

ASUO works toward student participation

Students often criticize the ASUO for a perceived lack of direction. They say administrators and legislators have the true power and student government, no matter how much it preaches, achieves few tangible results.

Well, it's true the ASUO has limited influence. It doesn't make federal decisions. It doesn't pass state legislation. It can't even change local laws. But it can be an effective lobbying organization for student concerns — providing the student body wants to get involved.

The ASUO is working on several issues at both the state and federal level. On March 3, the office will bus concerned students to the state capitol, where they will lobby for higher education's future — which includes calling for a statewide tax package. On March 5, an informational rally will be held to raise student awareness of ASUO-sponsored action. Large posters will detail the ASUO's federal concerns and give suggestions on how students can involve themselves.

Among the federal issues discussed will be President Clinton's National Service Trust Fund, the Violence Against Women Act, gay rights, and several financial aid concerns. Sixteen students will travel to Washington, D.C.

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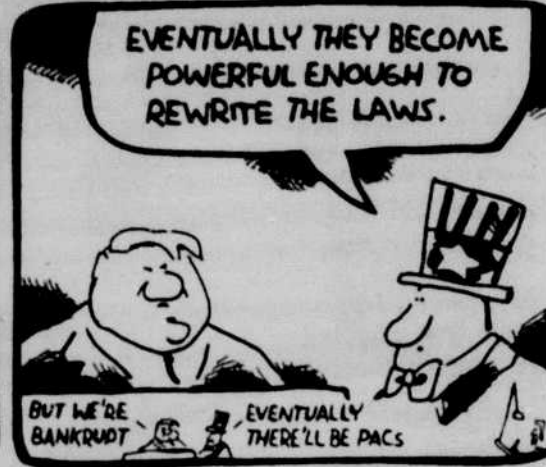
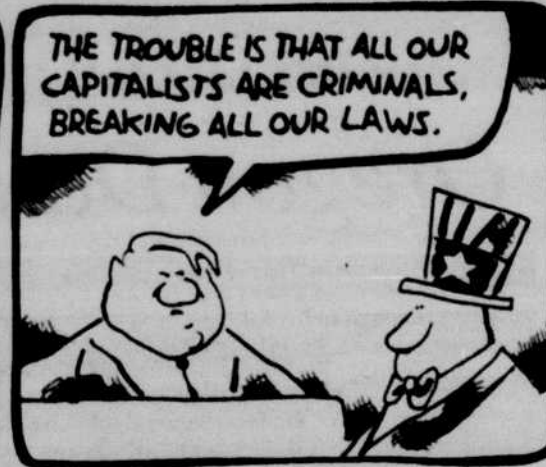
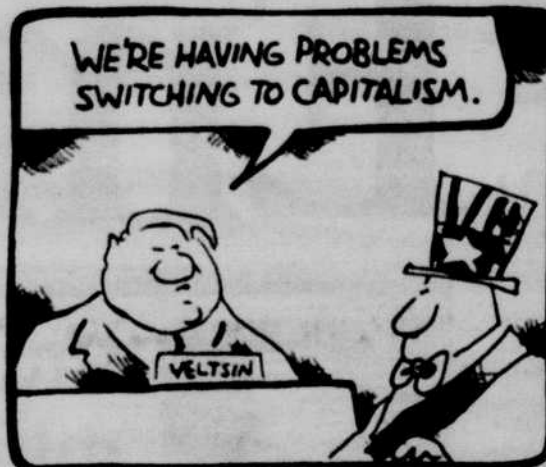
during spring vacation to lobby on behalf of these issues.

Through these efforts, along with Wednesday's phone bank that provided people an opportunity to contact their legislators, the ASUO is doing its best to involve University students. It's giving students an opportunity to speak out and to promote specific recommendations drawn up by the ASUO. Now students must take the next step and involve themselves.

This is not an apathetic student government. ASUO members put a lot of effort into developing solutions for problems both at a University level and beyond. Responding to the fall term Phi Kappa Psi rape protest, the ASUO will sponsor a "Greek Social Issues Seminar" for spring term. The seminar is coming out of an ASUO fund-raising account, not student fees. Rather than simply preaching that fraternities sometimes foster rape, the ASUO has made a constructive effort to address the issue.

The March 3 trip to Salem would be a good opportunity to get involved with ASUO-sponsored action. It concerns all students. After all, tuition may go up again next year, possibly by as much as \$400. ASUO President Bobby Lee said he hopes to recruit 500 students for the trip, which, when combined with equally large congregations from several other colleges and universities, could give legislators a substantial headache.

As Lee said, all the ASUO can do is provide opportunities for students. It has accomplished that goal. If students don't react to those opportunities, there's not much more the ASUO can do.



LETTERS

Get help

My purpose for writing is not to complain or whine about a trivial matter, nor to try and persuade you to think like me.

I am writing to convey a very important message to "Michael," who was the subject in an article titled "Coercive rapist faces truth" (ODE, Feb. 18).

If Michael still feels violent when he looks at women, he does not "have a handle on (his) problem." If he wishes women "wouldn't wear provocative clothing," he needs help. I mean this in the most serious of ways.

He shouldn't feel ashamed. I urge all men who have these feelings to seek someone who can help. It is these exact feelings that are too often the root of crimes against women.

Michael is troubled now, just as he was as a youth. He shouldn't allow himself to be victimized or let his feelings grow into actions.

The University offers free counseling to students at the health center. Michael now realizes he raped Elizabeth. He has taken a step. Now he must go further and find someone who can help him lose his angry feelings.

**Andy Bracco
Psychology**

Read Bible

To all you poor ignorant people who think it is OK to be homosexual, let me say I am truly sorry. I pray that one day you will know the truth. In the meantime, let me direct you to Leviticus 20:13.

**Sean McGrath
National Student Exchange**

Help all victims

As one of the letter writers in support of the Violence Against Women Act, I would like to encourage its supporters to remember the most helpless and innocent victims of violence: the children.

Children (or household pets

for that matter) do not have the opportunities and resources to escape or repel violence the way adult women do. Furthermore, the Violence Against Women Act, citing crimes like rape, carries the misleading implication that women are only the victims and never the perpetrators of violence.

It must be recognized that some violence against women is committed by women, and women are also capable of committing violence against men and children.

Let's discourage violence on all levels, and let's help all its victims. I personally will sleep better if I am assured that I did not assist a campaign led by people who indulge in male bashing and self gratification.

**Eric Nissani
Spanish**

April Fools

I'm not sure where Owen Brennan gets off denying the fact that the Oregon Commentator once published an article about a fictitious campus shuttle service called "RamRide" (ODE, Feb. 22).

Perhaps he simply failed to search the archives before writing his letter. Or perhaps he is attempting to squirrel out of Barbara Rodgers' shrill accusations on a couple of questionable technicalities.

The article in question was printed a few years ago in an April Fools' issue dubbed the *Oregon Commiehater*. Could Brennan really be saying that, because Rodgers remembered the title incorrectly ("RamRod" rather than "RamRide") and/or because it was published under a fictitious banner (*Commiehater* rather than *Commentator*), the article to which Rodgers referred never existed?

Oh please! If this is Brennan's reasoning, perhaps he should consider a career as a defense attorney. There's no doubt he would be good at finding similar cheesy technicalities on which to spring various low-lives and

petty criminals.

During my time on the *Commentator* staff, not only do I remember reading the "RamRide" article, but I also recall the staff being happy to take responsibility for what we printed.

If Brennan wishes to distance himself from past articles ("RamRide" was published before Brennan worked on the *Commentator*), then he should say so. If not, he should either fess up or shut up.

**Teresa Knezek
Former Publisher
Oregon Commentator**

Look around

We've all seen IT and walked past IT. We look at our feet as we go by. We've all heard IT's sounds and tried to imagine what IT is like. Some of us have even given up spare change to make ourselves feel better about IT. There is more we can do.

What is IT?

IT is the problem of hunger and homelessness and IT is right here in Eugene. Whether we're black, white, young, old, homosexual or heterosexual, these issues affect all of us because hunger and homelessness do not discriminate. 60,000 people face hunger daily in Lane County and 2,000 families are homeless. It is likely that all of us will have to deal with these problems in our future.

Because of OSPIRG and the Hunger and Homelessness group, we are all presented with an opportunity to help out. Contact OSPIRG at 346-4377 to find out what you can do to help fight these problems on a local and national scale. Weekly Hunger and Homelessness group meetings are on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in EMU Cedar Room B.

Remember: "What you do for yourself dies with you, but what you do for others lives on forever."

**Christopher Kummerer
Architecture**

Oregon Daily Emerald

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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