

• While **Occupy Eugene might have lost its home** for the holidays, it gave us the gift of hope. OE's efforts brought the issue of homelessness in Lane County into the headlines where it belongs. It showed Eugene that Ph.D.s, street kids and activists could work together to create change and that the general population has had enough of corporate greed and letting banks and corporations control politics. And it showed us that the Eugene cops can handle a mass protest and occupation without breaking out the Tasers and the pepper spray. Eugene had one of the nation's longest Occupations by our count, and we're looking forward to seeing where Occupy Eugene will go next with its cause. How about occupying a Lane County commission seat or getting an OE volunteer on a city or county advisory committee? A protest march here, a vote on a key issue there, let's Occupy everywhere.

• **Two women to work for** in 2012: Suzanne Bonamici is the Democratic candidate for David Wu's lost seat in the First Congressional District in the Portland area. She spent many years in Eugene earning degrees from LCC, UO and the UO law school before moving on to Lane County Legal Aid Services. We see her as a strong statewide candidate in the years ahead. Our delegation praises her gutsy work in the Oregon Senate. Bonamici should win her way to D.C. in the late January election. The other super female candidate is Elizabeth Warren, of course, going for the Kennedy Senate seat in Massachusetts, temporarily stolen by Republican Scott Brown. You've probably already picked up her stirring advocacy of the middle class on the internet (see <http://wkly.ws/15e>). Karl Rove has seen the viral videos and he'll be throwing his million-dollar lies against her until Nov. 2012. We bet on Warren.

• If you listen to **Click and Clack** the Tappet Brothers on NPR you will hear one of the Magliozzi brothers say at the end, "Well, it's happened again. You've wasted another perfectly good hour of your life listening to *Car Talk*." As 2011 wraps up we hope none of us have wasted a perfectly good year without accomplishing something of significance. Looking around, we're seeing a higher level of awareness of political issues, but where's the action that usually follows awareness? There is much work to be done, as evidenced by the lowly 43 percent turnout of Democrats in the special primary election that was held for David Wu's empty congressional seat.

One good way to crank up your activism as the year comes to an end is to take advantage of Oregon's political tax credit program to support qualified political parties, causes, organizations or candidates. As an individual you can give \$50 (a married couple can give \$100) and receive the full amount back on your taxes for 2011. If you owe state income taxes, you can subtract that amount from what you owe; and if the state owes you a refund, they will add that amount to your refund check. Make sure your donation happens before midnight Dec. 31. Find rules at oregontaxcredit.com Oregon also has a cultural tax credit program with different rules. See www.culturaltrust.org

• We were sorry to hear that Portland's **Just Out LGBT newspaper** has shut down this week after years of serving not only Portland but the greater Oregon area for 28 years. The groundbreaking free newspaper was considered the most influential print publication on LGBT politics, arts and other issues in the region, but it was not able to survive the crash in advertising revenues over the past three years. Will someone pick up the baton? As we've discovered, it is possible for print to survive in this economy.

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





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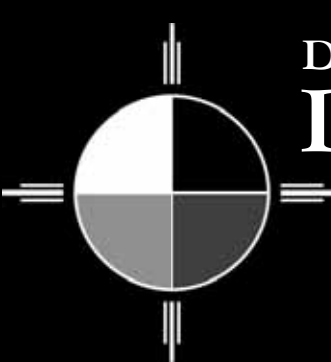
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WAR DEAD

In Afghanistan

- **1,847 U.S. troops killed*** (1,846)
- **15,138 U.S. troops wounded in action** (15,090)
- **981 U.S. contractors killed** (981)
- **\$486.1 billion cost of war** (\$486 billion)
- **\$143.5 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$143.5 million)

In Iraq

The war officially ended in December 2011 with a total of 4,421 U.S. troops killed, 31,921 wounded in action and undisclosed hundreds of U.S. military suicides. But U.S. contractors are assuming a larger role, high levels of U.S. spending continue, and the body count from civil unrest grows.

- **1,554 U.S. contractors killed** (1,554)
- **114,042 to 1.2 million civilians killed*** (113,770)
- **\$800 billion cost of war** (\$800 billion)
- **\$236.1 million cost to Eugene taxpayers** (\$236.1 million)

Through Dec. 26, 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)

LIGHTEN UP

BY RAFAEL ALDAVE

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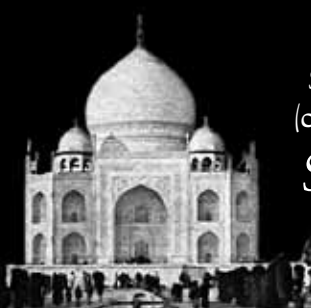
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