

Theater group slates weekend Salem show

The Eugene Theater Company is one step closer to realizing its ambition of presenting a traveling repertory of Bicentennial plays. The company's performance of Joaquin Miller's "Forty Nine" will open in Salem this weekend.

The play will be presented this Friday and Saturday at the Pentacle Theater, 352 52nd St. NW, in Salem. Tickets cost \$3 and may be purchased at Stevens and Son in Salem or at the door. The performance starts at 8 p.m.

Dance scheduled tonight

The EMU Program Committee welcomes all students back to the University with an evening of dancing and music — best of all, it's free!

A new Eugene rock entourage, Shinola, will perform in the EMU Ballroom from 8:30 to 11 tonight.

Learning center offers classes

Flunk a course last term? Do poorly in several other classes? If one of your resolutions this year is to improve your study habits, the Learning Resource Center may be able to help you.

Need to learn how to study for an exam?

Do you have trouble spelling?

A vocabulary class helps expand spoken and written verbal skills with small group discussions and light doses of reading.

More information about all of these classes is available from the Learning Resources Center in Room 268 Condon Hall, or call 686-3226.

The joint you are smoking may soon be protected by the U.S. Constitution, if a number of suits being filed in state and federal courts around the country are successful. Alaska has already given constitutional protection to pot use in the home.

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), the nation's most successful pot lobby, has filed suits claiming that the use of marijuana in the home falls under the protection of the constitutional right to privacy. NORML has filed suits in California, Illinois, Tennessee and the District of Columbia.

The suits mark a major shift in NORML's strategy, which has formerly concentrated its resources on lobbying efforts in Congress and various state legislatures. NORML was instrumental in getting marijuana decriminalized in six states.

But the decision of the Alaska Supreme Court broke the ice on the constitutional issue and set a strong precedent that will be used in the other suits. NORML will now devote a much greater proportion of its resources to court battles than it had earlier, but will continue to lobby in legislatures as well.

The Alaska Supreme Court, in its unanimous ruling, stated that there was no firm evidence that marijuana use was harmful to the user or would "constitute a public health problem of any significant dimension...Mere scientific

doubts," said the court, "did not warrant government intrusion into the privacy of the home."

Since the Alaska decision was based on a privacy clause in the state constitution rather than the U.S. Constitution, it cannot be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

That aspect is one of the advantages of pursuing marijuana reform through the courts rather than legislative bodies, according to Keith Stroup, director of NORML. The court decision is not subject to the whimsy of politicians. Once the decision is made in a state supreme court, based on the state constitution, it has fundamental protection that can only be changed by the court itself or by a constitutional amendment.

A decision putting marijuana use under the protection of the right of privacy would also allow someone to cultivate the weed for personal use and to transport it as well. Under the Alaska decision, there is no constitutional protection for amounts of marijuana for sale rather than for personal use.


But at the same time, there is no maximum quantity explicitly set for personal use and the court generally assumed that amounts of pot ranging from eight ounces to one pound are for personal use. This amount is much greater than that set in even the most liberal laws passed by state legislatures, which generally designate an ounce or less for personal use.

In addition to the principle argument of the right of privacy, the suits also claim that current marijuana laws constitute cruel and unusual punishment for the offense involved, and that the laws deny equal treatment under law, since alcohol and tobacco are not treated the same even though there is definite proof that they can post health hazards.

Some of the arguments opposing constitutional protection for the private use of marijuana state that the substance has indeed proven to be dangerous and that constitutional protection would open the door for similar rulings for more dangerous drugs such as heroin.

Peter Meyer, legal counsel for NORML, counters these arguments on the grounds that the suit deals only with marijuana, that there is no positive proof of harm and that the burden of proof is on the state to prove that pot "poses some significant threat to the individual or danger to the public welfare" — a threat that has not been proven.

The question is bound to reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Since the District of Columbia lies under federal jurisdiction, the suit has been filed in federal court. An appeal would go directly to the U.S. Supreme Court, and according to Stroup of NORML, either side that loses will definitely take it to the high court. Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark will donate his time to argue for NORML's suit.



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briefs

The "briefs" section is for campus and community announcements. No brief will be published that charges an admission or donation fee. However, classes that charge tuition or dinner events that offer a free program even to those who do not buy a dinner will be accepted.

All briefs must be typed, triple-spaced in a 65-unit margin. Handwritten briefs will be given low priority. Briefs will be published one time only in any seven-day period, as space permits.

The deadline for briefs is 2 p.m. the day before publication.

MEETINGS

The Incidental Fee Committee will hold its first meeting of Winter Term Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the conference room of Suite V, in the EMU. The Committee will discuss procedural matters and assign tag people for the budgeting process.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Environmental Studies Center will be open this week Wednesday, Thursday and Friday for people interested in working with us Winter Term. Credit is available for this opportunity of enriching your environmental awareness and knowledge. Many projects in conjunction with other environmental groups await you. Drop by (11 PLC) or give us a call (x5006). Join us!

A financial aid workshop will be held Jan. 14 and 15 in the EMU to explain application procedures, distribute 1976-77 application materials and answer student questions about financial aid. The Jan. 14 workshop will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. and the Jan. 15 workshop from 8 to 11 a.m. Room will be posted. All students who may be applying for financial aid are urged to attend one of the sessions.

For students who cannot attend the workshops, 1976-77 application materials will be available at the Financial Aid office after Jan. 15.

Group experiences offered by the Counseling Center this quarter include a group for couples, group training in assertive behavior and test anxiety reduction and self-actualization groups utilizing encounter and rational-empirical techniques. Groups are open to all students and University employees free of charge.

For information call x.3227 or come by 150 Susan Campbell Hall.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday during fall, winter and spring terms, except during exam weeks and vacation periods. During summer session the Emerald is published Tuesday and Thursday during the eight-week term and on Thursday the last three weeks of the eleven-week term.

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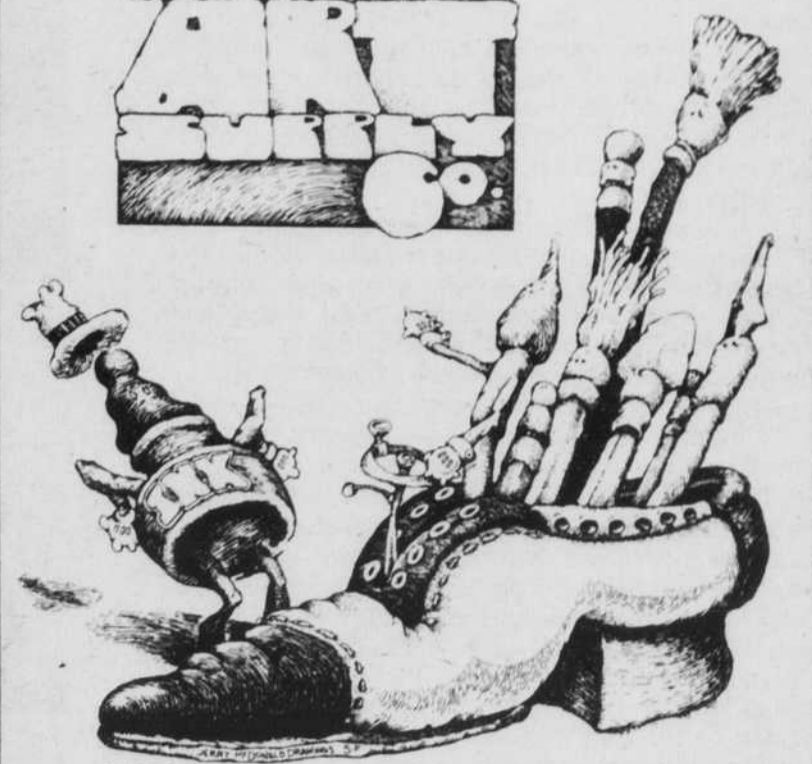
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