

Summer  
means  
Baseball  
See Page 6



# oregon daily emerald

Thursday, July 5, 1984

Eugene, Oregon

Volume 86, Number 6

## Refugees describe plight, seek asylum

By Paul Ertelt  
Of the Emerald

Alfredo's story provided a somber note to what had been a festive mood at the gathering in University Park Tuesday.

Through a translator, the young Guatemalan refugee told a tale of government brutality in his country to the more than 200 Eugeneans who gathered in the park to take part in a "fiesta" and protest U.S. policy in Central America.

Alfredo is in the country illegally, since refugees from Guatemala and El Salvador are not given political asylum in the United States. If arrested by the immigration service, he faces deportation, and those aiding him could face felony charges for harboring an illegal alien.

Alfredo and his family are with the "Sanctuary Caravan" on its way to Seattle where he hopes to find sanctuary in a church. The caravan is sponsored by the Interfaith Sanctuary Movement, a coalition of churches and other groups offering sanctuary to the refugees.

Members of the movement say they will continue to risk arrest because they believe deportation would mean death to the refugees. Mario, a former medical student at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala, is also traveling with the caravan.

The folk music, socializing and generally light atmosphere of the "fiesta" came to an end when Alfredo stepped up to the microphone to tell his story.

While Alfredo and his parents watched from a nearby field, Guatemalan soldiers marched into his village. The soldiers led his three older sisters, his two brothers and four of his nieces and nephews into a house and set it on fire, he said.

All those inside, including his 17-hour-old niece, were burned to death. All together, 14 members of his family have been killed by the Guatemalan army, Alfredo said.

"You ask yourselves why?" he said.

"We ask ourselves the same thing why?"

But Alfredo does have a theory why his family has been singled out by the army. His mother, his three sisters, and his uncle were all Catholic lay workers, and the government considers the church a subversive organization, he said.

Alfredo fled his country with his pregnant wife Maria and their daughter Elizabet, who is now three years old. Since last fall, Alfredo and his family have lived in Tucson, Ariz., where their daughter Anita was born three-and-a-half months ago.

In an interview Tuesday, Mario said he left his country because he feared he would be killed by government "death squads." As a student, Mario was involved in a theater and music group that often performed in nearby villages.

But his group eventually took a political turn, getting involved in peasant strikes and demonstrations. This involvement brought them to the attention of the Guatemalan government, he said.

"Some of my friends were kidnapped and assassinated by the death squads," Mario said. "Many of their bodies have

been found, but others haven't been found anywhere."

If he is deported, Mario said, he probably will be tortured and killed by the government. But by staying in the United States, he said, he hopes to educate people about what is happening in his country.

Mario maintains that he is a bona fide political refugee and thus should be allowed to stay in the United States.

"The U.N. says that Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees have a right to receive political asylum in any country," Mario said.

Mario rejects the assertion by the U.S. immigration service that people are fleeing Guatemala for economic and not political reasons. He said his case is proof to the contrary.

"In Guatemala, I studied and I had good grades," he said. "I had a lot of interest in becoming a professional doctor."

U.S. military aid to Guatemala is part of the reason for the situation there, Mario said.

"The government of Guatemala is killing a lot of people, and it is doing it with help of the American government.

"The U.S. government has some of the same interests as the Guatemalan government," he said. "There are a lot of North American factories there chemical factories, Coca Cola."

The sanctuary network has operated an "underground railroad" for almost three years, carrying refugees to churches throughout the country. But what they once did in secret, they are now doing openly, trying to get as much publicity as possible.

In each of the cities where the caravan has stopped, the local media have given extensive coverage, says Andrea Stoutland of Seattle, who is serving as a translator for the refugees. Since it left Tucson, the caravan has stopped in Phoenix; Los Angeles; Fresno, Calif.; Davis, Calif.; and Ashland.

"We've had press conferences up to

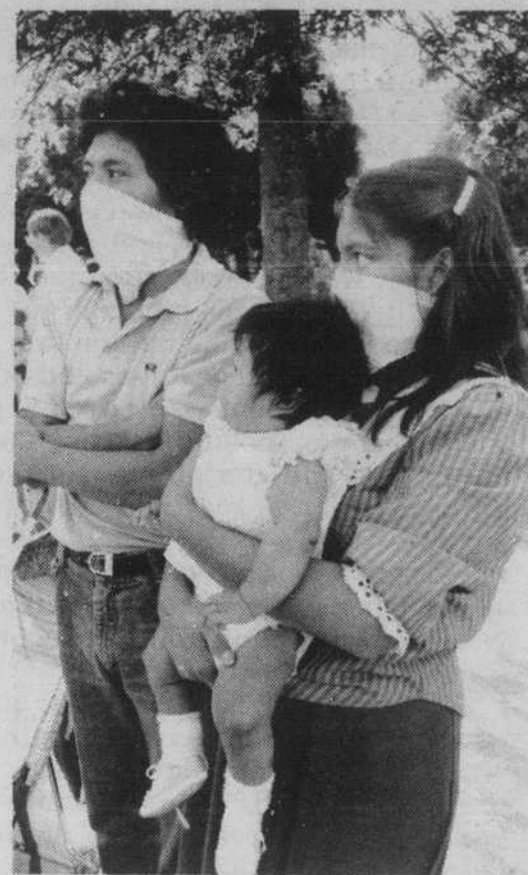


Photo by Michael Clapp

A Guatemalan couple wear handkerchiefs to hide their identities and lessen the chance of reprisals on their families back in Guatemala.

three times a day, and local television has been covering almost every arrival," Stoutland said.

Because of the publicity, the immigration service has decided not to arrest the refugees, said Bill Cadbury, of the Eugene Friends Meeting. His church is giving sanctuary to nine Salvadorans.

At about 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, the caravan pulled out of the park amid cheers from the onlookers. About 25 cars, covered with American flags and filled with sanctuary supporters, left Eugene.

About 10 cars went all the way to Portland.



Photo by Michael Clapp

The band Sandunga plays songs from Latin America while the fiesta crowd eats watermelon and chili and waits to hear the story of the Guatemalan refugees.

## Athletes may gain early registration slot

By Douglas Pyle  
Of the Emerald

A proposal to give student-athletes a jump on registration each term is under consideration by the University. The controversial proposal is intended to satisfy a new rule from the National Collegiate Athletic Association requiring universities to certify that student-athletes enroll in an average of 12 hours per term in courses from "a specific baccalaureate degree program."

University Vice Pres. for Administration Dan Williams said the proposal is controversial because allowing athletes to register before other students touches tender nerves, considering the difficulty all students have getting the classes they need.

In addition, there is "a general attitude... that student-athletes are already a privileged class," he said.

"That's the political problem," Williams said. "Here we find the need to give some of our student-athletes an advantage over non-student-athletes because of certain rules that the NCAA have established."

The NCAA rule, which goes into effect this fall, will require athletes in their junior and senior years to enroll in at least 12 hours per term that directly satisfy the needs of a declared major, Williams said. Whether hours taken to fulfill general University requirements outside of a major can be counted under this rule is still uncertain, Williams and Associate Director of Athletics William Byrne agree.

The NCAA rule, while requiring student-athletes

to enroll in 12 credits toward their major, does not specifically require that they register for classes early. Rather, early registration was formally recommended by Jim Ferguson, assistant director of athletics, in a June 7 memorandum to Williams.

"My suggestion would be that all student-athletes be permitted to register during the first registration period. This should virtually assure enrollment in the classes required," Ferguson said in the memo.

"If a student-athlete... is not able to register early or gain access to required classes, then there needs to be provisions for them to gain entry into those classes... But I believe that early registration will solve nearly all problems," he said.

ASUO Pres. Julie Davis said she privately expressed her concerns to Williams that Ferguson's proposal would make "some people more equal than others," and it may establish athletes as "a class of students" who get special privileges.

The ASUO will send an official reply concerning Ferguson's proposal to Williams by Friday, Davis said.

Williams said Monday it was unlikely that all student-athletes, about 400 in number, would be given early registration, as proposed by Ferguson. He suggested instead that "they would only have to be allowed to register early for that class they absolutely have to have (to fulfill the NCAA rule)... That may mean that maybe 10 students (would register early), each for one class. That's a far cry from 400 students being allowed to register early every quarter."

Joseph Wade, director of academic advising, said "it is not realistic" for only a few student-athletes to

register early and meet the NCAA rule.

"Students have to be prepared to take upper division courses," Wade said. All athletes need to register early to ensure they get preparatory as well as major-required courses, he added.

Peter Briggs, foreign student advisor, said that foreign students who are not on immigration visas face requirements similar to those athletes will face under the new NCAA rule, but they are not being considered for early registration.

Visas for foreign students stipulate that they be "making progress toward a stated degree (with) an expected completion date," Briggs said. While foreign students "don't like the system" of open registration, they don't have trouble getting the classes they need in the long run, he added.

Williams said the athletes' predicament is different, however, because it is the University, and not just the student, who is required to assure the student is making sufficient progress toward a major.

According to Registrar Herbert Chereck, very few students have been allowed to register early in the past.

Spring term, only physically handicapped students and students who volunteered to work the arena registration process were allowed to register early, Chereck said. Also, some other students may have benefited when they registered by proxy because legitimate University activities kept them out of Eugene during registration, he said. These students numbered no more than 303, according to a "packet puller tally" provided by Chereck.