

Indians slate symposium on school issues

A symposium on Indian higher education in the northwest will be presented at the University Friday. The event is sponsored by the Native American Student Union (NASU).

The morning session will take place in the Forum, EMU, from 9 to 12 a.m. An afternoon session is scheduled to begin at 1.

"The symposium will deal specifically with Indians in higher education in the Northwest, and the increasing difficulty they have attaining an adequate education in this state," says Dennis DeGross, director of the Native American Program.

Featured speaker will be Richard Wilson, Executive Director of Management Group, Inc. The Albuquerque-based firm specializes in Indian consulting, including "work in environmental, health, education and business management for tribes," DeGross says.

Wilson served as the first director of the Native American Program at the University of Oregon in 1969.

The longhouse will also be the scene of a dinner for Native Americans beginning at 5:30 p.m. A free pow-wow at Westmoreland Community Center will conclude the symposium. The pow-wow is open to the public and will begin at 7:30 p.m.

Seeks ban on corporate farms

Petition to end agribusiness

By DAN McGUINESS
Of the Emerald

An onion costs a dime at Safeway this week.

From seedbed to supermarket, its crackly hide passes quietly through the vertical links of the Safeway empire to become a tiny drop in the corporate Crock-pot.

Now imagine eastern Oregon's vast sea of sagebrush transformed into productive farmland, its desert surface punctured by deep wells feeding water into giant, circular, sprinkler-irrigation systems.

Imagine fleets of 20-ton tractors cruising through endless fields of potatoes and onions, injecting miracle fertilizers into the soil while helicopters overhead spray pesticides that kill bugs dead.

Then imagine the headlines as they might appear—BLOOMING DESERT MEANS FOOD FOR STARVING MILLIONS.

This scenario is not too far from reality, says John Markoff, a political science faculty member who has done extensive research on corporate farming in Oregon.

"Recent changes in the world economy have made it profitable to farm on a large scale. There is a definite trend towards corporate

ownership of farmland in this country, and it is projected that by the mid 1980s, wheat will be the only crop not under their control," he explains.

The Oregon State Grange has reacted to the latest incursions of agri-business into the state by starting an initiative drive which would place a constitutional amendment restricting corporate farming on the November ballot.

The backers of the initiative petition must collect 67,000 signatures by July 1 in order to get the amendment on the ballot.

The University's Survival Center caught wind of the petition drive not long ago and is now putting its energies into it.

Survival Center director Mike McClellan says the initiative will receive good backing throughout the state. "It will get the support of urban consumers who are aware of escalating prices and the difference in the quality of food. Small farmers are for it because they're being ruined by agri-business, and environmentalists will surely be in favor because they see how destructive energy-intensive farming is to the soil and to the ecosystem as a whole," he explains.

The bill is patterned after similar amendments recently passed in Minnesota and South Dakota, two of the six farm states which banned corporate farming in the last five years. The bill defines a corporation as more than five unrelated shareholders whose company derives less than 80 per cent of its gross receipts from farming.

The move is intended to preserve the concept of the family farm, an entity still very strong in Oregon.

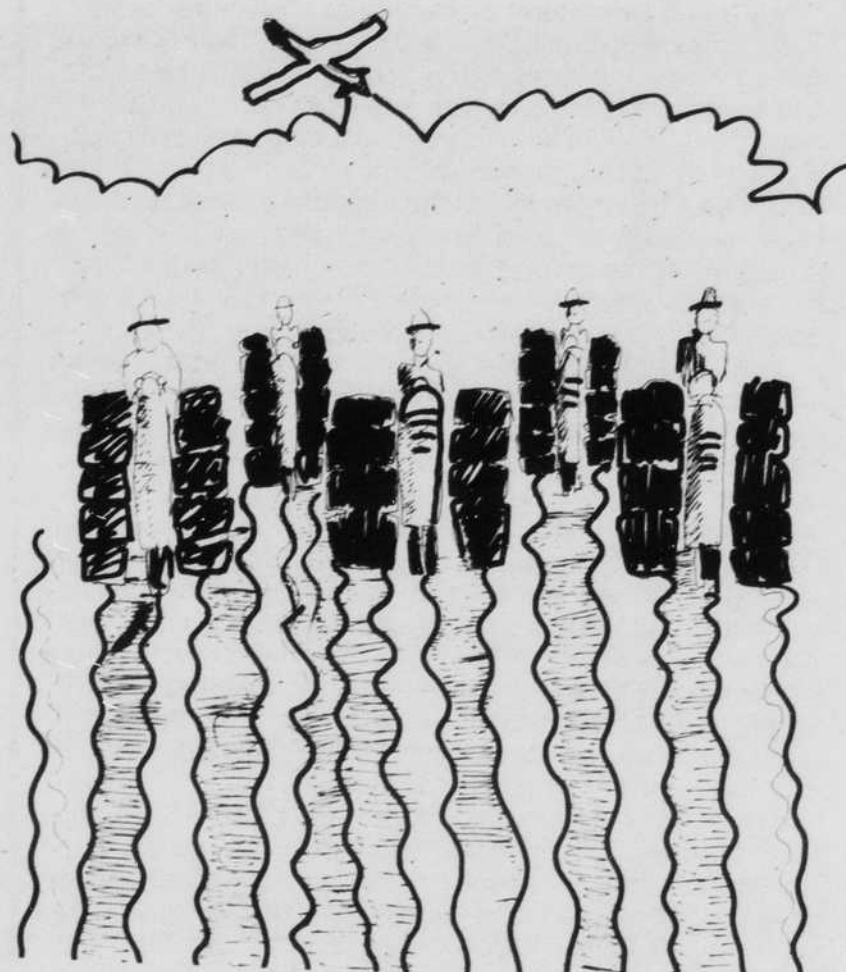
There is a smattering of corporate farms in the Willamette Valley and southern Oregon. The U and I Sugar Co. has large holdings in the Ontario region, but the most visible inroads are being made in the Boardman area east of Pendleton where Boeing Aircraft has purchased over 100,000 acres of desert land and is subleasing

16,000 acres to Sim-Tag Inc., a firm which specializes in processing potatoes into packaged starch.

The amendment would require these companies to divest of their holdings within ten years. It would not affect U and I Sugar (owned by the Mormon Church) because there is a clause exempting land

farm for a long time is going to work for a big operation for hourly wages."

Clark says the objective of agri-business is the creation of vertical monopolies which allows them to set prices. This is done by ownership of the farmland, the processing, the shipping and the distribution.



Drawing by JoAnn Fahlgren

owned and farmed by religious, educational or charitable non-profit corporations.

Gene Clark, coordinator of the petition drive on campus, calls it a preventative bill.

"It's a question of who will own and control farmland in Oregon," he says. "If agri-business moves in, the profits will go elsewhere. There will be jobs, of course, for managers and migrant workers, but no man who has run his own

"But," exclaims Clark, "they have to grow a product that will sell, and that means it has to look good. So they pour tons of fertilizer and pesticides on the soil and it makes for shapely, colorful food. Its food value is no better though — I know. I've worked the produce section in five different supermarkets."

The debate over the proposed amendment will heat up in the months ahead while potatoes and onions grow fat and costly.

Champion trees

(Cont. from Page 1)

those trees from the hungry teeth of the chainsaw.

Ralph Jaskowski, silvi-culturist for Willamette National Forest (which currently has no champions), says, "We would give a champion tree special protective attention to preserve it and its immediate area. We would flag the area on our district maps and notify the district rangers that this would become a protected special interest area. The value to the public in special interest and recreation would far outweigh the commercial value of the tree. It might mean leaving an acre around a champion Willow or substantially more area for a Douglas Fir."

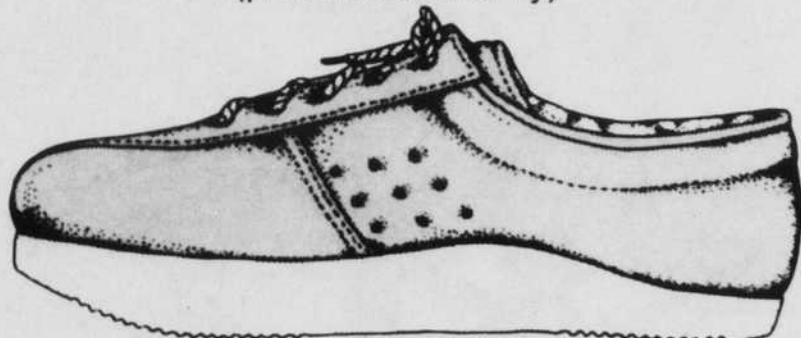
If the idea of the "Big Tree Hunt" is appealing, there's more information in the office of Ralph Voris, Information and Education Section, Oregon State Dept. of Forestry, 2600 State Street, Salem, 97310. They will supply information on how to measure the tree in the field and information on the current champions and the trees that should become champions if someone would only find them.

Drawson's slide show will be in Room 123, Science Building, at 8 p.m. Friday.

Sale at Roots

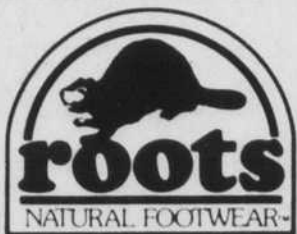
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