

POKÉMON PLAYERS AREN'T PUMPING UP BUSINESSES

Grouping couches together, chilling racks of beer, lighting coals for the grill. These aren't preparations for the neighborhood potluck. They're what some people have done to get comfortable for playing hours of Pokémon Go on a downtown street corner.

While some stores are seeing an increase in foot traffic, that hasn't translated into a similar increase in profitable business.

Much of Eugene's Pokémon activity is concentrated around the Bier Stein on 16th and Willamette. That block has three PokéStops, making it a hotspot for catching the virtual creatures. PokéStops are real-world locales where players can collect items for game play.

"We have quite a few people using our bathroom," says Kristina Measells, the Bier Stein's owner. "We like the fact that people are out walking. Well, not really walking."

Measells points out that a lot of Pokémon Go players, ironically, aren't really going anywhere. "They put up camp chairs and put lights up in the trees," she says. "They get very comfortable. We clocked someone, and he was out there for eight hours one day!"

Last Thursday, July 4, at 10:30 at night, about 100 people milled around in small groups on all sides of 16th and Willamette. Player Nathaniel Dylan Ray says he spends two to four hours there in the evenings after work. He says he likes that corner because of the concentrated activity — he's seen 200 to 400 people there on weekends.

"The more Pokémon hunters in an area also seems to bring in more rare Pokémon, so that spot is perfect," Ray says. "Three to four days of hunting that area you

can have a Gyarados."

Measells says the increase in business isn't significant. Pat McCallum, owner of Mac's at the Vet's Club across the street, says the same. "Other than people laying out in our lawn, it hasn't affected us," he says. Mac's offers half-off appetizers for players who catch something and show them, but he says he doesn't think a single person has redeemed the deal.

Parking and litter is the biggest impact the game has had so far. Measells says police responded on a recent Saturday night to address the group that was grilling, and that their neighbors are losing parking spots in already-small lots to players who park and camp.

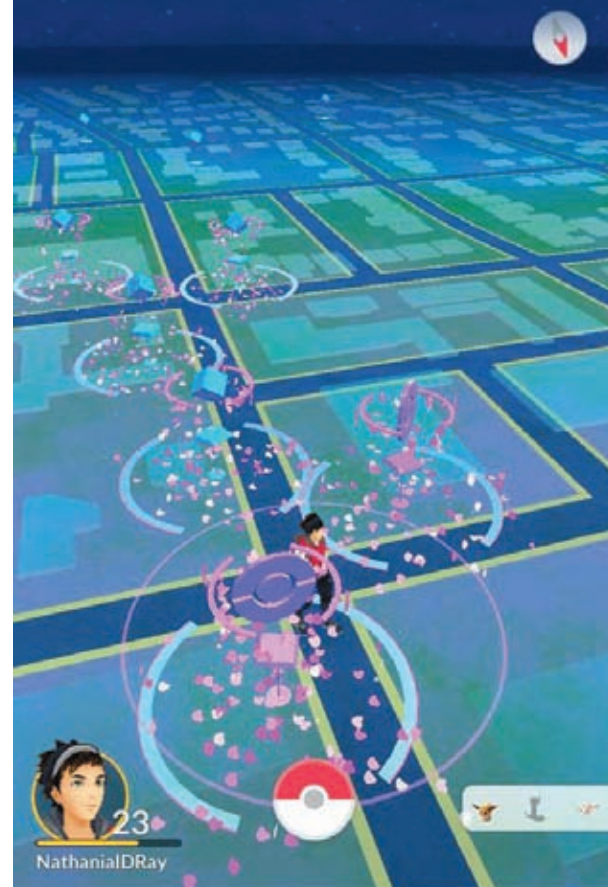
Out of respect, the Bier Stein has applied to be removed as a PokéStop, although Measells doesn't know how long that process will take. "It's just gotten a little crazy," she says. "If we can get it down to just one Stop rather than three." She adds, "We're also a little scared that someone is going to get hit by a car."

Ray, however, says he ordered food from the Bier Stein recently, and wouldn't have gone there if it wasn't for the Pokémon activity. "Never would have thought about trying them out if not for the lures and crowds of Pokémon trainers outside," he says. He also noticed a few other restaurants in the immediate area he is looking forward to dining at soon.

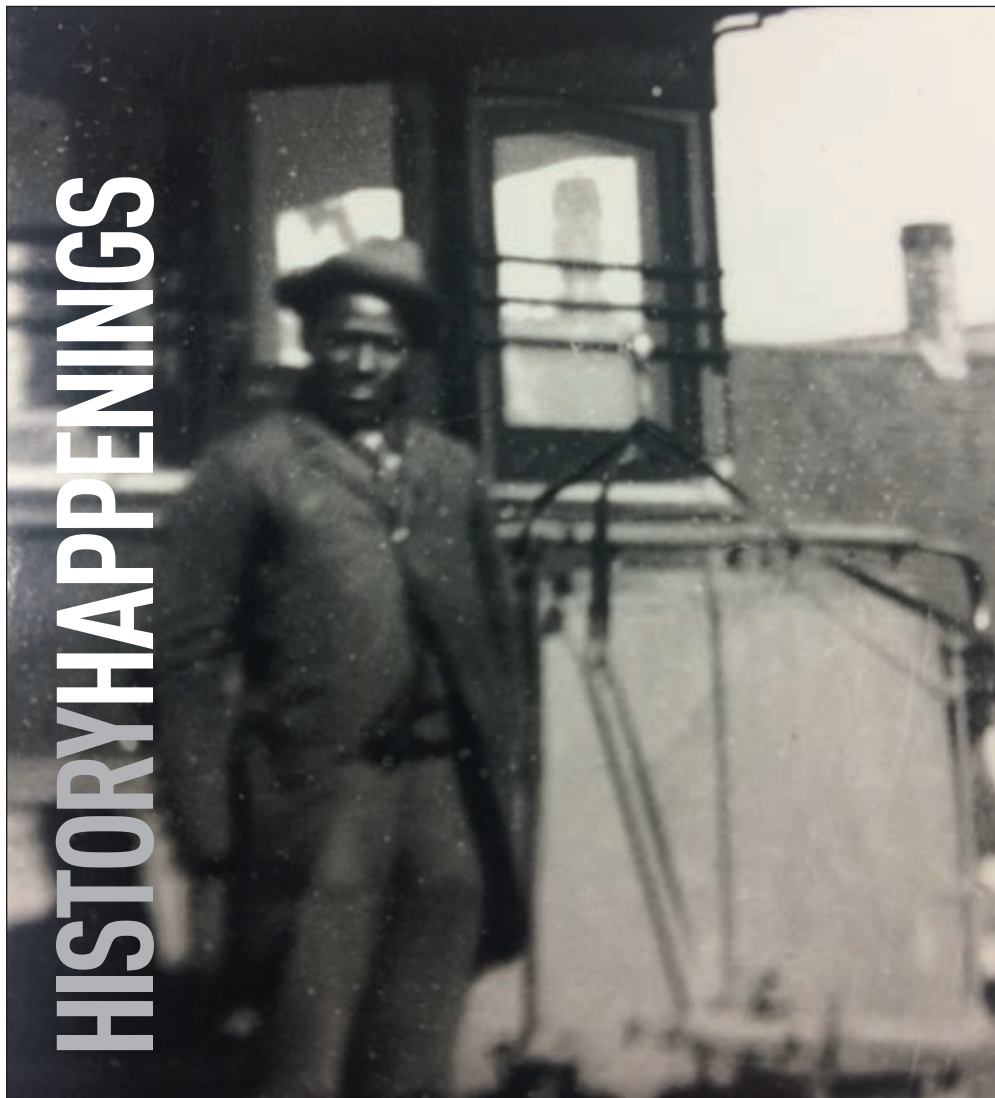
Ray says the Bier Stein removing itself as a Stop is a "bad move," and he's not likely to go back there if that happens. That would be a "bummer" for the game, he says.

"I have not found any spots yet that are as good as 16th and Willamette," Ray adds. "But I have heard of a bike path near campus being a great spot to hunt." ■

NATHANIEL RAY'S IMAGE OF POKÉSTOPS ON WILLAMETTE STREET THAT HAVE BEEN 'ACTIVATED' WITH LURES



HISTORY HAPPENINGS



WILEY GRIFFON

Traveling from Texas to Eugene in 1888, Wiley Griffon was the first conductor on the city's street rail system and also held the distinction of being its sole manager and superintendent for a time. After the rail system was sold to a mine owner in 1894, Griffon sought employment in a variety of occupations: small business owner, logger, porter, janitor, waiter and in hop yards outside Salem. As the first African-American property owner in Eugene whose home was in the vicinity of Third and High, Griffon was quoted as saying he "would rather live here than anywhere else." Newspapers from June 1, 1913, noted that Griffon was back in town after an operation to remove tumors on his back and neck. Failing to gain back his strength he passed June 27. In a June 29, 1913, obituary Griffon was said to be "a good citizen. It is said that he never drank nor used profane language. He always had a smile for everyone and on the streets was always whistling."

Heather Kliever is curator of education, Lane County Historical Society



• **Measure Your Online Marketing: Reports and Analytics** 6 pm Thursday, Aug. 18, with Carol Infranca, "award-winning print and broadcast journalist, business and government marketing and public relations specialist and an authorized local expert for Constant Contact." The workshop is FREE and takes place at the downtown Eugene Public Library at 10th and Olive. Call 541-682-5450 or visit eugene-orgov/library for more information.

• This week in **fast food news**: McDonald's says that "every chicken item McDonald's serves is made from chicken not treated with antibiotics important to human medicine, including its new Chicken McNuggets." Those new nuggets are also free of additives, the fast food giant says. It tested the nuggets at Oregon and SW Washington McDonald's in February, and "the participating McDonald's restaurants saw a 13 percent lift in McNugget sales, validating just how much the consumer demands quality ingredients they can feel good about eating, even when indulging." Meanwhile OSPIRG delivered "thousands" of petitions to KFC (aka Kentucky Fried Chicken) on Aug. 2, "urging the fried chicken giant to stop serving meat raised with the routine use of antibiotics," saying that "antibiotic resistance is quickly becoming public enemy number one among health experts worldwide, especially true now with the recent emergence of a new "superbug" resistant to a last resort antibiotic, colistin." The presentation featured a farmer, a nurse, a victim of antibiotic resistance and at least one volunteer in a chicken suit, OSPIRG tells EW.