

CONTACTING US

NEWSROOM: (541) 346-5511
E-MAIL: ode@oregon.uoregon.edu
ONLINE EDITION: www.uoregon.edu/~ode

ADDRESS: Oregon Daily Emerald
 P.O. BOX 3159
 Eugene, Oregon 97403

PERSPECTIVES

Finishing a century of success



Today's newspaper is a document for the record books. Just above the green stripe on the front page is something a little unusual: Volume 100, Issue 1. It marks the first issue of the Oregon Daily Emerald's 100th year of existence.

In day-to-day work, newspapers serve communities small and large all over the world. They provide news, entertainment, a forum for public opinion and dozens of other services. In short, newspapers are often the community cornerstone.

For a century, the Oregon Daily Emerald has worked to achieve this on a diverse campus by documenting activities at the University and throughout the surrounding community. It has also provided a strong voice of reason, often asserting its independence from the University in editorials decades before the newspaper officially became independent.

The significance of today's edition gives the Emerald a chance to tell its own story, which began on Feb. 12, 1900, with Volume 1, Number 1. It was founded by the Eutaxian, Laorean and Philologian Societies on campus and originally named The Oregon Weekly. The ASUO took over the newspaper at the start of the following school year and kept control until 1952. Still under the ASUO, the newspaper's name changed to the Oregon Emerald in 1909, and it began publishing five days a week in 1920 as the Oregon Daily Emerald.

Through the years, the Emerald's editorial board took sides on many controversial issues. In the 1950s, the Emerald took a staunch stand against the practices of Wisconsin Senator Joe McCarthy. The board was surprised when the reaction it received was from students who thought the Emerald had not gone far enough in denouncing McCarthy.

This kind of determination and self-reliance led directly into one of the newspaper's proudest moments. On April 8, 1971, the Student Publication Board was abolished and the Emerald became independent. Two months

later, the Oregon Daily Emerald Board of Directors created Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Company, Inc., a company financially and legally separate from the University.

Currently located in Suite 300, a rented office high atop the EMU, and more than a quarter of a century after gaining its independence, the Emerald earns more than 80 percent of its revenues from the sale of local, national and classified advertising. Only about 17 percent of the revenue comes from a bulk student subscription of 10,000 copies daily.

About 40 student newsroom staffers collaborate on each edition of the Emerald every day during the school year. The advertising, classifieds, business and production departments have also trained hundreds of students for a variety of experiences in the world. Emerald alumni have landed jobs as diverse as chief of Caribbean services for the Associated Press and executive editor of The Seattle Times. The Emerald has provided the country with hundreds of award-winning, well-trained journalists.

Like any news medium, the Emerald has taken its lumps over the last century, which is inevitable on a student newspaper because of the high turnover. But the employees truly do follow the Emerald bylaws, which state, "Professional journalistic principles of objectivity, accuracy, fairness and balance shall guide the editorial staff's decisions about news and editorial content." This is evident because after 100 years the newspaper is still here, and respect for newspapers is often built on little more than reputation.

The newspaper business survived the inventions of radio and television, and it is now adapting to the Internet. By remaining involved in campus and community activities, the Oregon Daily Emerald has secured its niche and maintained its reputation as a fair and relevant campus publication. The next century should be filled with just as much success.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Speeches incoherent

An open letter to 1997-98 ASUO President and Vice President Bill Miner and Ben Unger:

Did you misunderstand the concept of a commencement speech? Oh yeah, "Let's make the graduation ceremony just a little uglier and longer." Plus, since you long ago lost the respect of the students, you just decided to burn your bridges with all the professors and the HIPs in the audience? I can't wait to hear the reply from potential employers when you guys go in for job: "Sure, I'd love to hire you, but since you don't want to be a part of the 'monster that is corporate business' we're just going to pay you ten percent. Also, a couple of college graduates like yourselves should get executive-track jobs, but obviously you

want to work on the assembly line down in the sweat shop."

Remember next time, there are times to be idiots, and really wrong times to be idiots. Your speech wasn't brave, if that's what you think. It was incoherent, babbling, nonsensical nonsense. Some good points amazingly found their way in, prompting surprised applause, because we were expecting the other kind of speech — you know, the good kind. My section, however, was filled with boos, hisses, and the occasional "go home" or "shut up."

What a way to go out. Terrific job. Good luck with your lives, Bill and Ben. You're going to need it.

Dayna Terry
English

Discussion needed

The Thurston High School shooting has created space for a wide-ranging discussion to take place in our communities about how best we keep our culture safe from unintended gun violence. In particular, we must generate ways to keep our children and young people safe. The fact that the Thurston shooting was not even the sole incidence of gun violence in a school setting on May 21 underscores this even further.

Without question, firearms have a place in American culture. They will continue to do so, whether the purpose is for the defense of civil society, for sport and recreation, or even for subsistence. As a society built on civil liberties and responsibilities, however, it is increasingly clear that we all

have a role to play. We must create community norms that keep weapons of any size or shape from falling into the hands of those who may misuse them — especially those who are not equipped by reason of age or ability to judge correct from incorrect use of a firearm.

For this reason, I heartily endorse three things: First, continued dialogue in each of our communities around unintended gun violence; second, support of the "Let It End Here" campaign or campaigns like it; and third, removal or monitoring of influences that tend to teach violence in our homes.

May we continue to learn which road we must follow. And may we listen carefully to one another, for the sake of all our children.

Rev. Stephen Mathison-Bowie
Eugene

Oregon Daily Emerald

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NEWSROOM — 541.346.5511

Editor in chief: Michael Hines
Associate Editors: Rob Moseley, Leanne Nelms
Photo Editor: Laura Goss
Webmaster: Broc Nelson
Design Assistant: Kiley Arroyo
Reporters: Peter Breden, Amy Goldhammer

ADVERTISING — 541.346.3712

Becky Merchant, *director*. Rachele Bowden, Leigh-Ann Cyboron, Dan Hageman, Doug Hentges, Andy Lakefish, Justice Rhodes, Erick Schiess, Ryan von Klein, Emily Wallace.

CLASSIFIEDS — 541.346.4343

Anne Nielsen, *manager*.

BUSINESS — 541.346.5512

General Manager: Judy Riedl
Business: Kathy Carbone, *business supervisor*. Melanie Jones, *receptionist*.
Distribution: John Long, Peter Breden

PRODUCTION — 541.346.4381

Michele Ross, *manager*. Tara Sloan, *coordinator*. Laura Daniel

