

Editorial

Forest fires deserve involvement, action

As forest fires continue to burn out of control in Southern Oregon, the need for increased federal involvement to extinguish the fires and restore the damaged forests is an issue of paramount importance.

Dry weather and high winds provoked some of Oregon's rural forest fires to spread Monday, causing Oregon forestry officials to close all state-protected lands on the west side of the Cascade Range.

The so-called Silver Complex Fire, which has been burning for seven weeks, expanded by 1,494 acres on Monday to a total of 91,934 burning or burnt acres.

Last Thursday a congressional oversight hearing was held in Washington, D.C., to discuss federal efforts to combat fires raging in the Western United States.

At the hearing, Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., initiated discussion with regard to the economic impact of the fires as well as the costs of reforestation and salvage operations.

Federal efforts to aid the war against forest fires, however, should not stop at discussion; instead, sweeping action is needed on the federal level not only for the present situation but also for establishing a federal policy for combating persistent forest fires in the future.

In the beginning of October, the Senate approved an allocation of \$10 billion in federal funds to help fight forest fires and to cover environmental damages in the Northwest.

This is a step in the right direction, but as the fires continue to spread it may prove inadequate for preserving and protecting one of Oregon's greatest resources.

Increased local effort needed to battle hunger

In the wake of a two-week observance called "World Food Focus," concerns about the problem of hunger in Oregon have once again surfaced.

Furthermore, emergency food requests in Oregon have increased during the last few years at a substantial rate, shedding light on the degree in which low-income Oregonians are in need of food.

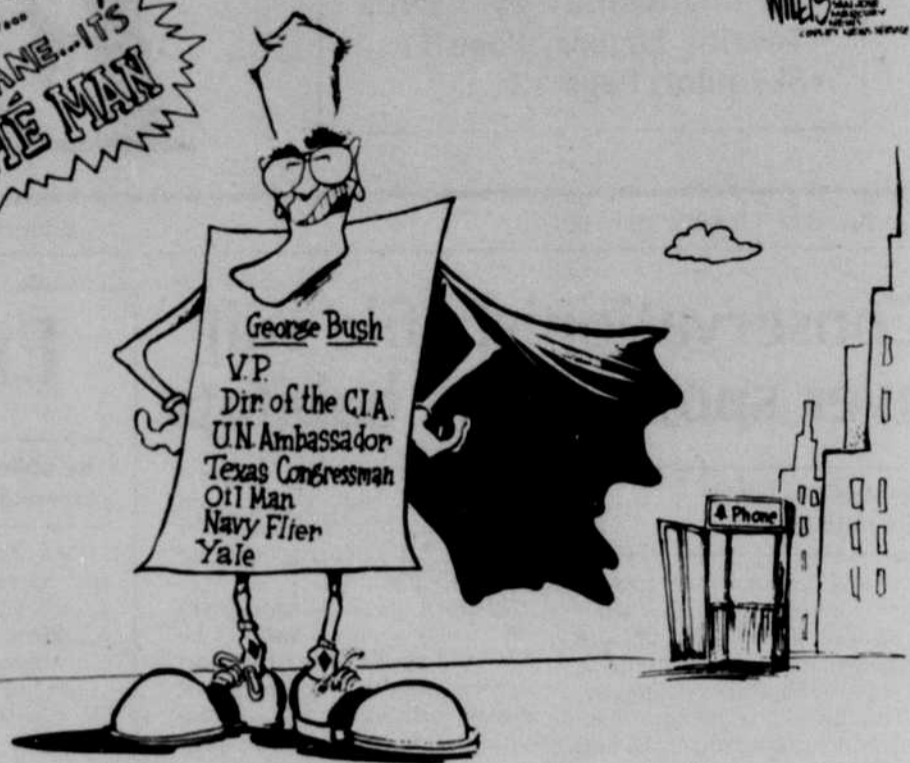
True, hunger is not something that is normally thought a problem of deep concern in such an endowed society as ours, but the facts show that people do indeed go hungry here in Oregon.

For example, between July 1, 1986 and June 30, 1987, 491,000 Oregonians received emergency food assistance — a 14 percent increase over the previous 12 months, according to Larry G. Raff, Oregon Food Share's acting executive director, who spoke at a news conference Friday in response to World Food Day. Raff also pointed out that, "Less food is becoming available at a time when need is skyrocketing."

Raff's comments show the urgency with which private-citizen action committees and state welfare agencies must continue and increase efforts to combat a far-reaching social problem that threatens not only the people of distant, drought-stricken lands but also the humble inhabitants of this state and this community.

To help overcome the local hunger problem, the more fortunate members of the community should take the time to donate food, volunteer time, or perhaps pressure an Oregon congressman to increase state appropriations for battling hunger.

IT'S A BIRD...
IT'S A PLANE...IT'S
RESUME MAN



Letters

Open mind

I have been following the battle between Tim Chauran and the Phi Delt Theta fraternity with some interest. As Michael J. Flannigan states, "it has started again," (ODE, Oct. 12).

The incident described by Chauran is of little importance (ODE, Oct. 7); although Chauran's account of the incident is more credible than the Phi Delt's — since when are fraternity brothers each others' keepers, as Stuart Sandor's letter implies? (ODE, Oct. 12).

Chauran also lacks an apparent motive for having fabricated the entire story, which implies strongly that the incident did, in fact, occur.

However, the social implications of such an event are important. Some Greeks are aware of the stereotypes associated with the system in general; one need look no further than Flannigan's sarcastic, albeit witty, letter to see that. These stereotypes have endured for years; they must have some basis in fact, or else they would have died long ago.

The idea of abolishing the entire Greek system is ridiculous. However, changes could be implemented that would better the image of the Greek system. Instead of denying that ugly in-

cidents happen, why not take steps to prevent their occurrence?

Why is it necessary for those "outside" and "within" the system to "ridicule" each other at all? Wouldn't it be more constructive if we worked together to enhance each group's collective opinion of the other?

So, Greek people, what do you say? Try to enhance the public perception of who you are and what you are doing. I personally promise to keep an open mind.

Rudy Asercion
Computer science

Problems

I read the letter written by Scott Lewis in the Emerald (Oct. 14) about the sign that sometimes hangs in our office. The claims made by the author had some problems.

The poster says, "Soviet Free zone, no Russian attacks permitted." It is in the same vain as having a nuclear-free zone or a violence-free zone. I do not think that the Russians will hold off an attack because we have our sign up, but as charms go, this one did not cost you \$60,000 in attorney's fees.

I do not want to hurt anybody's feelings as to the reasons why they put up those types of signs, but please do not point a finger at us when we ban what we wish not to happen. This country still is free, is it not?

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 200, EMU.

Also, I wish the author would have stayed around to talk to the person there in the office. All Scott Lewis said to us was: "I am going to write to the Emerald about this."

Timothy F. Chase, Historian,
University College Republicans

Valid criticism

Judge Robert Bork's supporters are being "disengenuous" to blame his impending failure on a "disinformation" campaign.

Bork was found wanting by the Senate Judiciary Committee based on the substantive issues in his record. Bork had a chance to dispel critics' concerns and was unconvincing.

Moreover, Bork received a negative recommendation because of his inability to accept social changes most Americans have long embraced. He came across as an idealogue because of his propensity to theorize about the law with little regard for the practical effects of his views on the civil and individual liberties of ordinary citizens.

Speculation about Bork's views is not disinformation. It is the legitimate function of the confirmation process, the only weigh stop for accountability for judges on the nation's highest court.

The problem for staunch conservatives like Bork is they're hindered by the so-called doctrine of "original intent" — a euphemism for conservative activism on the court that would roll back much of the social progress of the past 30 years.

Fixed as he was by this rigid philosophy, Bork proved himself unable to understand what Princeton's constitutional scholar Stanley Katz called the Constitution's greatest asset — its capacity for change while holding to fundamental values.

The American people spoke up and were heard through their senators — that's democracy in action. Bork's supporters should quit trying to stall debate by calling foul where there was none.

Gary Jimenez,
Student

Wednesday, October 21, 1987

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