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Wednesday
November 12, 2008

THE COMMUTER

Linn-Benton Community College, Albany, Oregon

A Weekly Student Publication

Volume 40 No. 8

**VETERANS DAY PARADE
ALBANY, OREGON
NOVEMBER 11, 2008**



**IN FLANDERS FIELDS THE POPPIES BLOW
BETWEEN THE CROSSES, ROW ON ROW,
THAT MARK OUR PLACE AND IN THE SKY
THE LARKS, STILL BRAVELY SINGING, FLY
SCARCE HEARD AMID THE GUNS BELOW.**

**WE ARE THE DEAD. SHORT DAYS AGO
WE LIVED, FELT DAWN, SAW SUNSET GLOW,
LOVED, AND WERE LOVED, AND NOW WE LIE
IN FLANDERS FIELDS.**

**TAKE UP OUR QUARREL WITH THE FOE
TO YOU FROM FAILING HANDS WE THROW
THE TORCH BE YOURS TO HOLD IT HIGH.
IF YE BREAK FAITH WITH US WHO DIE
WE SHALL NOT SLEEP, THOUGH POPPIES GROW
IN FLANDERS FIELDS.**

**LT.-COL. JOHN MCCRAE
CANADIAN ARMY
WORLD WAR I
MAY 3, 1915**



The Commuter

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SPECIAL FEATURE

Honoring the the 90th Anniversary
of the end of World War I,
November 11th, 1918

**Veteran's Day:
Editor's Note**

Gregory Dewar
The Commuter

We chose this issue to rest with eight pages since it's a short week. We went out and covered the Veteran's Day parade, as you've no doubt noticed on our front cover. Everyone knows a veteran, whether you're close to them or not. Your friends, colleagues, co-workers, family, classmates, and anyone else in your life could be a veteran, whether they served overseas or not, their veteran status is not diminished.

This administration has taken the brave fighting men and women of our oft overlooked defensive and offensive fighting forces and spread them far and wide. And a little too thin, I'm afraid. The complaint I hear time and again is that people are unable to receive the money from their G.I. bill. Money that they paid into it out of their military paycheck every month. Some even opted to pay in more. It seems as if the government has turned their back on them. The upcoming administration has the power and possibly the scope of dreams to honor people willing to risk life and limb for this country.

In the meantime, you can do your part by honoring all veterans, whether you've known them or not. It doesn't matter what day it is.

Speaking of days, yesterday heralds

and marks the 90th anniversary of the end of the first World War, also known as the Great War. It was on November 11, 1918 that a cease-fire was declared and over 40 million casualties, including civilians, died in this global conflict. More than 60 million European troops were mobilized between 1914 and 1918. As this conflict ended it prepped the world for the Second World War, Korea, The Six Days War, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and our current conflicts.

The destruction of the Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, German Empire and the Russian Empire have influenced international relations and police action into this century.

On our cover, you'll find Lt. Colonel Colin McRae's famous war poem "In Flanders Fields", written during the first World War, to honor those Veterans.

For me, personally, I could not separate my mixed emotions. It was difficult to see those uniforms again. Difficult to see these enlisted soldiers and officers, with smiling faces, wondering how much of a facade it really was. Wondering how much more time they'd spend in Iraq. Wondering about my own experiences.

I looked around to the crowd of combat veterans. To them this was a normality, and this was the respect that was due. They have managed to come back to this reality and live normal, productive lives. How many won't?

**The Greatest Man
I Ever Knew**

MaryAnne Turner
The Commuter

He took the responsibility of being my dad when my father couldn't live up to the challenges, even though he was my grandfather. That's what parents do. They care for their children, and their children's children. John Adams Bradish, my grandfather, died a veteran of WWII on Veteran's Day in 2004. He was the greatest man I have ever known.

He and my grandmother, Carol J. Bradish, lived a fairytale life story together since their childhood. They were childhood sweethearts, dated in college, married young, and for the most part lived happily ever after. Shortly after their marriage, he went off to join the army during World War II, and with luck on his side he landed in Japan the day that Normandy surrendered. They moved west from Iowa to Oregon, and John started work as a forester in Philomath. They raised four children: Lee, Linda, Tom, and Lori Bradish.

When he went to Japan he stayed for one year to help rebuild the cities. He didn't suffer any emotional trauma, gruesome injuries, or lose his best friend... that I know of. If he did he never showed it.

He was always a mild tempered man, and when I did something wrong he had a quiet way of making me feel ashamed

and embarrassed for my actions. I had so much respect for that man, and the wisdom he carried. I attached that wisdom to his love for nature. He worked and played in the woods, and it was his sanctuary that brought him peace. I believe that his constant peace made him appreciate life more.

Every summer we would go up to Clear Lake in the Cascade Mountains. We rented cabins and rowboats. Those long days fishing on the crystal clear lake taught me patience and a love for salmon. I also learned about the sweet taste of natural minerals spewing out of the side of a mountain in a stream of water, and the dangers of fishing in a lightning storm.

In sixth grade I spent the week at work with Grandpa in the woods instead of going to outdoor school. I was happy I didn't have to sing silly songs and make wood cookies. Instead, I learned what I could eat if I ever got lost in the woods, saw tons of wildlife, and spent some valuable time with a wise old man.

He died from Parkinson's disease at age 76. He may not have gotten a purple heart or anything special, but he had a wonderful life, and a wonderful family. He's still my hero. I find it both ironic and honoring that he died on Veteran's Day.

To Grandpa and all who served for this country, you are not forgotten. Rest in peace, and for those still living and serving today, thank you.

**The Few, The Proud,
The Neglected**

Chris Brotherton
The Commuter

When I was a kid, Veteran's Day was nothing more than a day not to go to school. Even though I was raised by my grandparents and I had heard all of my grandfather's old war stories, I never understood what the day really meant. It wasn't until I had grown a bit, and actually started listening to what my grandfather was saying that I began to realize why it was important to pay respect to our Veterans.

My grandfather fought in WWII, in the Marines. I know that he spent a lot of time in Japan, and he saw the aftermath of Hiroshima. He told me stories of seeing silhouettes of people's bodies burned into the cement of the sidewalks, the way an image is burned into film. He had shown me his medals, a Purple Heart, a Silver Star and several others that he couldn't even remember what they were for. He didn't mind telling me about his time in Japan, but he always told me that he wasn't proud of what he had to do while he was there.

I didn't understand this, as I had always been taught that if you were a soldier, you were proud to serve your country. I asked him about it and he explained to me that to serve his country was the greatest thing that he could do and he felt a great deal

of pride for having done his tour of duty. However, the fact that he had to kill other people was something that never sat well with him. He once told me that back in those days, since they were unable to televise the war, nobody really knew what it was like until they got there. He said that it was a horrible condition to learn under.

I can only imagine the things that he has seen, the way that bullets and explosives can disfigure a human body. As you walk down the street, you see the silhouette of a woman carrying a baby, knowing that is all that is left of two human beings, bodies vaporized by the blast.

We are currently in a war, and how do we take care of our current vets? When they finally get to come home, will any housing be provided for them? Will they get job placement or vocational training? How are we going to repay the people who were brave enough to fight for our freedom? According to the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients, Veterans currently account for approximately 23% of all homeless people in America. This is how we are paying them back so far.

So as Veteran's Day rolls through this year, take some time to pay some respect to those who not only gave their lives, but also the ones that couldn't get their lives back upon their return.

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LOCAL NEWS

Community news about the mid-Willamette Valley, including Albany, Lebanon, and Corvallis.

Robnett's: friendly hardware

Colin Walsh
The Commuter

Not many people may know it but when you push the doors open into Robnett's Hardware Store you are walking on history. Robnett's Hardware store is the oldest running commercial store in Corvallis and was originally built as a home for the founder of Corvallis (Marysville) J.C. Avery. Built in 1857, the building once served as a supply headquarters for miners heading south in search of gold. The store repaired wagons, serviced horses, sold groceries and a few tools. Since the 19th Century, the function of the building as a hardware and implement store has not changed. The bright yellow painted bricks have also never been changed, except for a

couple of paint jobs.

"This is my place. I come here at least twice a week. I can get anything here: a broom or a screw for my lawnmower. They got ya' covered" Remarked long time shopper Richard Castillo.

When you step into Robnett's, the creak of old floorboards vibrate under your feet. The long slender shelves are packed tight with anything a handyman can dream of. Robnett's offers many goods to the public, but they are vastly known for their huge fixture and fastening room, selling mostly screws, fasteners and washers. "That's why our motto is screw it, bolt it, nail it," remarked owner Scott Lockwood.

Diverse selection of goods has kept Robnett's in business for years and will for years to come. Owners Scott and Tori Lockwood

don't see anything slowing down anytime soon, either. Scott and Tori Lockwood are the 6th generation of Robnett's to run the store as a mercantile. They have two sons, Nicholas and Jack, who will most likely take the store over when it is their time. But Scott says he is in no rush to hang up his hat quite yet.

Robnett's Hardware store is a warm cozy place tucked away in the heart of beautiful downtown Corvallis. They always have a heater blasting warm air in the winter. So go hide out from the rain, get warm, and take a look at history.

Robnett's Hardware is located at 400 SW 2nd Street Corvallis, OR 97333 (541) 753-5531

E-zine's new name: Piñata of Dreams

Amy Dewar
The Commuter

Starting this week, Natalie Daley and her crew will begin accepting submissions.

After much deliberation, the title of the 2009 e-zine has been selected! Exactly 45 titles were submitted, and while many of them would have been fantastic choices, most were already in use by another group and therefore had to be eliminated. In the end, it came down to six choices: "Inspired Reflections," "Virtuoso," "Spectrum," "Piñata of Dreams," "Escaping Reality," and "Roadrunner Dreams," with "Piñata of Dreams" being the favorite.

The winning submission came from a classroom assignment given to the students of SP219, taught by Mike Hougum, while Paul Hagood's WR240 class sent in others. The group, entitled "Experience of Music," includes Sean Brown, Rob Freel, Josh Coulter, Chris Richter, and Gretchen Lindsey. Although the initial prize was going to be a \$25 gift certificate to the LBCC Bookstore, this has been extended to a \$10 gift certificate to each of the group's members. In addition to the certificate, the winners will be credited for their work in the upcoming e-zine.

Submissions must adhere to the following parameters:

- * Written materials should use easily readable/reproducible fonts such as Times, Helvetica, or Palatino.
- * Prose should be under 2,500 words.
- * Poetry should be under 500 words.
- * Art and photography should be under 10 megs.
- * Music, video, or film should be no longer than three minutes.
- * Resolution of all submissions should be limited to 300 dpi.
- * JPEG, MOV, and MP3 formats should be used to submit materials.

The e-zine is friendly to all types of media, including traditional work, but also music, video, and crafts, so don't be shy! Any and all artistic submissions are welcome!

Meet the Great Eight of the ASG

Hannah Gzik
For The Commuter

Did you know there is an Associated Student Government here at LBCC? Well there is, and all eight of us that make up the ASG are here to serve you, the student! So let me introduce you to your current ASG officers...

Vice President Patric Pici, who is originally from North Bend, is working towards his Associate of Science with a Chemistry emphasis here at LB, but will be transferring to OSU to finish up his prerequisites for Pharmacy school. Patric is serving on ASG this year because he has been a student here at LBCC for three years and feels that he has skills that would help to improve the college experience for all students. When Patric is not working he likes to spend time with his family, friends, and dog Bella.

PR Secretary Alex James is majoring in Mechanical Engineering. He is serving on ASG this year because he would like to be active and also feels it is a great stepping stone for his future aspirations. Alex likes to play his baritone saxophone in his spare time and is a big time car enthusiast. Alex is 3-year cancer survivor and had the same doctor as Lance Armstrong.

Student Service and Education Representative Kim McAloney is majoring in Ethnic Studies and Education. Kim graduated from St. Helens but was born in California. She is serving on ASG this year because she really wants to make a difference and be the voice of students here on campus. Not only does Kim cook, bake, shop, and scrapbook but she also finds time to spend with friends and family.

Arts and Humanities Representative Anissa Teslow Cheek is

working towards her AAOT with an emphasis in Speech Communications. Coming to us all the way from small town Harmony, Minnesota, Anissa is a part of ASG because she wants to serve her fellow students and also grow as an individual. When she is not in school she is usually spending time with her husband, new puppy, and two crazy kittens.

Business Representative Gwen Guerpo is a Business Administration/ Management Information Systems major. Gwen came to us from Maui, Hawaii and is now serving on ASG because she wants to help new and existing students be successful with their college experience by providing them with valuable resources and educating them through her own experiences. Gwen loves meeting new people, learning, and volunteering, which is why she is the treasurer of the Pacific Islanders Club and president of the Parents Club. Gwen likes to scrapbook, dance the hula, and still finds plenty of time to be with her family.

Health Occupations Representative Roxanne Goodwin is majoring in Diagnostic Imaging (Rad Tech). She is part of ASG because she wants to be more involved in what goes on here on campus, and to be the voice of those students who either don't want or don't know how to speak up. Roxanne is also a humanitarian and loves to give to those in need. Any spare time Roxanne can get is spent with her three children and friends.

Science and Technology Representative Scott Sanders is majoring in Water/ Wastewater. Scott is serving on ASG because he likes to be involved and to be the voice for those who want to be heard. Scott has many talents, includ-

ing playing the drums, guitar and singing simultaneously. Browsing Wikipedia, reading Calvin and Hobbes, working on his house, and daydreaming are just a few of the things Scott likes to do when he is not at LBCC.

Finally, to complete the introductions for ASG, there is myself, Hannah Gzik, your president. I am an AAOT Pre-Pharmacy major and will be heading off to OSU next year. I am originally from Nyssa, a very small town in Eastern Oregon. I am serving on ASG because I want to make your time spent here at LBCC the best that it can possibly be. Any free time I have from school, ASG, and working as a Pharmacy Technician is spent with my family, snowboarding, reading (mostly required for a class), and just living life as a twenty-one-year-old, learning from my experience and mistakes as they come my way.

So we are done introducing ourselves to you but now we want to hear from all of you! You can come visit any one of us in the Student Life and Leadership office located right next to the Hot Shot Coffee House. This is our invitation to all of you to come tell us about your concerns, comments, or just to come meet us to find out what we are all about. This invitation is open to everyone all year round... so come see us and find out what our priorities are this year and how we are advocating for students. Check in with us again next week to hear more from your ASG.

Sincerely,
 Your Associated Student Government

THE COMMONS FARE
 11/12-11/18

Wednesday
 Dishes: Meatloaf and Mushroom Gravy, English-style Fish & Chips and Vegetarian Chili with Cornbread, Sour Cream, and Cheese
 Soups: Dilled Potato Chowder and Chicken and Wild Rice*

Thursday
 Dishes: Pork Piccata, Coq au Vin and Tempeh Enchiladas
 Soups: Potage de Boeuf* and Cream of Garlic

Friday
 Chef's Choice

Monday
 Dishes: Turkey Cutlet with Brown Butter Sauce, Texas Chili con Carne with Cornbread and White Spinach Lasagna with Creamy Garlic Sauce
 Soups: Roasted Vegetable Chowder and Albondigas*

Tuesday
 Dishes: Etuffee Cajun Shrimp Dish, Swedish Meatballs with Buttered Noodles and Cheese and Mushroom Crepes
 Soups: Egg Flower and French Lentil

*Gluten-free

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Reviews, upcoming events,
and the cure for weekend boredom.

Betrayer of the Light!

Tomorrow we begin to feel the Wrath of the Lich King

Greg Dewar
The Commuter

Tomorrow heralds the end of the Burning Crusade and a shift back to the regular lore of Warcraft in Blizzard's massively multiplayer online sensation: World of Warcraft. We'll find out how good ol' Arthas is doing. New gear, new instances, 10 more levels, and a whole slew of new reputations to grind await us.

It's been awhile since 2002 and the release of the only Warcraft III expansion: The Frozen Throne. We've "visited" with some of the other characters from Warcraft III and The Frozen Throne, including Kael'Thas and Illidan (and the heroes from Warcraft II: Beyond the Dark Portal), and though I've been gone most of the previous expansion, my return a week ago coincides sharply with the new expansion: Wrath of the Lich King, who's release date, make no mistake, is November 13, 2008. I'm a little sad that I missed out on most of BC, but as far as I'm concerned it wasn't as good as classic 1-60 WoW.

There's a quivering sense of anticipation buzzing around the air of both Azeroth and Outland as rumors fly. Everyone on my realm is talking about their plans, creating raid schedules, and reading up on the new instances. Old Grand Marshals and PvPers, like myself, are eagerly awaiting the new battlegrounds and the next season of the arena.

All last week there was a series of invasion world

quests, as the undead scourge began to attack Azeroth, offering a level 70 epic set of undead slaying gear for every armor type and repeatable Argent Dawn reputation quests. A new reputation, however, has been created, the Argent Crusade, and it's my opinion that Argent Dawn reputation will no longer be useful since so many people are already exalted from running Naxxramas and the first reputation revamp.

This expansion opens up the third continent on the world of Azeroth, Northrend, where Arthas, now the Lich King of the undead scourge, has been amassing his forces and waiting to completely dominate Azeroth. Players have been making preparations all week, gathering up the last remnants of gear to help them level faster and spending their currencies as battlegrounds tokens, honor, and arena points will be reset prior to the launch of the Wrath of the Lich King. Rumor has it that Badges of Justice will remain intact and may possibly be traded in for the new currency that will buy Tier 7 and higher armor.

There will always be the pre-launch conspiracy theories: "Oh, this reputation will be important!" and "You should have this gear, because there isn't any better until level 78." But in the end all the speculation doesn't seem to matter.

The Wrath of the Lich King will be a commercial success, and I don't think anyone doubts its incoming popularity. Start saving your money now; I hear the new epic mounts are going to cost 25,000 gold.

Yung Royal comes "Out Tha Shadows"

Kris Nelson
The Commuter

I recently got the chance to preview Yung Royal's new CD entitled "Out Tha Shadows". It is going to be released on November 15.

The "Out Tha Shadows" mixtape features other artists, including Phonix, Klutch, Markus Tha Great White, We-side, Soufside Ink, Myle High, Paradox, E.R., and J-Lil. The CD features 20 tracks, and two of those are sample tracks from Yung Royal's upcoming solo CD.

When I received the CD, I put it in my stereo and I haven't taken it out since. The beats that go with the songs are epic. It's like you are watching a battle scene in "300": You can't stop listening because you want to find out what's in the next song. I recommend listening to track 10, "Where it's Hot" featuring Paradox and E.R., be-

cause it's a song that will keep you moving. Some of the lyrics are "Tell me where it's hot and I'll get it where it's hot." If you want something a little more calm, but something that still has a good beat then check out the track entitled "36 Bars with God".

Another good track on the CD is "Time to Get Paid" Featuring Phonix. It has all of the elements of a good hip-hop song: a good and steady flow, lots of drums, and catchy lyrics.

If you are into local rap/hip-hop this CD is for you. Support you local artists and get a copy of this new mixtape. No, get two; one for you and a stocking stuffer for your friend. Come see Yung Royal at the "Out Tha Shadows" mixtape release show in December.

For more information on Yung Royal visit his Myspace page at <http://www.myspace.com/imyungroyal>

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POETRY CORNER

Cackles from the Coughing Crow
 by Shannon Russell

She makes me think of the sloppy drunk at your sister's party. She oozes already used sexuality like a dirty condom left on the grungy shower floor of the men's restroom. She is dirty and unclean filthy love grated moments, scraped over from everyone else's mistakes. She relates to no one.

She says she feels love. She offers her tits up like penny candies. She'll roll around anywhere at anytime laughing at her "loose" philosophies. She thinks, no, she pretends that dancing means tantra in heels. She has no soul, for she gave it up long ago. Her heart is marbled with past regrets and fatty promises Her eyes, her hair, her skin, her being resolve to nothing.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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LBCC from a different perspective



photos by Eve Bruntlett

Finding the beauty in a giant brick and cement infrastructure that was designed to be a prison was certainly a challenge. And yet if you look at the architecture surrounding us everyday long enough, and in a certain light one can find beauty. Zooming in from the entire picture and finding these specific little zen moments provides a canvas, that when meshed together on a page like this shows an interminable beauty. Art, like all things, including Linn-Benton Community College, is a matter of perspective.

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CAMPUS NEWS

News about Linn-Benton
Community College, including
the Sweet Home, Lebanon,
and Benton Centers.



Campus Shorts (Nov. 12, 2008)

LBCC Traffic Control Flagger Certification course

A Traffic Control Flagger Certification course will be held at LBCC in the Willamette Room located in the College Center, on Saturday, Nov. 15, from 8 am to 12:30 pm. The cost for

the course is \$80 and includes all materials, and will certify you to flag traffic in Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Washington. You will learn basic visual flagging signals, appropriate two-way radio usage, and signing and sign regulations. You will minimize liability and driver inconvenience by making the worksite safe keeping traffic flowing.

"Loading your advising toolbox: An introduction to the tools of advising"

A workshop for fundamental advising skills for the new

faculty will be held on Thursday Nov. 13, from 3 pm to 5 pm, in WH-224 (computer lab). You will gain fundamental advising skills such as; hands on training in the Student Information System (SIS), understanding the placement test results for better assisting the students, understanding the Graduation and Transfer Requirements, and understanding the campus resources and more. Space is limited to 30 people. To reserve your spot call the Career and Counseling Center at (541) 917-4782.






November is Native American Heritage Month and the Native American Student Union is hosting events to celebrate.

- *Today*, November 12, 3 p.m.: "Native American Mascots." A presentation and discussion hosted by Michele Wilson at the Albany campus, Forum 113.
- *Tomorrow*, November 13, 6 p.m.: A traditionally prepared northwest meal will be served. There will also be guest speakers, music, and a Native American Drum Circle. Held at the Albany Campus, in the Commons. Ticket prices are \$5 for students and \$8 otherwise.
- November 19, 3:30 p.m.: A flute demonstration and workshop hosted by Rocky Gavin and the NASU. Held on the Albany campus, North Santiam Hall 107.
- November 20, 3 p.m.: "Skins," a video presentation and discussion hosted by Callie Palmer on the Albany campus, Forum 113.

For ticket and other information contact either Toni Klohk in the DAC at 541-917-4299, or Michele Wilson in SSH 204 at 541-917-4835. By e-mail Deanna Trask at trask@ml.linnbenton.edu or Jeana Wiser at rogersj@onid.orst.edu.

PERSPECTIVES:

What was your reaction to the outcome of election night?

 <p>Kristen Jones Business Mgmt. & Marketing</p> <p>"I thought the speeches were really good. I had a lot of respect for McCain when he was giving his concession speech, even though his audience was booing."</p>	 <p>Tim Lykins Mechanical Engineering</p> <p>"I thought it was interesting that some of the republicans were acting like it was the end of the world."</p>	 <p>Betsy Smith Administrative Medical Assistant</p> <p>"I was not happy, happy but I am still satisfied with it. I am just happy that people turned out to vote."</p>	 <p>Christina Hahn Welding Technology</p> <p>"It was an amazing and historic event. I thought McCain's speech was interesting, the crowd booing was telling."</p>	 <p>Mike Huber Chemistry</p> <p>"I had heard from the news that Obama was going to win. I was just surprised by how much. I can see how America is changing. It is time I reevaluate my views on the economy."</p>
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Compiled by Max Brown. Photos by Max Brown. The views expressed in Perspectives do not necessarily represent the views of The Commuter staff.

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To apply, please contact David Becker.

Office: B-109
(541) 207-4960
David.becker@linnbenton.edu



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opinion

Submissions to The Commuter:
E-mail: commuter@linnbenton.edu
Drop-in: Forum 222
 Please sign and keep to 300 words or less.

Obama's advantage

And why it's good for our political system

Brandon Goldner
The Commuter

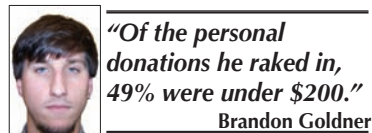
There are those that would complain about capitalism and all of its many flaws, and then there are those that would only bemoan those aspects which don't suit their needs. A great example of this would be the complaint that Barack Obama had an unfair fundraising advantage, and only won the election because he had more money.

It's a compelling argument on the surface, as he went against his word and opted out of public financing. The result was a finance discrepancy between himself and John McCain to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars in Obama's favor.

But here's the thing: of the personal donations he raked in, 49% of them were under \$200. That number was only 32% for McCain.

Obama obviously garnered support from an overwhelming number of people who could only afford to give him \$150 or \$50 or even \$5. So in what world is it fair to say that he didn't deserve every penny of it?

It's nothing more than capitalism working fairly when a large group of people



"Of the personal donations he raked in, 49% were under \$200."
 Brandon Goldner

pool their resources to enact changes they feel will benefit them. In years past, some people have thought that their vote doesn't count, and maybe they had a right to feel that way. Large corporations can pay to have lawyers draft (and committees defend) legislation that favors their growth while it adversely affects the lives of common people. Sometimes it seems that, while we all get one vote, a vote with money behind it has more influence.

To respond, there's little we can do beside vote with our dollars, be it from boycotting companies whose practices we detest to purchasing supplies from the local hardware store to ward off a Home Depot from coming to town. Of course, in electing our political leaders, we will still have to trust those representatives to look after us, but at least we have a say in who's chosen in the first place. After this election, every one of us should feel a little more powerful in knowing that we have more influence than we've given ourselves credit for.

Do taxes = socialism!?

Brandon Goldner
The Commuter

Practically every time there's talk of changing our tax structure so the bottom half doesn't get completely reamed, there's a vocal resistance to it. This time, they even got a couple of pet names and a cheerleader to help them along.

Joe the Plumber (or Sam not-the-plumber if you want to get technical) was the first person during the presidential campaign to mainstream the use of socialism as a way of describing Barack Obama's proposed tax changes. But is it really?

While we were all busy dusting off our duck-and-cover era fear of social equality, Obama was being called "Barack the wealth spreader," and "redistribution-in-chief" by the Republican vice-presidential and presidential candidates respectively.

But here's the thing: taxes in and of themselves redistribute wealth! It seems obvious, but maybe it was overlooked that, to pay for Medicare, we have to redistribute wealth from 25-year-olds to pay for a 75-year-olds' medicine. Perhaps we didn't notice that we pay property taxes that redistribute our earnings to fund the construction of parks, roads and the like. Nobody seems to have a problem with that, and they shouldn't.

The public dialogue regarding taxes needs to change from equating taxes with scariness to engaging in a mature conversation about what services we feel is a priority for our wellbeing and how we're going end up paying for them. It's not that complicated.

But it is really funny to see big fat hypocrites acting as legions for the preservation of public

sanctity through eliminating taxes while they are proposing a ton of their own initiatives that would have to be paid for somehow. Oh, and Sarah Palin is popular mainly because she gave every citizen of Alaska a bigger cut of profits from oil companies whose money she seems not to have a hard time "spreading." Oh, and Ronald Reagan is widely known for expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, where poor families actually get money back from the government instead of having to pay for it.

Looks like we're all a bunch of rotten socialists, right?

No, we just have an idea that, here in America, pretty much everyone willing to work their ass off should have an opportunity to succeed, and those who can't (due to illness, injury or age) shouldn't be thrown to the gutter to rot. That seems like a pretty simple thing to accomplish in a nation as wealthy as ours, but somehow we keep getting bumped off track even when influential, well-known politicians pledge to support those who need it most.

I guess people like me will just have to work hard and earn our raises... oh wait, our income isn't rising as fast as inflation. But my boss sure has a nice car. Well, I guess I'll have to quit and find a job that pays more... oh wait, they're all taken. And even the people who took them are being fired. Guess I'll just have to go to school and earn a degree that will help me out a bit... Crap, I can't afford school. Or books. Or rent. Looks like I'll have to take out a loan to pay for it all... oh, the credit markets dried up due to disastrous economic policies that provided no safeguards to prevent this type of thing from happening. Good thing I can always move to Alaska and grab a cut of that sweet, sweet oil money. Thanks, comrade Palin!

Iraqi Veterans Against War: Counter-recruitment

Benjamin Lewis
For The Commuter

There has been much hope and excitement generated around the last election. The hope is that a new president will effect a change in our society. Though this hope is shared by all, it is important to remember that one person has never been responsible for all change, and that we the people must exercise our democratic rights in order to make our own change. We cannot rely on elected officials to do it for us. On Nov. 4 an unprecedented number of voters let their voices be heard, and Obama, thankfully, won by a landslide. The question now is whether or not the American people will keep to the streets and demand the changes they want to see in their communities, or will they return to their couches for another four years.

Community colleges are unique in the fact that they are emplaced with a specific goal of serving the community. With that we must ask what sort of responsibilities do community colleges have to their respective communities. A question that is directed, not only at the faculty, but perhaps even more importantly, to the student body.

For some time groups like the Albany Peace Seekers and The Institute for Peace and Justice have been operating in Linn and Benton counties in an attempt to fulfill certain responsibilities and bring a nourishing change to the community. Many of their efforts have been focused on Counter-Recruitment and Alternatives to Military Service projects that are meant to provide students with a balanced picture of what is at stake when they sign up for the military.

Beyond this, Counter-Recruitment has far more universal goals. It seeks to end unjust and illegal wars by reducing the manpower of the largest military force in history, making it impossible to occupy foreign countries such as Iraq for the selfish economic interests of the elite corporate powers. With this reduction there is a follow-up movement to redistribute the almost 500 billion dollars of annual military expenditures at a community level. This redistribution would enable the citizens to fund programs such as universal health care and free tuition for college students.

As the death tolls rise daily the importance of leaving Iraq and Afghanistan immediately has become an imminent priority. We must follow in the tradition of Vietnam War veterans and student activists, where the desertion of around half a million GI's who blatantly refused to follow immoral and illegal orders, along with countless student demonstrations, helped to end the war. Iraq vets and students of our generation are now stepping up to the plate and taking action.

Iraq Veterans Against the War is a nation wide organization that has more than a thousand members, and the only criteria for joining is that a person must have served on or after 9/11 in any military form or function. The members of IVAW Oregon at the moment are small, but they are growing. IVAW calls for the immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces, compensation to the Iraqi people and the withdrawal of corporate pillagers, and full support to all veterans including healthcare and benefits.

With the support of the Albany/Corvallis and surrounding communities, veterans, and activist groups, we can all bring beneficial change to the society in which we live in everyday, and fulfill our responsibility to future generations. If there are any veterans interested in peace activism, or simply finding a support group among peers to talk about issues such as PTSD among other vets, e-mail Benji at corvallisivaw@gmail.com.

Fall Blood Drive

LBCC and the Red Cross are teaming up for the Statewide Civil War Blood drive. Extend the gift of life and become eligible to win two tickets to the 2008 Civil War Football game.

Please join us on Wednesday, November 19th and 20th, 2008 from 9:00am-2:00pm in the Alesa/Calapooia room. Refreshments will be provided. To reserve your donation time come to the sign-up table located in Takena Hall Monday, the entire week of November 3rd from 8:00am-2:00pm, or go online to www.givelife.org use sponsor code LBCC, you can also call 1-800-GiveLife.

Have some time and want to volunteer? Volunteers are needed for escorts and canteen on the day of the blood drive For more information contact the Student Programming Board Health and Recreational Specialist at 541-917-4472.

Visit www.civilwarblooddrive.com for more information