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Photos by Erich Boekelheide

Making a beeline to spring

This bee took advantage of Monday's warm weather to get an early start on gathering nectar. Monday's high was 61, and the low was 31. The National Weather Service expects the warm weather to continue for the rest of the week. Highs of 55-65 are expected with lows in the low-to-mid 30s. No precipitation is expected through the weekend.

Bandit suspect held for murder

Randall Woodfield, suspected by police to be the "Band-Aid Bandit," is in Marion County Jail today after being charged Monday with the murder of a Salem woman.

Woodfield, a 30-year-old Springfield resident, was arrested by Marion County police for the Jan. 18 murder of Shari Hull, 20, and the attempted murder of Lisa Garcia, also 20. Woodfield also has been charged with sodomy in connection with the cases.

Hull and Garcia were both sexually assaulted and then shot in the head while working in the Transamerica Title building in Salem. Hull died immediately, but police said the bullets glanced off Garcia's skull, not seriously injuring her.

Woodfield was moved to Marion County late Monday morning after being held in the Springfield jail since Thursday. He was being held by police for an alleged parole violation while officers determined what charges could be brought against him.

The "Band-Aid Bandit" is suspected in at least 27 crimes including four murders, rapes and robberies along Interstate 5 from northern California to Washington. The bandit got his nickname from a piece of medical tape he wore across the bridge of his nose while committing crimes.

Sheriff's officers in Shasta County, Calif., are still investigating Woodfield's possible connection to the Feb. 3 murders of a 37-year-old mother and her 14-year-old daughter in a small community north of Redding, Calif.

Ballistics tests show the mother and daughter were killed with the same revolver used in the Salem murders, detectives have said.

Woodfield also is a suspect in the Feb. 15 murder of an 18-year-old woman in Beaverton.

No charges have been filed in either the Redding or Beaverton murders, and authorities involved in those cases say they will not contest Marion County's move to hold the first trial in the case.

Meanwhile, Eugene Police are still investigating at least five robberies of local convenience stores attributed to the bandit. Police Chief James Packard said the department is not yet ready to file charges in the robberies.

Gass: Moral Majority has strong backing

By MIKE RUST
Of the Emerald

It's time for the majority to rule, the director of Oregon's Moral Majority told a University history class Monday.

Speaking before Eckard Toy's "Recent American Conservatism" class, Mike Gass, who heads the controversial lobbying organization, said that various "immoral minorities" are trying to impose their views on the rest of the country.

However, the Medford minister says he encourages people who hold beliefs other than his to speak out, just as he does.

"I'm not trying to change you — I don't think I can do it," he told the students. "But allow me to express my opinion."

Gass believes that if all Americans get politically involved, the majority of them will support the views espoused by Moral Majority.

He cited a "Christianity Today" study that said 70 million adult Americans — 53.7 percent of the adult population — claim to have had a "born-again" experience.

"Moral Majority is a majority, in fact," Gass said.

While the Oregon group is independent of the national group, they share the same philosophy and values.

Those values are "pro-life, pro-God, pro-family and pro-American," Gass said. The organization deals primarily with moral issues, advocating positions they claim are derived from the Bible, which they regard as "the inspired word of God."

"Without an authoritative base for decisions of morality, you'd have chaos," Gass said.

High rates of crime, divorce and abortion show the values of the majority are being threatened, Gass said.

Around the country, 73,000 pastors are involved in Moral Majority, he said. While the majority are Nazarenes, Baptists and charismatic

denominations, people of all faiths and even some non-churchgoers also support the group, Gass added.

In Oregon, there are between 2,000 and 3,000 pastors involved, Gass estimated. One-third of Oregon's 3,000 churches are active politically in some way, he said.

Moral Majority is currently concentrating on several bills in the state Legislature. They support a House bill that would mandate the teaching of scientific creationism as well as Darwinian evolution in the schools and oppose Senate bills involving sex education, allowing the home growing of marijuana and prohibiting discrimination against homosexuals in hiring and renting.

Gass, who taught in public schools at the junior high level, says he doesn't object to sex education but believes it should be confined to biological functions, rather than human sexuality.

"Value judgements are being made in public school systems. We don't feel that's right."

Concerning gay rights, Gass said that while the constitution protects the right of homosexuals to practice their lifestyle, he should not be forced to expose his children to gays by renting a house to them or hiring them.

In California, the Internal Revenue Service has put 63 churches up for auction after they lost their tax-exempt status because they "refused to sign a piece of paper saying they wouldn't say anything about homosexuals," Gass said.

A "program to reach poor people" was recently established by Moral Majority, he said.

However, the "liberal press" rarely covers such activities, Gass added.

Moral Majority is a special interest group just like the steelworkers or the National Organization for Women, Gass said. He suggested that Moral Majority has been controversial because of what he feels is the group's success.

"The problem is that we did a lot of things in November."



Mike Gass

Photo by Ken Sands