

Smoke: Even though there wasn't any fire, tests drew alarm — and response

by JANE LEHMAN
Of the Emerald

Somebody got his smoke signals crossed when two fire engines and a hook and ladder truck answered a mistaken alarm at the University Art Museum Monday afternoon.

The Eugene Fire Department received a call at 1:43 p.m. reporting a fire in the basement of the museum,

where valuable artifacts are stored. However, where there was smoke there was no fire.

Unknown to museum employees, the City of Eugene was testing the University's sewer system for leaks by forcing a dense, harmless smoke through the pipes.

The smoke leak in the art museum came from a sump-pump located in the base-

ment. The pump is necessary to raise the sewer line effluent up to the sanitary line, according to Jim Kearns, head of the city's smoke test crew.

Museum director Richard Paulin's office reported that there was no damage to any of the treasures. "It was just a freak thing," commented Anne Sheffield, coordinator of the traveling exhibits.

One fire crew remained to blow out the smoke with an exhaust fan, while the rest of the units returned to the station.

The fire department was suspicious of the call, since they were aware of the testing, according to Captain Neal Cannady of the fire department. "We can't ignore it if a call comes in. We've got to go," Kearns says the sewer testing often brings out the fire department on similar smoke scares.

Herb Reeves, maintenance inspector for the city, says he notified the fire department and the physical plant here of the testing. He added that the physical plant agreed to take care of further notification of University personnel.

However, Leland Lorange, assistant director of the physical plant, says "The city said it was going to be taking care of this — notifying the fire department and everybody."

The University requested the sewer system testing to see if it is meeting Eugene pure water standards. Kearns pointed out at least three downspouts on Hendricks Hall that were emitting smoke, indicating rain water is getting into the sanitary sewer system.

The testing should proceed on campus at least until Friday if good weather continues, says Kearns.



Photo by Adrienne Salinger

When the City of Eugene goes about testing sewer lines sometimes even their best laid plans backfire. Although they take preliminary precautions, the fire department often ends up answering calls that result in mostly lots of smoke — but no fire.

Redden: Geary effort may have been legal

By JOCK HATFIELD
Of the Emerald

Craig Geary's write-in campaign for ASUO president last quarter may have been legal, according to State Atty. Gen. James T. Redden.

Geary's write-in candidacy was ruled illegal by Jamie Burns, last year's ASUO vice-president for administration and finance, and only the votes for Gary Feldman and his opponent Dave Tyler were counted in the run-off election.

Geary urged supporters to write in his name anyway and received 216 votes, none of which counted officially.

Redden, in reply to an opinion request submitted by Rep. Dave Frohnmayer, R-Eugene, says the "student constitution itself requires, by not prohibiting, the counting of write-in votes." This rule would hold, he said, unless the student constitution "contains language to indirectly rule out the counting of write-in votes."

Apart from the ASUO Constitution, Redden said there is no national constitutional provision allowing write-in campaigns in student elections. A voter has the constitutional right to vote for whoever he chooses in public elections, according to Redden, but this right does not extend to the elections of private organizations.

"It would probably even (constitutionally) be permissible for the University of the Board of Higher Education, to provide for appointment of student body officers without giving students any vote." According to Redden, it all boils down to the wording of the private organization's constitution.

Write-in campaigns aren't specifically mentioned in the ASUO Constitution. Section 10.2 of the constitution states: "A majority of votes cast in the ASUO Executive election shall be necessary to elect. If no candidate receives a majority, a run-off election shall be held within one week between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes."

Burns, who has now left office, believes the decision of the Constitution Committee last quarter was consistent with Redden's advice.

"We based our argument on the basis that the ASUO Constitution did prohibit through wording a write-in election," said Burns.

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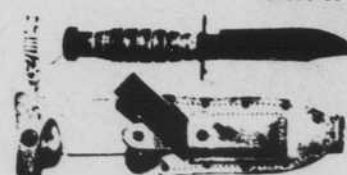
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