

Pacific Party optimistic about growing popularity

While still receiving only a small percentage of the votes, support for the 'green' party is rising

By David Ryan
Oregon Daily Emerald

Members of Oregon's Pacific Party say it has been a good election year. They were outspent, outvoted and did not make use of a single opinion poll consultant. They lost every race their candidates ran. And the closest race saw the Pacific Party receiving only 19 percent of the vote.

But across the state, more voters are registering with the Pacific Party. It's a political party with an environmental focus, what is commonly referred to as a "green party." Across the nation, there are now 28 states with Green parties, from the Pacific Party of Oregon to the Delta Greens of

Louisiana.

In the 1996 Presidential election, Pacific Party candidates attracted a little over one percent of the vote in the U.S. Senate election in Lane county. In the most recent election, the U.S. Senate candidate earned a little over three percent.

"We tripled," said Brian Setzler, spokesman for the Pacific Party. "We drew, obviously, from the Democrats or whatever."

In one Portland legislative district, Pacific Party state house candidate Stan Kahn won 19 percent of the vote. Kahn didn't beat the Democratic candidate, but he did beat the Republican candidate by seven percent of the vote.

In the gubernatorial election, Blair Bobier received two percent of the vote statewide. Karyn Moskowitz, U.S. Senate candidate, received three percent of the vote statewide.

Many of the party's candidates had never run for political office before, Setzler said.

"We learned a lot this time," he said. "I mean, we don't have any paid consultants come in and tell us about opinion polls. Polling would help, but that's not our big thing."

The Pacific Party's big things, according to Setzler, are core principles and grassroots volunteers.

"We've gone from 20 to 30 activists to 150 around the state," Setzler said. "At the U of O, the [Pacific Party] web page is up."

Michael Olson, ASUO Student Senate president, created the web site on behalf of the University Green Party volunteers.

"We collectively decided to put this out because in the mainstream media, it's virtually impossible to find news about the Green Party," Olson said.

The University Greens have an active membership of 20 people, he said. The University Greens began operating in the 1996 Presidential campaign to support Ralph Nader, a consumer advocate running on the Pacific Party's presidential ticket, Olson said.

Setzler said Olson is one example of the kind of volunteers the Pacific Party is receiving help from.

"It's just one person catching the wave of personal responsibility," Setzler said. "When people are self-starters and take the initiative, we just grow. I just see the movement continuing to grow and grow."

Oregon and Lane County are not alone in their Green Party's growth. The Delta Greens, based in New Orleans, are seeing better days for their party.

"The big thing here is that we have a huge environmental justice movement," said John Clark,

spokesman for the Delta Greens. "There's a potential alliance between the Green Party and the people that have gotten involved in environmental groups."

The Delta Greens have started four student groups. One is at Tulane University, one is at Layola University, one is at a junior college in Louisiana and another is at a high school in New Orleans.

Although the Delta Greens are located in the deep South, Clark remains optimistic about the party's chances of winning campaign races.

"I'd say there is more of a chance [for Green Party candidates] here than in some Western states," Clark said. "You would never get a Green candidate elected in Utah."

David Ryan covers the Eugene City Council, community groups and politics for the Emerald.

Lecture analyzes US policies on overpopulation, contraception

Changes in federal policies can change overpopulation and consumption behaviors

By Jeremy Lang
for the Emerald

Dr. Norman Myers put a unique political and economic spin on two of the world's major environmental problems: overpopulation and overconsumption. "Politicians don't realize that what's good for the economy is good for the environment as well," he said to some 80 students and community members Friday

night in 150 Columbia.

Myers, British ecologist and biologist, has written 15 books and has been a consultant and policy advisor to the White House, NASA and the United Nations. His visit to the campus was sponsored by the Institute for a Sustainable Environment.

In a lecture entitled, "Environmental Prospects: Breakdown or Breakthrough," Myers emphasized that small policy changes can have positive effects on the global economy and the ecosystem.

Myers cited Kenya as an example of how contraception affects overpopulation in developing nations. In Kenya, the availability of

contraception increased three-fold after 1980, and the fertility rate dropped from 8.3 to 5.4 children per woman.

"Contraception is an effective, inexpensive and very simple solution to this major problem," he said.

But in 1995, the U.S. Congress slashed foreign aid — which enabled Kenya to provide contraception — by 35 percent. As a result, the availability of birth control in Kenya decreased and unwanted pregnancies and abortions increased.

"When we stop and look at it, 35 percent comes out to roughly \$191 million dollars," Myers said.

"That's a single dollar per taxpayer to help solve overpopulation in a major way."

Beyond helping developing nations, Myers said industrialized nations can do plenty to improve their own domestic situations.

Myers said he believes major changes in consumption behavior, such as less automobile usage, will make the biggest difference in saving the environment.

"I do believe that we will see some of these changes in your lifetime," he said.

In the meantime, there are small things that people can do to consume less. The average person

can use household items such as fluorescent light bulbs instead of incandescent bulbs or install solar power panels on their house.

Myers is optimistic about the future of the environment, as long as the government is made aware of its economic oversights and the population works to consume less. He recommended the "simple solution" approach, suggesting that audience members write to Congress with their concerns regarding environmental issues.

"If your Congressman was to get 1,000 letters on his desk tomorrow, he would realize what's going on."

up coming events

FRANK BLACK & MIKE WATT
Nov. 11 WOW Hall

OREGON DANCE PROJECT
Nov. 12 Hult Center

MUDHONEY
Nov. 12-14 WOW Hall

GUYS & DOLLS
Nov. 12-14 Robinson Theater

TO GILLIAN ON HER 37TH BIRTHDAY
Nov. 13-15/19-21 LCC Theater

TRINITY IRISH DANCERS
Nov. 15 Hult Center

LATYRX / BLACKALICIOUS
Nov. 15 Wild Duck

WYMPROV
Nov. 15 & 22 Lord Leebrick Theater

club sports

11/13
Ice Hockey @ Lane County Ice-Fairgrounds 9:00 pm vs. Stanford

11/14
Ice Hockey @ Lane County Ice-Fairgrounds 9:30 pm vs. Stanford

Men's Rugby @ Southbank Field 12:00-5:00 pm

Women's Rugby @ Southbank Field 8:00-12:00 pm

11/15
Women's Ultimate @ Southbank Field 9:00 am -6:00 pm

next week's events...

Sea Kayaking Safety Clinic
Nov. 10 One of the popular aspects of sea kayaking is the ease with which novices can get in and paddle away to great adventures without having to learn many technical skills. That allure can be deadly. The seamanship and safety skills needed to handle dramatically changing paddling conditions take many ongoing hours of practice. This introductory clinic will touch decision making. Specific examples such as kayaking tragedies and near misses will be discussed. Free.
Tuesday, 7:30 pm: EMU Outdoor Program

Exploring the Sea of Cortez
Nov. 12 The vivid blue and rich marine life of the Sea of Cortez stand out against the rugged Baja desert and the Sierra de la Giganta mountain range, characterizing one of the most mysterious and dramatic wild places on earth. The isolated islands along the coast, often called the "Mexican Galapagos," are protected as wildlife sanctuaries, teeming with sea birds, desert animals, and bizarre plants. Dan Geiger, photographer, sea kayaker and O.P. staffer, will share some Baja magic that will leave you eager to pack and head south for a truly amazing winter adventure. Along with inspirational imagery, Dan will touch on resources, logistics, and Baja travel tips. Free!
Tuesday, 7:30 pm: 100 Willamette Hall

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