

# slant

• **America's college football fans will look to Eugene at 12:30 pm Saturday, Sept. 23, when the Colorado Buffaloes visit the Ducks.** Oregon and Colorado are both undefeated at 3-0 and ranked in the top 20. Colorado's new coach, Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders, never met a spotlight he did not love, and the Ducks are not shy about drawing attention. *60 Minutes* called Colorado the "unlikely epicenter of college football." Can the Ducks steal the Buffs' thunder?

• **Ballots for that janky Portland-based Recall Paul Holvey campaign have been mailed. Vote "no!"** We need solid voices and votes like Holvey's in the Legislature, not petulant recall campaigns.

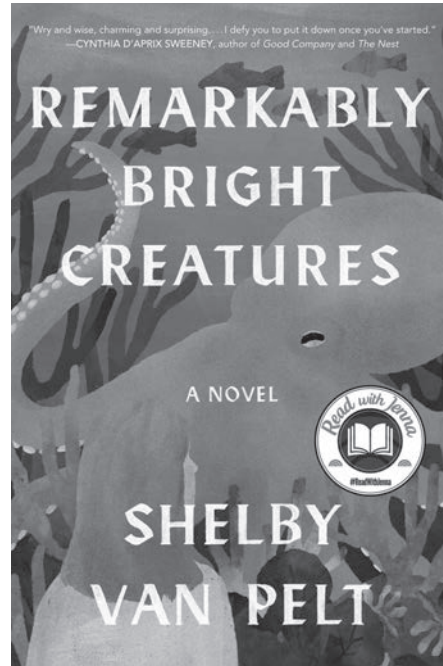
• **What we're reading:** *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt is charming, funny and heartbreaking by turn. The novel, set in Washington state — and partially narrated by a giant Pacific octopus, bringing in a waft of magical realism — looks at family, love and second, and third, chances. The audiobook version is deftly narrated for those who prefer a listen.

• **Annette Montero, a homeless woman who died in 2019 under the**

wheels of a garbage truck as she slept on the pavement in an alley in Eugene, at last got a form of justice on Sept. 15 when a jury found Sanipac — owner of the truck — to be mostly responsible for Montero's death. Sanipac's initial evasions didn't help its case, Montero's lawyers said, and the company has been ordered to pay \$360,000 to her family. Sanipac initially offered the family \$9,999, the lawyers say. That sounds depressingly like a discount price for a human life. Read about the settlement at EugeneWeekly.com.

• **The Wall Street Journal article, in print and online, "Inside Exxon's Strategy to Downplay Climate Change," should be required reading for every American.** It tells how Exxon has known for a long time the damage that fossil fuels are doing to the climate but had a strategy to downplay it. The *WSJ* says that Exxon currently plans to spend \$25 billion a year in capital expenditures through 2027, mostly on oil and gas. Ponder that the next time an unseasonable and unsustainable hot, dry day filled with wildfire smoke hits Oregon.

• **We have been asking for a parade and there's one being planned!** At 7 pm Saturday, Oct. 14, there will be a "human and electric powered parade of Eugene's unique quirk" from downtown Eugene to the 5th Street Public Market. Parade entries are being accepted through Sept. 30 and must be human



or electric-powered and can include marchers, dancers, creative lighting, costumes, bicycles, strollers, wagons, animals and musicians. Find out more at ArtCityEugene.com.

• **With Lucy Vinis' recent announcement that she will not be running for mayor again, we should think about what we want our next mayor to do.** Send us your ideas — Editor@EugeneWeekly.com — and we will put them out there for all to see, and then see what the new mayor does about them. Kaarin Knudson has thrown her hat into the ring, and you can see our story

on her candidacy at EugeneWeekly.com. An architect, city planner and former Oregon track star, she could get plenty done.

• **On Sept. 15, the state Fish and Wildlife Commission voted unanimously to prohibit wildlife killing contests for coyotes and other species classified as unprotected mammals in Oregon.** In wildlife killing contests, the participants compete for cash and prizes for killing the most, the biggest and the smallest coyotes and other wildlife within a set time period. Eugene's Cascadia Wildlands and Predator Defense were among the groups advocating for the ban.

• **Congratulations to Bill Rauch, former artistic director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival,** whose vision helped New York City's new \$500 million Perelman Performing Arts Center — where he was named inaugural artistic director in 2018 — to make its glittery debut this week at Ground Zero. Rauch, who in his decade at OSF transformed that distinguished regional theater into one known nationally, had this to say when asked by *The New York Times* whether the Big Apple now has one too many big performing arts centers: "When every man, woman and child who lives in the five boroughs of New York City has a life that is saturated in performing arts, then we can begin to talk about whether there's too much." Way to go, Bill!

## It Must Be the Climate

Small Modular Nuclear Reactors (SMRs) appear to be bringing a renaissance to the nuclear industry who brand them as durable, reliable, prefabbed and some 75 feet below ground. Although they could provide consistent base power, the proposed NuScale (located in Portland) design is the same as the Manhattan Project reactor, creating an endless life cycle of nuclear waste. This highly radioactive waste will be around for thousands of years.

Recent studies find SMRs to be more expensive per megawatt generated. Larger nuclear reactors, like the problem plagued, deactivated Trojan plant in Portland are actually more efficient and cost less per megawatt (MW). And there's a continued threat of nuclear proliferation and accidents: Three Mile Island, Fukushima and Chernobyl are all still contaminated.

Not only are SMRs more expensive, they create more waste per megawatt generated. According to the Department of Energy, existing conventional reactors already create more than 2000 metric tons of radioactive waste per year, waste that is stored onsite because no state wants to become a national depository. New Mexico just passed legislation banning nuclear waste storage as well as other states, that have or are considering similar legislation. When a nuclear reactor "goes critical", an inevitable failure, who will be certified to fix it?

Locally controlled power and storage should be the goal for EWEB and the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). The IRP standard approach to evaluating a potential energy resource is:

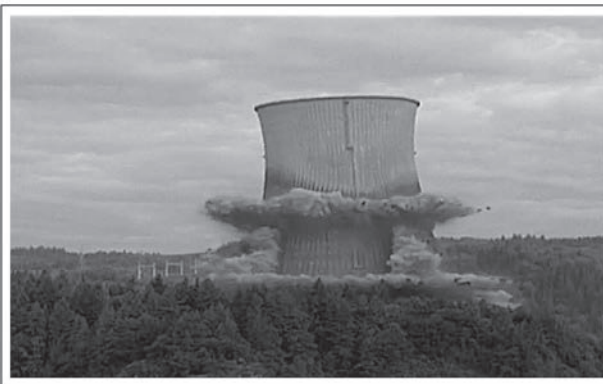
- ~ an existing and proven technology,
- ~ deliverability to the EWEB load
- ~ commercially operational today or
- ~ under contract within ten years.

No SMRs are currently operational domestically: they are forecast for 2040, their technology is experimental and their waste will outlive their productivity.

EWEB would do better to follow their evaluation process and adopt a future of renewable solar and wind with battery storage, then add geothermal over time. The technology is proven, the costs are low, and renewables are creating energy all over the world.

Jim Neu 350 Eugene

### A NUCLEAR Future? Who will Own the WASTE? Who will live next door?



The Trojan nuclear plant, the only nuclear energy facility ever operated in Oregon, still looms large in my memory 55 years after its construction began. That was in July of 1968, the summer before I started high school.

On a clear day, we could look east and see Mt. Hood or look northwest and see the Trojan tower rising above the Columbia River. Most of us Portlanders didn't become uneasy about Trojan until, just one year after the plant began operating in May of 1976, major flaws in its construction were discovered. Reports of leaks, cracks, and then flaws in its emergency cooling system made us Portland residents wary of living so close to Trojan.

Local opposition to nuclear power then grew rapidly. A combination of citizen activism and Trojan's ongoing expensive maintenance and repair issues led to its permanent closure in 1993.

Many Eugene residents, never having lived in the shadow of Trojan, know little about the history of nuclear power in Oregon. Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB), our main electric utility, has invested in nuclear power projects since the 1960s, one built and others proposed. Portland General Electric (PGE) was a two-thirds owner of the Trojan power plant and EWEB owned 30%.

A 1980 state law, wisely approved by voters, prohibits the siting and construction of nuclear power facilities in Oregon until an adequate repository for the disposal of the radioactive waste produced by these plants is found.

Oregon-based NuScale, a Small Modular Nuclear Reactor (SMR) company, supported several proposed 2023 legislative bills that would have repealed, or exempted them from the law. In the 40-plus years since the statute was passed, the nuclear waste disposal problem has not been solved.

Promotional materials for SMRs show young industry professionals gushing about a "nuclear Renaissance." None of them has had to live with a nuclear reactor tower in their community. None of them has endured a nuclear power plant accident or lived next to a nuclear waste "disposal" site.

Why is EWEB again considering an investment in Oregon-based nuclear power? Smaller nuclear plants will generate the same high-level radioactive nuclear waste as Trojan.

Concerned local residents, please contact your EWEB board members and ask them to say NO to nuclear energy. Will our state and local community learn from past mistakes with nuclear power, or will we plow headlong into a repackaged expensive and dangerous nuclear-powered future?

Sid Baum 350 Eugene



working to support a just transition to clean renewable energy for all residents.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT