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COMMENTARY

Monday, June 7, 2004

EDITORIAL

Emerald gives credit to year's biggest stories

The top 10 stories of the year, as determined by the Emerald Editorial Board:

10. **The winter storm.** Students came back to school from winter break to sheets of ice. It was the zaniest weather we have seen in this great state of bizarre weather patterns.

9. **ASUO.** Many, many editorials have been published exposing the abhorrent state of ASUO this year. From the chief justice of the ASUO Constitution Court calling former ASUO President Maddy Melton unfit for office to former Vice President Eddy Morales accusing ASUO Student Senators of racism for disagreeing with one another, we can say, without a doubt, that the Melton/Morales administration was the worst we've ever seen.

8. **Neil Goldschmidt hired, retired.** Former Gov. Neil Goldschmidt did a lot for this state during his political career, but he tainted his legacy with a despicable act: He admitted to having sex with a 14-year-old girl while he was mayor of Portland 30 years ago. We stand by our earlier opinion on this, which was "thanks for your public service, but good riddance, and seek help."

7. **Campus improvements.** This year was great for making the campus — visually and structurally — a better place. The Lillis Business Complex opened, which utilizes cutting-edge technology for energy efficiency and is just an all-around architectural feat. Also, the college of education received a sizable grant to expand its building, which will make a nationally renowned program even better.

6. **The Department of Public Safety.** It was a rough year for DPS. Last summer, a former DPS officer used his vehicle to drive on the sidewalk and pursue a "suspect" who was on a bicycle. The officer collided with the "suspect," who wasn't actually doing anything illegal, and — long story short — an internal DPS document concluded that the officer had committed misconduct.

5. **DPS, part two.** Then, around the same time as the pursuit debacle, the City of Eugene basically said: Hey, DPS, an officer on your payroll just demonstrated a serious defect in judgment that opened the University up to a potential lawsuit. *We're gonna have to expand your powers!* And with that, the Eugene City Council gave DPS the right to issue municipal citations.

4. **New basketball arena.** Given the strange and troubling set of arena decisions that have taken place, the administration is clearly implementing the following confusing process: Spend a lot of money choosing a site; spend a lot of money developing preliminary plans; decide the arena will cost too much money; scrap it and build it later when it will likely cost more money.

3. **Measure 30.** Once upon a time there was a state called Oregon, which had one of the worst economies in the nation. The deeply divided Legislature had to decide whether to raise taxes or make spending more efficient, but like small children the lawmakers just whined a lot. So the tax-increase decision was sent to voters, who had already rejected a similar measure, and Measure 30 was born. The voters, understandably angry that the people they elected can't get anything done, soundly rejected the measure. In related news, tuition is set to increase by 12 percent next year.

2. **Same-sex marriage.** Oregon made state history this year by granting its first same-sex marriage. Although we were never able to reach a consensus about the issue — some of us wanted to abolish government-sanctioned marriage altogether, some of us supported same-sex marriage and some of us liked the idea of domestic partnerships — we couldn't deny the significance of the event.

1. **Iraq war.** Look, few are denying that Saddam Hussein was a ruthless dictator who spat in the face of every democratic ideal in existence. But what really made us leery about the war was the faulty justification used by the Bush administration (links to terrorism, then weapons of mass destruction, then ...). In the meantime, soldiers continue to die fighting a guerrilla war with no clear end in sight.

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You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we will sentence them to take the first step into a thousand years of darkness. If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done.

— Ronald Reagan

Eric Layton Illustrator

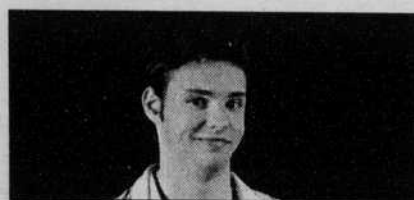
Was it as good for you as it was for us?

As you thumb through the pages of today's Emerald, you'll be viewing the work of one remarkably talented staff. We've spent the past year working to provide the campus community with news that is both entertaining and useful, with a definite focus on the latter.

The year started with a bang; in the summer, the Emerald first told readers that a Department of Public Safety officer had struck a bicyclist with his vehicle. We followed the story in an effort to better understand what transpired. We filed an Oregon Public Records request and, in October, were able to tell readers what they may have not otherwise known: The DPS officer was found guilty of misconduct. In the months since, DPS has undertaken a sweeping review of its pursuit policy.

Later in October, the Emerald informed readers that Howe Field was selected to house the new athletic arena. Were it not for the Emerald, readers would have missed hearing about a leak at Autzen Stadium that caused about \$200,000 worth of damage. Readers wouldn't have found out that outgoing CIA Director George Tenet secretly visited campus to speak to various academic dignitaries from across the country. And, most importantly, readers never would have discovered that their ASUO Vice President, Eddy Morales, was charged with assaulting a woman after a night of drinking at Taylor's Bar and Grill.

In November, the Emerald was the first to report that campus alcohol violations



Brad Schmidt
 Of chief concern

increased an alarming 171 percent. We told you that Oregon University System Chancellor Richard Jarvis' plan to solve financial problems, *The Deal*, had died. After hearing complaints about how often ASUO officers were in their office, we conducted a survey to find out whether they were sticking to their scheduled hours. Soon after we ran the story, an angry ASUO President Maddy Melton called the Emerald, just to let me know she was in her office.

In the short month that was December, we brought you a five-part series examining academic cheating and we covered the late-night fire that broke out in Hamilton Complex.

In January, we told you former football player Junior Siavii was charged with assaulting a woman at Taylor's. We did a story examining why Taylor's seemed to be attracting high-profile problems. We told you the University hired a new diversity provost. We were the first to break the

news that the cost estimates for the new athletic arena had jumped to \$180 million. We also told you about the University student who filed a lawsuit asserting his right to bring a gun to campus.

In February, the Emerald took readers inside a Programs Finance Committee meeting from January, one that student leaders tried to keep off the record. Only after the Emerald filed a grievance citing Oregon Public Meetings Law was the conversation made public to you, the readers. We told you about the tickets all fee-paying students are entitled to, and we showed you what the student government was — or rather, wasn't — doing to keep you informed. We reported that the University had temporarily pulled the plug on plans to build the new arena. And we did a story about the undercover Eugene Police Department officers who broke up a campus party.

In March, we brought you a datelined story from Portland as same-sex marriage entered Oregon. We drove up at 5 a.m. to ensure we didn't miss a thing, and we were the only college paper in the state to bring readers such in-depth coverage. We also reported about various fraternity indiscretions and how they have gone unpunished by the University.

In April, we told you about Jarvis' resignation and the amount of money he was going to receive even after he left office.

In May, we covered the resignation of
 Turn to **SCHMIDT**, page 4A

ONLINE POLL

Each week, the Emerald publishes the results of the previous poll and the coming week's poll question.

Visit <http://www.dailyemerald.com> to vote.

Last question: Need help getting through finals? What is your Dead Week drug of choice?

Results: 57 votes.

- Caffeine: 36.8 percent or 21 votes.
- Illegal drugs: 22.8 percent or 13 votes.
- Booze: 10.5 percent or six votes.
- Exercise: 10.5 percent or six votes.
- Food: 10.5 percent or six votes.
- Prescription drugs: 5.4 percent or three votes.

• Nicotine: 3.5 percent or two votes.

This week: What was the biggest story covered by the Emerald this year?

Choices: ASUO VP Eddy Morales' alleged assault; DPS pursuit policy; Goldschmidt scandal; Los Angeles Times Editor John Carroll lecture; Multnomah county issues same-sex marriage licenses; Sports arena put on hold; Squirrel fishing; Wieden workshop.