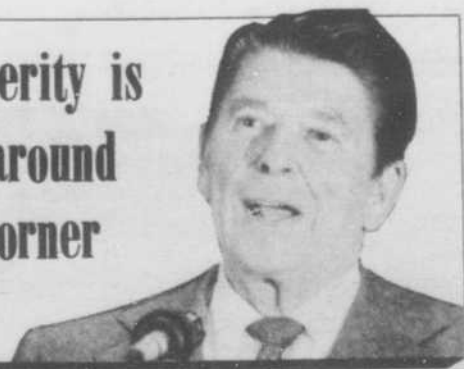


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the corner

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## Citizens attack center's name

By Marian Green  
Of the Emerald

What's in a name? Apparently a lot more than the Eugene City Council bargained for when they changed the name of the Eugene Performing Arts Center to the Hult Center for the Performing Arts.

Nils and Jewel Hult never imagined their \$3 million endowment gift to the performing arts center, which led to the renaming, would be greeted with such controversy.

But the day after the Eugene City Council unanimously voted to change the name at a Sept. 23 recognition dinner for a limited number of center supporters, angry citizens already were circulating petitions and questioning the practice of naming public buildings after private individuals.

"The people of Eugene wanted to identify with the center. To have it (the name) taken away... was just like a slap in the face," says Dottie Neil, one of eight Eugeneans who are circulating petitions criticizing the name change.

The group has gathered more than 1,300 signatures since the renaming.

Neil says the people of Eugene deserve recognition because of their 1978 approval of an \$18.5 million bond issue for the about \$24 million center's construction.

"They're going to be paying for it for the next 16 years," she says. "It's not \$3 million, but it's a lot for them, especially in this hard economic time."

Center Director Dick Reynolds says city and center officials are working to retain the city of Eugene identification somewhere in the center's logo.

"We're very sensitive to what this community has done in putting together a project of this size," Reynolds says. "I personally don't feel pride of ownership was lost."

The controversy has Nils and Jewel Hult, who have been active community leaders for more than 20 years, confounded.

"Of course it's upsetting. You can't even give money away in this town anymore, apparently," Nils Hult says curtly.

Would Hult donate the money if he had it to do over again?

"Not if I had any idea it was going to create such a controversy, of course I wouldn't," he says.

Benson Snyder, director of the Eugene Arts Foundation, says the facility wouldn't have been possible without the bond issue. "But by the same token, we wouldn't be able to have it without that private support."

"It provides a big chunk of the operating costs, so that it doesn't become a burden on the taxpayers."



Photo by Bob Baker

Hult Center for the Performing Arts

**Hult: '...they can name it  
any damn thing they want.'**

The citizen's group also questions the way the council announced the name and the practice of "selling" memorializations for public buildings.

Back in 1980, the city council granted the Eugene Arts Foundation, which attempts to provide continuous supplementary operating support for the arts, the

power to name certain sections of the center after private donors. But the council kept the right to name the large concert halls and the center, with consideration of arts foundation's recommendations, according to December, 1980 council minutes.

Soon after, the foundation sent out a list of "suggested memorialization opportunities" and submitted preliminary donation amounts for each. The list included a \$3 million price tag for the total performing arts complex.

In August and September of this year, the council approved foundation recommendations for the Soreng and Silva performance halls.

But the citizens group criticizes the council's approval of the renaming in the middle of a \$10-per-plate recognition dinner for about 500 center supporters.

"Every time a government body takes any action without any public input, they take away a little bit more of our freedom. Pretty soon we're not going to have any," says Neil.

City Councilor John Ball says the meeting, which was announced at the morning council session Sept. 22, was held in "kind of a rah-rah atmosphere. The council meeting was kind of peripheral to the recognition dinner."

After the council decided in 1980 to let the arts foundation run the show, "the public in general was no longer included in the process," Ball says.

He says the council felt the media provided enough of a forum for registering dissatisfaction with the name.

Although memorialization of public buildings after private individuals is a common practice, Ball says that practice "should be kicked around a little."

"There was never much consideration of the appropriateness of the city naming the crown jewels — the major accomplishments — after private individuals or families," he says. "What does it do to the spirit of the community to name the major accomplishments after private individuals?"

Ball, like several other councilors, wasn't prepared for the atmosphere at the recognition dinner.

"Never in my wildest expectations did I suspect that the council meeting was going to take place as a sideshow to the three-ring circus of the recognition dinner."

Several citizens have questioned whether the council violated the Oregon Public Meetings Law, which states that a special meeting such as the Sept. 23 council meeting must be announced properly 24 hours in advance

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## Survive through discipline, Jackson says

Sportscaster warns of glut in journalism

By Randy Malat  
Of the Emerald

Keith Jackson is talking about communication. With a gallery of verbal effects and tricks of inflection, he's expressing opinions that hit like a jackhammer.

Jackson's voice rolls along with the dramatic urgency of a bulldozer. It backs off and softly cajoles like a warm breeze. The medium and the message are one.

He is talking about sports and journalism and education and free enterprise and politics to about 50 high school teachers and local journalists in the International Lounge. The meeting is part of the 56th Oregon High School Press Conference at the University. Jackson's voice delivers one point after another with the certainty of a Joe Montana spiral.

"Young people want discipline," says ABC sportscaster Keith Jackson. "Even though they will bellyache and moan and go home and lie. They still want it. God knows they need it. And I'll tell you why

they need it."

"Four years ago the University of Texas graduated more students in communications than there were jobs available in the entire nation," he says. "That's why the tough ones are gonna be survivors."

"I know full well that there isn't one of you in the room that's tough enough on 'em. Very seldom do you find teachers who are tough enough," Jackson says. "And I don't mean by yelling, kicking, screaming. Demanding they meet the challenge. Having the integrity in your own self and your own profession to put an F on it."

"I've often thought of going into teaching myself for a few years before I die in an airport parking lot. But I think I might be too mean."

Jackson's responses to questions add up to a moral lesson, an hour with a phenomenon, a man who practices what he preaches.

"Amplify, clarify, punctuate."

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Photo by David Kao

Keith Jackson