

OPEU contract talks halt

By Sandy Johnstone
Of the Emerald

Negotiations have come to a standstill in contract bargaining for the Oregon Public Employees Union, which includes classified staff at the University.

The main issues are fairness and job security, says Donna Glathar, a representative of higher education on the bargaining team.

"The reason is not money," says Glathar, who works in the art and architecture library at the University.

The issues include the following items:

- Temporary interruption of employment, which is used a lot in higher education to save money, should be restructured, says Glathar. The state proposal would allow interruptions of employment for a maximum of 10 days as often as the employer deems necessary.

- The union proposes that only five days of a temporary layoff should be allowed each year, and if more is needed then the layoff clause of the contract should be enacted. The union also suggests the employee and employer decide together which days should be taken off.

- Health insurance benefits should be fully paid, says Glathar. The state's final offer pays all of the first year of the contract, but only pays one-half of the increased cost for the second year of the contract.

- No salary increase has been offered by the state unless revenue collected in the second year of the

contract is in excess of what is budgeted. This seems to overlook the sacrifices the union made when they delayed the pay increase it was scheduled to receive, says Glathar.

- Contracting work to non-union members is another conflict because the state does not want to give the union the benefits that would be available to them under the law, says Glathar. The OPEU's last contract had a clause dealing with contracting out, which the state wants to retain.

However, since then the Employment Relations Board came out with a new ruling that says employers who want to subcontract work must negotiate the decision and the impact of the decision with the union. Glathar says the OPEU wants the protection of that ruling.

- The state's last offer would also limit the rights of employees to bump other employees in case of layoffs. Employees would only be able to bump into a position they have already held. They would not be able to bump within their own classification.

Under the last contract, employees could bump the person with the least seniority in their classification if they have the skills needed to perform the job adequately or they could demote and take a lower position if they qualified for that.

Meetings have been scheduled for the members of the OPEU across the state. A Eugene meeting will be held July 20 at 7 p.m. in Room 180 PLC.

The OPEU will vote on the final offer from the state on July 21-22.

Springfield utility awaits WPPSS ruling

The Springfield Utility Board is playing a waiting game, wondering if they will be released from obligation to the Washington Public Power Supply System.

"As of now, we've been released from any obligation for the plants (nuclear plants 4 and 5) and right now we're just waiting for the Oregon Supreme Court to rule," said Mary Ann Rhodes of SUB.

The Court is expected to announce its decision on the case involving SUB and 10 other Oregon utilities within the next three weeks. The case was appealed from Lane County Circuit Court, which ruled the utilities are not obligated to pay their share of the \$2.25 billion debt on plants 4 and 5.

A similar case recently decided by the Washington Supreme Court released 29 Washington

utilities from their share of the debt, which adds up to \$7 billion including interest. That decision, along with the similar cases pending in Oregon and Idaho, has pushed WPPSS to the verge of default.

According to Peter Mercereau, a SUB lawyer, default would have "no immediate effect" on SUB, because of the ruling by Lane County Circuit Court.

However, if WPPSS defaults the situation may change.

"If the supply system defaults there could be spinoff effects," said Mercereau. "No one knows for sure what will happen."

Should the Oregon Supreme Court reverse the lower court decision, Mercereau said that SUB would be obligated to pay its share.



Mall performers' licensing slated

Performers who want to entertain downtown can attend a street performers' licensing session sponsored by the Lane Regional Arts Council.

Sessions will be conducted at the Arts Council's office, 795 Willamette St., every Tuesday at 2 p.m. Performers can get a license valid through March 1984 for \$5.

Singers, dancers, instrumentalists, jugglers, mimes and other entertainers are invited to be part of the Street Performers Program.

The license, which must be displayed by any entertainer accepting tips, is an orange button with an identifying photo.

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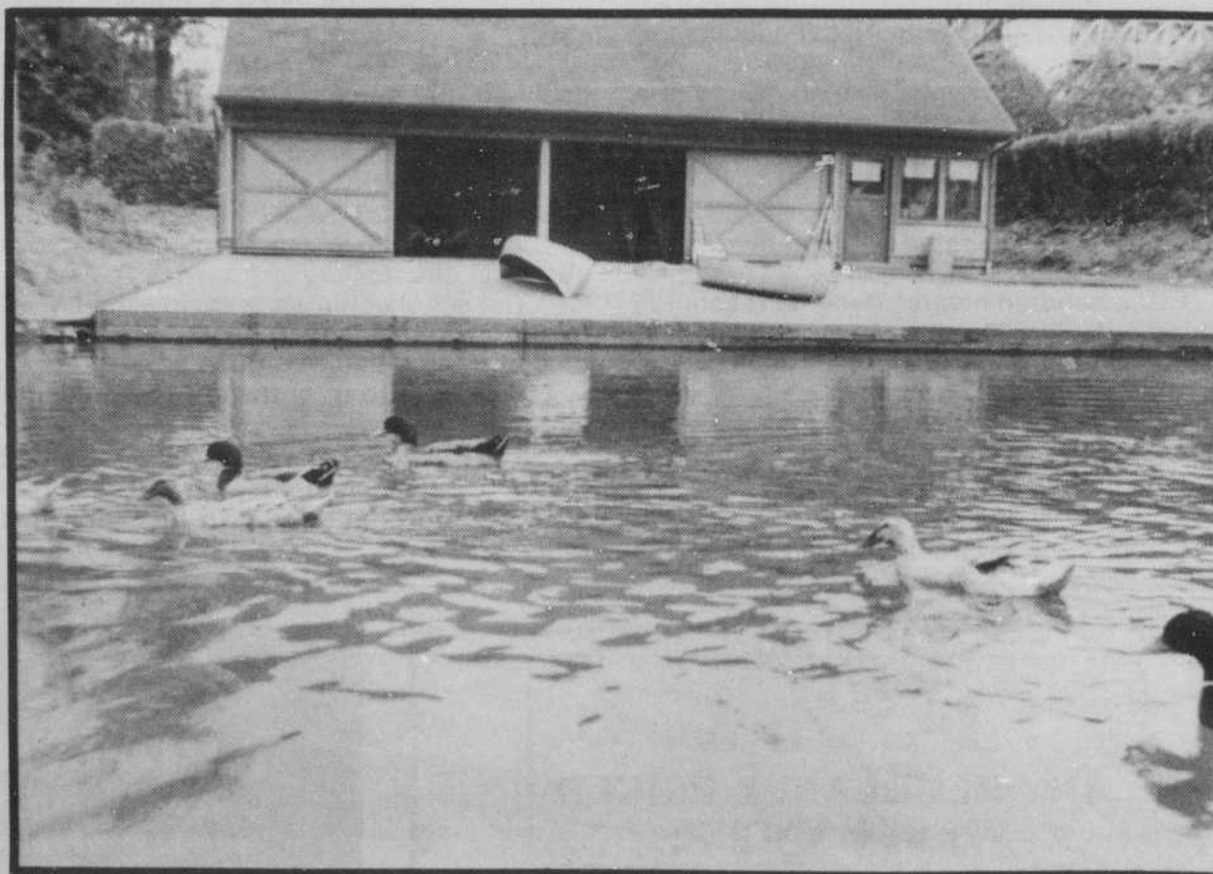
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