

# Citizens committee examines 5 bills

By JIM ROTH  
Of the Emerald

The Citizens Advisory Committee for Criminal Justice Planning, part of the Lane Council of Governments (L-COG), will meet Monday to examine five bills currently under consideration by Oregon Senate and House committees.

The citizens committee hopes to form a group opinion on each bill for approval by the L-COG Board of Directors. These opinions would be written into statements which could be used to lobby for the interests of Lane County when the bills reach the floor of the Legislature.

Representing the public opinion of Lane County in the state Legislature is one of a number of functions the committee could perform — and it has recently been expanded from 10 to 18 members to promote new activity.

"The sky is the limit for this group," said Dave O'Brien, district criminal justice planner for L-COG. "They can define their own role and decide how much work to take on."

The committee does have one well-defined task: to provide a set of recommendations each year to the L-COG Board of Directors outlining priority projects for federal grant money. The citizens committee has a professional counterpart in the L-COG's technical advisory board, made up of the district attorney, county sheriff, municipal police chiefs, a district court judge, the public defender and several other professionals.

Linda Mills-Erickson, a University law student, is the committee chair. She shares O'Brien's hopes for the newly enlarged committee.

"We had trouble getting a quorum at meetings before we expanded," said Mills-Erickson. "It's difficult to get work done when only four or five members show up each week."

The committee includes two other students, two nurses and two juvenile workers, but most members are professional. The committee does not have as broad a representation of the community as L-COG would like, according to O'Brien.

"L-COG doesn't have to maintain the citizens committee but we have chosen to have it," says O'Brien. "We could hire a staff of professionals who would study the community and suggest changes or new programs but there wouldn't be that link between public opinion and government that we want."

The citizens committee is in turn linked to the L-COG board by O'Brien, whose job entails more administrative and liaison work than actual planning.

The bills under consideration next Monday are: House Bill 2246, victim compensation, establishing a minimum time period for offenders before release on parole; HB-2286, setting the minimum sentence for felons at five years for first conviction, 15 years for second conviction and life for third conviction; HB-2213, repealing legislation criminalizing prostitution; HB-2321, bringing back the death penalty; and Senate Bill 20, appropriating general funds to the state board administrator to reimburse counties for judicial expenses.

The meeting, open to the public, will be held Monday at 7:30 p.m. in the Public Safety Building's cafeteria conference Room A.

# Co-op bids for brush-clearing

By KEVIN HARDEN  
Of the Emerald

A new workers' co-op has an offer for Lane County.

Since the Lane County Board of Commissioners banned the use of herbicides on county roads, alternative solutions have been in the making. One likely to be heard out is hand-clearing brush. And the Western Lane County co-op has offered a bid of \$4 less per mile to hand-clear county roads than the job would cost with herbicides.

"We want to offer the county an alternative to herbicides," says Carolyn Smyth, head of Western Lane County co-op, which is based in the Deadwood and Five Rivers area.

The only hitch is that Lane County has not yet put the brush-clearing jobs out to bid. Nevertheless, Smyth is optimistic.

"We're mainly waiting for Al Driver (Lane County transportation department head) to make a decision on the project," she says. "I've spoken twice to the commissioners, but until the job opens up we just won't know."

Formed last fall, the Western Lane County co-op grew out of the idea that people should be able to live in the Deadwood and Five Rivers areas without having to travel far away for jobs. High unemployment has given impetus to Smyth and 32 others to found a

co-op and provide year-round employment for people in the area.

"Some of our friends were faced with the possibility of leaving the area to go back to Eugene to find work, so we formed the co-op," she says. "We're trying to open up alternatives to leaving."

Smyth explained that the road clearing project has been the first major job the co-op has been able to focus on. "We're really positive about getting the contract," she says. "We're just getting started so we're open to ways to employ more people."

The co-op has spent the past several months "brain storming" about possible jobs and "just growing." Following the example of Hoedads, a Eugene-based cooperative, the co-op has accepted work from odd jobs to logging, says Smyth. The group held 10 meetings this year and decided which jobs to accept, what to charge for their work and what amount of profit to apply to the next job.

Most decisions are made on the basis of group consensus, Smyth says.

"We are a registered cooperative corporation with bylaws and officers and we have a small membership fee that goes back into the co-op to be used for new equipment, insurance for certain jobs and as a resource for the group to draw on," she adds.

Although the co-op provides work for people, it hasn't received offers of assistance from any county or state agency. According to Smyth, Lane County Commissioner Jerry Rust has been asking for money to fund groups and projects such as the workers' co-op.

# Films on aging scheduled

"A Large Slice of Life," a trio of films on aging, will be shown tonight at 8 at the Laurelwood clubhouse, 17th Avenue and Columbia Street. The public is invited and there is no admission charge.

The films are the work of filmmaker Bill Maddron, former owner of Industrial Litho in Eugene.

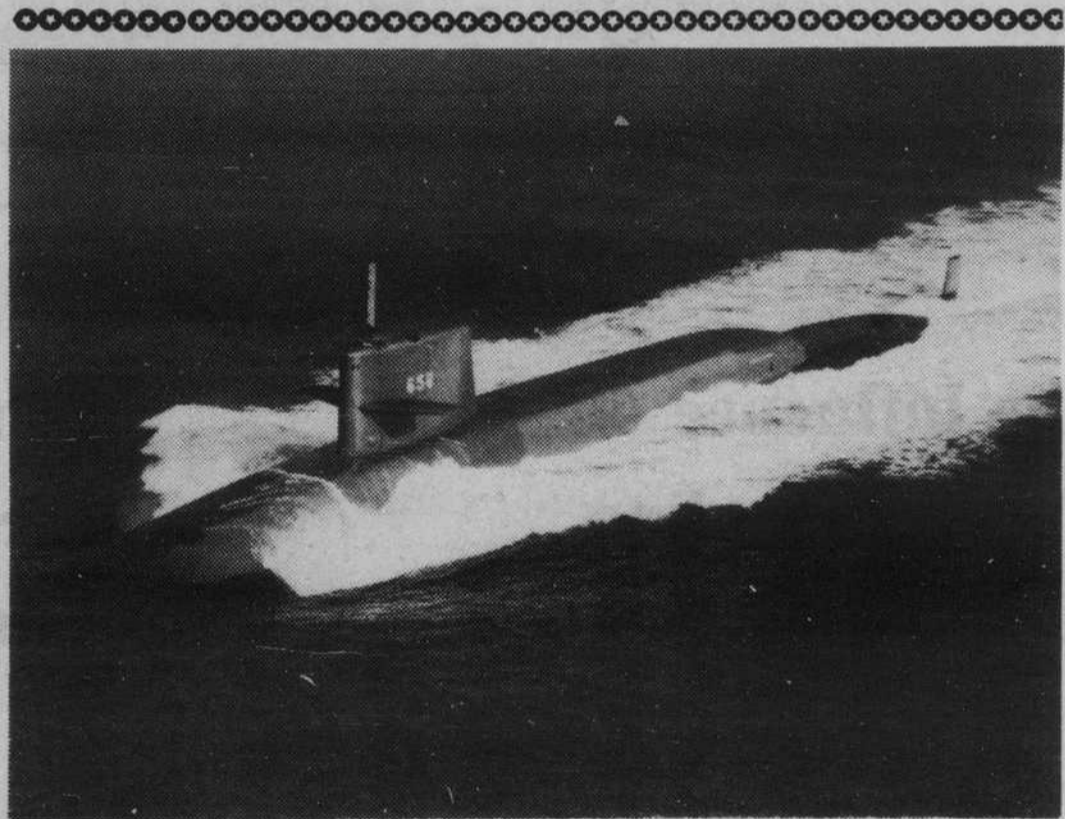
"Able, Stable, and Wise — the Older Worker" provides information on the special qualifications the older worker brings to the job market.

"Retire? Who? Me?" is a documentary of a group of pre-retirees considering their own imminent retirement with insight and humor.

"Why Must Our Elderly Die Alone?" contrasts the increasingly sterile and artificial treatment of death in today's society with the time when death was regarded as a natural, expected part of the human experience. It suggests how and why today's society might regain some of the age-old meaning and richness of the experience of dying.

# Criminology lecture set

The accuracy of crime reports issued annually by the FBI will be discussed by two Eugene criminologists Friday at 3:30 p.m. in Room 189, PLC. The talk, titled "The War on Crime — Is There Any Way to Know Who Is Winning? Some Methodological Problems with Crime Statistics," will be given by Janie Burcart and Ann Schneider of the Institute of Policy Analysis. The Department of Sociology Colloquium Series is sponsoring the free event.



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