



-  **Editor-in-Chief:**
Maggie Jirasek
(x2447)
-  **Design Editor:**
Salena De La Cruz
-  **Copy Editor:**
Allison Gerfin
-  **A & E Editor:**
Daisy Bain
-  **News Editor:**
Frank Jordan
-  **Sports Editor:**
Elena Boryska
-  **Opinion Editor:**
Erinn Lerten
-  **Feature Editor:**
Elisabeth Meyer
-  **Business Manager:**
Aaron Patelzick
(x2578)
-  **Webmaster:**
Luke Mahan

- Staff:**
- Jesse Gurzynski
 - Isaiah Creel
 - Shadra Beesly
 - Andy Price
 - Jennifer Kane
 - J.J. Pearson
 - Nick Barron
 - Megan Cobb

Secretary: JoAnne Gale

Adviser: Patty Mamula (x2310)

Goals:
The Clackamas Print aims to report the news in an honest, unbiased, professional manner. The opinions expressed in The Clackamas Print do not necessarily reflect those of the student body, college administration, its faculty, or The Clackamas Print advertisers. Products and services advertised in The Clackamas Print are not necessarily endorsed by anyone associated with The Clackamas Print.

The Clackamas Print is a weekly publication and is distributed every Wednesday except during Finals Week. The Clackamas Print Copyright 2001.

Advertising:
The advertising rate is \$4.75 per column inch.

19600 S. Molalla Ave.
OREGON CITY, OREGON
97045
(503) 657-6958 EXT 2309
cccprint@clackamas.cc.or.us
http://depts.clackamas.cc.or.us/print

FACE OFF

Safe haven law opens arms for infants

ERINNLERTEN
Opinion Editor

One of the most tragic stories covered by today's media is that of newborns abandoned in Dumpsters, along the side of the road or in a variety of life-threatening situations. Recently a baby found buried in the sand on the Oregon coast has brought the issue of child abandonment under further scrutiny by the media and the public.

Oregon's safe haven law (Senate Bill 199), which was passed in 2001, allows parents to drop off children at approved "safe haven" locations. Safe havens include hospitals, birthing centers, physicians' offices, sheriffs' and police stations. The law states that a parent may leave an infant in the care of one of these facilities if the child is 30 days or younger and has no evidence of abuse. It goes on to state that the parents are not required to provide any identifying information about themselves or the infant.

Opponents of Oregon's law claim that it contradicts Measure 58, which allows adult adoptee's access to original birth records. The argument is that with no original birth records, children turned in under the safe haven law will not be able to find out who their birth parents are. However, it is obviously better to have a child with no record of their parents than a dead one.

Typically, women who abandon their infants are motivated by fear of how their parents, boyfriends or husbands will react, a

fear so compelling, experts say, that no option appears to be the only feasible option. Some have been victims of rape or domestic violence. Many are children themselves in profound denial. They won't confide in anyone until it is too late. And then they discard the infant, as if by doing so, they might convince themselves they had never really been pregnant at all.

Texas, the first state to pass safe haven legislation, saw a doubling in babies saved after one publicity push. California, which took part in no publicity, saw seven babies turned in under the "Safe Arms for Newborns" law in the first nine months of 2001, according to the International Association of Voluntary Adoption Agencies and NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations).

In a recent case two Connecticut parents, protected by their state's safe haven laws, were advised by a hotline operator to drop their baby off at a hospital. The couple crossed the border into Massachusetts to drop their baby off at a hospital, not knowing that Massachusetts has no safe haven legislation. Officials are searching for the couple, who could face up to two and a half years in jail if convicted of child abandonment. This case illustrates the need for a consistent national safe haven laws rather than the patchwork among states.

Although a temporary and imperfect solution, safe haven laws do work, and provide an alternative for parents who feel they have no other options.

To reach Erinn Lerten goawayrocks@hotmail.com or drop by B-104.

An easy way out is not the best

DAISY BAIN
A&E Editor

It saddens me to no end when I think about the people who live around me. Some of the people I once called my best friends have ruined their lives. And what is the worst part of the scenario? They have children. Or let me re-phrase this, they had children.

Let me tell a story. My best friend from what is called post-partum depression. She turned to drugs to help her through the blues. She never recovered. I can't count how many times her adorable child was dropped off in my arms to be taken care of while she tramped all over the city. Finally, when enough was enough, the grandparents and I got together and pulled her aside to "talk" out her problems. The child now is in the care of the grandparents, and the mother is nowhere to be found.

Where is the father? The man who was thought to be the father is on drugs. DNA testing proved that, thankfully, he's not the daddy. The real father, who just married another woman, signed off all parental rights to the grandparents.

Many state legislatures are now considering enacting safe haven laws that would allow women, such as my friend, to drop off their infants to any firehouse or hospital with no questions asked. There are cons and pros to this new law.

I know that if this law had been in effect here in Oregon my friend would have never had the privilege getting to know him.

With the "no questions asked" option, the children will never have the chance to know who their parents are, ever. Many of the women who are so distraught that they feel the need to get rid of their babies. The fathers have no idea they have a child out there. Suddenly, they have no chance of knowing their own flesh and blood.

Now, I see the other side of the argument. Dumpster babies happen all the time. Those poor children are left without a chance, and if they were dropped in a hospital versus a garbage bin, they would have a higher chance of survival. According to statistics kept by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in 1998 31,000 children were abandoned in hospitals. This was before the safe haven law. Just because we don't have laws stating you can drop them off, doesn't mean that women won't.

I strongly believe that those women, who drop kids in Dumpsters, would do that anyway. What happens if two or three months down the road, the mother suddenly feels like she was wrong? She feels she needs to be with her baby. This shouldn't be allowed. If you can dump your baby, who says you can deal with your children when it gets even tougher?

I am afraid that this law will just make it way too easy for women to cop out of a situation that could be remedied. I know that if this law had been out there when my friend gave her baby up, I wouldn't see him now. I don't think I would be able to approve of this law, no matter how good-hearted it may be.

To reach Daisy Bain e-mail Daisypower2@yahoo.com or drop by B-104.

DID THESE STORIES MAKE YOU ANGRY? CONFUSED? EXCITED? CURIOUS? INSULTED? FURIOUS? LIVID? IRATE? THRILLED? AGITATED? PROVOKED? WELL THEN, SEND A LETTER TO THE EDITOR. B-104 OR CCCPRINT@CLACKAMAS.CC.OR.US

Donations are now being accepted in The Print office in B-104 to help the orphanage in Crimea, Ukraine.

Donations are being accepted until April 26.
Please include the following school supplies in a clear plastic Ziploc bag:

- 5 pencils
- 2 black pens
- 2 blue pens
- 1 red pen
- 1 ruler (12 inch)
- 1 eraser
- 1 pack of markers (8 or 12)
- 1 water color set with brush
- 1 small notebook
- 1 child safe scissors
- letter from you or your family (optional)
- picture of you and your family (optional)

If you have any questions call (503) 650-3818


