

Athletics' survival good for academia

Well, it's been delayed. You know — the vote on how to fund the ominous \$6.3 million athletic deficit served up by Oregon's state university system.

The pretty-please request for \$3.5 million from Oregon State Board of Higher Education funds to help ease the deficit load has gone unanswered, again.

The board also decided to delay the vote in September; it voted last Friday to wait until a task force designed to evaluate the funding problem reports back in April. A June vote is set to follow.

If the board is thinking about handing over the bucks to athletics, it's a good thing they decided to wait; they'd make a lot of enemies considering the shape Oregon university academic programs are in due to recent Measure 5- induced cutbacks. Better to wait for the pain to subside before bringing in the salt wagon.

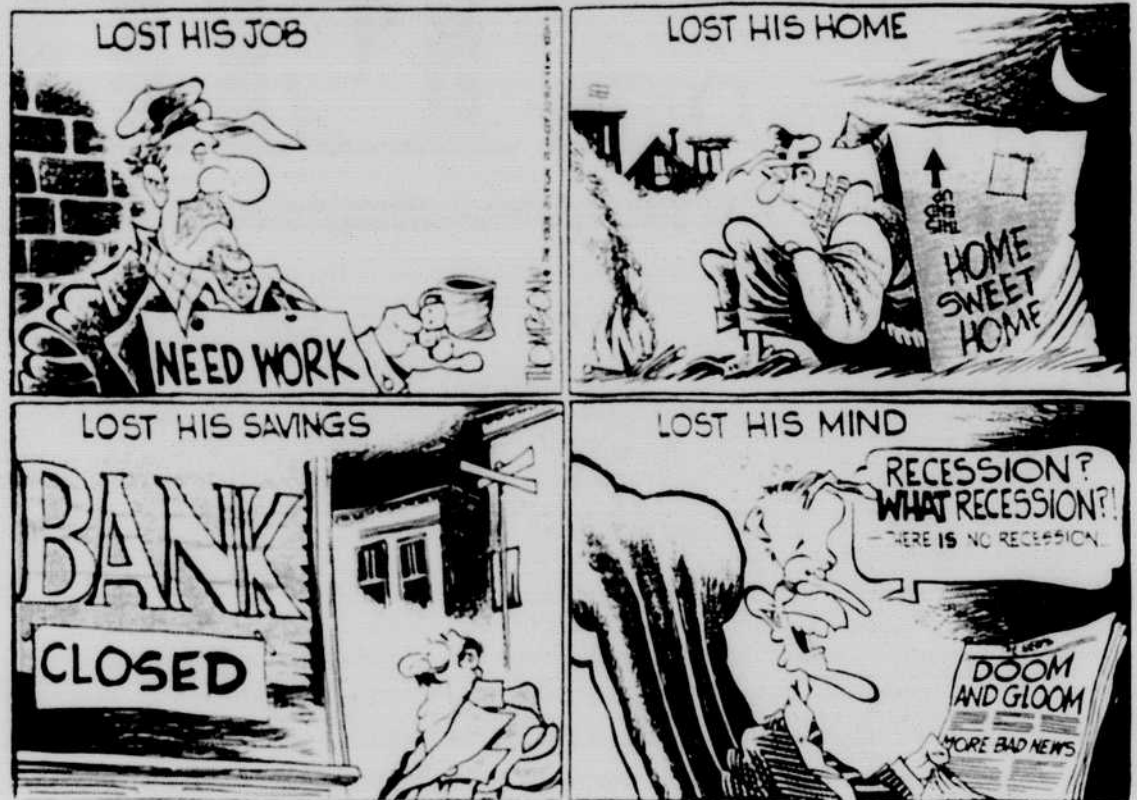
The board's task force offers a ray of hope though; its focus is to look at other ways to fund the debt, which is a necessary evil because a part of the University's well-being coincides with the athletic department's. Pac-10 membership brings in a lot of little extras we otherwise wouldn't have, ranging from national institutional recognition to research grants. The benefits of athletics extend beyond the limits of the department itself.

The problem comes in when money is taken away from academic programs to feed athletics. Of course, this makes people crazy, as it should. After all, a university's ultimate purpose is education, not sports. These same people, however, must realize those "silly" ball games do indeed help fund book learning at this school.

A one-time bailout may be the best answer at this point, taking the heat off until an acceptable permanent solution can be worked out. But such a solution should take only the minimum amount of funds needed from academic departments, not letting their money pools run dry.

Athletics must now learn to live by the same slim-pickin's rule everyone else now adheres to, and university academia must open its sweaty fist a bit to share with athletics, because the benefits come back around in the end.

VICTIMS OF THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN:



LETTERS

No comparison

Listen up, Jason Lund. In response to your assertion that Project Saferide is discriminatory in its hiring practices (ODE, Nov. 7) — get a clue.

You draw a comparison between the ROTC's policy of refusing to hire gay and lesbians, and Project Saferide's policy of hiring only women drivers. You start by claiming to understand that a woman might feel "uncomfortable" receiving a safe ride home from a man. You take this thought one step further and suggest that people within the ROTC may be "uncomfortable" in the presence of homosexuals.

First and foremost, while a woman may feel "uncomfortable" in the presence of a man in what should be a safe situation, remember she is often not simply "uncomfortable," but scared. Her fear is based on the valid concern that she may be attacked at any time without warning.

So does it follow, Lund, that those within ROTC are afraid of being attacked by homosexuals? Ridiculous.

All this from a woman who is afraid to walk alone at night and who thinks being uncomfortable working with homosexuals is stupid.

Rebekah Ledwith
Student

Sad day

What kind of student leaders are we electing these days?

ASUO Vice President Jo Sonja Watson's shoplifting debacle is an embarrassment to the entire University student body. It is somewhat understandable

if Watson's criminal activities included stealing valuable commodities like food if she was poor, but to steal post-it note pads and a troll doll from a cooperative non-profit corporation that services members of the University community is extremely irresponsible — especially when each time someone like Watson strikes, bookstore prices are obviously affected to make up for the loss.

Watson went on to ignore the legal process and failed to appear in court and delayed paying her fines. I hope Watson's record follows her far into the future so she can have a chance to learn that not reporting gross mistakes like shoplifting is not acceptable in a law-abiding society. It is a sad day when convicted shoplifters like Watson are in control of \$4.5 million in student incidental fees and ASUO accounts. Is embezzling the next step?

This time, Watson, you can't win the contest by finding 100 different ways to define diversity.

Richard Horswell
Student

Hope

It is important to keep in mind that while everyone is at risk for human immunodeficiency virus infection and subsequent acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, some people are at higher risk than others.

Of the total (192,406) number of AIDS cases thus far reported in the United States to the Centers for Disease Control as of September, 5 percent (10,520) were reported from strictly heterosexual contact. These statistics constantly change because

epidemiologists chase a moving target.

Poverty and political neglect have more to do with AIDS increasing than individual behavior, per se. For example, the rate of AIDS among African-Americans is three times higher than among whites. Black women face 10 to 15 times the risk compared to white women, and black children account for 50 percent of AIDS cases.

Moreover, blacks have a shorter life expectancy, a higher infant mortality rate and are 50 percent more likely to die of a heart attack than whites. Thirty-three percent of blacks live below the poverty level compared to 12 percent of whites.

Public health education remains the most effective means for AIDS risk reduction, but reportedly only 15 percent of total AIDS funding goes to prevention.

Many health educators are understandably using Magic Johnson's revelation of HIV infection from unsafe sex to demonstrate that "anyone can get AIDS." My hope is that Johnson's situation will also get others to care about those who are at much higher risk for the disease than themselves.

Clarence Spigner,
Assistant Professor
School and Community Health

Rain

To rain chastisements down upon the heads of homosexuals is neither bigotry nor hatred. It is morality and a genuine concern for the welfare of other people.

Matthew K. Kokkeler
History/Political Science

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