

COMMENTARY

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Editorial

Solar panel project sets good example

It is a modest start but one that is definitely commendable.

Last week, a group of University administrators, faculty and students came together to discuss their plans for solar panels, which are planned to help power the EMU. This is a worthy example of the potential in putting student zeal to good use.

Students Jocelyn Eisenberg and Ben Gates came up with the original concept of solar panels for the EMU in a pitch to earn \$100,000 of surplus funds from the ASUO. Those funds will now go toward the panels, and the Eugene Water and Electric Board has already offered to donate funds for designing the panels and to purchase the power they produce.

They are confident that in the next few years the panels will be able to save the University a tremendous amount in reduced energy costs.

However, just as the 30 kilowatts that the panels are expected to produce are only a small percentage of the total power the EMU uses, the creativity of these students is just a small percentage of the total amount of brain power here on campus.

Despite the fact that many students have a few years to go before they receive a diploma, most are capable enough to offer some beneficial contributions to campus life. There must be hundreds of students here in Eugene who can be put to good use by the University or the city to improve the quality of life for all.

To truly reap the benefits of the enthusiasm and energy of students, the University and the city need to both respect what students want, but also maintain what they believe are important goals. Students need to deal with city and University officials respectfully, but also retain their desires. A good example of this relationship appears to be in progress with the planning of the solar panels.

National pressure should put issue in perspective

Maybe if the University administration does not particularly want to listen to local broadcasters and community members, it may lend an ear to three national organizations. The Radio Television News Directors Association, the Society of Professional Journalists and the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press re-

cently sent a joint letter to the University's top administrators asking them to end consideration of a new policy that would severely limit the amount of footage from Duck football games that could be aired.

While it is the right of the University to protect its legitimate property, it is also its responsibility as a publicly funded institution of higher learning to respect the freedom of the press. Not only is the University attempting to regulate how Duck games are covered, it is also threatening news organizations with the loss of access to athletic events if broadcasters do not play by its rules. These are not issues that should be a concern just to those within the news business, but also to anyone who has an interest in the University.

This new criticism should show the University that what it is trying to accomplish is a mistake. Its heavy-handed dealing with the press only gives the University an arrogant and overbearing image that will hurt both its fan base and the long sought-after national reputation.

IntroDUCKtion a pleasant reminder of university's promise

After being on campus for more than a couple of years, students begin to lose some of the naivete of youth. From being on campus through several terms of both stress and frivolity, most students begin to think of what will come next when they take that plunge into the professional world.

During the past few days, many incoming freshmen have been visiting campus as part of the annual IntroDUCKtion program, and it has been a pleasant reminder for student veterans of how they were when they arrived on campus for the first time. The uncertainty and trepidation mixed with an intoxicating dose of liberation and the ripe promise of new experiences.

It is refreshing to not see students numbly lurching through the routine motions of campus life, but rather full of eagerness at the thought of which classes to take and what activities to join. Every time one sees a new student having his or her picture taken with a parent in front of the University of Oregon sign near Oregon Hal it is a welcome return to when the promise of university life was nearly too large to fully comprehend.

This editorial represents the views of the Emerald's editor in chief and does not necessarily represent the views of the Oregon Daily Emerald.

Drinking age doesn't make sense

When presidential daughter Jenna Bush was caught last May trying to use a fake ID to get into a Texas bar, my heart went out to her.

Of course, like everyone else who heard this story, I did have to wonder just what was going through Jenna's head not to realize that the several Secret Service agents accompanying her would be a dead giveaway to her true identity.



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But still, it seemed unfair to me that she should have to take so much heat from the media — and probably worse from her dad, Dubya — for doing something that just about every college student has tried at one point or another.

At least, I know I did — and probably more than most. My own experience with fake IDs began when I was about the same age as Jenna Bush when her troubles started.

It was the summer after my freshman year of college, and along with four friends, I was working as a nanny in New Canaan, Conn.

We may have spent our days there chasing toddlers and stain-treating Kool-Aid spills, but at night we

would put on our party clothes and head out to the bar strip in the working-class town a few miles away.

Our tickets into those less-than-reputable establishments were the fake Alabama state driver's licenses we had proudly purchased in a New York City shop our second week there.

With our photographs laminated onto cards complete with driver's regulations printed on the back and a hologram on the front, they looked as good as the real thing — at least as long as you didn't look at the uneven edges too closely.

But despite a few minor imperfections — and the fact that we were five girls from Oregon with about as much of a Southern accent as Hugh Grant — my first fake ID still managed to pass inspection for several months before it was taken away from me in a bar in Eugene.

Not one to give up easily, for the next year and a half I used just about any kind of ID I could get my hands on — IDs of friends, friends of friends, even an expired license someone found on a bathroom floor. I'd use them until they got lost or confiscated, but another one always came along.

They never looked like me, but it didn't seem to matter. Most of the time bouncers were kind, and if they weren't, well, the humiliation of having an ID snatched out of my hands never bothered me for long.

Name, address, birth date ... until I turned 21 a few months ago, it

was my nightly mantra.

Looking back on my fake ID days now, I realize that the lengths I went to just to get into a bar were probably more than a little ridiculous.

But what seemed even more ridiculous to me then — and still does now — is that it was against the law just to go out and have a few drinks with friends.

Why is it that a person in this country can legally assume the huge responsibilities of marriage or owning a firearm at the age of 18, but is not considered responsible enough to have a beer until the age of 21?

If the law doesn't seem to make sense, then it should come as no surprise that it doesn't work, either — especially on college campuses where younger students can easily obtain alcohol from older classmates.

There is no way to eliminate underage drinking, and maybe it isn't even the real problem. After all, what's worse, freshman dorm parties and fake IDs? Or drunk-driving accidents and deaths from alcohol poisoning?

Alcohol abuse is a problem, but the way to prevent it is through education, not by punishing young people for drinking.

And until the law is changed to reflect that, few college students are going to take it seriously. Not even the president's daughter.

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Editorial roundup

Here's a look at the editorials of campus papers across the nation.

Murder in Genoa

Daily Texan
(University of Texas-Austin)

AUSTIN, Texas — Carlo Giuliani is hardly the first victim of globalization, far from the first casualty of the centralization of the world's power in the hands of a few. Graveyards across the planet are full of people who have died in the name of democracy and culture — two concepts that are increasingly incompatible with the expansion of Western-led industrialism and finance.

Still, throwing the fire extinguisher at a vehicle that could have easily sped away should not be grounds for an instant execution. Although Giuliani chose not to join the other nonviolent protesters, he should be alive today, dealing with a police citation. Instead, Giuliani was murdered in the streets by Italian police so disgusted with his kind, and what they represent, that they chose to back their van over his already lifeless, crumpled corpse.

Crossing new frontiers

Daily Illini
(University of Illinois)

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Rhode Island quietly added itself to the list of states protecting sexual identity as a civil right. There are now three states that extend civil rights protections to transsexuals and cross-dressers.

It's a shame more states haven't followed their lead. It's even more of a shame we have to be making laws banning discrimination. By now it should be a given. Nobody

should be discriminated against. Not women, not minorities, not gays, not white males. It's no different with transsexuals and cross-dressers. They should not be kept from being hired because of their sexual identity, and they shouldn't be fired because of it.

Eudora Welty: a true Mississippi treasure

Daily Mississippian
(University of Mississippi)

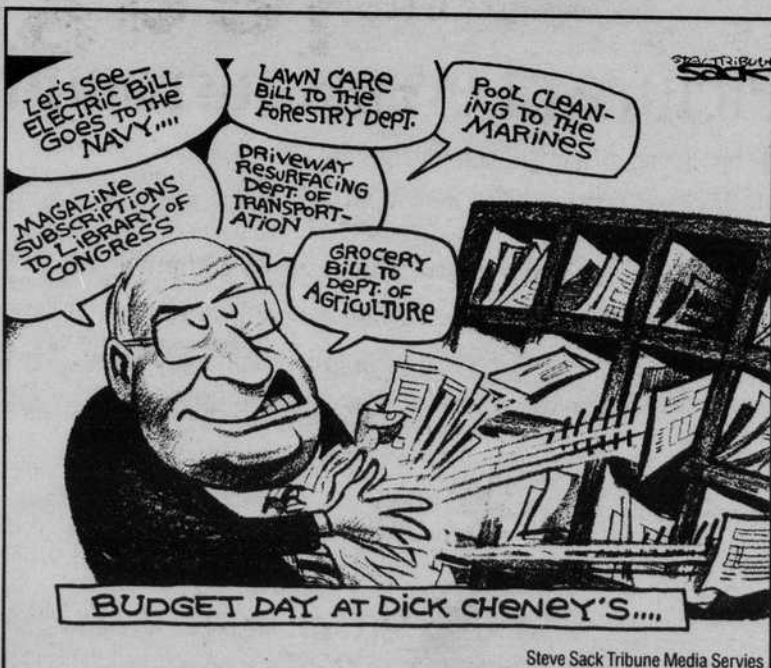
OXFORD, Miss. — Unfortunately, when it rains, it pours. In the last year, some of Mississippi's national treasures passed into history. From Willie Morris in 2000 to last month's passing of John Lee Hooker, we as natives have undergone great losses and face yet another.

es and face yet another.

The incomparable Eudora Welty's passing Monday marks another great Mississippian lost to the world. While Welty lived out a full 92 years, it doesn't make it any easier for literary critics, writers, professors and book lovers alike to take her passing.

Full of character and life and never without an intelligent and distinctly Welty comment, Eudora will not be missed as a Mississippian, but as a great author and personality nationwide. Much like Morris, Barry Hannah and William Faulkner, Welty's work painted a landscape distinctly Mississippian but accessible to readers everywhere.

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