

COMMUNITY

Former student creates awareness for world peace

By Susanne Steffens
Oregon Daily Emerald

Saturday is World Peace Day, but for most students world peace is a vague concept.

Words like freedom, democracy and justice are difficult to recognize and understand, and, for many, these words are just brought up and then forgotten.

One student, however, has made a change here at the University, crossing borders in order to create awareness for world peace. Shin Yasui, who arrived in Eugene from Japan in the fall of 1990, reminds you of Martin Luther King or Gandhi, as he has — with tremendous effort and enthusiasm — started to devote his entire life in working for peace.

Today, Yasui has quit school and is director of the Committee for World Peace, a grass-roots committee working closely with bigger peace organizations, which he started here in Eugene three months ago. His main concentration is Bosnia, in former Yugoslavia, as he experienced the country's great need for help when he was visiting last summer.

"I went to former Yugoslavia because I was overwhelmed by how the mainstream media was treating the conflict," he said. "I needed to know what really lay behind the information, so I thought it would be good

to go and talk to the people and get first accounts information."

Before Yasui left Eugene, he contacted peace organizations in Oregon, who helped him with lists of various peace organizations in former Yugoslavia. During the visit, Yasui contacted these, and, at present, almost a year after, he is working very closely with these groups.

"We work with giving financial, as well as moral, support," he said.

After Yasui left Bosnia, he went back to Japan to try to establish support for another grass-roots committee, appearing on television and talking to organizations. The response of the Japanese was not encouraging for Yasui. He did, however, receive a \$2,000 donation from a Japanese peace organization, before he returned to Eugene.

Within the past three months at the University, Yasui and his committee have managed to raise awareness among students by having information tables, a candlelight vigil, signature collections and monthly update "newspapers," which include war updates and the committee's work and program.

Yasui said that even though the committee receives a lot of support, the work can at times be overwhelming.

"From nothing, we have to promote everything ourselves," he said. "Another problem is to get everyone's

motivation. Sometimes it's too hard."

One important part of the committee work is to establish a national network. Through computer research and reading, Yasui has been able to get in touch with a number of movements around the United States, who are working for people in Bosnia.

Just recently, Yasui managed to get in touch with Stanford University, which has a committee under the name Students Against Genocide. On April 9, the two committees, together with students all around the world, had international campus protests for peace in Bosnia.

Yasui is working closely with Stanford, and hopes to meet up with some of the school's representatives in the near future. His time, however, is limited, as he is returning to Bosnia May 18 in order to try to help the many suffering families who he met a year ago.

Yasui hopes his committee will continue the work for peace and awareness, even if he is not around for some months.

"I will try to be in touch with them as much as I can," he said.

On Saturday, Yasui will be responsible for one of his last events before he leaves. World Peace Day will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the EMU, and the objective of the day is to raise awareness in Eugene about global issues.

County debates teen work hours



YAKIMA, Wash. (AP) — Proposals by Yakima County employers to let teen-agers work earlier and later in the day will hurt their school performance and otherwise exploit the youths, opponents told county commissioners.

But supporters of the plan say young people might have a better chance of landing jobs if they're allowed to work longer hours.

At a nearly three-hour hearing before Yakima County commissioners Wednesday, both sides agreed only that what happens in the county will be carefully watched across the state.

Yakima Valley growers are trying to persuade the state to let 14- and 15-year-olds toil in the fields before dawn.

Business leaders in the valley also want the state to let 16- and 17-year-olds work an hour later, a move aimed mainly at fast-food restaurants and movie theaters that close at 11 p.m.

Supporters said the proposals are an honest effort to give teen-agers a better chance of landing jobs. Jobs, they said, increase self-esteem, instill discipline and promote other values that can prevent juvenile crime.

"It's not a matter of exploiting a child, it's a way to provide a way out," said Ester Huey, a commu-

nity activist who has worked extensively on juvenile issues.

"We are not trying to take advantage of anyone," Commissioner Chuck Klarich told opponents. "We proposed this out of concerns for the needs of youth, not employers."

Klarich's comments were challenged by Peter Chacon, editor of a Hispanic newspaper in the Tri-Cities.

"You are trying to instill a work ethic in those who have to work," countered Chacon. "You are acting on behalf of employers."

Tomas Villanueva, representing the United Farm Workers of Washington, said letting 14- and 15-year-olds work an hour earlier in asparagus fields may not sound like a big change, but it robs them of much-needed morning time.

After picking asparagus, children often arrive at school extremely tired, he said.

"Our children belong in school ... not out at 5 or 6 a.m. in the morning," he said.

The union contends the proposals would allow growers to build a pool of cheap labor.

Commissioners are expected to review the proposals over the next week before sending it to state Department of Labor and Industries director Mark Brown, who will decide its fate.

Fishing restrictions placed to protect spring chinook

OLYMPIA (AP) — The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has placed emergency fishing restrictions on Columbia River tributaries above the Bonneville Dam in order to protect critically low runs of spring chinook.

The emergency measures include sports fishing closures and modifications to current regulations. Tribal managers are reviewing their tributary subsistence fishing.

"We are counting spring chinook at the fish ladder at the Bonneville Dam now and we are seeing the poorest return in history," Gene DiDonato, the department's assistant director for salmon planning, research and harvest management said Wednesday.

The Columbia River Technical Advisory Committee

has reduced the size of the expected run from 49,000 to 22,500 fish based on fish counts at Bonneville Dam, DiDonato said.

The emergency closures and restrictions include the following:

— Wind River: Closed beginning May 1 from 400 feet below Shipperd Falls to the mouth. A limited area of the river reopens for salmon fishing from Aug. 1 through Oct. 31.

— Drano Lake: Closed beginning May 1 from markers on point of land downstream and across from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service salmon hatchery and upstream from the Highway 14 Bridge. The lake reopens for salmon fishing Aug. 1 through Dec. 31.

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