

• **Racial slurs and insults** directed at black athletes and visitors from Portland’s Roosevelt High School are drawing a lot of press, but not much attention is being directed at Oregon and Eugene’s long history of racial discrimination (see News Briefs this week). A strong community response to such incidents is a good step toward overcoming our shadowed past. We cannot outlaw ignorance and hate, but we can certainly confront bigotry when we find it at the dinner table, on the school yard, in the workplace, at sporting events, in churches, on the streets – wherever we go. Bigotry is learned behavior, and it can be unlearned, or at least silenced, through social pressure and education. What hope can we have for finally eradicating overt and covert racial discrimination? Hope lies with future generations, so it’s disturbing to hear young people today parroting the hatred of their parents and grandparents. It’s up to each of us to break the cycle.

• **Lane County at its best** last weekend – big peace march in downtown Eugene and the annual daffodil festival outside Junction City. *EW* went to both. While the demonstration against the endless war is covered elsewhere in this issue, we also want to report that cars lined up on Ferguson Road for the sun-drenched festival at the Long Tom Grange. Crowds came to see antique cars, the petting zoo, arts and crafts booths, dazzling quilts and daffodils of all shades, sizes and smells. The daffs sold by the armload. Another hot item was the cinnamon roll, so big it was beyond calories, traditionally made by the women of the Grange. Maybe most interesting was the booth of famous men autographing their respective months in the celebrated calendar of the Long Tom Grange. The signers were all fully clothed.

• **Dan Savage got a warm welcome** during the less than 24 hours he spent in Eugene last week, and we appreciate all the people who enthusiastically jumped in to make the arrangements and fill the WOW Hall for one of the liveliest and most memorable events we’ve seen all year. And of course we are grateful to Savage for volunteering to fly down from Seattle to defend *EW* and his column from critics. Where were the critics? We didn’t hear one disparaging word all evening, which is a shame. Savage is happy to talk to those with different viewpoints. So, is his column corrupting youth with sex talk? Savage says younger children aren’t interested in *any* newspaper content, but when kids reach adolescence, they need to learn all about sex in terms and language they can relate to. Meanwhile, when it comes to blatant, in-your-face sexual content, it looks like *EW* is falling behind the competition. Earlier this month the *R-G* ran a 16-page glossy ad insert from J.C. Penny full of women in skimpy underwear. Didn’t see it? Check under the mattress in your teenager’s bedroom. KEZI-TV recently broadcast ABC’s hour-long, prime-time Victoria’s Secret fashion show. *Cosmopolitan* magazine online now offers readers an interactive, illustrated “sex position of the week.”

• **Honk for peace on Mondays?** We hear a Eugene group is preparing to go public with a national, maybe even international, campaign to help end the war in Iraq using car horns and bicycle bells. The as-yet unnamed organizers sent an email to *EW* this week saying they were inspired by the “honk for peace” signs at the March 16 protests downtown, which received plenty of response. The campaign is called Monday Out of Iraq Honk, and uges people to make a short ruckus at noon every Monday (except near hospitals) until the occupation of Iraq ends. The group is calling itself World Live in Peace and hopes to have a website soon.

• **Ernie Kent** sounded like a coach angling for a new job when he told a sportscaster on national TV after the Oregon-Winthrop win that his Ducks will do well against UNLV if they do what they’re coached to do. Subtle, maybe, but Kent usually is more generous to his talented players than to the brilliant coaching in his post-game interviews. Both *The Oregonian* and *R-G* sportswriters offer some version of the story that Ernie has an agent, likes the University of Michigan head coach opening and points to his successful Detroit recruiting as a draw. (Google the *Detroit Free Press* for more of this story.) Ironical that a rugged ride to the “sweet 16” should end in a job search, but there’s persistent chatter on the street that Phil and Penny Knight are holding back their bucks for a new Mac Court until Kent leaves. Sportswriters fuel the speculation with ink about the link between UO’s new AD and Mark Few, Gonzaga’s super coach with Oregon roots. So where does this all take us? Back to the NCAA tourney couch on Friday night to cheer the Ducks – and their job-hunting coach.

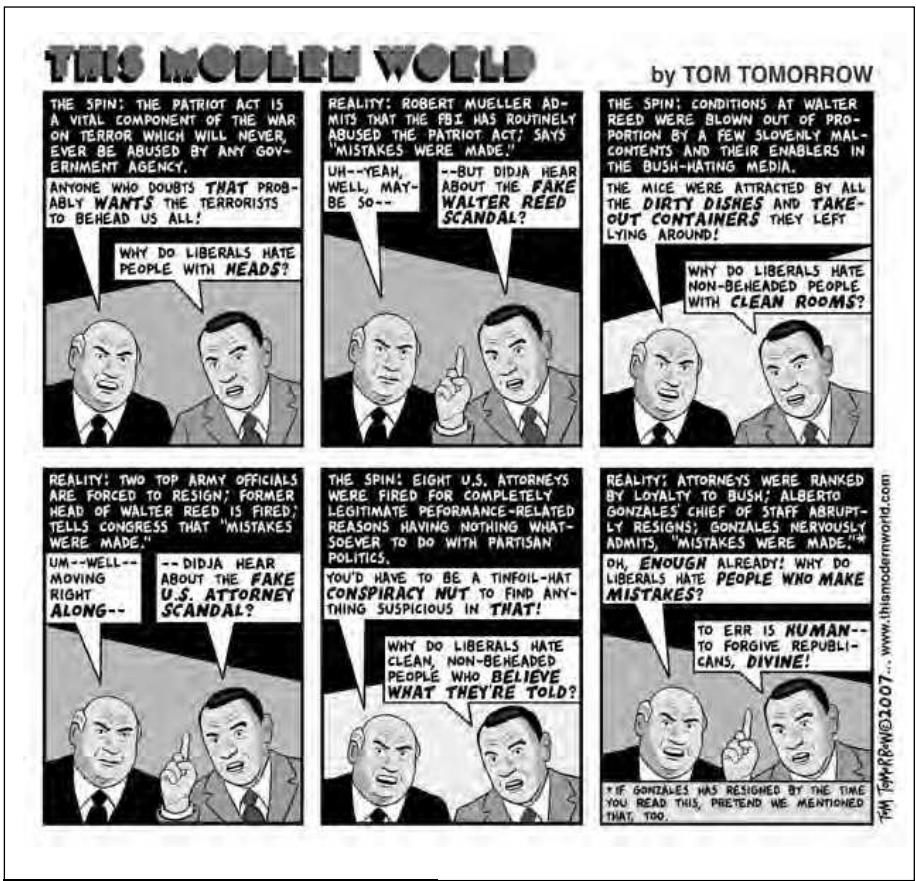
WHO YOU GONNA BLAME?

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 (circulation): distribution@eugeneweekly.com

Eugene Weekly • 1251 Lincoln Street • Eugene, OR 97401 • 541.484.0519 • fax 541-484-4044



news Briefs

RACISM COMPLAINTS

Complaints about racism from Portland black students visiting Eugene for a high school basketball tournament surprised many in Eugene. But many others were not so surprised.

Eugene is one of the whitest, least diverse cities in the nation, according to the latest U.S. Census. Among the nation’s 249 largest cities, Eugene is the 18th whitest. In Eugene, 88 percent of residents are entirely white. About 92 percent say they’re white or at least part white. Only 1 percent of Eugene’s population is black.

The vast majority of people in Eugene have little contact with African Americans in their neighborhoods. No Eugene census tract is more than 2.5 percent black. A section of Bethel between the railroad tracks and Crocker Road has 4,059 residents; only 12 identified as black. In south Eugene between Willamette Street and Lorane Highway, seven blacks live among a population of 2,053. In all of the new neighborhoods outside Belt Line stretching from West 11th around to I-5, there are almost 29,000 residents, but only 228 are African American.

Nor are young Eugeneans likely to meet many minorities in their formative school years. The district has known for three decades that Eugene’s system of alternative school choice results in segregated browner and poorer neighborhood elementary schools but hasn’t taken major action to solve the problem.

The city’s high schools are more evenly mixed. South Eugene High School is 23 percent minority, North 29 percent, Churchill 22 percent and Sheldon 23 percent, according to the latest comparative data. Roosevelt High

School in Portland, where the racism complaints came from, has 58 percent non-white students.

Complaints that the city racially profiles minorities also date back three decades without significant reform. An EPD study showed that Eugene cops stop black drivers at a rate 2.3 times higher than white drivers and search them at a 37 percent higher rate.

— Alan Pittman

THE BIG HULT GORILLA

How do Eugeneans in the arts view the Hult Center? “It’s both the crown jewel and the entity that absorbs most of the resources available,” said Marc Goldring at a meeting on Monday, March 19. In a preliminary draft, Goldring’s firm WolfBrown (formerly Wolf, Keens & Co.), the consultant group hired by the city of Eugene to help create recommendations for the future of Eugene’s arts policy, laid out a plan for the future of the arts communities in Eugene, including a restructuring of the Hult Center that alarmed at least one of the Hult’s constituent groups. The Mayor’s Cultural Policy Review (CPR) committee met with the consultants from noon to 4:30 pm, and a public meeting began at 6:30 pm.

Tina Rinaldi, mayor’s committee co-chair, opened by saying that Eugene’s participation in the cultural review process has impressed the consultants by being “far greater” than in any other city that has gone through the process. Indeed, Goldring said, the mayor’s committee ended by setting up another meeting to discuss the preliminary draft, which he called “emblematic of the way this community has engaged in the cultural policy review.”

While the draft recommends some seemingly common sense changes such as ensuring coordination of K-12 arts education and cooperation among the city, the UO and LCC (“separate silos” of arts activities now, Goldring noted), one of the recommendations includes “Conduct a thorough operations audit of the Hult Center to develop a new operating model that will support the facility’s mission in a financially stable way.”