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Fire hazard shuts Skinner, Spencer Butte parks

By Tammy Batey
Emerald Reporter

Severe fire hazard has led to the closure of Skinner and Spencer Butte parks and the Ridgeline Trail until significant rainfall occurs, city officials announced Friday afternoon.

Fire and parks officials jointly decided to close the areas Thursday, said Superintendent of Park Services Doug Post.

"We usually get several calls

Gate closure to continue until autumn showers begin

from neighbors saying, 'It's awfully dry. You better consider closing (the parks),' " Post said. "So the Fire Marshall apparently talked it over with his staff and with us and we concluded to caution on the safe side. It was time to close them."

For the last four to five years, the parks have been closed because of fire hazards, usually in

mid or late August, Post said. But this year, an extremely dry fall has led to the later closure.

When the parks will reopen "depends on Mother Nature," said Capt. Tim Birr, Eugene police spokesman.

"Basically, they'll be closed indefinitely until we see some weather change, obviously preferably rain," Post said.

"We'll open them as soon as possible, but rain will be the determining factor."

The closure means the gates to Skinner and Spencer Butte parks will be locked, and signs at the trail heads to the two parks and to the Ridgeline Trail will warn people of the temporary closure. There won't be any patrols or deputies in the

area, Post said.

"We're hoping people will understand why we've done it and will stay out of the area," Post said.

Firefighters were working to control a "fairly big grass fire" at 18th and Bertelsen Friday afternoon, Birr said. Post said there is no threat of other fires spreading to the closed parks but "we want to make sure that doesn't happen," he said.



Photo by Christopher Blair

Jerry Marshall circles Autzen Stadium Saturday before Oregon's game against New Mexico State, towing an advertising banner in his 1941 vintage Stearman biplane.

Pilot grabs crowd attention in banner-towing biplane

By Pat Malach
Emerald Managing Editor

You could say that Jerry Marshall has the best seat in Autzen Stadium.

The only problem is that Marshall's seat isn't exactly in the stadium, or even the skybox — it's 1,400 feet above in his red and white 1941 vintage biplane.

On clear and sunny fall Saturdays, Marshall can be seen circling high above the stadium, towing a banner advertising anything from local radio stations to roofing companies.

The 35-year-old owner of Cottage Grove Aviation has been towing the advertising banners for a little more than a year. Marshall said he started the business to "do whatever it takes" to supplement the income brought in by the flight instructions, aircraft rentals and scenic flights also offered at the small airport 20 miles south of Eugene.

Marshall said the banners are an effective ad vehicle because of the vehicle he uses to tow them.

"One thing that's nice about this airplane is that everybody will look at an open-cockpit biplane," Marshall said. "If I want people to look up, by pushing in the throttle a little bit and making a power change, since it has a fairly large engine, people notice that. It's an attention-getter."

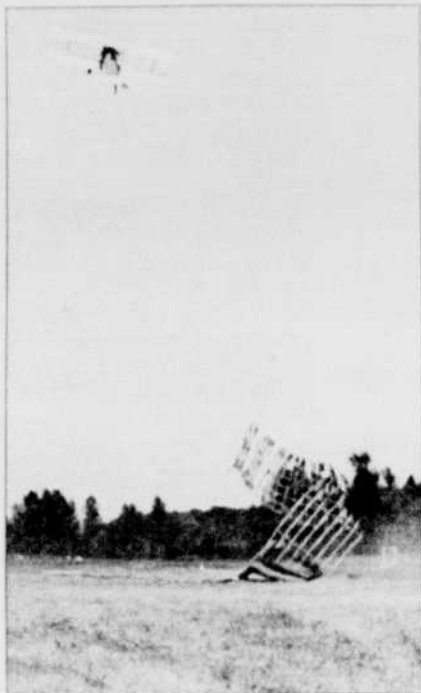


Photo by Christopher Blair

Marshall steers skyward in the steep climb necessary to peel a banner off the side of the runway and prevent tangling.

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Grad student maps quake probability

By Colleen Pohlig
Emerald Reporter

Economics class. Taking full advantage of the lights dimmed for the projector and the fact that there are more than 400 people in the class, you settle in for your daily nap.

You've just dozed off and you are floating somewhere between the twitching stage and peaceful dreamland when suddenly you are cruelly awakened by a disconcerting rolling sensation beneath your feet. Books fall to the floor, equilibrium is out of the question, everyone panics.

A bad dream? Unfortunately, no. You are experiencing an earthquake — magnitude somewhere between 7 and 9 on the Richter scale. Inconceivable in Oregon? Not anymore. Geologists are no longer wondering if Oregon is going to have an earthquake, but when, where — and how big.

To begin answering these questions, a research group at the University has created detailed maps of the state, showing each region's chance of experiencing a major earthquake.

The maps, designed primarily by graduate student Silvio Pezzopane, also show the region's chance of experiencing tremors from major quakes, how soon the quakes might come and how much risk they may pose to people and structures.

"This study doesn't tell us, other than probability, when (the earthquake) will occur," Pezzopane said. "It tells us, if it happens, where the strong ground motion will occur."

By creating these maps, Pezzopane said he hopes to awaken the public to the probability of an earthquake occurring close to home.

"(I want to) make us aware of the environment and the Earth," Pezzopane said. "When the Earth moves, there is a potential hazard for us and I want to recognize it."

Geology Prof. Ray Weldon, who also contributed to this project, said in general, Oregonians are not pre-

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Not again!

Geology Prof. Harve Waff believed an impromptu protest at Johnson Hall on Wednesday to complain about construction noise would be enough to keep the sounds at bay. He was wrong. On Friday, the noise resumed, and Waff and his students made an encore appearance at the administration building.

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Fight for the tie

The Oregon men's club sports soccer team scored a goal in the last five minutes of Friday's match against Willamette University, resulting in a 1-1 final score. The tie makes the team's record 1-2-2.



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