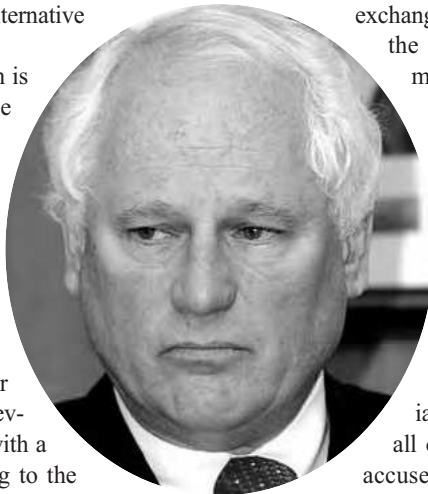


OREGONIAN SHAMED FOR MISSING SCANDAL

Neil Goldschmidt isn't the only one scandalized by reports that the former governor of Oregon sexually abused a 14-year-old girl 30 years ago. *The Oregonian*, the state's largest and most powerful newspaper, is taking heat for missing and then spinning the story, which first broke in the alternative paper *Willamette Week*.

Some of the criticism is coming from inside the paper. *Willamette Week* published an internal memo describing a meeting of editors and reporters at *The Oregonian* concerning the paper's catch-up coverage. Columnist "Steve Duin felt strongly that our coverage today was too reverential. We are dealing with a child molester," according to the memo. Duin "suggested that readers might think we'd learned nothing from Packwood and that we are hands off people in power." In 1992 *The Oregonian* failed to pursue allegations of sexual harassment against then Sen. Bob Packwood, and that story broke instead in *The Washington Post* — to *The Oregonian's* continuing shame.

The *Post* reported May 12 that *The Oregonian* "has been dogged by questions — from inside and outside the newsroom — about why it was scooped and then seemed to allow its catch-up coverage to be spun by Goldschmidt." The *Post* noted that Goldschmidt went to *The Oregonian* with an exclusive confession only after investigative reporters at *Willamette Week* unearthed his sordid past. "The confession that Goldschmidt gave exclusively to *The Oregonian* appeared to pay some coverage dividends, at least for one day's news cycle. On that first day, the paper published his version of the duration of the relationship. The benign language he used to characterize his encounters with the girl — 'affair' — appeared in the banner front-page headline. An editorial was sympathetic" and described Goldschmidt as a "tack-sharp, charismatic



leader" and the scandal as "an incalculable loss" for the state, the *Post* reported.

The *Post* reported on complaints from readers. "Goldschmidt dropped an interview in *The Oregonian's* lap so it would not be completely skunked on this huge story," Lars Larsen, a conservative talk show host on KXL-AM Portland, told the *Post*. "In exchange, the paper gave him the most favorable treatment I can imagine to a confessed rapist. People are calling in to complain that it was absolutely scurrilous of the paper to characterize this as an affair."

The *Daily Astorian* chimed in May 20 with an editorial, "It's Bob Packwood all over again." The paper accused *The Oregonian* of "dishonesty" and for making a "fateful bargain with Goldschmidt in order to foster the illusion that they were breaking the story that he had committed statutory rape while mayor of Portland. In doing so, they printed his version wholesale, which shortened the period of sexual relations by two years."

The *Astorian* wrote that the newspaper's failure in the Packwood and Goldschmidt stories "reveals a corporate culture whose comfort with lassitude may also be observed every day of the week as well as in major incidents." *The Oregonian's* inertia "leads inevitably to a culture of underachievement and a lack of intellectual rigor." The *Astorian* blames the paper's owners for a lack of a "sense of moral obligation" and "demand for excellence" that has led to the "intellectual corruption" at *The Oregonian*.

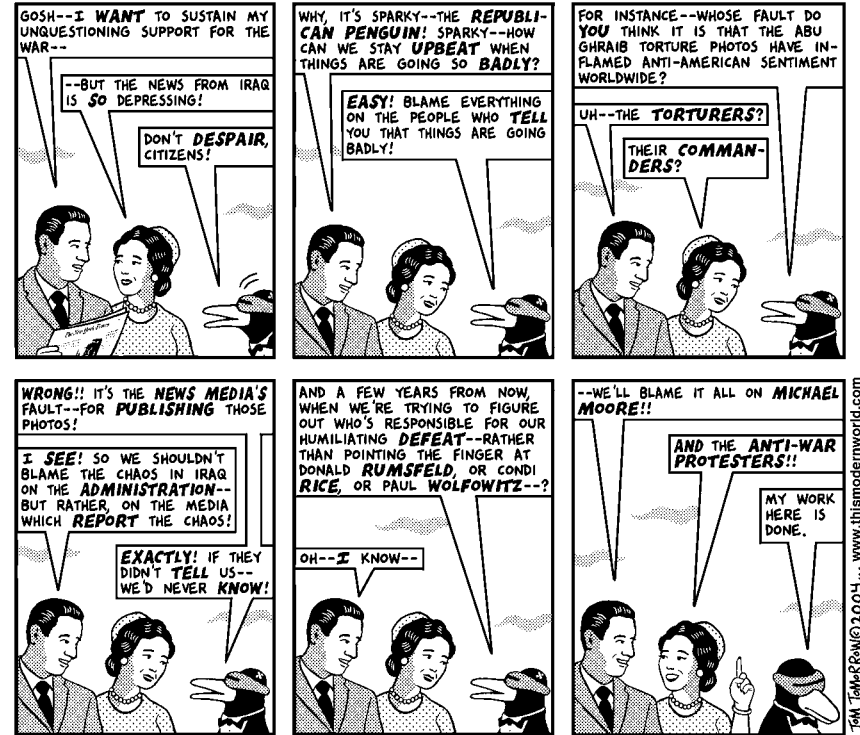
— Alan Pittman

EUGENE SUBSIDIZES NEW FEDERAL BUILDING

While the federal government is blowing billions of dollars in Iraq and slashing taxes for the wealthy, the city of Eugene is spending millions on subsidizing a lavish new fed-

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



eral courthouse.

The city spent \$4.1 million buying the Chiquita cannery site for the courthouse and another \$2.2 million buying and relocating the adjacent AutoCraft body shop for a total cost of \$6.3 million.

But the federal government paid the city only \$3.9 million for the courthouse site. That leaves the city \$2.4 million in the hole. The city hopes it can sell a couple acres of land the courthouse didn't want at the site for another \$1.6 million. But even that optimistic scenario leaves the city about a million bucks in the hole.

The city is adding to that federal reverse subsidy by spending another million on roads leading to the courthouse. That's a total subsidy of land and roads of at least \$2 million.

If the federal government refuses to pay for a new riverfront highway to serve the courthouse, the city of Eugene has agreed to pick up the \$7 million tab. That would push the total city hand-out to the feds to about \$10 million for the feds silvery new courthouse.

With calls for more money for living wages for the poorest city workers, buying parkland to protect endangered natural areas, more police officers, a new indoor swimming pool, continuing library and school funding, a new city hall, etc., the city is always scratching for cash to meet community needs. But that hasn't stopped city officials from spending millions subsidizing the new courthouse, freeing up federal money for more war and wealthy tax breaks. — AP

FUNDRAISER SET FOR BIRTHING CHOICES

Every month, the Oregon Midwifery Council (OMC) pays a lobbyist in Salem to help the organization fight for women's birthing choices. To continue that work, the Southern Willamette Valley branch of OMC will hold a fundraiser at 1 pm Sunday, June 6 at Secret House Vineyard in Veneta. The event will include music, organic food booths, wine tasting, activities for kids, and a silent auction including contributions from Sunshine Kesey, as well as lots of local art

and glass work.

OMC aims to safeguard the independent practice of midwifery through community education and political action; to increase the availability of midwifery care to more mothers and babies; to provide continuing education for midwives; and to protect the rights of parents to choose where and with whom to give birth.

Direct entry midwife and OMC member Elise Hansen says, "Hospitalized childbirth has become so medicalized, you would think women could hardly give birth without machines. Fact is, planned homebirth, with adequate prenatal care, is as safe, if not safer, than hospitalized birth."

By employing a lobbyist in Salem, Hansen says OMC can continue to "keep birth natural and to keep the doors open for women's birthing choices." — Bobbie Willis

HEMPFEST SETS DATES FOLLOWING COUNTRY FAIR

This year's Emerald Empire HempFest is scheduled to happen over two days, July 17-18, the weekend following the Oregon Country Fair. Last year's event was held at Alton Baker Park, but this year the event is planned for the park under the Washington-Jefferson Street Bridge.

Organizer Dan Koozer says the one-day educational and entertainment event last year was "so successful; we decided to extend the event to two days. The Emerald Empire HempFest we have envisioned for this year promises to be a blast for all ages. We plan to have three stages, a food court, art booths, non-profit booths as well as great musical bands."

Several guest speakers (to be announced) will give presentations throughout the day about "the hope Cannabis Hemp provides and the ways it is becoming legal."

The event is free to the public, but will include a food drive for FOOD For Lane County. Prizes will be given for 2, 5 and 10 can donations.

For information on performing and vend-

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

DIANE BENNER

Soon after she and her family moved to their west Springfield neighborhood 12 years ago, Diane Benner took a job delivering the *Register-Guard's* weekly ad circular. "I knocked on doors and said, 'I'm your paper person,'" she says. "I like to know everybody. I'm a listener, too."

Years later, when elderly neighbors were threatened with eviction by the city after a fire damaged their home, Benner brought in a TV crew and the harassment ended. When unruly kids roamed unsupervised at all hours, she went door-to-door to get adults to take responsibility.

Raised near Harrisburg, Benner bussed to school at Cal Young and Sheldon. She has three grown children from an early marriage and three school-age kids living at home, along with her husband of 25 years, Jay Benner, and an adopted grandson. She works as a custodian at Bethel's Home Source School.

Early this year, Benner called police to report odors coming from a nearby house in her neighborhood.

"Diane busted a meth house," says Head Start family advocate Chava Kronen. "She put herself at risk to make her street safer."

