

SLANT

- This just in! Scott Landfield of Tsunami Books tells us they didn't just raise the \$302,000 the store needed to assure **Tsunami could keep its Willamette Street location**, that in fact \$320,000 was raised. "The community did it," he says.

- As the **Jan. 23 special election on Measure 101** draws closer we have gotten calls from people weirded out by a robo-type call from Republican state Rep. Cedric Hayden. David Marks was one of the citizens who got the phone call, and he called EW to say he'd called the number back and discovered it was Hayden himself on the end of the line. "This is wrong in several different ways," he tells us of the pressure to vote "no." We talked to Hayden, who calls the phone messages "a voter education process." When asked if this could be seen as pressuring votes to say no to the measure, he says, "Obviously I'm doing outreach wanting people to vote and my opinion is 'no.'" Hayden says he personally answered hundreds of calls last Friday about the message that went out, and only 15 people requested he put them on a "do not call list," which he did. "It caught people off guard, he says. "Normally politicians don't put their personal cell phone on there."

Interesting strategy, Rep. Hayden. But we still disagree with you. Measure 101 funds much needed health insurance for low-income Oregonians and children, and we urge you to vote "yes."

- The smartest comments yet on the **South Eugene High School mascot issue** came from a recent SEHS graduate, an Axemen athlete who would change the name to simply the Axe. He hoped some of the energy from this issue could go into graduation rates, funding for public education, testing, etc. Given the smart, driven people pushing for change, we hope so too and think it will.

- Correction: Our Jan. 11 Slant said City Councilor Betty Taylor hoped that in the future the city of Eugene would have "cooperation of business owner Ali Emami to open the walls on two sides of Kesey Square." Our goof. **Instead, she wrote that the city should have "cooperation with Ali Emami."** There's no doubt about cooperation from Emami — he has fought to save the square and to make it friendlier to hang out in. The burden is on the city to cooperate with him to open those walls. Let's do it.

- Backers of the **city auditor Measure 20-283** always anticipated a fight from the city manager, city attorney and conservatives on the Eugene City Council. The established political structure in Eugene has rarely supported transparency and accountability. They fear independent auditing as a threat to their credibility, even if it saves taxpayers millions. But it turns out that some citizens have come late to this debate, and their push for an alternative, watered-down auditor by Citizens for Sensible Oversight (CSO) is divisive and confusing. This effort may end up killing the most solid and best-researched citizen proposal Eugene has seen in decades.

CSO is advocating for a vague, competing measure of undetermined budget. As the *RG* called it in a recent editorial, it's "auditor lite." The competing measure is in the city's hands now, and you can bet the administration is busy writing the devilish details that will take most of the teeth out of it. The CSO measure will become the city's measure. The City Council has until Feb. 12 to decide whether to put the administration's competing measure on the ballot. It's a bad idea, and we urge the council to reject it.

- If we Eugeneans care about this, the **eighth and final season of *Portlandia*** starts 10 pm Thursday, Jan. 18, on IFC. *The Oregonian's* Kristi Turnquist wrote a Jan. 14 piece wondering whether this show really did cause an influx of young people who had come to retire, plus others, to Portland. Considering the problems brought by the sheer numbers, we better watch.

- **What we're reading:** *Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* by George Packer. We started this in time to finish all 430 pages before Packer comes to Eugene Jan. 24 to talk about "American Identity in the Age of Trump." The Oregon Humanities Center is bringing him for what promises to be a stimulating lecture. See our Q&A this issue.

HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL



TODD ALBI

"When the hurricane hit, I wanted to do something," says Todd Albi, proprietor of SilverFire Disaster and Recreation Stoves in Eugene. "FEMA was sending generators to Puerto Rico, but no fuel." Albi asked his wife, Linda, a supervisor in the University of Oregon's Special Education Program, to contact a sister university program in Puerto Rico. Then he loaded a pallet with 45 SilverFire Hunter stoves. The Hunter is an efficient top lit updraft (TLUD) stove powered by twigs or any flammable biomass. When the stoves arrived in December, he flew to the island to assemble a team of stove trainers to deliver the stoves to families with disabilities. "The trainers were so dedicated," he says. "I worked with them and the families." Albi spent five years in the Navy with the SEALs before moving to Eugene in 1980. He was the first-ever UO graduate in fitness management but went on to a 25-year career in pharmaceutical sales. "And I've always done metal and wood fabrication," he notes. "I built colored telephone booths all around Eugene." The Aprovecho Research Center in Cottage Grove hired him in 2007 as a consultant in their rocket stove program, aimed at bringing clean-burning stoves to third-world countries. He launched the StoveTec line of stoves and visited China to assess its market potential. "I went to Chinese factories," he says. "All their stoves had secondary combustion chambers." When Apro backed out of a deal with one of the factories, Albi started SilverFire to honor the agreement. The SilverFire store at 2472 Willamette Street now carries a full line of high-tech stainless steel stoves with secondary combustion chambers, from backpacking models to the pizza oven seen in the photo, designed to resemble a phone booth. See them online at silverfire.us.