

## Fall term 2000: This was your life, for better or worse

Why would anyone on campus want to re-live the fall school term? The Emerald editorial board certainly doesn't care to slog through the entire 10 weeks, so here we offer synopses of what we consider to be the top five stories of the term.

### The never-ending election

Al Gore? George W. Bush? Let's just appoint Dan Quayle to the president's office for the remainder of December; after the last month of legal and political wrangling, the American people need a laugh or two. At the campus and local level, the ASUO busted tail to get scads of students registered to vote, and sanity prevailed in just enough Oregon voters' minds to defeat Measure 9, the anti-gay directive put forth by the Oregon Citizens' Alliance. Overall, however, it's the national election that will be discussed and dissected by future generations.

### FLA vs. the WRC

University President Dave Frohnmayer signed on with the Fair Labor Association in mid-September, then he took a big step back from the Worker Rights Consortium in late October when the University refused to pay dues to the group, a decision based on some vague legal issues. Students, faculty, adminis-

trators and alumni chimed in with their various opinions and one request seemed to arise from all parties: Make a friggin' decision already, Dave! If the WRC isn't a viable labor monitoring group in your opinion, then pull out completely. If the FLA is your choice, tell us. Oh yeah, and we recommend that you let your decision come from the heart and mind, not the wallet.

### Oregon football

The Ducks are headed, appropriately enough for this particular Emerald issue, to the Holiday Bowl. That news is actually a disappointment in some ways, following a near-miraculous run the Ducks had toward the Rose Bowl. A loss in the Civil War smashed those plans, though, and put the hated Washington Huskies in Pasadena. Oregon State—apparently in a deal with Satan himself—is headed to the Fiesta Bowl, to play God's team, Notre Dame. All in all, the 2000 football season should go down as one of the most exciting in Oregon history.

### Police response fee

The Eugene Police Party Patrol issued its first batch of response fee warning notices this past weekend at two campus-area gatherings. Good to see that the response fee isn't geared toward students, right? Of course,

the City Council and EPD have both stated all along that the fee is not, repeat not, biased toward the student population. Yet, when was the last time that the Party Patrol cruised the South Hills or the River Road area in search of an unruly crowd? Kudos again to the ASUO for at least softening the burden on those residents who are hit with a fine.

### Flu vaccine shortage

Health centers across the land, including the University's, are facing a severe shortage of this year's influenza vaccine due to problems vaccine manufacturer Wyeth-Ayerst had developing one of the new flu strains. The shortage has affected the campus and the community, leading to a nervous medical community that hopes for a delayed cold season. If you haven't yet received your shot, and would be considered at-risk, i.e. suffering from diabetes, asthma or a weak immune system, among other ailments, get it now, before the holiday break.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.



Giovanni Salimena Emerald

## Use the Golden Mean to make this holiday break less stressful



### LONE VOICE IN THE WOODS

BRET JACOBSON

Aristotle had a neat little notion when he described the Golden Mean. Maybe it's an idea that should be practiced a bit this holiday season, instead of the normal amount of insane chatter and anxiousness that too often invades what should be the merriest time of the year. The main thrust of the theory, of course, is to tackle every situation by avoiding both excess and deficiency in one's behavior. Not

a common notion nowadays, when sensationalism is worshipped as the national religion and television magazine shows pull in more ratings than real, hard news. Time and again during the last year or two, the idea of blessed moderation has been tested, and although too often ignored, it was ultimately vindicated. There was the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal that divided the country, the ridiculous events surrounding a little Cuban refugee and the unnecessarily heated debate during the current presidential election snafu. All these events should have been dealt with in a calmer, more reasonable manner. Instead, they were allowed to boil over into divisive nightmares. The same processes apply during the holidays. All too often, moms and dads bloat

Turn to Jacobson, page 3A

## Christmas past has more to do with Romans than reindeer



### CAPTAIN SENSIBLE

PAT PAYNE

So, you think you know the whole story of Christmas, do you? All about how Santa Claus (tm), in a sleigh pulled by eight tiny sheep, followed the Star of the North Pole to give frankincense, myrrh and three golden wise men to the Christ child, while he lit the eighth candle on the menorah and a bit of incense to Saturn and ... OK, so maybe I was a little off on the ac-

count. Sue me. But what that fractured fairy tale is supposed to illustrate is that Christmas didn't just come, fully formed, with either Christianity or commercialism. Not by a long shot. Christmas, the holiday as we know it, actually dates from the fourth century A.D., when Pope Julius I decreed that Dec. 25 would be the official celebration of Christ's birth. But why the 25th day? This brings us into a tale of competing religions amid the disintegrating Roman Empire. By the 300s, the Empire was officially Christian after the conversion of Emperor Constantine I. Of course, even though the emperor had converted, much of the empire worshipped the old polytheistic religion of its ancestors.

Turn to Payne, page 3A

## Looking ahead to the sights and sounds of this Christmas season



### SCRIBBLES OF SANITY

JAYNA BERGERSON

For some people, Christmas is not Christmas without a funky-looking plastic snowman or Santa Claus perched on the front lawn glowing at everyone that passes. Several strings of blinking lights twist around the house, drip from the eaves and engulf the bushes. There must be a fragrant wreath on the door and

an evergreen tree buried in bulbs, lights, tinsel and bows in the living room. Oh, and the music. The soft melodic sounds of Frank Sinatra or Bing Crosby play endlessly on the sound system. Then it is Christmas. A Christmas that lasts until everything is taken down and stored away in boxes until the next year. "What about presents?" squeals another large portion of the population, mainly composed of kids. Those brightly colored packages with the huge bows that sit calmly beneath the tree. They wait for that day when they will be ripped open and their contents spilled onto the floor to be viewed

Turn to Bergerson, page 3A

## It's tough to say 'bah humbug' to all the December celebrations



### DIARY OF A MALCONTENT

MICHAEL J. KLECKNER

Originally, this was supposed to be a "bah humbug" column. I wasn't just going to write the usual rant about overconsumerism or the increase in drunken driving incidents and familial dysfunction during December. I wanted to demand a little understanding to-

ward people (myself included) who don't partake in holiday festivities and who resent it when others say they're scrooges. I still think a little less pressure to celebrate would be nice. I don't want to be looked at funnily when I explain that I'm not sending cards or going to parties or making cookies. But my emotions get tangled at this time of year. It goes something like this: None of the holidays in December are for me. It's not my spiritual style to focus my goodwill on one month, and Norman Rockwell depictions are not my aesthetic. But I get a warm feeling whenever I hear Bing Crosby singing "Come

Turn to Kleckner, page 3A