

Ex-Crater Lake employes charge neglect

By JOHN MITCHELL
and JOCHEN HAGBERG
Of the Emerald

A federal judge in Portland Friday dismissed a complaint filed by Crater Lake Lodge, Inc., which sought to recover \$4 million from the federal government for damages allegedly suffered after sewage contaminated the lodge water supply last summer.

District Judge Robert Belloni held that the court could not take jurisdiction in such a complaint until the National Park Service has had an opportunity to investigate the alleged losses and settle the claim.

Ralph Peyton, president of Crater Lake Lodge, Inc., said the contamination caused a \$4 million loss of business reputation, good

will and profits. He contended that any damages from the contamination were solely the result of neglect by National Park Service employes.

But according to two former employes of Crater Lake Lodge, Inc., Peyton is also guilty of "neglect."

Crater Lake reportedly has been plagued by repeated human negligence in recent years. Tons of metallic waste, dumped by Crater Lake Lodge, Inc., lie at the bottom of the lake, according to the former employes.

On Aug. 8, 1972, the concessionaire's boathouse on Wizard Island was destroyed by fire. The structure, which housed three 42-foot tour launches during the winter months, burned for approximately two hours before fire

crews could contain the flames.

Construction of a new facility began immediately. Building sections were prefabricated on the rim and flown down to Wizard Island by helicopter. The rush to finish the new boathouse before the first snows prompted Peyton to recruit additional help. Seasonal Park Service employes worked overtime in the effort and the boathouse was completed in 21 days.

Cleaning up the old boathouse site, boat crew members Chuck Risse and Pat Taylor piled the melted aluminum roof and some other debris on a launch dock. They say they towed the dock around Wizard Island with a tour boat and dumped the charred metal into the lake.

"The dock was about 50 feet

long by eight feet wide," said Risse, "and we stacked the junk to about shoulder height. We were told to take the dock just far enough around the island so that we couldn't be observed from the Rim Village area."

Taylor and Risse say they dumped two full dock loads of junk into Crater Lake that day.

"Rudy Wilson, the boat crew supervisor, ordered us to dump the debris into the lake," reported Taylor. "We were specifically told not to mention a word of it to anyone."

Peyton, who is Wilson's immediate supervisor, denies any knowledge of such actions.

"I'm sure the boat crew hauled gobs of that junk out," he said. "If anything was dumped into the lake, it was not to my knowledge."

Taylor rejects Peyton's claim that the metal was removed from the crater.

"We didn't pack two tons of metallic junk out; we dumped all of it into the lake," said the former boat crew foreman.

The next summer, the boat crew claims it sent more human refuse to the bottom of the lake.

"Three engine blocks from old tour boats had been sitting on the island for many years — collecting rust," said Risse. "Rudy Wilson instructed us to load each engine block onto a rowboat. The plan was to tow the rowboats about a mile off shore and sink them by puncturing the bottoms with a pick."

Using another rowboat with a small outboard motor, Taylor claims he pulled the rowboat with the engine block out into the lake. About a mile off Wizard Island, the rear rowboat started taking water. A few seconds later, it pulled Taylor's boat straight to the bottom of the lake, approximately 600 feet, and he started swimming.

"I have never been so startled in my life," said Taylor. "I swam around for about 15 minutes in 35 degree water until I was rescued."

The other two engine blocks were eventually dumped and the boating mishap was never reported.

Peyton insisted that Taylor "was going too fast...and besides, what harm can a cast iron block do?" Later, he claimed that the engine blocks had been retrieved.

"We had skin divers pull the engine blocks and the outboard motor out of the lake," he reported.

Rick Nolte, of the Eugene Skin Divers Club, doubted that the divers could have pulled the engine blocks out if they were at a depth of 600 feet.

"Divers wouldn't be able to breathe at a depth of 600 feet, let alone work," Nolte said. "At 150 feet divers develop nitrogen narcosis, an effect similar to nitrous oxide, which is used by dentists. Between 200 and 250 feet, they would be totally intoxicated."

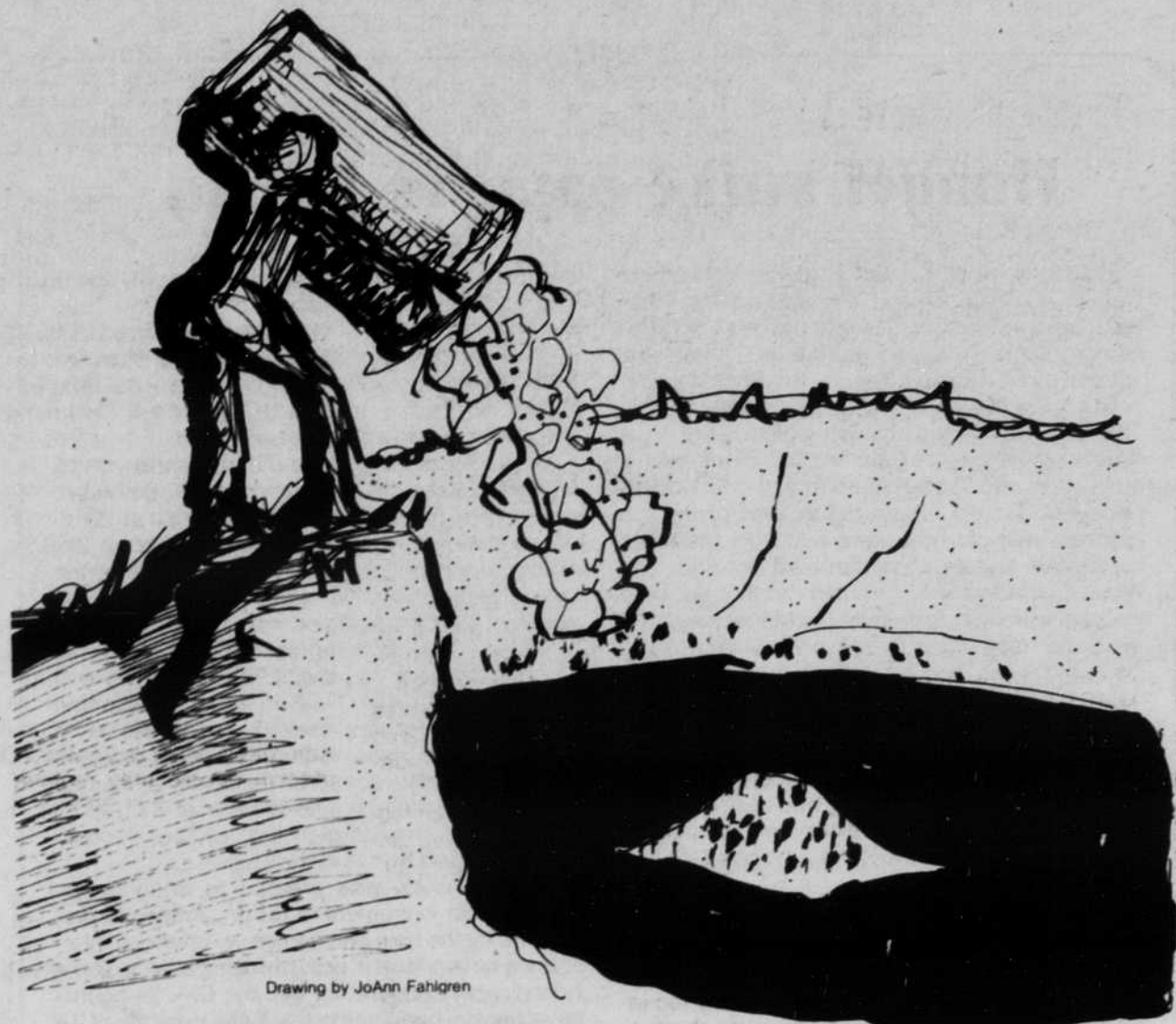
The National Park Service was unaware of reports of these activities until recently.

"It is certainly not Park Service policy to dump things into the lake," claimed Park Supt. Frank Betts.

According to Section 3.17 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, "the draining, dumping or discharging of wastes or refuse into the waters from any vessel is prohibited" on lands administered by the National Park Service.

Regardless of the truth of the allegations, Peyton will no longer be associated with the park. It was announced last week that the National Park Service had approved a transfer of concession rights to Canteen Corporation of Oregon, a subsidiary of Trans World Airlines. Canteen has purchased the rights of Crater Lake Lodge, Inc., from Peyton.

Crater Lake, listed by the National Geographical Society as one of the seven natural wonders of the world, is the only national park in Oregon. It was established in 1902.



Drawing by JoAnn Fahlgren

Affirmative action meeting garners little input

Speakers testify about need for greater classroom accessibility

A forum to evaluate the University's compliance with state anti-discrimination laws received sparse attendance Wednesday.

Only two students submitted oral testimony to the eight-member task force, which was set

up to hear grievances about discrimination on the basis of race, sex, handicap, age, religion, national origin, marital and/or parental status.

The task force will receive written testimony submitted to the Of-

fice of Affirmative Action, 465 Oregon Hall, prior to June 14.

Loren Simonds, Director of ASERT, an organization for handicapped students, testified at the forum. He called for greater room accessibility for disabled persons, saying only 35 of the University's 141 classrooms currently are accessible.

Several variables probably caused the lack of attendance at the hearing, according to Myra

Willard, compliance officer of the task force and the University's Affirmative Action director.

"It really is unfortunate that the evaluation hearings are taking place this time of the year," she said. "But we are under time constraints."

The final evaluation report must be presented to University Pres. William Boyd before July 1.

The task force has sent questionnaires to all University de-

partments and schools, and has received considerable input. But again, timing is a crucial factor.

"We won't have time to seek responses from faculty, staff and students as we would have liked," Willard reported.

The task force was set up by the University to examine the areas of curriculum, class treatment, career training, personal counseling, housing facilities and athletics for discriminatory practices.

Dotson still hasn't filed complaint

By RICK BELLA
Of the Emerald

Eugene businessman John Dotson has not yet filed the contest of election he threatened after the Oregon primary.

Dotson made an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination for the Lane County Board of Commissioners, position Number 3 and charged on election night that voters were registered in more than one county or state.

Dotson blamed the new voter registration system, enacted by the 1975 legislature for leaving loopholes which he says "ringers" took advantage of.

He then threatened to file a contest of election with the circuit court and reported his complaint to the secretary of state's office in Salem. But, a week later, there is still no formal complaint.

"He hasn't filed a thing," said Lynn Hardy

of the State Elections Division. "But we sent out a memorandum May 27 directing all 36 county clerks to keep an eye open for anything suspicious — especially new Oregon registrants whose precinct memorandum cards come back in the mail as undeliverable." Hardy said, however, that no special investigation is planned for Lane County.

Local officials have received no formal complaints and are proceeding as usual.

"I haven't heard a word from Dotson," said Don Penfold, Lane County director of elections. "But he has until 40 days after the election to file."

Penfold said the registrations made during the last five days before the election are being put into the computer now, and the precinct memorandum cards will be mailed shortly. He said the department is stamping

"Do not forward" on the envelopes. Officials plan to study the returned cards to see if the addresses indicate any patterns.

Dotson, however, is still adamant. "I think it's quite obvious to everyone involved that there was something wrong," he said. "We talked to a bunch of kids who were having a party and they said 'Hey, let's go vote for Jerry Brown.' We said 'Do you live here?' and they said 'No, but we live here now.'"

He said the people involved were living in a "commune-type house," and the residents were "drifting."

Dotson said he will wait to see what the secretary of state does after he gets the result of the county reports. "If there is a large mass of reported incidences," Dotson said, "we will see a large-scale prosecution."