



PHOTO BY COLIN HOUCK

recommendation, and the budtenders are responsible for answering questions that the doctors don't have, he adds.

"There's benefits from all these cannabinoids and how we can navigate that conversation is why we're here to help," Banks says. "People are actually using this to better their lives, I feel very fulfilled in contributing to that." — *Taylor Griggs*

Best Local Theater Company

1. **Very Little Theatre** 2350 Hilyard Street. 541-344-7751. TheVLT.com.
2. **Actors Cabaret of Eugene** 996 Willamette Street. 541-683-4368. Actorscabaret.org.
3. **The Shedd Institute** 868 High Street. 541-434-7000. TheShedd.org.

You're not getting older, VLT, you're getting better. At the ripe old age of 89, Very Little Theatre is the venerable grandpa of local theater — and one of the oldest community theaters in the United States.

Founded as part of the little theater movement, which advocated turning away from the cheesy commercial fare of the early 20th century, VLT got its name when a founder looked at the small number of faces at an early organizational meeting and said, "There are hundreds of little theatre groups up and down the country, but this is certainly going to be a very little one." Or so the story goes.

Perhaps fueled by a recent boom in local theater — Eugene has a delectable buffet of stage delights to choose from — VLT has upped its game lately. Yes, it does the warhorses, such as last spring's *Little Shop of Horrors*. But it does them well.

It also takes on more challenging fare, as *EW*'s often-curmudgeonly critic Rick Levin noted in his review of this year's *Wonder of the World*: "Let me begin by congratulating Very Little Theatre for daring to step afoul of the staid, risk-averse traditions that dominate so much arts programming in this town, and staging something

relatively new and fresh..."

Yes, Oregon Contemporary Theatre may be more professional, Cottage Theatre frequently showcases whirlwind director Tony Rust and Actors Cabaret serves better food with its musicals. But community is the soul of art, and VLT will always have a place in our heart. — *Bob Keefer*

Best DJ (Radio)

1. **Downtown Deb Trist** *Dead Air*, KLCC 89.7
2. **Billy Dyball** *No Pants Party*, KWVA 88.1
3. **Al Scott** *Afternoon Drive*, KNRQ 103.7

You won't find much that's closer to the cultural heart of Eugene than the Grateful Dead, so it makes perfect sense that *Eugene Weekly* readers have chosen Deb Trist, aka "Downtown Deb," as their favorite radio DJ.

Trist hosts the popular KLCC radio program *Dead Air*. Trist, a New Yorker who moved to Eugene in 1983, has hosted the show since 1986. With her long-time connection to the band — she married its music publisher Alan Trist — she features music from the Dead, from the band's late leader Jerry Garcia and from other musicians. She interrupts the music, as she points out, with minimal talk.

The name *Dead Air* originally belonged to Grateful Dead soundman Dan Healy, who used it for a radio program in California; he gave it to Trist in 1986.

Trist moved from a commercial station to KLCC in 1991. "That was like a welcome home," she says. "Public radio."

Garcia died in 1995, which means Trist has been playing music for decades from a band that no longer exists in this physical universe. "But they are eternal," she says. "And since Jerry died, *Dead Air* has been essential as a gathering place for listeners."

Check out *Dead Air* from 7 to 9 pm Saturdays on KLCC, 89.7 FM. — *Bob Keefer*

Best Place to Get Fit

1. **Outdoors**
2. **Eugene YMCA** 2055 Patterson Street. 541-686-9622. EugeneYMCA.org.
3. **Downtown Athletic Club** 999 Willamette Street. 541-484-5410. DowntownAC.com.

For a city that calls itself Track Town, USA, it'd better have a plethora of running trails. In fact, there are more than 42 miles of shared-use running paths in the Eugene-Springfield area, so we won't complain about scarcity. Rather than sweating it out on a treadmill that has a TV with talking heads tirelessly deconstructing what that new Tweet from President Donald Trump means, as they neglect the actual stuff that he and the Republican Party do to dismantle the country, go outside. Go bike Springfield's paved trails. Go hike outside of Eugene. Go run Pre's Trail. Go walk with the Eugene-Springfield Mossback Volkssports Club. Going outdoors does come with some caveats, though. Whether you're on a day or a night jaunt, watch out for distracted drivers. And the outdoors isn't available year-round, and you can thank climate change for that. So go spend some time outdoors — it won't be here forever. — *Henry Houston*

Best Indie Bookstore

1. **Smith Family Bookstore** 525 Willamette Street, 541-343-4717; 768 E. 13th Avenue, (541) 345-1651. Smithfamilybookstore.com.
2. **Tsunami Books** 2585 Willamette Street, 541-345-8986. TsunamiBooks.org.
3. **Black Sun Books** 2467 Hilyard Street, 541-484-3777. Blacksunbooks.net.

It's a sad commentary on the state of the book business that all three finalists for Best Indie Bookstore in town sell *used* books. Yes, they all sell new books, too. But then, of course, how many shops can get by these days selling nothing but books whose prices are being undercut by online giants?

This year's winner, Smith Family, is a classic, musty, sprawling place, redolent of old yellowing pages and hand-sewn bindings, with piles of still-unsorted books that greet you as you walk through the door. It's my favorite place to browse poetry anthologies, to look for classics I've mysteriously neglected to read and even to find the latest graphic novels.

Smith Family's two locations — one downtown, the other next to the University of Oregon — are certain to remind a long-time bibliophile of those nationally known icons, Powell's City of Books in Portland — said to be the largest in the world — and the aptly named Acres of Books in Long Beach, California, a 12,000-square-foot wonder that closed, sadly, in 2008.

We're lucky to have all three finalists here and still in business. — *Bob Keefer*

Best Massage

1. **Pearl Day Spa** 1375 Pearl Street. 541-683-3377. Thepearldayspa.com.
2. **Gervais Salon & Day Spa** 248 E. 5th Avenue. 541-334-6533. 1473 Willamette Street. 541-334-6533. Gervaiseugene.com.
3. **Footloose Massage Center** 35 W. 8th Avenue. 541-686-4461. Footloosemassage.com.

Best Dispensary

1. **Moss Crossing** 2751 Friendly Street. 541-636-3724. MossCrossing.com.
2. **Eugene OG** 2045 Franklin Boulevard. 541-505-7575. Eugeneog.com.
3. **TJ's Dispensaries** 3113 Willamette Street. 541-505-7961. 1027 Willamette Street. 541-505-7961. 1910 Empire Park Drive. 541-505-7105. VisitTJs.com.

Best Weed Edibles Selection

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