

# emerald

## Tempers flare in SUB lawsuit

400 ratepayers hit the streets

By Harry Esteve  
Of the Emerald

SPRINGFIELD — Angered by sky-high electric bills, about 400 Springfield residents took their complaints to the streets Wednesday night in a spirited protest against the Springfield Utility Board and the Washington Public Power Supply System.

Bundled in heavy clothing and holding candles in chilly hands, protesters stood outside Springfield city offices and listened to several ratepayers explain charges they have leveled in a lawsuit against SUB and WPPSS.

So far at least 26 people have joined the lawsuit that claims SUB's agreement to pay for nonexistent power from the abandoned WPPSS nuclear power plants in Washington is illegal.

More were expected to join the suit after Wednesday's demonstration, said Leslie Ratley, one of the original three plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

After several brief speeches, including one by Rep. Jim Weaver, D-Ore., the protesters marched three blocks to

where SUB members were holding their weekly meeting. Chanting "2-4-6-8, lower our electric rates," and "Whip WPPSS," demonstrators marched around SUB's offices until the board members agreed to move their meeting into the larger city council of office chambers.

Meanwhile, several demonstrators used their candles to light up January's electric bill.

Several one-month bills, including ones for \$98, \$102 and \$217 went up in smoke.

"Our highest electric bill was \$90 last year," said Springfield resident Bill Lowry, after burning his family's \$217 January bill. "And we've been conserving more!" he added angrily.

Lowry said he has used less total kilowatt hours of electricity this year due to conserving, but his bills have doubled.

Bob Ackerman, the lawyer who is representing the plaintiffs in the law suit, said increases such as Lowry's are due to SUB's agreement to help finance the WPPSS power plants.

Springfield ratepayers es-



Photo by Bob Baker

Grim Springfield Utility Board customers marched Tuesday to protest rising electricity costs.

entially owe \$124 million on their contract to buy power from the unsuccessful WPPSS plants — power that never will be used by a single Springfield resident, Ackerman said.

Ratley, a University journalism and political science student, said the "hell or high water" agreement SUB entered into with WPPSS is illegal because it exceeds debt limits set by Springfield's city charter.

"SUB signed away Spring-

field ratepayers money," without getting their consent, Ratley said.

It will take roughly 35 years to pay off the debt to WPPSS, Ackerman said.

While marching toward the SUB meeting, Springfield resident Dian Broz said she no longer can afford to heat her house. "We leave the heat off for 10 hours a day," she said.

Most of the marchers were either senior citizens or young families, and all who spoke

said they were having problems making payments on rising electricity costs.

Weaver brought cheers from the demonstrators when he said he has proposed a jobs program "to put 1,200 unemployed people to work putting up insulation and weatherizing homes in Oregon."

He said he had asked SUB to let ratepayers vote on whether to buy into WPPSS but "they were contemptuous and arrogant. They said no."

## Chancellor candidate visits Rainsford talks to board; says he believes in risks

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Accepting the position of chancellor of Oregon's State System of Higher Education would be a personal risk for George Rainsford, the candidate for the post said Wednesday.

The president of Kalamazoo College in Michigan said he believes in taking risks, however, as one who has climbed some of the nation's highest mountains and rafted wild rivers. He said he would leave Kalamazoo only to accept a new challenge in his life.

Rainsford, 54, was the first of five finalists to be interviewed for the position by the State Board of Higher Education on Wednesday at Portland State University.

Following a 2½-hour interview with the board, Rainsford said the salary and fringe benefits he receives from Kalamazoo — a 1,400-student liberal arts college in southwestern Michigan — are about the same as those received by Oregon's current chancellor, Roy Lieuallen.

Lieuallen's salary is \$69,516 a year plus a \$4,776 expense allowance, a home and state car. Lieuallen, 65, is resigning July 1 after a 20-year career as chancellor.

Rainsford acknowledged that he would probably have to deal with funding reductions in Oregon's eight state col-

leges and universities, but he said the state legislators have to understand the consequences of cutbacks.

Shutting down one or more of the smaller schools, as some have proposed, would be a symbolic gesture that might not necessarily gain significant financial benefits, he said. Such closures also would likely penalize those seeking college degrees in another five years, he said.

Rainsford said Oregon's three major universities — University of Oregon, Oregon State and Portland State — have national reputations for good scholarship and research.

"It's a better system, the institutions are better than the resource (funding) base provided them," he said about the universities, following his tours of state campuses between Eugene and Portland this week.

He is a member of the board of trustees of the Colorado Outward Bound School in Denver and teaches rock-climbing in the summers.

Rainsford was one of three finalists last year for the presidency of Lewis and Clark College in Portland, where his son graduated and his daughter is a junior. He said he is also being considered for a campus presidency elsewhere in the country, but declined to identify the institution.

## Faculty group plans long-range strategy

By Ann Portal  
Of the Emerald

A faculty committee developing a long-range plan for the University's academic future wrangled Tuesday with just how involved it should become in changing the University's structure.

Robert Albrecht, vice provost and head of the committee, said he felt committee members hesitated to go into a department or school and make changes that affect that unit's faculty.

But he said there are certain areas where the committee can at least raise questions.

Meeting for the second time, the committee decided its next move will be to extensively compare items on planning lists recently submitted to the provost's office by each department and school.

Committee members agreed that while the reports were compiled "in good faith," some reports are not quite "in the spirit" of instructions given by University Pres. Paul Olum. However, many departments and schools heads suggested ways to strive for excellence in their academic areas.

At his October inauguration, Olum directed deans and department heads to prepare the lists, which outline where the deans feel their academic areas should be headed in the next five years.

Responding to a request made by a faculty group, the committee decided

that faculty should be able to read the lists, after the lists' authors have been notified that the contents will be made public.

Albrecht said after the meeting that students also will be able to see the lists, but not for a couple of weeks.

Notes first must be sent to each department, he said, then the lists will be available in his office in Room 103, Johnson Hall.

The committee members discussed possible goals and limitations of the planning team, which may present its work to the faculty for review as soon as May. Several members said there seem to be some misconceptions about the committee's purpose.

"Important decisions are not going to be made by this group," said mathematics professor Charles Curtis. Rather, the group will discuss academic options, such as getting rid of duplicate courses offered in two or more departments, and send suggestions to the Faculty Assembly.

Robert Gilberts, education college dean, said the committee should limit its scope and decide on specific areas to study.

"We probably can't do them all," Gilberts said. He also urged the committee not to get involved in budget matters and distributing resources. "You don't solve problems with committees," he said.