



By KATHLEEN MONJE
Of the Emerald

... of environmental concern

The third-degree criminal trespass trial for 23 herbicide protestors arrested last July begins today in Newport, Ore.

The protestors occupied clear-cut lands owned by Publishers Paper Company in an effort to prevent aerial spraying of the herbicide Tordon 101. They were arrested after a month-long "camp-in" on the McMillan Creek watershed near Lincoln City.

The protestors plan a defense based on the Oregon "choice of evils" statute, which says an offense is justifiable and not criminal when "that conduct is necessary as an emergency measure to avoid an imminent public or private injury."

The defense plans to call six expert witnesses who have backgrounds in pesticide and herbicide effects on humans.

The Task Force against Nuclear Pollution reports a nationwide total of 566,000 signatures gathered in its petition drive opposing nuclear power plants and supporting alternative energy sources.

The Ralph Nader-endorsed petition drive channels signed petitions to Congressional representatives. Information is available from Task Force, P.O. Box 1817, Washington, D.C. 20013.

The State Environmental Quality Commission will consider the adoption of a one-year field burning control plan (to be submitted to the federal Environmental Protection Agency) at its March 31 meeting, which will be held in Eugene.

The control strategy plan is slated for 10 a.m. on the Commission's agenda. The meeting will be held at Harris Hall, 125 East Eighth St.

The U.S. Department of Energy has awarded an Ohio firm \$15,000 for a feasibility study on a burnable mixture of corn and coal, to be used as emergency fuel for utility power plants.

The two-week study will determine whether corn can be prepared for use in utility boilers; whether boilers will operate efficiently on the mixture and whether ash left from the burnt mixture will foul burners.

Grain was used as a fuel for utility boilers in the United States during the Depression, and more recently in Argentina.

The Lane County Audubon Society will present a slide show and discussion on "Southeast Alaska — America's Fjordlands" tonight at 7:30.

The meeting will be held at the Central Presbyterian Church, 1475 Ferry St. in Eugene.

ASUO health insurance plan helps take sting out of care costs

By CAROLYN BEAVER
Of the Emerald

Chances are good that students won't contract any mysterious or serious illnesses or injuries over the year, but it's always nice to have a little protection.

ASUO-sponsored health insurance, available yearly or per term, offers that protection. About 3,200 students signed up for the insurance plan fall and winter terms; half for the year-long package.

The insurance plan is "under the auspices of student government, but no incidental fees are paid for it...the whole thing pays for itself," says Michael Budd, student health insurance committee head.

For \$92.90 a year, or \$31.30 a term, students receive a full health plan including accident benefits, sickness expense benefits, hospital confinement costs and a medi-

cal expense benefit up to \$10,000.

Rates for students with dependents are higher. A student with one dependent pays \$205.49 yearly. With two dependents, the cost jumps to \$285.95 per year.

The plan excludes pre-existing conditions, home calls, eye examinations, dental work and pregnancy. Other than lack of pregnancy benefits, Budd says the "exceptions are all really fair."

Recently it was determined the insurance plan violated federal Title IX, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, because it does not include the pregnancy benefits.

Although the insurance committee is working on a plan to include the benefits for next year, Budd estimates if the benefits had to be offered in every plan, the costs would soar to about \$400 yearly. A more favorable alternative might be to make the benefits optional.

Budd says he'd like to have more student input before the committee comes to any decision and asks anyone with comments or questions concerning the pregnancy benefits or the existing plan to call him at the ASUO office, 686-3724.

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