

Holy Cow is permanently closing its campus location in the EMU on the UO campus as of June 30. “Deconstruction is in full swing and we cannot afford to keep it open after business went down 50 percent due to construction,” says Kathee Lavine of Holy Cow in an email. “We are open on Willamette and our catering and products are available as always.” Lavine adds, “It is perhaps fitting that we are going out with the OUS system, both of us ending our involvement with the UO on June 30. The university has changed dramatically in the 17 years we have had the café on campus.” She says Holy Cow was the first all-organic restaurant on a college campus anywhere. “We are proud of leading the EMU in sustainability: stewarding reusable plates, composting, cooking with real, whole organically grown ingredients as well as filtering water, supporting local farmers and small businesses.” The restaurant’s off-campus site is at 2621 Willamette.

H Boutique is closing its doors at 5th Street Public Market and will reopen in the fall at Valley River Center within the Harry Richie’s store. H Boutique and Harry Richie are among a chain of 16 jewelry stores on the West Coast and Idaho and the company was founded in 1956 by Harry and Jerry Richie. Corporate offices are at 956 Willamette St. No word from the market on what business might take its place.

In labor news, **McKenzie-Willamette Hospital workers** go to the bargaining table at 10:30 am Thursday, June 12, at the McKenzie Room at the hospital in Springfield. Find more information at the Eugene/Springfield Solidarity Network website at wkly.ws/1ry.

Freelance writer and author **Sharleen Nelson** and her husband have published a new book on *Oregon’s Festivals, Faires & Celebrations*, listing more than 90 events that take place around Oregon on an annual basis. The book is published by GladEye Press and will be available soon on amazon.com. Email snelson858@comcast.net.

We hear **Festival Latino** held May 31 at Sprout! Food Hub in Springfield was a big success, drawing about 400 attendees and raising more than \$5,000 to support Huerto de la Familia’s work with the Latino community. The event aims to “promote cross-cultural understanding and integration in Eugene/Springfield,” according to Alex Macfarlan, the UO master’s candidate in public administration who coordinated the event. See huertodelafamilia.org.

“**Guerrilla Funding for Small Business**” is the topic of an LCC Small Business Development Center session at 6 pm Thursday, June 12, at the Downtown Eugene Library. Speaker is Frank Plaisted, an expert on financing small startups. Call 682-5450. Also at the library at 10 am Saturday, June 14, will be a free “**Discover the Info Hub**” session focusing on online tools and resources. Basic internet skills are a prerequisite.

The 50th anniversary of the **McKenzie Flyfishers** will be celebrated from 6 to 9 pm Monday, June 16, at Lewis & Clark Catering, 2210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., next to the Mercedes car dealership. Program begins at 8 pm with members recounting the organization’s conservation accomplishments and outings. Free and open to nonmembers. Optional dinner is \$17. Call 913-0710 for more information.

A **produce stand** for FOOD for Lane County’s Youth Farm is now open through October from 2 to 6 pm Thursdays at Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend, near the ER entrance, and from 10 am to 2 pm Saturdays at the Youth Farm, 705 Flamingo Ave. in Springfield.

NEWS

A SEA STAR DYING FROM WASTING DISEASE

OREGON COAST SEA STARS RAVAGED BY WASTING DISEASE

Sea stars are known for their ability to regenerate limbs, but a vicious disease now sweeping the Oregon coastline is causing sea stars to rot and disintegrate much more quickly than their powers of regeneration can handle. If the die-off continues and we lose Oregon’s iconic orange and purple sea stars, local extinctions could cause long-term trouble for other marine animals.

“The way the rate has accelerated, I don’t think most sea stars along the Oregon coast are long for this world,” says Bruce Menge, a marine ecologist with Oregon State University.

“They can pull their arms off, ending in disintegration,” Menge says. “We’ve seen their arms crawl away from them.”

While sea star wasting disease was first observed in Washington in June 2013, it didn’t spread to the Oregon coast until April of this year, and since then, the disease has ravaged Oregon sea stars at an alarming rate. Sea stars are commonly called starfish, a term scientists don’t use because sea stars are not a fish.

Menge says that his research team monitors purple ochre sea stars at a dozen research sites along the Oregon coast, including Cape Perpetua, Cape Foulweather and

Seal Rock. In early-to-mid April, less than 1 percent of observed sea stars had the disease. By the end of May, the numbers shot up to 40 to 60 percent at most research sites. The disease can kill a sea star in a week or less, and it is currently affecting 10 species of sea stars.

Scientists don’t have any conclusive explanations for the disease. Researchers at Cornell think a virus might be to blame, Menge says, but they “still don’t have the smoking gun.”

Several ideas exist: If the disease is waterborne, it could travel hundreds or thousands of kilometers in a short amount of time, not restrained by the limitations that airborne diseases face.

Another idea, Menge says, is that the sea stars harbor a kind of virus or bacteria that is normally harmless, but a shift in habitat conditions, perhaps caused by climate change, has triggered the infective agent to become lethal.

Sea stars play important roles in ocean ecosystems, preying on mussels in the rocky intertidal zone, and without sea stars, mussels could gradually take over the lower shore and squeeze other species out.

Menge says sea stars have experienced episodes of wasting before, but it’s usually localized and doesn’t last. In the ’70s, he says he observed a wasting episode in New England, and the sea stars disappeared for a season. “Fortunately for that site, a lot of juveniles survived it,” he says. “We don’t know if that’s going to happen this time.” — *Amy Schneider*

PHOTO: ELIZABETH CERNY-CHIPMAN

IT’S ABOUT TIME

BY DAVID WAGNER



BULLFROG TADPOLE IN A 2-YEAR-OLD’S HAND

In the Willamette Valley the farmers markets are flush with vegetable garden starts. Our traditional vegetable season starts late because of our typical cool spring but lasts long into the fall. I harvest hot peppers in October. I encourage supporting the local organic farmers by buying well-rooted starts. For a small garden, it seems to make more sense than investing in starting from seed indoors. Only my peas and beans are seeded directly into the ground, one following the other.

We know the summer solstice is soon to arrive when the rising sun shines through the windows on the north side of the house. Alkaid, the star at the tip of the tail of Ursus Major, the end of the Big Dipper’s handle, is almost directly overhead at midnight. People who follow the stars and people who follow the sun are prepared for a celebration. As an old friend was wont to say, “Logic today must take care of itself, the sun’s in the hills living it up.”

Enjoy walking on the riverbank paths. Standing under tall cottonwood trees listening to the murmur of great blue herons tending to nestlings in the rookery above is deeply reassuring. Play in ponds for fun. What’s more fun than catching tadpoles for children to see how the legs develop? Bullfrogs, although predatory invasives, make great examples of metamorphosis. Tadpoles may take two years to develop into adults, so a big four-legged pollywog fills the hand of a 2-year-old.

David Wagner is a botanist who has lived in Eugene for more than 30 years. He teaches moss classes and leads nature walks. He may be reached at fernenmosses@me.com.