

Year of the Slug

Eugene's new SLUG queen Daniel Borson talks about his agenda BY BEN STONE

Daniel Borson has known that Bulbus Slimebledore was the stuff of queens since 2009. He was taken by the idea of a slug wizard, but allowed it to take backseat to some other magnetic personalities he's pulled out for SLUG (Society for the Legitimization of the Ubiquitous Gastropod) queen competitions over the years.

In 2008, Borson competed in the SLUG queen coronation as Ambassador Mucous Mulloscacia — a half-man, half-woman hybrid representing slugs' hermaphroditic nature. In 2009, he killed as Slimus O'Mulloskin, a singing leprechaun. In 2010, he played Little Orphan Sluggie, based loosely on the character from the musical *Annie*. And after a suspenseful two-year hiatus, Borson returned to the contest in 2013 in the robes of Slimebledore, shark-eyed and intent on winning. But with stiff competition from Queen Professor Doctor Mildred Slugwak Dresselhaus, Borson came up short once more.

"I knew that I had to run again," Borson says. "Because I knew that I was going to be queen some day."

And lo, Bulbus Slimebledore was crowned on Aug. 8, and is now preparing for a year as Eugene's "unofficial goodwill ambassador." Borson sat down with *EW* to talk about the future of our water supply, the true meaning of bribery, the Eugene Celebration and *those* boots.

What do slugs mean to you?

To me, the slug represents the ecosystem of our little area of the southern Willamette Valley. Given slugs' love of moisture and wetness and the very hot, dry summer that we're having this year, that's going to be challenging for slugs. Slugs feed birds, and birds are part of the ecosystem — to me [they're] representative of the whole web of nature that is really in a very precarious balance.

When the history books are written, what would you like them to say about your rain?

Given that my character is a parody of Professor Dumbledore and that Dumbledore is headmaster of a school, I also wanted to be about education, and specifically environmental education. Nearby Nature is one of my key charities — they do wonderful work in environmental education, summer camps, programs throughout the year for kids of all ages.

Are there any environmental issues specific to Eugene that you'd be meaning to look into in regards to environmental education?

I'd say probably the biggest ones are with respect to water and energy and sustainability. It doesn't rain as much here as we really like to think it does. As much as we like to think we have a lot of water, we're not immune to drought situations. Here in Eugene we have a precious resource with the Eugene Water and Electric Board (I happen to work for them). The McKenzie River water source to me is a very precious resource. Not only is it



BULBUS SLIMEBLEDORE PUTS A SPELL ON DOWNTOWN EUGENE

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