10 point 5 editors in quandary

Collective magazine faces changes

By ANN TRENEMAN Of the Emerald

Several Eugene poets sit around a small, crowded room in various reclining poses. They all examine a photograph which has been submitted for the next issue of 10 point 5, a Eugene fine arts magazine.

"Well, I like it, do you?" they ask each other until it is determined, by vote that the photograph will be included in the next issue of the magazine. Discussion then turns to who will proofread which poems that night.



It is by democratic vote that the 10 point 5 magazine collective makes all its decisions — whether it be about a poem, a poetry reading or a major change in the magazine.

And it is in this manner the collective will soon vote on a major change. That change will involve whether they should quit publishing their own poetry in 10 point 5 and offer a \$10 compensation for all work selected to appear in the magazine.

The collective's members have differing viewpoints. However, it looks as if the final vote will be to change their long-standing policy of printing their own work.

"In the past, in every issue, it was the same editors' work over and over again," Karen Kramer, a collective member, says. "We want to change that."

That all-inclusive "we" includes the 10 collective members who edit, solicit money and donations, layout, proofread, write grant applications and distribute 10.5 under the name Oz Publications.

Other collective members agree with Kramer, adding that not publishing their own work — publishing is a rare luxury for most poets — will "force" them to send their poems out to be published "in the real world," says Peter Wallace, another collective member.

But there area few collective members who are skeptical of the change.

"I'm not sure it will be good for the magazine," Peter Jenson, a local poet who has contributed his time and energy to the magazine since its birth three-and-a-half years ago.

"We're really at a turning point," he adds. "In the past it (publishing) has been the only goodies we've gotten." 10 point 5 magazine is supported solely by donations from local businesses, advertising and grants. The collective members receive no pay.

Collective members are currently not guaranteed their work will be automatically published because their poems are voted upon.

"When we're all sitting around voting on poems and there's someone's face sitting there... Well, there is some peer pressure," Kramer says. Past critics have said some of the editor's work was below par and should not have been included in the magazine.

Although this would be a major change in the magazine, it would by no means by the first. The original four editors of 10 point 5 were all previous members of another collective, which collaborated to publish the Augur. The Augur was a local alternate newspaper, which existed for five years until opinions clashed about whether the Augur should concentrate on political journalism or fine arts. The collective's members split up and followed their own inclinations. Some members founded 10 point 5 and others turned to work on the Willamette Valley Observer, a Eugene alternative newspaper.

That split took place in late 1974, and the first 1975 issue of 10 point 5 was a 25-cent tabloid printed on newsprint paper. Since that time, the magazine has gone through a variety of typefaces. Today it is a hard-cover magazine with a circulation of 1,000 to 1,500 copies per issue.

The magazine, which sells for \$1.25 with printing costs being \$1 an issue, has been published about three times a year and the upcoming July issue will be the seventh effort.

The July issue is devoted to Oregon. It features poetry by Northwest notables Ursula Le Guin, Ken Babbs and Olga Broumas.

One of the collective's downfalls in the past has been that the editors are primarily poets and not graphic artists — the magazine contains a fair amount of graphic material.

"We call it our creative white space problem," Kramer says. "But we haven't got that graphic arts' eye." That has changed also since graphic artists contributed their "eyes" during the last magazine's layout process.

Other changes the collective

considers is reducing the number of editors, and paid positions. Oz Publications would like to publish some poetry books in the near future. The collective would also like to present the community with more poetry readings and film festivals — like the upcoming Dutch Film Tour the collective is sponsoring at the Open Gallery June 23 and 24.

A change that has already been instigated is the formtion of committees to divvy up the various jobs.

"In the past we've shunned committees, but it works more efficiently," Kramer says.

10 point 5 magazine is named for the brain's alpha wave where dreams and creative thinking originate. It is one of Eugene's few artists' outlets; besides the University's fine arts magazine Northwest Review, "I think we're the only consistent outlet," Kramer says.

And so the 10 point 5 collective's members will soon decide how and if their magazine will change.

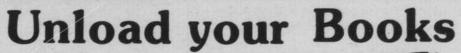
"It's an interesting problem we're wrestling with," Jenson says, adding the change could result in a loss of readers. "If you occupy a place in people's hearts, minds and, not incidentally the

market, any change must be looked at carefully."

The outcome will not only determine the nature of the magazine, but will affect the collective's members as well, as they start to think about contributing poetry to other magazines and face the inevitably possibility of rejection slips.

"What's it like being a poet in Eugene?

"It's probably better than being a poet anyplace else — but it's still the shits," Kramer says, laughs and adds, "The Excelsior (restaurant) supports most of 10 point 5."



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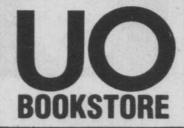
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