

Editorial

ASUO elections—two stand out in crowd

Twelve tickets have entered the race for the offices of ASUO president and vice president. This kind of situation makes the elections look like a lottery, where any number can win. With this possibility in mind, the Emerald editors interviewed candidates Sunday in the hope of narrowing the field to those we felt most qualified.

Of the eight tickets we interviewed (the other four did not show up), the teams of Ron Eachus-Mike Kment and Spence Alpert-Marlene Wylde stand out above the rest. All four of these candidates have had extensive experience in student government, and both tickets have formulated platforms which offer concrete solutions to student needs.

We have some qualified reservations toward the slates of Russ Husted-Moses Chao and Don Chalmers-Rob Taylor, and do not feel they are of the same caliber as the Eachus-Kment, Alpert-Wylde tickets.

The tickets of Randy Farleigh-Tom Pene, Gordon Rogers-Dennis Norman, John Thomas-Larry Tyson, and Charlie Varga-Rick Rittel lack a comprehensive understanding of the issues or operations of the University, and we cannot recommend them.

best choice: eachus or alpert

The platforms of Eachus-Kment and Alpert-Wylde show some striking similarities, but with different emphases. Eachus-Kment say, as the basis of their campaign, "We are running for office under the assumption that students are the real foundation of the University. Accepting this premise, students can no longer remain in a subordinate position."

Spence Alpert sees the role of student government as an initiator of programs for the students, providing goods and services through the resources already available to the ASUO, such as cooperative housing and stores, a loan program, etc.

The Alpert-Wylde ticket, however, also recognizes the need for greater student participation in the processes of the University, and would work for some kind of community government.

Of all the candidates interviewed, only Eachus-Kment extensively mentioned in their campaign literature anything about minority and disadvantaged students. They support recruiting these students—bringing the percentage of disadvantaged students in the University from the present three per cent up to ten per cent. They also advocate expansion of tutorial services aimed at keeping them in.

When questioned about this area, Alpert and Wylde responded that although they support efforts to bring disadvantaged students to the University, these students should be placed in compensatory programs to bring them up to the level of the University standards, so that after once being admitted, they won't be flunked out.

Although almost every candidate paid lip service to the idea of a joint student-faculty legislative body, Alpert and Eachus were the only ones to present plans for its structure and implementation. Neither candidate has been a stranger to the concept of community government: Eachus' first editorial as Emerald editor two years ago centered on this topic, and Alpert proposed a detailed plan for an academic council last fall in a joint meeting of the ASUO and faculty senates. Under Alpert's plan, a council of 30 faculty and 10 students would replace the general faculty as the primary legislative body of the University.

He says, "The idea of equal representation has become more of a slogan than a recognition of political realities. The record of other schools adopting similar plans has shown that the number of students on the council increases over time."

Eachus, on the other hand, urges a quicker adoption of a joint student-faculty legislature on an equal ratio. As an intermediate measure, he suggests a faculty-student senate which would replace the Faculty Senate, but still be advisory to the general faculty.

Both tickets argue for greater voting student representation on University committees, notably those dealing with curriculum, promotion and tenure. Both also advocate student control of student incidental fees. Alpert, in addition, would provide for student referenda on major changes in the incidental fee budgets.

Eachus, in addition, wants to bring the faculty under the conduct code, and gain student control over the EMU.

Both sets of candidates place considerable value on student lobbying and extending relations between the University and the community. Alpert would set up an extensive public relations program coordinated with

the University's existing PR office, and establish "direct communication, on a daily basis, with members of the administration and the state legislature." Eachus outlines four major areas of student lobbying: the State Board of Higher Education, the state legislature, power blocs in the business community, and the faculty. He also recognizes the need to be on top of the action in Washington, D.C.

The creation and funding of student cooperatives to lower prices were endorsed by both Eachus and Alpert.

Alpert-Wylde have included a plank on campus planning, urging the removal of parking meters, curtailment of air pollution by the University's physical plant, and closing 13th street to traffic.

They don't confront the plans to turn the remaining green spaces on campus into cement quads and high rise buildings, however.

Eachus-Kment presented specific proposals for educational reform, which Alpert-Wylde did not. Among these were expansion of the pass-no pass option, re-evaluation of group requirements, and the formation of a student-faculty task force to develop programs for educational reform. They advocate, as well, the development of a "Beachhead college" class approach, which would allow students to gain University credit through working in the outside community.

chalmers-taylor: cliches and goodies

Of the other five tickets interviewed, Chalmers-Taylor is the one we must deal with most extensively. They seem to have put together a pretty good formula for getting elected, but their campaign platform boils down to a long list of cliches interspersed by promises of goodies.

In their campaign brochure, they begin with the time-worn adage which students have been hearing since junior high school: "Too long Student Government has existed as an organization of students whose concern for student welfare was occasionally superseded by a concern for their own welfare. We believe firmly that Student Government should serve the students, not Student Government."

That should be implicit in any candidate's platform, and we doubt this statement radically separates Chalmers and Taylor from the rest of the field.

Chalmers-Taylor pay lip service to the ideas of a joint student-faculty legislature, greater student involvement on University committees, development of departmental unions, expanding the pass-no pass option, and increasing the enrollment of disadvantaged students. They do not, however, specifically develop these issues, or explain how they will be implemented.

We feel their basic problem is that they lack a comprehensive overview of the University situation which they may gain with further experience (they are both sophomores.) Nevertheless, Chalmers and Taylor have come up with some good ideas: the establishment of a Department of Ecology, lobbying with the state legislature to make graduate assistantships as tax free income, lobbying to change the Oregon Revised Statutes to enable students to receive medical treatment and medical aids, including birth control pills, without parental permission and state funding for the student health center and the night-time personal crisis center.

We don't believe, however, that either Chalmers or Taylor are ready to handle the immense job of the ASUO executive. We do hope they remain in the ASUO Senate, and work for their goals through this body.

husted-chao: unorganized

The Husted-Chao ticket is remarkable for its command of the issues and total lack of organization. Russ Husted is one of the most articulate candidates we interviewed. If he had gotten his thoughts and campaign together a month ago instead of last week, we would place him up with Alpert and Eachus as a serious candidate for ASUO president.

What he did present in his interview resembles the campaign platforms of Eachus and Alpert. And, indeed, he sees many similarities between himself and Eachus, except that he believes he's more action-oriented. Yet it was Eachus, not Husted, who developed those platform issues in an 11-page position paper.

Husted has proven himself to be action-oriented in the past. This fall he was campus coordinator of the Vietnam Moratorium and his record for activism stretches back to 1965, when he was involved in the Civil Rights movement in the South.

Husted-Chao see three major problems facing the University. The first is the "taxpayer revolt," or the external pressures placed on the University by the state legislature, the press and the citizens of Oregon.

He would protect the image of the University through the workings of a full time public relations bureau and press secretary, so that incidents such as the fire in the PE building would not become exaggerated in the media.

To further better relations between the University and the outside community, he advocates programs that will "bring down the fences between the two." Among these are classes, such as the "Can Man Survive?" class, which allow non-student enrollment, and programs for students going out into the community to learn.

Husted-Chao's other two major concerns involve the students at the University: the lack of feeling of community in the University and the factions predominant among students. Much of what they say about these problems resembles Nixon's "unity" theme in the 1968 presidential campaign.

Husted divides the unity issue three ways, unity among students, unity between students and faculty and unity, or a better working relationship, between students and the administration.

Husted-Chao argue for reapportioning the ASUO Senate to make the basis for representation on a departmental level. This would increase student involvement, Husted says, by making the representative system more relevant to each student. Moreover, students in each department would have a greater chance knowing their representative. But there are a lot of bugs in this system, too. For one thing, a large number of students haven't declared their majors, which would preclude them from representation.

Chao does not seem to have much experience in student government. During the interview, he concentrated on two issues. The first was campus unity.

As a member of a minority and a foreign student, he feels he has a better perspective from which to relate foreign students (numbering 1,000 on campus) to the rest of the University. "I will not try to stress minority rights," he said, "but attempt to bridge the gap between all students."

Chao's other main interest is campus planning. An urban planning major, he has an excellent grasp of the planning situation at the University. We wonder, however, where he has been when both ASUO and University campus planning committees were being appointed.

the others lack perspective

The rest of the candidates we evaluated lack the necessary political stature and breadth of perspective for ASUO president and vice-president.

There is one exception, Randy Farleigh, who is running for ASUO president with Tom Pene as his vice-president. Farleigh has practically grown up with ASUO politics; his older brother, Scott, was ASUO president three years ago. He was in the ASUO Senate for two years, and performed admirably there.

We thus expected more than his rambling monologue on academic reform which made up most of his interview. Farleigh defines academic reform as the greatest issue area concerning students, but he hasn't proposed anything new. He advocates unlimited pass-no pass, abolition of the GPA for graduation requirements, an undergraduate advising system, students on University committees, and the joint faculty-student Senate. He wasn't clear on how to bring these reforms about, however.

Farleigh also criticized student apathy, particularly in the participation (or lack of) by students who are already on University committees. But again, he offers no solutions to the problem. And although we, too, feel that educational reform should be a central issue for students, he did not address himself to other important areas, such as student control of incidental fees, expansion of student services, the relationship of the University to the outside community and the State Board, and disadvantaged students.

John Thomas and Larry Tyson's major position is that "Violence has no place in a university," and would crack down on campus demonstrators if they get out of line again. Their only other big proposal was a reform of the ASUO constitution which would reapportion the ASUO Senate—back to a system very similar to what it was like before the last reapportionment.

Asked about student control of incidental fees, they said they had no statement. Asked about open admissions for disadvantaged and minority students, they replied that they were primarily concerned with the "average student."

Gordon Rogers and Dennis Norman decided to run last Friday. They ran as a reaction to the violence and rhetoric which precipitated from the ROTC controversy. They base their campaign on their involvement in the "student-faculty" coalition, which does not have a great deal of potential for changing this institution.

Three other candidates, Eachus, Chalmers, and Husted, are also involved in the coalition.

Neither Rogers or Norman have experience in student government and both are generally ignorant of basic student issues, such as the incidental fee fight, and the organization of student government.

Charlie Varga and Rick Rittel are running an "un-campaign." Their platform simply states, "We're going to win."

During the interview, Charlie (they want to go by first names) said, "We would like to see everyone endorsed by the Emerald, because everyone is concerned. We'll refuse the endorsement if we get it."

Sorry, Charlie. We can dig you guys, but you don't get it.