

Keep on dancin'



NATALIE MONTGOMERY/Emerald

Tri-Delta and Sigma Phi Epsilon sing and dance to Brady Bunch tunes for Greek Sing, which is a part of Greek week. The three finalists will perform at the Hult Center Friday, May 19th.

Packwood hearings possible

PORTLAND (AP) — Three Oregon women among those who accused Sen. Bob Packwood of inappropriate sexual advances heard news Wednesday they feared might never come from the Senate Ethics Committee.

They had worried the committee would brush aside their allegations, especially since Packwood has become chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. "I thought the odds were very good that the most that would happen would be a slap on the wrist," Gena Hutton said.

But the accusers were satisfied with the committee's preliminary findings that there was substantial evidence to warrant further investigation into allegations that Packwood made unwanted sexual advances toward women, used influence with lobbyists and businessmen to try to get his wife a job and obstructed the ethics probe.

Now they want public hearings as the committee proceeds to determine what, if any, sanctions should be imposed.

"This is a good, positive first step," Hutton said, "but it's just a step along the way. We're not done. Disciplinary action hasn't been taken and we still have to ask the Senate that they take our allegations seriously. We still have to ask the Senate that they put ethics in front of politics."

Supporters of Packwood, however, said the report should not be misinterpreted as a finding of wrongdoing. It is only a decision to proceed with the investigation, they said.

"We look forward to a conclusion that I believe will be a happy one for the senator, ultimately," said Charles Slepian,

an attorney who has been one of Packwood's strongest supporters.

Slepian said there never was a realistic expectation that the committee would not have a full investigation. He said the women who made the allegations deserve to have the allegations considered.

"We're kind of anxious to have them testify and submit themselves to cross examination," Slepian said.

Hutton and fellow accusers Mary Heffernan and Gail Byler appeared at a news conference Wednesday by Oregonians for Ethical Representation, a group that has called for Packwood's ouster.

All three women expressed satisfaction that after more than two years of investigation, the committee had come out with findings that support their charges.

"I'm relieved that it's gotten to this point," Byler said. "It's been a long time coming."

Carlton Grew, co-founder of Oregonians for Ethical Representation, said the group will continue to push for Packwood's ouster and would welcome his resignation.

"I think after you read the bill of particulars, and the detail and the range of conduct and the breadth of the abuse of power and the abuse of his public trust, it only reinforces our position that he should be expelled," he said.

Packwood, 62, was elected to his fifth term in the Senate in 1992.

State Senate President Gordon Smith, one of Oregon's most prominent Republicans and considered a likely Senate candidate

in the future, urged that Oregonians judge Packwood on more than just the sexual misconduct allegations.

"I personally regret that these things may well have happened, apparently," Smith said. "I do hope that Sen. Packwood would be viewed on the basis of his entire record, which does include many, many good things for the state."

State Sen. Randy Miller, the Oregon GOP chairman, said that he believes Packwood welcomes a chance to talk about the allegations before the committee.

"I think we can all agree that if the charges are found to be true, then we would agree that this is wrongful behavior, and that it's not admirable," Miller said. But, he added, "I don't think there is anything that would be grounds for dismissal from the Senate."

The allegations by Hutton, Heffernan and Byler are included in the report issued by the committee.

Hutton said that in 1980, when she was working for Packwood's campaign, he pulled her toward him in a Eugene parking lot, put his arms around her, kissed her, put his tongue into her mouth and invited her to his hotel room.

Heffernan said that in 1981 or 1982, she was working as a lobbyist in Packwood's office when he squeezed her on the arm, leaned over and kissed her on the mouth.

Byler said that she was working as a restaurant hostess at a Portland hotel in 1970 when Packwood ran his hand up her leg and touched her crotch area.

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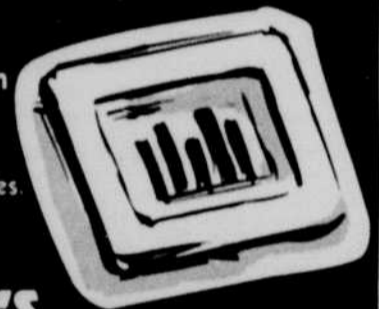
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