

Revamping of colleges urged



SACRAMENTO (AP) — Community colleges must be overhauled in order to better serve increasing numbers of students at a time when government budgets are shrinking, a commission has reported.

Many of the strategies proposed Wednesday by the Commission on Innovation, formed by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors, center on bolstering links between the community college system and the private sector.

In general, the commission suggested a broader array of classes, modernizing operations, and expanding the role of community colleges in economic development.

Proposals aimed at helping California's economy include developing centers that would provide one-stop training and employment services to workers who have lost their jobs, and extending community college services to small and medium-

sized businesses.

The changes would require elimination of laws that restrict community colleges in providing courses under contract to businesses and government agencies.

Other suggestions included:

- Operating community colleges year-round as an alternative to constructing new facilities.
- Delivering instruction to students at home via television or electronic information networks.
- Devising a system of statewide collective bargaining for community college employees.
- Providing incentives for colleges to become more efficient by adopting the principles of quality management used by many federal government agencies and businesses.

There are 107 colleges in the system, the largest higher-education institution in the world, which serves nearly 1.4 million students.

Mexican celebration to honor the dead

SUNNYSIDE, Wash. (AP) — El Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, is celebrated by families in Mexico with affection, dignity and humor, with flowers, graveside picnics and sugar skulls.

"It is a way of remembering," said Maria Elena Romero, who unfailingly visits the cemetery here on Nov. 2 with her husband, Macario.

Roman Catholics have traditionally set aside the two days after Halloween to honor the dead. In the Hispanic community, and particularly in the Mexican culture, that can include visits to graves, special prayers and even the celebration of Mass at the cemetery.

Mrs. Romero, 61, of Sunnyside, recalls spending the whole day at the cemetery in Monterey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, when she and her husband lived there years ago.

She remembers food booths lining the streets outside the cemetery, chats with people visiting deceased loved ones, and crowns of flowers gracing the gravestones.

Deceased children receive special recognition on All Saints Day, Nov. 1, said the Rev. Jesus Ramirez, a priest at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Granger.

"We consider them angelitos — angels," he said.

The Nov. 2 All Souls Day, a date comparable to Memorial Day, is a respected custom in the church, Ramirez said. He encourages parishioners to participate in graveside blessings.

"It's very strong, the respect for our dead," Ramirez said. "It is something that is in the souls of our people."

In parts of Mexico and Texas, families go to gravesites and make a day of cleaning and fixing them up. They take flowers, wreaths, crosses, paint and crepe paper for decorating.

A picnic is often eaten at graveside. In some countries, the dead are believed to revisit the earth on All Souls night and partake of the food of the living.

Historically, the Catholic church celebrated the day after Halloween to counteract and "Christianize" pagan customs, Ramirez said. Ghosts were believed to roam the earth and witches to gather for devil worship on Halloween.

Such beliefs likely stemmed from the Celtic festival of Samhain, lord of death, which marked the start of the season of cold, darkness and decay. Celts believed Samhain allowed souls to return to earth at this time.

The festival is considered to be the source of the present-day Halloween custom of trick-or-treating by costumed children.

Forest Service denies worker's claim

REDMOND (AP) — A union representative has been warned not to use Forest Service time or equipment to represent a former forest worker who claims she was sexually harassed by a lesbian co-worker.

Annette Trythall said she views the warning by Joe Cruz, supervisor of the Deschutes National Forest, as an attempt by the Forest Service to squelch a grievance she filed on behalf of Karin McGuire.

"The U.S. Forest Service is refusing to deal with this issue and is trying to force it to go away," Trythall said.

Cruz denied that Wednesday, saying, "It has to do with the

contract the union has with the Forest Service and nothing else."

Cruz said McGuire is no longer an employee of Redmond Air Center and does not qualify for union representation.

Trythall is the local representative for the National Federation of Federal Employees. Her salary is paid by the Forest Service and the agency provides her with office space.

McGuire, 31, filed her grievance last week with Regional Forester John Lowe seeking reinstatement plus back pay and reimbursement for counseling costs. Lowe has 30 days to

accept or deny the complaint.

McGuire claims a lesbian co-worker at Redmond Air Center graphically described sexual encounters and that forest officials failed to try to stop the alleged harassment despite McGuire's pleas for help.

Cruz said the agency conducted an investigation but did not find that any harassment had taken place.

The state Employment Division, however, ruled after McGuire quit her job in August that she was sexually harassed and granted her unemployment benefits. The Forest Service has challenged the ruling.

COMMUNITY UPDATE

• Texaco stations in Eugene, Portland and Vancouver, Wash., will give away two tickets to the Monday Alabama concert at Portland's Memorial Coliseum to any person who donates two bags of food to the Oregon Food Bank on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. People can exchange food bags for concert tickets in Eugene at the Glenwood Avenue Texaco station.

• Evangelina Rodriguez Lopez, a Guatemalan refugee, will speak about women and education in refugee settlements on Wednesday in the EMU Fir Room. Lopez represents the Permanent Commission of the Guatemalan Refugees in Mexico and New Union, a refugee women's group. Her speech begins at 7:30 p.m. and is sponsored by the Committee in Solidarity with the Central American People.

• A public forum on President Clinton's health plan is scheduled for Thursday, Nov. 4, at the First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St. The forum is hosted by Lane Fair Share, NAACP, Church Women United, League of Women Voters, American Association of Retired People and Concerned Faculty for Peace and Justice. An overview of the health plan will be given, and each group represented will provide a brief outline of how their organization views the plan. The two-hour forum begins at 7 p.m.

• "What You Don't Say Can Hurt You: Keeping Secrets and Your Health" is the topic of a free educational program offered by Sacred Heart General Hospital. The program begins Monday at 7:30 p.m. in the Eugene Hilton, 66 E. 6th Ave. Dr. Dale Larson, an associate professor and director of the health psychology program at Santa Clara University, will speak about the impact of secrecy on personal health. For more information, call 686-7272.

• The United Way needs volunteers for the following positions: receptionist for Willamette Wildlife Rehabilitation, six hours per week; yard worker for La/Co AIDS Hospice Services, two hours per month; craft assistant for Eugene Good Samaritan Center, two hours a week; tour guides for Willamette Science & Technology Center, two hours per week; telephone crisis volunteers for Sexual Assault Support Services, three hours a week. For more information, call 683-9000.

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