

ACTIVIST ! LERT

• The BLM is considering revisions to the **Northwest Forest Plan** and according to Oregon Wild, all of the options proposed would reduce logging setbacks on streams and rivers. The next riparian workshop will be from 4 to 7 pm Thursday, June 25, at the BLM office at 3106 Pierce Parkway in Springfield. Another public meeting is planned for June 30 in Springfield. See the BLM schedule at wkly.ws/216.

• **"The Future of Collegiate Athletics** at the UO" with economics professor Bill Harbaugh and professor emeritus Dennis Howard, an international expert on sports finance, will be the topic at City Club of Eugene at noon Friday, June 26, at the Downtown Athletic Club, 999 Willamette St. \$5 for non-members. No program is planned for July 3, but City Club will return July 10 with "Micro Housing: Making Affordable Housing More Affordable?" See cityclubofeugene.org.

• A **Bernie Sanders for President** meeting is now happening at 11 am every Saturday at the Growers Market, 454 Willamette St. Contact Jerry Brule at jerrybe99@gmail.com.

• The **VA Roseburg Healthcare System** has scheduled a town hall from 4:30 to 6:30 pm Thursday, July 2, at the Elks Lodge, 1701 Centennial Blvd. in Springfield. VA representatives will be available to answer questions and assist vets with current claims or filing new claims for disability compensation.

• Coming up at 8 am Saturday, July 11, is the annual **McKenzie River Clean Up**. Groups and individuals will spread out up and down the river, some checking the banks on foot, others wading the shoreline, still others searching for trash from drift boats, kayaks and canoes. The McKenzie Watershed Council has a Facebook page with sign-up information or call 687-9076 or email coordinator@mckenziewc.org. A barbecue will follow at Hendricks Bridge Wayside.

• **Free HIV testing** for the general public will be offered from 1 to 4 pm this week (June 22-26) at HIV Alliance, 1966 Garden Ave. in Eugene. Although the test is free, HIV Alliance is seeking donations of \$25 to support an expansion of its testing program to the general public. Previously the testing was primarily for those considered high-risk for HIV/AIDS. For more information or to donate online, visit hivalliance.org.

• A free **emergency preparedness** event sponsored by the city of Eugene will be from 10 am to noon Saturday, June 27, at Tugman Park, 3666 Hilyard Ave. Topics will include how to create a neighborhood disaster plan.

NEWS

SHELTERCARE SENIOR STAFFER CONSIDERING RUN FOR MAYOR

Last week, the latest potential candidate for Eugene mayor announced her "serious intention" of running for the mayor's office in 2016. Candidates can't file for the 2016 Eugene race until September, but ShelterCare Developmental Director Lucy Vinis told *EW* that she is currently "in a very serious exploration."

Vinis has spent the last six and a half years at ShelterCare, a local nonprofit that, among other things, provides emergency services, shelter and support for homeless individuals and families. She says her job as developmental director entails "engaging the community in understanding and supporting the work that ShelterCare does" to help the unhoused.

"She's a very collaborative, positive, energetic person," ShelterCare Executive Director Susan Ban says. "I have a high degree of trust in her. She's a great team player."

Before joining ShelterCare, Vinis worked with Eugene-Springfield's EarthShare of Oregon, a nonprofit that rallies workplaces to support environmental causes.

She has also volunteered in the 4J school system and is the founder of Youth Visions, a nonprofit that supports short films made by high school students. The program still runs under the guidance of the Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts (DIVA).

Although Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy says she is not making endorsements at this time, she tells *EW* in an email that she is "very pleased that Lucy has decided to run for mayor. I have known her for a number of years and have confidence in her values, ethics and ability to lead."

Piercy is not seeking reelection after this, her third term, is finished.

Vinis says she was Eugene City Councilor Alan Zelenka's campaign manager in 2006, and she was active in Piercy's 2008 campaign for mayor.

She says her background in nonprofits has well equipped her for the job of mayor. "I do feel that my work with ShelterCare and EarthShare of Oregon, building that strong community conversation around a particular issue and engaging people to find solutions, is good preparation for running for the mayor's office," Vinis says.

Ban says that Vinis has exhibited strong leadership qualities at ShelterCare. "I have really appreciated that she can pull community members into a committee to work on a specific project — she's able to listen carefully to a lot of different ideas and then help weave them into a cohesive product, always making sure that everybody has been heard," Ban says. "She's a natural leader." — Amy Schneider



'I do feel that my work with ShelterCare and EarthShare of Oregon, building that strong community conversation around a particular issue and engaging people to find solutions, is good preparation for running for the mayor's office.'

— LUCY VINIS

SHOULD OREGONIANS HAVE A 'RIGHT-TO-TRY'?

In Oregon, the terminally ill can take advantage of our "right to die" (aka death with dignity) law. Should the terminally ill have access to experimental therapies? A "right to try," as it were?

The federal government says no, but 22 states have passed laws that say yes. Oregon could be the next to do so this July as the Legislature winds to a close.

Since 2014, laws giving patients expanded access to potentially life-saving but unproven therapies, so called right-to-try legislation, has been proposed in more than half the country, according to the Regulatory Affairs Professionals Society. Many places, including Colorado and Missouri, have passed these bills.

"It has a very compelling story behind it," says Dennis McNannay, executive director of the Oregon Biosciences Association. "In its most simplistic form why would we not give the terminally ill a drug that might save their life? But there is a tremendous amount of nuance."

A new drug could prove miraculous, reducing pain or symptoms, sending a disease into remission, maybe even curing the condition, as some are sure to hope. The dark side of an investigational product, given the lack of testing, is that it could go awry and increase patients' pain, worsen their condition or end their life.

The core legislation that Oregon is considering was developed by the Goldwater Institute in Arizona, a conservative organization that advocates nationally for "constitutionally limited government," according to its website. Oregon's law is based on that language with minor adjustments.

That legislation in turn is based on the FDA's "compassionate use policy." The FDA has a strict, three-stage process for approving new medicines, but in cases where the patient is terminal, certain treatments can be approved under compassionate use. Oregon's House Bill 2300-A would allow patients to try therapies that have passed the FDA's first assessment, but it would not instruct doctors or companies to provide that treatment.

Critics argue the laws sabotage the FDA regulatory process and don't offer as much hope as people would like to think.

Democratic Sen. Elizabeth Steiner

Hayward tells *EW*, "It's a very messy problem. These laws haven't been around long enough for us to know how they will pan out." She advocates waiting a year or two to see how it goes in the other states.

"People could be stuck with enormous medical bills," Steiner Hayward says. "That can make it an issue of social justice," because the rich can access these drugs, but the poor could not.

In the current bill, insurance companies would not have to cover the investigational products.

Speaking June 22, Dr. Samuel Metz, a Portland-based physician, said he was "deeply conflicted" about the right-to-try laws. He said there would be less than one Oregonian per decade who could use the bill. "Medical ethicists are uniformly against right-to-try laws" because of the possibly delays it could cause in approving drugs and the potential for exploitation of families by firms.

McNannay says one of the main reasons against the bill was that patients were more likely to suffer an adverse reaction to experimental treatments.

"There's a whole lot more to this issue," he says. "The more you learn about this issue, the more complex it gets." — Dash Paulson