

Women gain in statehouse

By TOM TROWBRIDGE
Of the Emerald

Women have benefitted from recent Oregon legislative sessions despite growing conservative moods, two Eugene representatives said Monday night.

Speaking before the Lane Women's Political Caucus, Mary Burrows, R-Dist. 41, and Margie Hendriksen, D-Dist. 40, promised to continue working in the Legislature for sexual equality.

Burrows, the ranking Republican woman in the House, spoke about legislation that has been passed in the legislature aimed at sexual equality.

Burrows said that the 1977 Rape Shield Law has helped to increase the number of reported rapes. Before the law passed, a rape victim's sexual past often was fair game during a trial. The new law prohibits such questions.

Another reform benefitting women is the revised inheritance law, Burrows said. Previously, men were assumed to have earned most of a couple's assets, regardless of contrary evidence. The new law, says Burrows, treats couples more fairly.

Burrows also pointed to new equality in Oregon's marriage age. Formerly, a woman had to be 15 years old to legally marry, with no such restrictions on men. The new law requires both to be at least 17.

Burrows noted that despite these gains, inequality of jobs, opportunities and pay is still widespread. To fight that, she urged women to get involved in politics.

Hendriksen, the only woman lawyer in the Oregon House, talked about women's rights gains in the 1981 Legislature, such as a new law that uses marriage license revenues to support "domestic violence shelters."

Women abused by their husbands receive crisis intervention, counseling and support at such shelters.

But one of Hendriksen's pet projects didn't survive the Legislature — the "comparable worth bill." It would have helped increase pay for people in sex-segregated jobs with undervalued salaries, such as nurses and librarians, Hendriksen said. Because women traditionally hold these jobs, they receive less, she added.

Hendriksen, like Burrows, urged more women to become politically involved. "Women in this state have a tremendous impact on laws affecting women. For changes to occur, we need involvement."

Center releases film

A film that takes a practical and informative look at the causes and consequences of back injuries has just been released for distribution by the Labor Education and Research Center at the University.

"Lost Time" presents a new approach for preventing back injuries, one of the most serious occupational health problems plaguing workers and industry today with more than 1.5 million on-the-job injuries annually.

Ergonomics, the redesigning of work processes and lifting tasks, is introduced as a means of reducing the high incidence of serious back injury.

"The film looks at the way people work and stresses the need for job redesign where lifting requirements are excessive," says Dick Ginnold, coordinator for LERC's Occupational Health and Safety program.

Footage of hazardous construction work, metalworking, electronics and warehousing is used as a backdrop for discussion of traditional preventive approaches — training, worker selection and conditioning — and their limitations. Interviews with afflicted workers, employers, physicians and ergonomic experts help tell the story of the occupational back injury.

"'Lost Time' would be very useful for meetings of unions and joint labor-management groups, health and safety committees, and state and federal OSHA officials," Ginnold said.

"It would also be effective as part of a training package for new OSHA inspectors as well as an aid for classes in engineering, sociology, business and management, to familiarize students with workplace issues and various job hazards."



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SURC — planning and PR

By STEVE HOOKS
Of the Emerald

Students who join the Student University Relations Committee can gain experience in public relations while helping plan many University activities, says John English, graduate adviser and past president of the volunteer organization.

SURC has helped plan "Duck Week," Parents' Week, Homecoming, Commencement, and the Early Orientation and Registration Programs (EORP), and now is assisting University Pres. Paul Olum's inauguration Sunday, according to recently elected chairer Molly Poole. Poole is a senior majoring in public relations.

SURC also worked with the ASUO during last spring's higher-education funding rally by conducting an informative meeting and lobbying at the legislature, Poole says.

SURC "directly relates to student needs — now and in the future," says adviser Mary Hudzikiewicz of the department of public services. The group's other duties include turning uninterested students into interested alumni and helping the community get a "student perspective" on University events.

"But I also encourage and help the group's own projects dealing with school spirit," Hudzikiewicz says.

Curt Simic, the University's public relations vice president,

began SURC three years ago with 13 members. Now it has 31.

The organization receives funds from the public relations department and works with the directors in that department, Hudzikiewicz says. The department selects prospective volunteers from applications and interviews, Poole says.

Hudzikiewicz says while SURC has not suffered budget cuts, neither has it gained funds.

SURC wants to lobby the legislature and work with the ASUO again for higher education funding, says Hudzikiewicz. Lane County legislators were impressed by students' efforts to lessen budget cuts last spring, she says.

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