

## Trojan's closure gives hope for energy future

When Portland General Electric Co. announced on Jan. 5 that it was closing its Trojan nuclear power plant, the definition of hypocrisy was rewritten.

Nearly two months to the day of the announcement, PGE convinced voters to defeat two ballot measures that would have closed the plant on either Jan. 2 or March 2. PGE spent \$5 million to defeat the two measures, and offered its own alternative that would have closed the plant by 1996.

Six days after the election, the plant shut down and has not been restarted since.

PGE says the closure was an economic decision. The plant had become too expensive to continue operating, said PGE chairman Ken Harrison. Harrison says closing Trojan will save \$40 million to \$50 million. The cost of decommissioning is \$400 million to \$500 million.

One of the driving questions in this case is "why now?" What does PGE know now that it didn't know two months ago?

To the people of Rainier, whose economic lifeblood was the Trojan plant, the sudden closure comes as something of a near-fatal blow. At least 700 people in the town of 1,700 will lose their jobs by the end of the year. In November, many of these workers expected to have three years to look for new work.

PGE could have better used the \$5 million spent fighting the closure initiatives to provide job retraining and relocation assistance to the soon to be unemployed workers.

Locally, the closure could result in a short-term increase in electric rates. The Eugene Water and Electric Board, at one time a 30-percent owner of Trojan, has already begun looking into building new power plants locally, including a geothermal well and a wind farm.

EWEB is also discussing selling power to PGE until replacement power for Trojan can be found. PGE also intends on expanding into alternative power plants, including wind and geothermal, but will generate most of its replacement power using natural gas.

Whatever the future, Oregonians can at least put the nuclear power controversy to rest. Oregon law prohibits the operation of any nuclear power plant except Trojan. Now, Oregon's challenge will be to find alternative sources of power without further damaging the environment.

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## LETTERS

### Pen pals

Our fourth-grade class is collecting information about the United States. We would like *Emerald* readers to send us postcards or letters telling us about the history and places of interest in your state. Also include any interesting personal experiences. Thank you for helping us learn about our country.

Ms. Palmer's class  
Garden Hills Grade School  
2001 Garden Hills Dr.  
Champaign, Ill. 61820

Richard Horswell  
Eugene

### Foreign gyp

I am interested to know whether the newly proposed student survey will reach out to all the Chinese Community Education students who are being subsidized by the state university system to study here at the University for a fraction of the cost.

The Community Education Program was set up to allow Eugene-Springfield residents to participate in University classes at affordable rates. Why is CEP available to foreign nationals as a way to enter the United States under quasi-student status with fees per credit hour less than regular in-state tuition? The University's student directory bears witness to the number of foreigners enrolled in CEP.

Sonja Adams  
Class of 1988

### Inaugural hype

It seems as if Bobby Lee and Karmen Fore are wasting their time and money for the trip to the inauguration of President-elect Clinton.

No wonder higher education has no friends these days — what with the vice-provost freely giving airfare for useless and so-called lobbying trips to Washington, D.C. I hope none of the Oregon legislators saw this article (*ODE*, Jan. 6), which really illustrates the fat administrators fling around for ASUO officers.

Furthermore, going to Washington on the pretense of lobbying is outrageous. These obviously very influential lobbyists from the University will definitely have an impact on sena-

tors and representatives who always have such time for visits from student body officers.

I am disappointed that the team wanting replacement revenue is traveling 3,000 miles too far to lobby for higher education. As Oregon's own legislative session begins, Lee and Fore should concentrate on the legislative body that has the power to help, and not indulge in the staged drama of inaugural hype when there is work to be done at home.

### Unaware

I was horrified as I read and contemplated Stephanie Sisson's column (*ODE*, Jan. 11).

I find it hard to believe that in this "environmentally aware era," someone is spewing drivel like this in a college newspaper. It's true, humanity is not powerful enough to destroy the earth — just everything on it.

"As the way we live shifts from an agricultural basis to mechanical, the earth must change with us." This opinion was founded on an extremely weak grip on global issues and ideologies, and it is this kind of uninformed, anthropocentric thinking that is solely responsible for the mess our generation — and those that follow — face today.

Tiffany Isham  
Fine Arts

### Sing a song

A group of Eugene folks, more than a dozen strong, added a spontaneous note to the swearing-in ceremonies for our new mayor, Ruth Bascom, and our three new City Council members, Nancy Nathanson, Kevin Hornbuckle and Barbara Keller.

We wanted to put those assembled (and you, the reader, as well) on notice that strong, positive involvement by many residents will occur vis-a-vis our new council. Active participation and, if necessary, grassroots initiatives will be on our agenda. We believe decency toward, and justice for all, is the only basis for a truly prosperous city.

What we did was — when the University chorus conclud-

ed singing "America the Beautiful" — stand and sing a new verse, written in the 1980s by Pamela Haines. It goes:

"O beautiful, for working folk, who forged the wealth we see.

In farm and mill, in home and school — unsung in history.

America! America! May race nor sex nor creed.

No more divide, but side by side, all rise united, freed."

Our demonstrative rendition was well received. We invite all to join with us in energizing the new council to go where none have gone to date, to begin to make Eugene a truly livable home for all residents. Your participation is invited.

As a start, attend the first meeting of our renewed City Council. See *The Register-Guard* for the date and time of the meeting, which is at the council chambers in City Hall, East 8th Avenue between High and Pearl streets.

Paul Prenskey  
Eugene

### Vet respect

No doubt Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday merits attention. The holiday commemorates the birth of a man whose principles are of profound importance to many college students.

I question, however, why such attention is devoted to this holiday at the University, where I saw almost no mention of Veterans Day. On Nov. 11, we honor American veterans and celebrate the armistice ending World War I. Both deserve solemn respect.

Aaron Ramsey  
English

### Goo goo

Stephanie Sisson's column (*ODE*, Jan. 11) is feel-good froth when she reassures people that "business as usual" won't wreck our ecosystem.

Currently we are going through what's called a "spasm" of species extinction. Will Sisson's goo-goo journalism bring one back to life? Her pap is just a temporary salve for the consciences of future corporate leaders among the *Emerald's* readership.

David Oaks  
Eugene

## Oregon Daily Emerald

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