

Kush MMD and **Reign Inc.** have opened a state-licensed and regulated medical marijuana facility (MFF) and wellness center at 221 W. 10th Ave. in downtown Eugene. A ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house was held May 12. The business has a provisional MMF license and “will wait until receiving the official state registration from the state before engaging in cannabis commerce,” says General Manager Lisa Della Croce. “We will operate a holistic wellness center as well with an acupuncturist, massage therapist and a community library filled with helpful information to improve people’s quality of life.” Call 915-0327 or email reigninc2014@gmail.com.

One of the rainiest **Wildflower Festivals** in a long time happened Sunday, May 18. “During the downpours, everyone ran for cover and laughed. What else can you do when it is pouring?” says Peg Douthit-Jackson, education and special events coordinator at the nonprofit Mount Pisgah Arboretum. She says attendance was “around 1,500, which was about 500 below what we would expect with this type of weather. Our income was down due to fewer people but we really pushed our memberships at the gate and those increased 300 percent. It is great that we got so many folks to join us and be part of the arboretum family.” The arboretum’s next fundraiser is the Mushroom Festival in October. Meanwhile, guided morning bird walks are coming up Sunday, May 25, and June 22. \$5 for non-members. See mountpisgaharboreum.com or call 747-1504.

In labor news, the **American Postal Workers Union** and its allied unions are protesting efforts to privatize the Postal Service. Demonstrations have been held at 56 Staples stores around the country, including Portland May 18. Staples has contracted with the Postal Service to set up mini-post offices in 56 Staples stores, and if the pilot project is deemed successful, all 1,600 Staples stores in the U.S. will have private post offices, staffed by low-paid, non-union, untrained workers, according to Jamie Partridge of Portland Communities and Postal Workers United. His phone number is (503) 752-5112.

Springfield Creamery, which produces Nancy’s Yogurt and other products, has been verified by The Non-GMO Project. The creamery is among the first nationally distributed dairy products producers to get such verification. “The verification process is a rigorous program that includes traceability, segregation and testing at critical control points,” says owner Sheryl Kesey Thompson. The company will be audited annually as part of the process.

SolarCity is the contractor for OSU’s largest new solar array as part of OSU’s Solar by Degrees program. OSU now has 10 acres of solar facilities around Corvallis generating about 2,200 kilowatts of electricity. SolarCity, based in California with offices in Portland, builds and owns the solar arrays at no cost to OSU; in turn, OSU buys solar power at a “lower rate than they would pay for utility power,” according to Brandon Trelstad, OSU’s sustainability coordinator in a press release.

Eugene-based **SheerID** is continuing to grow, partnering with for-profit and nonprofit enterprises to validate legitimate discounts. Just in time for Memorial Day, SheerID is now serving Winter Park Resort, American Century Championship, Good Home Co. and several others offering discounts for active duty military, reserves and veterans. See sheerid.com.

lighten up
BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

After Oklahoma botched an execution using lethal injection, at least one other state is thinking about bringing back the firing squad. That might actually be a step forward if juries that impose the death penalty are required to serve as members of the squad.

NEWS

RAPE INVESTIGATION DRAWS PUBLIC RECORDS DEMANDS

The recent rape investigation at the University of Oregon has not only triggered a spate of articles about the issue locally and across the nation, it’s also triggering requests for emails, contracts and other information from UO staff who might be involved in the investigation or its handling. As a state institution the UO, like other government entities, is subject to Oregon’s Public Records Law.

On a state or local level a member of the public can file a request “for information relating to the conduct of the public’s business,” as the UO’s website puts it. The UO’s Office of Public Records handles the requests. Some records and some details in records are exempt, but many public documents, including emails, text messages and other records, are available for review.

New York Times reporter Josh Hunt has made at least a dozen public records requests since the news broke that three UO basketball players had been accused of rape, according to the UO’s public records log, which as of press time was last updated May 16. Those requests include asking for emails from Coach Dana Altman, UO Police Officer Johns Loos, ASUO Women’s Center Director Brandy Teel, Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Director Penny Daugherty, UO Chief of Strategic Communications Tobin Klinger and more on specific dates in March, April and May.

A woman named “Cassie” was mentioned in the police investigation that was released to the public, and Hunt has asked for emails from a woman named Cassie Boge, who is team manager with the Oregon women’s basketball team, according to GoDucks.com.



On May 9, Andrew Greif, Ducks beat reporter for *The Oregonian*, asked for emails between UO President Michael Gottfredson and Oregon Athletics Director Rob Mullens “from March 8 to the present regarding sexual assault allegations against Oregon basketball players.”

Other requests came from reporters from KGW, KATU, the *Oregon Daily Emerald* and sports columnist John Canzano of *The Oregonian*, who on May 14 asked for the cell phone records of Craig Pintens, senior associate athletic director who also oversees marketing and public relations. UO Matters blogger and professor Bill Harbaugh and other community members have also made requests.

Greif made a request for emails from “employees in Oregon athletics’ compliance office to the NCAA with the keyword Brandon Austin,” one of the basketball players accused in the case, back on March 19. That request was ruled “exempt from disclosure” according to the public records log. Greif’s request for Austin’s letter of intent was granted. March 18 was the day *The Wall Street Journal* published a story involving Austin and allegations of sexual assault.

According to Lisa Thornton of the Office of Public Records, the log is updated daily as requests come in when possible, depending on the workload. — *Camilla Mortensen*

4J BARGAINING CHANGES AS BUDGET GAP CLOSES

“We still have a long ways to go,” says Tad Shannon, Eugene Education Association president after last week’s bargaining session between the EEA and Eugene School District 4J. Shannon says the session brought the groups closer to agreement but some issues with the proposed contract such as so-called “trigger provisions” left teachers not yet ready to sign.

With the upcoming switch to full-time kindergarten in the 2015-16 school year and an expiring tax levy next June, 4J is facing some substantial financial challenges. In a May 5 4J Budget Committee Meeting, 4J finances looked bleak, with a \$3.6 million budget gap and 26 full-time positions slated to be cut.

But circumstances changed abruptly in the May 15 bargaining session, when 4J school board Chair Mary Walston announced that the \$3.6 million gap had been closed. The additional money came from \$2 million in reconciliation funds from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and \$1.6 million in projected funds that were determined to exist after finances were closed for the month of April, 4J’s chief financial officer Simone Sangster said in the bargaining session.

Where the old proposal provided no step increases, the revised contract added these increases in salary for the approximately 60 percent of 4J teachers eligible for them. That means 40 percent of the union’s members get no additional compensation for the last year, and no cost of living adjustments were made, Shannon says.

Also new to the contract are “trigger provisions,” which account for possible changes in 4J’s financial situation throughout the course of the multi-year contract that runs through 2017. Instead of re-opening the contract if 4J’s finances change, the district’s proposal says that if three financial conditions are met, some having to do with a grant from the ODE and the local option property tax next year, then the district will begin restoring seven items in order of priority.

The first item on the list funds staffing for fully scheduled kindergarten under ODE’s mandate that all Oregon school districts must switch to full-day kindergarten starting with the 2015-16 school year. Once that is funded, additional funds will go toward the next items on the list, including adding music and art teachers at the elementary school level. The last two items on the list are cost of living adjustments for teachers and an increase in district contribution to employee insurance benefits.

“Our belief is that the trigger would basically prevent future step increases or cost of living increases,” Shannon says. “It is so vague and general in its language that we believe we would be giving those things up for any time in the foreseeable future.”

Kerry Delf, 4J communications coordinator, says that the three conditions that implement the trigger are “very likely to happen” and that “these are not pie-in-the-sky, far-fetched ideas about future school funding. It is possible that one of those pieces would not occur, but if so, it has very serious financial consequences to the district.”

4J and the EEA meet again 5:30 pm Tuesday, May 27, at 4J Education Center, 200 N. Monroe St. The current contract expires June 30. — *Amy Schneider*

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— TAD SHANNON, EEA PRESIDENT