

STANDARDS RESTORED

Outraged consumer activists sent 10,987 letters to members of Congress in February objecting to a late-night rider slipped into the 2003 Omnibus Appropriations Bill that undermined years of collaboration between government, consumers, advocacy groups, and industry that established strong USDA organic standards. The rider would have allowed meat to be labeled "organic" even if it came from livestock raised on conventional, non-organic feed.

Organic food consumers nationwide reacted strongly and Congress responded. A bill to rescind this rider moved rapidly through Congress, shepherded by Sens. Patrick Leahy and Olympia Snowe and Reps. Sam Farr and Ron Kind. It eventually gained 68 co-sponsors in the Senate and 103 in the House.

Ultimately, this legislation was folded into the 2003 supplemental spending bill signed into law on April 16.

Senator Leahy said, "The swift and strong groundswell of opposition to that rider [was] an eye-opener for many in Washington."

ZAPPING ACTIVISTS

Attorney Karen Dobson is returning to Eugene this week to speak about how she was mistakenly targeted by rogue elements of government intelligence agencies and subjected to dangerous high-tech surveillance tactics Oregon and elsewhere. Her free talk will be at 7 pm Thursday, April 24 at Harris Hall, 8th and Oak in Eugene.

Dobson says she will be talking about microwave weapons that have been developed in the last 50 years and how to protect ourselves from them. "These have been used to harass me and others who are trying to expose stealth surveillance tactics or drug smuggling of rogue intelligence agencies," she says.

The alleged surveillance began in 1993 after she won \$123,000 in legal fees in a po-

lice fraud case in Washington state and moved to Newport. She says her privacy and health were compromised as she was tormented with "nonlethal" directed energy weapons targeting her residence.

She believes "rogue" government agents mistakenly thought she had moved to Newport to investigate them. As years passed, she received information from sympathetic agents as to the weapons being used against her and techniques to shield herself.

"This is a secret technology that few people understand," says Kathy Ging of Eugene who is helping organize the lecture and discussion. "We need to start talking about this."

LCARA CUTBACKS

Animal welfare advocates are organizing in response to what is being described as "crippling budget cuts" to the Lane County Animal Regulation Authority effective July 1.

The proposed reductions would eliminate LCARA's cattery program dealing with stray and feral cats, cut one of the three remaining staff positions for field officers, and cut shelter hours by 20 percent.

Concerned citizens are asked to lobby their city and county elected officials, or attend city Budget Committee meetings coming up at 5:30 pm May 5, 7, 14 and 19 at City Hall. For more information, call Diana Robertson at Shelter Animal Resource Alliance, 741-7253.

WHAT ABOUT U.S.?

Congressman Peter DeFazio is calling for every dollar spent by the Bush administration to rebuild Iraq and boost Turkey's economy to be matched by "a dollar spent rebuilding crumbling infrastructure here at home." DeFazio's amendment to Bush's \$75 billion emergency spending bill did not get a vote on the House floor.

THIS MODERN WORLD

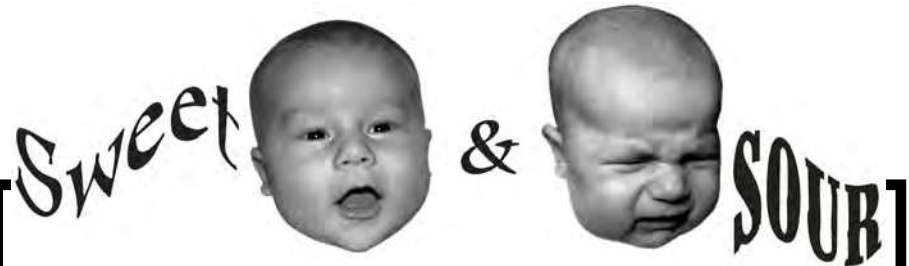
by TOM TOMORROW



Bush is vowing to provide universal health service to Iraq and build 6,000 schools, 100 bridges and 5,000 miles of roads. DeFazio says this is happening "at a time when 45 million Americans go without health insurance; when Oregon's roads are crumbling and bridges have become impassable for large, heavy trucks; and when Oregon schools are underfunded to the extent that some districts are chopping more than a month off the school year."

CORRECTIONS/CLARIFICATIONS

The meeting with the Eugene Human Rights Commission and the Police Commission mentioned in Ben Fogelson's April 17 commentary is a community panel discussion about life, civil liberty and public safety since 9/11. The public is invited to participate, but those who wish to directly address the Eugene Police Commission should attend the next Police Commission meeting at 5:30 pm May 8 at Eugene City Hall.



- If you're born in Oregon or went to high school here you can get in-state college tuition, right? Not if you're an illegal immigrant. Senate Bill 10, similar to laws passed in Texas and California, is a bi-partisan effort to solve the problem but faces fierce opposition from anti-immigrant right-wingers.
- People who drive less, giving the environment a break, could get a break on their car insurance, if a bill moving through the Legislature passes.
- The EWEB board decided not to jolt ratepayers with yet another shock. Instead of boosting charges, the utility will make \$9 million in internal cuts to cover rate hikes by federal dams.
- Residents won't need to sort recyclables (except glass) any more as the areas largest garbage companies plan to accept mixed recycling and sort it themselves. No more excuses.
- The UO is moving forward with its priority to build a new basketball arena costing up to \$150 million. Meanwhile, budget cuts are threatening to close nursing homes and schools across the state, and UO students are facing double digit tuition increases. Go Ducks!
- State legislators can't work as lobbyists at the same time can they? In Oregon, of course they can. Bills to reform the two timing have been stymied in the Legislature since 1995.
- Spotted owl counts are dropping about 5 to 8 percent a year in Oregon forests. Meanwhile, the Bush administration is boasting it will cut 450 million board feet of timber in the Northwest this year, the highest amount in five years.
- Did you pay more than \$10 in state income tax this year? What a chump. More than 80 percent of Oregon's corporations used enough tax loopholes and dodges to qualify for the minimum payment of \$10.
- Local officials are moving to cut \$300,000 from county human services funds. The poor, disabled, mentally ill and homeless will bear the brunt. Lane County is looking at cutting health clinics, 84 jail beds, four prosecutors, 14 juvenile drug treatment beds and a total of 91 jobs to close a \$20 million budget gap.

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

HOPE MARSTON

On Nov. 25, 2002, Eugene became the 15th city nationwide to pass a resolution in opposition to the USA PATRIOT Act, the hastily passed post-9/11 law that revokes civil liberties under the pretext of fighting terrorism. "By now, 87 communities have passed resolutions," says Hope Marston, a founder of the Lane County Bill of Rights Defense Committee. "Congress is starting to sit up and take notice." After high school in Peoria, Marston studied journalism at Southern Illinois, then spent 20 years as a TV news reporter and producer in several states. She wound up in Seattle, working for the McNeil-Lehrer NewsHour. "I got out in '95, when Newt Gingrich got in," she says. "Even PBS is corporate TV now, not public TV." Marston tried her hand at criminal-defense investigation, then left Seattle, spent a year at Breitenbush, and settled in Eugene in 1999. She works part-time as a secretary at the UO. "I wasn't into activism until I got involved with the Green Party and the Ralph Nader campaign in 2000," she says. "With all that's happened since then, there's more and more work to do." To learn more about the campaign for civil liberties, see www.hopemarston.com

