



The **David Minor Theater** at 180 E. 5th Ave. is expanding and showing \$3 matinees now that Ronny Goldfarb of Ronny's Audio Vision next door retired the first of the year, according to Josh Goldfarb, Ronny's son and the owner of DMT. "We are also in the process of expanding and maximizing the space now available to us. So stay tuned for updates!" he says. The DMT has been in business for the past four years. See davidminorthater.com or call 762-1700.

The **Mentor Lane Campaign** is a new coalition launching this month during National Mentoring Month. The coalition comprises local mentoring programs in the county and emphasizes the "enhancement of mentor recruitment and sharing of resources," says Jen Jackson of Sponsors, Inc. "The coalition has an organized referral system to find mentors the organization best suited for their mentoring interests. Mentors also have access to a 'discount card' that provides volunteers at any agency in the coalition access to community-wide discounts." Email jenjackson@sponsorsinc.org or call 505-5663.

The nonprofit **Civil Liberties Defense Center** has been named one of the Top 10 Activist Groups in the U.S. by *CounterPunch*. The Eugene-based law firm will be celebrating its 10th anniversary during the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference at the UO in late February. CLDC founder and director Lauren Regan will be a keynote speaker at PIELC. See counterpunch.org for "10 Small Groups that Make a Big Difference."

We noticed **Lane Arts Council** is looking for a full-time manager for its Arts Education Program. Better hurry if you are interested. A review of applications is beginning Friday, Jan. 17. Email lanearts@lanearts.org.

Planned Parenthood of Southwestern Oregon is now available to help individuals and families sign up for health insurance, Oregon Health Plan or Healthy Kids through the Cover Oregon marketplace. "We are fortunate to have two expert enrollment assistants who are working full time to educate our community about Cover Oregon and the Affordable Care Act," says Jody McCurry of PPSWO. "We invite everyone to attend our free enrollment events happening throughout Lane County over the next few months." People can make individual appointments or stop by one of the health centers during enrollment hours. Call 543-7664 or visit ppsworegon.org.

GloryBee Foods has been named winner of the 2014 Mayor's Bold Steps Award that recognizes businesses that are taking bold steps in each area of the triple bottom line — people, planet and prosperity. The winner was announced at the State of the City event on Jan. 8. Runners-up for the award were Rainbow Valley Design and Construction and Life Technologies. For more information about the award, go to eugene-or.gov/boldsteps.

The first **Wine Exploration and Food Pairings for Women** classes are being planned for Thursday evenings Jan. 23 to Feb. 13 at the Oregon Wine LAB, 488 Lincoln St. The classes are a collaboration between wine enthusiast Roxanne Watson and chef Elizabeth Stuart. Each class is \$40. Call 520-8126 or find the event on Facebook.

Congrats to KLCC News Director **Tripp Sommer**, who earned a national award this month for his career committed to public radio journalism. Sommer will be presented with the 2014 Leo C. Lee Award in the Public Radio News Directors Inc.'s annual conference in Virginia in June.

The **Eugene Film Society** (EFS) is a collaboration between Edward Schiessl and Joshua Purvis of Bijou Cinemas and local businesses, nonprofits, colleges and the UO to promote film festivals and cinema events, "encouraging competition and collaboration among local film organizations," Purvis says. The next event will be an EFS Screening & Social from 5 to 8 pm Sunday, Jan. 26, at the Bijou downtown. The event will include short independent films, highlights from the Cinema Pacific and Open Lens film festivals, student work, food and beer.

NEWS

FLEENOR FILES LAWSUIT OVER RICHARDSON PROBE

A cloud of suspicion around the departure of former administrator Liane Richardson still hangs over Lane County government, in part because the full details of the investigation into her unauthorized changes to her payroll have never been released. On Jan. 13, former Lane County Commissioner Bill Fleenor filed an open records lawsuit over the report by USO Consulting. The outside investigation was commissioned by the county and released with 29 pages blacked out. Fleenor, the *R-G* and *EW* were among those who made public records requests for copies of the report. The *R-G* also has a public records lawsuit over the report.

Fleenor said at a Jan. 13 press conference that Richardson's actions "didn't happen in a vacuum," and it's time to "find the rot and root it out" because elected leaders should have been aware of what was going on. "Who knew what, when?" he asked, and he said the public would benefit from possible revelations in the report before the upcoming May election.

'Is Lane County responsible to the people or to its own special interests? We need transparency.'

— BILL FLEENOR,
FORMER LANE COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Three of the commissioners who had previously been supportive of Richardson's work. Faye Stewart, Jay Bozievich and Sid Leiken, are up for re-election. "Is Lane County responsible to the people?" Fleenor asked, "or to its own special interests?" He added, "We need transparency."

Fleenor's attorney is Corvallis-based Dan Stotter and co-counsel is Lance Quaranto of Eugene. The county has said in the past that it redacted the report to protect the whistleblower who called attention to Richardson's pay changes, and it cited Oregon public records law as allowing some records to be kept secret in certain circumstances, such as protecting whistleblowers and pending litigation. When asked for comment on Fleenor's case, county spokesperson Anne Marie Levis said the county does not comment on pending litigation.

Stotter said the exemptions that the county is relying on are "'conditional exemptions' in that they expressly do not apply if there is a significant public interest in the records at issue."

He said there "clearly is a public interest in understanding how it came to be that county administrator Richardson took funds from the public" as well as in how the county responded.

Stotter also said that Oregon law "requires a public body to redact (black out) only the limited portions of records that actually contain exempt information." According to Stotter, the county has not met that duty with its "extremely broad redaction of everything in whole paragraphs, and even whole pages" of the Richardson report.

Richardson, who is divorced, has changed her name back to Inkster, according to her LinkedIn page, where she lists herself as an attorney-at-law since August 2013 and as an "independent consultant to The Pampered Chef." Those who "liked" the Facebook page that Richardson used for county administrator updates now find that they are getting updates about kitchen products. — *Camilla Mortensen*

RECALLED COUNCILOR FILES SUIT AGAINST ALLEGED FALSE ACCUSATIONS

It's one thing to get ousted from office, but quite another when the ousting is based on false statements. That's what recently recalled Lowell City Councilor Pam Bryant alleges in her Jan. 7 lawsuit against Kenneth Hern and Nancy Garratt, two members of the Recall for Lowell's Future Committee that sought to remove her from office.

Lowell, a city with a population of about 1,000, is located on the north shore of Dexter Reservoir, southeast of Eugene. On Dec. 10, 2013, Lowell's recall election resulted in Bryant's recall by a margin of 26 votes. Fellow Councilor Gary Reese was also subject to a recall vote but was not voted out. In the complaint filed by David Bahr, Bryant's attorney, Bryant alleges that the defendants presented a series of false statements that "were intended to mislead voters in the recall election and cause Ms. Bryant's defeat," and that this action is in violation of the Oregon Corrupt Practices Act.

Bryant says that she supports political debate, but elections should be based on truth and honesty to help voters make informed decisions. "People rely on the information that is put out in flyers, newspaper articles and official documents, and we as a people need to be honest, because when people base their vote on false statements, they're not getting a fair shake," she says.

Bahr says that the defendants made a range of accusations against Bryant, some of which were main talking points in the recall effort. He says the accusations are "just like pasta. They're throwing them up on the wall to see if they stick."

One such accusation involves the Political Action Committee (PAC) Save Our Schools Lowell. A flyer allegedly created by the defendants, entitled "Facts and Information about Pam Bryant and Gary Reese," states that Bryant "formed 'Save-Our-Schools Lowell' to raise money for our schools ... Save-Our-Schools Lowell does not exist."

Bahr points out that the Oregon secretary of state's website shows Bryant formed Save Our Schools Lowell on Feb. 25, 2011, and she is listed as the treasurer (wkly. ws/1o8).

"School funding is a major issue in Lowell, and I believe that Ms. Bryant was staking at least part of her position in the community as someone advocating for schools, so it's damaging for someone to say that it's totally made up and not true," Bahr says.

Bryant says she is a strong school supporter, and she thinks the accusations were an attempt to discredit her with the education community.

Other statements that Bryant alleges are false include Bryant recording a Lowell City Council executive session meeting, inferring that the Lowell city administrator was involved in missing city money and calling the city attorney without authorization.

"We're certainly not against free exercise of opinion in the political debate," Bahr says. "That's why we have the First Amendment. But the state of Oregon has established the boundaries for what you can get away with, and you just can't make statements that are politically untrue."

Bryant's complaint says she seeks economic damages, attorney fees and for the defendants to retract their false statements. She is considering running for councilor again this fall. "It would be nice to know that people aren't thinking that I'm anti-school, anti-growth and anti-business when I'm not," she says. — *Amy Schneider*

'School funding is a major issue in Lowell, and I believe that Ms. Bryant was staking at least part of her position in the community as someone advocating for schools.'

— DAVID BAHR, ATTORNEY