

Alleged errors cost UO \$160,000

By RICHARD SEVEN
Of the Emerald

HEW charges fund misuse

The University of Oregon and Oregon State University — as well as other universities around the nation — have been charged with inadequate bookkeeping and misuse of federal funds as a result of a series of audits by HEW.

The audits cover the fiscal years of 1972-73 to 1975-76. The two state schools have agreed to pay a total of \$340,000 to the federal government, \$160,000 coming from this university.

Among 56 sample errors charged by the auditors were: failing to correctly document work performed on federal contracts, permitting researchers to give less time to projects than contracted for, allowing unauthorized transfers of funds between projects, paying more than once for the same

work, not accounting for equipment and supplies, using federal money to pay for non-federal work and overdrawing federal accounts.

Don Howard, who administers research grants for the University Business Office, said it was not a question of non-compliance with federal regulations.

"The auditors simply didn't like the way our system (of handling federal grants) was functioning," Howard says. "Even a perfect system will malfunction. The guidelines are written in vague terms, but it wasn't a question of non-compliance."

The University audit was taken in February of 1976 as a sample over the four-

year period. In the audit, a questionnaire was circulated, asking a random sample of federally-funded employees to account for their work hours for that month. The auditors then compared the questionnaires' time sheets with time sheets certified by the employees' supervisor. The auditors requested reimbursements on the difference between the two amounts.

"The original audit report for the four-year period totaled about two million dollars to be paid back because of 56 claimed sample errors," Howard says.

However, University officials appealed the audit to the National Institute of Health (NIH) in a July meeting in Maryland.

"We got NIH support on all but six errors, and we got four of those six reduced, which totaled \$160,000," Howard says.

According to Howard, the \$160,000, which was paid last October, came from reserves of \$234,000 built up to cover possible sudden drops in overhead.

Howard says some changes have been made to prevent further oversights to occur. For instance, instead of simply having a supervisor figure out the employees' work time for a month, the supervisor and employee both will review the time worked.

"We're not sure if it's any better, but HEW hasn't disputed it yet," Howard says about the new system. "Maybe their silence is approval."

HEW auditors are currently reviewing 42 other colleges and have already cited universities such as University Southern Cal, Oklahoma and Minnesota.

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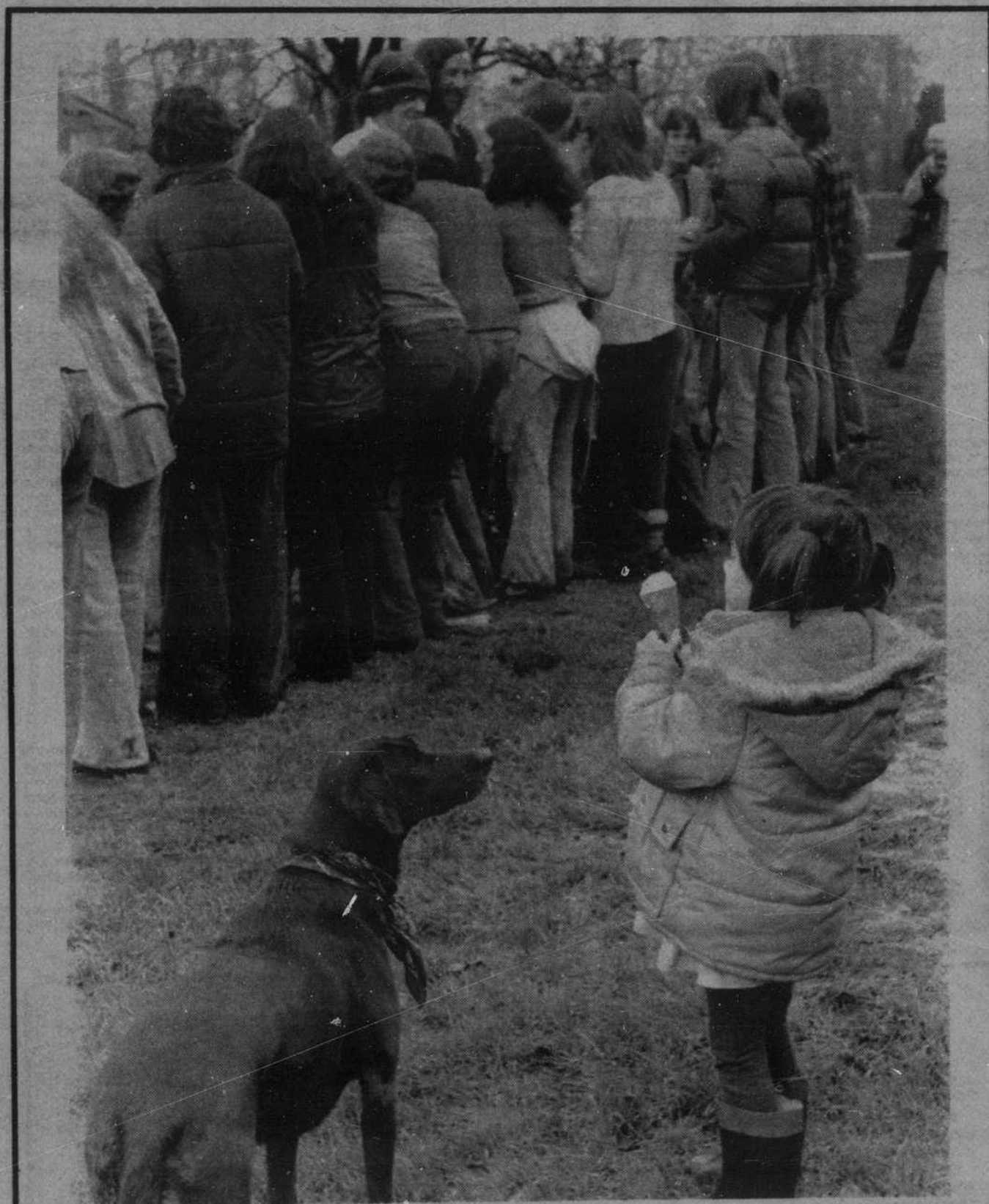


Photo by Adrienne Salinger

Hug-oo to you

There's more than one way to play a game as both participants and spectators discovered Sunday at Skinner's Butte Park. While a young spectator and her dog ignore the action, players in New Games Day play "hug-oo" in which two lines of people walk toward each other in an effort to make the person opposite laugh. Laughs go to the other line until one line wins. The contests were sponsored by the Friends of New Games.

ASUO questions Redden's ruling on GTF standing

By CAROLYN BEAVER
Of the Emerald

Attorney General James Redden has decided the dispute between the University and the ASUO concerning the student right to participate in Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF) contract negotiations, but the ASUO questions his opinion.

In November, the University denied an ASUO request to have representatives at the negotiation, saying the GTFs were students, hired as part-time University employees. The ASUO considers the GTF's faculty, primarily hired to teach classes. Redden's opinion classified the GTFs as students, not faculty.

Redden used the State Board of Higher Education's definition of faculty, which may not be accurate, says Don Chalmers, of the Office of Student Advocacy.

As ASUO statement stated that because Redden used only the State Board definition, which specifically excludes GTF's and ignores case law definitions of faculty, the opinion is "weak in its logic and approach."

Chalmers says other opinions have been used to determine the definition of faculty. When the Attorney General's opinion was requested, the ASUO submitted several definitions of faculty, including the State Employment Relations Board (ERB) and the Black's Law Dictionary's opinions. Redden, however, "chose to look over these," Chalmers says.

Even though the ASUO considers the opinion a weak one, the issue will not be pursued at this time.

ASUO Pres. Gary Feldman believes pursuance is not in the best interest of the GTF's or the student body right now because the negotiations are quite involved and he "understands the need to maintain cordial with the parties involved in those negotiations, especially the GTF's."

Feldman suggested an amendment to the state board statute to "insure an adequate role for the general student body in these negotiations" be investigated and encouraged student comment on the issue.

The ASUO will not be able to have authorized members participate

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ASUO Pres. Gary Feldman