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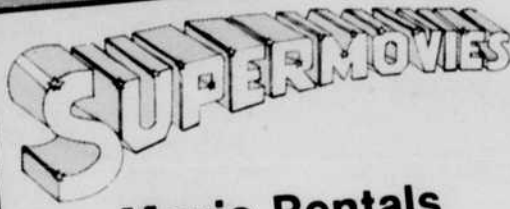
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Senate postpones debate on drug-testing resolution

By Laurie Schwartz
Of the Emerald

The University Senate voted Wednesday 16-13 to postpone discussion on a resolution to recommend discontinuing the Athletic Department's mandatory random drug-testing policy.

"The crux of the matter is the legality" of random drug-testing, said senator Dennis Hyatt, who proposed postponement until Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer releases his opinion on the issue, which is expected soon.

The senate will take the matter up at its next session, May 13, whether or not Frohnmayer releases his opinion.

Senator Randy MacDonald, a student, opposed the postponement, saying, "I personally disagreed with the attorney general's ruling on South Africa (divestiture) . . . I am not waiting with bated breath for the attorney general's opinion on this."

Senator Dan Thoma, the student who introduced the resolution, said the issue could be

argued on the basis of the degradation and humiliation caused by random drug testing, rather than constitutionality.

"Even if the attorney general says it's legal, we still think it's wrong," Thoma said. "His decision is moot."

In other business, the senate voted 20-10 to ask University President Paul Olum to set up a committee to study the feasibility of changing the interval between University classes from 10 to 15 minutes.

"Ten minutes is an excessively short period of time," said MacDonald, who introduced the resolution. He said he sometimes has trouble getting to classes on time when he has to go from Lawrence Hall to Clinical Services.

Senator Cory Wynne said the important issues are the amount of time students have to discuss questions with professors after class and class disruptions when people come in late. It's a question of quality of education, he said.

Attendance was low at the session, although student senators had a high turnout.

Students with legal questions can turn to OSPIRG hotline

By Sarah Kitchen
Of the Emerald

Students with questions about their rights have somewhere to turn.

A hotline offered by the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group answers questions about landlord/tenant disputes, new cars that break down and other problems.

OSPIRG's consumer hotline has served students and community members since 1982, but a lot of people aren't aware the hotline exists, said Coordinator Dianne Decker.

The most common problems are landlord/tenant disputes, Decker said. Questions include how long it takes to get a refund on a deposit, how to get a reluctant landlord to repair an item, consumers' rights concerning eviction and how much notice a

landlord must give before he or she shows an occupied apartment, she said.

A common problem with deposits occurs when students move out at the beginning of the summer and leave town, said Jack Kapuscinski, OSPIRG's campus coordinator.

"Many times students get taken advantage of because they move out in June and may have left the state, so they are not around in July and do not pick up their refund," he said.

"A lot of people do not know how to get refunds back, and they also do not know that if a landlord does not give it to you after 30 days, you can get back double the money," he added.

OSPIRG members are in the process of writing a flier about tenant refunds, and they expect to make literature drops in surrounding housing areas in May.

When they receive a call, staff members give advice if they can or refer the caller to an expert if they can't. For example, callers might be referred to Legal Aid, Consumer Protection in Salem or an owner of a local rental management consulting firm.

When a caller is referred elsewhere, hotline staff members find out what happens in the case to help them advise people in the future. Kapuscinski said. Over the years, the hotline has collected a number of files on certain disputes.

Decker added, "We don't just get calls from students, we also get calls from people in the community. For example we get a lot of older people who were fooled into buying things door to door."

In such a case, the caller is told of the three-day cooling off period a purchaser has to return an item purchased from a door-to-door salesperson for a full refund.

Decker emphasized that while the hotline gives advice, it cannot accept formal complaints.

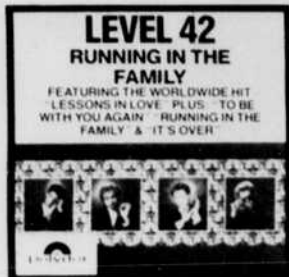
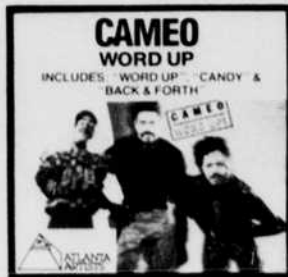
Seven OSPIRG staff members work on the hotline, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The number is 686-4357.

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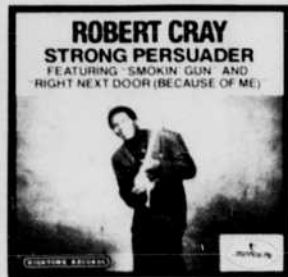
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