

Activism

By SALLY HODGKINSON
Of the Emerald

Bans on disposable diapers and polyvinyl chloride packaging and development of "gasohol" are the major proposals being pursued by the Survival Center before the Legislature, says Peter Gray, the center's legislative co-ordinator.

"The Survival Center has gotten deeply involved in the Legislature this session because we recognize that if you want to get something accomplished, the way to go is through the Legislature," Gray says.

The biggest opposition may be aimed at the ban on disposable diapers, says Gray. "Everyone thinks it's a joke, but it's not," he says.

Disposable diapers are against the law, argues Gray citing Department of Environmental Quality regulations prohibiting raw sewage in open areas.

"It's just common sense," Gray says. "If you throw human waste in a spot that is open and it's not treated, then you'll have a lot of trouble with disease. We can't sacrifice public health for convenience."

The Survival Center also hopes to ban the use of polyvinyl chloride packaging, Gray says.

The polyvinyl chloride plastic is used in some food wrap, meat trays and plastic bottles, says Gray. This plastic substance "leeches" into the food and eventually into consumers, he says.

"Polyvinyl chloride is definitely something we do not want to see inside ourselves," Gray says.

The Food and Drug Administration prohibits substances that seep into food, but apparently aren't doing anything about polyvinyl chloride, says Gray.

"What we're trying to do is find out how much polyvinyl chloride is being used, why

Students develop legislation designed to protect environment, brighten image

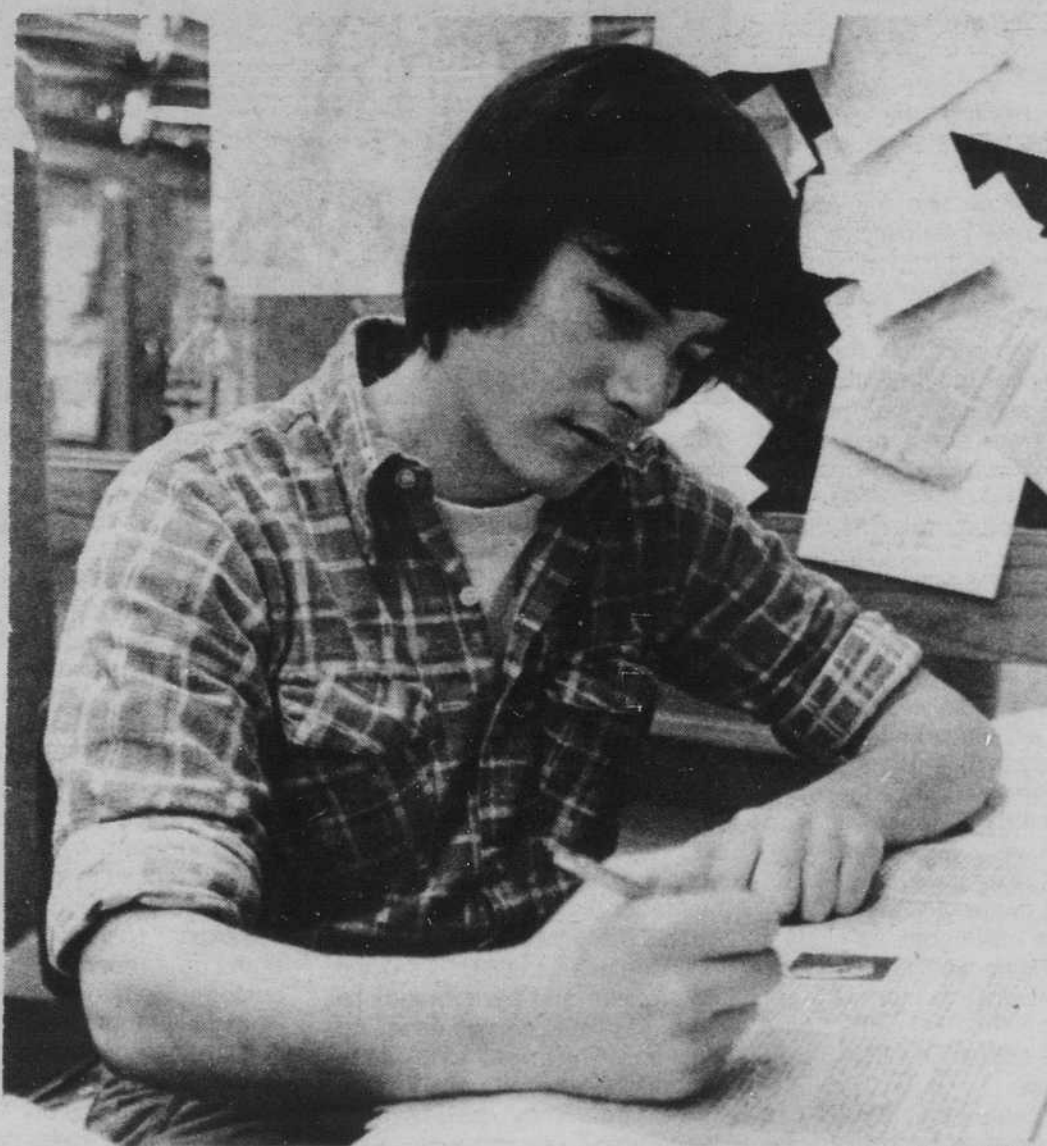


Photo by Robert Matthews

Peter Gray will head up the Survival Center's legislative efforts.

the FDA isn't doing anything about it and ban its use."

One alternative to polyvinyl chloride is a substance called polyilfins, which is 20 to 30 percent cheaper, Gray says.

The Survival Center also supports a bill which would exclude motor vehicle fuels that contain alcohol produced from agriculture and forestry residues from the state gas tax.

Gasohol, as the substance is known, has been produced in Nebraska with "phenomenal success" from corn stalks. Gasohol can fill up to 25 percent of a vehicle's tank and is cleaner and gets better gas mileage, says Gray.

"You can take anything that is organic, break it down and produce this alcoholic product," he says.

Some possible sources for the alcohol are forest slash and grass seed residue, says Gray. "There's a huge potential there, let's make use of it."

The Survival Center is also working on legislative proposals for utilizing slash from logging, banning the use of dioxin-bearing herbicides, regulation of excess packaging and promotion of meadowfoam as a crop substitute for grass seed, Gray adds.

"What we're trying to do is let Oregon come back into the limelight and show that we're still the mecca of environmental concern."

The Survival Center's input into environmental proposals is major, he says. "There are really no other environmental groups in Oregon which are as effective or as well organized. The center is really leading the Oregon Environmental Council in the legislative effort."

One of the reasons for the large input is student research, says Gray. Over 30 student volunteers in the last 1½ years have researched the issues that the center hopes to pass the Legislature.

Students have become more realistic, Gray says, and they recognize that the way to change the system is through the system.

"The system is there to allow you to alter things, not to be in your way," he says. "You can picket, protest or occupy lands all you want, but the best way to go is through the Legislature."

Chance to earn credit proffered

By ANNA HOYT
Of the Emerald

A chance for students to earn credit while learning about environmental problems and working toward solutions is offered by the University's Survival Center.

Center Director Jim Stratton sees education as the main purpose of the organization. The center provides students with "an opportunity to get involved in environmental issues," he says.

"Once you start realizing how people are screwing up the environment...it's like opening a door. If we don't have a world to live in, nothing else really matters; people and other things are secondary," Stratton says.

Classes at the center include "Oregon Environmental Issues," which Stratton calls a "broad discussion of environmental issues currently facing Oregon." This

course deals with energy, recycling, wilderness and forest management.

"Oregon Wildlands" attempts to give students the background to make informed decisions concerning Oregon's unprotected wildlands. Students are also encouraged to get involved in decision-making.

Topics include the legislative process, as well as the historical, aesthetic, economic, social and ecological aspects of wilderness preservation.

Recycling and resource recovery are discussed in a class called "Beyond Waste."

If none of the above classes fills the bill, Stratton suggests one of the center's position-by-credit projects.

He encourages students with an idea or a general concern to come to Suite 1 of the EMU or call the Survival Center at 686-4356. Stratton suggests that stu-

dents without a specific idea come in and look over a notebook filled with 40 projects the center would like to undertake. Between one and five hours of CSPA credit are available for working on projects.

"In the past, credits have been slipshod—somewhat lax. This year we want it to be more of a learning experience," Stratton says. Students are now asked to write a concise paragraph

In addition to classes and projects, the Survival Center has many special programs. Upcoming events will address harbor seals being shot by fishermen on the Rogue River, fisheries and "the dying ocean."

The center also offers a weekly film series and a newsletter providing current information on important environmental issues.

ask the sexpert

This is a weekly column by Planned Parenthood of Lane County. Send questions to the Emerald, 300 EMU, or call Planned Parenthood at 344-1611.

I have a question concerning the transmission of bacterial yeast infections. The book "Our Bodies, Ourselves" indicates that these diseases can be transmitted through toilet seats and towels. Men to my knowledge are also susceptible to these infections. Is it true that men can be infected through these sources? Should men cover toilet seats with disposable covers in public places? Is it possible to pick up yeast and bacterial infections through a toilet bowl that has been used and not flushed if water from the bowl were to splash the genitals?

Men are not very likely to be infected with

bacterial and yeast infections through exposure to toilet seats and towels for several reasons. One, their body structure doesn't provide the warm, moist environment that bacteria and yeast need to survive successfully. It is possible for a man to have a yeast infection in the genital area, but that usually happens after repeated sexual intercourse with an infected woman. Two, yeast and bacteria would probably have a difficult time surviving in cold water that contains chlorine and fluoride. Toilet bowl water splashing on the genitals might be uncomfortable but not risky. There's a chance that Herpes might be spread this way if there is an open cut or sore in the genital area. Flushing the toilet after use is part of good hygiene along with washing the hands. If you have reason to suspect it was not flushed or that the toilet seat is not clean, that can be corrected. It is "possible"

to be infected through these sources but just not very likely.

I'm a 28-year-old married graduate student with one child. I'll be ready to start my professional career this summer and do not want to become pregnant again. I won't go into the problems I've had with various birth control methods. Getting a tubal ligation looks very attractive to me right now because the possibilities of reversal seem to be getting better all the time. What kind of statistics are available on successful reversals?

Your question is heard again and again these days from women who have the size of family they want and are anxious to pursue the career for which they have been trained.

There are many methods of performing

tubal ligations and the method that is used determines how possible it will be to reverse the procedure. The mini-laboratory has the most successful reversal rate perhaps 75-80 percent. With this method an abdominal incision is made, the physician locates the tubes, seals them off and closes the incision.

Your saying that you do not want to become pregnant again and your interest in reversal procedures are not compatible. Most physicians want the woman to consider this a permanent method of birth control and not go into it with the hope that "maybe someday I can change my mind." Although tubal ligation methods have become more simplified, it is still a surgical procedure with risks involved and deserves serious consideration.

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