

# Lecture focuses on censorship

## Bob Evans quit editorship after brush with coercion

By Pat Malach  
Emerald Reporter

Robert Evans, a newspaper editor in Northeast Oregon, spoke at the University Thursday about the issues of censorship and coercion within the field of journalism.

"When I was called up to do this I thought, 'What, me, come down here and speak to you about my experience?' because it's not like I'm anything great, special or have a unique story to tell, it's just that I got thrown into a situation and I responded in a certain way and that became the story," Evans said.

Evans is currently the publisher and editor of *The Joseph Eagle*. He resigned from his position as editor of the *Wallowa County Chieftain* after his editorial writing responsibilities were taken away by the publisher.

The publisher of the *Chieftain* asked Evans to remove a story and editorial from the paper about a pro-timber industry group that had misused a county bulk-mailing rate to send a political letter.

Evans refused and the publisher left the decision up to him.

He said that up until that time the publisher had shown no interest in controlling the editorial content or direction of the paper.

The next Monday Evans was called into the publisher's office.

"I went back there and asked him if he was going to call me on the carpet for what I had written," Evans said. "He said 'I'm not calling you on the carpet.' He completely avoided it and went into (saying) that what he had decided was that the paper had been missing the deadline for the last couple of weeks. He said he decided that he had been out of journalism

long enough and he wasn't burnt out anymore and as of that week he was relieving me of my editorial page duties. He said he was taking over the editorial page because it was one of the pages that was usually late."

Evans said he later learned that the county judge that had been mentioned in the editorial and story because she had influenced a postal clerk to allow the bulk rate use and because she had told Evans that "If I went to bat on this it would have adverse effects on the paper," phoned the publisher and asked him to "check out" Evans' editorials.

Evans said he turned in his letter of resignation that same day.

Rather than moving on to another job in a different area, Evans, with the help of a bank loan, started *The Joseph Eagle*, a weekly paper with a circulation of 1,200.

Evans said there has been some pressure from the timber industry to convince advertisers to boycott his paper. He said one of his advertisers had been approached and told that people were "disappointed" that the business had advertised with him.

Evans said he feels airing controversies is healthy for a community. He said if you open up the debates and "let the people have at it" you are going to have the best decision.

"I started doing that and it made some people on main street mad because it challenged their position," Evans said.

### Correction

In Thursday's Et Als column, it was mistakenly reported that the Recreation and Intramurals game of the week would be shown today.

Also Thursday, William Moore's commentary should have read, "Believing as we do that homosexual lifestyles are inherently destruc-

tive to people, it would be wrong for us not to speak against them. Human lives of great value are at stake. We sincerely invite interaction from people willing to avoid scolding and name calling, and to discuss ideas and issues."

The *Emerald* regrets any confusion or problems these error may have caused.

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ALL OTHER STUDENTS:	May 25th	9AM to 3PM
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