

new flag just in time for the 4th of July. Soldiers who are blinded by explosions and disfigured won't be able to see themselves in the mirror, at least. How lucky is that?

A quadriplegic soldier can be the new Christopher Reeves. Soldiers with severe brain injuries won't remember a thing.

Soldiers whose kidneys are destroyed by medicines will keep dialysis machines. A good investment. Military morticians will know anatomical structures better than ever before. People who never could write with their opposite hand before learn quickly that they can.

When will they ever learn?

Greg Hume
Creswell

VOTE SORENSON

The headline in the R-G business section 5/11 caught my eye. It read, "State businesses bear low burden." Which seems at odds with what feels like a constant drumbeat of how poor an environment it is here in Oregon for business. As I read on, I found out that Oregon didn't rank just low, it ranked 50th, dead last in percentage of all state and local taxes that come from businesses.

This did not come as a big surprise to me, as I have read similar facts elsewhere as to the major drop in corporate taxes in recent years. One of the recent places I heard a discussion of such trends was a Jeff Golden interview of Peter Sorenson on the radio show "The Jefferson Exchange" on 1280 AM. This show helped solidify just why I am very supportive of Sorenson's run for governor. I found him extremely thoughtful, well-read on taxes and a major push in his run for governor is for a return of the corporations paying their fair share, thus lowering the burden on individual taxpayers.

It is refreshing to hear a politician speak openly and honestly about corporate taxes, a topic which lately seems almost taboo. I also appreciate that he understands the need for a sustainable economy and the importance of retaining Oregon's wild areas, a major asset often overlooked in economic discussions.

Tim Boyden
Eugene

COLLARED

I got quite a shock when I read the Carrie Packwood-Freeman Viewpoint 5/5. The accompanying photo shows Carrie and (I assume) her animal companion, who is plainly wearing — my God! — a collar. Oh, the caninity!

Since the column is titled "Sexist Oppression," I can only surmise that the dog is male and, therefore, considered fair game for oppression and degradation.

John R. Sanders
San Dimas, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We received several responses to this column from out of state (some of them unprintable) since the column was picked up by the "Best of the Web" online at the Wall Street Journal.

TREATED LIKE DIRT

They're treating Florence's signature dunes parcel like dirt! All Lane County residents should be alarmed at a recent Lane County Board of Commissioners' decision to auction off the magnificent 87-acre dunes, osprey nest, Indian gathering site along the Siuslaw directly across from Old Town.

An April 13 meeting saw the board, led by Commissioner Anna Morrison, instruct the county's Parks Division to get an appraisal pursuant to sale of this priceless, irreplaceable gem (taken via tax foreclosure) that has been cherished by thousands of county residents for more than a century. California developers are salivating over this juicy plum, which would be lost forever as open space.

A "win-win" outcome is possible, however, if citizens and opinion leaders swing into action immediately. The Oregon Department of State Parks has expressed a keen interest in acquiring this historic property to annex to its existing land adjacent to the county land. Because we voters passed Measure 66, which reserves a substantial share of lottery proceeds for such acquisition, State Parks has the money to pay Lane County — making both sides happy.

It is wise for the County to sell some repossessed lands for Parks operations, but this is the wrong property, which is to coast dwellers like Mount Pisgah and Spencer Butte are to valley residents. This land should stay in public ownership, protected forever for all of us.

Craig Harbison
Veneta

INVADERS

Someone recently asked me how I felt about the insurgency in Iraq. I replied: "if there were an invading force occupying my country, the U.S., I would be an insurgent." However the history books would likely refer to us as "patriots."

Which brings me to the seemingly endless, unquestioned/accepted "war" in Iraq. I have one question, to anyone reading: "Why are we, the United States of America, an invading force, and 'at war' in Iraq?" Before you answer, please consider these few simple facts:

The Bush administration has finally admitted there is not now, and never were, "weapons of mass destruction." There is no connection between Iraq and the events of Sept. 11. (I'm sorry, there really isn't. Even Cheney himself has finally admitted this.) The longest range missiles Iraq's standing army possessed at the time of U.S. invasion was 100 miles. Hardly a threat to our "homeland security," 6,211 miles from Baghdad.

If we invaded simply to "overthrow Saddam," or to "liberate the Iraqi people," why is this suddenly worth losing U.S. citizen lives over and spending over \$228 million a day of the U.S. taxpayers' money?

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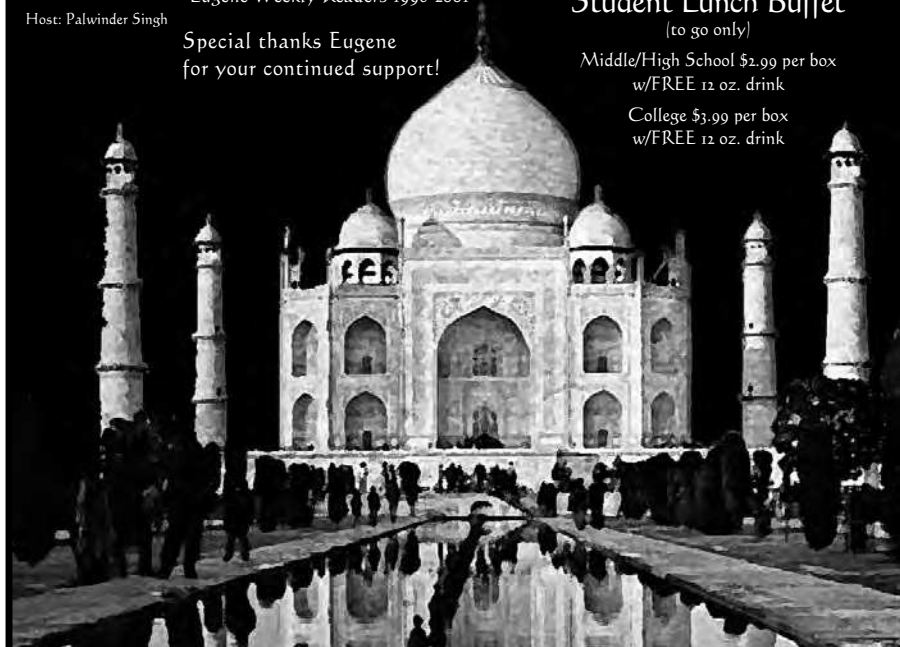
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