

## Something Eugene!



# SLANT

• Lisa Heyamoto told the City Club of Eugene on Dec. 7 that what keeps her up at night is her worry that democracy functions on an informed citizenry, so what happens when the sources of information go away? (And as NPR's "Hidden Brain" investigates this week, what is the cost?) Today, **two Oregon counties have no source of local news**, according to the narrative journalist and senior instructor of journalism in the UO. That's a pattern, especially across rural America, and we would add that the voting patterns show it. Heyamoto's informative talk about "The Future of Local Newspapers" was not much fun for journalists, but perhaps the new media she talked about will save our democracy. If you missed it, you can find City Club talks archived on KLCC.

• Hey holiday lovers, a **Christmas comet is on its way!** Comet 46P/Wirtanen is going to be close to Earth on Sunday, Dec. 16. It will pass within 7 million miles, *Sky and Telescope* says, making it one of the 10 closest since 1950 and "20th closest approach of a comet dating as far back as the ninth century AD." It might be hard to see with the naked eye, but look to the eastern horizon. And as long as you're standing outside in a dark place looking up, the Geminid meteor shower is active through Dec. 17, hitting its peak at 4:30 am Dec. 14.

• Looking for some books at **The Duck Store**? You'll be hard-pressed to find them soon. In an email to EW, Arlyn Schaufler, The Duck Store's executive director, says its selection of general interest books will decline. The store will have a few titles related to the university and Pacific Northwest authors, but it is focusing more on textbooks and course materials. He adds that the book inventory is because of a changing nature of book shopping and increased online competition. The bookstore will be having a 50 percent sale going on through the holidays. The store will then decide whether to return the books to the publisher. He adds that the store won't have any more layoffs. At least you can still buy a Marcus Mariota Tennessee Titans jersey, right?

• When we asked in "Slant" last **week who you would like to see run for president**, reader Sue Mandeville gave us her choice: "I would like to see either of the Castro brothers [Joaquín or Julián] run. They are progressive, very intelligent and cute as a button. Being Texas Democrats they've already been investigated thoroughly!"

Speaking of the stampede for the Democratic nomination in 2020, Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley has given up on persuading the Legislature to pass a law allowing him to run both for re-election as a senator and in the primary for president. He will have time, though, to test his national popularity before his filing date in Oregon, so we'll be seeing much more of Merkley on MSNBC and CNN in the months ahead.

• Did you notice the non-Jesus banner on 8th Avenue? This year **the Freedom From Religion Foundation splurged and put a solstice banner up in downtown Eugene**. Check out our (almost) daily online coverage from the banner wars to Hi-Fi Music Hall's new ownership at [eugeneweekly.com](http://eugeneweekly.com).

• Eugene City Council voted Dec. 10 to **use the gravel lot that used to be City Hall as a parking lot**. Yup. There's no City Hall there. There's no shelter for the homeless there. But we sure will have some parking. The good news is the council also adopted a resolution approving a low-income rental housing property tax exemption for a new development slated for 70 units of downtown housing at 11th and Lincoln and passed a supplemental budget request to support a number of homeless services from Dusk to Dawn camping to a day resource center and 15th Night youth homelessness intervention.

SLANT INCLUDES SHORT OPINION PIECES, OBSERVATIONS AND RUMOR-CHASING NOTES COMPILED BY THE EW EDITORIAL BOARD. HEARD ANY GOOD RUMORS LATELY? CONTACT EDITOR@EUGENEWEEKLY.COM

# The Shedd Institute

[www.theshedd.org](http://www.theshedd.org) - 541.434.7000

The Eye Center  
John H. Haines, MD  
Kent A. Karren, MD  
Hana L. Takusagawa, MD

Irving Berlin's  
**WHITE CHRISTMAS**  
December 14, 15 & 16  
The Shedd Institute - Eugene  
541.434.7000 - [theshedd.org/WhiteChristmas](http://theshedd.org/WhiteChristmas)

## The Shedd Institute Community Music School

Classes & private lessons for all ages

The Shedd Choral Society  
Sundays at 6:30

The Shedd  
Singing Club  
Tuesdays at 6

~ Contact the registrar today! ~  
541.434.7015 / [registrar@theshedd.net](mailto:registrar@theshedd.net)