

Senate approves funding for Survival Center

Pat Daly

Oregon Daily Emerald

The ASUO Student Senate Monday night unanimously approved a \$1,200 special request by the Survival Center to help pay speakers for an upcoming conference.

The Survival Center is sponsoring a conference on environmental racism and justice this month. Student fees unspent in the previous year allow for special requests.

Kevin Chang, a representative of the Coalition Against Environmental Racism, said the request will pay \$50 honorariums for 20 speakers scheduled to appear at the conference. Some scheduled speakers, Chang said, usually charge \$500 or more for such engagements.

The Survival Center's original request for \$1,500 was voted down last term by the Senate.

Mark Rhinard, who is senate chairman and ASUO vice

president, said the center's original request didn't provide enough information about spending for the conference.

Survival Center members and other conference supporters nearly out-numbered Senators last night as they lobbied for their request. Center members submitted to the senate detailed information showing how more than \$6,300 raised for the conference had been spent.

Senator Martin Fisher said he was impressed with the fact that center members raised the money on their own.

"How many other student groups have gone out and raised that much money?" Fisher asked. He said he was also impressed with the information the center provided with their latest request.

Fisher moved to grant the full amount of \$1,200 after an ASUO Executive recommendation of only \$600.

In other activity, the Senate withdrew a motion to revoke a \$145 stipend for former ASUO Programs finance senator

John Howe after discussing the matter in Executive Session. Howe was not at either meeting.

The senate officially announced the vacancy of Howe's Finance Senator seat. The senate will accept applications for the position.

Rhinard said that while the motion could have been decided, he believed it was more appropriate to wait until Howe could be at the meeting in person. The motion was postponed until next week.

A special request by the *Journal of Environmental Law and Legislation* was also postponed because no representatives from the group were present.

The Senate received a brief document from ASUO Legal Services. The memo detailed the constitutionality of religion-related expenditure of incidental fees. Rhinard said the memo stemmed from a request last term for Senate funding of a religious group.

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Super max houses prisoners with serious behavior problems



SALEM (AP)

— When an inmate leaves his cell at the Oregon State Penitentiary's "super max" unit, he is handcuffed, tethered with a leash and accompanied by two guards.

If he has no program to attend, he's confined to his cell, except for 40 minutes of exercise five days a week.

There is no window view. Only peeps of sunlight are possible through narrow openings across the top of an enclosed yard.

It's officially called the Intensive Management Unit, and it's designed to house the worst of the worst at the prison.

Since the super max unit opened in 1991, assaults have dropped significantly — even though more inmates are doing time for violent crimes.

Convicts are removed from the general population at the 2,000-inmate, maximum-security prison for a variety of reasons, says state Corrections Department spokesman Perrin Damon. They include drug dealing, leading gang activity inside the prison and assaulting guards.

Prisoners accumulate point scores based on the seriousness of their violations and their histories. When their scores get high enough, they are classified as maximum-custody inmates and head for super max.

"They get there when their behavior shows they cannot exist by the rules we have," Damon said. "The people assigned to maximum custody generally present an extreme risk of escape, violence or disruption to the safe, secure and orderly operation of a Department of Corrections facility."

The unit's capacity is 196 inmates. About 120 were there last week.

Oregon is one of at least three dozen states with such extra-secure units. The year super max opened, there were 178 assaults of inmates in the prison. The numbers dropped to 103 in 1992 and 104 in 1993, the latest total available.

Put another way, the rate of assaults dropped from 29 per 1,000 inmates in 1991 to 16 per 1,000 by 1993.

Inmates stay in the unit until they complete work on programs, and behave appropriately, to earn a new security classification. That usually takes five or six months.

Program subjects include anger management, alcohol and drug abuse and mental health. Some have completed GED, or high school equivalency, programs while in super max.

Emergency System encounters difficulties

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The Emergency Broadcast System had trouble during last week's flooding in Northern California, delaying evacuation warnings and failing to get cooperation from some television and radio stations.

The National Weather Service's first pre-evacuation warning was delayed nearly an hour because some stations missed the message or chose not to broadcast it.

Although the delay was not blamed for any deaths or damage, some state emergency officials said in a more severe calamity, the delay could have proved disastrous.

"This flood has probably been the biggest use of the system in the state's history, and there have been hitches," said Stan Harter, who oversees the voluntary broadcast system for the state Office of Emergency Services. "A few stations did participate, but ... participation was pretty dismal, pretty poor."

Under the 30-year-old EBS, government agencies such as the National Weather Service are authorized to issue warnings to a designated radio or TV station. That station then broadcasts tones signaling other stations to record and play the emergency message, although they are not required to air it.

In the San Francisco Bay area, KCBS-AM is the volunteer lead station.

Last Sunday, a KCBS editor did not see the initial EBS bulletin issued at 4:18 p.m. The message was placed in a pile with other less important messages. Also, an electronic coding system designed to flash a message on the computer screen failed,

News Director Ed Cavagnaro said.

The emergency tones went out at 5:10 p.m., only after city officials called KCBS to ask about the EBS message.

"It was late, but it wasn't a serious situation in terms of getting the information out," Cavagnaro said. "We want it to be more timely."

Some broadcasters said last week's delay showed the EBS has outlived its usefulness or should be upgraded.

"In many parts of the U.S., it is a very useful, valid, effective tool for the public," said Bill Ruck, manager of engineering at KNBR-AM, which didn't broadcast the initial EBS message. "Here, it's been a joke."

KNBR didn't send the first emergency bulletins Sunday because the station was providing that information in its news stories. The station did broadcast the second flood warning Monday.

"Generally, the problem is: When there's a black cloud on the horizon, they call for an EBS activation," Ruck said. "We're in the business of providing information to our customers, and whether we do it with the fancy tone system or not doesn't really matter."

Forecasters on duty at the National Weather Service said no one was available Sunday to comment on the matter.

A new system scheduled to start in 18 months would send EBS messages directly to stations, allowing them to program their equipment to automatically interrupt normal broadcasts for the announcement.



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