

news Briefs



OSPIRG RATES LAWMAKERS

Sen. Ron Wyden and Congressman Peter DeFazio led the five out of seven members of Oregon's Congressional delegation who voted "in the public interest" more than 80 percent of the time between Jan. 22, 2003 and March 16, 2005, according to the annual Congressional Scorecard for U.S. Senators and Representatives.

The tally on major public interest issues was released last week by the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG). The organization is releasing its annual scorecard as part of its work with Congress to "stop the dirty, dangerous energy bill that threatens the coast, and to promote clean, safe energy policy," according to OSPIRG Field Director Laura Etherton in a prepared statement.

"These scorecards are a helpful tool to educate the public about the voting records of

their elected officials and to help citizens hold those officials accountable," says Etherton.

The scorecard tracks public interest votes such as protecting the Clean Air Act; protecting the Arctic Refuge from drilling; preventing unfair credit card practices; and increasing access to affordable prescription drugs. The tally also looks at campaign contributions, biographical data, past OSPIRG scores, and accessibility.

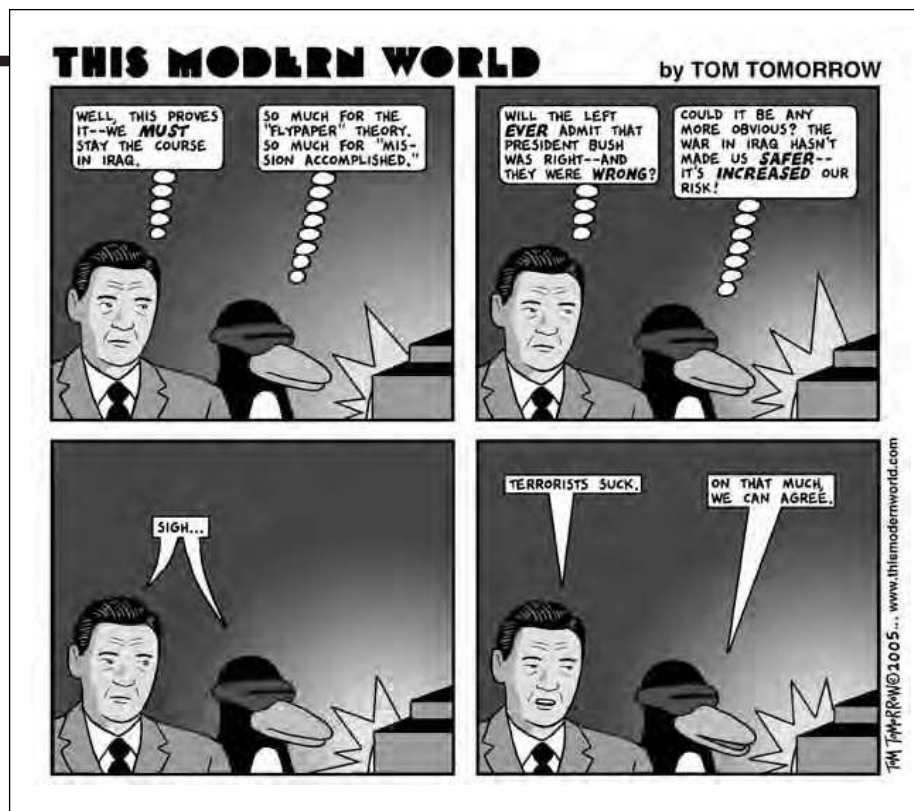
Wyden scored 100 percent on the scorecard; Sen. Gordon Smith 32 percent; DeFazio 95 percent; Rep Earl Blumenauer 90 percent; Rep. David Wu 86 percent; Rep. Darlene Hooley 81 percent; Rep Greg Walden 0 percent.

"We especially applaud Sen. Wyden for being a public interest hero," says Etherton, "We are particularly disappointed in Rep. Walden's consistent votes against the public interest, which earned him a zero percent score."

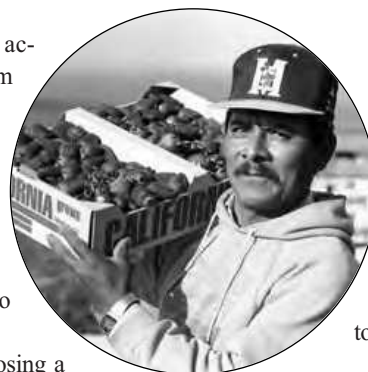
Nationally, 156 members of the House or Senate scored 80 percent and above, of whom 33 scored 100 percent, while 194 members of either chamber had scores at 10 percent or below, with 97 members scoring zero. The complete scorecard is available at www.ospirg.org/reports/scorecard.pdf

LABOR NOTES

- The Senate Revenue Committee last week voted to invite Oregon's working poor to the front of the line for its first big tax-cutting bill of the session. Despite pleas from corporate lobbyists to add new federal tax breaks for corporations to the state tax code, the committee voted 3-2 for amendments to House Bill 2542 that will expand the state's use of federal tax breaks for Oregon's poorest



working families instead, according to a statement from the Oregon AFL-CIO. The money saved from not adopting the new corporate tax breaks will be used to expand the state's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which is keyed to the federal EITC.



- Farmworkers are opposing a new bill that will provide tax credits to farmers for minimum-wage jobs, but not for jobs that pay more than the minimum wage. The Senate Revenue Committee voted unanimously last week to adopt a new tax credit for agricultural employers that is designed to help them cope with future increases in the minimum wage.

- Union volunteers will reach out to Oregon's newest union members when they join the Working America canvass team in southeast Portland this week. The team will be canvassing door-to-door in opposition to a new Wal-Mart in the area.

CORRECTIONS/ CLARIFICATIONS

Jocelyn McAuley tells us her 6/30 letter incorrectly stated that Ms. Killian "claims Whole Foods pays living wages." She notes, "This is not Ms. Killian's stance on Whole Foods."

Jonesin' for Marriage

By Matt Gaffney

Eugene Weekly reader Dan O'Reilly didn't just want to say "Will you marry me?" to his girlfriend, Angela Turner. He wanted to say "W _ _ L Y _ _ R R Y M _ ?" to his girlfriend, A _ G _ _ A T _ R _ _ R.

Dan and Angie solve the Jonesin' Crossword puzzle together every week in the *Weekly*, so Dan figured that instead of simply going down on one knee and strapping a nice rock to her finger, he'd ask Angie to be his betrothed via their weekly crossword.

Dan got in touch with me (I'm the editor of Jonesin', which is written by Oregon native Matt Jones), and I told him it sounded like fun. Dan sent me details about Angie and her life, and I forwarded them along to Matt Jones, who crafted them into the Jonesin' puzzle that ran in *EW* June 23.

To 99.99 percent of the people who solved that week's puzzle in alternative weeklies across the country, it just seemed like a normal crossword. But to one Oregon couple, it was filled with hidden meanings. In addition to having ANGELA at 1-across (clued as "Tony's housemate on 'Who's the Boss?')", the puzzle had TURNER as the corresponding last across answer in the grid (clued as "Spatula, essentially").

In the center of the grid, two across entries read WILL YOU and MARRY ME. In addition,

the grid included the hopeful groom's name (DAN and O'REILLY), as well as various other aspects of Angie's life — all of them clued in a straightforward, non-Angie-specific way.

How did the groom's scheme go down? I'll let him describe it:

Day started off with Angie arriving in Corvallis around 11 am, all prepared for a trip to the Rogue brewery for their summer garage sale. We took off for Newport, grabbed a bite to eat at this hole in the wall restaurant called the Chowder Bowl, then headed for the Rogue, where somehow I must have confused the dates of the garage sale by a week. Not one

to leave empty handed, we grabbed a 22 oz. bottle of some of their finest to enjoy on the beach. After picking a spot, we laid down a blanket and whipped out the EW to enjoy the crossword and the sunshine. First answer she got was 1-Across "Angela." We had completed about half the puzzle when she worked on down to "Turner", where she mentioned (this is verbatim from her mouth), "Hey this puzzle has both of my names in it, we should keep it when we're finished!" It was at this point that she was just as surprised to find both of my names in the puzzle as well; must be a coincidence!

We worked on the puzzle for about a half-an-hour when we started to slow down. I asked her if she was done working on it and she said yes, to which I replied that I didn't think she was. At this point, I'm looking straight at the puzzle where it says, "WILL YOU MARRY ME" with my pencil right next to the phrase. After not getting the subtle hint, I told her that maybe I could help her finish the puzzle, which is when I took a Sharpie marker and circled the answers ANGELA TURNER WILL YOU MARRY ME. She was absolutely dumbfounded, almost to the point of embarrassment that she didn't see it while we were working on it! After an initial whisper of "Oh my God," her first complete sentence was, "There never was a garage sale today, was there!"

In case you're wondering: She said a three-letter word for "I agree."

Matt Gaffney is the editor of Jonesin' crosswords, which is written by Portland resident Matt Jones.

