

For medical study

Student defends Mexican school

By PETER LEIBIK
Of the Emerald

Bruce Web, an Oregonian who completed three years at the Universidad Autonoma de Guadalajara in Mexico, the world's largest medical school for Americans, contends much of the school's negative aspects, including the strict dress code and "medical mill" reputation, are "over-played" in the United States.

Although Web hopes to transfer to the University's Health Sciences Center in Portland, he defends Guadalajara against some of the charges made by American medical school advisors.

"Long hair is out," admits Web, "but nobody is running around with crew cuts either."

Web acknowledges blue jeans and casual dress are officially banned but adds, "Mexicans are wearing Levi's and T-shirts, so they can't very well stop Americans from doing it. In fact, it looks like any campus anywhere, except you won't find shoulder-length hair."

Web is particularly sensitive to the charge that Guadalajara's low entrance requirements and high tuition cater exclusively to wealthy Americans trying to buy a medical degree, as the American Association

of Medical Colleges has implied.

"Granted, it's a private school; it makes a reasonable amount of money and encourages American enrollment," Web says, "but by American standards \$4,400 a year falls into the middle tuition range."

"Americans at Guadalajara cut across all strata," says Web. "Many are sons of doctors but that holds true at any medical school. Others are attending on federal loans and quite a few have no backing at all from their families."

"No matter what people say, you can't really get through this school that easily. Some people can coast, but it's like any school. The amount I studied is the amount I learned."

According to Web, language difficulties are over-magnified, too. Americans are required to take a six-month Spanish language and culture course before beginning medical studies. And while lecture and exams are in Spanish, Americans study from English texts. Web adds that in scientific courses many words have the same Latin root in any language.

Even the dismal record of Guadalajara students on American graduate medical exams is misleading, according to Web. "People start taking the exams

after their first and second years for practice and pass it after their third," he says.

But Web admits problems exist at Guadalajara. The school refuses to publish transcripts until the last term of the third year unless the student is willing to forfeit a \$2,000 deposit.

Nearly all Americans try to transfer after three years, Web says, but only 5 to 10 per cent succeed. Once a student graduates from Mexican medical schools, he is obligated to serve two-and-one-half years as an intern and in the Mexican government's social service program.

Web agrees with University pre-health science coordinator Marliss Strange's assessment that foreign medical schools are a last resort. "You have to assume you get a better clinical education here," he says. "And although I enjoyed myself culturally, the whole experience of being forced to leave the United States — the expense, the travel — was a hardship."

Which is all by way of explaining why Web is at home in Tigard waiting to hear from Oregon's medical school and a chance to start his third year again, North of the border.

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Gandhi allows Indian elections

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi assumed emergency powers on June 26, 1975, opponents charged she was laying the foundation for dictatorial rule. But she called the measures "shock therapy" to save India and its 610 million people.

Pointing mainly now to economic improvements, she says her therapy worked and it is time to start dismantling the emergency powers and hold elections.

The opponents contend the improvements could have come without emergency powers under which civil liberties were suspended and political opponents

went to jail. They also maintain that Indian democracy has been harmed.

Gandhi announced last week that elections for a new Parliament would be held in March "to reaffirm the power of the people and to uphold the fair name of India as a land committed to the path of reconciliation, peace and progress."

"Anyone can see that today the nation is more healthy, efficient and dynamic than it had been for a long time," she said.

"Our people have shaken off the sense of defeatism and gloom. There is a new pride in being Indian. Indeed, it can be said that in the year just completed, the nation

has rediscovered its sense of purpose and its potential strength."

The strength cited by Gandhi is derived primarily from the economy, which was stagnant before the emergency but which showed significant improvement in the past year while more developed countries saw their economic problems worsen.

To back up Gandhi's contention, government officials cite a record grain crop of 118 million tons last year, a record buffer food stock of 18 million tons, record foreign exchange reserves of \$3 billion, a 10 per cent jump in industrial production, a 33 per cent increase in exports and a money-saving 10 per cent drop in imports.

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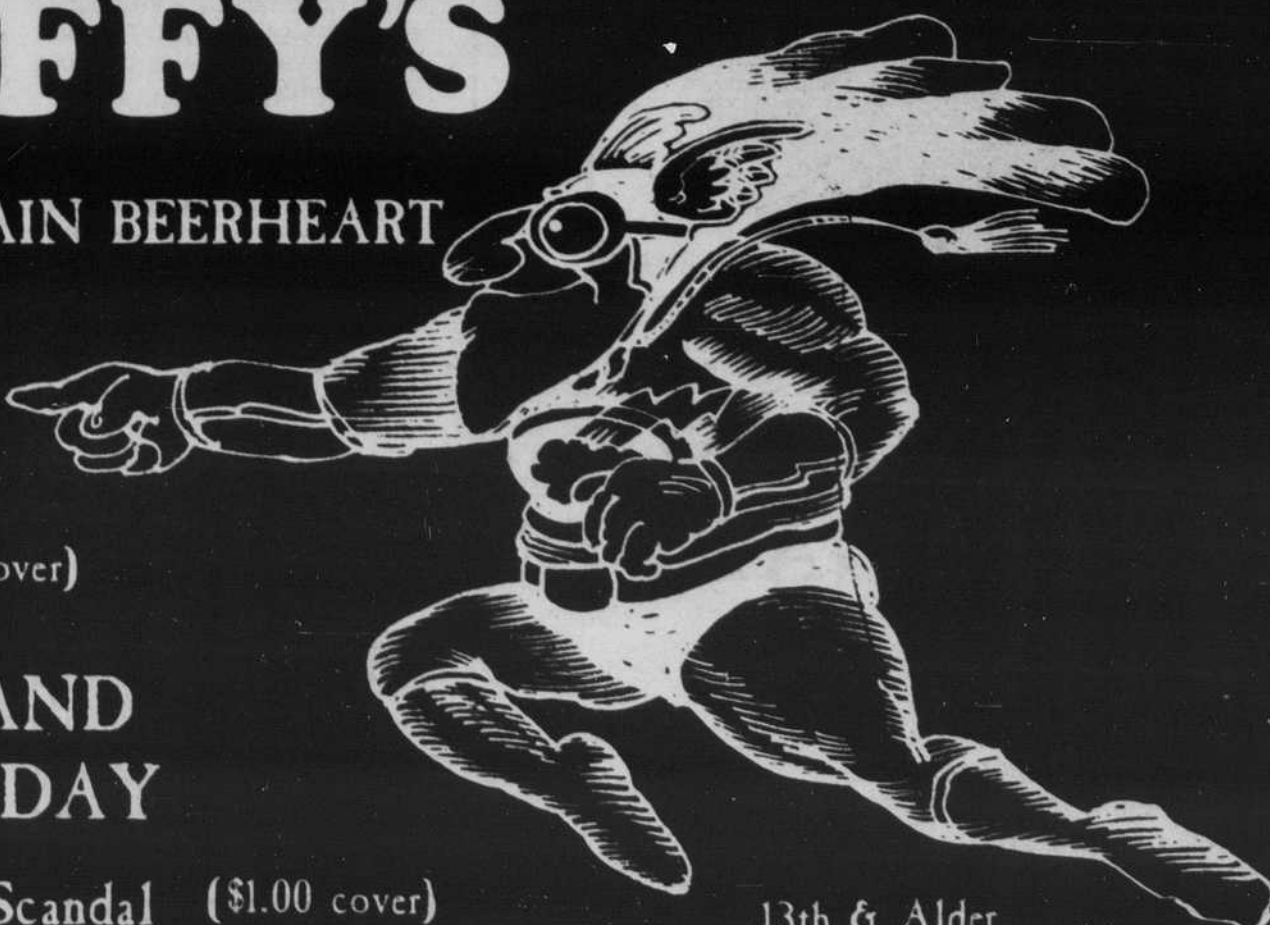
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