fast-paced sport, hell-bent on versatility, quick reflexes and strategy that is essentially Quidditch — without that whole flying part — and a Frisbee instead of a Quaffle.

Freechild started by tossing around a Frisbee with friends, but lately, he's been playing on television. Ego's game against Pittsburgh at nationals was the first men's Ultimate match ever shown on any ESPN channel. "I think with teams that take it seriously, like us, it makes it look like a real sport, which it is," he says. "And I think that is evident by the fact that ESPN signed a deal with the governing body of Ultimate. It's pretty big for a sport to get that recognition."

Disappointed by his team's early exit but appreciative of the Callahan Award, Freechild says he's happy to see just how popular it has become across the country. "It's pretty big," he says. "There's high-school state championships, regional championships. There's no nationals at the high school level, but I would almost argue that every college has a team." And UO's teams are doing their part to put a sport once solely seen as a recreational activity on the map. — Nick Poust

SLANT

• Props to the three city councilors who objected to the rushed vote on the **Core Campus tax exemption** (see News this week). Councilors George Brown, Betty Taylor and Alan Zelenka held their own in the debate. The majority of councilors seem to doubt Eugene's ability to attract less extravagant housing projects — ones that could be built without a multi-million dollar tax break. Didn't Eugeneans just vote down a city fee measure, based in part on their objections to such tax breaks? We wonder what voters will think of this decision if Paul Conte is successful in his plan to put MUPT on the ballot. The city needs to acknowledge the growing body of research that indicates such subsidies do not live up to their promised benefits and unfairly compete with existing local housing providers.

Looking ahead we predict the looming higher ed bubble will combine with our aging population and this glut of student apartments will convert to senior housing. Wheelchairs will cram the elevators and coffin-dodgers will fight over shared bathrooms, but the High Street signs will be safe at last.

• **Civic Stadium** is back in the news now that the Eugene Y is proposing to buy the site from School District 4J and possibly bulldoze the historic stadium to build a new Y and sell or lease part of the property for commercial and/or residential uses. Eugene has a terrible history when it comes to preserving historic buildings and this one is still in good shape structurally. We've long advocated saving Civic Stadium, and it makes even more sense now with growing pro and amateur soccer needing a home. Why can't we have a new Y and a refurbished Civic Stadium on the site and still have room for a parking structure and some income-generating development? It will take some visionary collaboration by the Y, 4J, city planners and private developers to save this unique piece of Eugene's heritage. Civic Stadium itself is a shining example of what can be accomplished to benefit the community during tough economic times.

Meanwhile, who is behind the scenes wanting to partner with the Y in developing the property? We asked Master Capital if they are back in the game, but no answer as of press time. Developer Steve Master was involved in an earlier proposal for the property before 4J shelved the sale proposal. And we're curious to see what will happen with the old Y facilities on Patterson Street. A great location with an obsolete building.

• **Lots of turmoil** in local media, but we're happy to report EW is printing fat papers lately and our revenues are up significantly year-to-date over last year. We heard last week that EW made the top 10 nationally in "penetration" of adults over 18 in our market (which inspired a string of tasteless jokes). An independent analysis by Media Audit of the nation's top 100 alternative weeklies looked at both print circulation and website unique visitors, and eliminated duplication. We have consistently ranked in the top five or six in print penetration (the number of print readers in the county compared to the county population), but the new study shows we also have a healthy and growing web presence. We are the only alternative paper in Oregon to make the top-10 list. Thanks for turning to us for your news, views and arts information, whether you read us on paper or on screen.

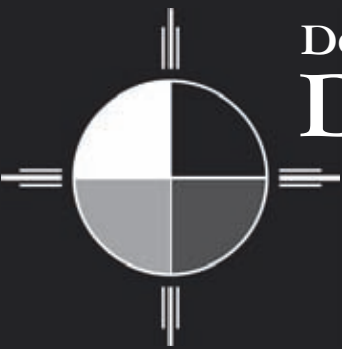
• Big turnout for **Dr. Eben Alexander III's** talk about his near-death experience at the new Unitarian Universalist Church June 16. Fascinating talk about the compatibility of science and spirituality from a Harvard neurosurgeon. The spacious new UU meeting hall was packed to capacity and dozens were turned away. Alexander and his book *Proof of Heaven* have gotten a lot of national attention but organizers credited Bob Welch's column in the R-G June 9 for the sell-out crowd. Ah, the power of the printed word. Did Alexander convince us that heaven exists? He's not a preacher and he spoke mainly about his remarkable personal experience, and he noted that the title of his book came not from him, but from his publisher. Ah, the power of marketing.

lighten up

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

Pope Francis has revealed that there is an active "gay lobby" at the Vatican. That might explain why a pope's wardrobe includes red shoes and red velvet stoles trimmed with ermine.

SLANT INCLUDES SHORT OPINION PIECES, OBSERVATIONS AND RUMOR-CHASING NOTES COMPILED BY THE EW STAFF. HEARD ANY GOOD RUMORS LATELY? CONTACT TED TAYLOR AT 484-0519, EDITOR@EUGENEWEEKLY.COM



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