

Protesters want mental health system to change

Natasha Shepard

For the Oregon Daily Emerald

When David Oaks was an undergraduate at Harvard, he had some "psychiatric problems." He had been experiencing a lot of difficulties in life and was smoking too much marijuana. He agreed to go, temporarily, to a mental institution for treatment.

As he drove up, he thought the institution looked like a country club and a good place for a vacation. Instead, what he found was that there were people being tied down, put in solitary confinement and forcibly drugged.

The mental health system, Oaks said, needs to be reformed.

"There are people being tied down, people being tortured, people being poisoned and people being killed," said Oaks, who is now co-coordinator of a network of advocacy organizations of "psychiatric survivors and allies" in the United States and Canada.

On Tuesday, Oaks' group, the Support Coalition International, along with the Homeless Action Coalition and the Clearinghouse on Human Rights and Psychiatry, will be sponsoring a protest against Sacred Heart General Hospital's alleged psychiatric rights abuses and its use of psychiatric drugging and "coerced electroshock."

The protest, also part of Homeless Awareness Week, is specifically questioning the treatment of Darrell Wilson, a homeless man who died in the Lane County Psychiatric Hospital, which is run by Sacred Heart.

The event will begin Tuesday across from the University Bookstore. Speakers will include Carol Bruhl of the Homeless Action Coalition, who witnessed Wilson's last five days and Chuck Areford, a mental health worker and a member of the Clearinghouse on Human Rights and Psychiatry.

At 12:50 p.m. the group will march to

Sacred Heart to deliver a wreath in Wilson's memory.

According to information from the Support Coalition, Wilson died after having been administered seven "powerful psychiatric drugs in 24 hours," as well as having been in solitary confinement for some time earlier.

Oaks said, although after seeing the autopsy report, they do not claim to have a "smoking gun." Wilson's case does show that Sacred Heart "lied to us about using less drugs, less force, less solitary confinement."

However, according to Beverly Mayhew, Director of Public Affairs for Sacred Heart, "nothing was out of order" about Wilson's case. His family was heavily involved in decisions about his care, Mayhew said, and "a review of his case showed that he was indeed treated appropriately."

"The course of treatment did not cause his death," she said.

Although Sacred Heart does use elec-

troshock therapy, those who administer the treatment follow the stringent guidelines by the American Psychiatric Association, as well as state and local guidelines, Mayhew said.

Oaks said that Sacred Heart uses electroshock therapy without informing patients of the real risks of electroshock.

Risks associated with the treatment, Mayhew said, include short-term memory loss, headaches and nausea. Patients are required to sign a detailed consent form before undergoing the treatment, she said.

Electroshock therapy, Oaks said, causes a "head injury high," because the therapy disables the brain.

Psychiatric drugs are not the answer either, he said.

"After 20 years of taking the drug you end up with a bigger problem than you had before the chemicals," Oaks said. "All these treatments are based on disabling the brain."

The problem is the lack of alternatives."

Ozone ordinance revised

Sarah Hirschman

For the Oregon Daily Emerald

The City Council is attempting to construct a new ozone ordinance for Eugene after a suggestion by councilwoman Barbara Keller.

The draft is now being formulated with endorsement from the council.

The new ordinance would restrict the sale and use of certain products containing ozone-depleting chemicals in Eugene. The necessity of this ordinance is rooted to scientific evidence, which indicates that the use of certain chemicals that are discharged into the atmosphere are depleting the ozone layer.

Ordinance planners have met with opponents and proponents of Ballot Measure 20-03, an earlier ozone protection initiative that failed at the polls last spring. Problem areas surrounding the old measure were reviewed and comparisons were made to

other cities with similar ordinances already in place.

Ballot Measure 20-03 was rejected due to high costs to enact the ordinance. Many voters said they thought 20-03 was redundant and simply duplicated environmental laws that were already intact.

One change that has been made to the new ordinance is in the list of restricted chemical products. It is now smaller in regard to the necessity for available reasonable alternatives. More definitive and less costly administration procedures also have been instituted.

Estimated costs for the new ordinance include a projected start-up cost of \$25,700. Low-end bid annual costs are estimated at \$28,834, and high-end costs at \$75,658.

The council has scheduled a public hearing for Nov. 28 and a work session on Dec. 7 to further discuss the new ordinance.

Logging, spotted owl debate moves back to federal courts



NORTHWEST

SEATTLE (AP) — The debate over logging and the northern spotted owl moves back to federal court this week.

At issue is whether the Clinton administration's long-term forest-management plan will be sent back for further revision or allowed to stand.

Attorneys for environmental groups will argue that the latest scientific studies show the owls, listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act, are slipping toward extinction at an accelerating rate. They claim any additional logging of the old growth forests where the birds live could nudge them over the brink.

Attorneys with the Justice Department will defend the president's plan, which covers roughly 16 million acres of federal forests in Washington, Oregon and northern California. The plan would slash logging to about one-fourth of the level of the 1980s, protecting nearly 10 million acres of old growth and other forests.

Federal experts will argue at a hearing on Thursday in Seattle that the owls can survive the loss of 25 percent of their habitat. U.S. District Judge William Dwyer, who has twice rejected federal management plans, is not expected to rule until the end of the year.

The Clinton administration's plan technically went into effect this spring, when Dwyer lifted an old-growth logging ban he imposed three years earlier. But the plan is being challenged by environmentalists and the timber industry. The former wants less logging; the latter wants more.

Dwyer's decision is likely to hinge on whether the plan is compatible with the National Forest Management Act, which requires the government to ensure that no vertebrate species are wiped out on federal lands.

The federal government has spent more than \$13 million since 1988 to count and study the spotted

owl, but few parties agree on the species' status.

"No one really has any idea of what the population size is," said Barry Muldar, former spotted owl coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Muldar is now manager of the agency's forest ecosystems program.

In the early 1970s, biologists believed there were no more than about 1,500 pairs of the birds scattered across the Northwest.

Today, surveys have tallied about 5,400 pairs. But that doesn't mean the population is climbing.

Early this year, a group of top owl researchers concluded that owl populations are declining at about 4.5 percent a year.

The researchers, led by Kenneth Burnham and David Anderson of Colorado State University, also found evidence that the rate of decline is accelerating, and the survival rate of female birds is dropping.

Not everyone agrees with them. "There isn't much disagreement about whether the population is declining," said Eric Forsman, the Forest Service wildlife biologist who raised the alarm over the decline of spotted owls nearly 20 years ago. "There is disagreement over whether it's a rapid rate of decline or a gradual rate of decline."

That disagreement is central to the question to be heard in court this week: What will happen to the owl population under the president's forest plan?

"If we accept that under current conditions the owl population is declining, and if you then continue to log old growth, it will decline even further," said Gordon Orians, University of Washington ecologist.

Government experts are banking that the trade-off between timber production and owl habitat won't be fatal to the birds.

And though some old growth will be cut under the president's plan, new owl habitat will also be created as previously logged areas grow back.

The administration estimates about 10,000 timber workers will lose their jobs under the Clinton plan.

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