



Downtown merchants in Eugene are getting a head start on the holidays with a number of events before Thanksgiving, including a tree-lighting ceremony and entertainment from 5:15 to 6:30 pm Friday, Nov. 20, on the east Park Blocks. Many downtown shops will remain open until 8 pm.

Saturday Market is closed for the season and **Holiday Market** starts this weekend at the Fairgrounds. The popular shopping, food and music extravaganza runs from 10 am to 6 pm Saturday and Sunday with hundreds of booths offering hand-crafted items from jewelry to fiber arts to musical instruments. Find a list of vendors and a schedule of performers at holidaymarket.org.

How's the **newspaper business** doing in Oregon in 2015? We track newspaper circulation numbers provided by the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association and other sources. New numbers are out this month from recent reports. *The Register-Guard* appears to have lost 2,383 weekday subscribers and single-copy sales compared to last year. Weekday *R-G* copy sales are down to 41,280 and weekend distribution has also sagged. Bucking the trend, *The Oregonian* reports a growth in weekday subscriptions by 6,478 over last year (despite shrinking content). The *Statesman-Journal* in Salem has also picked up readers, boosting its weekday subscriptions by 1,070. The weekly papers in Cottage Grove, Florence and Springfield are holding steady and *Eugene Weekly* is growing a bit. Our average print run in 2014 was 39,415 and so far this year we are averaging 39,803.

Lane County had **69 foreclosure filings** in October, down from 77 in September, according to Gorilla Capital, a real estate company that tracks both judicial and non-judicial filings. The numbers go up and down but currently foreclosures are up 31 percent year-to-date over last year. The rise can be attributed to new legislation that "pushes borrowers and lenders into court," says John Helmick of Gorilla.

Local real estate people tell us there are many reasons why houses and commercial properties go into foreclosure beyond health crises, job loss, divorce, etc. In some cases the owners could easily make payments, but choose foreclosure as a strategic move if the timing is right. If a property has too high a mortgage debt, too little equity or can't be sold at a profit, owners might calculate that they would come out ahead by simply not making payments or paying taxes and letting the foreclosure process drag out for a year or two. That would trash their credit and make it hard to finance another house, but for people downsizing or who have other property, that might not be a big concern. Times have changed since the days when the sheriff would come kick you out if you were late on your mortgage payments. Banks today fear litigation and are very cautious.

POLLUTION UPDATE

The Center for Public Integrity recently gave the state of Oregon a **grade of "F" in its 2015 State Integrity Investigation**, which is a "a comprehensive assessment of state government accountability and transparency done in partnership with Global Integrity." Oregon also received an **"F" on the public access to information component** of its overall integrity grade, which is consistent with the **"F" given to Oregon by the National Freedom of Information Coalition** for lack of transparency. These poor rankings for access to information and transparency are also consistent with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ's) handling of public records requests. DEQ records are the lifeblood of "Pollution Update," and DEQ has steadily moved in the direction of decreased public access to records in recent years. Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum recently convened her **Public Records Reform Task Force**, which met for the first time on Oct. 29. Not surprisingly, nobody from DEQ showed up. — *Doug Quirke/Oregon Clean Water Action Project*

NEWS



PHOTO BY: MOHAMMED ALKHADHER / MOHAMMEDALKHADHER.COM

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON STUDENT DAVID SPENCER SHARED HIS EXPERIENCE ATTENDING THE UO AS A PERSON OF COLOR AT THE NOV. 12 MARCH AND RALLY IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI. THE MARCH BEGAN AT THE UO'S FORD ALUMNI CENTER, WHICH HOSTED A TALK BY CHARLES OGLETREE, A HARVARD LAW SCHOOL PROFESSOR, WHO SPOKE ON THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT. AN ESTIMATED 500 STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE RALLY.

OREGON WILD HORSE ROUNDUP SPURS DEBATE

About 1,400 wild horses are currently being gathered (aka rounded up) via helicopter from Oregon's public lands in an area known as Beaty's Butte on Oregon's east side. Wild horse advocates are questioning the management of the area and what will ultimately happen to the mustangs once they have been removed from the range.

The Beaty's Butte herd is where Oregon's famous Kiger mustangs were first found, and horses with Spanish mustang characteristics are still found there, according to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) information on the herd management area (HMA). It is believed that Spanish-type mustangs such as the Kigers are descended from the horses brought to the Americas by the Conquistadors.

According to Larisa Bogardus with the BLM, 888 horses have been captured as of Nov. 14. The gather contract concludes at the end of November, Bogardus tells *EW*, and then next year or the following year "bait trapping" the horses with salt and water will begin. Bogardus says there have been nine horses euthanized for reasons such as blindness, lameness and clubfoot, with veterinarians from the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service making the determinations.

The BLM plans to capture 1,500 horses and ultimately leave around 100 horses on the land, which is located about 65 miles from Lakeview and covers more than 400,000

acres. Darla Clark of Strawberry Mountain Mustangs, an all-breed horse rescue and rehab center, says she doesn't think such low numbers constitute a sustainable breeding stock, and there's no reason for such small numbers on such a large HMA.

Clark says, "The BLM has some protocol issues they need to address, and until then there's no reason for us to be paying for that many horses standing in long-term holding." She points to a federal investigation in October that revealed the BLM had not followed the federal wild horse and burro law when it sold around 1,700 BLM mustangs to a Colorado rancher who admitted most of them went to slaughter.

The BLM "also failed to follow its own policy of limiting horse sales and ensuring that the horses sold went to good homes and were not slaughtered," the report says.

Bogardus says the horses that have been gathered are sent each day to corrals in Hines, near Burns, Oregon, and Palomino Valley, Nevada, where they will be made available for adoption. The BLM's news release adds that horses might be sent to a permanent holding facility.

According to the BLM's statistics, there are currently more than 47,000 mustangs in its long-term holding facilities.

The BLM cites the recent drought and overgrazing by the horses as among the reasons for

the gather, and that the wild horse numbers are above the designated management levels for the area. Bogardus says the horses that have been gathered are in "pretty good shape, not emaciated or starved, but we don't want them to reach

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— DARLA CLARK, STRAWBERRY MOUNTAIN MUSTANGS