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Cat controversy cooking at Amazon complex

By Michelle Brence

Of the Emerald

What started out as a discussion of how a no-cat rule should be enforced has turned into a controversy over the rule itself. Some Amazon family housing tenants want the rule changed.

"The cat problem is a wicked problem," said Frank Gaddini, Amazon director. "We're not going to satisfy everyone's wishes."

After exchanging views, the Amazon Community Tenants council decided Sunday to outline options and let tenants vote on the matter.

Amazon leases prohibit all pets besides fish, birds and small rodents. After residents complained of cat feces in the playground, the ACT council discussed enforcement of the rule at its May meeting. ACT includes two elected officers and a representative from each of the complex's 11 divisions.

Cats were allowed in Amazon until 1977. According to the University family housing handbook, the rule was changed after a Lane County health official found that the amount of cat feces in the area posed a health hazard. Three pregnant residents were found to have

contracted toxoplasmosis, an infection most commonly transmitted through cat feces, it says.

Toxoplasmosis is minor most of the time, said Dr. Peter Hafner, assistant director of the University Student Health Center. It can cause infectious flu-like symptoms in adults, he said. A pregnant woman can pass the disease to a fetus, possibly causing brain and eye damage, pneumonia and fever or rashes, he said.

At the May meeting, ACT agreed to ask the Office of University Housing to play a more active role in investigating reports of cat ownership, said Betsy Thorpe, an ACT officer.

"We have reported people, and the housing department is ignoring it," she said.

The council also discussed taking loose cats to the pound, but "it wasn't anything that anyone was comfortable in doing," she said.

Trapping cats was tried at Westmoreland family housing two years ago without success, said Greg Harris, who was the acting family housing director at the time.

Someone also suggested that ACT representatives encourage

residents to anonymously report people who own cats. Thorpe said, but ACT did not agree to carry out the idea.

The controversy erupted when ACT's newsletter, distributed last week, said ACT had decided to encourage anonymous reporting.

"We have also decided to turn people in and demand that the office act on reports," it stated.

Kathy Harnden, an ACT representative who did not attend the meeting, was enraged when she saw the newsletter. Before distributing it to tenants in her area, she attached a statement attacking the decision.

"...I will not participate in such Gestapo-like tactics as spying on and turning in my neighbors!" she wrote. "I'm shocked that the council would make such a fascist proposal!"

She said she regretted attaching the statement after learning that the newsletter misrepresented the meeting.

Another resident, who asked not to be identified for fear of losing his cat, wrote and distributed a flyer condemning the idea and comparing ACT members to Nazis.

"What kinds of people are these that they have nothing better to do with their time than to covertly inform on good-willed and peaceful neighbors and to try to separate them from their beloved and harmless pets?" he wrote.

He also wrote that the rule

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Photo by Ross Martin

Cats have become the center of controversy at the Amazon family housing area. Amazon Community Tenants will present a proposal to amend the policy regarding pets to the Family Housing Policy Board in October.

New director to head student advocacy office

By Stephen Maher

Of the Emerald

The ASUO has chosen a new director for the Office of Student Advocacy.

Lucille Kaplan, an attorney who recently moved to Eugene from New York, was selected from a field of more than 25 applicants. Included in that group was the director for the past three years, Bill Kittredge.

"Lucille's qualifications and background set her apart from the rest. We are all quite impressed with her and look forward to excellent advocacy for the students," said Caitlin Cameron, ASUO vice president.

Kaplan graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University in 1975 with a bachelor of arts degree in Near Eastern Studies and earned her law degree from the University of Chicago in 1978. Since that time she has served as both a legal aide and a corporate attorney and has taught legal research and writing at New York Law School and Brooklyn Law School. She also has served as a volunteer attorney for the Animal Legal Defense Fund in New York.

Kaplan was selected after the position was opened up for applications and advertised in newspapers and at West Coast universities. The ASUO decided two years ago that the positions of OSA director and legal services director should be opened up every three years.

Kittredge, who just returned from vacationing in Alaska, said he was "sort of surprised" when he heard the news. The ASUO hasn't planned any type of transition yet, he said.

Kittredge's contract expires July 31 and he now plans to help manage the new computer store to be located in the basement of the EMU.

"We have a joint-operating agreement which essentially makes me a partner," Kittredge said.

The OSA provides free representation and advice to students in University-related matters as well as research and advocacy for the ASUO executive.

Kaplan was chosen by a search committee composed of ASUO President Steve Nelson, Cameron and former ASUO President Lynn Pinckney. ASUO Executive Coordinator Susan Sowards and Director of Legal Services Karsten Rasmussen served as non-voting members of the committee.

Weaver announces recent poll results

By Stephen Maher

Of the Emerald

In a hastily called press conference Monday, Rep. Jim Weaver announced the results of a poll he said shows Sen. Bob Packwood sides with a minority of Oregonians.

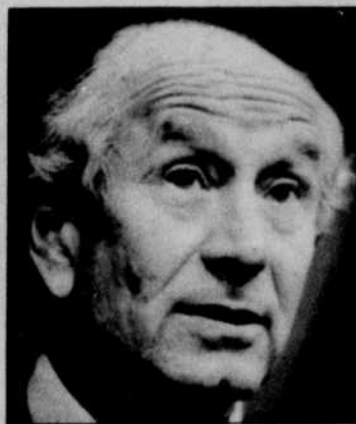
The poll, commissioned by the Weaver campaign and taken by Lauer, Lalley and Associates of Washington, D.C., surveyed 600 Oregonians by phone July 16-22.

The poll covered issues that Oregonians said were most important to them, Weaver said. These include the federal deficit, military spending, the strategic defense initiative (Star Wars), the Hanford Nuclear Reactor, import restrictions and tax reform, he said.

"I voted to scrap Star Wars, Bob Packwood voted for it. I championed the Hanford shutdown, yet Packwood wants to keep it running," Weaver said.

According to the poll, Oregonians favor shutting down the Hanford plant 53 percent to 31 percent and favor scrapping the Star Wars plan 45 percent to 42 percent. The rest of those surveyed were undecided.

Weaver also cited results that show that 48 percent of Orego-



Jim Weaver

nians want military spending cut compared with 9 percent who don't.

"A staggering majority of Oregonians want defense cut," Weaver said, "and I voted to cut military spending."

"These are not issues that I've adopted for the campaign. These are issues I've fought for, bled for," Weaver said.

A Packwood campaign official discounted the poll results, saying that until Weaver releases the entire poll data and the methodology used in gathering the information, the results are questionable.

"If he wants to release it, then

we'll take a look at it, but they can make these come out anyway they want," said Mike Witeck, press secretary for the Re-Elect Packwood Committee.

"I think Oregon expects to elect a senator and not a weather vane" in the fall, Witeck added.

In comparing Packwood's record with the poll results, Weaver blasted Packwood for "hiding the fact that he votes the other way."

"It's my job to show where Packwood stands," Weaver said. "He's not going to say where he stands. I wish he would, but he doesn't."

The top concern of Oregonians, according to the poll, is the federal budget deficit. Fifty-eight percent cited it as their major concern.

Weaver said he had no disagreement with Packwood over the federal deficit question except for priorities on what to cut.

Weaver said he believes that the polls showing him trailing Packwood by a large margin "will change when Oregonians realize Bob Packwood stands for the opposite side of what they believe in."