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This week's winners and losers

 **WINNER:** More than 14 503P 800 Oregonians, including political and business leaders, are on their way to New York City. The aptly named Flight for Freedom will show Oregonians' support for New Yorkers in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. The participants also are boosting tourism and showing that Americans shouldn't be afraid to travel.


 **LOSER:** Minnesota's two largest state-employee unions picked a lousy time to strike. The walk-out during a time of national crisis reflects equally badly on them and on Gov. Jesse Ventura's administration.


 **WINNER:** Salem-area residents weren't fond of the "tree of lights," a pole atop the Chemeketa Parkade, so it won't return this Christmas season. Instead of stringing lights from the pole, the Salem Downtown Association will support the living Christmas tree celebration in Riverfront Park.


 **TOSSUP:** A B-minus for children's programs isn't a great grade; it's barely above average. But it's the highest that the state has scored on annual reports by Children First for Oregon. The grades measure how the state is doing toward meeting goals set by the Oregon Progress Board. Now comes the hard work of ensuring that the economic downturn doesn't erode that progress.


 **WINNER:** George Fox University is home to the newest Miss Oregon. Heidi Lynn Rickey, a sopho-


more, is succeeding Katie Marie Harman, who relinquished her state crown when she became Miss America.

 **LOSER:** The operators of PGE Park, the refurbished Civic Stadium, will lose millions of dollars this year instead of making money. That also will mean less money for the city of Portland.

 **WINNER:** Seventeen Salem-Keizer educators will get help in turning innovative teaching ideas into reality. The Salem Schools Foundation awarded \$23,255 in grants to them this week.

 **WINNER:** Remember the numbers 7-1-1. If you are hearing- or speech-impaired or if you are calling someone who is, you can dial those three numbers to make connections through a text, or TTY, telephone. Oregon joined the federal relay system this week.

 **LOSER:** Rep. Gary Condit is a disgrace to California and to Congress. He should have resigned because of his stonewalling during the search for missing intern Chandra Levy. Instead, he quietly has launched a bid for re-election.

 **WINNER:** It really works to turn off some lights, switch to energy-efficient bulbs and lower the thermostat. Through these and other steps, state agencies cut their power use by 10 percent during the first half of the year. The Oregon university system lagged behind with a 3 percent reduction.