

Laughter can help relieve stress

Laughter can also strengthen the immune system and reduce the risk of chronic illness

By G. Jaros
Oregon Daily Emerald

There's a line waiting to get into heaven. Satan is walking up and down taking people out of line and throwing them through a door into flames. He makes some wait in a separate line. A man in the back of the line gets curious and asks, "What's with those people you don't throw into the flames?" Satan replies, "They're Oregonians. They're too wet to burn."

Laughter is the best medicine according to many doctors, researchers and stress management experts.

"When I am doing workshops what I tell people is that in terms of disease and chronic illness you cannot beat laughter — well, exercise and laughter," said Leigh Anne Jasheway, who is a stress management expert.

"They are about the two best things you can do for your body in terms of preventing the ravages of stress. 70 and 85 percent of all chronic diseases have stress as a significant component," said Jasheway, who also teaches comedy writing and stand-up comedy at Lane Community College.

Jasheway ran the Wellness Program for the University of Texas Health Science Center for 12 years before deciding to branch out on her own. She was

looking for alternative stress management techniques for herself as well as others. What she found was humor.

"One of the things I discovered was that traditional stress management programs were not really very effective at the job site," Jasheway said. "It's hard for people to sit in a conference room next to their office at lunch and close their eyes and visualize something peaceful. They're more likely to visualize strangling their boss or throwing the fax machine out the window."

Laughter lowers blood pressure and increases circulation, which leads to better memory and creativity by delivering more oxygen to the brain, Jasheway said. It also strengthens the immune system by increasing interferon gamma and killer T-cells, both significant components of the immune system in warding off diseases such as cancer and AIDS. Laughter also creates endorphins in the brain which give a euphoric feeling, and enzymes in the stomach that help prevent gastrointestinal distress.

"The typical 5 year old laughs 400 times a day, the typical adult — 15," Jasheway said. "What that tells us is that our society has this little philosophy that's 'grow up and get serious', and my basic premise is that we need to lighten up about ourselves."

Jasheway suggests that people hang-out with funny people and look for the humor in all things.

It's about being receptive to funny things and laughter, Jasheway said.

"Most people walk by funny things and don't laugh at them because they're not open to the funniness," Jasheway said. "What I tell people is that instead of letting your mind constantly go 'Why me?', which is a typical response during the day when things happen, have your mind ask 'what's funny about this?' If you can just redirect that question there's something funny in everything," Jasheway said.

It's not always easy for students burdened with deadlines, midterms and finals to take time to relax and laugh.

"Just recently I haven't had time to just free my mind and open up to what is out there," said senior Chinese major Sonoyo Ogawa. Ogawa said she laughs about twice a day. "If I had time to relax and observe maybe I would laugh more."

Some students find plenty of time to laugh.

"I laugh at least 50 times a day," said senior business major Kit Blair. "I surround myself with funny and obnoxious people. I have heard that laughter is good for you and I think it's true — I think caffeine helps too."

When Blair is feeling in a rut, he doesn't rely completely on himself to get rid of the blues.

"You want to surround yourself with people who are funny," Blair said. "Laughter's one of those things that is better shared with other people."

Danceability

Continued from Page 1

that no one will be turned away from not being able to pay.

The workshops are used to teach participants how to realize their own strengths and interact with this knowledge in a group.

"You arrive with the tools you have," Alessi said.

The Company will be present-

ing, "Momentum: A Moving Performance," a free program on Feb. 28 at 2 p.m., at the Hult Center's Soering Theater. The presentation will feature eight performers, five of whom are physically disabled.

"The focus is not disability, but contemporary dance," Alessi said. "Come see contemporary dance at the cutting edge."

Special election

Continued from Page 1

will ask the University to stop purchasing Gardenburgers for use in cafeterias. The measure's passage does not require that University housing or administration officials comply with the request.

A fourth measure approved by the court could change the ASUO grievance process with elections complaints, making the process faster.

Several ballot measures — including the measure which prompted ASUO President Geneva Wortman to hold the special election — were rejected from appearing on the ballot by the Constitution Court.

The deadline for resubmission was extended to today by Elections Coordinator Taylor Sturges for the two remaining measures. She cited a lack in the consistency of earlier court decisions for the extension.

One measure earlier rejected by the court would ask students to reinstate funding for OSPIRG. The group's \$147,390 budget was not extended by voters in last spring's general election. The extended deadline will allow resubmissions of revised versions of the ballot measure's wording.

A measure to allow student voting by Duck Web also will be con-

sidered by the court if members of the ASUO Executive choose to submit a new version of the ballot measure by today.

The only measure rejected by the court but not resubmitted was proposed by the College Republicans. The proposed measure asked for voters to disqualify the ASUO Executive's ability to call a special election by requiring a simple majority vote in the Student Senate and approval by the Executive.

The controversy over the legitimacy of the election has also become one of the focus points of the ASUO Executive's critics.

Student Scott Austin, former congressional candidate, filed an injunction Thursday to halt the special election. He is asking the Constitution Court to hold a hearing to decide the election's legitimacy.

Austin claims that the ASUO Executive is relying on a precedent that can only be used in emergencies. The ASUO Constitution only mandates the use of the special election privilege when the ASUO president and vice president's seats become vacant concurrently, or a petition to recall the president or vice president has been approved by the Constitution Court.

EMU Erb Memorial Union



Saturday • Feb. 13
Men's Lacrosse Game

12n-3:30pm • Southbank Field

Women's Volleyball Tournament

8am-7pm • Gerlinger Annex B-54

Sunday • Feb. 14
Men's Lacrosse Game

11am-3pm • Southbank Field



CANCELLED

Outdoor Program

Forest Service Trailhead Fees Debate • Wednesday • Feb 10

Scott Silver has been called to a meeting with the Forest Service Chief in Washington, D.C. on this date. Look for this debate to be rescheduled soon. Sorry for any inconvenience.



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Sunday 12n-3pm

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John Lee Hooker • April 2nd • Hult Center

Bela Fleck & David Grisman • April 10th • Hult Center

Let's Go Bowling & Young Dubliners

Wednesday • Feb. 10

WOW Hall

Queer Film Festival (Lilies)

Thursday • Feb. 11

180 PLC

Les Ballet Trockadero

Friday • Feb. 12

Hult Center

CALOBO

Friday • Feb. 12

WOW Hall

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Robinson Theatre



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