

KRMA to KWVA, saga nearly over

No, could it really be true? After all this time? Is the University going to get a radio station? Probably.

But for University students who have waited a couple of years and seen \$60,000 poured into a program that hasn't (yet) borne fruit, "probably" is a bit of a downer. "Probably" could mean anything.

In all fairness, KWVA-FM, as the campus station is now called, does look as if it has everything in order. The FCC has approved the ownership change which transferred the license from the University Foundation to students. The equipment and studio are ready.

The only remaining obstacle: getting FCC approval to put a broadcast tower on top of Prince Lucien Campbell Hall. That process is supposed to be over soon, but with all the past FCC delays, stallings, postponements and procrastination, radio station organizers are a bit jaded—they won't say exactly when KWVA will hit the airwaves.

Let's hope it's soon.

KWVA has received a lot of student money over the past two years, and those same students are getting a little restless. In addition to the \$60,000 the radio station has already received, KWVA got a \$49,182 allocation from the IFC for next year.

For anybody not keeping a total, that's nearly \$110,000, and the radio station has yet to spin a record.

Getting the license looks as if it's a long and complicated process, but two years seems an inordinate amount of time. Ordinarily, the smartest option might be to scrap the whole deal and cut losses. However, the radio station is so close to opening (supposedly), and the money allotted is so much, the choice here is to suck it up and wait for KWVA to finally show up.

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Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3180, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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OPINION

Guilty or not, Peltier deserves retrial



Leonard Peltier. Ring a bell? He should; he's now serving two consecutive life terms in an American prison for a crime no one can prove he committed. The bulk of the evidence used to convict him in 1977 has since been repudiated, yet he has been denied every appeal for a retrial since then.

Peltier, a Chippewa-Lakota Indian activist, is the subject of two documentaries and one forthcoming Oliver Stone film depicting his 17-year-long legal battle; of Amnesty International's recent call for a Commission of Inquiry into the role of the FBI in political trials; and of a Petition for Executive Clemency demanding Peltier's freedom, led by Sen. Daniel Inouye.

A "Friends of the Court" brief has also been issued, asking for a new trial for Peltier. The document, so far ignored, was signed by 55 members of Congress, the National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, California Attorneys for Criminal Justice, and 78 world religious leaders.

So, what's all the hubub about anyway?

Peltier is being held for the shooting deaths of two FBI agents during a June 1975 shoot-out on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, S.D. Trouble is, the evidence convicting Peltier has since been found to be fabricated, perjured, and/or coerced by the FBI.

"There is absolutely no evi-

dence to keep him there," said Lisa Faruolo, office manager and paralegal for the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee in Lawrence, Kan. Yet he remains in jail.

Peltier was involved with the American Indian Movement's 1973-75 South Dakota protest against various human rights and treaty violations, including the signing away of resource-rich reservation land without the Lakota people's knowledge and consent; abuses suffered by a reservation-policing "goon squad"; and continued ignorance of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, which originally guaranteed the Sioux nearly 50 million acres of traditional homeland in Nebraska, North and South Dakota, Montana and Wyoming.

AIM members peacefully occupied Wounded Knee, S.D., for 71 days in 1973, leaving after government representatives agreed to conduct congressional investigations of their accusations. The investigations never happened, but an increase in "mysterious" reservation deaths did. Between 1973 and 1976, the yearly murder rate rose to nearly 170 per 100,000—the highest in the country and more than eight times the 1974 Detroit murder rate.

Coincidence? Maybe. One must take into account, however, the testimonies of those living on the reservation. After the occupation, it was not uncommon for the "goon squad," Bureau of Indian Affairs police, and/or FBI agents to keep the residents in check via unqualified beatings, ransacking and destruction of property.

To deal with the worsening situation, the Traditional Coun-

cil of Chiefs of the Oglala Sioux Tribe asked AIM members to come to Pine Ridge in early 1975 for protection. The move, no doubt threatening to the U.S. government because AIM's influence and strength had grown significantly, prompted tensions to rise.

Between April and June 1975, the FBI prepared itself for a confrontation via actions like a study of its "paramilitary operations readiness" in Indian country, and a build-up of FBI personnel in and around the reservation, including SWAT trained agents.

Ironically, the only thing the government was fighting was a group of people trying to keep rights that were justifiably theirs in the first place. Just as much, if not more, manpower and energy was expended denying these people their rights instead of obliging them with the earlier promise of congressional investigations. Another agreement broken.

In reaction to the building tension, a firefight, complete with SWAT teams firing automatic and semi-automatic weapons, tear gas, high explosives and fixed-wing aircraft, ensued June 26, 1975, resulting in the shooting of two FBI agents and one Lakota man. Peltier now carries the load of the agents' deaths; the Lakota man's death was never investigated.

Peltier was sentenced June 1, 1977, his prosecution secured by "witnesses" like Myrtle Poor Bear. Poor Bear, the only alleged eyewitness, signed two affidavits stating she was

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