

• The "3,000 Dead" cover of our Jan. 4 issue has generated mostly positive calls and letters, none yet for publication. Several people have asked where they can find extra copies to pass around or send to friends and family. We will have a free stack at our front desk for the next couple of weeks. Some noticed that no credit was given for the cover image; that was at the request of the East Coast artist who gave us permission to use it. He tells us he created the "War President" photo-mosaic in 2004 and has grown weary of the negative feedback.

• The Bush and Cheney decision to escalate the Iraq War, defying Congress, the American people, his generals and the Iraq Study Group, has left many of us scratching our heads. But then we've been scratching ourselves bald in recent years. Here's one perspective that hasn't gotten much press. On <http://electroniciraq.net> this week, Mideast analyst Trita Parsi says regarding Bush's address on Iraq: "There was little new about the U.S.'s strategy in Iraq, but on Iran, the president spelled out a plan that appears to be aimed at goading Iran into war with the U.S." She goes on to say that "Rather than talking to Iran and Syria, Bush virtually declared war on these states." If this perception is true, or even half true, the escalation finally makes sense.

• Worth noting who was sitting next to the governor last week at the Lane County inaugural luncheon at King Estates Winery: Ben Westlund, now a Democratic senator from Bend, and for a short time an independent, and before that a Republican. Nominated for the state Senate by both R's and D's in Deschutes County, Westlund ran a quick race for governor against Ted, but money and signatures stopped it, along with polling that we suspect showed him pulling more votes from Kulongoski than from Saxton. Now that he's followed the Wayne Morse trail through Oregon politics, maybe he should take on Gordon Smith in 2008.

• Makes us proud that Oregon's Secretary of State Bill Bradbury has gone several times to Tennessee to work with nearly 600 advocates spreading Al Gore's powerful message against global climate change. Makes us wonder if this could be Gore's field organization for "Re-elect Gore in November 2008." After his recent rip to Tennessee, Bradbury speculates that Gore won't choose to run, but he could be drafted.

• Now that's more like it: After beating two top ten teams – Arizona and UCLA – in eight days, the Oregon men's basketball team finds themselves vaulting from 15th to ninth in the latest AP poll. It's too early to count chickens – or NCAA tournament berths – just yet, but it's got to feel good for this once über-hyped junior class (with stellar senior Aaron Brooks) to finally come together as a team the way they have this year (and don't count out inconsistent but talented freshman Tajuan Porter). Doesn't feel half-bad to be a Duck fan, either.

• Army Spec. Suzanne Swift's court martial is over, and the Iraq veteran was sentenced to 30 days in detention and lost all the rank she had earned. Swift, who went AWOL rather than return to Iraq where she was sexually abused, will be reassigned to a new job in clerical shipping and ordering. We hear she will be transferred March 30 to Ft. Irwin, Calif., 917 miles from her hometown of Eugene. Her mother, Sarah Rich, said last week that Swift is not doing well following her court martial, even though she avoided a long prison sentence and a dishonorable discharge. "For the record this 'deal' was anything but 'phenomenal.' It was more 'abominable.' Soldiers who've been in combat in Iraq who have PTSD from sexual abuse don't deserve to be stripped of their rank and sent to prison. Be mindful who you trust to take care of your children." Updates are available at <http://suzanneswift.org>



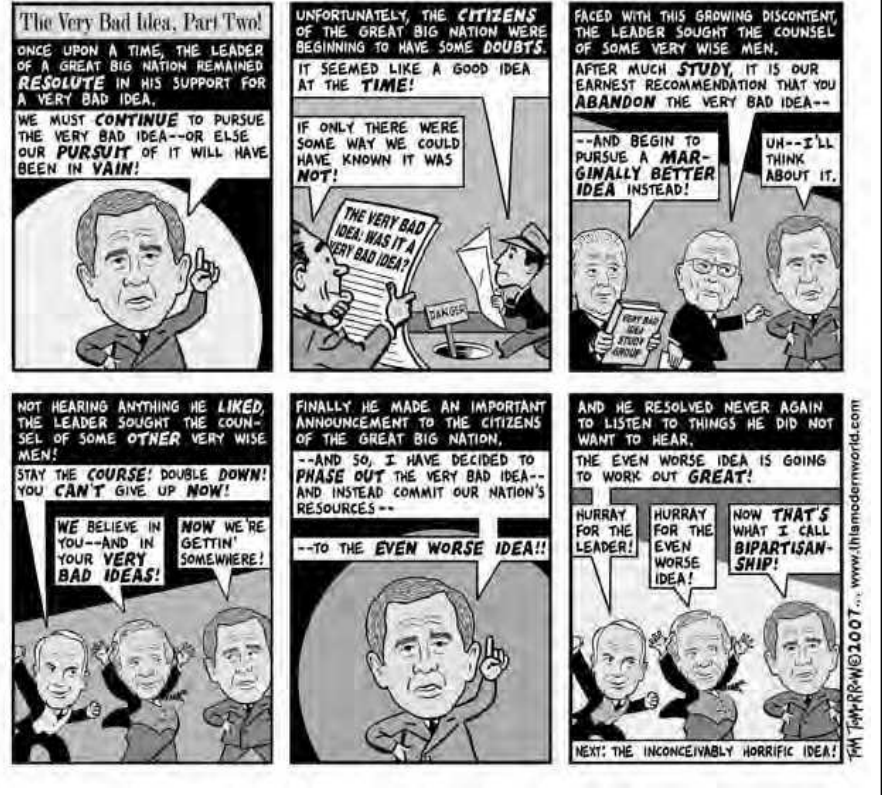
Suzanne Swift

• Fun to see a reference to Eugene's political consultant Dan Carol and his "Kumbaya Dammit" column in the *Washington Post* Jan. 11. Carol's column on progressive politics has appeared many times in *EW* and elsewhere in national magazines and caught the attention of *Post* writers Amy Argetsinger and Roxanne Roberts regarding Tony Snow. The White House press secretary has tossed around the word "kumbaya" four times recently. The writers say the "Kumbaya" song "began as a spiritual, turned into a folk anthem, and has evolved into political shorthand for idealistic, fuzzy-wuzzy moments." Only Carol, however, appears to be adding "dammit" to the word, injecting a bit of his signature irony and feisty attitude.

SLANT includes short opinion pieces, observations and rumor-chasing notes compiled by the EW staff. Heard any good rumors lately? Contact Ted Taylor at 484-0519, editor@eugeneweekly.com

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



news Briefs

R-G FINGER AD GETS A 'DART'

The Register-Guard has won one of the highest dishonors in journalism.

The R-G won a "Dart" for "thumbing its nose at the news" from the *Columbia Journalism Review*. The magazine, published by the journalism school that administers the Pulitzer Prize, criticized a finger-shaped ad from Sacred Heart hospital that jutted through the text of a news story which wrapped around the finger.

CJR wrote in its "Darts and Laurels" column that the ads that ran in October were "knocking down still further the ad-edit wall." *CJR* continued, "Thus forced to read around that grossly gratuitous graphic, some readers suspected the paper of giving them the finger."



An October ad in the R-G

EW reported on the ad Oct. 28, noting that it appeared to conflict with professional journalism ethics codes calling for newspapers to clearly separate advertising from news. Earlier *R-G* stories on Sacred Heart gamma knife machine being advertised read like the ad, the article noted.

UO Journalism Prof. Jim Upshaw wrote an op-ed in the *R-G* in November, which also criticized the "invasive" finger ad. The viewpoint column was headlined, "Advertiser has newspaper wrapped around its finger."

The R-G has also received letters to the editor critical of the ad. Richard Reed wrote Jan. 16 that the paper has "given the finger" to citizens and eroded the wall "between the purity of the journalistic ethic and the cesspool of marketing mendacity!"

The finger ad has drawn criticism from across the nation on journalism web blogs. Upshaw's column was posted on the widely read Romenesko web site of the Poynter Institute for journalism education.

On visualeditors.com the ad drew a long list of comments. Seattle news designer Paul Morgan called the ad a "sad state of affairs for my former paper in Eugene." The ad blurs the line between advertising and news, he wrote. "Would the paper run a story critical of that company on the same page as that ad?"

One comment found the ad tolerable, saying it was no worse than an internet pop-up ad. But other comments were that the ad layout was visually ugly and said it appeared that the story around the finger was part of the ad. A comment questioned whether Sacred Heart also paid for the space that the story ran in around the finger.

Other comments questioned whether the story wrapped around the ad was picked to not conflict with the ad. One blogger joked that he would have run a story like the alleged finger in the Wendy's chili around the ad as a protest and been fired.

— Alan Pittman

COACH'S PAY TRUMPS PROFS

UO football coach Mike Bellotti finished a disappointing season this year, and UO faculty are up in arms over lavish athletic spending, but the UO still pays Bellotti about \$1.3 million per year.