

## Application fee ban deserves approval

All rental and application fees levied on prospective tenants by property management companies would be prohibited under a bill introduced in the state House two weeks ago by Rep. Bill Dwyer, D-Springfield.

This bill should have the full support of every college student at the University who has spent time looking for a place to live. Most students and working people cannot afford the application fees. And when they are non-refundable, it leaves PMCs open to charges of playing clients against each other for fee money.

It's a landlord's market in Eugene. Although most PMCs claim they don't really profit from application fees, one spokesperson did admit that her company was in "business to make money."

A lot of PMCs do their credit checks through the same credit company, so it is possible a client might pay a fee three different times just to have a credit check at one credit service agency. At an average of about \$20 an application fee, this can add up quickly.

Most PMCs are reluctant to disclose costs or profits incurred through rental fees and credit checks. They are obviously making money from fees. But until reporters are allowed to look at company books, there is only speculation on how much.

Besides the application fees, the lack of affordable housing in Eugene benefits property owners. It allows them to be choosy. Clients on the credit borderline can be denied as a bad risk simply because there are so many in line. A lot of people are labeled as credit risks because of one bad experience, sometimes in disputes with landlords.

Application fees are discriminatory because poor people and low-wage earners can barely afford to pay rent. Applying at three or four PMCs uses money necessary for rent itself.

Everyone who has rented, or will be renting, should support Dwyer's HB2368. Call your representative and voice your support to ban application fees.

## Scrap video arraignments in Lane County's courts

People accused of crimes in Lane County may be appearing on television from now on. They won't be on any of the local affiliates or cable, but they will be seen on video screens in Lane County Circuit Court.

In a new system being used by the court, defendants are arraigned by video camera while they remain at the jail. The video arraignment system was designed to help stretch the budget and prevent escapes. The county favors it because it will save money used to transport defendants to the courthouse every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and minimize the chances for escape.

But the system faces opposition from defense lawyers who say it dehumanizes the arraignment procedures. This opposition is well-founded. The Constitution says the accused have the right to face their accusers. While this is only an arraignment procedure and not a trial, people have the right to actually be present throughout their own court proceedings.

Obviously an image of someone on a screen is not as personable as the real thing. Judges and prosecutors should have to face the real person whose fate they are deciding. To dehumanize people in such important proceedings is certainly harmful to their rights as citizens and as human beings.

It is also questionable that defendants will get full use of their defense attorneys if they are not even in the same room with them.

One district judge has said the court system needs to move into the 21st century. But if that means trampling the rights of the accused, and turning the system into an invisible force by removing defendants from it, then the 21st century will have to wait.



## LETTERS

### Failing system

I fail to see why education and health and human services programs were selected for severe cuts, not only here but at other major universities in Oregon. Furthermore, I wonder why the possibility of eliminating or shrinking less important programs like the business schools was virtually ignored.

The United States is failing to educate children, failing to properly care for the elderly and failing to come anywhere close to dealing with poverty and homelessness.

Meanwhile our capitalistic system directs our resources toward making money. It allows us to quietly sweep these "domestic problems" under the rug. Certainly it must be more important that we provide shelter for a homeless family rather than feed the economy by protecting the business interests of oil companies and weapons manufacturers.

Universities do not need to produce young adults whose contributions to bettering society will be questionable at most. The country does not need more people searching for profit at any cost. What we do need are people willing to spend their time teaching and improving the conditions of others.

In making these cuts, Oregon's university administrators have illustrated the disturbing priorities of many people in this country.

Koalani Roberts  
Journalism

### Bowl update

It's the end of the third quarter of the Oil Bowl and the score is tied; USA 27 and Iraq 27. The sands have reshaped the desert. The United States has placed in their special team, the Desert Storm Offense, and have scored three touchdowns this quarter, throwing long bomb after long bomb. I've never seen anything this persistent. Throwing this well beats Elway or Montana any day.

But not all of the Iraq attack was lost. Scud "The Babe" Bomber has begun throwing short passes to any arbitrary players from ambiguous points

behind the line, giving Iraq another touchdown. The United States countered this with their Patriot position of the defense.

While talking to both coaches earlier, Bush stated that this would be a "quick sweep." But this hasn't appeared so because the players on the sidelines have seen the College Bowl's end and the Super Bowl wrap-up. The players are also getting confused; there are Iraqis stuck in the United States' locker room and vice versa.

Coach Hussein asserted that he will not back down in this game however long it takes. So you may see retirement centers in this stadium in a while. Remember the Saigon Bowl? That was a long game. I can't remember who won. Or was it called off due to extensive overtimes? Isn't the limit five years?

With the United States having the momentum, and Iraq having the ball, the fourth quarter of a tie game begins.

David Mattison  
PPPM

### Smoke 'em

George Bush says Operation Desert Storm won't be another Vietnam: "This time we fight to win."

Does Bush seriously think that is all we learned from Vietnam? Mistakes made in Vietnam being repeated in the Persian Gulf are: A refusal to believe American power is limited, that a United States over-reliance on technological superiority is misleading and often unsuccessful, and that by underestimating the enemy we believe victory is always imminent.

Bush draws lessons from Vietnam while fundamentally misunderstanding what happened in the first place. The fact remains that Vietnam was an unwinnable war. It had nothing to do with restrictions on the military, protests at home or media coverage. How can Bush say the military fought with one hand tied behind its back when U.S. bombs dropped on Southeast Asia exceeded the tonnage used in World War II? In addition to carpet bombing Vietnam with B-52s, the United States used a

whole panorama of high-tech weapons ranging from napalm and Agent Orange to fuel-air bombs, all of which were unsuccessful. United States involvement left 1.5 million Vietnamese civilians and military dead and 58,000 U.S. dead — plus 300,000 wounded. It's unreasonable to believe an outside military force can bring peace and stability to the Middle East any more than it could to Southeast Asia 25 years ago.

Bush's claims of stopping naked aggression are a smoke screen to protect U.S. oil interests. This is another lesson from Vietnam: Never believe everything our leaders say.

Douglas R. Hightower  
Journalism

### Crude date

I would like to thank the party or parties involved for the crude "Dream date" insert placed in a few copies of the Feb. 1991 *Oregon Commentator*. I fail to understand why you choose to espouse the views of the College Republicans via the *Oregon Commentator* in consideration of the fact that two organizations are not affiliated with each other. In addition, you show little respect for women or the situation occurring in the Persian Gulf by poking vulgar fun at both.

I am not a member of either the College Republicans or the *Oregon Commentator*, but in your myopic attack you have successfully alienated anyone who may have shared your viewpoint. There are numerous, appropriate forums in which to express your view. You, however, decided on a poor choice.

Clark Smith  
Student

### Sticky

Appreciating what sticklers you journalists are for accuracy, shouldn't you start publishing daily or strike your middle name?

Charles O. Porter  
Eugene