

ASUO debates begin Candidates agree on issues, but differ in style, Wood says

By CAROLYN BEAVER
Of the Emerald

Incumbent Jim Weaver and Bob Wood, fourth district congressional hopeful, met Thursday noon in the first of a series of ASUO-sponsored candidate's debates.

About 50 people attended the question-and-answer session in the EMU Ballroom, although the room was set up with more than 200 chairs. Wood said "this isn't a time people are interested in issues," and Weaver called those in attendance "hard core political activists."

The candidates' positions on most of the questions asked were

about the same.

"A good share of the issues we would agree on," said Wood. "A difference in style and background" in coordinating various constituents and interest group opinions make up the main difference between the two men, he added.

Wood and Weaver responded to questions in several areas including energy and the forest product industry. Weaver called himself "a champion of solar energy in Congress" and advocated use of "alternate" energy sources such as wood wastes, wind and geothermal power.

Wood agreed and said until there were adequate incentives,

people would not "make the transition to decentralized alternatives." He said the government would have to help provide those alternatives.

Both candidates took a stand against nuclear power. Weaver said it was "dead in the water" because of the extensive costs incurred in building nuclear plants. Wood said he had introduced local measures to decommission the Trojan Nuclear Plant.

Wood said the forest industry, the state's leading employer, "needed a lot more attention." He thought it more beneficial to help the industry rather than bringing in others.

"It's easy to bring in a Hewlett-Packard, but the cost is substantial. I'm not against diversifying into those areas to some degree, but there is no incentive to train our people. Most companies bring people in from outside," said Wood.

Both candidates were asked about political apathy. Weaver said if the "transient college population" saw "value to it (political involvement), they'd do it."

He continued, saying if getting out and voting would make a difference, more students would do so. "I don't see this difference today, but I try to make that difference where I can," he said.

Wood suggested more information in the "formal education process as to how to use the community."

Gubernatorial hopefuls to debate on campus

The ASUO is planning a series of candidate forums this spring to allow students to familiarize themselves with various candidates and their positions.

The only definitely scheduled forum is set for April 28 when three Republican gubernatorial candidates, Tom McCall, Roger Martin and Victor Atiyeh, will meet. ASUO Vice-President Keli Osborn says she hopes the Democratic gubernatorial candidates will meet on campus the same day, also.

"We'd like to have a discussion/debate format," says Osborn. Each candidate would have an opening statement then a panel consisting of a press, student and faculty representative will pose a set of questions to them.

Weaver outlines vets' bill to extend school benefits

Jim Weaver, Fourth District congressman, spoke to a crowded room of University Veterans Association members Thursday in the EMU.

Weaver addressed HR 9981, a bill he co-sponsors, that would extend G.I. educational benefits to 54 months and remove the 10-year limit on using educational credit.

"Congress intended the GI bill to allow veterans who had served their country to catch up on the education they missed while in the service," Weaver said. "But more than that, the GI Bill was meant to help veterans as they searched for competitive jobs in the civilian economy, to help them get meaningful work — work they could be proud of."

Because a four-year degree is "no longer the automatic entry into the America job market that it once was," the extension of benefits is necessary, Weaver said.

"There is simply no excuse for a situation in which veterans who want meaningful work cannot find it," he said. Along with extending benefits as a means of obtaining better employment, Weaver said he was also concerned with federal employment programs for veterans.

A national goal of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) is to employ 35 percent veterans in all CETA-funded jobs, said Weaver, adding that Lane County is lagging behind other programs in the region in obtaining that goal.

Weaver also discussed Carter's plan to limit veteran preference on civil service exams to 10 years after separation from the service, and his own plan to make veterans' medical benefits facilities available to more cities. Veteran now must travel to the VA Hospital in Portland to receive medical care.

Weaver lauded the newly formed veterans group and said "creating an effective voice to speak for you in the Congress, the state Legislature and the County Courthouse is definitely an important first step in your struggle" in receiving "the kinds of services student veterans need and deserve."



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