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Herrera grabs ASUO presidency

By CAROLYN BEAVER
Of the Emerald

Committee declares 'no response' invalid

Ramon Herrera is the rightful owner of the president's office, the ASUO constitutional committee decided Wednesday.

After hearing 20-minute long position explanations from both Jeff Warren and the ASUO Executive's sides, the committee went into executive session and unanimously declared Herrera the winner.

The controversy centered around the placement of "no response" votes on the run-off election ballots. Warren filed a complaint Sunday after ASUO Vice-president Molly Devlin ruled the "no response" votes invalid.

Had the no response votes been considered valid, they would have been used in tabulating the percentages of votes each candidate received. In that case, Herrera would not have had the majority of votes

needed to win and another election would have been called.

At the committee meeting Mark Cogan, representing Warren, argued "that those people who marked no response on the presidential ballot did indeed cast a legitimate vote of preference."

He called the no response vote "a deliberate form of expression. If they didn't want to vote they didn't have to. The no response vote was valid because it was placed on the ballot."

Devlin contested Cogan's statements saying the ASUO who voted no response didn't know enough about either candidate and didn't want to bias the election. "Later she said there were two different ways "of getting to the same spot, marking no response or not voting at all."

The committee made three decisions. It

upheld the election board ruling that "no response" should not be counted as a vote cast and that there will be no new election. It also decided that it was not improper to have "no response" on the ballot, but there was an inadequate explanation of it on the ballot itself that should be corrected in the next election.

Gordon Hanna, committee chairer, said he "would prefer to let the written decision (due Monday) stand for itself. Any comment from me may not be the exact way the committee felt, but may be just what I perceive."

Herrera, obviously, is "glad it's over. The one person that congratulated me that meant more than anyone else (Warren) has done so."

Herrera announced that Mike Lockwood will fill the vice-presidential spot the president is allowed to appoint without going

through affirmative action hiring procedures. Lockwood, a candidate for president in the general election, will act as executive coordinator for the ASUO, said Herrera.

"One of Mike's responsibilities will be to produce an elections rules and regulations handbook so that this doesn't happen again next year," said Herrera.

Applications for the rest of the ASUO positions will be available Monday. Herrera will also begin holding office hours that day.

Warren was disappointed but said, "I sincerely wish Ramon the best of luck."

However, he had some unpleasant words for Herrera's choice of vice-president.

"I would have considered working with Ramon if Mike Lockwood hadn't entered the picture," he said. "There's no way in the world I'd work with Lockwood. There's just a point to how low you can slip. It will send Ramon's administration back six months and that's half his time."

Sunshine awakens the senses

Nothing like a warm spring afternoon to awaken the senses. A romp in the park can bring high spirits to all nature-lovers, especially when they happen to bring along a loaf of crusty bread for the ducks. These kids harbored no fears about edging closer to their feathered friends and apparently the ducks didn't mind the neighborly visit, either. It's long been established that kids and animals just naturally "go together." These little ones will probably want to go "down by the river-side" - well, Millrace - more often. That is, as often as their mother will take them.



Photo by Adrienne Salinger

City admits faulty stove code enforcement

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

Charges that the city's enforcement of the state mechanical code for wood-burning stoves has been inconsistent are true, Keith Martin, assistant city manager, said Wednesday morning. But, recent changes in the enforcement and approval procedures may end that inconsistency.

In a statement released at a news conference Wednesday morning, Martin said claims by seven local wood stove manufacturers that inconsistencies in stove approval and inspection procedures have hurt their industry were investigated and found to be true.

Martin called the press conference in response to allegations made by seven woodstove manufacturers a month ago

about several inconsistencies within the city's mechanical inspection department that may have injured their industry.

The seven Eugene-Springfield woodstove manufacturers asked the city to establish a uniformly enforced set of regulations for stove installation and approval more than a month ago.

Those manufacturers, Mike Duval of J & J Enterprises, Ken Hussey and Doug Johnson of Mannan Building Supplies, Thomas Lichty of the Oregon Woodstove Company, John Orlando of Oregon Steel Fabricating, Fred Wingham, Radke stove distributor and G.M. McCormack of McCormack Consulting Engineers, said in a letter to the Eugene City Council April 12 that the city has "actively discouraged the industry by irresponsible, unreasonable and inconsistent actions and has caused substantial monetary losses."

The group also told the council that one employee of the mechanical inspection division, Lyle Lamont, had been particularly inconsistent in his inspections of wood stoves. An investigation into the allegations about Lamont's work is continuing, with a preliminary report due within two weeks, Martin said.

Some of the problems with the inspections and approval of wood-burning stoves go beyond the established mechanical code, Martin said. There are inconsistencies in enforcement between jurisdictions throughout the state.

Although the mechanical inspection division of the Public Works Department has reviewed the existing approval and inspection standards and found them "reasonable," Martin said changes are still needed.

Among those changes, the city has decided to allow stoves approved for installa-

tion by the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) as well as the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO) to be sold within its jurisdiction, Martin said.

"The process that we've been following is not very tight," Martin said. "So now we've tightened it up."

Those changes will allow manufacturers to sell their stoves with UL approval if they have been unable to get ICBO approval, he said.

"We're doing this to facilitate the industry members," Martin said. "The whole industry is burgeoning and expanding and coming up with new products every day."

Part of the change in the enforcement procedure has been to change several inspection assignments, Martin said. Although Lamont is still with the inspection department, his duties have been changed.