

Oregon Daily Emerald



Weather forecast

Today Partly cloudy
High 69, Low 45

Tuesday Sunny
High 73, Low 41

OSPIRG seeks re-establishment

The group hopes to gain student support after being defunded last spring / PAGE 3

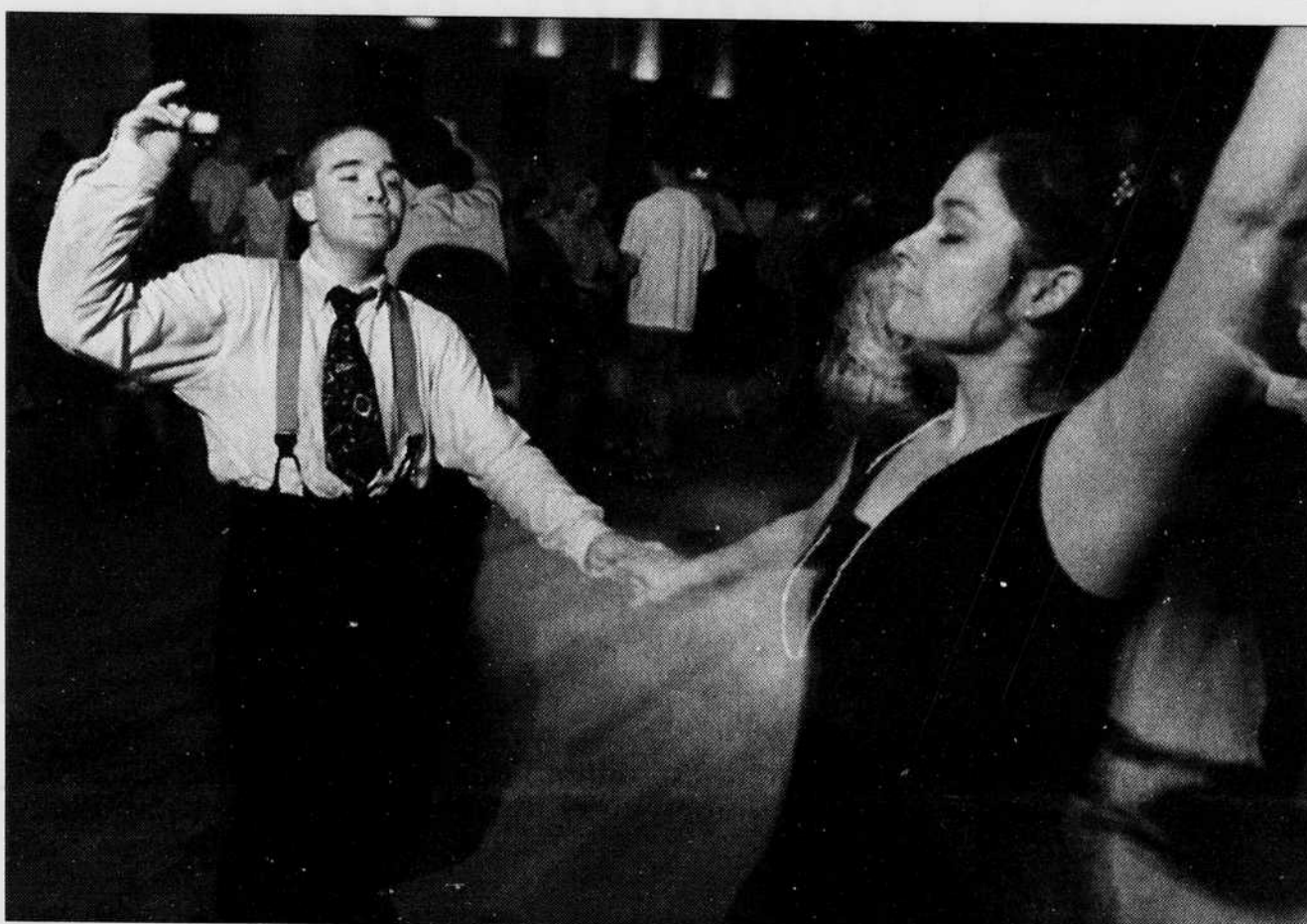
Women's soccer

Ducks could not slide past Portland State, tying 1-1 / PAGE 9



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Matt Hankins/Emerald

Keith Hazleton and dance instructor Denise Steele swing out Saturday night at the EMU ballroom to the retro song stylings of Indigo Swing.

Congress OKs lower interest rate on loans

Students who consolidate their loans before Jan. 31 can take advantage of the 7.46% rate

By Peter Breaden
Oregon Daily Emerald

Students receiving financial aid may breathe easier this year due to a number of changes in their direct loan payments.

Congress approved a number of amendments to the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act that lower interest rates on student loan payments.

The new rate of 7.46 percent is a decrease from the 8.25 percent students usually pay on most direct loans. Students with direct loans must consolidate their loans by Jan. 31, 1999, to be eligible for a lower interest rate on their payments.

Students can pick up an application at the Office of Financial Aid, on the second floor of Oregon Hall.

The total amount allocated, in the form of federal direct loans, has increased almost \$34 million since six years ago, and 2,000 more students have received aid, according to the Office of Financial Aid's Fund Summary.

Nearly half the students at the University use loan money, in part, to pay tuition, which is currently \$3,726 a year for in-state students and \$12,510 for non-resident students, said Ed Vignoul, director of student financial aid.

"I believe in equal educational opportunity regardless of whether parents can afford it," Vignoul said. "People today need more and more education."

A few years ago, the University was one of the first to adopt a direct loan program.

The direct lending program allows students to borrow directly from the federal government through student financial aid instead of using loans from private banks.

Turn to **LOANS**, Page 7

Duckfest brings back swing

Indigo Swing played at the EMU Ballroom as part of Duckfest

By Jeremy Lang
Oregon Daily Emerald

The joint was jumpin', as they say, on Saturday night.

The San Francisco-based group Indigo Swing made sure the EMU Ballroom stayed that way all night long. Both experienced and first-time swingers came out in full force for the event, part of the Duckfest celebration to welcome back students.

The packed ballroom proved that swing is back and very alive in Eugene.

"Swing is really an American art form," said Denise Steele, who led a dance lesson before the free concert. "The clothes, the music and the dance are all part of an artistic era."

The floor was packed front to back prior to the show for dance lessons. Steele ran the crowd through a basic six-step lindy hop, one of the many styles of dance that helped define the big band, jazz style of the 1940s swing era.

"Swing is really an American art form."

Denise Steele
Swing instructor

Turn to **SWING**, Page 6

Health Center recommends that students get hepatitis vaccination

The number of reported cases in Lane County has increased, and many students are in a high risk age group

By Sarah Skidmore
Oregon Daily Emerald

The number of hepatitis A and hepatitis B cases is on a gradual decline at the state level, but in Lane County the number of reported cases has nearly doubled in the past year.

University students are in a high risk category for contracting the hepatitis A and B viruses, according to state health officials. Age group, lifestyle and a higher incidence of reported cases of hepatitis A and hepatitis B in the Lane County area all increase student's risk.

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that can be caused by medication, alcohol or several other agents, according to the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

Although both viruses have serious long-term effects, students are at a much higher risk to contract the hepatitis B virus, according to Lane County Health and Human Services officials. Hepatitis B can also cause serious damage to the liver. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis can result from HBV. The risk of getting liver cancer is 200 times higher if you are a hepatitis B carrier, according to the American Social Health Association.

Hepatitis B is transmitted directly and indirectly through blood and other bodily fluids. It is usually transmitted by sexual contact, but it can also be picked up through mucous membranes and broken

skin.

Some possible ways to contract it include: repeatedly sharing an infected person's razor, toothbrush or earrings; travel to high-risk areas; and use of illicit injectable drugs or contaminated needles used for tattooing or piercing, according to the American College Health Association. Approximately 75 percent of all the reported HBV cases happen to people between the ages of 15 and 39, according to the association.

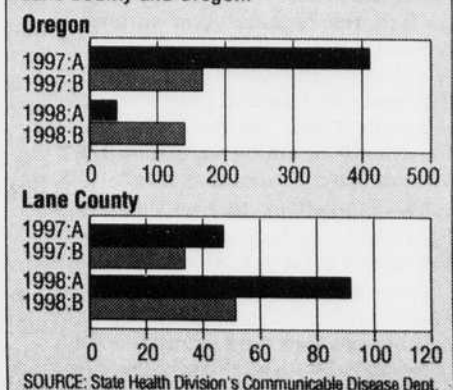
HBV is highly contagious, and in some instances, it has been shown to remain infectious on environmental surfaces for at least a month, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

Symptoms of hepatitis B include: loss

Turn to **HEPATITIS**, Page 4

Hepatitis in Oregon

Number of hepatitis A and B cases reported in Lane County and Oregon.



SOURCE: State Health Division's Communicable Disease Dept.

Matt Garton/Emerald