

# emerald

## ASUO election marred by misconduct charges

By Dane Claussen  
Of the Emerald

Five of the 21 elections violations complaints filed so far are against ASUO Pres. Rich Wilkins, according to ASUO elections director Gus Palmitessa.

According to the five complaints filed against Wilkins by members of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity, the ASUO president informed members of the fraternity Tuesday night that presidential candidate Debbie Mellow was planning to withdraw from the race and support candidate C.J. Balfe.

Mellow, in fact, has not dropped out of the race and says she is upset with Wilkins.

"I've had good friends come up to me and ask me, 'Hey, Deb, why are you dropping out?'" Mellow said Wednesday.

Wilkins, on the other hand, said he spoke about Mellow only in response to questions from house members and that he made it clear he was relaying a rumor. He said he heard the rumor from several sources.

"I don't know why I can't say I'm supporting somebody," Wilkins said, adding that former ASUO Pres. Dave Eaton campaigned for Wilkins and Palmitessa last year in all the Greek houses.

Furthermore, the five complaints are not consistent in explaining what he said at the house, Wilkins said.

An election has serious problems when Rich Wilkins, the president of the school, goes around... telling people that I'm not even liked by my own house," she said.

Students believing she has dropped out will

candidate for president, Mellow and Palmitessa said.

switch their votes to other candidates although she is still in the race, Mellow said.

Wilkins is obviously supporting Balfe, when he shouldn't be supporting any one single

The fact that there were 21 complaints filed by early Wednesday afternoon "doesn't speak well of the quality of political life at the U of O," Palmitessa said.

Elections complaints upheld by the post-elections Elections Court could result in fines for candidates or in the election being declared invalid, he said. There are far more complaints this year than last year, Palmitessa added.

Among the other allegations:

- Presidential candidate Kevin Kouns used the office of SEARCH, of which he is co-director, for campaign activities. A preliminary investigation of the charge, filed by candidate Jeffrey Houston, sustained the complaint.

- Kouns told Houston that his attendance at the University would be "unhealthy" if Houston failed to stop verbally assaulting the Students for a Progressive Agenda, on whose platform Kouns is running. No investigation of the charge, filed by Houston, has been conducted.

- Incidental Fee Committee candidates Doug Green and Dave Ridenour used the Jewish Student Union office for campaign activities. A preliminary investigation was inconclusive and ended with Palmitessa warning the candidates about use of ASUO program offices for campaign purposes.

- A pollworker campaigned for SPA candidates while working at a polling booth.

### Antelope residents vote

## Battle looms over town's future

**ANTELOPE (AP)** — The ladies of Antelope will be selling piles of goodies to an anticipated horde of reporters to help pay the costs of voting their town out of existence Thursday. The vote is to avoid a takeover by followers of Indian guru Bhagwan Sri Rajneesh.

"I'm working on an angel food cake right now," Antelope resident Margaret Mobley said Tuesday. "I hope everybody acts like angels that day."

She said volunteers from the surrounding ranches were helping out with sandwiches, maple bars, and cookies for the occasion.

Keith Mobley of The Dalles says the ladies of the town that once had 40 people started bake sales a couple of years ago to pay for a new water system. Mobley, Margaret Mobley's son, is the city's attorney and has spearheaded the fight for the right to disincorporate.

"Now it's for a different purpose," he said. "They've had bake sales in Madras, The Dalles and in Sherman County."

"She's made an awful lot of cakes and sandwiches."

Mobley said the city — and his job — will go out of existence 60 days from the date of the election, if it is successful.

The Antelope City Council voted last month to hold the emergency election because it

feared followers of Rajneesh would move enough adherents into the town to take control of the administration in the November general election. Residents said they feared the Rajneesh would take over and then raise taxes so high it would force the other residents out.

Sheela Silverman, president of Rajneesh International Foundation, which owns the ranch, denies the accusations.

Up to 500 reporters, photographers and other outsiders are expected for the special vote on Thursday, including Secretary of State Norma Paulus, Oregon's top election official, said Wasco County Clerk Sue Proffitt.

Reporters and cameramen started showing up here Monday, scrambling for the nearest motel space — at least 50 miles away.

The balloting to decide whether the town should dissolve its incorporation and revert to county rule was assured Monday when Circuit Judge John Jelderks rejected an appeal by the Rajneesh commune to delay the matter until the May 18 Oregon primary election.

Antelope had a population of 40, according to the last census. That was when the town was populated mostly by retired people from Portland and

before the group of red-garbed Rajneesh followers bought the 100-square mile Big Muddy ranch 18 miles away down a dirt road.

Now the population has swollen with 74 registered voters, Proffitt said.

"It's about 39 non-Rajneesh and 35 Rajneesh at this point," she said.

"We can tell from the registration it will be the new people who force the result at this election."

The outcome is not assured, since the commune has 174 registered voters and under Oregon law, can move them into town, register them as city residents and vote, all on election day.

The matter came to a head earlier this year when the City Council refused the Rajneesh permission to build a printing plant on commercial property they bought within the town.

The disciples, saying they were suffering religious discrimination, responded by buying up homes and commercial property, including the store, which has become "Zorba the Buddha."

Mobley said that in earlier elections, voters just congregated at the Antelope Store and Cafe.

"But that was when the store was neutral," she said.



Photo by Bob Baker

## Who died?

Rumours ran wild all day Tuesday, when everyone who passed by the EMU saw the American and the Oregon flags flying at half staff. But an EMU employee had the answer: the cables tend to slip during bad weather.

## Officials approve festival

**THE DALLES (AP)** — Wasco County officials approved a permit on Wednesday for a summer festival that is expected to bring thousands of followers of an Indian guru to his commune in Central Oregon.

A permit is required under state law for gatherings of more than 3,000 to ensure that state health and sanitation requirements are met. The followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh estimate that the festival in honor of Guru Pornima Day will attract up to 10,000.

A land-use watchdog group, 1,000 Friends of Oregon, opposed the permit application at Wednesday's public hearing. They said the festival would violate state land-use laws because it was proposed on land zoned for exclusive farm use.

At another public hearing last week some said they opposed the festival because they were concerned about the effect the gathering could have on the area's farming. They said they were also concerned the festival could become an annual event.

The Rajneesh had wanted the festival from June 26-July 16, but the commission approved a shorter period, June 30-July 10.

The victory for the Rajneesh came one day before the disincorporation election in the small town of Antelope, the town closest to the guru's ranch-commune.