

Dorms

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But it was money that ultimately helped make up her mind.

"My roommate and I added up the cost of rent and then budgeted liberally on food and entertainment. It is still cheaper to live in our apartment, especially because the cost of housing went up and the new standard meal plan is 16 meals instead of 19."

Last year, it cost \$5,100 for a student to live in a standard double-occupancy residence hall, including the 19 meal plan, which was standard last year. This year, the same room with the standard 16 meal plan cost \$5,350.

Students would pay \$4,500 to live off-campus if they paid \$400 for rent and utilities, and \$100 for groceries and incidentals each month, for the nine month school year.

Allen Gidley, director of business affairs for University Housing, blamed the housing price increase on slight inflation and higher food costs. He added that students never have to pay higher housing prices to cover repairs or improvements.

"We work minor repairs and improvements into our budget each year. The law also requires us to keep a Building Repair Reserve for projects in the \$40-50,000 range. Anything bigger than that, we have to raise the money from outside

sources," Gidley said.

But some students do agree strongly with the "dungeon dorm" label, particularly those who live in the Bean Complex. Of the halls on the main campus, Bean has the smallest rooms and windows and is the farthest away from classrooms.

"I really don't like it [in Bean]," said Russell Choi, an undeclared freshman who lives in one of the Bean halls. There seems to be music blasting all the time despite quiet hours and I really hate being so far from campus."

"We're also a big party hall. I like to party, but not all the time. I need quiet and study time too."

Choi did say that the actual furnishings in the rooms are "really nice," including new closets and desks. But he added that it's hard to enjoy them with such limited space. "My roommate and I have all this stuff and there just isn't anywhere to put it," he said.

Choi currently does not know if he will live in the dorms next year or find an apartment. He said he might even consider living in Bean next year, depending on what his friends are doing.

Jensen said, overall, dorm life has not prepared him for living on his own but he still feels ready. He expects to graduate this spring, but if he has to come back for a fifth year, he said he wouldn't live in the halls again.

Gas tax hike will go to voters next

By Brad Cain
The Associated Press

SALEM, Ore.— Opponents of the Legislature's 5-cent-a-gallon gasoline tax hike said Monday they have gathered enough signatures to block the increase from taking effect as scheduled Oct. 23.

The successful signature drive means the gas tax plan instead will be placed before voters next May in what's expected to be an expensive election battle over the future of Oregon's road system.

It takes about 45,000 signatures to refer a legislative measure to the ballot, and Anne O'Ryan of the Oregon/Idaho American Automobile Association said Monday the group already has rounded up about 54,000 signatures.

"We want people to keep turning in signatures, because we want to send a message that's loud and clear that Oregonians deserve an opportunity to vote on this unfair tax," O'Ryan said.

The Auto Club could support a gas tax hike to expand and repair Oregon's road system, O'Ryan said, but opposes the Legisla-

ture's plan because it changes the way trucks are taxed.

The deadline for turning in the signatures is Oct. 22.

Oregon Taxpayers United, the anti-tax increase group headed by Bill Sizemore, has collected an additional 6,000 signatures to help refer the gas tax to the ballot, OTU spokeswoman Becky Miller said.

OTU opposes the gas tax plan on grounds that it's too large, while the Auto Club's complaint is that the Legislature's proposal would replace the state's weight-mile taxes on trucks with a diesel tax.

Truckers say the weight-mile tax is costly and cumbersome to administer, but the Auto Club says basing truck taxes on weight and travel is the best way to compensate for trucks' wear on the road system.

Pat McCormick, spokesman for a coalition of business and government interests that support the gas tax, predicted that Oregon voters will hear quite a bit about the issue in coming months.

"It will be a very high profile

"It likely will be one of the more expensive campaigns Oregon has seen."

**Pat McCormick
Spokesman**

campaign, and it likely will be one of the more expensive campaigns Oregon has seen," McCormick said.

He said the thrust of the campaign will be that Oregon's gas tax, which now stands at 24 cents a gallon, hasn't been raised since 1991 and that in that time the state's roads have become increasingly worn and congested.

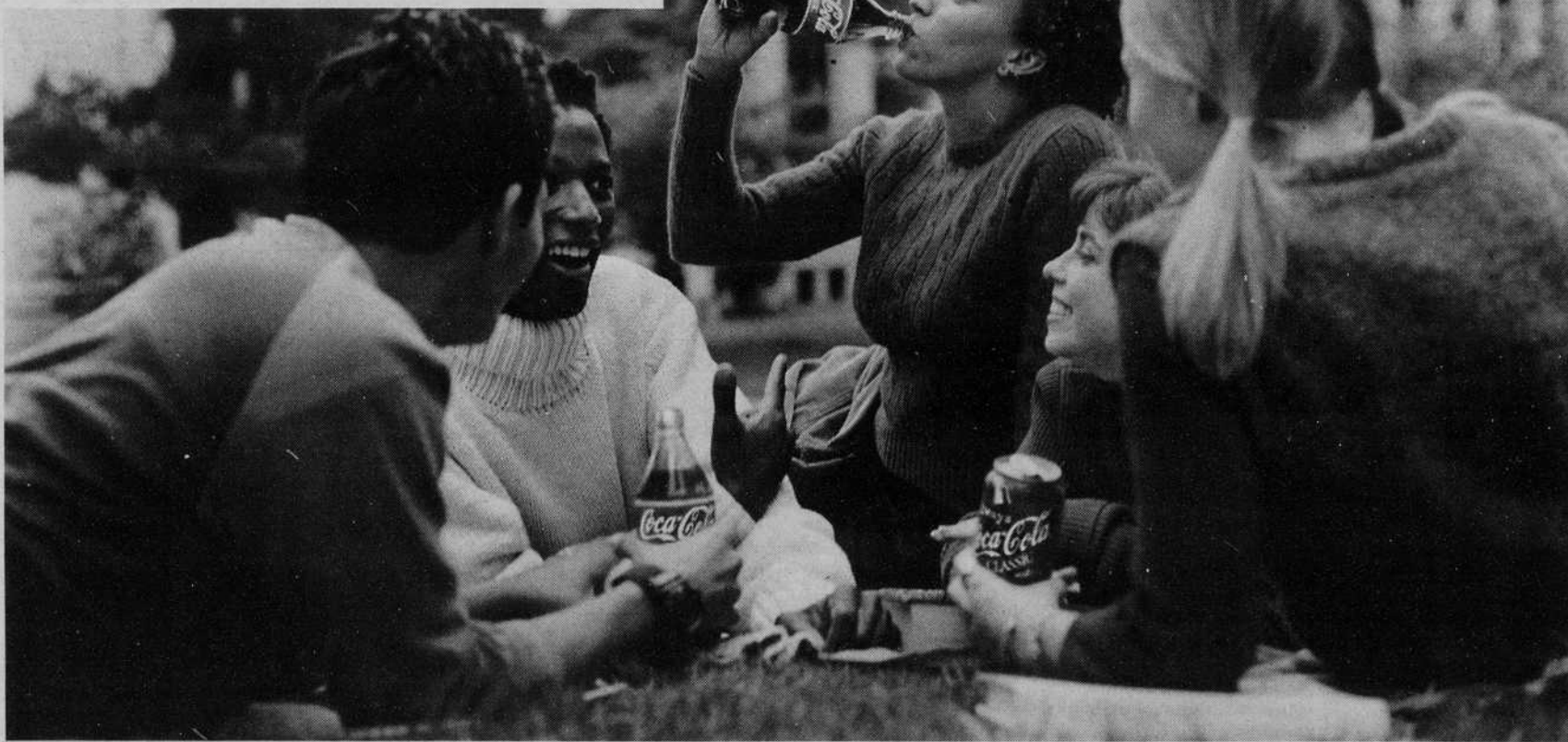
"We think people are very concerned about the problems of poor roads and unsafe driving conditions," McCormick said.

O'Ryan said the Auto Club also is worried about deteriorating roads but wants to make sure cars and trucks pay their fair share of road damage.

"What we are hearing is that people think this tax package is unfair," she said.

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