

Fraternity helps with taxing questions

By STEPH NOONAN
Of the Emerald

Although T.S. Eliot once pegged April the cruelest month of the year for personal reasons, millions of Americans share the same sentiment—but for different reasons.

April 15 brings the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) more mail than Elvis Presley and Beta Alpha Psi, the campus accounting fraternity, is trying to minimize the IRS's headaches with a free tax assistance table in the EMU.

The table will handle tax questions from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. daily until dead weak.

"We've all taken at least one course, Intro to Individual Taxation," said member Colin Slade.

"Some of us have even taken an additional advanced tax course on corporate income tax. We're also briefed by a tax teacher on important issues. We understand the theories behind income tax laws, the 1040 form, deductions and other technicalities."

Still, Slade said, the operation cannot be compared to a professional tax service like H & R Block.

"They're bound to know more than we are — their business is filling out tax forms," he said. "We're kind of an intermediate step for people who don't need the services of a tax preparer, yet the tax thing isn't real clear to them. For them, it just isn't worth paying the \$10 to \$15 to get the return done."

Slade said a person who could lose or gain a great deal of money through the tax system would be

"stupid not to go to an accountant" for assistance.

"But we will answer specific questions or research the problem right there," he said. "We never give anyone an answer if we don't really know. We want the person to keep looking. We don't want the buck to stop there with us. They should go to the IRS or a CPA for the answer."

Since the group sticks to this philosophy, no liability is incurred by them or the University, Slade said. "Also, we're never really dealing with much money in helping students, so we decided against any kind of liability waiver for them to sign."

In assisting both students and faculty members, Slade has encountered a wide range of tax problems.

"There's such a vast amount of

regulation and legislation done on taxes that the questions are incredibly varied," he said. "I thought it would be simple stuff like 'What goes on line 14?' but it's much more technical. People are into capital gains, for instance—people with their own businesses."

One common problem, Slade said, is most dorm, fraternity and sorority house residents believe they can claim a renter's refund on their return.

"They can't claim one because there is no state property tax paid on any of those dwellings," he explained.

Other questions are researched right at the table. "We basically help people through the form. They can't leave it with us to fill out for them. Sometimes we almost fill it out—like for a foreign student

with a short form. Some feel quite intimidated by the whole system."

References used to answer questions include IRS booklets, the 1040 form, Slade said. The honorary is purchasing a "Master Tax Guide" also.

ASUO provides a grant for advertising and "one text is mine, the IRS information is free, and the law library loans some material," he said.

Beta Alpha Psi members participating receive three hours of pass/No pass accounting credit, Slade said, and most are seniors preparing for a career next year.

Slade offers no specific advice for students waiting to tackle their 1040.

"Actually it's very simple. It would be an insult to their intelligence if I told them 'this is how to fill it out.'"

Africa

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"Our frustration grew as we were constantly confronted by the hideousness of the system, and we found our friendships were being made or broken by political thinking."

The Doveys held jobs for a year and a half until they saved enough money to leave again, this time for Eugene, Oregon. They arrived in mid-August and were immediately enamored with much of the American way. They say they found Eugene an especially attractive town, with people reaching out to welcome them.

But they are still uncomfortable with their decision to desert their homeland and remain occasionally captive to the frustration they once lived: "I'd like to be able to say I'll forget about South Africa and live the best life I can here in Eugene or somewhere else. But I don't think I could identify with another country again, and I can't go back to South Africa under present conditions."

So, Ken and Teresa find themselves poring through newspapers, looking for news of South Africa, and writing home to friends and neighbors for news too trivial or too personal to be reported to the outside world:

Mike Murphy has just been banned for trying to set up black trade unions. He was a quiet lad who went up tremendously in my estimation when I heard of his banning. My reaction was one of disgust at my own inadequacy and lack of commitment. I have been shocked into reappraisal of my role as a white South African.

Banning means a man will be confined to his house for five years, except for necessary excursions, and will be allowed to speak with no one. In addition, he will forfeit his job and be allowed no visitors except for his immediate family during the ban, which could be extended.

The letter explains the paradox binding many South Africans who oppose the apartheid system. To oppose it in any effective way is revolutionary and illegal, while to offer no opposition is to remain part of an insidious system, offering at least tacit support.

"Unless you're the type of person who wants politics to run your life you have to ignore what's going on or say 'forget it, I'm leaving,'" said Sandi Leuner, who lived in South Africa with her husband Patrick until they expatriated and arrived in Eugene last August.

"The (apartheid) political system is wrong," says Patrick, originally from Southwest Africa and now a University student majoring in architecture. "But no one is giving white South Africans anything better, and they end up feeling defensive about what they've got — they become frightened about what might happen" if they lost their preferred status.



Drawing by Cecily Reeve

Ken Dovey estimates that 20 to 30 per cent of white South Africans support granting blacks political rights. "But a lot is political warfare — not war between people," Sandi explains.

The bizarre history of South Africa formed its present system with no mandate from the people who live there.

In the 17th Century, English settlers landed in South Africa (Ken Dovey's ancestors among them) just as they were landing in Cape Cod. Once landed, they adjusted to the conditions of the new land and led a life different from their English cousins back home.

As differences grew between them, so did England's demands on the colony's economic and political allegiance. The South Africans revolted in a long, bitter battle with the British.

The insurrection was quashed. But deep-seated resentment against the British and their ways remained until World War II when South Africa narrowly decided to fight on the allied side. A large minority of South Africans refused to ally with Britain. Rejecting both Britain and her liberal ways, they sided with Nazi Germany.

When peace came, the pro-German faction managed to get elected, and a vestige of that power has remained in office ever since.

This being the situation, Ken and his wife have reconciled to expose the situation to others. Ken Dovey hopes the United

States will voice outrage of the system to prevent South African leaders from believing the U.S. will come to their rescue.

For now, Ken and Teresa speak at local community groups, churches and high schools, giving testimony against the apartheid system they lived in, and hope someday it will be reformed.

What if it isn't?

"I really can't go back to South Africa and live under that system again. Maybe the next best thing I could do is to go one step further — to work for some type of world organization," says Ken Dovey. "We'll have to see."

Quintet schedules show

The University's Faculty Woodwind Quintet will present a recital Wednesday, at 8 p.m. in the music school's Beall Concert Hall.

Members of the ensemble include Richard Trombley, flute; John McManus, clarinet; and Deborah Cunningham, horn. Oboist J. Robert Moore and bassoonist Peter Berquist complete the quintet.

The program will open with "The Chimney of King Rene," by Darius Milhaud. The seven movements recall the renowned troubador of Southern France, King Rene of Aix-en-Provence. The 15th century ruler was so beloved by his subjects, that even today the main boulevard remains named Chimney of King Rene. Milhaud lived in this country during the past years and composed the piece to reflect the colorful nature of its historical monarch.

"Three Pieces for Mechanical Organ," by Wolfgang Mozart follows. The work was arranged by Wolfgang Meyer and quintet member Bergquist. Originally, Mozart created the work for mechanical organ, an instrument that has only small, thin sounding pipes. The trio of pieces has since been transcribed for quintet to capture the dynamic quality and color of the literature. The movements are "Adagio and Allegro in F Minor, K.594," "Andante in F Major, K.616," and "Fantasia in F Minor, K.608." The group will close with "Quintet for Winds, Op. 42," by Carl Nielsen.

Admission to the concert is free. The quintet will perform the same program Thursday at Portland State University.

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