

St. Helens, Oregon

Residents of Small Town View Buchanan Controversy

Editor's Note: The conflict between Emerald Managing Editor Annette Buchanan and Lane County District Attorney William Frye has gained high national interest. The people closest to the case, however, are the people of Oregon. What does small town Oregon—often characterized as conservative or even reactionary—think of the case? Larry Lange, who is news editor of the Emerald during the academic year, interviewed several people in his home town to find out.

By LARRY LANGE
Summer Contributing Editor

ST. HELENS, Ore. (Special)—St. Helens is a small, quiet community of about 5,300 people located 30 miles north of Portland on the Columbia River. It has one high school, one junior high school, and three grade schools. Its economic mainstays are three sawmills, a paper mill, a plywood plant, and an insulation board plant.

Going via Interstate 5, St. Helens is 140 miles from Eugene.

A month ago, most of the general populace of St. Helens had never heard of Annette Buchanan, managing editor of the Emerald.

Then came the Emerald's marijuana story on May 24. And notoriety for Miss Buchanan.

Now, people in St. Helens—140 miles away from the event—are interested.

Several of them were asked for their opinions regarding the case. Those questioned were familiar with the case through reports given through the mass media.

The results showed a general support for Miss Buchanan's actions, but a disagreement over the legal implications of the case: Should journalists be legally forced to reveal their news sources? Should journalists be protected from divulging these sources?

The interviewees were asked five questions. They are listed here, along with some of the answers received.

DO YOU THINK MISS BUCHANAN IS DOING THE RIGHT THING?

Robert Geiser, 34, a grocery store owner: "Definitely. She has to. I don't think she has any choice but to stand up and not tell them. I don't think they can force her to tell. I don't think she's condoning it (the use of marijuana), and she's not harboring it (as in harboring a criminal), and therefore she doesn't have to tell."

Don Sheldon, 68, a retired jeweler: "If a person gives something in confidence, that confidence should be respected. Otherwise, no one would ever say what needed to be said."

A local housewife, who asked that her name be withheld: "I really haven't formed an opinion about it. I can see her side of it, but this (the use of marijuana on campus) could be a real bum thing."

Mrs. J. B. Steward, a graduate of Reed College: "I think she was justified in refusing to divulge the names, if they were confidential. Ethically, she shouldn't. It sounds to me like the whole thing was started by a politician who lost out."

Her son, Jim, 23, a graduate student at Portland State College: "I don't think that's right (bringing her to court). It's up to the law to find these people and prosecute them. She's not an arm of the law. I thought it was unusual that they would force a journalist to reveal these names."

"I think it's a breach of freedom of the press," he added.

IF YOU WERE MISS BUCHANAN WOULD YOU REVEAL THE NAMES?

A local lumber worker, age 47, who also asked

that his name be withheld: "No, I wouldn't. She's in the right, I'd say. After all, those people placed their trust in her, and I think she should uphold it."

Dr. J. B. Steward, a physician and surgeon: "... Not if it was understood that was the way she would get it (the story). It's the same way if I get information from a patient. Let them (legal authorities) go out and get it."

The anonymous housewife: "If I felt this was a bum deal for a lot of kids, yes, I would. Feeling the way I do about it (marijuana), I would probably sing—and take the consequences."

Jim Grady, 23, a graduate student in literature at the University now at home working: "If I had given my word, I definitely would not do it. If I had not promised, I would still be reluctant to do it."

Don Sheldon: "I'd serve a stretch in jail for not telling. I wouldn't be railroaded like that."

DO YOU THINK THAT JOURNALISTS SHOULD BE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO REVEAL THEIR SOURCES OF INFORMATION?

Joe Sheldon, 22, recently graduated Magna Cum Laude in biology from the College of Idaho: "No, because it would cramp the source of news greatly. Journalists, I don't feel, would go out (in search of news) if they felt they would be penalized."

Jim Steward: "It's subject to the seriousness of the crime. But basically, she shouldn't reveal the names."

"She's doing the right thing, both on a personal level and a journalistic level."

The lumber worker: "No. We have legal authorities who are supposed to take care of that."

Don Sheldon: "She shouldn't be damned because she had information which brought the problem out in the open."

Ed Grady, 50, local clothing store manager, answered affirmatively: "Anyone who has actual knowledge of a crime, should be called before a court to testify if their testimony is deemed necessary."

"It's generally accepted that the use of dope is not beneficial to anyone," Grady continued. "There is a law against that sort of thing and I think it's a good law."

DO YOU THINK OREGON SHOULD HAVE A LAW PROTECTING THE JOURNALIST'S CONFIDENCES?

Jim Steward: "Well, I do and I don't, because journalism is sometimes sensational, and sometimes people are hurt. The citizens would lose and the journalists would gain."

Joe Sheldon: "It seems kind of ridiculous not to."

The lumber worker: "Definitely they should. It hurts the press and it hurts everybody. People will just shut up—they wouldn't talk to any reporter."

Mrs. Steward: "No, if it were somebody who was printing a lot of propaganda, there shouldn't be." But she added that, for an interview situation, the reporter's confidences should be respected.

Geiser: "Not necessarily. I think your court'll hand down a common law decision on it, and that'll be it. A legislative law is not necessary. We have too many of them now."

Don Sheldon also answered affirmatively: "We're going down the drain into a welfare state fast enough," he said, without more legal "snooping."

Jim Grady: "All free societies should have laws against subpoenas on reporters. I see her (Miss Buchanan) as the victim of a lag in responsible legislation."

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11 a.m.

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Call 345-3962

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Orthodox Presbyterian Church

(a Reformed church)

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11:00 and 7:00 p.m.

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For information or transportation
call 345-3638

Reverend Glenn T. Black, pastor
3350 Willamette Street

First Methodist Church

1185 Willamette

345-8764

SUMMER PROGRAM

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Church School Classes 9 a.m.

Ministers: Norman L. Conard and Everett H. Gardner

WESLEY FOUNDATION

Next to Co-op Bookstore—1236 Kincaid

Robert Kingsbury—University Pastor

Central Lutheran Church

(The American Lutheran Church)

18th & Potter

Sunday Worship — 9:30

LUTHER HOUSE

1824 University

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Eric Ottum
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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

23rd Avenue East and Potter

(5 blocks south of campus)

SUNDAY SERVICES

8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Ministers, Lloyd Stamp and

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For Transportation call 345-8741

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(Missouri Synod)

17th and Hilyard Street

344-2361

Sunday Worship Services: 8:30 and 11 a.m.

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345-0341

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11 a.m. Service
"MAKING MEN WHOLE"
Chaplain Earl Peden, USAF
7:00 p.m. Service
"Building or Destroying a Nation"
Dr. Vance Webster
8:30 p.m. College Hour at
Ann Judson House
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All College Students Welcome
Annual Church and Sunday School
Picnic, July 4, Harlow Lodge

SUMMER SCHEDULE

8-Week Session

Newman Catholic Student Center

Sunday Masses: 7:30, 9:00, 11:00 evenings at 8:00 p.m.

Confessions—30-5 minutes before Mass

Daily Mass at 4:30—Confessions 4:00-4:25

Saturday Mass—8:00 a.m.

INQUIRY INTO CATHOLICISM

Wednesday Evenings, Starting June 29th at 7:00-8:30 p.m.

1850 Emerald St.

Phone 343-7021

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