

Police believe missing woman took own life

■ Linda Bovee vanished without a trace Oct. 11, now police believe they have recovered her body

By Brian Goodell
Oregon Daily Emerald

A body believed to be that of Linda Bovee, a Eugene woman missing since Oct. 11, was discovered Saturday at the Moon River Reservoir in Harney County. Eugene Police Detectives Jim Michaud and Greg Reeves announced at a press conference Monday afternoon that they believe Bovee took her own life.

Although the autopsy performed Monday was inconclusive, detectives on the case made a tentative identification based on the clothing found on the body, the body's proximity to Bovee's car, and the fact that no one is currently missing in Harney County.

"We're confident that this is Linda Bovee's body," Michaud said. "But the death certificate will not be signed out until a toxicology report can be done."

Police cannot positively identify the body as Bovee's until cause of death is determined. The toxicology report, which will not be completed for another six weeks, will determine if Bovee used any substances in her suicide attempt. Police suspect the cause of death is asphyxia due to drowning, but are reluctant to say for sure.

Detectives believe Bovee

drove herself to Harney County, placed rocks in her backpack to weight herself down and drowned in the Moon River Reservoir.

"There were no signs of foul play or trauma to the body," Reeves said. "The theory is that she voluntarily went to one of the most desolate places in Oregon so that nobody would find her."

Monday's autopsy was performed in Multnomah County. Information about the autopsy remained secret until the detectives could notify the Bovee family about any findings.

"As soon as we knew something we got a hold of Doug [Bovee's husband]," Reeves said.

Dr. Doug Bovee wanted to be available at the press conference because he had received many phone calls about his wife. Doug Bovee admitted his wife had some problems but said he did not realize she was in trouble.

"It's a mystery of life," he said. "For some reason she was unable to reach out. That's the tragedy."

The Bovee family made plans for a funeral service this Thursday at 1:30 p.m. at the Unity of the Valley Church in Eugene.

Doug Bovee noted that his wife's car, a dark blue Subaru station wagon, had a bumper sticker that read: "Let Peace Begin With Me."

"Maybe that's her way of looking for peace," he said.

ANWR

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to an elementary school with many other children of oil employees. In this setting, she grew up believing that the oil industry was helping the people, as well as the economy, of Alaska.

"With the oil industry, people love it or they hate it. I grew up loving it, with the idea that companies like BP and the Atlantic Richfield Co. were great companies making our lives better," she said.

In high school, her views on the oil industry and ANWR began to change. She said she now thinks Alaska's environment and economy will suffer if drilling is allowed in the Coastal Plain.

"Opening up ANWR for drilling might not hurt the wildlife, but there's so much we don't know for sure. We don't even know for sure how much oil is in the Coastal Plain, because it's protected," Pursell said.

Cam Toohey is the executive director of Arctic Power, a non-profit group that represents the oil industry's stance on the ANWR issue. He agreed that there's no way to know for certain how much oil is there, but said that research projects on the area lead him to believe there is a sizable amount under the surface waiting to be drilled.

"The U.S. Geological Survey performed estimates on the area using extremely safe exploratory 3-D technology," Toohey said.

Toohey said he is also certain the area could be drilled without harming the environment based on positive evidence from the construction of the pipeline and from the last major drilling site,

Prudhoe Bay, west of ANWR.

He added that the number of caribou in Prudhoe Bay has actually increased because they stay near to the oil wells, which their predators won't come near.

Pursell is skeptical that an oil company could run a clean drilling site that wouldn't harm the wildlife.

"There will be pollution problems. There's no way around it. From January 1997 to March 1998, BP reported 104 oil spills," she said.

Dan Ritzman, a climate campaigner for Greenpeace, said the organization worries that a drilling mistake by the oil companies could hurt not only animals like the caribou but the natives who depend on them.

"The Coastal Plain is the biological heart of ANWR. The native Gwich'in Indians in the area are called the Caribou People. They depend on those herds for hunting, and drilling could upset that," Ritzman said.

Even if the area could be drilled safely, Pursell said she has mixed feelings whether ANWR's oil will solve Alaska's deeper economic troubles.

"If there is a huge amount of oil there, new jobs will be created and it will be a big boom to the Alaskan economy, but only for a short time. As the oil runs out those jobs will disappear and a recession will occur. It's happening right now in Prudhoe Bay," she said. "Oil is just not a stable thing to build our economy on."

Pursell's stepfather, Tom Hyatt, agreed that ANWR drilling could potentially damage Alaska's economy, but remains in favor of opening the Coastal Plain. He said when oil was discovered

in Prudhoe Bay, mistakes were made and an artificial economy formed.

"The oil companies offered high wages to construction workers to build the site and local businesses raised wages to compete. Once construction was complete, the economy was high without as much revenue coming in," Hyatt said.

However, he thinks those problems can be avoided if everyone learns from past mistakes and takes a more cautious economic approach.

"Alaska's economy has always been boom or bust. I just hate to see any resource wasted," he said.

Congress now has the responsibility to decide what will happen to ANWR. In 1995 the House and Senate passed a bill to open the Coastal Plain, but the president vetoed the bill. Frank Baker, External Affairs officer for BP, said the company isn't lobbying on the issue and probably won't until after the 2000 presidential election.

"Our stance remains to open the area, but now it's up to Congress," he said.

Pursell said she is unsure what would be a good compromise between the environmental and oil concerns, but remains certain that unless more information on the area is collected, the benefits of the oil don't outweigh the long-term benefits of protecting the Coastal Plain's wildlife.

"ANWR is more than just an acronym of a place few people have ever been to. We as human beings don't have a right to open every single area of the planet for development."

Calendar

The Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) invites University students to visit Smokey the Bear on his tour around the country to promote the preservation of roadless areas in our national forests. Smokey will be in the EMU on the Fishbowl Terrace from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information call Mike Linman at 346-4377.

Students in the Human Rights Alliance will simulate a workday in a sweatshop by spending fourteen hours sewing in a production line to raise awareness about the inhuman working conditions in apparel factories. 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EMU Amphitheater, 1222 E. 13th Ave. For more information call 346-4356.

Exhibition: Master of Fine Arts painting group show by Julie Nuthals, Erik Shearer, Elizabeth Reagh Chatchawan Nilsikul and Wesley Hurd, and MFA ceramics by Justine Pinckard. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., weekdays. LaVerne Krause

Gallery, Lawrence Hall, 1190 Franklin Blvd. Free. For information, call (541) 346-2057 or 346-3610.

"Applying for a Master's Degree in Social Work" 3:30 p.m. Century Room E, Erb Memorial Union, 1222 E. 13th Ave. Free. For more information call Academic Advising, 346-3211

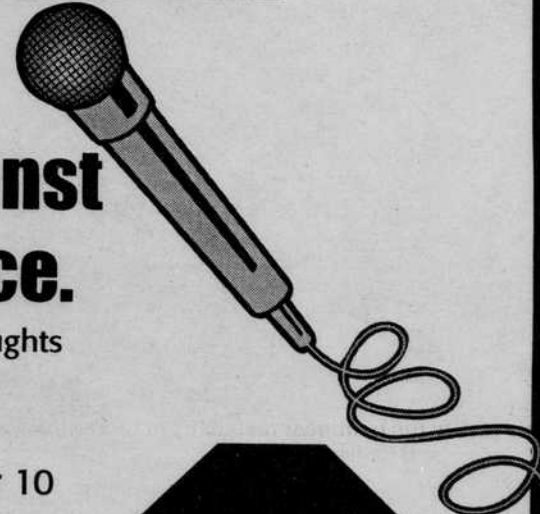
Christians Uniting in Prayer for the University Community. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Century Room D, Erb Memorial Union, 1222 E. 13th Ave. Free. Sponsored by the Eugene Christian Fellowship.

Teleconference: "Buying Recycled: The Real Story About Cost, Availability and Quality" features national recycling expert Richard Keller as well as businesses and government agencies from WasteWise and Buy Recycled Business Alliance. 8 to 10 a.m. Media Services Studio A, Knight Library, 1501 Kincaid St. Free. For information, call Karyn Kaplan, (541) 346-1529.



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