

ard Lariviere. Lariviere, who argued for an independent board for the UO, has had the last laugh. The state cut the OUS budget in the next few years and political support for a more autonomous UO grew. Lariviere's successor, Michael Gottfredson, then made an independent governing board his main priority as UO president.

In 2013, SB 270 established governing boards for the UO and Portland State University and effectively ended the OUS as a powerful agency. SB 80 is a housecleaning bill, editing out references to the OUS and the chancellor from statutes. The OUS was so large that the housecleaning needs to be thorough so the new system — independent boards and HECC — can legally take over all OUS's old responsibilities.

"The bill doesn't directly impact the UO's governance model or authorities," says Angela Wilhelms, the UO secretary, who works with new UO president Michael Schill and the new board of trustees. "The transition from a statewide system to institutional boards is several years in the making; SB 80 is the next appropriate step in that transition."

Wilhelm describes the new institutional governing system's first year as "extraordinary."

Under the new system, the UO has gone through "hiring a new president, the beginning of a robust policy review process, the issuance of new bonds, and several other approvals and actions taken by the board of trustees," Wilhelms says.

However, the UO's incoming faculty senate vice president, economics professor Bill Harbaugh, says that the governing board hasn't changed the operation of the UO very much.

"We were told this would free the university from bureaucratic controls," Harbaugh says. "I haven't noticed that. We just get our policies approved by HECC instead."

Harbaugh, who runs the university watchdog blog *UO Matters*, says that the institutional governance was supposed to encourage donors to give more to the university, but ironically it's the state funding that has increased.

"State funding has actually gone up, despite a decline in students from Oregon," he says. "We haven't seen a lot of private philanthropy yet. But now the UO essentially belongs to this board of trustees and we'll find out what kind of UO they want to have." — *Dash Paulson*

SLANT

- **MUPT** may be going to the voters if the Eugene City Council votes to revive it this week just after we go to press. Opponents of the controversial Multi-Unit Property Tax Exemption program were planning to submit initial paperwork to the city clerk this week for two citizen initiatives. Chief petitioner is Paul Conte. One would override council action to reinstate the 10-year tax breaks for housing developers, and the other initiative would require that "Any future MUPT program should be approved by the voters of Eugene." Both initiatives state that, "It is in the public interest to terminate the MUPT program at this time because the current program fails to provide sufficient concrete public benefits to justify the loss of tax revenues." MUPT was on the council agenda this week, July 8, and the city manager has been pushing for unfettered tax breaks. "If council delays, we'll see what happens," Conte says.

- We already have a favorite in the 2016 race for **Oregon secretary of state**, although it's risky to pick so early. We could have more favorites before the filings are finished. With Val Hoyle's announcement July 7 that she will be stepping down from her leadership position and considering a try for the statewide office, it's a pleasure to imagine our Eugene-Junction City Democratic public servant in the perch right below the governor's office. Lane County Commissioner Sid Leiken also is eyeing the office, and we expect many more to follow. It's interesting that in this time of mistrust of government, so many candidates still want to be a part of it.

- Speaking of candidates we like, if **City Councilor Betty Taylor** decides to not run again for Ward 2 in 2016, we hear Marty Wilde is considering the race for the open seat. Juan Carlos Valle tried to unseat Taylor in 2012 and will likely try again. Wilde is a former City Club of Eugene president who describes himself on Twitter as a "Dad, occasional lawyer, military guy and scholar." The 2016 city elections will be hot with an open mayoral seat and Councilors George Brown, Claire Syrett and Chris Pryor up for reelection if they so choose.

- We have uncovered **one bit of good luck** in the Civic Stadium fire amidst all the sad news about arson charges. In a couple of weeks, Friends of Civic and Civic Alliance were planning to put a new roof and some structural support on

the old grandstand. If that work had been completed and then gone up in flames, it would have been a big financial loss, especially for the folks who have worked so long to save Civic.

- Eugene lost the Eugene Celebration (will it ever return?) and the iconic Eugene Celebration Parade won't be happening this August, at least not in its former glory and absurdity. But our spirits are buoyed by news that one uniquely Eugene institution remains intact, held together by yep, slime. A date has been set for the 33rd annual **SLUG Queen Competition and Coronation** at 6:30 pm Friday, Aug. 14, on the Park Blocks downtown. It's unpredictable and kinda messy, but always memorable. Is being a SLUG queen on your bucket list? Deadline to join the competition is Aug. 7. Check out slugqueen.com or you can email kimstill@eugenestaturdaymarket.org or call 686-8858. Long may the new queen rain!

- Eugene native **Forrest Watkins** has been teaching English in China this past year, saving his money, and this week he begins a four-year bicycle trip around the world for climate action. His 25,000-mile cycle tour through Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas will focus on how local individuals and organizations are working for climate action. He hopes to raise \$10,000 for the climate action network 350.org. "We don't know how much time we have to act on climate change, but it's not a lot," he says. "I am taking on this storytelling project to show the power of regular people in taking on the biggest issues of our time." He will be posting to 360bybike.com and we plan to publish at least some of his stories and photos in print and at eugeneweekly.com.

- **Steelhead anglers** on the Willamette and McKenzie rivers are scratching their heads this summer. Only 2,584 summer steelies were counted passing Willamette Falls year to date, compared to 18,700 last year and 12,000 the year before. Lots of factors affect steelhead returns and survival, but warm water and low flows are certainly high on the list. We hear some conscientious anglers are leaving wild steelhead alone this summer, regardless of which river. Hooking and fighting an already stressed fish can kill it. Good time to try the mountain lakes.

SLANT INCLUDES SHORT OPINION PIECES, OBSERVATIONS AND RUMOR-CHASING NOTES COMPILED BY THE EW STAFF.
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