

Oregon Daily Emerald



Weather forecast

Today Showers High 54, Low 45
 Friday Mostly Cloudy High 50, Low 39

Bomb threat

A bomb threat temporarily halted a lecture by Eugene anarchist John Zerzan in Columbia Hall / PAGE 3

Ready Freddie

Freshman Freddie Jones uses his reverse layin to turn the Ducks around / PAGE 7

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Court hears special election arguments



Coordinator Taylor Sturges defends her decisions against Scott Austin's accusations

By Sarah Skidmore and Jim Scripps
 Oregon Daily Emerald

In a proceeding intended to clear the air regarding the special election, Scott Austin still found something that smelled foul.

"There are certain things in this election that don't smell right," Austin said. "It just doesn't smell right. It doesn't smell good and I don't like it."

Wednesday night, a public Constitution Court hearing was held to evaluate two injunctions filed against ASUO president Geneva Wortman and ASUO elections co-

ordinator Taylor Sturges.

The injunctions, filed by Austin, questioned the legality of the special election.

Wortman and Sturges asserted that the special election was held to amend the ASUO Constitution to streamline the spring election process and that no special treatment was given to any group.

In the first injunction, Austin states that Wortman did not have the constitutional power to call a special election. The second injunction questions the legality of Sturges' decision to extend the deadline for ballot measure submissions.

In her closing statement, Wortman said, "We are in no way abusing our power or violating the constitution."

Wortman defended her actions, saying

that as chief executive officer, it was within her duties to call a special election for the good of the student body.

Austin argued that nowhere in the Constitution is such a power detailed.

"There are duties that I do as an ASUO executive daily that are much more than what is detailed in the ASUO Constitution," rebutted Wortman.

The Constitution states that a special election is mandated when the seats of both the vice-president and president are concurrently vacant, when an executive seat needs to be recalled or when a sitting president is being impeached.

The special election deadline had been set

"There are certain things in this election that don't smell right. ... It doesn't smell good and I don't like it."

Scott Austin
 Student activist

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Magazine features UO bicycle taxi

Bicycling magazine focuses on the University's system of alternative transportation

By Felicity Ayles
 Oregon Daily Emerald

It is safe to say that in Eugene, as in any college town, bicycles are a huge part of life. For some people, they are the only possible form of transportation.

That's why the University tandem bicycle taxi is making national news this month. The taxi was featured in an article in the "transportation shorts" section of Bicycling magazine.

"I'd never heard of tandem taxi service, and I thought it would intrigue our readers," said Scott Martin, "shorts" editor.

Martin said a freelance writer first asked him about the topic and said it was "a nice light topic with interesting implications for transportation."

Bicycling magazine has mentioned Eugene before as one of the "Best Cycling Cities," but Martin said he didn't know if the magazine had ever mentioned the University or any other pedal-powered taxis before.

Martin said the article about the University was an asset to the magazine.

"It was a good read and may open their eyes to transportation alternatives," he said.

The idea for the taxi was first developed by University Bicycle Coordinator David Niles.

He piloted the idea for the taxi at the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta and then brought it back to the University and offered it to students, faculty and staff.

Niles said the taxi has been featured in a few different magazines, and a local television station once reported on it.

"It may be the widest circulation of anything we've been featured in," Niles said of the Bicycling article.

The taxi has been around since spring quarter 1997, when it began as a temporary project. Based on the success of that project, Niles said, he continued the taxi service.

In the winter months, Niles said, the taxi is not as busy as in the spring, but he



The campus' unique tandem bicycle service has gained notoriety through an article in Bicycling magazine.

Court rules OSPIRG's funding legal

Opponents contend that use of student fees to fund the group violates the First Amendment

By Kristina Rudinskas
 Oregon Daily Emerald

An old debate over student fees has been unleashed because of the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling Tuesday. The circuit court upheld a lower court's ruling that allows student incidental fee money to fund OSPIRG.

The court dismissed the appeal of a 1996 decision in Rounds vs. Oregon State Board of Higher Education.

Plaintiffs and students from the Rounds case argued they had ideological and political differences with the purpose of Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group. The plaintiffs also said student funds shouldn't be used off-campus to fund a statewide group.

The appeal has been pending against the University and ASUO for three years.

The ruling sets another precedent for student control over the incidental fee. The fee finances ASUO programs, athletic tickets, the EMU, the Student Health Center, student child care and other student services.

Student PIRGs are environmental, consumer and social advocacy groups that have chapters on university campuses across the nation.

"Today is a victory for students," said ASUO President Geneva Wortman. "It's a victory for student control of student fees."

Owen Brennan Rounds, the plaintiff, said he believes the decision will send the issue to the Supreme Court.

Rutgers University in New Jersey and the New York State University have also had cases pending against student financing of a state PIRG.

"This is the first time our side has lost at the circuit court level," Rounds said. "This sets a constitutional imbalance which sets it up for the Supreme Court."

According to a brief by H.E. Fritz von Carp, filed in 1995 as one of the plaintiffs in

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