

WAR DEAD

Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq began on March 20, 2003

(last week's numbers in parentheses):

- **3,882 U.S. troops killed*** (3,876)
- **28,451 U.S. troops injured*** (28,451)
- **130 U.S. military suicides*** (130)
- **306 coalition troops killed**** (306)
- **933 contractors killed** (accurate updates NA)
- **84,779 to one million Iraqi civilians killed***** (84,250)
- **\$473.9 billion cost of war** (\$471.9 billion)
- **\$134.7 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$134.2 million)

* through Nov. 12, 2007; source: icasualties.org; some figures only updated monthly

** estimate; source: icasualties.org

*** highest estimate; source: iraqbodycount.org; based on confirmed media reports; other groups calculate civilian deaths as high as 655,000 to one million



dying off and disappearing in a phenomenon called "colony collapse disorder."

Beekeepers have been reporting losses of 30 to 90 percent of their hives. In colony collapse disorder, seemingly healthy adult bees leave the hive, never to return. Bees are the number one pollinator of crops in the U.S., and their loss affects farmers from Oregon to Florida.

The USDA's Agricultural Research Service has been investigating the problem and pinpointing everything from parasites to poor nutrition. Scientists have also looked into radiation from cell phones and genetically modified crops.

The journal *Science* recently reported a link between colony collapse and a honeybee virus called Israeli acute paralysis virus, which is transmitted by a mite commonly found in beehives. Scientists speculate a mix of infection, genetics and environmental influences could be causing the die-offs.

According to a report in the *Capital Press*, an agricultural newspaper in Oregon, beekeepers are taking advantage of all the buzz about bees to ask for a little help. Beekeepers reported on an American Honeybee Producer Association survey that 15 percent of their bee losses are due to pesticides. They are pushing for an amendment to the 2007 U.S. Farm Bill that would require chemical companies to pay into a fund that would compen-

sate beekeepers for their pesticide-related losses. More than 250 amendments to the bill have already been proposed.

— Camilla Mortensen

COALITION TARGETS CLIMATE

A new coalition has recently formed among groups and individuals in Lane County "working to mitigate and prepare for challenges resulting from climate change and peak oil," according to Pam Driscoll of Dexter, one of the organizers.

Representatives from numerous groups in the area attended the first meeting in November. They included forest activists, since logging is a key component to increased CO2 in the atmosphere.

Topics being raised by the coalition include relocalization, preserving forests, mass transportation, food security, legisla-

tion and local business, says Driscoll.

A second meeting is scheduled for 6:30 pm Wednesday, Dec. 12, at the Grower's Market Building upstairs meeting room, 454 N. Willamette. For more information, call 937-3007.

LUERS TURNS 29 BEHIND BARS

Jeffrey "Free" Luers celebrated his 29th birthday at the Lane County Jail Dec. 5 as he



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