

Bill drafted to shorten 'long arm of the computer'

Sirens shriek, lights flash and a criminal suspect is pulled over to the side of the street. The apprehending police officer glances at the license number of the car and within seconds knows if the owner has a local, state or national criminal record.

If the scene was Lane County, the officer would have checked the license number with the Area Information Record System (AIRS)—a computerized criminal information system.

Such systems are now operating in most counties in the country, and tie-ins to state and national computer systems are being developed.

In some parts of the country, however, information

programmed on such systems is also available to prospective employers, professors, investigators or any interested person because guidelines regarding who has access to the computerized information—and when—have been only sporadically established.

Two University second year law students are currently preparing to wage a battle in the state legislature for establishing controls on the dissemination of the programmed information.

Lois Portnoy and Maureen Fitts have drafted a bill that will be introduced this week by House Minority Leader Gordon MacPherson (R-Waldport) which calls for the establishment of "a

state agency to make rules to govern the operation of computerized criminal justice information systems in Oregon."

And some of the rules are written into the proposed bill. One such rule would allow an individual to inspect his or her computerized files and remove any record of an arrest which had been on file for two years but was not followed by a prosecution.

The computerized systems, which were federally initiated and labelled "top priority" under the Omnibus Crime Bill of 1968 are now regulated by individual law enforcement agencies.

Though the agencies currently "are being very strict in Oregon

about who can have access to the information," Portnoy and Fitts said they want to insure some individual rights for criminals "by making the systems politically accountable to the legislature."

"But the most important thing about the bill, even if it doesn't pass, is to make the public aware these systems exist," Portnoy said.

The students said that while a "definite value" exists in the system, "a terrible danger of misuse of the information also exists."

"We are not trying to abolish the systems," they said. "We just want to make sure people with

computerized files have rights too."

The bill calls for the creation of a five-member agency which would supervise all systems in Oregon and establish guidelines concerning which agencies and individuals would have access to the computerized information.

The members, which would be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the legislature, would include one member from a law enforcement agency, one member from a public or private computerized data processing agency and three members from the public-at-large. They would be appointed for four-year terms and required to submit an annual report to the governor containing a description of the files currently in operation, the number and nature of requests for information and a list of violations of the regulations established by the agency.

Portnoy and Fitts pointed out that the legislation is timely since "the whole network is still being developed." And they said that "there is a move in the country" to establish such agencies in all states and on a national level.

Portnoy said she became involved with the issue first when she was doing some research on the Omnibus Crime bill of 1968 "as part of some general schoolwork." After investigating the computerized systems created by the act "we decided to draft the bill," she said.

The women said they talked to MacPherson first about the legislation "because he was chairman of the House judiciary committee last session" and they said he has been "very receptive to the bill."

After its introduction, the students said they plan to spend "a lot of time" in Salem lobbying individual legislators and testifying in committee hearings.



Zane Smith

Wilderness areas added to preservation study list

Four study areas in the Willamette National Forest have been added to a list for possible inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

This announcement came Thursday from Zane Smith Jr., Supervisor of the Willamette National Forest, in a morning press conference. The areas under study by the U.S. Forest Service total 10,880 acres and include the following areas:

— A 4,700-acre addition in the Three Sisters area near French Pete Creek Valley. Known as the Mosquito Creek area, this portion is on the western edge of the present Three Sisters Wilderness area.

— An area at the northern boundary of the Mr. Washington Wilderness area totalling some 530 acres.

— Two areas bordering the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness area including 3,650 acres in the Minto Mountain area. The other section for possible inclusion covers 2,000 acres in the North Breitenbush area.

Smith said the areas selected by the Forest

Service in Washington were the same areas recommended by him and the Pacific Northwest Regional Forester.

He said that during the study period, which is expected to occur during a 10-year period, the lands would be managed as wilderness areas. "This means that such activities as logging, road construction and other activities not consistent with wilderness guidelines will not be carried out in these proposed study areas," Smith said.

Smith also said that roadless areas in the Willamette National Forest not selected for study will be managed in the same manner so as "not to impair later classification as wilderness area."

The areas announced by Smith Thursday are part of 235 areas totalling 11 million acres nationwide which will be included for study.

Smith said that during the next 90 days the public can provide input on the study proposals. He said the comments should be directed to the Chief of the Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

Money problems hit Whitebird

Is White Bird dying? Officials say that on January 23, the socio-medical clinic must repay a \$9,000 note obtained for a down payment on its buildings. So far, \$2,100 has been raised.

Faced by this grim situation, clinic officials called a press conference Thursday morning to discuss the alternatives that face the clinic if the \$9,000 is not raised, and plans for future financial assistance.

Speaking for the clinic, David Larry, chairer of the fiscal committee, expressed hope that the community will "help us keep our doors open". If community support falls short, he assured reporters that the clinic's administrators will still make "every effort to keep it open." If necessary, attempts to renegotiate the loan will be made.

If White Bird survives its current financial crisis its future might be somewhat brighter. Although the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) recently rejected its application for a \$1.9 million grant, an official of the clinic said they were "urged by NIMH to reapply" since it was mostly due to a technicality that the grant was denied. The grant would provide aid for six years.

Larry stated the clinic has already reapplied for a \$98,000 Office of Education grant that expires in June. They will also ask the state for \$45,000, the county for \$32,000, and the city for \$26,000 in aid. He stressed, however, that it is one thing to ask for money and another to

receive it. In addition, plans are being made to apply to private foundations for grants and for the clinic to go into business as a training agency to provide further sources of revenue.

In an attempt to rally the support of the community, Larry pointed out "White Bird is

providing more services for less money than any other human service agency in Lane County." The clinic maintains "the only 24 hour a day, seven day a week crisis intervention service in the community."

Last year White Bird served over 13,000 people.

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