

SLANT

• On the Friday before our country's biggest spectator sporting event, the Feb. 3 Super Bowl, Bev

Smith and Bobby Green made the case to the City Club of Eugene that **everybody should be an athlete**. Green was a Duck football player, a coach, an official, plus a City Council member and Lane County commissioner for 14 years. Smith, now the director of Kidsports, played and coached basketball teams at the University of Oregon and the Olympics and is a fierce advocate for the fieldhouse and playing fields now under construction on the old Civic Stadium site. She said every kid should have at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day and every adult at least 30. She quoted Bill Bowerman, "If you have a body, you're an athlete." About 12,000 local kids play in Kidsports, 4,000 on scholarship, and she wants to be sure that marginalized kids have an opportunity to play.

• Here's hoping the **Oregon Legislature gets its act together and finally passes the Clean Energy Jobs Act**, a cap and invest program that might finally show the world how to move forward on a state level on slowing down carbon emissions. Pester your legislators; you can find them at oregonlegislature.gov.

• You asked (some of you even asked nicely) for a better **What's Happening online calendar** — and we listened. We know how much our free calendar listings mean to local groups and musicians getting the word out, and to Eugeneans looking for something to do. Check it out at EugeneWeekly.com.

• Local crisis intervention group **CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out On The Streets)**, and yes, that name's a little tongue in cheek] has been getting some much-deserved recognition lately starting with a story in the *Wall Street Journal* in November 2018. Officials from the Portland Police Bureau, Multnomah County

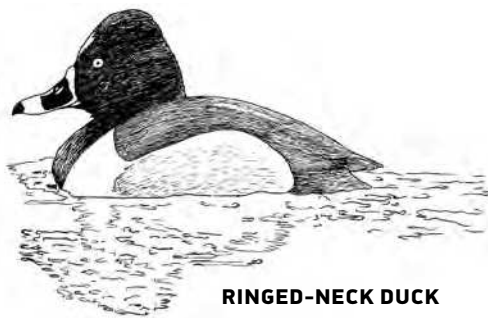
and Portland have all come to Eugene to check out the CAHOOTS model, which pairs a medic with a crisis worker who has substantial training and experience in mental health. The group is working with cities from Denver to New York to implement similar models. EW has called CAHOOTS several times to help unhoused people who appear to be in distress, and we're grateful for what they do!

• **Morsels: Hey, Neighbor Pizza House** is a new restaurant in what some dare call Eugene's most urban corner, 19th and Agate. It's a pizza house and much more. We liked sitting at the beautiful little wood slab bar and watching pizza come together, to be delivered, picked up or eaten right there. Indoor space is tight but that's OK. You can get them on the phone at 541-505-9302.

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

IT'S ABOUT TIME BY DAVID WAGNER

A bright, sunny day recently offered a great "Duck Watching Day." It's a day when almost all of the regular winter residents can be seen on a walk along the east side Delta Ponds. Such a day reveals a diverse crowd of waterfowl: gadwall, ringed-necked duck, northern shoveler, mallard, bufflehead, American coot, double-crested cormorant, American wigeon, great blue heron, Canada goose and great egret. Less common but frequent in



RINGED-NECK DUCK

these ponds are wood duck, hooded merganser, pied-billed grebe and green heron. Watching the northern shovelers doing their circle dance is a joy. They're courting each other in anticipation of flying north. Pairs swim around in tight circles, about a yard in diameter, seemingly endlessly. When another sunny day dawns, grab the binoculars and head out to the ponds for an hour or

two of pleasure.

February is the first month of the year for flower-watching. Although wind pollinated species like hazel

nut have been shedding pollen for weeks, the insect pollinated flowers begin flowering this month. The traditional first day of bloom for the earliest two, osoberry (Indian plum) and spring beauty, is the 15th. Last year osoberry was 10 days early. With the warm weather we have been having it will be interesting to see if this year osoberry will bloom early again. Just as pleasing as the little clusters of white flowers is the understory flush of bright, spring green leaves that unfurl as the flowers bloom. Although blooming much later, snowberry leaves also adorn the woodlands.

David Wagner is a botanist who works in Eugene. He teaches moss classes, leads nature walks and makes nature calendars. He can be contacted through his website, ferenzenmosses.com.

NEWS BY CAMILLA MORTENSEN

CLIMATE LAW

Lawsuits seek to slow the tide of climate change but need their days in court

Those who understand climate change know that a little snow on the valley floor in Lane County doesn't mean global warming isn't happening. Since Congress and state legislatures have been slow to act, climate change activists have also been engaging in direct action and filing lawsuits to try to slow the rising temperatures, which lead to catastrophic wildfires, flooding and sea-level rise, among other catastrophes.

In Eugene, the Our Children's Trust youth climate lawsuit is still battling in the legal system. *Juliana v. United States* was filed in federal court in Oregon in 2015 and argues the federal government has failed to adequately act against climate change.

On Feb. 1, the Trump Administration again tried to block the teens and kids from their day in court, arguing in the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit that the youth can't "demonstrate causation because climate change stems from a complex, world-spanning web of actions across all fields of human endeavor," and they can't connect flooding or drought in their neighborhoods to "any particular conduct by the government."

The feds also argued that the youths' "alleged injuries" cannot be redressed because "a single district judge may not ... seize control of national energy production, energy consumption and transportation in the ways" that would implement the remedies.

Meanwhile, another set of climate cases is also active in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. The counties of Marin, San Mateo and Santa Cruz, as well as the cities of Richmond, Santa Cruz and Imperial Beach are suing Big Oil and Big Gas in *San Mateo v. Chevron* to recover climate damages knowingly caused by oil and gas companies.

On Jan. 29, a slew of groups, scientists and states, including Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, filed friend of the court (amicus) briefs asking the court to affirm a district court decision to send the climate change damages cases back to the California state courts where they were originally filed. The AGs are from Oregon, California, Maryland, New York, Washington, Vermont, Rhode Island and New Jersey; they argued that the defendants "ignore the states' broad authority and important role in addressing climate change."

The attorneys general and other amici argue in their briefs that the fossil fuel companies knowingly deceived the public about the climate change impacts their products have made worse and allege that the fossil fuel industry sought to manufacture doubt about climate change and minimize its risk.

Richard Wiles, executive director of the Center for Climate Integrity says in a press release that "state courts are the right venue to try these cases, which simply seek to recover the costs of local climate adaptation measures. What the industry fears is justice, and then having to pay the costs of climate adaptation for every city and county with damages."

Finally, on Feb. 4, four climate activists in Blackberry Township, Minnesota, closed safety valves on a crude oil pipeline belonging to the Canadian energy corporation Enbridge. The action mirrored previous efforts to shut down the flow of tar sands fossil fuel into the U.S. from Canada.

Local attorney Lauren Regan and her nonprofit Civil Liberties Defense Center successfully argued before the Minnesota Supreme Court in a similar previous valve-turning case that the valve turners had a right to present a necessity defense at trial. In a necessity defense a defendant can defeat a criminal charge if the harm that would have resulted from following the law would have significantly exceeded the harm that results from breaking it. ■

Check out "Ultimate Necessity" on EugeneWeekly.com for background on all the climate cases.