

• Travelers to the coast may have noticed that **Alpha-Bit Café** in Mapleton closed in mid-February following a farewell sale. Old photos are still being posted on the Alpha-Bit and Alpha Farm Facebook pages. So what happened? The café and bookstore support the Alpha Farm Intentional Community in Deadwood and hundreds of people have worked there over the decades. The workers considered themselves volunteers, but according to a recent store worker named Zain, “the government” views the workers as employees, not volunteers, and says wages, withholdings and insurance are all in arrears. “We stayed in the black only because those at the helm never thought we had to pay for such things, so we never did,” Zain tells us. “We just can’t afford to operate any longer.” The property and building are owned by Alpha Farm and are on the market. We hear at least one offer has come in.

• We’ve been tracking **KEPW 97.3 FM**, a listener-supported community radio station in Eugene that is projecting to be on the air by the end of 2016. “We could have our 45-foot antennae up within the next couple of months and are also gathering equipment for our studio at Growers Market, 454 Willamette Street,” says Rick Gold of KEPW in an email to supporters. Ideas for programming are welcome and the first meeting for organizing shows will be at 7:30 pm Thursday, March 17, at Growers Market. Regular weekly meetings for KEPW are from 6 to 7:30 Thursdays at the same location. See kepw.org.

• A four-part series of presentations called “**Creating Green and Resilient Homes, Neighborhoods, Economy and Culture**” begins March 21 and continues April 18, May 16 and June 20. The program is hosted by Jan Spencer and is in cooperation with the River Road Park District. All presentations will begin at 7 pm at the River Road Annex, 1055 River Road. A tour of homes and sites will be sometime in July. Spencer has been a River Road neighborhood activist and an advocate for economic and cultural transformation for many years. Sliding scale; suggested \$25 for the series. More information at suburbanculture.org or email janrspencer@gmail.com.

• Haggen Northwest Fresh bought dozens of **Albertson’s grocery stores**, then went bankrupt and sold them back to Albertson’s. *The Wall Street Journal* and other publications have followed the convoluted tale involving federal trade regulators. The newly named Haggen stores in Eugene still have their Haggen signs, but are now back under Albertson’s ownership. But we hear rumors that many local store employees (and customers) prefer the Haggen management and store improvements and are not looking forward to their new/old bosses. Haggen honored union contracts when it bought the Albertson’s stores.

• “**Social Media Marketing 101**” is the topic of a free workshop at 6 pm Thursday, March 17, at the Eugene Public Library downtown. Workshop leader Carol Infranca is an award-winning print and broadcast journalist, business and government marketing and public relations specialist, and an authorized local expert for Constant Contact. The following week, “**Get Your Business Online**” is a free workshop at 6 pm Thursday, March 24, at the Eugene Public Library. Brad McKinney and James Korth will talk about how to make businesses easy to find with Google search and Google Maps. These steps will promote your business and also help boost the local economy by putting Eugene and Springfield “on the map.” Both workshops are sponsored by the library and SCORE. Call 682-5450.

• We see **City Club of Eugene** is taking nominations for officers and new board members. The club is also seeking volunteers and mentors to work on a new Civic Associates program, an effort to boost civic engagement among young adults in the community. City Club is also looking at fundraising efforts to meet the growing costs of operations. City Club has looked at 20 potential sites for its weekly noon meetings and has settled on the UO Baker Center at 10th Avenue and High Street through July. Lunch menu is provided by the UO catering service. See cityclubofeugene.org.



BRIAN BABB'S FAMILY SPEAKS OUT AGAINST HIS DEATH ON THE PORCH WHERE HE WAS KILLED

NEWS

BY CAMILLA MORTENSEN

PHOTO: TODD COOPER

CELEBRATING VETERAN'S LIFE ONE YEAR AFTER HE'S KILLED BY POLICE

March 30 marks one year from the day Brian Babb was shot and killed by a Eugene police officer while having a mental health crisis. His family is celebrating his life and reminding the public that they are still working to create a federal bill that would prevent similar deaths in the future in a March 30 event at the Vet's Club.

The Army veteran's family still has questions about his death and about how law enforcement handled the situation after Babb's therapist called 911 fearing Babb was suicidal. The Eugene Police Department showed up with a BearCat armored vehicle and, within an hour of the 911 call, Babb was shot and killed by the police.

Then-district attorney Alex Gardner ruled the shooting justified, but the police department later sought to improve its response to people in a mental health crisis.

"It's been a year, a hard year" since he died, says Babb's sister Stephanie Babb.

She says "Brian's Bill" seeks to develop a "new kind of first responder." Step-

hanie Babb says in a situation like her brother's, a crisis response group like CAHOOTS could not engage with him because firearms were involved, and such responders were "kicked out before they even got a chance to do anything."

Stephanie Babb says that, yes, her brother brought a gun to the door, but she asks, why were they at the door in the first place? Brian Babb had a flashback triggered by the militaristic police response, she says.

She wants to address the militarization of police response, and in particular, Stephanie Babb says she wants the bill to revamp how the police respond to veterans, comparing it to templates for law enforcement responses to domestic violence.

Veterans cross gender, race and socioeconomic status, she points out.

The celebration of life for Brian Babb features live music, food and a no-host bar. The celebration is free, but donations for Brian's Bill are accepted. The event is 7 pm Wednesday, March 30, at the Vet's Club, 1626 Willamette Street. ■

