

- Greek rebuttal, Page 3
- Animal rights rally, Page 4
- IFC budget hearings, Page 6
- Tennis finale, Page 8

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Local mountain bikers aim for compromise with city, county

By Hon Walker
Emerald Associate Editor

Mountain biking in county and city parks is becoming an endangered activity, and bikers are seeking a compromise with park officials and with other users of the park trails.

About a month ago, signs were posted prohibiting bikes from the Mount Pisgah trail at the Buford Recreation Area, said Bill Chapman, Lane County Parks director. However, the trail has always been off-limits to cyclists, he said.

The trail is used by hikers and horseback riders, Chapman said, and the county parks department lacks the resources that would be necessary to maintain the trail. In the past 10 years, maintenance resources have been cut back by two-thirds, he said.

"We're really concerned about physical damage to the trails, seeing as we have no way to repair it," he said.

The Buford area is the county-owned park closest to Eugene. County trails are not heavily used by cyclists, Chapman said, and damage is generally not a problem.

However, he said, unless resources increase or a master plan is developed to accommodate bike use, the trails will remain off-limits to bikes. Riding on a county trail is a violation of county ordinance and could carry a fine of up to \$500.

University cycling club member Anthony Harding said he prefers the term "bike-hiking" to refer to the use of park trails for their physical challenge and the scenic value.

He would like to see an agreement among bikers, hikers and horseback riders so that all can

use local park trails.

"We enjoy the facilities just as much as they do," he said.

However, many hikers and horseback riders do not appreciate being startled by a person on a mountain bike, Harding said. He said he hopes that communication among the groups can achieve a compromise for use of the trails.

"If we're all going to be using the trails, we (bikers) are going to have to be considerate of others," he said.

One way this can be done is for bikers to use bells or other warnings to alert other users of trails. In addition, discretion should always be used on the trails, especially when going downhill, he said.

The few bikers who have misused the trails have given a bad reputation to the rest who enjoy the trails responsibly, he said.

"All the mountain bikers are pretty much being discriminated against," he said.

John Etter, principal landscape architect for the city parks and recreation department, said, "There are responsible riders out there who don't want to see their chance to ride taken away from them."

"We feel the activity is a legitimate form of recreation, and we want to offer facilities for them."

However, Etter said, the department has received complaints from hikers that bikes were not staying on designated trails.

Although damage to park trails has long been a problem, he said, the possibility for damage is



Photo by Sean Poston

Local mountain bikers such as Paul Hopkins may soon find more of their favorite city and county trails closed to cyclists.

Turn to Biking, Page 6

Being gay not 'bad,' but not easy

By Denise Clifton
Emerald Associate Editor

Editor's Note: As part of Gay and Lesbian Pride Week, this is the second of two articles looking at same-sex relationships and dating. The first article appeared on Monday.

"The first couple of times I met Ed, I just didn't want to talk to him," said Tadd Tobias.

It wasn't because Tadd didn't like Ed Moreno; it was because Ed was so good-looking. Tadd was afraid he'd make a fool out of himself.

"I just tried to put that out of my mind," Tadd went on. "It was like, 'No, Tadd. He's entirely too cute. You don't have a chance in the world with him.'"

But Ed was determined to meet Tadd. He sought him out at the Willamette AIDS Council, where Tadd was then working.

"He hunted me down," Tadd said. "It was very flattering."

A few days later, Ed brought Tadd a helmet for one of his favorite pastimes — mountain-biking.

"I said, 'You brought me the helmet; we should at least go for the inaugural ride together,'" Tadd said. "So, he jumped on the back of my motorcycle and I got on the front, and we started to ride off into the sunset."

This was the romantic beginning of a nine-month relationship for Tadd and Ed.

"When you do find a special man who really does connect with you, you begin to feel these needs that for years and years have not been met or have been oppressed," Tadd said.

"It's very special," Ed agreed. "In many ways we'll be coupled together forever."

However, Tadd and Ed have recently begun the process of going their separate ways.

"We started growing apart," Tadd said. "Neither one of us were meeting either's needs."

"But we're not really totally uncoupled yet," Ed added. "We're kind of just resolving what we've



Photo by Mark Vlen

Tadd Tobias says his willingness to be openly gay has brought risks as well as benefits.

been through, what we want and where we should go from here."

Male bonding

As an openly gay couple in Eugene, they had to deal with many issues and worries that straight couples don't have to face.

"I can think of times like being at the movies with Tadd and he was wanting to put his arm around me," Ed said. "But I was worried because then the people behind us would know we were gay."

"It was tough because although I loved this man, I didn't want him to touch me," Ed added. "So, then when I did feel good enough to kiss him in a public place, I had an incredible sense of the power that gave me."

Society's condemnation of male public displays of affection is a huge oppression against straight men as well as gay men, Tadd said.

Turn to Couple, Page 12

IFC member accused of conflict of interest

By Joe Kidd
Emerald Reporter

The ASUO Constitution Court was asked Tuesday to decide if an IFC member created a conflict of interest when he voted to approve the budget of a group he helps lead.

Student Thomas Mann filed a complaint with the court, claiming Armando Morales violated the ASUO constitution April 12 when he argued in favor of and approved next year's budget for the United States Student Association.

Mann, who is also publisher of the *Oregon Commentator*, claims a conflict of interest arose because Morales is vice chairman of USSA Pacific Northwest region and a national board member of the student lobbying organization.

ASUO constitutional amendment 4.6 prohibits IFC members from voting on a budget when that member holds a paid position in any ASUO or EMU program.

In a written complaint submitted to the court, Mann argued that although Morales is not a paid member of USSA, Morales travels to USSA activities around the country on USSA funds, and "that an office-holding member of a group has a vested interest to see that his group is funded at a proper level."

Morales flatly denied that his actions created a conflict of interest or tainted the budget process. "While I am a member of many groups ... I am a paid member of none," Morales wrote in a prepared statement to the court.

"It is inferred that because I am an officeholder within the USSA that I lord over the money and actions of the membership and that I seek to enhance this power by increasing the resources at my disposal," he said in the statement.

"Such a draconian, elitist vision of the role of officer is beyond my experience or imagination."

But if the court finds a conflict of interest did oc-

Turn to Hearing, Page 6