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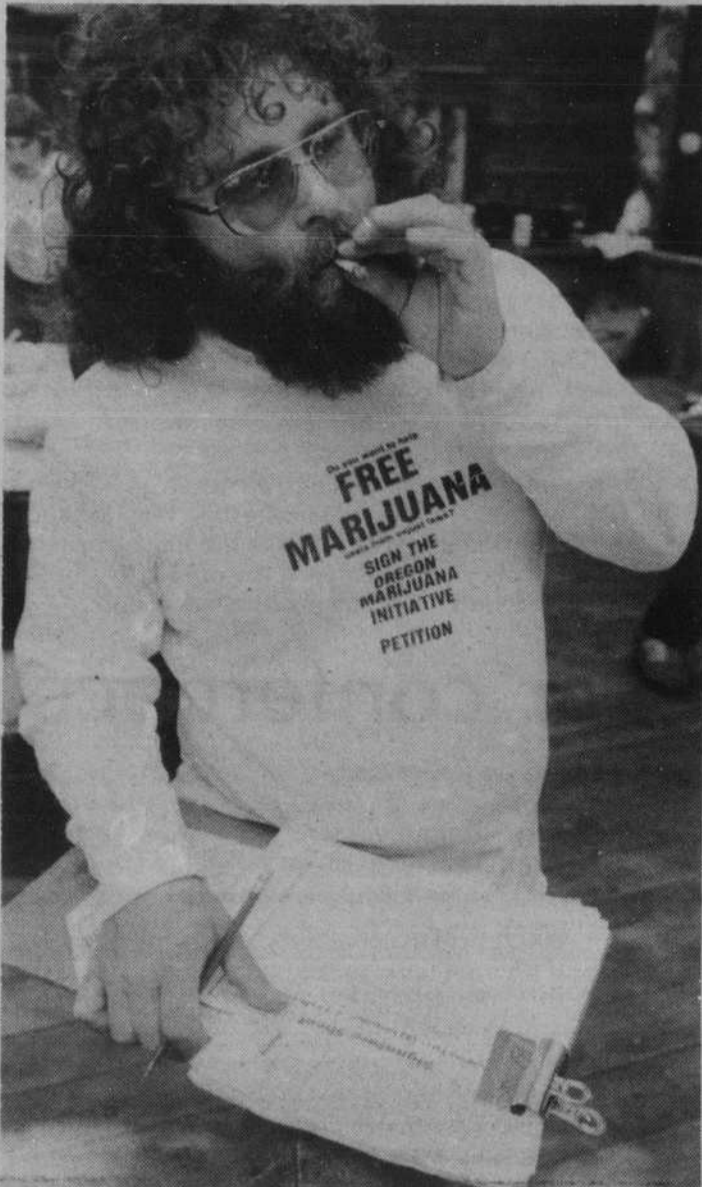


Photo by Michael Clapp

William Conde takes a break from counting signatures for the Oregon Marijuana Initiative Monday. Almost 40,000 signatures have been counted.

Oregon Marijuana Initiative reaches 40,000 signatures

By Paul Ertelt
Of the Emerald

Their purpose was clearly stated on several T-shirts: "Prohibition Sucks" and "Free Marijuana." And the supporters of the Oregon Marijuana Initiative who gathered on the deck of a South Eugene home Monday afternoon intend to turn those sentiments into Oregon law.

About two dozen people counted petition signatures for the initiative, which would allow possession and cultivation of marijuana for personal consumption.

Just under 40,000 signatures have been collected, says petitioner Fred Oerther of Portland. In order for the measure to get on the November 6 ballot, 62,521 validated signatures must be collected by July 6.

The group hopes to collect at least 80,000 signatures, since some may be rejected by the secretary of state's office, which checks a random sampling of signatures to ensure they are legitimate and the signers are properly registered.

But the petitioners are optimistic about the initiative's success, even though they failed to gather enough signatures in 1982. This time, experience, a state-wide organization and more lead time should better ensure their success, Oerther says.

"Today we are where we were one-and-a-half or two weeks before the deadline last time," he says.

Though the group needs more petitioners, some people are afraid to gather signatures for a marijuana initiative because they fear involvement with the group may cause reprisals from employers, he says.

Oerther is also optimistic about passage of the initiative — if its latent supporters can be convinced to register and vote.

But younger people, who would most likely support

such a measure, register and vote less frequently than those over 40, he says. To counter the problem, the group plans an intensive summer campaign to register voters.

The initiative, which would apply only to those older than 18, would eliminate all criminal penalties for possession or cultivation of marijuana for a person's own consumption. The initiative does not define personal consumption or prescribe any limit to the amount of marijuana that could be grown.

'Most marijuana growers are not big-time growers. Most are people who grow it to smoke or poor people trying to supplement their income.'

— Fred Oerther

Though this aspect of the measure has been criticized, Oerther says some limit would eventually be developed by the courts or through practice. For now, it is more important to establish that the government has no right to interfere with what adults do on their own property, he says.

"Basically the issue is freedom," he says.

Most marijuana users are otherwise law-abiding citizens, Oerther says, but they are being harassed by law enforcement agencies whose resources would be better used fighting more serious crime.

"Most marijuana growers are not big-time growers," Oerther says. "Most are people who grow it to smoke or poor people trying to supplement their income."

Hart leads in Oregon polls

By Lori Steinhauer
Of the Emerald

With the Oregon primary a week away, Gary Hart appears to have secured the strongest local footing of the three Democratic presidential candidates.

Though the Hart, Walter Mondale and Jesse Jackson Oregon state campaigns all claim to operate on "grassroots" budgets, the figures vary immensely.

The Hart campaign has about \$30,000, says Mike Gillett, media coordinator for the campaign, while Mondale's Northwest coordinator Steve Duncan estimates his campaign coffers at \$10,000. The Jackson campaign has about \$6,000, says Pam Smith, co-chair for voter registration.

Hart will make a Eugene appearance Saturday. The exact location of his speech has not yet been announced, Gillett says.

Oregon supporters of the Colorado senator are promoting the campaign by telephone and door-to-door canvassing.

"I would estimate in any 24-hour period during the week we have 100 to 150 volunteers, (and) on the weekends, 500 to 700 statewide," Gillett says.

By the weekend before the primary, Gillett predicts about 1,000 volunteers will be canvassing in Portland, Eugene, Salem, Coos Bay, Roseburg, Medford, Bend and Pendleton.

"We're trying to contact every democrat in the state that is in the phone book," Gillett says.

And surveys show support for Hart is piled high.

Hart held 43.1 percent of the votes in a Portland-area phone-in poll, conducted in mid-April by Portland's KATU. In the same poll, which asked viewers to call in and state which democratic presidential nominee they would vote for, Jackson

placed second, gaining 29.2 percent of the votes and Mondale took third, with 27.8 percent of the votes.

The poll was not scientifically conducted, and thus subject to error, says Ross Mason, KATU's assistant news director.

But Hart also led in a scientific poll conducted by the survey firm Bardsley and Haslascher, published in the Oregonian March 25. Of 351 registered Democrats contacted throughout the state, 60 percent said Hart was their first choice, while 27 percent favored Mondale, 4 percent supported Jackson, 1 percent chose other alternatives and 8 percent were undecided.

And while Hart leads the statewide campaign in both votes and financing, Jackson campaigners have more modest goals.

"If we were able to get 20 percent of the votes statewide, we would consider that an impressive victory," says Mike Roach, Oregon state coordinator for Jesse Jackson's campaign.

The Democratic National Committee rules require that each candidate earn at least 20 percent of the statewide votes and a given minimum of votes in each congressional district, varying from 14 to 20 percent, in order to gain state representation at the National Democratic Convention. The convention will be held from July 16 to 20 in San Francisco.

Both Roach and Smith agree that Jackson's appearance in Oregon before next Tuesday's primaries is unlikely, since he would more likely go to a state where he could gain greater representation for the convention.

"Each state is given a certain number of delegates, based on its population.

Continued on Page 2

Increased ticket sales could cut student fees

By Jim Moore
Of the Emerald

In this age of rising costs and spiraling inflation, news about budgets or fees is like an early morning phone call or an unexpected telegram — nobody wants it because it's usually bad news.

But University students should be happy about some recent news from the administration that could save them between \$31,000 and \$39,061.

The savings, which will be realized in next year's incidental fees, constitute a rebate from the athletic ticket guarantee fund. That rebate will come in one of two forms.

If the guarantee fund exists next year — it is not part of the athletic department's request to the Incidental Fee Committee — then it will require only slight funding to return it to its full \$39,061.

And if the fund is not kept, the money left in this year's fund will revert to the ASUO in some student account, according to Bill Hallmark, the ASUO coordinator of programs and finance.

Which account the money will end up in will probably be determined by a meeting between University Pres. Paul Olum, the ASUO Executive and Ralph Sunderland, the University's budget director, Hallmark says.

The ASUO guarantees the athletic department that there will be \$120,000 worth of student tickets sold or the ASUO will make up the difference up

to \$1 per student per term.

During this fiscal year, which ends June 30, student ticket sales apparently will come within \$8,000 of the \$120,000 target, and could actually reach it.

In the past, the full amount has gone into the athletic department's coffers because student sales did not reach the agreed-upon level. But when it became obvious that student attendance was up this year, Hallmark asked Sunderland that the fund be transferred to the appropriate ASUO program account.

"The primary reason I made this request was so that if the ticket guarantee is not collected this year, the funds would revert back to the ASUO surplus account controlled by the IFC, instead of the enrollment reserve account controlled by Ralph Sunderland," Hallmark says.

Sunderland says he feared the excess money would be returned to the students, and spent, instead of left in the ticket guarantee fund — if, that is, the fund exists after negotiations between the athletic department and the Incidental Fee Committee.

A meeting between Olum and Hallmark, one day prior to a scheduled meeting between Olum and Sunderland, provided Hallmark with the answer he sought.

"Either it will be used for the ticket guarantee so students won't have to pay that, or it will be returned to the students," Olum says.