



HAPPENING PEOPLE

BY PAUL NEEVEL

ROSCOE CARON

"The Latino immigrant story resonates for me," says Roscoe Caron, who grew up among French Canadian immigrants in Manchester, New Hampshire. "My grandparents were textile mill workers." Caron went to a Catholic school through eighth grade; half the day was taught in French and half in English. He started college at Superior State University in Wisconsin, then spent a year at Ohio State before moving to Eugene in 1972. "When I got here, I thought, 'OK, I'm home,'" he recalls. A year later he joined the Hoedads Reforestation Cooperative. "We worked in every state west of the Rockies, except Alaska," he says. "We grew to over 300 workers in the late '70s. I became Hoedads president in '82-'83, right when the Reagan recession happened." Caron returned to college at the UO to become a teacher and graduated in 1986. He taught middle school in Junction City, then

in Eugene's Jefferson, Kennedy and Kelly middle schools until he retired in 2010. In 1996, he and his tequila-drinking and garage-band buddy Jim Garcia, then faculty advisor to MEChA (the Latino student union) at the UO, launched Ganas, an after-school program that brings MEChA members to middle school twice a week to help Latino students with homework and to have some fun. "Ganas has been going for 22 years," he notes. "It's been the incubator for a lot of college students going into teaching." More recently, Caron has invested his time and energy in CAPE (Community Alliance for Public Education), a local advocacy group that challenges the prevailing corporate model of standardized teaching and testing. "Oregon is now in its second year of standardized testing for kindergartners," he says. "We're promoting opt-out." Learn about CAPE meetings and events on the CAPE Facebook page.

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• **The Friday the 13th auditor forum at the City Club of Eugene** was not as civil as most City Club meetings. Bonnie Bettman McCornack spoke for the elected, independent auditor, and Josh Skov advocated for the City Council-appointed auditor before a full house. By the end of the forum, we harked back to an earlier City Club statement by Councilor Mike Clark. He said the council appointed measure, 20-287, is a "cynical measure" to kill the elected auditor, measure 20-283. We'll see if it succeeds on May 15.

• **Speaking of uncivil politics: Chill out Dems.** It feels like the Trump effect is hitting the local progressives as they attack each other and slip anonymous "news tips" (let's call it opposition research) under EW's door. We

love a good news tip, but play fair kids, OK? After the primary, the Democrats need to work together this November and down the road.

• **What we're reading: Gerald Murnane's *Stream System*** (Farrar, Straus and Giroux). The Australian writer, slightly but increasingly known in the U.S., might be the next winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, muses a recent article in *The New York Times*. Murnane, 79, lives in the tiny town of Goroke, a town of 600 about a four-hour drive west of Melbourne; he once said he's never touched a computer or cell phone, working instead on a manual typewriter. His dozen-plus books interweave fiction and autobiography, memory and imagination in unsettlingly wonderful ways. Teju Cole calls Murnane "a genius on the level of Beckett."

• How ironic that the **\$559,000 a year pension paid to former UO football coach and athletic director Mike Bellotti** is part of a program that ulti-



mately limits physical education and extracurricular sports to Oregon kids. And that the \$309,437 yearly pension paid to former Lane Community College President Mary Spilde ultimately affects the education offered to these

same Oregon kids. There is something terribly wrong with the PERS picture, as the national media is pointing out.

• It's not just Oregonians caught up in revisiting the crazy times in **Antelope, Oregon, with the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh**. Discussions of the Netflix doc *Wild, Wild Country* have been the center of water cooler conversation both physical and virtual lately. Even if you haven't binge-watched all six episodes, the latest Saturday Night Live skit gets to the WTF at heart of as Rajneeshpuram and its events from attempted murder to bioterror attacks (you'll never look at a salad bar the same way again). Even the Style section of *The New York Times* is talking about the Netflix docu-series. On April 12, a pink and red sweater was pictured with the words: "And as striking as the hues were in the Oregon backcountry, they're statement-making on New York streets." Nothing delights our geeky hearts like excitement over documentary!

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