

Discoloration of PLC's water not dangerous

By Scot Clemens
Oregon Daily Emerald

The discoloration of the drinking water in Prince Lucien Campbell Hall is apparently harmless according to the University, but this has not stopped others from being concerned.

A test taken this summer by the University Office of Environmental Health and Safety showed that there was a mild to high amount of lead in the sample taken, but that amount is below the Environmental Protection Agency's "action level." The "action level" is the level at which the water supplier (in the University's case it's the Eugene Water and Electric Board) is advised to take some measures to lower the level, according to EPA scientist Wendy Marshall. (The EPA "action level" is 15 parts per billion, where the test done by the University recorded a 14 parts per billion level.)

While this level does seem high it is not proof positive that there is a problem, according to Kay Kouts of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. The dis-

coloration also is not proof of the presence of lead, because water with high amounts of lead does not change its color, Kouts said.

EWEB water supply and treatment supervisor Doug Wise also says that the test does not prove that there is a safety risk. Wise says that a single sample that is not state- or EPA-approved proves very little. Such an approved test would require at least a hundred samples and would be done by EWEB, not the University.

Still, Linda Stellar, PLC building manager and office manager in economics, says she will continue to bring her own drinking water to work. She says that the main problem is that the water is simply unappetizing because of its brownish color.

According to both EWEB and the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, the color is most likely caused by harmless amounts of metals other than lead. Both also suggest that those who wish to drink the water should flush out any excess metal by running faucets for a while.

Computer access increasing

By Kim Challis-Roth
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

Vice President Al Gore's "information super-highway of worldwide computer access" is under construction, and many schools, including the University, have recently added on-ramps.

From cybernetic mailboxes on and off campus (via modems), faculty and students can virtually talk to the world. Communication is only as limited as the user's knowledge and patience.

This term University students are able to sign up on Duckmail, an electronic message system. Undergraduates can log in and log on to Pine and Eudora (mail carriers), Gopher (an information delivery system) and Newswatcher with a \$10 term pass from the EMU Computing Center. Students may also tap into Janus, the library catalog or Duckhunt, a database of current classes at the University.

Lucy Lynch, part of the University Micro Lab Technical Support team, said the system is exciting, but also warns of its addictive side.

"It's almost more information than you can use," Lynch laughs. "One student got so excited he logged on with the White House (news) group and began receiving 30 to 40 pieces of mail a day. At first it's a toy, but soon it becomes an invaluable tool."

With Duckmail, students can send papers to professors or messages to friends and family. Lynch says she enjoys watching students from other countries contact family members through the system. The only requirement is an official e-mail address that is easy to use after a quick authorization session at CC-EMU.

Public campus work stations are located on the third floor of the Chiles Center, in Room 72 Prince Lucien Campbell Hall the first and second floors of the Computing Center (across from the University Bookstore) and the CC-EMU lab. Many departments on campus have their own labs, like the Brainerd Computing Lab for Journalism students in Allen Hall.

Duckmail is easily accessible off campus by dialing the UOnet campus network at 346-2150.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, more than 25 percent of college students use home computers, compared with less than 9 percent a decade ago.

Students with modem connection problems can head to the documents library in Room 205 of the Computing Center or call VAX Consulting at 346-1758.

Graduate students and faculty may self-authorize on Oregon and Darkwing, two sophisticated accounts that allow total Internet access, along with mail service.

Other universities are expanding their "super-highways" with similar systems.

In a Sept. 27 article in *The PR Newswire*, Michael Ferrari, president of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, invited more than 1,000 new students to send him electronic mail to let him know how they were adjusting to college life. Ferrari says he has received — and answered — at least a dozen messages a day which range from first impressions of the campus to parking ticket complaints.

Electronic communication is increasing worldwide. An article in Singapore's *Straits Times* in July reported the National University of Singapore is hoping to achieve a 100 percent computer literacy rate among its undergraduates. Students at the university have access to a thousand computers at more than 30 sites on campus. The students use e-mail to send messages to the 104 departments on campus.

Using electronic mail can become complicated as there is no universal directory and the addresses consist of strange symbols intermingled with letters and numbers. Experts advise developing an e-mail address book and updating it monthly. With an address, students can reach everyone from President Clinton (president@whitehouse.gov) to President Brand (pres@oregon.uoregon.edu).

Planetarium presents trip through stars

Starflight, the new fall program at the Lane Education Service District Planetarium, takes its audience on a thorough 45-minute trip through the universe.

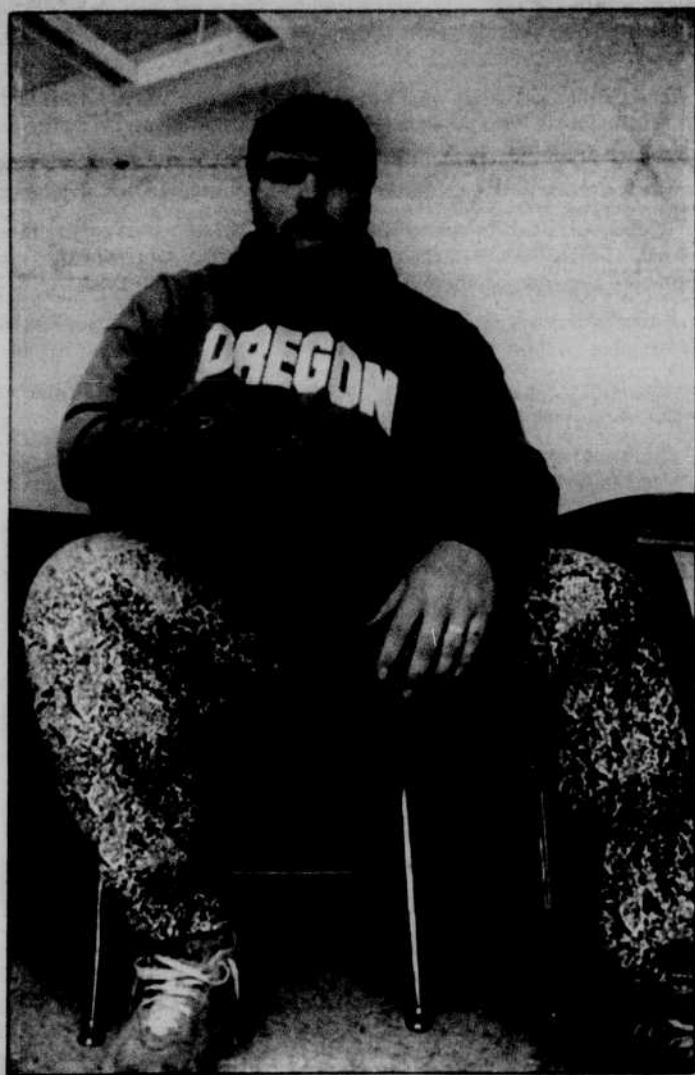
The program goes over the basics of astronomy, discussing the planets of our solar system, and the stars of our galaxy. It also provides interesting tidbits such as a demonstration of an exploding supernova and theories about why there probably isn't life on Mars.

The Planetarium, which shares a building with the Willamette Science and Technology Center (WISTEC), is located behind Autzen Stadium at 2300 Leo Harris Parkway. It also presents laser shows choreographed to a wide variety of music on the weekends.

Starflight will be presented at the Planetarium through Nov. 28 on Thursdays and Fridays at 4 p.m. and on Saturdays and Sundays at 3 p.m.

Admission to Starflight is \$3 for adults and \$1.75 for children 12 and under. Laser show admission is \$5.50 per person.

For more details, call 687-STAR.



Heath Howington, offensive guard for the Oregon Ducks, demonstrates how classroom desks are not "one size fits all."

DESKS

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rassing for some larger students to complain. She said the reason many don't is because they feel ostracized by their size already, and don't want to draw even more attention to themselves.

Davis said being overweight draws attention from people anyway, especially when she tries to fit in a desk that is impossibly small. She said her studies end up suffering as well.

"To sit in those desks for 50 minutes is a trial," Davis said. "To sit there for 90 minutes or three hours is just too distracting. In class, you have to be very focused on the professor. If the desk is cutting into you, or you're sliding off, you're focused more on 'Get me the hell out of here.'"

Dan Williams said the University will surely do something if the demand is high enough.

"Certainly if there's a legitimate need, we'll do the best we can to accommodate these students," Williams said.

Zumwalt said she knows their dilemma sounds humorous. But as Davis pointed out, during testing for freshman

athletes this fall, one basketball player broke a desktop with his knees, while another desk broke when a football player leaned back.

"It's kind of laughable," Zumwalt said, "unless you're the one sitting in the chair — then it's not very funny."

Because Zumwalt and Davis pay tuition just like every other student at the University, they think that being able to attend class in the same comfortable environment that everyone else does is not too much to ask.

To both Davis and Zumwalt, the small desks point to a larger societal problem as well — that by not providing alternatives for larger people, the school is glorifying a young, thin image that is just not attainable for some individuals.

"It just re-stimulates the feeling that I'm going to school with all these 18- and 23-year-old kids who have these beautiful bodies, and I'm not like them," Zumwalt said. "It's just a constant reminder that you are different. It's painful and embarrassing."

Davis was more blunt.

"It's just a microcosm of our culture; if you're not thin, you don't fit," she said.

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