

UNIVERSITY

Group uses vacations to help poor

By Carrie Dennett
Emerald Reporter

This year, some Oregon college students have traded in the traditional vacations of sleeping until noon and catching up on the latest movies for one that makes a difference in their lives and the lives of others — helping Portland's poor.

"It's a great way to spend your vacation ... It's not an academic experience, so you really are getting a vacation," said Scott Hamilton, co-project manager of the Alternative Break Coalition.

The project is now opening its doors to the University. Already, students from Oregon State, Portland State, Willamette, Lewis and Clark, Reed, Warner Pacific and the Multnomah School of the Bible have committed part of their vacations to this project.

ABC's purpose is to provide college students with the opportunity to learn about poverty by experiencing it in North and Northeast Portland, and to provide volunteer assistance to social service/justice organizations in that area.

Hamilton said that while the experience is not academic itself, it allows students to take what they learned in school and apply it to the real world. It also gives them an opportunity to learn about themselves.

During the winter break, 37 volunteers put in a total of 1600 hours at 17 different agencies.

At Lewis and Clark's alternative break over Thanksgiving, 11 volunteers cooked a turkey dinner for three families. "When dinner was ready, everyone went to the table," Hamilton said. "There was kind of a pause, and we didn't know if we should say grace or not, because the families came from different backgrounds.

"Then, one little girl said 'why don't we all say what we're thankful for.' So we went around the table, and everyone said why they were thankful. It was so obvious what we should have done, yet no one said it except for that little girl."

ABC is hoping to get 60 volunteers for the next alternative break, which will run from Mar. 16 to Mar. 23. The cost is \$45 per person, which covers

food, housing and transportation in Portland.

An informational meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 19 at 7 p.m. in Cedar Room D. For more information, students can contact Hamilton or Koth in Portland at 287-6996 or Nave Schildbach of OSPIRG's Hunger and Homelessness group at 346-4377.

The alternative break idea began when Hamilton and the projects founder, Kent Koth, were students at Grinnell College in Iowa. Koth got the idea to bring the project to Portland after spending the summer of 1989 working as an intern at the Sunnyside United Methodist Family shelter.

Koth was able to coordinate the project in Portland through a grant from the New England Electric Company in Westborough, Mass., which allows recent college graduates to pursue public service projects.

Future fundraising will be made easier by ABC's inclusion in Portland's Center for Urban Education, which gives them non-profit status.

Nicaraguan poet to visit University

By Daralyn Trappe
Emerald Reporter

Ernesto Cardenal, a well-known poet and priest in Nicaragua, will make his first visit to the University on Sunday for a poetry reading at 7:30 p.m. in the EMU Ballroom.

"He writes the kind of poetry that speaks to you about what you see in the world," said University student Carlos Castro, a native Nicaraguan and member of the Latin American Support Committee.

Cardenal touches on all subjects in his writings, Castro said.

"He has so many aspects, as a poet, a revolutionary and a priest," he said. "He also writes historical poems. He can tell you a whole book of history in a poem."

In 1965, Cardenal founded the Solentiname community in Nicaragua, where he developed cooperatives and created a school of primitive painting, along with establishing church services.

In 1977, however, the community was destroyed by Somoza's Guardsmen.

During the Sandinista rule of the 1980's, Cardenal was the Minister of Culture.

Cardenal is currently working with the non-profit organization La Casa de las Tres Mundos (The House of Three Worlds), a group which promotes painting and poetry in Nicaragua. The name refers to First, Second and Third World nations, Castro said.

"His poetry crosses such things as class and color," Castro said.

All proceeds from the event, sponsored by LASC and The Council for Human Rights in Latin American, will go to support La Casa de las Tres Mundos. General admission tickets are \$6 in advance and \$7 at the door. For students and seniors, tickets are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door.

Tickets are available at the EMU Main Desk, Hult Center, Hungry Head Bookstore and Balladeer Music.

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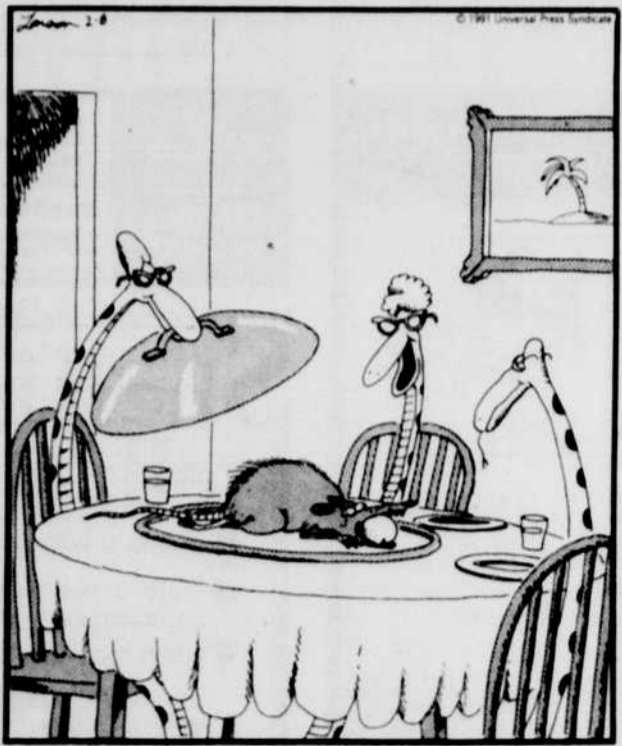
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