

harry esteve

Recyclers trash litter

They're called compulsive.

Some people cannot walk into a dirty room without cleaning it up. Others cannot live in a trashy world without trying to do something about the mess.

Recyclers are some of those "others."

At a statewide gathering of recyclers last weekend in Seaside, Ore., a panel of market representatives explained that because of economic conditions, recycling organizations probably won't be able to sell collected materials.

They said the market for old newspapers was down because the housing industry was depressed, and much recycled newsprint goes into making housing construction materials.

They said less recycled aluminum was needed because the beverage container industry was emphasizing plastics.

The recyclers listened patiently and politely, applauding when the panel was finished.

Later that night, they sat on barstools at a local Seaside hangout and quaffed beer. Spirits were high.

It was not as if they hadn't heard, but it didn't seem to matter. They had been hearing the same predictions since they got into the recycling business.

For some, that represented more than a decade — and plenty of reasons to have a few beers: 10 years of waking up every morning to sort empty bottles into colors, smash steel food cans, bale cardboard, stack newspapers and filter old motor oil.

Ten years of cleaning up Oregon's waste for little recog-

niton called for a few more.

The next day — back at the conference — the keynote speaker was from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

No more recycling money from Uncle Sam, he said. The United States is dismantling its federal recycling program.

Again, they listened politely, laughed at his jokes, and that night they partied even harder.

Even then, the talk centered around recycling. Who was paying the best price for cardboard? How would a small non-profit recycling outfit in Bend collect enough paper to make trucking it to Portland economical?

Next morning they were back at the conference for one more day of speeches and workshops. Two certified public accountants lectured on how to

keep finances straight in a non-profit company.

The head of a successful recycling program in Colorado described methods for promoting recycling to the community.

A few hours after the conference ended Sunday afternoon, some of the recyclers climbed a hill that overlooked some of the lush area just south of Seaside. At the top, they stopped and took photographs of the coastline below and gazed at the view.

The hills rising up to the south were sheared bald of their trees from timber industry clear cuts, and a large sandy clearing marked a giant landfill waste disposal site, only a few hundred yards from the ocean.

For the first time in three weeks, the recyclers looked tired.

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Activist hits arms race

The key to stopping the nuclear arms race is citizen involvement in local activist organizations, according to a representative of Citizens Action for Lasting Security.

Hal Darst spoke Wednesday at a workshop titled "What You Can Do to Stop the Arms Race" in Allen Hall.

"A lot of people have problems getting involved in this issue because it's such a huge problem," Darst said. "But we don't have any enemies in this struggle. The truth is on our side. All we have to do is raise the issue."

The United States has more than 30,000 strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, Darst said. "When we understand that 30,000 nuclear weapons could easily destroy the world, the question becomes, 'why do we build more?'"



Oregon Daily Emerald

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