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# COMMENTARY

Friday, February 14, 2003

Editorial

## Quacks & smacks

**Quacks** to the pro-Bush demonstrators. They've finally come out in a cohesive manner to present their side of the war debate, and everyone is well-served by more voices joining the discussion.

**Smacks** to Fox for booting "American Idol" contestant Frenchelle Davis after it was discovered she appeared topless on a pornographic Web site. Since when is something too raunchy for Fox? This is not a network entitled to pass moral judgment.

**Quacks** to the anti-war demonstrators for championing the loyal opposition to war. This is a life-and-death issue, and more people should be out in the streets about it.

**Smacks** to House Speaker Dennis Hastert, who thinks we should ban French and German products such as Perrier, Evian and French wine because they haven't agreed to Bush's war plans for Iraq. Come on, stop acting like children on a playground. What next, will Bush give Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder the "silent treatment"?

**Quacks** to Holy Cow Cafe, for their "plate club" program. The cafe is (pardon the expression) killing three birds with one stone: It cuts down on the disposable trash generated by the EMU food court, it keeps the Folk Festival plates from taking up storage space, and by renting the plates from the ASUO, it generates some cash for the student government.

**Smacks** to the idea of "date auctions," of either gender, by any group, even for charity. Even though the dates are platonic, it still sends the wrong message: That humans are pieces of meat to be sold.

**Quacks** to the University for new student numbers on the ID cards. Identity theft is a real possibility, and we commend the University for taking social security numbers off the cards.

**Smacks** to the University for waiting so long to take social security numbers off the ID cards. This was a dumb idea from the beginning. At this point, it's a little like locking the barn door after the horse ran away.

## Editorial policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words.



Peter Utsey Emerald

## 'Campus buzz' offers greater public service

Like many other newspapers, the Emerald considers public service to be its main function. Exposing facts that would otherwise be hidden, writing about issues, trends and controversies that come up in daily life, printing information about the democratic process, and telling the public about community events — these are some of the different topics we consider when deciding what to cover as news.

The first three categories are relatively easy to handle; we use our "news filters" and assign the story a priority. Unfortunately, the last category — telling people about community events — can be harder to filter, especially on a campus as active as the University's. We simply don't have the space in the paper or the full-time staff to cover every brown bag discussion, every student group meeting or every departmental guest lecture.

The editors here struggle daily

with what parameters to use in deciding which events to cover: How many students are involved, how important is the topic, how prominent is the guest speaker, etc. But still, we can't publish everything.

As an attempt to ease this situation, I am happy to re-introduce an event-listings feature in the paper. Beginning Monday, we will print "Campus buzz," a daily list of what's happening on campus. Our intention is to set aside a space where we can publish public notice of events that otherwise might not receive any coverage. In order to do this, though, we need your help: Tell us about your events!



Michael J. Kleckner  
 The editor's office

We will accept "Campus buzz" submissions at the Emerald front desk (Suite 300, EMU), by fax (346-5821) or by e-mail (campusbuzz@dailyemerald.com). Here are the guidelines for submitting events for publication:

- Please include a description of the event, location, date, time, cost, phone number and contact person (tell us if you would like the phone number and contact name published).
- The Emerald will attempt to print as many event listings as possible. However, space limitations and priority will be taken into consideration. Submission does not guarantee publication.
- First priority is given to one-time, free events happening on campus that are sponsored by a student organization or University department.
- Lower priority is given to events that are not free, that are not unique or one-time occurrences, that are not happening on campus

and that are not sponsored by campus organizations.

• Listings are published Monday through Friday for the following day's events. For example, Tuesday's event listings are published on Monday. Friday listings will include events happening on weekends as well as Mondays.

• Submissions for events will be considered only if they are received by noon two business days before the event. Example: A Tuesday event listing must be received by noon Friday.

• Listings may be run only once per submission; ongoing events must be resubmitted each time they occur.

We hope this feature will be useful to students and to groups on campus. Watch out for the "Campus buzz," and make sure to let us know when your group is sponsoring an event.

Contact the editor in chief at editor@dailyemerald.com.

## Letters to the editor

### Who pays the greatest price for Measure 28?

I would like to respond to Kelly Flynn's letter to the editor entitled "Voters must hold Salem fiscally responsible" (ODE, Feb. 5). In his letter, Flynn urges Oregonians to open their eyes and realize that the Oregon Legislature has wasted money and is thus responsible for Oregon's budget woes.

I am quite certain that the decision for Oregonians over Measure 28 had little to do with whose shoulders the blame for Oregon's budget deficit should fall on. Much like Flynn, I think it is time that we "acknowledge a collective need to stand together and hold the real culprits responsible." Unfortunately, I did not see that measure on the ballot.

Flynn is correct that Measure 28 is only a band-aid used to cover up the real problem of irresponsible politicians residing in Salem. However, what he and the majority of Oregonians failed to realize was that in their attempt to bring the "real culprits" to justice, they managed to ensure that it is our public school children who will pay the greatest price, rather than the tax-paying voters who elected those politicians in the first place.

Zach Cuda  
 first-year graduate  
 educational leadership

### Taxpayers should have war options

White House economists have projected the cost of a military campaign in Iraq, and the ensuing occupation, to be at least \$100 billion. These experts have comfortingly reassured us that our economy can afford this price tag. Whether our uninsured, our homeless, our disabled and our schoolchildren can afford it is, apparently, another matter.

This sum can be better understood as roughly \$350 for every American, or \$1,400 for a family of four. Unlike the economists, I appreciate what a difference \$1,400 could make for

millions of American families. Therefore, I propose that every American taxpayer be given the option of waging war against Iraq, or receiving a \$350 refund.

This new plan could take effect retroactive to 2002. It'd be a relatively small matter compared with invading another country to print and distribute new tax forms well ahead of April 15. A new line could be added asking whether or not we want to be refunded \$350 per family member from the "Attack Iraq" Treasury Department fund.

About 15 percent of American families live at or below the poverty level, which currently is only \$18,100 for a family of four. Given a choice between war and receiving \$1,400 from the government, my bet is that most of these impoverished families would choose the money.

I might be mistaken. Perhaps there are many Americans who might feel that their \$350 would be better spent installing puppet governments. Some Americans are funny that way.

Todd Huffman  
 Eugene