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ALLEN ALLEY: Walking Across Oregon

SAM ADAMS: The Recall

SEX TRAFFICKING: Getting Help

PORTLAND

Spectator

Volume 8, Issue 1, October 2009

MAGAZINE

Getting Real About Health Care

This month, prepare
yourself for the debate

The Portland Spectator is a student publication who believes that the academic environment should be an open forum, where there is a chance for rational and prudent conservative arguments to be heard. We encourage the expression of diverse ideology to promote thought-provoking discussions.

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On the cover Samantha Berrier wears a flu mask, available in SHAC. Photograph by Clara Rodriguez

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Dear Readers,

Thomas Edison once said, “opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work,” and I couldn’t agree more. When I looked at the unnoticed, unremarkable *Spectator* magazine of October 2008, what I actually saw was a great opportunity to practice the art of magazine making. Here was this student publication with an office, a workable budget, an experienced advisor, and an eager staff. It just needed a little work.

There was a reason the magazine had been neglected for years—ideologically, *The Spectator* is to be a conservative magazine. Here at PSU, this word made it into a kind of pariah; students found it untouchable during the Bush years, lest they be accused of sympathizing with an unpopular administration and party.

Today, however, a new atmosphere exists for critical discussions—a great opportunity for us. We’ve chosen to practice an innovative conservatism; one that opens the door to new possibilities and builds a new vision for America’s future. We’re not settling for fast, dismissive labels of anything. Our job, as I see it, is to provide readers with new ideas, and new ways of considering important issues. I hope you find it valuable.

Sincerely,

Joe Wirtheim
Editor-in-Chief
 2009-2010



Left: Ian Uponen, Music Major and Madison Beaudet, Film Major.

Top: Minh Ho, Computer Science Major.

Bottom: Travis Meyer, Interdisciplinary Studies.

Photos by Clara Rodriguez



LOCAL Get your quills ready and top off your inkpots, Portland's Wordstock will be taking place October 8-11 at the Oregon Convention Center. Wordstock is an annual "festival of books" that brings together various local and national writers for four days of readings and writing workshops. This year Wordstock will be hosting over 100 writers including prominent Native American author Sherman Alexie and the confrontational evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins.

LOCAL In good news, the overall crime rates in Portland since 2007, especially meth related arrests, have significantly dropped. According to a federal report compiled by ADAM (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Program), the rate of arrestees that had acquired methamphetamines dropped from 23% to 13%. These drops may be in response to Oregon's prescription requirement for cold and flu medicine containing pseudoephedrine (the key ingredient for manufacturing meth).

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR ME LATELY, ASPSU? WELL, NOTHING

Student representatives are gearing up for another year of fighting for you. So far, they've only made promises. We'll have to be satisfied with examining those promises that Jonathan Sanford, as President of the Associated Students of PSU (ASPSU), has mapped onto the following year. Later, we can have fun calling him out every time he stumbles, because we're the press, and that's what we do.

Campus politics gets only slightly less love from PSU students than obnoxious sidewalk canvassers. But, it is important. The members we elect to ASPSU are highly engaged in the "real world" and are taking action to advocate for students from Salem to the steps of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. They defend a student's right to affordable tuition with the state legislature and fight for better government assistance when hostile economic environments force rising costs. After tuition and grant sizes are locked in, people like Sanford make promises to the student body to help us out on the back end of college costs.

Sanford soberly recognizes that he can't stop tuition going up nearly 8% from last year, nor can he stop student fees from increasing at a rate that SFC vice chair, Jil Heimensen, says will lead to an annual fee of over \$900 by 2014. Ridiculously over-priced textbooks? Forget it. What is he, a publishing company? No. But he is the ASPSU President and he is advocating for students who are the average graduating age of 27.9, and may have a life with its own expenses outside of tuition like raising children, affording food and shelter, and so on. One promise Sanford has made is an affordable housing campaign for working parents that already seems at odds with a current goal of PSU's administration to expand First Year Experience (FYE) housing and increase the number of

NATIONAL The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) is looking to borrow money from and possibly levy new fees on big banks in order to shore up its economic downfall this year. After ninety-four banks failed this year the FDIC, responsible for insuring deposit accounts up to \$250,000, estimates a loss of \$70 billion by 2013.

NATIONAL The Senate agenda in October includes hearings on examining the effects of global climate change legislation, the management of federal forests as it relates to climate change and carbon sequestration, reducing the use of energy in buildings using recommendations from the Department of Energy, and nominating a new Secretary of Energy, Steven Chu.

WORLD Afghanistan- Afghan President Hamid Karzai was re-elected this summer; allegations of corruption have little chance of being cleared as the oversight during elections was insufficient at best. The ballots, which are being re-counted as much as possible have been found to favor Karzai; although he is being encouraged to give his runner-up Abdullah Abdullah (his former foreign minister) a prominent position. While the US is building more schools and deploying the remainder of 21,000 more troops, doubts grow in the US senate and with President Obama. While we have been marginally successful in reducing poppy growth, which produces 85% of the world's heroin, the Taliban and al-Qaeda still have many strongholds. Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal believes we need a new strategy but it's unclear as to the new outline he proposes.

WORLD Iran- In a chest-beating show of strength, Iran test fires a series of short-range missiles. This follows condemnations from world leaders at a recent U.N. summit in New York. It is believed that Iran was attempting to conceal an additional nuclear development site hidden within a mountain on an Iranian military base. The U.S. is seeking painful sanctions if inspectors are not allowed full access to the facility, which Iran claims is solely for civilian power use, but is suspected of being intended for nuclear weapons development.

"traditional" students who are younger (possibly fresh out of high school).

A key word that was missing when Dean of Students, Michele Toppe, spoke about campus housing at the student publications orientation last month was "affordable." It is not yet known whether affordable housing is part of the administration's goal, but growing the controversial FYE program may be involved. Sanford promises to not only benefit student's pocket books with affordable housing, but also to improve the rate of students who finish their education at PSU, which he sees as directly tied to the issue. According to Sanford, PSU President Wim Wiewel is working with Associate VP in Finance and Administration Mark Gregory to gain funding from the city's Urban Renewal Project with which to build space for 1,000 beds on campus. Those beds aren't part of Sanford's plan, and it's unclear whether the administration will cooperate with ASPSU to make that housing affordable or not.

If these two goals are fighting for implementation, it will be interesting to see which comes out on top. ■

FYE: Facilitating community or drug use?

In a May 2009 *Spectator* article, Kayla Newell found the FYE program to be both expensive and ineffective. Rather than a

way of building community and encouraging students to make healthy choices, FYE tolerated drug abuse resulting in PSU's high dropout rates (67% for full-time students, 50% for part-time).

OTHER CAMPAIGN PROMISES FROM JONATHAN SANFORD

Shared Governance Keeping working people, mothers and fathers, veterans, and people of color from being "priced out" of admission to PSU

Truth and Reconciliation A week-long event in spring to help PSU heal any issues surrounding the topics of diversity and social justice on campus

Speakers that Sanford is trying to bring in: Desmond Tutu (or his daughter), and Barack Obama

More Power for the Student Senate over the Student Fee Committee (SFC)

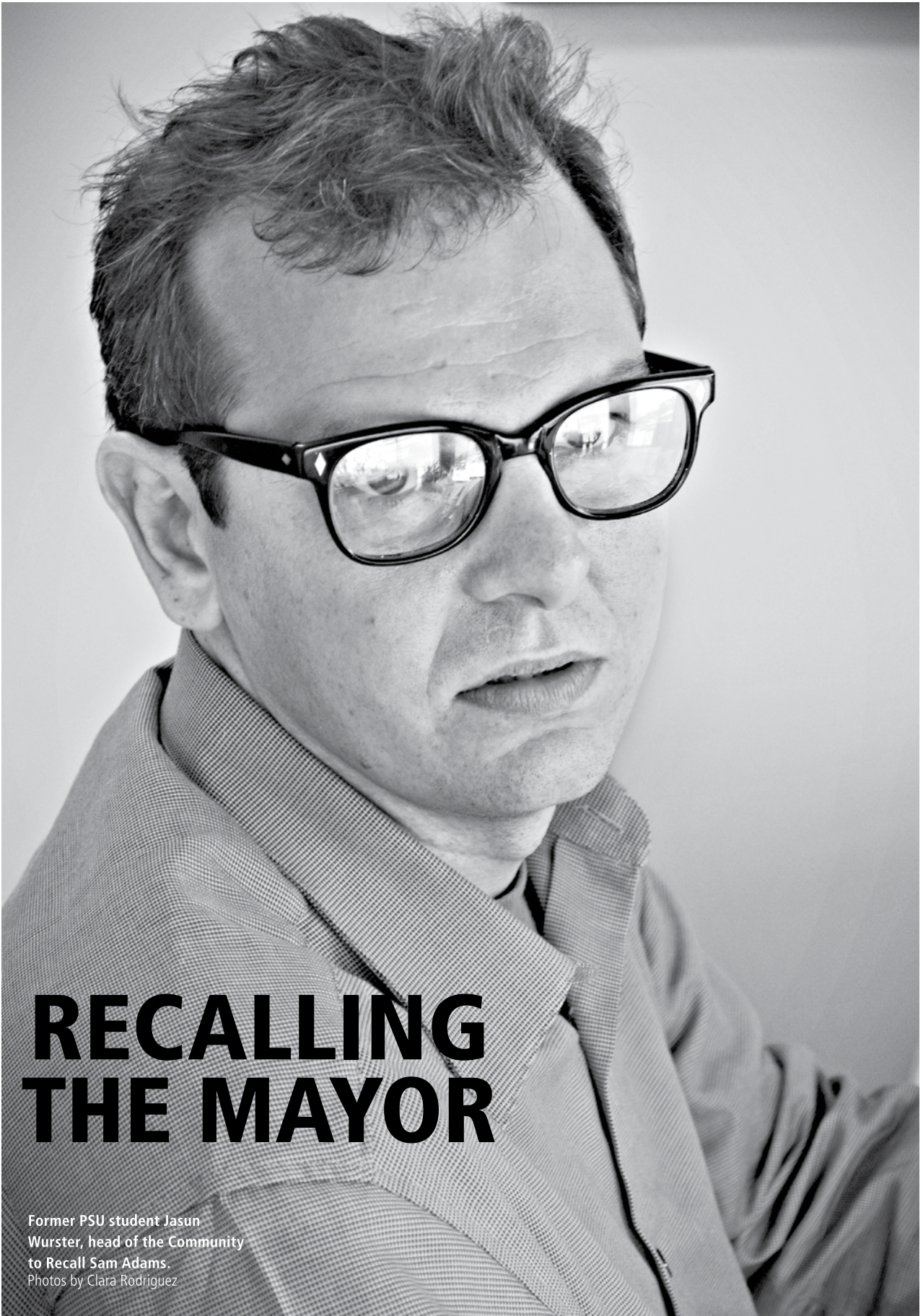
Policing SFC liaisons

Strict personnel training and stipend policies at ASPSU

Inclusion and Communication Having "a thousand cups of coffee and tea" with students on campus

Food cupboard for hungry students"

Positioning PSU as sustainable, rather than in name only



RECALLING THE MAYOR

Former PSU student Jasun
Wurster, head of the Community
to Recall Sam Adams.
Photos by Clara Rodriguez



A former PSU student leads a petition campaign to preserve the city's credibility

By Jeff Wickizer

This October, the recall saga of Portland's embattled Mayor Sam Adams and former legislative intern Beau Breedlove will reach a crossroads four years in the making. The Community to Recall Sam Adams, led by former PSU student Jasun Wurster, must present the required 32,183 valid signatures needed to trigger a recall of the Mayor on the next ballot.

If the recall campaign is successful, the embarrassment will continue for Mayor Adams. If the signature drive falls short, Adams can close the curtains for good on this carnival side show that has raised questions about his truthfulness and ability to perform the duties of Mayor.

Wurster is nearing the end of his nine month quest to lead a successful signature gathering campaign to recall Portland Mayor Sam Adams. Jasun said his decision to pursue a recall of Mayor Adams came down to his love of Portland. "I love this city; it's the first place I have really felt at home. It came to the point where I felt that if I let this issue go, then I might as well move."

On September 9, 2009, I sat down with Mr. Wurster at their campaign headquarters, located at 421 N. Broadway, to find out why he decided to pursue this recall and what his experience has been throughout the process.

Mr. Wurster wanted to make it clear that the campaign is not about sexual orientation or political affiliation, but about democracy. It comes down to a lack of ethics and truthfulness on Sam Adams' part. Jasun reiterated that Sam Adams lied to the citizens of Portland to get elected—only once he was elected and on the verge of being revealed was he forced to admit his lies.

"Since the beginning of the Portland Mayoral race, Sam Adams has engaged in constant lies and bullying. He eliminated potential candidates through political 'thuggery'. He had the mentality that



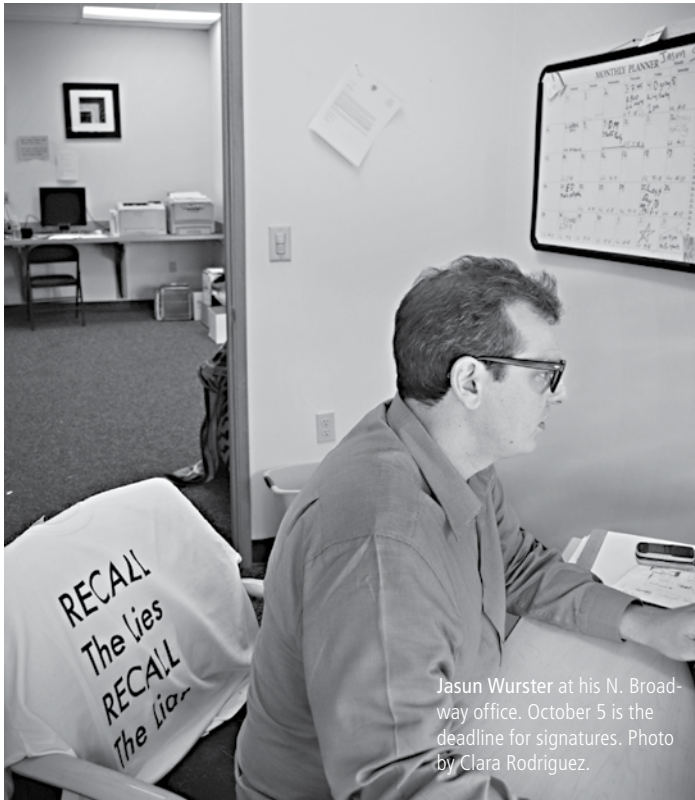
he was the biggest kid on the block and he was going to beat his competition bloody," said Wurster. He went on to add, "Adams ran such a negative campaign that it created political apathy, and voter suppression."

Over the last nine months there have been substantial and frequent criticisms of Mr. Wurster and the Community to Recall Sam Adams. *The Oregonian*, and columnist Anna Griffin, have printed multiple pieces labeling the recall as "amateurish organizing" with lackluster funding, as though it should not be taken seriously. The reverend Chuck Currie called them cowards and claimed they were hiding behind their website. Jasun says, "The newspapers have done a big disservice to the citizens of Portland. They are supposed to be the watchdogs of Democracy." Mr. Wurster also points out that Portland, unlike many other larger cities, has only one major newspaper. This does not allow a variety of messages and opinions to be distributed to Portland residents. We get the views of a newspaper largely sympathetic and apologetic to Mayor Adams.

Wurster wanted to make one thing clear; "This is not a paid signature campaign, where petitioners are paid to get a certain number of signatures. That kind of campaign employs professionals who are replaced if they do not meet their numbers. This is a volunteer campaign, made up of concerned citizens who believe deeply in this cause."

Multiple media outlets, both online and in print, have stated that the recall campaign has only gathered roughly 10,000 signatures, over 21,000 short of the requirement needed by October 5th. Mr. Wurster said that typically in these efforts, the majority of the signatures come in the last 30 days. He says that the campaign has compiled a volunteer base of over 500 people to gather signatures as the deadline approaches. Jasun did admit it has been a lot of work to

Continued -->



Jasun Wurster at his N. Broadway office. October 5 is the deadline for signatures. Photo by Clara Rodriguez.

get people to voice their concerns, “More people place a higher importance on voting for “American Idol” than their local government.”

Jasun says all the negative publicity he and the campaign have received is by design. He adds, “The intimidation, lies and scare tactics are the same tactics Sam Adams used against Bob Ball and Sho Dozono to get elected.” He also points out that other organizations, such as the Portland Police Union called for Mayor Adams to resign, as did former Mayor Tom Potter.

Jasun reminds me, “Sam Adams has two things going for him, political apathy and fear. It has been an eye opener, the amount of fear citizens have about Sam Adams. City employees and small business are afraid to speak out against him for fear of political retaliation. They risk losing memberships, grants, and funding.”

Then there is the repeated verbal and sometimes physical abuse that signature gatherers receive at the hands of Adams’ supporters. It has been well documented that people have scribbled out signatures, threatened gatherers, and harassed them due to their legal right, and attempt, to gather signatures. I asked Jasun why he thinks there have been so many outbursts toward this campaign and signature gatherers in general. Wurster says, “It is out of fear. People do not want to look inside themselves and realize they bought the lies and voted in the wrong guy. If they admit Adams was a mistake, they admit they made a mistake.”

Soon enough the signatures will be collected and tallied. There will finally be a clear path this saga will follow. I asked Mr. Wurster how he would view the recall attempt if it were to fall short. Would he consider it a failure? Jasun responded by saying, “At the beginning I realized there were two possible outcomes. One, we would gather enough signatures to have a recall placed on the ballot. Two, if we

2005

Sam Adams met Beau Breedlove while the 17-year-old was an intern in State Representative Kim Thatcher’s (R-Keizer) office.

AUGUST 2007

Pearl District developer Bob Ball confided in Randy Leonard that he had heard rumors of a possible inappropriate relationship between Sam Adams and a minor. Leonard took the news to Adams, who denied the reports, claiming that the relationship was that of a mentor guiding a young man interested in politics.

2007-2008

Sam Adams, Randy Leonard, and others in Adams’ corner continued to dismiss inquiries and reports into his relationship with Beau Breedlove as smear tactics used to derail his campaign to become the next Mayor of Portland.

JANUARY 2009

Former PSU student Jasun Wurster establishes recallsamadams.com

SEPTEMBER 2007

Leonard responded to Willamette Week, saying, “This is one of the most vile things I’ve ever seen happen in politics. At worst Sam is guilty of not recognizing that the cynics of the world would mischaracterize what he’s done.”

JANUARY 19, 2009

Roughly three weeks into his term as Mayor, Sam Adams confessed to Willamette Week that he had a sexual relationship with Beau Breedlove after June 25.

JUNE 22, 2009

Attorney General Kroger conducted a criminal investigation and issued a final report stating that, due to the lack of evidence, no criminal charges were going to be filed against Sam Adams.

were unable to gather the required signatures, we would at least engage citizens to be politically active and hold our government officials to the high standards required of them.” He added, “Sam Adams has been dividing Portland and this recall is about bringing people together.”

Jasun Wurster is pursuing this recall because of a strong belief in honesty and integrity, especially when it concerns the elected officials that represent our city. Being a recent Political Science student at PSU, Jasun is definitely a young man with a future in local government and politics. He stated, “I wouldn’t have been able to run this recall or understand the importance if not for my time at PSU.”

He has taken on a monumental task with significant consequences whether this recall is ultimately successful or not. I asked Jasun if he has thought about what the future holds for him if this campaign does not end as he hopes.

Jasun said, “I can do this recall because I have nothing to lose. If we do not succeed in recalling Sam Adams, I know a future in government and politics in Portland is over for me. I will most likely have to move. It’s a pretty bleak future I see if the recall does not succeed.” ■

For more information on the recall campaign visit: www.recallsamadams.com

Allen Alley (r) with Alexander Almeida at Waterfront Park.
Photos by A.J. Alley.



ALLEN ALLEY'S OREGON TRAIL

A Republican contender for governor takes a little walk to Portland

By Alexander Almeida

I arrived early. As soon as Alley walked up to me to say hello, he quickly excused himself to greet some gatherers who had just walked out of the Albertsons in Lake Oswego. Right as his watch clicked to nine o'clock, we began on the final stretch of Alley's long walk that started in Baker City and ended almost 400 miles in Portland's downtown waterfront park. I asked A.J., Alley's son, if they had ever thought about using bicycles. He said the idea came up, but a supporter in Eastern Oregon quickly killed the notion, "He told us 'we will choke you with [your bicycle] until you die.'" I now understood why they wanted to go by foot.

An Oregon State College Republican, Daniel Gerig, told me why he supported Alley. Having walked nearly 180 miles with him, he pointed out that Alley had business experience, and specifically, international business experience (PixelWorks, a hi-tech company co-founded by Alley has offices in Portland, Silicon Valley, Tokyo, Osaka, Shanghai, Taipei, Seoul, Hsinchu and the United Kingdom). He felt Alley was the best chance the GOP had in the upcoming election, noting that you essentially "had to consider Portland" in any gubernatorial bid. Alley has done just that by making a point to end his journey in Portland and going so far as to attend the progressive Bus Project and *Willamette Week* co-sponsored "Candidates Gone Wild" event...twice.

We were closing onto mile 400; I asked Alley how the response had been so far. Alley told me that there had been many honks and waving. Just as he tells us this, a large truck honked behind us; the spooked supporters dove for the bushes. "We've had a few angry honks, and a few thumbs down," Alley started but before he could finish a supporter interjected, "That's just flat out partisan!" Alley smiled and added, "I mean, I just crossed 400 miles of this state to get to know people, give me a break." I noticed Alley's legs; more tanned on one side than the other and remembered that he started his walk during Oregon's recent 100+ degree heat wave.

Alley is determined. He told me the reason he's running, despite being a virtual unknown, is that he honestly believes he is the right man for the job. I've seen Allen Alley before at his "Blast Off" event when he announced his candidacy for Governor. The message he had back then couldn't have been

Continued -->

Other Republican Contenders for Governor

Sen. Jason Atkinson

State Senator from Central Point, Atkinson has been a representative in Salem since 1998, when he was first elected at the age of 27.

Former Rep. John Lim

Lim has served in both the Oregon State Senate and House, though lost his re-election bid in 2008.

Former US Sen. Gordon Smith

is also rumored to announce his candidacy later this year.

clearer than if there had been a whole team of James Carvilles holding up “It’s the economy, stupid” signs. Since Alley launched his campaign on April 23, Oregon’s economy has only gotten worse. As of August, the Department of Labor reports Oregon’s unemployment rate has ballooned to 12.2%.

We arrived at Zupans (the first scheduled stop) to greet people in the parking lot and as a halfway point for more supporters to arrive. The number more than doubled from the initial ten or so to just fewer than 30, including what Alley dubbed the “Stroller Brigade” of mothers and children. Here, several news teams showed up for a quick interview before dashing off in their vans to the finish line at Waterfront Park. At less than one minute past 10:45, Alley rallied everyone to move out. The precision in timeliness was kind of amazing.

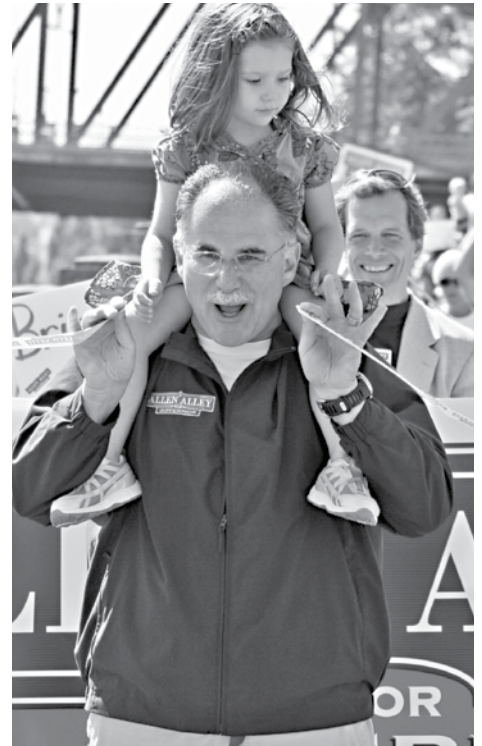
I then talked to several more supporters, starting with Alley’s neighbor who refused to spill any dirt (assuring me there was none), then a former employee, his wife, and a business partner. They all had the same thing to say: Oregon needs jobs and Alley is the best man to get it done. They all cited his experience, his ethics and his unrelenting determination to do something once he commits himself.

While talking to Alley’s supporters and hearing his speeches, there seemed to be something missing; that something

was what forces bile to the back of my friends’ mouths when they hear the word Republican: the social agenda. When I asked Alley about the lack of a social agenda he told me it was because few people had brought it up on the campaign trail; that they cared more about jobs and the recovery of the economy. I read this more as Alley knowing most Oregonians don’t care about the conservative social agenda and unless Alley wanted that albatross “(R)” to become electoral kryptonite, he ought to avoid the subject as much as possible. This also corresponds with Alley’s stated attempt to get as many Independent and Democrat votes as possible.

Alley crossed the finish line at Waterfront Park, which was adorned with ceremonial ribbons and lots of red, white and blue balloons. Alley’s ending speech was similar to his other speeches I’ve heard, but with more determined flair and a realistic sense of the future for the state, saying “It is easy to be sustainable when there is no industry...when the entire state is a park. Anyone can do that. Our challenge is to show the world how to have economic prosperity and do it in harmony with our environment. *That* is a challenge worthy of Oregon.”

In this era of political rhetoric and bitter partisanship, Alley seems to be uninfected even if he suffers from political naivety. But that illness is far more bearable. ■



They all had the same thing to say: Oregon needs jobs and Alley is the best man to get that done.



Doing Health Care Reform Right



Supporting the President's initiative to reform health insurance may be a hard pill to swallow. The nagging question is who will pay for the mandates?

By Joe Wirtheim

From a distance, installing new regulations on the health insurance industry looks great. Many young adults are uninsured either because they're working part-time or for small businesses, either of which make health insurance unattainable. Of course at PSU, the mandatory health premium levied on our tuition bill spreads the cost evenly.

Therin lies the catch to national mandatory health insurance. If Obama gets his way, when you're finished with school you'll be obliged to begin buying health insurance yourself, or through your (pray) new employer. David Gratz, a physician, writes in

the *Weekly Standard* that without the base of a large premium-paying public, insurance costs would soar, especially with all the new mandates on insurers to cover almost everything. But in states like New York and Massachusetts, experiments on increasing the insurance pool and evening out premiums still led to obscene premium increases due to over-regulation.

At the end of the day, Obamacare may not really save money. If he holds to his September 9 promise to not increase the national debt, then who will pay for all this care? The reality coming into focus is that we are about to experience another tax, another entitlement, and another government liability. ■





Socialized Government Death Medicine...!

The disappointing search for logic or utility in Republican arguments

By Jonathan Miles

OHC's next Think and Drink event will feature a discussion between Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Richard Read and Author Lijia Zhang during Happy Hour at Rontoms. Wednesday, October 7, 2009, at 6:30 p.m. 600 E. Burnside, Portland

"Think and Drink" lived up to its name this month, where, over drinks, I listened to Oregon's U.S. Representative Earl Blumenauer (D), and PSU President, Wim Weiwei, speak about the current political cacophony over healthcare reform. The event, sponsored by the Oregon Council for the Humanities, was at a packed Rontoms, where I was dumbstruck by Blumenauer's "facts don't matter" assessment of the Republican angle over healthcare reform. Weiwei, who disagreed with Blumenauer's dismal view of the national debate, rebutted that while people make decisions based on emotion, there is a requirement for logic and fact to give those decisions endurance.

Well, if he's right, then Republicans all over the country will eventually change their minds about healthcare reform, because so far there aren't any logical or fact-based arguments driving their end of the discussion. While "Socialized Medicine" sounded scary in the nineties, the two ringers that are being used to scare people now are "Government Takeover" and "Death Panels."

Even though the term "Death Panels" is going out of fashion like folksy charm, the residual theory has clung to the debate like fleas to a bubonic rat. A local Portland lawyer weighing in on the issue believes that like cheap mail service, education and public defenders, universal healthcare is an obvious service that the government should provide. However,

he also recognizes the need for a panel to deny some risky claims for the sake of keeping down costs. Unfortunately for the Republican argument, there are no existing bills that include a provision for actual death panels with the power to euthanize the elderly. Without death panels we are left with a socialized “Government Takeover.”

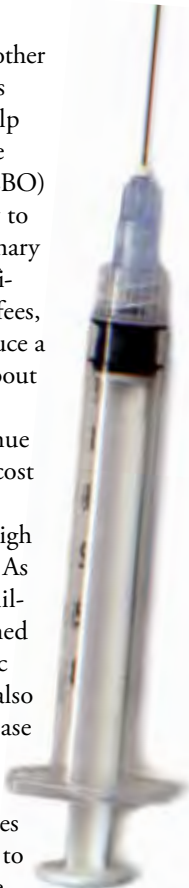
So what will happen to my gold-plated, low-deductible, high-premium insurance plan if the government takes over the health care industry? This is a question that could have been explored fruitfully if the plan was to reinvent healthcare into something like Britain’s National Health Service. Yet those who decry the Socialist reform attempts are acting as though a government funded insurance plan would out compete the newly restricted private insurers and take over the market. Let’s be real. The public option, valuable though it may be, will always be sub-par compared to the private option. Private companies like FedEx will always outperform government-run organizations like the U.S. Post Office. While we all admire and respect the over-worked, under-sung heroes of public legal defense, we also suspect that we could increase our chances of winning a case if we could afford a private attorney. Finally, private schools routinely outperform public schools in academic achievement. The reason why public options can compete with the private alternatives in each of these realms is not because the government has regulated the competitiveness out of the market. It is simply because most of us can’t afford the private option. The question, then, is whether we would rather have another bottom of the barrel public service than no service at all, and not whether that public option is a Trojan horse devised to assassinate granny.

What’s unfortunate about the dominating Republican arguments isn’t just that they’re wrong, it’s that they exist where

there could be room for a reasonable one. Under the latest bill, being pushed by Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee Senator Max Baucus (D-Mo.), there will not likely be a public option insurance plan, but a private, non-profit cooperative to compete with existing insurers. The benefit of leaving out the public option is not eschewing the risk of government takeover, but that a cooperative will cost about \$100 billion less than government-run plans. However, this means we still face \$774 billion in costs for the cheapest reform proposal. After Obama’s \$787 billion recovery, it is frightening to think that we may drop another bomb on the national deficit. Obama says that emphasis on preventive care will help pay for reform, but that’s hard to believe when the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) provides research showing that it’s likely to cost more, not less. In the CBO’s preliminary analysis of the Baucus bill, however, significant reform coupled with revenues from fees, penalties, and taxes is projected to produce a net reduction in the national deficit of about \$61 billion over the next few years.

Perhaps the most questionable revenue is the excise tax that would increase the cost of luxury insurance plans by up to 40% with special exclusions for people with high risk jobs like firefighters and coal miners. As it stands now, parents who send their children to private schools are already steamed up about paying taxes to fund the public schools that they aren’t using; these are also the same people who would see an increase tax on their gold-plated insurance plan. Other options are taxing employers who don’t provide insurance to their employees and private insurance companies. Is it fair to tax these three groups for the sake of the 15% of U.S. citizens who are currently uninsured? Furthermore, is it fair to ask purchasers of a private good to subsidize the reduction

of the national deficit through a fancy sales tax? I’m not the person who can form that argument, but I am savvy enough to see that it’s missing from the mouths of those who are informed enough to do so. ■



The cost of health care is already high in the US, at about 1.5 times that of any other country in the world

The Concord Coalition states that the cost to maintain Medicare and Medicaid type entitlements will consume all of US revenue by 2043.

The government pays about 50% as much as private insurers for procedures that are provided to Medicare/Medicaid patients

Frequent Flying is No Kind of Health Care

Overhauling health insurance is the biggest project of this Presidency. Understanding it can be just as big. Here's where the deal stands.

By Erica Charves

Pres. Obama says that any bill he signs has to meet the following requirements:

Would not make you or your employer change insurance or doctor

Eliminates the following: pre-existing conditions, cap on lifetime or annual coverage, dropping coverage for sick people

Create a new insurance exchange for uninsured
Tax credits and assistance for poor and lower income Americans

The plan would go into effect in four years

Individuals must have insurance; large businesses will pay into insurance pool. Small businesses may be provided with "hardship waiver"

No federal funding for illegal residents and no abortion funding
Required Medicare reform on spending

Sen. Baucus' reform bill, as reported to the Congressional Budget Office:

Provides federal grants for start-up costs for co-ops
Requires citizens to purchase insurance by 2013
Requires big businesses to provide insurance for employers

Places restrictions on denying coverage or changing coverage costs based on a new customer's 'pre-existing' state of health

A 'grandfather' rule that will allow existing policies to remain unchanged by the new laws, if the customer wishes to keep the policy active

A state-run insurance exchange market, where customers can shop for a new policy

Subsidies for customers whose annual income falls between \$14-\$33k for individuals, or up to \$66k for families of four

Expanding Medicaid to include non-elderly adults whose annual income is less than \$20k

Tax credits given to small employers who offer insurance

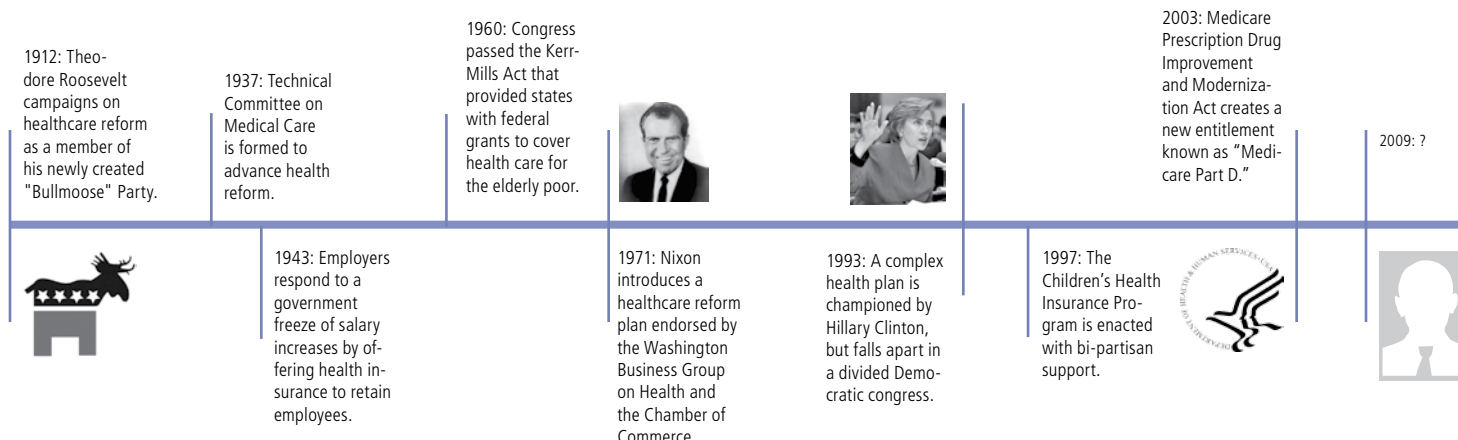
After six years working in emergency medicine, I have seen some crazy things. I worked four years on an ambulance in the Bay Area of California, and now I am employed in a local emergency room on a weekend night shift. In this line of work, there are less dramatic gun shot wounds, stabbings and car accidents; instead we see heaps of people for simple problems like refilling prescriptions, treating the common cold and hangovers. We have an expression: "frequent flier." Emergency rooms are too often treating chronic conditions, psychiatric problems, migraine headaches, addiction or a combination thereof. Frequent fliers are racking up bills on (presumably) unpaid tabs, and others paying through social assistance such as Medicaid, are running up a tab on the public dime. When individuals are forced through lack of insurance or alternatives to use emergency rooms as primary care, everyone loses. Hospitals lose money, and costs are passed onto those who have insurance.

Overhaul, Stat!

Representatives in Congress and the Senate will be revising and voting on a healthcare reform bill this fall and many of us are wondering what it will cost. It is a necessary change because the uninsured are crowding emergency rooms and suffering through problems that a primary care physician could treat for minor co-pays. President Obama said, in his September 9 proposal speech, "Individuals will be required to carry basic health insurance...just as most states require you to carry auto insurance."

Mandated insurance concerns skeptical Americans. This is an important point that young people, college students in particular, should not overlook. Young people, generally those under 30 years of age, are a key element to the new health plan. An Urban Institute survey from 2008 showed that one in three young adults were uninsured, often due to lower-wage jobs and employment without healthcare options. During times of financial crisis and record high unemployment, college students and middle class families may have to consider spending an extra \$100 to \$400 a month, offset by a small annual tax credit to purchase the required insurance.

Portland State University currently requires all students enrolled in five credits or more to pay into a co-op type coverage, with a fee of \$177 per term that covers basic insurance. While it pays only a portion of bills, the co-pay for regular visits to the Student Health and Counseling Center remains low for regular check-ups, lab work, dental care and refilling prescriptions. Additional coverage can be purchased



on a sliding scale based on age starting around \$400 per term. A preventative-based, low-cost option for youth is still in the proposed Baucus bill because co-ops like PSU's work to cover youth for a low rate while providing access to a clinic.

Oregon Democrat and Senator Ron Wyden expressed concern regarding the cost of mandated health coverage. Hard-working middle class families may not qualify for a tax credit, even though they are among the most in need. In Oregon this year, over 90,000 people applied for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) lottery; only 3,000 people were chosen in addition to the Oregonians already covered by OHP. By limiting the tax credits allowed, small business owners and the uninsured will have to rely on co-ops and Medicaid to provide insurance.

Healthcare for All in a Cooperative Sense

A co-op system has been advocated by Republicans working for bipartisan agreement such as Rep. Olympia Snowe (R- Maine), one of a few members on the Senate Finance Committee known as the "Gang of Six". Chairman of the committee and head of the gang, Sen. Max Baucus (D-Montana), revealed a plan that closely resembles Obama's proposal in his speech to Congress. Although the new plan is missing the government option, most Republicans still do not favor its option of a co-op. I would argue this is because the GOP is in bargaining mode. Just like buying a car, you never accept the first offer. The Baucus Bill is a first offer. Because co-ops are private, it is likely that some Republicans will vote "yes" in the future.

Co-op insurance companies work like a union to bargain for insurance deals as a group, and other co-ops are member-owned health systems providing care directly. The ideal co-op would provide a block of uninsured individuals and small businesses more affordable rates; currently those who pay for private insurance shell out three times more than employer provided plans. Perhaps an insurance giant like Kaiser, who owns hospitals nationwide, could

be contracted to provide low-risk health insurance for youth and others on a sliding scale.

Private options work for Medicare and Medicaid patients. Years ago some of these plans were given private options, where government agencies agreed to pay mass sums to companies such as Kaiser, Blue Cross, AARP or Providence to purchase plans under other insurers. For example, a senior may choose to pay a premium and receive Providence Medicare or AARP Medicare, but they will pay annually and the company collects co-pays. When individuals can afford the extra fare, they often choose privatized co-ops.

Access to co-ops and clinics for affordable rates and incentives for healthier living, along with preventative medicine, can make a huge difference. By giving choices and bargaining through co-op healthcare plans, the self-employed and uninsured can receive lower rates. Rewarding patients and medical providers for healthy lifestyles will lower costs and reduce reliance on overburdened emergency rooms where patients can incur thousands of dollars in bills. It's time to pull the cord on unethical practices such as disqualifying people for pre-existing conditions, and annual spending caps. With the right prescription for change, our healthcare system can recover from its current state. ■



INTERRUPTING SLAVERY

A Portland organization works to aid victims of an unseen crime: sex trafficking

By Samantha Berrier

The story of Miya is your typical heartbreaking story. ABC News reported on the Arizona teen's ordeal three years ago. While working at a mall to save college money, Miya was approached by a well-dressed couple. They introduced themselves as a model agency looking for new faces. Flattered by their interest, Miya agreed to meet the couple that evening at a local restaurant. The "agent" then mentioned their current journey to California for a few photo shoots and invited Miya to join them for the short trip. He told Miya that if she didn't enjoy the shoots, she was allowed to leave at anytime. Convinced that she could earn around a thousand dollars in one weekend, Miya graciously accepted the offer. As promised, Miya underwent a complete makeover, from hair to nails. Her excitement quickly diminished as her adventure took a turn for the worst as she was then forced into prostitution. After six nights of sexual torture, Miya found herself on one of the roughest streets in San Francisco, where she bravely ran for her life.

Many find this nightmare a reality. We convince ourselves that slavery is of the past. However, every year hundreds of thousands of fragile women and children are forced into the underground sex industry where they are pressured into prostitution within the safe walls of America. According to the National Institute of Justice, "the number of human trafficking cases brought in federal courts has dramatically increased" since the year 2000. In August of this year a local Portland man was indicted by a federal court on six charges of sex trafficking involving the forced prostitution of a minor. While predators have seduced many victims from "good" families, research conducted in 2001 by the University of Pennsylvania shows that most of the approximately 293,000 youth currently at risk are "runaways or have been abandoned by their families and live on the streets."

Greg Russinger, a native to Portland, stands as the co-founder and president of JustOne, an organization that promotes awareness of the sexual

exploitation of young women and children around the nation. During our interview, Russinger discussed his abrupt awakening: "Six years ago, I was a part of an indie film group and we watched the film, 'Lilia 4Ever'. The film was so provocative that it deeply interrupted my existence. The film focused on the issue of international sex trafficking."

After years of collaborating with several non-profit organizations working toward the extinction of sex trafficking internationally, Russinger began to pursue a career focusing on the local aspects of human slavery. His passion to educate and mobilize the population of the local horrors of sex trafficking quickly transformed into a two-hour learning forum, "Sex&Chocolate", that focuses on sexual exploitation and the parallels within the chocolate industry. His organization also uses social mediums such as Twitter to create a networking base for inter-agency collaboration.

This fall, Russinger's foundation anticipates an addition to their actions against slavery. "The Piece Plan" will allow everyday citizens to sponsor victims of human trafficking, and this expansion will encourage stabilization for survivors to reintegrate themselves back into society. In the past, the women who offered their testimony to the police were immediately released back onto the streets; this lacked incentive for the scared women to seek help. Much like an exchange program, a family will essentially "adopt" the victim and provide one-on-one care. With this program in place, the victims will receive the physical resources they need, as well as the emotional support to transform from victim to survivor. ■

For more information, visit www.just4one.org or www.onevoicetoendslavery.org or twitter: @endingslavery Sexual Assault Resource Center

(503) 640-5311

National Human Trafficking Hotline

(888) 373-7888

Oregon Human Trafficking Task Force

Keith Bickford: (503) 251-2479

"My hope is to interrupt the reader as I have been interrupted."

— Greg Russinger



SEX & CHOCOLATE

Just4One's Sex&Chocolate campaign aims to increase education and awareness about the sex and chocolate slave trade. In 2000, the U.S. consumed 3.3 billion pounds of chocolate. While the chocolate industries receive roughly 70% of the profit, the farmers barely obtain 5% according to the European Fair Trade Association. In order to produce 40% of the world's cocoa crop, farmers in the Ivory Coast employ child laborers trafficked from Mali. The U.S. Department of State estimates that 109,000 children in West Africa work under "the worst forms of child labor." These child workers endure severe beatings while being forced to work long hours without pay.

H1N1: Think of it as a personal challenge

This year's flu is especially tricky, so staying in class will take extra effort

Masks like this are available free at the Student Health Center (SHAC)



By Megan Kimmelshue

As the weather turns cold and students crowd the Portland State campus, more than just parking spaces and waitlists will be worried over. Viruses like the common cold, flu, and various nasty hybrids rampage swiftly and mercilessly throughout whole classrooms and departments every year. The sounds of sniffing, a hacking cough, and watery sneezes become a dreadful symphony that students fear and professors raise their voices to be heard over. The main concern this year, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), is centered on the H1N1 influenza, or more misleadingly known as Swine Flu.

The CDC analyzes influenza activity across the United States on a weekly basis and the findings presented in mid-September noted that influenza activity is already higher than normal. In response to the concern over the spread of the virus, PSU and the Center for Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) have created new policies designed to protect the student body and faculty.

The Spectator is not looking to contribute to the trend of misinformed hysteria over this particular strain of influenza, but

like any other virus, precautionary measures can be taken to guard against succumbing to these unpleasant invaders that can turn a great term into a disaster. Fortifying the immune system through small measures will give you a greater chance of making it through the fall and winter seasons without battling illness alongside midterms. Building a strong immune system can be done in several ways, but it is important to realize that the body works holistically together to keep itself healthy.

Nutrition to Build Immunity The best way to build a healthy immune system is by taking in wholesome, traditionally-made foods that don't require much artificial doctoring. Look for broth-based soups without preservatives, like Trader Joe's Chicken Noodle, or make it yourself. Chicken broth has been shown through research to have anti-inflammatory properties. Naturally fermented foods, like kombucha, yogurt and kefir contain natural probiotics and good bacteria that provide excellent immunity support. Keep a bag of frozen berries in your freezer to add to otherwise bland foods that will add vitamins and natural sweetness without high amounts of sugar. If you do

succumb to illness, drink coconut juice in addition to water, as it is an isotonic beverage that provides your body with crucial minerals needed to restore hydration and electrolyte counts, which Gatorade artificially tries to replicate.

Exercise to Build Immunity Breaking a sweat, unless you're feeling completely under the weather, can be a healthy booster and a stress reliever. It can be as easy as taking a walk through the Park Blocks, or as involved as signing up for a fitness class or jumping on the elliptical in the student workout room in the Stott, or come Winter Term, the new Rec Center.

Supplements to Build Immunity The Whole Foods' brand of supplements is affordable and good quality. Stock up on their vitamin A & D blend derived from cod liver oil; both vitamins, especially Vitamin D, are strong immunity builders. If you can afford pure cod liver oil, even better. Small 1000 mg Vitamin C packets that dissolve in water are also helpful to have on hand and run about 39 cents per serving. Running a little higher price-wise but worth the cost is a daily probiotics capsule. The National Center for Complementary

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RELAX. STRESS CAN COMPROMISE YOUR BODY IN WAYS THAT AFFECT SLEEPING HABITS, EATING PATTERNS, AND DAILY ROUTINES.

and Alternative Medicine notes that the friendly bacteria present in probiotics are “vital to proper development of the immune system, to protection against microorganisms that could cause disease, and to the digestion and absorption of food and nutrients.”

Lifestyle to Build Immunity Besides the obvious precautions of washing your hands and covering your cough, your daily habits can help prevent contracting illness. Relax. Stress can compromise your body in ways that affect sleeping habits, eating patterns, and daily routines. When your body is thrown off-kilter, sickness can follow. Cut out or cut down on smoking, alcohol and sugar.

If you do find yourself feeling under the weather, dedicate time to rest and schedule an appointment at the Student Health Center if your symptoms are not resolving within a week. SHAC recommends that students stay home for at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever. Not only will taking the time off speed up your recovery, but your classmates and professors will thank you as you eliminate one more possible exposure to illness. ■



New PSU Classroom Health Policies

- » Students will not be penalized for missing classes due to illness
- » Faculty will not require a doctor's note to excuse absences
- » Faculty may ask a student to leave class immediately if exhibiting signs of illness and not return until 24 hours after fever has subsided
- » Faculty will update classes weekly regarding basic flu information provided by SHAC
- » Faculty should provide alternate means of communication with ill students
- » Faculty may refrain from passing out paper that might be handed from one student to another and when possible, ask students to leave empty chairs or desks between them
- » The policy also states that in the event of a campus shutdown, new policies and guidelines will be implemented

Obama Needs to Bring it Home

If the President wants to make real change, he needs to “pick up and dust off” his flimsy domestic policy

By Molly Shove

“Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America.” So said President Barack Obama on January 21st to a hysteric crowd, fanatically reminiscent of the Beatles’ U.S. debut. Since then, his once astronomical popularity has fallen by almost twenty percent, and “Saturday Night Live” has found more to make fun of than his ears and cool demeanor. Some blame public figures like Rush Limbaugh for brandishing red-hot pokers, herding Americans away from their would-be omnipotent caretaker. Other more loyalist onlookers blame cynical independent voters for expecting a grand revolution of “hope and change” to, in one fell swoop, rid the world of all its problems. Still, others take the view that after about six months in office, he hasn’t gotten all that much done.

Obama came into office promising us utopia. He was going to “make the hard choices” in restoring our international reputation, save the world, as well as the polar bears, while simultaneously weaning our dependence on foreign oil and creating a new green economy with affordable healthcare; the kind that would make America’s businesses more competitive at the same time as it found tax dollars to improve unemployment benefits, throw capital at floundering banks and give tax cuts to 95% of working Americans. Reading the names of recent bills that have passed the President’s desk such as the “Helping Families Save Their Homes Act,” one might suspect that he’s making progress in his pursuit of such towering achievement.

But upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that the unpopularity of the bills do not stem from a disillusioned and impatient American public; they stem from flatly ineffective legislation.

The first major bill passed by President Obama was the “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act,” which was said to “lay a foundation for our lasting economic growth and prosperity.” What it has actually turned out to be is a hodgepodge of tangled tax cuts and social service programs, which do less to create jobs and do more to aid local government and the unemployed. These things are over-priced amenities, doing ultimately little to jump-start our economy. They keep our parks maintained and people dependent on taxpayers for their income. Other problems include 9,287 earmarks coming to the taxpayers at a cost of nearly \$13 billion. Some of them address important problems that need dealing with; some don’t. Nearly all of them, however, fail in any significant way to address the sprawling deficit.

GOP congressmen pointed to several alarming line items in the 2009 stimulus budget. For example, a \$246 million tax break for movie producers to buy a film does help with unemployment, but is not something that taxpayer money needs to support. Spending \$650 million for the digital television converter box coupon program is a joke, encouraging people to waste time at home on the tube. And the \$248 million spent on furniture at the new Homeland Security headquarters is not doing much to help our “economic growth and prosperity.”

What’s more worrying than the specific bills is the attitude of the president towards his campaign promises. His stimulus has barely any green energy incentives compared to the money allotted to fixing our highways. Though the Cash for Clunkers program forced you to buy cars with higher MPG, did it really change anything with regards to global warming? Only 10% of carbon emissions in the U.S. come from cars. Most of the other 90% come from the large coal-fueled electricity companies who will receive free

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Illustration By Steve Ebert

permits under the cap and trade bill.

Of the twelve other bills he has signed, three are extensions of ongoing government programs (Cash for Clunkers, Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act and Small Business Act Temporary Extension) and one was the delay of the switch from analog to digital television. That's more than one fourth of his legacy.

This is not to say everything he's done has been ineffective. He simply needs to grow a backbone. His original idea for cap and trade was brilliant, and only congressional foot dragging turned it sour. He didn't write the earmarks in the stimulus; his fault is in passing it, and passing up the opportunity to show congress who's boss. Obama is more moderate than most of his congress, and the reason most of them are

in office is due to Obama's popularity. It would be prudent for Congress to stop its lethargic self-indulgence and listen to him.

One of his policy bright spots is the "Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act." An all-encompassing bill with the health of future America in mind, it holds a great deal of potential. If it cuts the number of smokers, it cuts future health costs and family tragedies. It's also an example of the government thinking about the nation's wellbeing rather than lobbyists or tax revenues. For example, instead of just raising taxes on flavored cigarettes or those labeled "light," they ban them altogether.

He also helps fund education in his stimulus, which is commonly accepted to be both a long-term economic investment

and the best way to take care of most social problems. It helps him follow through on many of his campaign promises, from developing green technology in the labs of universities to fostering an accepting international community by teaching world history and critical thinking skills.

If he wants to save the world, he needs to start by saving his party from themselves and regaining the trust of the American people by passing some legitimately good policy. Not every idea he's had is perfect, but he has outlined some fairly creative solutions to difficult problems. Now it's up to him to "make hard choices" and prove to the American people that he is "change they can believe in." ■

The Spectator's Rearbuttal

Editor's Note: Through June, The Rearguard and The Spectator will each feature a column of "banter," in a civilized manner, on issues of concern to the reading public at Portland State University. This is the Portland Spectator's response to the following challenge, agreed to by the Editors: Stake out your publications' territory.

"HAVE YOU NO SENSE OF DECENCY, SIR?"

By Joe Wirtheim

Ever since 1804 when Aaron Burr shot Alexander Hamilton dead in a duel over an unflattering political commentary, America has enjoyed a, let's say, "robust political dialog." We love our traditions, but we mustn't keep outright shooting each other—pistol dueling is messy and out of style.

We're rather lucky at Portland State, because we're graced with an ideological array of student publications that are the enablers of a healthy intellectual issues debate... or something... (let me say, don't let dear grandma see your copy of *The Rearguard* with its explicative cover; she wouldn't understand its intellectual irony).

A good example is here at the more [ahem] prudent *Spectator* where we are tasked with being the *conservative* voice on campus. Now take a moment and do yourself a favor: wipe from your mind the vision of a ranting Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, or Bill O'Reilly. We're working to set ourselves apart from the media's clowns. We're choosing to take our cues from conservative thinkers with cooler heads—and there are plenty.

To wit: David Frum voiced his frustration over a hijacked debate at NewMajority.com. He is a conservative commentator and former G. W. Bush speechwriter who has been critical of the Glenn Beck phenomenon, telling the *LA Times*, "...there's a line where legitimate concerns begin to collapse into paranoid fantasy." He is also speaking of the Birthers and Death Panel folks, of course.

Then there's Jon Henke of TheNextRight.com who struggles with his party's fringe, fretting about what he calls "irresponsible, dishonest conspiracy theories that divert us from important matters." His criticisms are often pointed to the WorldNetDaily

[wnd.com] whose Editor, Joe Farah, spends his time espousing the most unfortunate theories. Henke is concerned that the past month of death panel talk has circumvented a decent debate on health care.

The obnoxious fringe speaks to who they imagine is their grassroots constituency, fanning the flames of unhealthy government cynicism (where a healthy one should exist), and forgetting to educate along the way. This is, to my mind, an unfortunate disservice, and sidesteps the real debate that should be occurring (like, why should we not adjust the health industry, exactly?).



THE SPECTATOR, AS AN EDITORIAL PUBLICATION, NEEDS TO DRAW A LINE IN THE SAND.

For those of us in the audience who try to make sense of politics and policy debates by doing something perfectly natural like reading or watching the news, we find ourselves taking in a poorly scripted soap opera—only with real consequences. So when John Henke and David Frum began taking the fringe to task, it reminded me of the day in 1954 when the good republican Rep. Joe Welch laid Sen. Joe McCarthy out with his simple question, "have you no sense of decency, sir?"

Actually, the Welch thing is one of Jon Stewart's favorite points of ridicule directed at his rivals on "The Daily Show." Stewart is, according to a recent Time poll, the most trusted news personality by 50% of Oregonians (Brian Williams a distant 32%). Of course, I wonder if Stewart is the other side of the same coin to Beck. Stewart's ridiculous "like-me-I'm-cute" grinning after every quip to his choir does little to enlighten and engage us—instead it only underlines the viewer's cynicism of substantial debate. His "ironic distance" falls flat on those who want to engage and take real action. Like Beck, the man is an entertainer posing as the person we hoped for: a journalist.

Speaking of big hopes, has anyone noticed the latest *Rearguard*? Perhaps you skipped over its, lets say, blessed defecation cover. If you did crack it open, you'd notice this month's "psychedelic" aesthetic, which does make their "news" content easier to swallow (watching Ziggy curse at us is not unlike a bad acid trip). The one question that troubles *The Spectator* is when did rude, cheap comedy replace speaking for the unrecognized, oppressed voices of campus, which is the paper's stated mission?

I'm going to stake out a little territory here; *The Spectator*, as an editorial publication, needs to draw a line in the sand. We'll refrain from birthers and death panel theories, and instead take our cues from a more sensible center-right faction. We'll stay critical of those in power, offer some alternative thinking on issues, but most importantly we'll speak to our reader's ability to educate themselves and not to their cynicism. ■

Joe Wirtheim is a Communication Studies Senior, and Editor-in-Chief of The Portland Spectator, 2009-2010.

The Gospel According to Dawkins

Considering the blowhards: A pox upon both your houses

By Vincent Berretta

I first caught a glimpse of Mr. Dawkins on Stephen Colbert promoting his book “The God Delusion”. My immediate assessment of this self described anti-theist was that he was a pompous blowhard intent on ruffling feathers. After further review, I have come to the conclusion that he is an extremely learned pompous blowhard intent on ruffling feathers.

Let me make a caveat before I get immediately dismissed as some zealot promoting the tenements of organized religion. I am most assuredly agnostic. Dawkins at this point would consider me a coward, and I apologize for my limited faith. I am no scientist so it requires a bit of faith on my part to accept the biologist's reasons for non-religion. And I think there are many more like me. I guess you could call us non-practicing agnostics.

Richard Dawkins is to agnostics what John Hagee is to fundamental Christians; a rallying point for the enthusiastic. We in the middle, however, would rather be left in peace. My mother's bible study group, a cluster of “blue hairs” that glut on canned tropical fruit suspended in a Tupperware of Jell-O, don't threaten reason as ole Dick would have me believe. In fact, it was probably my 100th singing of “Our God is an Awesome God” while sitting next to a rotund choir leader whose Hanes Beefy-T that read “No outfit is complete without cat hair!” that made me scrap the whole thing altogether. It wasn't that I was ostracized for my logical beliefs or that I felt lonely and scared, it was a sense of shame that was not shared by my fellow worshipers.

Not that Dawkins' reasons aren't well formed or clearly explained. I just think his approach is a little pushy. Especially when he calls those who believe in religion “ignoramus” as he does in the first chapter of his book, “The Greatest Show on Earth”,

comparing believers to a hypothetical example of students that obstinately reject the validity of Roman History.

Very good Mr. Dawkins, when I was a weelad in my grammar school days and someone disagreed with me I called them stupid, too. In fact, I have devised a new recruiting tool for the cause: just find everyone you know that is religious and say they're ignorant buffoons. I can see it now, walking into a church, pews full of bright-eyed, God-starved parishioners just waiting to get their Jesus fix, making your way to the pulpit and calling them all a bunch of fools. They'll have to come around, who can argue with that? “He's right,” they'd say to themselves returning home, fully enlightened. The next day, the price of stock in companies manufacturing home-science kits would increase ten-fold.

This would fit perfectly into Dawkins' approach as he's been quoted saying, “Let's stop being so bloody polite” with regard to religion. Wait a minute. Can't we save some of the more refined aspects of civilization in our effort to converse as rational human beings? And how is this different than your Pat Robertsons or your John Hagees? If Dawkins is promoting a yelling match with increasingly louder voices, I'm not so certain I see the benefits. Why exchange a corn-bred windbag for some limey git?

Dawkins would do right by his people if he learned that he can't play the game by the same rules as his adversaries. In order to promote reason, one needs be reasonable, and not nearly so dismissive. In order to save all those young impressionable minds from the clutches of religion, one needs to show how sober and rational the alternative can be. That or he could market puffy paint tee-shirts reading, “No human is complete without Atheism!” ■



If you're unfamiliar with **Pastor John Hagee** and would like to see an example of his belligerent and unfounded rants, go to our blog at: pdxspectator.wordpress.com

Richard Dawkins will be speaking about his new book "The Greatest Show On Earth" for Portland's Wordstock at the Convention Center October 10th at 3:00 p.m. and again at PSU in the Peter Stott Center the same day at 6:30 p.m. Tickets for his PSU speech can be retrieved from his website, richarddawkins.net. Tickets to see him at Wordstock can be purchased at ticketsoregon.com



Illustration By Clara Rodriguez



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