

YEPSA HOSTS FIRST YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SYMPOSIUM

Just over three years ago, Elliot Glaser-Flynn enrolled at Network Charter School and joined Youth for the Education and Prevention of Sexual Assault (YEPSA), a group whose mission is to end gender violence through education and action. Now, at 18, he's the project manager of the first ever Youth Empowerment Symposium, which will take place Sunday and Monday, Nov. 10-11, at the Hilton downtown. The event will include 12 workshops, meals, a keynote presentation by Cree Gordon and a concert Sunday evening at WOW Hall.

Glaser-Flynn was inspired to put together an event like this after traveling to the Adolescent Sexuality Conference in Seaside to present a workshop and recognizing there was no equivalent event in Lane County. He approached Denise Velasco, vice president of YEPSA, and for the past two years, the duo has been fundraising and coordinating to put on this event. They are expecting to see about 75 youths at the symposium.

"We've received an overwhelming amount of support from the community," says Velasco, who has collected contributions from Oregon Country Fair, Equity, PFLAG, the city of Eugene, Network Charter School, Oregon Safe Schools and Symantec. Thanks to these contributions, YEPSA has been able to provide free attendance through scholarships to all of the attendees of the symposium and still has many scholarships to give out. Other organizations, such as Planned Parenthood, HIV Alliance and Ophelia's Place are contributing time either through presentations or tabling.

YEPSA holds other events throughout the year, including an annual play — this year entitled *It's Easy to Do: What Makes Them Happy* — that is written, directed and produced entirely by youth. Rehearsals are held weekly at 4 pm Thursdays, and YEPSA's meetings are 3:30 pm Tuesdays at Network Charter School, 2550 Portland St. Both are open to the public. For more information, visit wkly.ws/1m8 and yepsa.weebly.com. — *Carolina Reid*

ACTIVISTS URGE PURCHASE OF AMAZON HEADWATERS

The Amazon Creek Headwaters appear doomed following the latest Oregon Court of Appeals decision, but local folks who have been fighting for more than a decade to preserve this pristine area next to the Ridgeline Trail have not given up. They are urging citizens to email or write the Eugene City Council to ask them to set aside the money that is in the voter-approved city parks bond for natural areas to purchase at least 18 of the 47 acres owned by Martin



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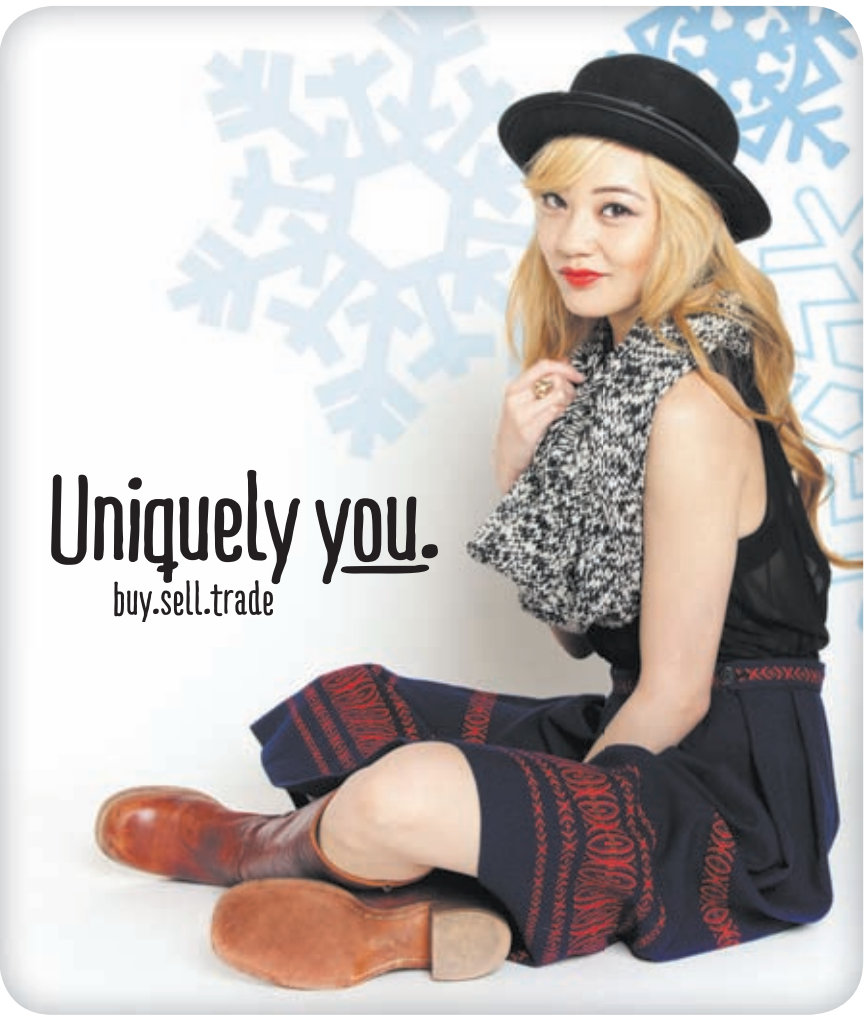
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