

Church mailing of political pitch may break law

By KEVIN HARDEN
Of the Emerald

An endorsement of Congressional District challenger Jerry Lausmann may please God, but it doesn't please the Eugene Post Office.

A September letter endorsing Lausmann as "the Lord's choice" in the coming congressional election may have violated the regulations governing non-profit second class mailing, Ken Haley of the Eugene post office said Thursday.

Eugene's Faith Center church, a member of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, mailed the endorsement to church members Sept. 22. The letter, written by Faith Center Pastor Roy Hicks, Jr., also contained a request for contributions to Lausmann's campaign. An envelope to mail those contributions to Lausmann campaign headquarters in Medford was included.

That letter could have violated postal regulations because it contained the contribution envelope, Haley said.

Non-profit organizations, such as churches, can mail their own material by the non-profit rate of less than three cents a letter. If those letters contain material from organizations that are not granted non-profit status, they would cost nearly nine cents each to mail, he explained.

Although the regulations governing political mailings are not specific, Haley said the use of the non-profit rate for envelopes for political contributions could be "questioned" by postal authorities.

"That envelope should not have been enclosed at the non-profit rate," he said.

If the church violated postal regulations, it could be forced to pay the balance of the mailing rate

for the letters.

In the letter, Hicks said although he normally wouldn't have been involved in the campaign, he felt Lausmann was the candidate for his church members to support.

"He is my choice, and I believe he is the Lord's choice," Hicks wrote.

Hicks also said this election is important because the "Democrat who has been holding this office has done damage to the country in his voting policies during the years he has been in Washington."

"We understand that the Republican Party of the United States has rated this particular election as the fifth most important election in the entire nation this year," he wrote. "I am asking you to not only vote, but to pray."

The letter also contained a plea for financial help for the Lausmann campaign, which Hicks said was not at Lausmann's request.

Although Hicks was unavailable for comment, one of the leaders of the Foursquare Church said that endorsement was unusual.

Dr. M.E. Nicholls, general supervisor of the Foursquare Church organization in the U.S. and Canada, said that political endorsements of any kind are against an unwritten church policy.

"We have never made it a practice to endorse anyone in a political campaign," Nicholls said. "I think it's something that we would not normally do."

Nicholls, who has been with the church for nearly 45 years, said he had not heard of another political endorsement of any kind before now. Ministers of the church would be "out of line" if they endorsed one candidate over another in an election," he said.

"It would not be right to persuade them (church members) how to vote."



Photo by Nan Cerqui

Rick Streiff, a 23-year old University student whose study of geology extends beyond the four walls of a classroom. For almost a year he has worked to extract some of the gold he knows is hidden somewhere in his mine claim southeast of Cottage Grove. Story on Pages 10 and 11.

Petitioners near signature goal in attempt to recall Weinstein

The committee to recall Lane County Commissioner Archie Weinstein handed more than 15,000 petition signatures to county elections division head Don Penfold Thursday afternoon, which could put the recall issue on the Nov. 7 general election ballot.

The committee gathered 15,600 signatures during a two-week petition drive that covered most of Lane County. The group needed 15,333 to put the recall on a ballot.

The committee tallied the signatures Wednesday and Thursday and presented them to Penfold to begin the verification process.

Penfold said the elections division would begin the verification process as soon as the signatures were tallied. Penfold met with recall leaders Tuesday morning to discuss the possibility of putting the measure on the November ballot.

The recall effort began more than a week ago when Jan Newton and Roscoe Caron, both of Eugene, filed the necessary petitions with the elections division. Since that time, more than 2,000 peti-

tions with a potential for 24,000 signatures, have been circulated, Newton said.

Although the group has enough signatures to put the measure to a vote, the committee will continue to circulate petitions until Monday morning.

Petitions will be circulated at Autzen Stadium during Saturday's football game, said Ray Nelson, University coordinator for the drive. The group hopes to collect 2,000 more signatures at that time to make up for any discrepancies in the petitions.

today

Oregon conservationists react bitterly at the chance that the U.S. Senate may consider a bill which creates only 75 million acres of Alaskan wilderness, while the House bill would protect 124 million acres. See Page 8.

Remember paraquat, that extremely toxic substance you feared was sprayed all over your Mexican marijuana? Well, you'll never know. Most labs have stopped testing for it. Is paraquat passe? Find out on Page 12.

It's getting tougher and tougher for students to get a square meal. Now, a new rule will force students who receive food stamps to get a part-time job. For details, see Page 20.

Drop day

Today is the final day that students may add and drop classes without a W being recorded. It is also the final day to apply for fall term graduation.