

'Dawgs' roll over
for the Ducks
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Parents discuss strike possibility to clarify issues

By Janet Paulson
Of the Emerald

About 150 Eugene School District parents met on Sunday with representatives of the teacher's union and the school district to discuss issues in the pending teachers' strike.

The Edison Elementary School Parent Advisory Council sponsored the forum, held at the Central Presbyterian Church, to inform parents about issues involved with the contract negotiations.

Brooke Belcher, principal organizer of the Edison school parent group, explained the purpose of the forum was to inform and to clarify contract issues, not to solve the problems.

"We are all directly affected by this strike. It means a lot to all of us," she said.

The panel consisted of three representatives each from the Eugene Education Association and the Eugene School Board who responded to questions from parents. Each group also made an initial 10-minute presentation identifying and describing the issues in the contract negotiations.

Edison parent Ted Heid briefly explained the state's collective bargaining laws and the process public employees must go through prior to striking.

After the initial remarks, each side was given two minutes to respond to each question.

In his opening remarks, panel member and EEA President Ray Gross explained the union's decision to strike.

"Would you contribute \$5,000 toward the education of your child? Teachers made that

contribution in 1983," he said.

In 1983, Eugene teachers took a 4 percent salary rollback in response to a school district request. The district is in the best financial condition in years and is in a position to offer more to the teachers, Gross explained.

School board member Karen Hemmingsen said there were two categories of issues to be resolved in the contract negotiations: financial and language.

The financial issues include salary and insurance benefits.

"The board has to think of the long-range financial stability of the district and how taxes will be affected," she said. "The board has a commitment not to raise taxes for another year."

The language issues under consideration concern the district's current policy of only listing open positions locally until the middle of August and the question of promotions.

The school board wants to increase the allowable date to post teacher openings from mid-August to Aug. 1, but the EEA believes a change is unnecessary because EEA members could be locked out of desirable positions.

Another parent's group, the Citizens to Keep Schools Open (via a settlement), collected signatures from local residents Sunday afternoon in the lobby of the Hilton Hotel, where negotiating teams were meeting.

The group maintains an impartial position and is concerned that bargaining efforts continue. By mid-afternoon about 150 people had signed a petition, written on yellow legal

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Photo by Shu-Shing Chen

Nicole Hippenhammer performs Sunday evening at the third annual Indonesian Night, sponsored by the Indonesian Student Association. Around 300 people attended the event.

No answer given in attempted bombing

By Jackie Barry

Of the Emerald

An Oregon State University employee arrested for planting a bomb in the school's computer center will return to work today after two months paid suspension.

OSU officials suspended Albany resident William A. Myers, 43, after his Feb. 6 arrest for first degree attempted arson. OSU security officers made the arrest after a bomb squad disarmed a bomb housed in a briefcase that Myers admitted carrying into the center that morning. The briefcase also sported a monogram consisting of Myers' initials.

Law enforcement officials received five or six anonymous phone calls Feb. 6 that directed them to the bomb-laden briefcase, informed them Myers had carried it into the building and then directed them to a transmitter inside a car registered to Myers. The transmitter was set to the same frequency as the bomb.

Wally Johnson, OSU's director of information, confirmed school officials made the decision to ask Myers to come back to his job and after consulting with the state attorney general and the Benton County district attorney and because of his exceptional work.

Although Myers was arrested two months ago, he's never been formally charged in connection with the bombing. The Benton County

district attorney's office will not confirm nor deny whether Myers is still a suspect. However, Johnson said the Oregon State Daily Barometer quoted District Attorney Peter Sandrock as saying "no charges have been filed against anyone."

Myers still maintains his innocence and says he has a theory about who really planted the bomb and why that person would try to make it look like he'd done it. Myers has told the district attorney's office about his theory but won't discuss it in public, he said.

"It wouldn't be fair to engage in public guesswork" because it might damage innocent parties, he said. "My arrest could've been thought over more carefully, and possibly it wouldn't have happened."

Myers told officials he'd been asked to carry the briefcase into the computer center by a woman with a broken boot heel. After Myers' arrest, his co-workers found an unmonogrammed briefcase next to Myers' desk that they identified as the one they'd seen him use in the past.

Myers said he "feel(s) real good" to be asked back to work but he'd "feel even better" if a grand jury or the district attorney would publically clear him. He said he talked to numerous reporters Thursday who were "gritting their teeth because the DA won't confirm or deny" his innocence.



Photo by John Curtis

Hiron's Drug Store at 185 E. 18th destroyed in a early Saturday morning fire.

Hirons destroyed by fire

Hirons Drug Store, 185 E. 18th Ave., was destroyed by fire early Saturday morning, according to Eugene police.

Damage was estimated at \$1 million, including \$400,000 for the 30-year-old building and \$500,000 to \$600,000 for the contents.

The cause of the fire has not been determined.

Fire and police officials received the call at 12:09 a.m. from a unit of the Eugene Police Department, according to Barry Howarth, a communications specialist for the EPD.

The officer noticed the flames when he passed by on 18th Avenue, Howarth said. The store was half consumed by flames by 12:10 a.m., he said.

"There could have been a working fire in the back of the store for quite a while," Howarth said. "We had the entire Eugene fire department on it (the fire)."

The fire was controlled at 2:21 a.m.

The Safeway grocery store adjacent to Hiron's received "less than minimal damage," from the blaze, according to assistant manager Duane Hedland. The Safeway store was closed for about seven hours during the fire and reopened at 6:45 a.m. after health inspectors determined that selected food products had received no damage, Hedland said.

John Hirons, who owns the 18th Avenue store, also owns another Hirons on Franklin Boulevard.