

ACTIVIST ALERT

• **Project Homeless Connect** is preparing for its fifth annual event March 17 at the Fairgrounds. Organizers are collecting coats, hats, gloves, scarves, socks, sleeping bags and backpacks, along with personal hygiene products. Donations may be dropped off at any St. Vincent de Paul store. Checks can also be sent to United Way of Lane County, 3171 Gateway Loop, Springfield 97477.

• Oregon's U.S. **Senator Jeff Merkley** will hold town halls in Polk, Lane and Douglas Counties next week. His local meeting will be at 2 pm Saturday, March 19, at Maple Elementary School, 2109 J St. in Springfield.

• The **invasion of Iraq** March 19, 2003 will be remembered by a demonstration and procession of coffins at noon Saturday, March 19, at Central Park on Monroe Street in Corvallis. Participants are encouraged to wear black.

SCHOOLS, NOT WAR

More than 20 Lane County peace and justice groups are collaborating on an event recognizing the eighth anniversary of the invasion of Iraq. The Peace Feast & Walk begins with welcoming remarks by Mayor Kitty Piercy at 11:30 am Saturday, March 19, at First Christian Church, 1166 Oak St., followed by a walk through downtown led by Samba Ja that starts and ends at the church. The event ends with speakers, music and a chili feast hosted by Church Women United.

"Lane County taxpayers have paid out hundreds of millions of dollars for the Iraq and Afghanistan wars," says Michael Carrigan of CALC. "Saturday, we'll be asking people to contact the White House and Congress and request that our federal taxes fund schools and job creation and not endless war."

David Hazen, another organizer of the event, says "The culture of peace being created right here in Eugene/Springfield, is a model of the collaboration that we would like to see in the rest of the world."

Congress has appropriated more than \$1 trillion for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001. The cost to Eugene taxpayers alone has been \$106.9

million for the Afghanistan War and \$219.8 million for the Iraq War and occupation, according to nationalpriorities.org

For more information, contact Hazen at 343-2109, or Carrigan at 485-1755, or email calcepeace@efn.org

REACTION TO INVASIVES QUESTIONED

Feeling murderous about that Scotch broom? Want to whack those dead man's fingers? The push for native species (and against invasive species) is nearly ubiquitous in environmental and conservation-oriented communities.

Panelists at the "Environmentalism Gone Awry" panel at the Public Interest Environmental Law Conference March 5 suggested that "native" is a relative descriptor: When restoration is the aim, people often think of the way an area looked during their own childhood, and want the species of that time to return and flourish.

We should take another look at that philosophy, panelists suggested. Sydney Ross Singer, a medical anthropologist and biologist in Hawaii, told the story of the coqui, a frog precious in Puerto Rico. The

coqui arrived in Hawaii and reproduced. It was then the subject of a vicious anti-invasive campaign, which encouraged people to kill the frogs and even began a chemical regime.

The problem with this anti-coqui campaign? The frogs hadn't done any damage.

"Hawaii didn't have a frog problem; it had an attitude problem," Singer said. He says the plan to eradicate the coqui was pointless, cruel and dangerous, because of proposals to use biocontrols to eradicate them.

Invasive species could be problematic and even destructive, James Morris, a biologist at the University of South Carolina said, but the response to their presence was becoming more reactionary than responsible. "I think it is good policy to prevent invasions," James Miller said, and added, "It's good policy to weigh costs of control against benefits of control."

Boyce Thorne Miller, science policy coordinator at Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance, said that people get "sucked in" to the idea that any change in environment is necessarily dangerous, and corrective action should only be taken based on facts, not feelings. She said, "Very often it's fear that leads us to these conclusions that we need to get rid of these things."

— Shannon Finnell

WAR DEAD

In Afghanistan

- **1,489 U.S. troops killed*** (1,484)
- **10,543 U.S. troops wounded in action** (10,468)
- **709 U.S. contractors killed** (709)
- **\$386.2 billion cost of war** (\$384.1 billion)
- **\$109.8 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$109.2 million)

In Iraq

- **4,421 U.S. troops killed** (4,421)
- **31,938 U.S. troops wounded in action** (31,938)
- **185 U.S. military suicides** (updates NA)
- **1,521 U.S. contractors killed** (1,521)
- **109,230 to 1.2 million civilians killed*** (109,145)
- **\$779.2 billion cost of war** (\$778.0 billion)
- **\$221.6 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$221.2 million)

Through March 14, 2011; sources: icasualties.org; defense.gov, U.S. Dept. of Labor * highest estimate; source: iraqbodycount.org; based on confirmed media reports; other groups calculate Iraqi civilian deaths as high as 655,000 (Lancet survey, 2006) to 1.2 million (Opinion Research Business survey, 2008)

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL



RICHIE WEINMAN (revisited)

December 1998: Eugene Housing and Neighborhood Development manager Richie Weinman shows off Woodleaf Village, the new crown jewel of the city's low-income housing program. Thirty duplex homes, built by a nonprofit developer, line a loop on the flank of Spencer Butte. "It's the first subsidized family housing in south Eugene," he says. "I went to a lot of neighborhood meetings." In 1974, when he first arrived in Eugene with an education degree from Ohio State, Weinman worked as a substitute teacher and sold Richie's Tropic Coolers at the Saturday Market. In seven years with county government and 14 with the city, he has specialized in poverty and housing issues. This year he worked with the City Council on regulations allowing people to camp with permission in church parking lots. "Now people can help each other legally," he says. "Homeless people don't have to worry about being in violation of the law."

2011 update: For four years prior to his retirement last June, Weinman co-chaired Project Homeless Connect for Lane County, a one-day event that puts homeless people in contact with service providers. He returns as temporary staff to coordinate this year's PHC from 9 am to 3 pm Thursday, March 17, at the Fairgrounds.

Wall to Wall City Cycling Gear
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