

editorial

Now is not the time for an Autzen dome

The arguments for the construction of a dome on Autzen Stadium are very attractive. Many Duck fans have suffered through cold autumn football games plagued by rain at the 18-year-old stadium. It can be an unpleasant experience, especially if the Ducks are losing.

A domed stadium would allow fans the opportunity to enjoy a game in an artificially controlled environment.

A dome would also make it easier for University football coach Rich Brooks to recruit young football prospects. It would show potential recruits that the University is committed to supporting its sports program.

An Autzen dome would also improve attendance at Duck football and basketball games, increasing the athletic department's overall revenues.

But the cost of placing a dome on Autzen is estimated to be \$15 million. The dome's supporters claim the project will be funded totally through private donations.

Can the Eugene-Springfield community, which is suffering through a severe economic recession, afford such a project? We are skeptical.

University President Paul Olum fears that donations given to the dome project would deplete the amount of money traditionally donated to University academics. He is afraid that there is just so much money available from annual private donations, and to tap these sources for the construction of a dome would hurt rather than help the University.

We agree.

The University currently has many needs. Many of our campus buildings are suffering the effects of old age. There are cracks in the walls of PLC, Gilbert Hall often floods with the winter rains, and the desks in Chapman, Condon and Fenton are ancient and often unusable.

The University library is ranked among the lowest in the nation for major research libraries. Good, quality faculty are daily leaving the University because they are tired of extremely low pay and poor research facilities.

The lawns often go unwatered in the summer because the University does not have enough money to properly maintain them. And the University cannot afford to provide safe and adequate parking facilities for people who must use cars.

Sure, a dome on Autzen would be nice. It would undoubtedly improve our athletic program. But the University has higher, more tangible priorities.

The University Foundation, which is the University's fund-raising arm, claims that people who would donate money to a dome project would not, in any other case, make donations to the University. We hope the foundation's directors are correct.

Nevertheless, the plight of the Eugene Hilton and the Hult Center for the Performing Arts show there is a limited amount of money in the Eugene economy. Both were built with promises that the local economy would greatly benefit from these structures. Instead, the operators of the Hilton are currently battling a foreclosure attempt by First Interstate Bank of Oregon, and the city of Eugene has had to cover the Hult Center's million-dollar deficit.

The money just isn't out there, and the University can't afford to gamble that it is. Now is not the time to build a dome, maybe it will be in five years, maybe in 10, but not now.

If a dome project depletes the pool of money available for the University's other needs, the University will suffer much more than it will benefit from a dome.



letters

Unfair

Whether non-smokers like it or not, there is a smoking population at this university.

I agree that you have rights to breathe relatively clean air, but there is room for all of us. I will agree to not smoke in your space, if you will agree to provide me with a place to smoke, study and be comfortable.

I am assuming that there have been complaints about the smoking in the Fishbowl, since I arrived on Tuesday morning to find "No Smoking" signs posted everywhere. But simply kicking us out is no answer. Perhaps a few fans in strategic locations could ease the problem.

Or — provide us with another room. The two areas allowed to us now have many problems. The area by the cafeteria is very small, totally unventilated, and a passageway through which everyone — even non-smokers — must pass. And, there are no smaller tables for more private studying. The booths in the Skylight area is also a smoking area — however, getting a table there is next to impossible.

My suggestion is that either adjustments be made to make the Fishbowl comfortable for both groups, or that the non-smokers get the entire main floor, and smoking be allowed in the upstairs area that includes the Skylight and Refectory.

I'm sure this doesn't exhaust the possibilities.

Kathy Mason
Eugene

False ads?

Thursday May 16 — Emerald Supplement advertised on page 11B — "The Folk Tradition Continues..." next to last paragraph reads, "All events are free and open to anyone." On the last page of the same supplement — "First Annual Willamette Valley Folk Festival — Free Admission East Lawn, EMU."

Also in the same classified ads: "Willamette Valley Folk Festival May 17-19, East Lawn, EMU — LeRoi Brothers, Pan-casan (from Nicaragua), etc. . . . and much, much more! It's all free!" In the same edition of the Emerald in the Classified ads: "Check this Action! 3rd Annual Outdoor Beer Garden — Friday May 17th with The LeRoi Brothers from Austin, Texas — Ticket \$1.50."

What do all these ads have in common?

The 15th annual free and open Willamette Valley Folk Festival on the East Lawn of the EMU. On or before Thursday May 19, 1985, the Cultural Forum, which sponsored the Willamette Folk Festival, received permission from Adelle McMillan, administrative controller (director) of the EMU, and the department of campus secret security to allow the fencing off of the entire East Lawn of the EMU (normally an open public access area) Friday night May 20, for an alcoholic beer garden that cost \$1.50 and required identification (minimum age 21), with officers not allowing entrance to anyone without identification.

This was supposedly a free event, open to all ages on public (state) property.

Besides the question of false advertising, are student incidental fees used to support these alcoholic events? Didn't Paul Olum refuse to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages at school events, just last year?

What is University policy on the use or misuse of public land (this university), by student groups, non-profit organizations, city, state or federal employees?

What should one surmise from this experience — that the University's main purpose in land use is not educational, but financial? What is State of

Oregon land use policy toward public access of our state universities? How much leeway do university (public) officials have in administering these rules?

Richard Gold
Senior

It figures

Reading Douglas Pyle's complaints about the Portland State Vanguard's hiring practices reminded me of my experience as musical director of the University summer 1984 production of Side By Side by Sondheim, reviewed by Mr. Pyle in the July 19, 1984 edition of the Emerald.

Though the show was a musical review, with no social statements except those expressed by Sondheim himself in the songs, the review (of the play) was titled "Play is not sensitive in dealing with gays." Mr. Pyle then proceeded to devote 11 out of 16 total paragraphs of his review to an alleged bias in this production against gays, even though we presented the songs and script as they were provided to us by the publisher.

Mr. Pyle appeared to be so blinded by his own stance on this issue that he failed to research Steven Sondheim's own avowed sexual preference, which would have confirmed the fallacy of Pyle's contention that the show was anti-gay.

It seems to me that a reviewer of a performance who is so unable to set aside his own viewpoint that he grossly misinterprets the meaning and tone of a harmless, non-controversial show such as Side by Side deserves the type of questioning described in the recent Emerald article.

I urge the Emerald to consider his application for editor with this in mind.

Johnathan Mansfield
Music

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

oregon daily emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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News and Editorial: 686-5511
Display Advertising and Business: 686-3712
Classified Advertising: 686-4343
Production: 686-4381
Circulation: 686-5511