



RIDE (Rides for Intoxicated Drivers of Eugene) is a nonprofit hoping to begin local service this winter. “It is our mission to keep our community’s children safe by reducing drunk driving on our streets,” says CEO Jonathan Russell. RIDE will provide sober drivers to chauffeur intoxicated patrons home in their own vehicles. Chase drivers will follow behind and pick up the RIDE driver once the patron has arrived safely home. Russell says RIDE is “still in the funding stages” using Indiegogo. Perks are available for those who donate at various levels. See rideeugene.org or call 870-6941.

Juventud FACETA is a local nonprofit that offers Latino/a youth a safe place where they can discover their talents and abilities, practice cultural traditions and build leadership skills. The group is celebrating its 13 years in Lane County with a homemade tamale sale from 5 to 8 pm Thursday, Aug. 29, at the old Whiteaker School, 21 N. Grand St. Tamales are \$2.50 each and 300 will be available. See juventudfaceta.org.

GarageSkins is a new business in Lane County, founded by Rick Medlen of Creswell. The business produces and markets light-weight, magnetic garage door overlay systems, manufactured in Eugene. The kits provide the look of real wood and are designed to stick on metal garage doors without using tools. Cost ranges from \$495 to \$925. See a video at garageskins.com or call Medlen at 514-3331.

Reality Kitchen has a new food cart, Eugene’s Best Soft Pretzels, which made its first appearance at the Eugene Celebration last weekend.

The Eugene-based **Terra Firma Botanicals** is now offering a unique product, Chocolate Elixirs, according to River Kennedy, president of the company. The organic brews include “Passion,” an elixir intended to “stimulate sexual vitality.” Others are for energy, balance and relaxation. See terrafirmabotanicals.com.

SheerID, founded in Eugene earlier this year, has this week added the UO Duck Store to its client base. SheerID will help the store confirm alumni status for discount offers. The store had a problem last year when a coupon code went viral and nonmembers redeemed discounts. SheerID also confirms military status and other targeted groups, according to CEO Jake Weatherly. See sheerid.com.

The fifth annual **BRING Home and Garden Tour**, a self-guided tour of 12 homes and gardens that exemplify the art of sustainable living, is coming up Sunday, Sept. 8. See story next week and visit bringrecycling.org or email tour@bringrecycling.org.

Beer, food and activism? Great combo. Many enviro and political groups and other nonprofits are raising money by teaming up with restaurants and pubs for special days or evenings. The venues donate a percentage to the groups and the groups in turn work to get their members and anyone else they can find to show up and spend money. Everybody wins. We run some of these events occasionally in Biz Beat, but we’re starting to get a lot of them. Keep sending them in, but we’ll probably only run ones that are a really good deal for the nonprofits, such as 50 percent of the *proceeds*, as opposed to 10 percent of the *profits*. Don’t forget to send them to our What’s Happening Calendar, too, cal@eugeneweekly.com.

lighten up

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

Did you know that if Sen. Ted Cruz renounced both his Canadian and U.S. citizenship he would qualify to be a Cuban citizen? The best job for him may be ambassador to the United Nations.

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thing,” Slaughter says.

It’s easy to forget that she came from such a difficult start; however, “Emma’s future is still unclear,” Elliott says. “Emma is on a journey, and we are looking for a person or family that have the financial resources and time commitment that it will take to properly care for her.”

In the meantime, nothing in her history seems to have slowed her down. Emma looks happy chasing squirrels, following her foster mom around the house and generally just being a dog.

“I think she had a good start in life,” Slaughter says.

Anyone interested in adopting Emma can contact Greenhill or the 1st Avenue Shelter. — *Jordan Tichenor*

NEW LGBTQ CENTER IN LANE COUNTY

A new project is on the way to open a LGBTIQ community center in Lane County. The original Q, the nonprofit Queer Resource for Social Change, closed its doors in December 2009.

Since the community center closed in 2009, Q has been hosting an online community resource that highlights cultural events focusing on building community for LGBTIQ people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning). Q has been using art as a way to create a safe space in the world for trans people since 1997.

The goal is to create “a space in the community that’s really owned by and used by the community, where queer people can come to and feel safe and have a connection to each other and their culture,” says Max Jensen, a new Q board member and co-president of the Gender Sexuality Alliance at LCC.

Jensen and Jesse Quinn, a recent UO women and gender studies graduate, are at the origin of the new project. After they realized that such a place did not exist in the area and after they promoted the idea through social networks, Q found them.

Listening to Jensen’s presentation for the center was inspiring and gave the Q members energy to jump back into the project, former President Amber Dennis says.

Jensen and Quinn give themselves two to three years to open the new LGBTIQ center. For now they are focusing on starting a solid foundation and building up services. Q operates with a few board members, voting members and volunteers. They hope to get interns ready to take part in the project.

“When we open the doors, we’ll be able to provide the resource to the community,” Quinn says, “whether that’s opportunities for disenfranchised youth, archiving our history, providing a cultural forum or just being able to develop and foster a sense of the LGBT culture.” Learn more at aqueer-resource.org. — *Laetitia Béraud*

LOCAL COMPANY MARKETS CALIFORNIA WATER

The trendy bottled water you’re drinking is often just tap water in disguise. In the case of a young company here in Eugene, it’s actually out-of-state tap water. Emerald Valley H2O is marketing an “eco-friendly” brand of bottled water that uses plastic bottles made from 100 percent recycled materials, with some of its water sourced from Southern California municipal water. When a glass of local tap water costs less than 5 cents and doesn’t require a throwaway plas-



tic container, bottling water from California and sending it to Eugene has an environmental impact.

According to the Food and Drug Administration, Americans gulped down over 8 billion gallons of bottled water in 2009, costing consumers over 300 times more per gallon than tap water, not to mention the expense and environmental impact of creating,

transporting and recycling the plastic bottles. “Just because we recycle doesn’t mean we shouldn’t reduce,” says Sarah Grimm, waste reduction specialist for Lane County. “It’s much more important to reduce your use of materials. Buying a whole new bottle is going to be more environmentally intensive.”

Local company Emerald Valley H2O markets its bottled water brand, ecoh2o, with the slogan, “Bottled water going green.” Manager Mike Scnear says some of its water is sourced from a spring near Mt. Palomar in Southern California, where the water is extracted and then transported to a “green” bottling facility in Commerce, Calif. The water undergoes extensive sanitization and filtration processes before being bottled and shipped about 1,000 miles north to Eugene. In addition to spring water, ecoh2o uses Los Angeles County municipal water to manufacture its electrolyte-enhanced bottled water, putting it through an additional two steps of purification before bottling it. Much of L.A. county’s water comes from the Colorado River via a 242-mile aqueduct.

But by national standards, local EWEB water — Eugene’s municipal water supply — is already considered pristine, and drinking it doesn’t necessitate the production and transportation of plastic bottles. According to EWEB’s 2012 Consumer Confidence Report, EWEB’s water quality met or exceeded all water safety standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency. “We actually do really well in terms of our water quality,” says Joe Harwood, external communications coordinator for EWEB. “We’ve been consistently designated an outstanding performer.”

“We know that water bottles take a bad rap in the media,” Scnear of ecoh2o says. “But if people don’t buy stuff that’s made from post-consumer plastic, we’re not benefiting the reason we recycle.” He says that he hopes to eventually open a bottling plant in Oregon.

Sales manager Brandon LaDuke says ecoh2o’s water is cleaner than tap water, and their filtration processes remove chlorine, salts and traces of sulfur. “The bottles set us apart. It’s all BPA-free,” he says. “That’s the beauty of it; we have this good water and good bottles to back it up.” Ecoh2o’s website says that their bottles leave a 65 percent smaller carbon footprint than other brands, due to the recycled elements in the bottles.

Local PepsiCo products distributor Bigfoot Beverages also disseminates a few brands of bottled water, including Aquafina, which comes from an undisclosed “public water source,” and EARTH2O, which sources its water from Opal Springs in Central Oregon and bottles it near Culver, Ore.

“How much more ‘ecological’ could you get to have water delivered right to your tap, without any plastic bottles?” says Lance Robertson, EWEB public affairs manager, in an email. “The bottled water industry likes to paint tap water as scary and dangerous. Maybe there are issues in other cities, but here in Eugene and Springfield, we have great and very clean tap water.”

And it’s hard to beat when it comes to cost — local tap water costs about 38 cents per gallon, including basic charges that cover EWEB’s infrastructure costs. A 23.7 ounce bottle of ecoh2o goes for \$1.19 at most retailers. — *Amy Schneider*