

Opening delayed

Morning blaze guts new fitness center

By Lori Steinhauer

Of the Emerald

A fire Monday morning caused extensive damage and delayed the planned opening of the Oregon West Fitness Center, formerly the B.J. Kelly's nightclub, fire officials said.

There were no injuries in the blaze, but much of the building was charred by the flames and the entire structure was damaged by smoke and heat. Estimated loss is about \$150,000, Eugene Fire Marshall Dick Christensen said.

"That's just a guesstimation at this point in time," he added.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation. Nothing indicates the fire was caused by arson, although it has not been ruled out, Christensen said.

Remodeling work on the building was nearly completed, and the fitness center was scheduled to open for business on Nov. 13, said Brian Vik, the center's managing director. About 1,000 invitations were due back from the printers to be mailed this week for a "sneak preview" wine and cheese par-

ty on Sunday.

"It looks like it (the fire) will probably set us back two or three months," Vik said.

The fire department sent six trucks and a crew of 25 to the site after receiving a call at 1:38 a.m. Monday, said Jim Wechsler, a fire department spokesperson.

The fire, which began upstairs in the building, was declared under control at 2:44 a.m., Christensen said.

"It was a two-alarm fire. Normally it's just a one-alarm fire, and if they think it's getting pretty dangerous they'll send out another group," Wechsler said.

Repairs will begin after debris is completely cleared from the building, possibly later today, Christensen said. Air conditioning units and timber will be lifted out with a crane.

The property, which is insured by Great American Insurance Company of Portland, will be appraised this week, said Dick Wong, claims manager for the company.

"Right now we're in the process of finding out what we do

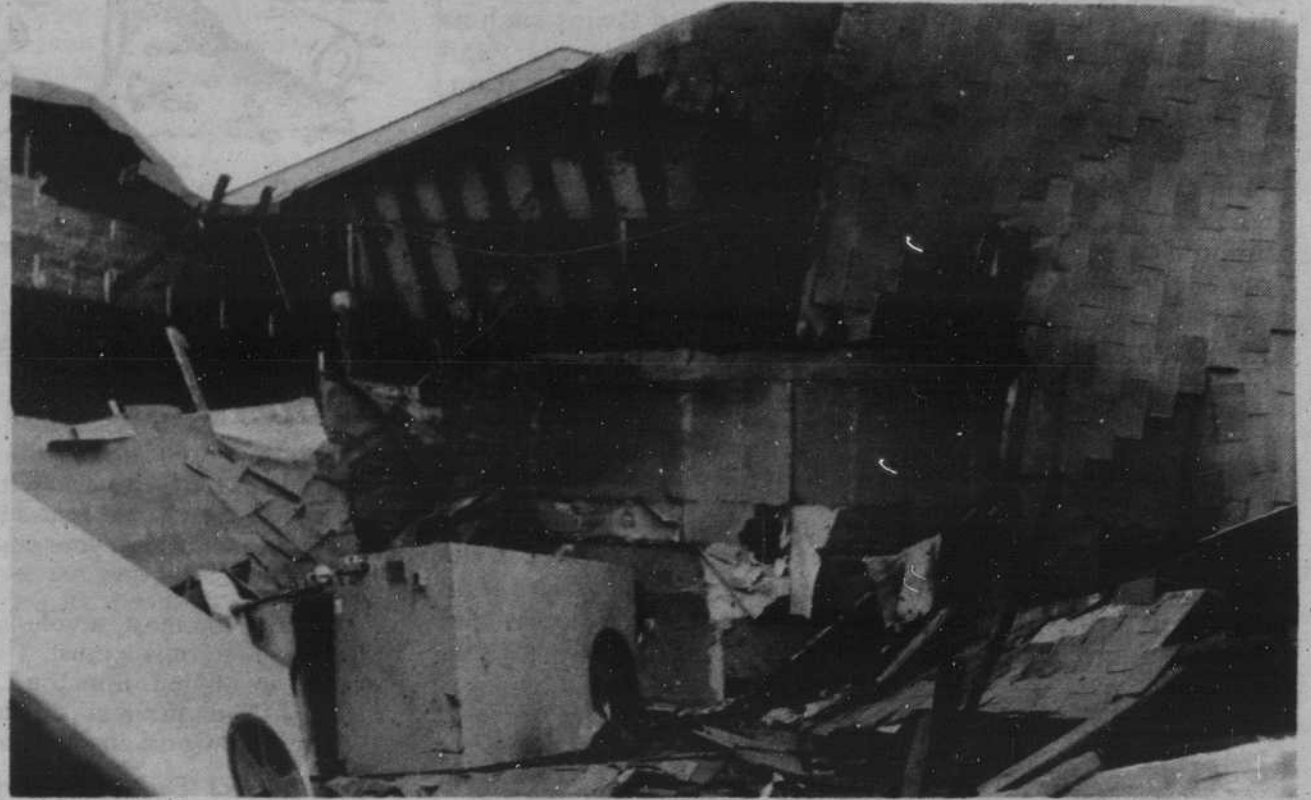


Photo by Michael Clapp

A two-alarm fire early Monday morning turned the newly-remodeled Oregon West Fitness Center into a charred shell. Plans for repairs are already underway, but the center won't open for another two to three months.

cover, what policies we have and the scope of damages," Wong said.

The builder's risk-fire policy

is held by Tom Connor of Eugene, who is co-owner of the fitness center.

The remodeling plans for the

building had previously passed approval by the Eugene Fire Department and the building commission, Christensen said.

Salvadorans resist intervention

By Thomas Henderson

Of the Emerald

Joining her wrists together to symbolize binding the hands of intervention, Baptist minister Marta Benevides spoke at the Law School Monday night on the anguish of native El Salvadorans and the folly of United States foreign policy.

Benevides told the audience that, regardless of the outcome of today's election, they must "conspire" to end U.S. intervention in Central America. Despite a sometimes negative connotation, conspiracy is a word only "as dirty as it ends," she said.

In fact, she chided Americans for their inability to plot. "How are you going to conquer anyone?" she asked. "You don't conspire right."

"I have always conspired, but that's because I love my country," she added.

Benevides was an adviser to Archbishop Oscar Romero on the Ecumenical Committee on Humanitarian Concerns before he was assassinated in 1980. She also directed the ecumenical committee that started the first refugee centers inside El Salvador.

She is currently the U.S. coordinator for Medepaz, an ecumenical organization providing technical support for theological reflection and economic survival. She also represents the Unity Committee for Salvadoran Women and the Unity Committee of Salvadoran Trade Unionists, as well as various committees of the National Council of Churches.

Benevides studied in an American seminary, thereby proving that she is not the product of some communist indoctrination, she said.

She said that U.S. intervention in Central

America, particularly El Salvador, is characteristic of the imperialism that has plagued the region throughout its history.

From the Spaniards to the Americans, Benevides said Central America has been exploited by foreign powers with little regard for the region's self-interest. The current struggle in El Salvador is a conflict between self-determination and external manipulation.

She likened El Salvador to a young adult needing to leave home for independence. This does not mean the child cannot maintain a close relationship with his or her parents, she said, but that individuals, like countries, must be allowed to pursue their own lives.

Benevides applied a similar metaphor to Nicaragua, saying its faults should be viewed as those of an infant learning to walk. Nicaragua's fledgling government should be encouraged toward progress rather than criticized for its faults, she said.

Dismissing concerns of communist subversion in El Salvador, Benevides said the oligarchic ruling class, which owns 70 percent of the country's land and keeps the Salvadoran people in poverty, is much more an immediate threat than any Soviet ambitions. "In El Salvador, the last thing we're worried about is the Soviet Union, Cuba or Nicaragua."

Benevides described the "liberation theology" of churches in the Third World as a conversion of the church by the people rather than the other way around. Liberation theology, she said, puts the church in its legitimate place as the servant of the people and the champion of the oppressed.



Marta Benevides

Center criticizes Wood's pricetag

By Kirsten Bolin

Of the Emerald

The marketing techniques and promises of Evelyn Wood's Reading Dynamics course drew criticism from the University's Learning Resources Center when the reading program began an ad campaign on campus in October.

In a recent session of the course in Eugene, Evelyn Wood's employees exaggerated the results of their course and unfairly discredited the Learning Resources Center's speed-reading program, says Dave Hubin, director of the center.

When reached at their San Francisco offices, Evelyn Wood employees would not comment on what was said in their seminar. Evelyn Wood's course costs \$400; the Learning Resources Center's course costs \$40.

Contrary to Evelyn Wood's ads, all material is not speed-readable, Hubin says. Learning when to speed-read and what material to speed-read is as important as increasing speed, he says. Students respond to speed-reading training in individual ways, and because of this it is impossible to guarantee a specific improvement for anyone, though most students should comfortably be able to double their speed, he says.

During the Evelyn Wood seminar, the speed-reading course offered through the Learning Resources Center was erroneously reported as using rate-building machines called tachistoscopes, a speed-reading method that has been thoroughly discredited.

These machines are not used at all during the training sessions, Hubin says, and he attributes these reports by Evelyn Wood's trainers to their need to convince students that their program is worth an extra \$360.

Commercial speed-reading companies like Evelyn Wood's also raise questions in the minds of students about the caliber and qualifications of instructors at University-run programs, Hubin says.

These questions are completely unfounded, says Susan Lesyk, developer of LRC's program.

"Our instructors for all of our courses have a

Continued on Page 8