

# SLANT

• We were excited to hear from **Greenhill Humane Society** that Tank, the pit bull who has waited more than 500 days to find a home, was adopted by *Eugene Weekly* readers after his story appeared in our annual Pets issue. Go Tank!



• Faced with mounting evidence that **playing football causes brain disease**, what are America's institutions of higher learning going to do about it? A recent study found that more than 99 percent of brains from deceased former NFL players that were examined contained chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), the degenerative disease linked to repeated blows to the head ([goo.gl/wk53QJ](http://goo.gl/wk53QJ)). The same study found CTE in 48 of 53 former college football players. America's universities are hitched to football — they rely on football to generate huge revenues. But universities are supposed to be about knowledge and learning. Can they continue to send students out to play a game that apparently damages their brains?

• Are Americans ready for **single-payer health care**? That topic drew enthusiastic applause Tuesday afternoon when Rep. Peter DeFazio addressed a few hundred people who turned out in the heat for a town hall meeting at Churchill High School. "That does not mean socialized medicine," the popular Democratic congressman said. "It means you have one entity that insures people." As a step toward that major reform, DeFazio suggested a "national not-for-profit plan that everyone can sign up for" should be offered to all Americans alongside private insurance plans. We agree.

• When Dan Bryant gave his 20-minute local "TED talk" to the City Club of Eugene on July 28, a couple of remarkable numbers stood out. Pastor of the First Christian Church in downtown Eugene and tireless advocate for homeless housing, Bryant told how his 106-year-old church is providing roughly **20,000 contacts with people in need every year**. That includes breakfast every Sunday for 400, hundreds more through the Egan Warming Center, and 50 to 100 walk-ins from the street every week. Can the congregation and leadership of this old white Eugene church be in the same country as the leadership in the White House in Washington, D.C.? As Bryant says, "Homelessness is a justice issue."

• **The heat wave this week** isn't just a danger to your electric bill, it's a fire danger. The Oregon Department of Forestry has declared an extreme fire danger level for rural areas of Lane County and northwest Douglas County, and warns against using gas-powered or spark-emitting equipment. Setting campfires outside of incorporated campgrounds is also forbidden. David Kjosness with ODF's Western Lane District said in a press release, "We are asking that people be extremely mindful of this hot, dry weather and avoid any activity that could spark a fire, whether it is formally restricted or not." Be careful out there!

## POKE RESTAURANT

*A young restaurateur creates a hip dining experience in downtown Eugene*

**T**here's a trendy new lunch spot for those who live and work downtown, and the creator behind it is just 24 years old. Poke Stop serves poke bowls, a sort of "Hawaiian fish salad," according to creative mind and manager Jina Choi.

Choi's new restaurant is situated right near the downtown bus station — something that served as the inspiration for its name, along with wordplay referencing the ubiquitous mobile game Pokémon Go. The location used to be Happa Restaurant, a sushi place owned and run by Choi's parents, Diana and Steve Choi. "I've been in Eugene for 10 years now and my parents are local restaurant owners here," Choi says. "They own Sushi Seoul and now they own Belly."

When Happa failed to turn a profit, they closed it down. Choi, a recent University of Oregon graduate, decided to open it again under new management and with fresh paint and design choices. The interior is sleek, with minimalist décor, succulent plants and simple white furniture. A favorite piece for Instagram is the pink neon "hello gorgeous" sign on a wall by the bar.

Choi says she came up with the idea for a poke restaurant after visiting Hawaii in March. She noticed that many people there would order poke to go, then take it home to add their own sauces and toppings. She says she thought her own restaurant "could be Subway style, where people could customize their orders and add stuff."

Choi says her shop is aimed at a younger generation. "We're excited to bring in more young people

to downtown," she says, adding that their marketing was entirely through Instagram and Facebook.

"It's unique because we've got unlimited toppings and lots of options," she says, looking around to admire her handiwork. She remodeled the entire location herself in just two weeks. "This place is adorable — I love it. It's so cute. I can't get over the decoration, how it all came together."

The food is delicious, too. Since Choi has the support of her parents in her endeavor, she has access to high-quality fish from their sushi suppliers. The bowls are completely customizable, with arugula, green tea and coconut rice and many other options as possible bases. The fish is fresh, and there are dozens of toppings to choose from — including Red Hot Cheetos.

Customers can make the bowls spicy or sweet to their taste, and there are fresh fruits and vegetables available as toppings. Some can even choose to get their bowl served inside a fresh pineapple.

A small bowl is just \$9, making it an economical downtown lunch spot. Choi has kombucha on tap and La Croix in the fridge, plus adorable Korean snacks lining the counter. In the future she says she plans to feature different local bakeries, with cupcakes and desserts available for customers.

Though Poke Stop has been open for a few weeks, the grand opening celebration is noon to 4 pm Friday, Aug. 4. "We're doing free cupcakes, free musubi and free champagne," Choi says. ■

*Poke Stop, located at 1044 Willamette Street, is open from 10:30 am to 8 pm daily. For more info visit [eatpokestop.com](http://eatpokestop.com) or find it on Facebook @eatpokestop.*

