

Oregon Daily Emerald

Wednesday, February 7, 1990

Eugene, Oregon

Volume 91, Number 94

Inside

- Senate's CIA statement, Page 3
- YWCA request rejected, Page 4
- Walk/run event planned, Page 5
- College bowl results, Page 7



Winter hits

Students were greeted by a true sign of winter as snow fell in Eugene for the first time this season. More snow is expected throughout the state today.

Photo by Mark Ylen

BPA encouraging public input for power line plan

By Hon Walker
Emerald Associate Editor

Bonneville Power Administration representatives reassured Eugene Planning Commission members Tuesday night that more local input will be considered before plans for a 500,000-volt power line in South Eugene move any further.

"Bonneville has taken time out to assess the situation and consult with local leaders about where to go now," said Tom McKinney, Portland BPA project manager, during the meeting at City Hall.

"Bonneville is willing to do what local governments want to do," he said, adding that the BPA's final administrative decision will be made after the public contributes input as well.

The process for planning a new power line began in 1982, and BPA has been set to name one of four possible routes for the line later this year. However, residents along each proposed route have joined local policymakers in speaking out against the plan.

Those who live along the proposed routes have long been concerned about the visual effects of 130-foot towers, and now they are concerned about the health effects.

Recent studies have drawn a possible link between strong electromagnetic fields (EMFs), generated from high-voltage power lines, and a variety of health problems.

However, McKinney said, because the findings are so new and scientific opinion so mixed, BPA advocates a policy of "prudent avoidance" for persons who may be unnecessarily exposing themselves to EMFs.

In the meantime, BPA and Oregon State University are conducting further research into the effects of EMFs, he said.

"There is uncertainty in scientific communities about health effects. It is difficult to determine the extent of health effects because there are no standards to help us along," McKinney said.

In addition, before anything is built,

BPA will commit to a public review of the need for the power line and examination of alternatives to a new power corridor, he said.

"Identifying a potential corridor does not commit BPA to building anything at this time," McKinney said.

Congressman Peter DeFazio, D-Eugene, has recommended that the BPA demonstrate with more certainty that a need for a high-voltage power line indeed exists, McKinney said.

"We've been in projects where we're almost ready to construct, and we've dropped the project," because the need

'There is uncertainty in scientific communities about health effects. It is difficult to determine the extent of health effects because there are no standards to help us along.'

— Tom McKinney

for a greater amount of power was not as high as had been anticipated, he said.

Local energy conservation could postpone or even eliminate the need for a larger power line, said Lou Driessen, BPA civil engineer.

He added that other routes are possible besides the four under consideration.

"If someone wants to come up with an entirely different route, we will look at that," Driessen said.

Eugene Planning Commissioner James Ellison said public input was vital to the process of deciding if and where a power line is needed. "We need to keep listening to what folks say."

Testimony will be heard at two upcoming public hearings, Feb. 21 and 28.

Supreme Court hears cases at law school visit

By Peter Cogswell
Emerald Reporter

The Oregon Supreme Court paid its annual visit to the University Law Center Tuesday, hearing four cases.

The visit was part of the law school's legal writing and research program.

The first case of the morning session involved the state asking the court to overturn a 1987 ruling that limits the power of the police to conduct certain kinds of searches.

The second morning case dealt with equal treatment under the law when prosecutors cut a deal with one defendant and not another, said David Schuman, a University law professor.

The first case of the afternoon

session dealt with a question of whether a trial court went too far in padding from the jury the fact that a defendant failed a lie detector test.

The second case of the afternoon session was a workers' compensation involving the admissibility of medical reports after the employer's attorney has had contact with the claimants physician.

The hearing was the first for newly appointed Supreme Court Justice Richard Unis, who was named to replace Justice Hans Linde, who retired. Unis was appointed to the court Jan. 30 by Gov. Neil Goldschmidt.

Three of the justices who attended law school at the University were Chief Justice Edwin J. Peterson, Justice Edward

Fadeley and Justice Unis.

Visiting the University has special meaning for Fadeley, who considered the opportunity to attend a publicly financed law school one of the biggest events in his life.

"I recognize how big an event it was to attend law school and therefore it is always good to come back," said Fadeley, who was a law school honor student when he graduated in 1957.

The visit by the Court gives law students some idea that what they are learning has the opportunity to help them in their law careers, Fadeley said.

The Court is taking the arguments for these cases under advisement, and will render a decision on them within the next year.



Photo by Andre Kanier

Oregon Supreme Court Justice Edwin J. Peterson presides over a case at the University Law School Tuesday.