



November, the letter he got said the office had not received Schlossberg's requests.

According to the letter, DeFazio had contacted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on behalf of the Oregon ACLU, and it summarized DHS's response letter as: "It is the mission of the FPS (Federal Protective Services) to protect federal properties, so an officer visited the demonstration to determine if the federal building would be impacted by the rally."

The summary said that the letter from DHS "also noted the officer was permitted by federal authority and guidelines to monitor and gather information about persons engaged in a protected activity because it was for legitimate law enforcement purposes."

Schlossberg has sent another letter again requesting DeFazio to state his position on the DHS surveillance of the rally, which was not on federal property. He also asked DeFazio to say whether he knew of the surveillance in advance and for the congressman's office to review information it "might have access to that is relevant to federal agencies monitoring Eugene citizens."—  
Camilla Mortensen

## UO BACKS OFF ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST

After backlash from faculty members about the new Conflict of Interest-Conflict of Commitment (COI-C) policy hastily implemented by the UO (*EW* 12/4), the school has now decided to suspend the planned January 2009 implementation of the plan.

Faculty members objected not only to portions of the policy itself but to the way it was developed, without the faculty input required by state law.

The proposed COI-C policy applied to faculty, graduate students, researchers and

other non-classified staff employees of the UO and demanded they report their possible conflicts of interest or commitment annually. These conflicts included anything from holding elected office to owning a business.

Faculty have expressed concern that the 14-page document seeks disclosure of not only their own activities but those of their immediate family; and that it alters the existing disclosure policy by removing an exclusion that relates to personal time. Under the current policy, outside activities not related to university duties that are undertaken during personal time are excluded from reporting. But according the FAQs, under the proposed new policy, when it comes to finances, "even if your outside activities are not related to your area of expertise, you should disclose them."

In an email sent out to UO faculty members Dec. 12, the school said after "thoughtful and substantive comments" from faculty colleagues the process would be suspended in order to "review and address the concerns."

The email announced that Faculty Senate President Paul van Donkelaar, "will convene a small ad hoc committee" to review the COI-C and suggest revisions to the policy so that it meets "essential legal and policy requirements with a keen sensitivity to academic freedom and the culture of a public research university."

The UO anticipates revealing the next COI-C draft at the March 11, 2009 meeting of the Faculty Senate.

— Camilla Mortensen

## WAR DEAD

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

(last week's numbers in parentheses):

- **4,212 U.S. troops killed\*** (4,209)
- **30,879 U.S. troops injured\*** (30,871)
- **167 U.S. military suicides\*** (167)
- **314 coalition troops killed\*\*** (314)
- **1,123 U.S. contractors killed** (accurate updates NA)
- **98,218 to 1.1 million civilians killed\*\*\*** (98,133)
- **\$581.7 billion cost of war** (\$579.8 billion)
- **\$165.4 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$164.9 million)

\* through Dec. 22, 2008; source: [icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org);

some figures only updated monthly

\*\* sources: [icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org), [defenselink.mil](http://defenselink.mil)

\*\*\* highest estimate; source: [iraqbodycount.org](http://iraqbodycount.org); based on confirmed media reports; other groups calculate civilian deaths as high as 655,000 (Lancet survey, 2006) to 1.1 million (Opinion Research Business survey, 2008)

• How does **Gov. Gordon** sound to you? The Portland press is chattering about the possibility of Gordon Smith running for governor in two years now that he is soon to be replaced in the Senate by Jeff Merkley. Smith has not squelched the chatter as he quickly did when he was mentioned as the next president of the UO, succeeding David Frohnmayer. According to *The Oregonian*, Smith blames his loss mostly on George Bush, which Smith thinks will not be an issue in a state race. Maybe not, but wasn't it Smith's embrace of Bush's policies that cost him his Senate seat, and won't those still be big issues in 2010? We'll see.



• We're done writing letters to Santa; now **let's write letters to Obama**. He's a smart guy but he doesn't know everything, and he's already fumbling some of his appointments. He needs our help. We will publish as many 200-word letters to Obama as we can Jan. 15. Then we'll bundle up copies of *Eugene Weekly* and mail them to the White House. The Obama transition team is waiting to hear from us! These letters will be prominently displayed in the Obama Presidential Library! Future generations will marvel at the insight, wit and wisdom of

the people of Lane County! Or *EW* will come in handy for potty-training the First Puppy. Email your letters to [letters@eugeneweekly.com](mailto:letters@eugeneweekly.com) by Jan. 8.

• **Imagine if Ebenezer Scrooge**, after being haunted by images of deprivation, had thrown open his shutters on Christmas and donated \$25,000 to the UO Athletic Department for *front-row basketball seats*. Not quite the same, is it? But in a depressionary time of deep need and want in this city and state with thousands going without, that's exactly the "donation" the UO is asking from the corporate Scrooges of the state. And they are giving it.

This isn't charity, this isn't good will to man, this is an embarrassment. Imagine if the ghost had brought Scrooge to his tombstone to find the inscription: "When the shivering, starving masses begged, he gave his alms instead for front-row basketball seats." The horror!



• Times are tough and budgets are bleeding like New Hampshire sugar maples in March, but is it really better for Eugene in the long term if the **city's policy is to cut down big old trees**, like the recently saved black walnut on 6th and Madison, instead of pruning them? It might be cheaper in the short term, but in the end, we need those trees for their shade and climate moderation, storm water control and even pollution control. It's hard to put a price tag on the multiple benefits of old trees, but an enlightened city staff would attempt to do just that.

• It's jolly to see the **Springfield Times** cranking out a decent community paper with local news and views since late November. Kudos to owner Scott Olson and Editor Craig Murphy. Murphy does most of the writing, which is common in small papers (we've known editors who have made up silly bylines to add "variety" to their papers). The *Times* could use more writers and photographers, more letters to the editor, and of course more advertising. Lots more advertising.

Since the *Springfield News* died, followed by the *Springfield Beacon*, the *R-G* has been trying to pick up the slack by covering some Springfield city government and business news, and we've done what we can to cover more Lane County and regional issues. But Springfield really needs and deserves a hometown paper that reflects the character of the community. Ideally this new paper will grow in its courage and coverage, and shine some light on the political machinations that go on behind closed doors.

If you can't find a hard copy of the *Times*, check it out online at [www.springfieldtimes.net](http://www.springfieldtimes.net). Notice the ".net" in the web address. There are lots of Springfields in the U.S., and the .com was taken.

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](mailto:editor@eugeneweekly.com)