

• We hear from Oregon **ACLU Executive Director** Dave Fidanque that contrary to what we printed in this column June 28, the ACLU offices in Eugene will *not* be closing in September. Fidanque, who lives in Eugene, confirms he is losing two staffers, Bonnie Souza and Claire Syrett, but the office "will probably move to a smaller space in the fall." Meanwhile, he says, the Lane County Chapter is hosting a series of "Civil Conversations" on the second Tuesdays of the month, and the ACLU will have its usual entries in the Eugene Celebration Parade and booth on the Community Parkway. To donate, volunteer or get on the mailing list, visit www.aclu-or.org

• **Legalizing, regulating and taxing** marijuana is likely to be on the November ballot in both Oregon and Washington, but will voters give it a thumbs up or a middle finger? Oregonians voted down legalizing pot two years ago, but voters this time around might better appreciate the economic issues that are addressed in the Oregon Cannabis Tax Act, which includes hemp production. Prohibition has not only overloaded our jails and courts, but has also fed a huge, tax-evading underground economy run in large part by organized crime. Restrictions on hemp growing have also hurt Oregon farmers. Polls indicate Washington voters are leaning toward approving their ballot measure, while Oregon could go either way, depending on voter turnout. If both states legalize pot, the DEA will be under even more pressure to deal with the federal Controlled Substances Act which still classifies marijuana as a dangerous Schedule I controlled substance with no medicinal value. In May, Connecticut became the 17th state to legalize medical marijuana, adding to the pressure. Reclassifying pot as a Schedule II drug could allow regulation and dispensaries, and yes, big tax revenues for states on board with marijuana law reform.

• President Obama signed a new **federal transportation bill** on July 5, and in it were some good things for Oregonians. Rep. Peter DeFazio fought for and got a one-year extension on Secure Rural Schools, which gives Oregon counties, including Lane, \$100 million in county payments to divvy up. Lane County Administrator Liane Richardson says there are no plans

to use Lane County's share of the money to rehire deputies. Logging public lands hasn't been the answer to our long-term county budget woes. What about looking to Commissioner Rob Handy's suggestion we lobby the Legislature to raise taxes on private timberlands?

Some good news in the transportation bill for students – holding the rates on Stafford loans for another year. Also winning: The controversial Keystone XL tar sands pipeline didn't make it into the bill, nor did a coal ash amendment that would have pushed coal industry costs on taxpayers and the people who suffer from coal ash pollution. DeFazio says the bill and the highway funds will put Oregonians to work. We're hoping some of the road money makes Oregon more walkable and bikeable too.

• Eugene turns 150 this week. Woohoo.

• We often rip and poke **The Register-Guard** as part of our media criticism mission, but we do find redeeming content in the daily's shrinking pages. One example: Sunday's eyebrow-raising piece by R-G arts reporter Bob Keefer (see the Commentary section July 8) called eloquently for large tax hikes to provide an economic boost for Lane County, the state and the country. The R-G editors even ran this heresy above the fold. That issue was worth the eight quarters.

• **Patriarchy's dark shadow.** An astute Springfield reader sent us a good quote from *The Deepening Darkness: Patriarchy, Resistance & Democracy's Future* (2008) by Carol Gilligan and David A.J. Richards: "When violence is acceptable and pleasure is demonized, when newspapers print photographs of dead bodies and ruined houses while censoring bare breasts and the word 'fucking,' when Love Laws are enforced with righteousness and fervor while torture is condoned and Geneva Conventions violated, the shadow of patriarchy is unmistakable. Like the Angel in the House, it falls between us and our creativity, our democracy, our humanity."

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

In Afghanistan

- 2,021 U.S. troops killed* (2,017)
- 16,687 U.S. troops wounded in action (16,584)
- 1,173 U.S. contractors killed (1,131)
- 12,793 civilians killed (12,793)
- \$545.1 billion cost of war (\$542.5 billion)
- \$161.1 million cost to Eugene taxpayers (\$160.2 million)

In Iraq

- The war officially ended December 2011 with a total of 4,422 U.S. troops killed, 31,927 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.
- 1,569 U.S. contractors killed (1,563)
 - 117,311 to 1.2 million civilians killed* (116,980)
 - \$805.1 billion cost of war (\$804.8 billion)
 - \$237.7 million cost to Eugene taxpayers (\$237.6 million)
- Through July 9, 2012; sources: icasualties.org; defense.gov; U.S. Dept. of Labor (contractor deaths updated occasionally)

* highest estimate; source: iraqbodyscount.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). Afghan civilian deaths from guardian.co.uk tallied monthly.

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