

ASUO officers explain workings of student government

■ **SUPPORT:** *Scotten and Banfield encourage students to get involved and make a difference at the University*

By Tom Potter
Student Activities Reporter

Out with the old and in with the new — the new Associated Students of the University of Oregon, that is.

This year, ASUO President Matthew Scotten and ASUO Vice President Glen Banfield say they are trying to make the ASUO more user-friendly.

For those who are new to the University, here is everything you wanted to know about the ASUO president and vice-president:

The ASUO is modeled after the federal government. The Executive Branch consists of the president and vice-president. The Judicial Branch consists of the Constitution Court and the Legislative Branch consists of the Student Senate.

Banfield is the chairman of the Senate, but he stresses he is not a voting member unless a tie-breaker is needed. Banfield's main job is to approve Senate appointees.

The Senate has a hand in the delegation of some student fees throughout the academic year.

"What we try to do in the Senate is represent program needs," he said.

Scotten said in addition to handling student fees, the ASUO also encourages student involvement.

"At the University, we are really lucky in how many opportunities there are," he said.

Students can get involved with any of the groups on campus and are encouraged to do so, considering that \$135 per term of their money goes to incidental fees, Scotten said.

Incidental fees help fund various ASUO student programs.

"As their elected official on campus, I can be really helpful to them," Scotten said. "I'm some-

one who really cares about students.

"I think first and foremost my job is to be an advocate for students. [I'm] being a representative, trying as best as possible to address student needs and concerns."

This year the ASUO has some small internal changes as well. The staff consists of 22 members and some new positions have been added.

A safety advocate has been added as a way to link the Office of Public Safety to students. The vote is meant to create better communication and address some of the students' concerns about OPS, Scotten said.

An environmental advocate has also been added and there will be teams that will work together on larger projects, Scotten said.



SCOTTEN



BANFIELD

Part of the vice president's job is specifically to sit down and talk with students about their concerns, Banfield said. There are also a number of staff members that can help address student concerns.

"A lot of my goals pertain to a social level," Banfield said.

Scotten and Banfield also said they have a lot of projects they are working on. For example, Scotten said they are going to bring local campaigns to campus.

This year is especially important to students because it is a legislative year. There are a lot of issues that will affect students on the ballot, Scotten said.

The grievance process is also being changed to make it more accessible for students. Through the current process, students have to go through five steps before

their complaint can be heard.

The problem with the current system is it discourages students and they just give up rather than addressing their problem, Scotten said.

"[We want to] take out some of the barriers to student rights," Scotten said.

Another project that is being worked on includes trying to get a tuition freeze, he said.

"Glen and I can work our butts off all year, but it doesn't mean anything if we don't have student support," Scotten said.

But the job isn't all work, Scotten said.

"It's also really fun. Glen and I really enjoy what we do," Scotten said. "You get to meet some really cool people."

They also say they encourage students to come in and talk to them.

"We work for you, so come in and say 'hi,' or yell at us," Scotten said.

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Pets have a Detective, now they have a lawyer

By Bettijane Levine
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — If the defendant has wings, fins, fur, tails, scales, paws or claws, there's a good chance its attorney is Michael Rotsten of Encino.

Perhaps the only lawyer in Southern California with an almost exclusively animal clientele, Rotsten says he deals with elephant-sized problems as well as little barks and bites.

And then there are the various oddball occurrences you would never think of until they happen to your animals or to you. Like the woman wearing a clown suit who was hit by a cow. And the pet shop owner charged with illegal possession of freshwater stingrays.

Soon, Rotsten will go to court in Orange County to conclude what has turned out to be a more serious case. It involves an injured 8-year-old Yorba Linda boy and a 4-year-old bull mastiff named Boo.

No one disputes that Boo caused Zachary Anderson Jr., a neighbor, to require multiple stitches after the child entered Boo's dog yard and was "pinned" by the 140-pound pooch.

"But the evidence doesn't substantiate the allegation that the child was bitten," Rotsten says. "It indicates the child sustained injuries from the claws on the dog's paws, and that it was the dog's weight and size that caused

STRANGER THAN FICTION

him to do damage.

"Expert witnesses testified that a dog of that size and power was not trying to kill the child. If he'd wanted to, boom, the child would be dead. The dog pinned the boy, who came into his territory at night, and he did what a bull mastiff is born to do. It was totally explainable."

The judge apparently agreed. It was decided that Boo will not be put to death and that the Orange County Animal Control decision to kill the dog was "not based on the evidence and was clearly an abuse of discretion."

On the other hand, it also determined that Boo was "vicious under law," because he had caused substantial damage to the child.

Boo's owner, Stephen Williams, a CPA who hired Rotsten and has so far spent \$10,000 on the case, says his next goal is to get his family pet out of the cage in which he has languished for nine months.

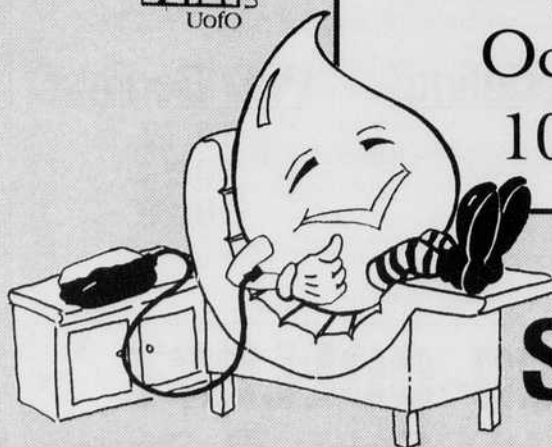
This month, a judge will determine under what conditions the animal can be set free.

The case has brought Rotsten international attention. Calls and e-mail from Europe and around the United States request his advice on animal matters or simply congratulate him for choosing nonhuman clients.

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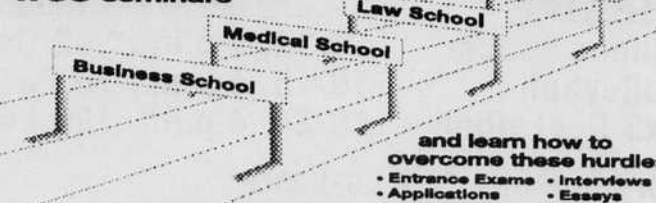


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