

Registering to vote no small matter

In the past few weeks, University students have been bombarded with voter registration materials. The ASUO has virtually begged students to register, sending out registration cards to every in-state student and appearing all over campus with voter sign-up tables.

Add the *Emerald's* name to the list of organizations urging people to make a difference this year. This routine may be getting old for people who are already registered, but the fact is it's now or never. Oct. 13 is the last day to register for the Nov. 3 election, and this is the time to fill out a card.

The ASUO should be praised for its efforts so far. It has given registration cards to Residence Assistants at the dorms, asking them to make sure students are signed up. Fraternities and sororities have also received cards.

It has had a voter registration rally on campus, gone door-to-door in the University area on weekends, and set up booths at PLC and the library, among other places.

The results have been positive. Although the rally wasn't well attended, the ASUO estimates that more than 1,000 new voters have been registered through various methods since its campaign began. More are expected in the stretch drive before the registration deadline.

If you haven't signed up yet, there is no good reason not to. Oregon allows every resident 18 and older to register to vote, even if that person has only lived in the state for one day.

Many people argue that their vote won't make a difference. But millions of individual votes decide elections every year. One vote means just as much as the next. And people can't claim they don't care about the nation because this year's issues affect everyone.

The economy, health care, education, societal values, the deficit, the timber industry, AIDS — these concern every citizen, no matter which side of the debate an individual falls on.

People who claim they don't like any of the choices offered should at least analyze the issues closely. Maybe they will find an option that is minimally offensive.

Essentially, the opportunity to vote is a privilege, not a burden. African-Americans and women spent years trying to achieve that privilege. Not voting is tantamount to mocking the right they spent so many years to gain.

Besides, if you don't vote, you have no right to complain about the direction of the country. If the President angers you, you shouldn't say a word. If you don't participate, your opinion is worthless.

VERMIN'S SECRETS TO BLISS # 341: more EUPHEMISMS!

YES, EUPHEMISMS! NOTHING WORKS BETTER TO TURN THOSE FROWNS UPSIDES-DOWNS! NEXT TIME YOU'RE BLUE, TRY A FEW!

INSTEAD OF...	SAY...
PERSECUTION	FAMILY VALUES
HOMO-GENOCIDE	FAMILY VALUES
MISOGYNY	FAMILY VALUES
WITCH HUNT FOR THE 90s	FAMILY VALUES
WIFE-BEATING LEGITIMIZED	FAMILY VALUES

I'M SO HAPPY NOW THAT I'VE DISCOVERED EUPHEMISMS!

LOUDER!

COMMENTARY

Controversy suits OCA just fine

By Darrell W. Fuller

Imagine a miserably humid day during a hot summer on the East Coast. A group of 55 men have gathered in a small meeting room that lacks electricity, let alone air conditioning. Making matters worse, the windows are shut and locked. The doors are also locked shut. Outside the building, guards are posted.

What could possibly be so controversial? What can these 55 religious, sexist, intolerant, Euro-centric men be doing? What nefarious plan are they hatching, shrouded in secrecy and controversy?

These men are writing the United States Constitution. The year is 1787. The location is Philadelphia. The eldest statesman is Benjamin Franklin at 81 years old. The youngest delegate is Jonathan Dayton, who attended at the tender age of 26.

Some leaders of the newly independent colonies have decided that the Articles of Confederation, under which they are currently governed, need amending to successfully keep the colonies united.

Rather than amend the Articles of Confederation, these 55 men take it upon themselves to write a new document, a controversial document that will forever change history. Had the colonists learned that these men were creating a new, strong central government such a short time after their revolution from an all-powerful central government, they would never have been allowed to complete the Constitution.

What's the purpose of telling this age-old story from a Paul Harvey "Rest-of-the-Story" angle? Well, today, in Oregon, another group of men (and women) are labeled as controversial. While most people shrink from the brand, they do not. They — the leadership of the Oregon Citizens Alliance — wear "controversy" like a badge of courage.

History is not just full of controversial people. History is controversial people. Everyone

you read about in today's history texts were controversial during their lifetimes. Christopher Columbus thought the world was round despite the overwhelming "scientific" evidence of the day. The radical (nay, revolutionary) colonists opposed taxation without representation despite the wrath of "respected" government leaders.

It is not difficult to (hypothetically) picture Thomas Jefferson tending to his farm when a neighbor stops by to warn him, "Don't have anything to do with that radical bunch talking about independence. They're extremely controversial in town." The authors and signers of the aforementioned U.S. Constitution saw the necessity of a stronger central government at a time when central governments, especially monarchies, were not in good repute by American colonists.

Abraham Lincoln opposed slavery on moral grounds. Just imagine this hypothetical discussion between President Lincoln and one of his advisers who admonishes him not to take action, saying, "Sure, I'm opposed to slavery, too, but what right do we have to impose our morality on others by creating an Emancipation Proclamation? You know, Abe, freeing the slaves will be very controversial in the South."

Martin Luther King Jr. believed passionately in racial equality, saying he wanted his children to, "... not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." This action leaves one to wonder if Dr. King would consider sexually deviant thoughts and actions, like homosexuality, as a part of one's character on which judgments can fairly be made.

Each of these people were extremely controversial in their own time for taking a stand. Lon Mabon and the OCA leadership are in good company. It is, perhaps, unfortunate that there are not more controversial people in America today.

The most controversial figure in world history was the Christ

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child, Jesus of Nazareth. Whether or not Oregonians believe him to be the Son of God is beside the point. He was, and still is, the most controversial person in history — controversial before his birth, controversial during his short human life and controversial since his crucifixion. Those who purport to be Christians are instructed to follow Christ's example. In other words, Christians are supposed to be controversial (or, in Biblical terms, "salt of the earth"). Perhaps being controversial isn't such a bad thing after all.

So, love or loathe Mabon, Scott Lively, Loretta Neet and the many other leaders and supporters of the OCA, Oregonians should at least recognize that they are principled men and women driven not by a desire for fame or fortune, but by a desire to do what is right, to stand for something in the face of overwhelming odds, slanderous talk and death threats.

Jefferson, Lincoln, King, and yes, Mabon of the OCA — patriots one and all. There is an old Russian proverb that states, "A man ahead of his time often has to wait in uncomfortable quarters." It has never been easy to be principled, just ask Mabon. Is it worth the effort? Just ask anyone who enjoys "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

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