

• **Our bird-watching friends just told us the Vaux's swifts have been swooping into the chimney at the University of Oregon's Agate Hall** — aka the old Condon school — at 18th and Agate during the fall migration. Their annual migration is almost over, but if

you want to try to catch them, drop by ASAP to see the tiny birds circle and then plunge into the chimney for the night. Why a chimney? With no humans around, Vaux's swifts would use hollow trees, but thanks to us, there are far fewer dead trees and far more chimneys. With the use of fireplaces as a main heating source on the decline, the chimney on the historic building was happily preserved when it was decommissioned. The Lane County Audubon Society has called for the formal adoption of the Agate Hall chimney as important bird habitat, and for the UO to maintain the chimney perpetually.

• **It feels like the world doesn't stop reeling.** The Russians bombing Ukraine is horrifying, as are the deaths in Venezuela from climate-change induced landslides. The protests in Iran calling for the fall of the clerical establishment over the Sept. 16 death of Mahsa Amini's while being detained by the morality police in Tehran for "inappropriate attire" give us hope for change in that country, while we are horrified by the deadly response from the Iranian government.

• **Maude Kerns Art Center has been hurting during the pandemic, which shut down its popular Art and the Vineyard summer fundraiser.** But Maude isn't sitting in the corner and pouting; this past weekend Friends of Maude brought in art pieces to contribute to "Marvelous Maude's Art Rescue Sale Fundraiser" — and the weekend sale brought in at least \$8,000. It's great to see the community step up and support the arts here in Eugene.

• **We take our obligation to do election endorsements very seriously.** Members of our editorial team interview the candidates both for the primary and general elections. Not all candidates want to be interviewed by *Eugene Weekly*. Betsy Johnson, for instance, turned us down for not being "objective." Hate to tell her, but the nature of endorsements are they are not objective given we are telling readers who to vote for. Not all newspapers are doing endorsements these days — *The Register-Guard* isn't, and that's a loss to our community. Most voters don't have the time or access to sit down with political candidates or watch or listen to every debate. It's part of our job to research and interview the candidates, then ask them the hard questions. We make our endorsements based on that. We encourage you to read our endorsements and others, as well as talk to others you trust — even those who you often disagree with. *The Oregonian/OregonLive* is doing extensive and informative endorsements, and while we don't always agree with *The O*, it's worth reading. We hope that ours will help you. Please cast your vote this November to keep this precious democracy alive.

• **Make sure you're registered to vote.** It's easy and takes a few minutes to do online at [SOS.Oregon.gov](https://sos.oregon.gov), in-person at your nearest election office or by mail. The deadline is end of day Oct. 18 at an election office or 11:59 pm Oct. 18 online.

• It's always a fun time when **Sen. Ron Wyden drops by the Eugene Weekly office — who else can talk about politics and basketball with unmatched enthusiasm?** Wyden gave us an update on some of the bills he's working on — such as My Body, My Data, which protects people seeking reproductive health care — and an update on establishing an WNBA basketball team in Portland, which he says is on the list for the league's expansion cities. And he assures us that the Portland Trailblazers won't leave town, like the Seattle SuperSonics did when it moved to Oklahoma City in 2008. "Not on my watch," he says.

• Don't let President Joe Biden's low approval ratings deceive you into thinking he hasn't done much for Americans. **We applaud his latest executive order of pardoning simple cannabis possession felonies**, urging governors to do the same and reviewing weed as a Schedule I drug. Remember, elections do have consequences.

Eugene Weekly is reaching out to the Lane County community to learn about what news topics are going uncovered.

In particular, we are seeking input from communities — low-income, rural, BIPOC, etc. — who have not historically seen themselves and what they care about being represented in our newspaper or the news in general.



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