

PERSPECTIVES

Sore losers

The Elections Board decides to recall the elections in light of grievances filed by a supporter of the runners-up



Giovanni Salimena/Emerald

Have you ever really wanted something and didn't get it, like trying out for a play, a sports team or applying for a killer job? Everyone has experienced this kind of disappointment in one sense or another, but it's how you deal with it that shows your strength of character and maturity.

ASUO Executive candidates Wylie Chen and Mitra Anoushiravani won the primary election by more than 250 votes over their nearest competition, which made them the new ASUO president and vice president, respectively. Not so fast.

A grievance filed by someone closely affiliated with the runners-up claimed that Chen and Anoushiravani were guilty of campaign violations because they may have distributed leaflets in residence halls without following proper procedure.

The ASUO Elections Board believed this grievance was severe enough to require a revote in the general election.

It appears that Dan Reid and Matt Swanson, the runners up, are sore losers who cannot let go of the fact that they lost by a 20 percent margin. This is not exactly what you would dub a close call. Nothing will be accomplished by recalling the vote except for making those who cannot face disappointment look bad.

Reid and Swanson have not only asked to throw out the results of the primary, but to disqualify Chen and Anoushiravani from the executive race.

It is reasonable to recall elections for appropriate reasons, such as someone tampering with votes or somehow skewing the numbers, but it's hard to believe that fliers distributed in the residence halls caused 250 students to suddenly change their minds.

This isn't the first time this has happened in student government. Last year, more than 10 grievances were filed, which delayed the results until all grievances were heard. Although we streamlined the grievance process in the special election last term, it appears the problem has not gone away.

Given an undesirable outcome, should candidates be able request a recall on a whim? If sore losers lose again in the general elections, will we once again delay the results of the election until these grievances are heard?

Yes, distributing fliers in the dorm is a violation of the elections rules, according to the board.

But two things must be considered first and foremost: the good of the student body and whether the results of the election were skewed by the violation?

First, it is not in the students best interest to revote. Students have already made their voices heard.

Second, this violation could not be responsible for a 20 percent victory and should not be found to have skewed votes.

The Elections Board was wrong in its decision to put the executive back on the ballot and disgruntled runners-up are wrong for requesting it in the first place. It is poor sportsmanship and a growing precedent at the University—one we can certainly do without.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Thumbs



THUMBS UP

To family matters: President Clinton has proposed legislation that will give parents new ground to sue employers who discriminate against them for tending to their family's needs.

To accountability: A military review of the fatal ski gondola accident in Italy resulted in tighter flight restrictions for U.S. aviators in foreign-based training missions.



THUMBS DOWN

To the sentencing of Jack: Doctor Kevorkian was sentenced to 10 to 15 years in prison for the assisted suicide/second degree murder of Thomas Youk, although Youk's family and the man himself were fully in favor of the physician assisting in the suicide. Jack, you should have set up practice in Oregon.

To tests: Currently, promoters and World Championship Wrestlers are fighting the Legislature for a bill that would exempt wrestlers from the mandatory drug testing rule, which requires all athletes to be tested before they can compete in this state. Why stop there?

Letters to the Editor

Faculty member speaks

Over a 27-year period, OSPIRG has provided students with a first-hand education about crucial environmental and other public-interest issues through research and action. Culturally, it has provided a space where students can become active agents taking on powerful anti-environmental interests, instead of passively accepting "the way things are."

Dan Goldrich
Professor, political science

Change off campus

I just wanted to take a moment to voice my support for OSPIRG. I'm under the impression that some students on this campus do not support the re-establishment of OSPIRG, but I hope those who are undecided on the subject will take a moment and consider some of the many positive elements of the organization.

I have been involved in various student groups over the past two years, and every time one of these groups asked for support from the students at OSPIRG we have received it.

This support ranges from participation in a rally or event to helping us with publicity. I harbor no reservations in saying that the students who are in OSPIRG are some of the most dedicated and caring people I know around here.

Many who criticize OSPIRG cite the fact that the money we the students fund them with doesn't stay on campus. And perhaps this is true to some degree, but neither you nor I can "fight the power" alone, and it takes organizations such as OSPIRG to rally for student rights, civil rights and environmental rights at the state and federal level in order for progress to be made. This group is a vital component in the politics of change.

Not only is it necessary for progressive, positive organizations to work for change at the campus level but at the other levels, as well. This is why I urge the voting students of this campus to vote in support of OSPIRG this week.

Jessica Billingslea
Political science

Fees like taxes

University students appear to be on

their way to becoming our newest tax objectors. They sound so petty with all this new hullabaloo on campus about a conservative cause.

Don't they realize that the whole list of their student fees is just like our U.S. tax system? When you live within a society, you pay taxes for the common good. This makes the whole state and country viable.

I have to pay for the humongous Pentagon and the mad Star Wars program, even though I hate to see half of my taxes wasted there.

You can become a tax objector. Generally we all pay for our justice system. The line-up of student fees is similar: men pay some of women's services and vice versa. And all pay for the now embattled OSPIRG, which is vitally needed to keep our environment clean and functioning. Why is this liberal? Who wants to live in a dirty world to save a few bucks? On what principle is this based?

Hilde Cherry
Eugene

CORRECTION

In the April 16 story "Chen, Anoushiravani claim ASUO Executive," Dan Reid's name was misspelled. The Emerald regrets the error.

LETTERS POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be limited to 250 words. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, clarity, grammar, style and libel. Letters may be dropped off at EMU Suite 300.