



Tubing the Willamette

Just one of many crews that piloted tubes down the Willamette River rapids this weekend, taking time to enjoy the almost unbelievable 90-degree weather that graced Eugene.

Photo by Steve Gibbons

Graduate

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school, she met her future husband, Toshio Ando. The couple settled in Denver and had six children. As soon as all the children were in school, Ando fulfilled her lifelong dream of becoming a teacher.

Here at the University, Ando's case was virtually forgotten until the spring of 1984 when University Archivist Keith Richard was putting together a World War II display for the library. While going through records of that period, Richard found a file labeled "Japanese student." He read the file and was moved by her experiences.

"The first thing that struck me was the insensitivity of the bureaucrats," he said. "They operated within this system that had no area for humane decisions."

Ando, who still teaches elementary school in Denver,

said the bitterness she felt during the war is long gone.

"Bitterness has a tendency to warp you," she said. "You have to look at the positive."

Richard called Ando immediately and asked if she would like to come back and go through the ceremony, but she was reluctant.

"I guess I didn't want to do it because I didn't see the importance of it," she said.

Richard waited more than a year, then called Ando back in November 1985. Ando told him she need more time to think about it, then accepted his invitation the following month.

"There had been action by Japanese-American organizations to get restitution," she said. "I thought, maybe this is a good time to bring out what happened. The generation living now may not know about it."

Teledyne

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"The residue that goes into the new ponds is not radioactive in any form," says Linda Grace, Denham's assistant.

Marbet disagrees with her assertion. The new filtering process only removes the daughter products, he says. The parent products, uranium and thorium, remain in the sludge that goes into the ponds, he says.

The uranium and thorium still release radiation, and as they do so, they change into new atoms, Marbet says. These new atoms will continue to decay and change into more new atoms, eventually decaying into radium and radon, he says.

Radium and radon are the two radioactive elements that form the root of the original controversy.

Although the decaying process will take hundreds of thousands of years, the radioactive elements will still move in to and affect the environment, Marbet says.

TWCA is playing "radioactive roulette" by releasing the material into the environment because they have no idea where it will end up or who will get hurt, Marbet says.

"It's like shooting bullets into the air," he says. "That's why it's such a clever pollutant — because it takes lots of statistical studies to see how it will affect the environment."

"They are deliberately deceiving people," Marbet says.

Denham says the primary source of controversy is the sludge in the two ponds used prior to 1979. This is partly because they are located only 400 feet from the Willamette River, he says.

The sludge, which resembles silt or mud, contains zirconium compounds, oxide, unreactive sand, calcium com-

pounds from lime, silicon, carbon, aluminum, niobium, titanium, iron, potassium, chlorides and silicates, Denham says. These elements account for 99.8 percent of the sludge, he says. The radioactive elements, or radio nuclei content, are a portion of the remaining .2 percent that hasn't been accounted for, he says.

The sludge in the old ponds, each about 10 to 12 feet deep, is about 65 percent water and 35 percent solids while the new ponds contain a higher percentage of water, says Tom Nelson, TWCA's manager of environmental quality.

"It's like a very firm jello," he says. "This material is not just like dirt suspended in water."

The area of the two old ponds covers about four acres while the four new ponds cover a total area of 10 acres, Nelson says.

As each new pond fills, it is allowed to dry out. They are then excavated and the material is spread on agricultural fields owned by the company, Nelson says.

Before the ponds may be reused, the Department of Environmental Quality has to come in to inspect the linings, which are composed of clay, Nelson says. The DEQ may then give permission to refill as is, or may require the company to make repairs, he says.

Jack Kapuscinski, one of the initiative petition drive coordinators for Eugene, says about 31,000 signatures have been gathered statewide so far. There are about 200 people passing petitions in Eugene and about 1500 petition passers statewide, Kapuscinski says.

Marbet will be giving a presentation about the petition Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. in the Forum Room.

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