

## A piece of history benefiting everyone

Amazon family housing residents have recently filed a request to preserve their community as a historic landmark. The University has plans to tear down the buildings this summer and continue with its rebuilding of the low-income housing.

Returning to square one of the project, the original intent of the University was to demolish the existing Amazon housing and replace it with new buildings. However, as problems escalated, the project snowballed into a disaster that culminated in the firing of the architect Wednesday.

**Historic preservation will benefit both the University and, not only the current residents, but future tenants.**

The contract between the architect and the University degenerated into an unworkable relationship. The intended plans and climbing construction costs were sending the new housing into a rent district that would be out of reach of students requiring low-income housing.

The people of Amazon have developed a very personable living environment. In an attempt to keep the environment intact and avoid the demolition of their homes, they have proposed the idea of a historic landmark. If it passes, the low-income Amazon housing will remain standing, estimated to be livable until 1996.

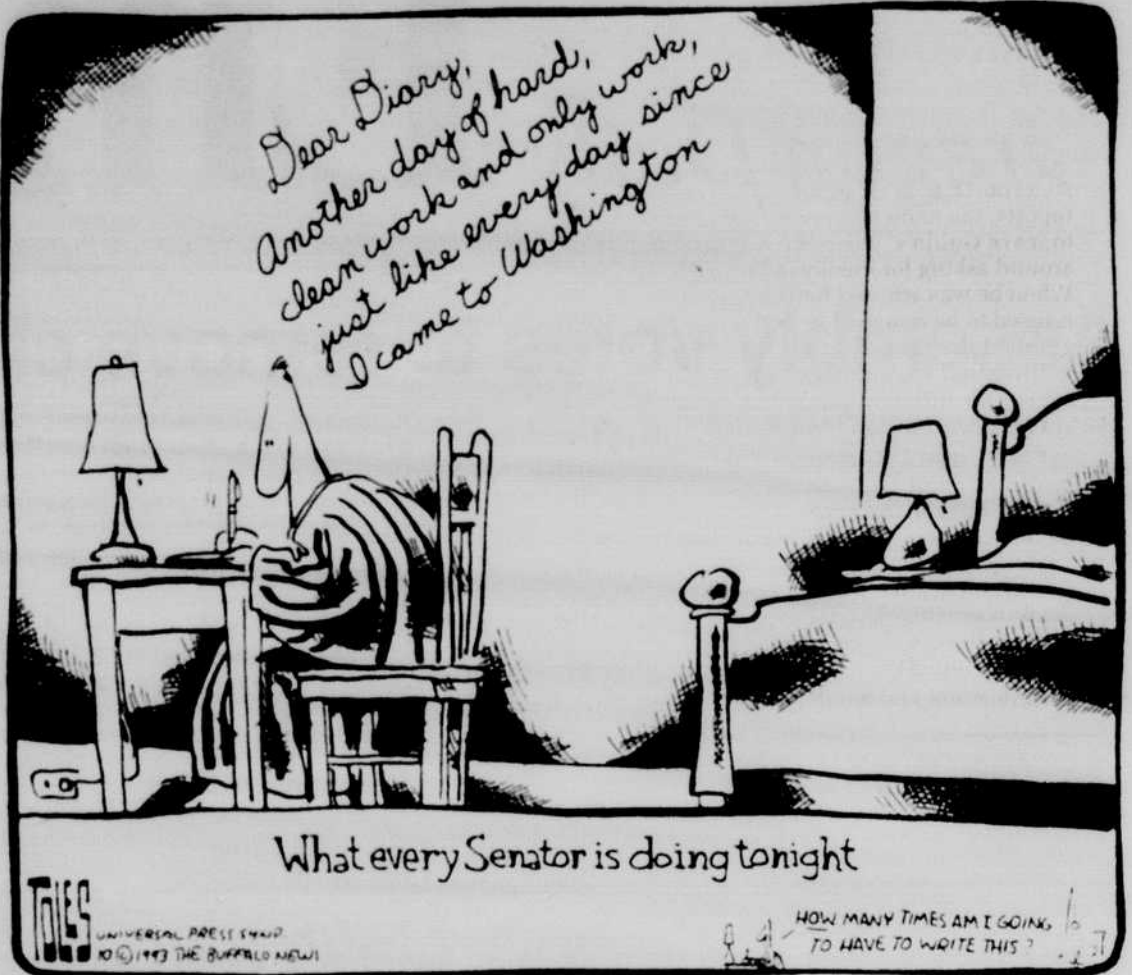
The buildings, when first moved to their present location in 1947, were intended for use for five to 10 years. They are now going on 50. Obviously, they will be unlivable soon and must be refurbished if kept intact. The current residents may have found a way to preserve their environment at least until they are finished here.

The real issue does not seem to stem from the fact that the buildings are a historical landmark. Instead, the historical landmark is a way to prevent the demolition of the buildings.

Even if the buildings are found to be of historic significance, the University will be left with 50-year-old buildings that are still occupied today. Second, the people who are living there now have a community that will stay intact. This sounds like the University is the loser and the tenants come away with a win. However, this could work to the benefit of both.

If approached appropriately, this idea of historic preservation will benefit both the University and, not only the current residents, but future tenants. Amazon has been functioning well for quite some time. If the buildings were refurbished rather than demolished, the University and the students would positively benefit.

If refurbished in an economical way, then the University will provide low-income housing for future use, the tenants will continue to exist in the same environment, and future low-income students will have an enjoyable environment to live in. However, this would have to be done in a way that administers to the restraints involved in the demands of a historical sight.



### LETTERS

#### Rah! Rah! Rah!

After reading Lia Saliciccia's column on "boring, pointless" letters to the editor (*ODE*, Nov. 2), I had to stop and ponder. Yes, I thought, she's right. Some letters to the editor are boring and pointless. Some are poorly constructed and poorly written. Some are elitist, some insipid, and some are just plain insulting.

Come to think of it, some letters to the editor are a lot like Lia's column.

Hey! Keep those silly letters (and columns) rollin'! That's entertainment! Rah! Rah! Rah!

Lee Baxter  
History

#### Open Meetings

This letter addresses the "open meeting" issue of the Assembly Committee on Multicultural Curriculum.

Last spring, the initial reading by attorneys was that this committee is like most other University committees: It is not a decision-making body and so it would not fall under the open meeting requirement of state law. The Assembly is the decision-making body for any recommendations that might emerge from ACMC.

The autumn, attorneys concluded that some obscure aspects of open meetings regulations may apply to ACMC, so that open meetings are appropriate. ACMC will operate in that manner, but that includes the ability to meet in executive session if appropriate.

Last Spring ASUO officers asked the provost to add student members to ACMC and to give assurance that committee meetings would be open. I indicated that only the Assembly could add members and that only the committee can determine its operating procedures. The assumption was that only ACMC members plus Davison Soper as Senate President would attend the organizational

meeting; hence the apparent surprise by some members that the student representative had invited another student to attend.

Davison Soper and the ACMC members were operating in good faith and in keeping with the advice that meetings could be "closed." It is time to put misunderstandings, politics and positioning aside and to see what this faculty and community wants to do in the area of multicultural education.

Norman K. Wessells  
Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
and Provost

#### Grave danger

In the *Emerald's* editorial for Oct. 22, "Congress can't be commander of army," the editorial staff claimed that putting all the president's foreign policy decisions up for congressional scrutiny is "unnecessary."

Although not every foreign policy decision should be subject to congressional oversight, it is obvious that the executive branch has had far too much control over "national security" policy throughout our history.

One needs only to look at the terrible ways in which the CIA has been used in the second half of this century to realize the degree to which presidential power has been grossly abused. The CIA has helped oust democratically elected leaders in countries like Chile and Guatemala, and has assisted in the implementation of brutal dictators like Augusto Pinochet, who ruled Chile from 1973 to 1990 and still has control of its military.

By stating that scrutiny of the president's foreign policy initiatives is unnecessary, the editorial staff is essentially saying the Congress and the American people do not need to know about the grave dangers that our military and covert operations present. Such a view is extremely elitist and absolutely appalling when one considers the lives

that have been lost and the anguish that has been created as a result of unchecked presidential power.

Justin Delacour  
International Studies

#### Missed point

Concerning your editorial of Nov. 2 ("How to improve the Ferry Street Bridge"), I'm afraid you've missed the point entirely.

Briefly: Eugene is now in the process of evaluating several proposals to restructure traffic flow across the Ferry Street Bridge. This bridge serves both as the principal link between north and south Eugene, as well as a symbolic gateway to motorists entering the city from Interstate 5.

In choosing a final plan, Eugene will have the opportunity to dramatically affect the growth patterns in the lackluster "heart" of the city. Unfortunately, most of the debate on the issue thus far has centered on how to alleviate traffic "friction" into and out of the city. Thus, people have tended to frame the issue in those terms.

The proposals put forth by the University architecture students last week were not mere pipe dreams; rather, they were intended to introduce wider civic considerations into the discussion. They tried to show how to make relatively simple yet tremendously effective improvements to a city which now admittedly is, at best, a testimony to the unattractiveness of the "urban renewal" development schemes of yesterday (i.e. vacant concrete buildings and so forth).

So the students tried to provide the city with an expanded menu of thought and to show the public at large what is really possible with limited resources, given a little ingenuity. In short, they tried to introduce to the policy-makers of Eugene something we can simply call vision.

Peter Grimm  
Architecture

## Oregon Daily Emerald

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