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Perspectives

Oregon Daily
Emerald

In my last column I made a plea to you, the students of the University, to give me your advice in my pursuit of being a better columnist. Much to my dismay, I only received five letters in response. I had allotted countless hours to read all the wonderful ideas that you had. Instead, it took me five minutes. Mind you, that is not counting the time that it took for me to beat someone's Tetris challenge that I received in the batch.

I am very grateful to those people who did actually take the time to write me. But to all you other people, tsk tsk tsk.



Mason West

I have feelings too, you know. And so, like a dog with my tail between my legs, I turned to the columnists of yesteryear to guide me. And there I found Robert Funk.

Who is this Robert Funk, you ask? I'm not really sure, but judging by his picture I'm sure he was

a hit with all the ladies. I stumbled upon his column in the Sept. 17, 1950, issue of the Emerald. This was the beginning of that school year and Bob's first column of the year (as it says under his photo). Coincidentally, that was also the day that the EMU opened its doors for the first time.

Bob wrote his column about what a columnist typically writes his first column about. He tells how we comment about how odd things must seem for the new freshmen and about how he will give them comforting words of wisdom with a certain paternal authority. Bob then goes on to say that the words of wisdom are a bunch of hooy and that college is hard.

I've got to go with Funky on that one. Even though I am but a lowly freshman, I too have been feeling the pressures of 10-page papers and 300-level classes.

Bob also speaks about how in his previous year writing for the paper, he made up lots of new words to suit his purposes. I didn't know we could do that! So in light of this new ability, whenever I think that something is really cool I will call it "booley." And although I'm a little hesitant to ask you for anything again, if you want to use the phrase here and there I'm sure that would help it catch on.

According to Bob, we columnists typically lay out the kind of things that we will be writing about for the rest of the year. I was quite relieved that Bob agreed with me on the foolishness of this. He acknowledges the simple nature of columnists when he

says, "You forget what you said you were going to write about, and can't find the paper you said it in, and people stop speaking to you at breakfast because they think you've been trying to mislead them."

Well, I certainly don't want to get the silent treatment while I'm eating my Count Chocula. That would be very "rutny," which is another word — meaning "lame" — that I have just invented. Hee hee, this is fun.

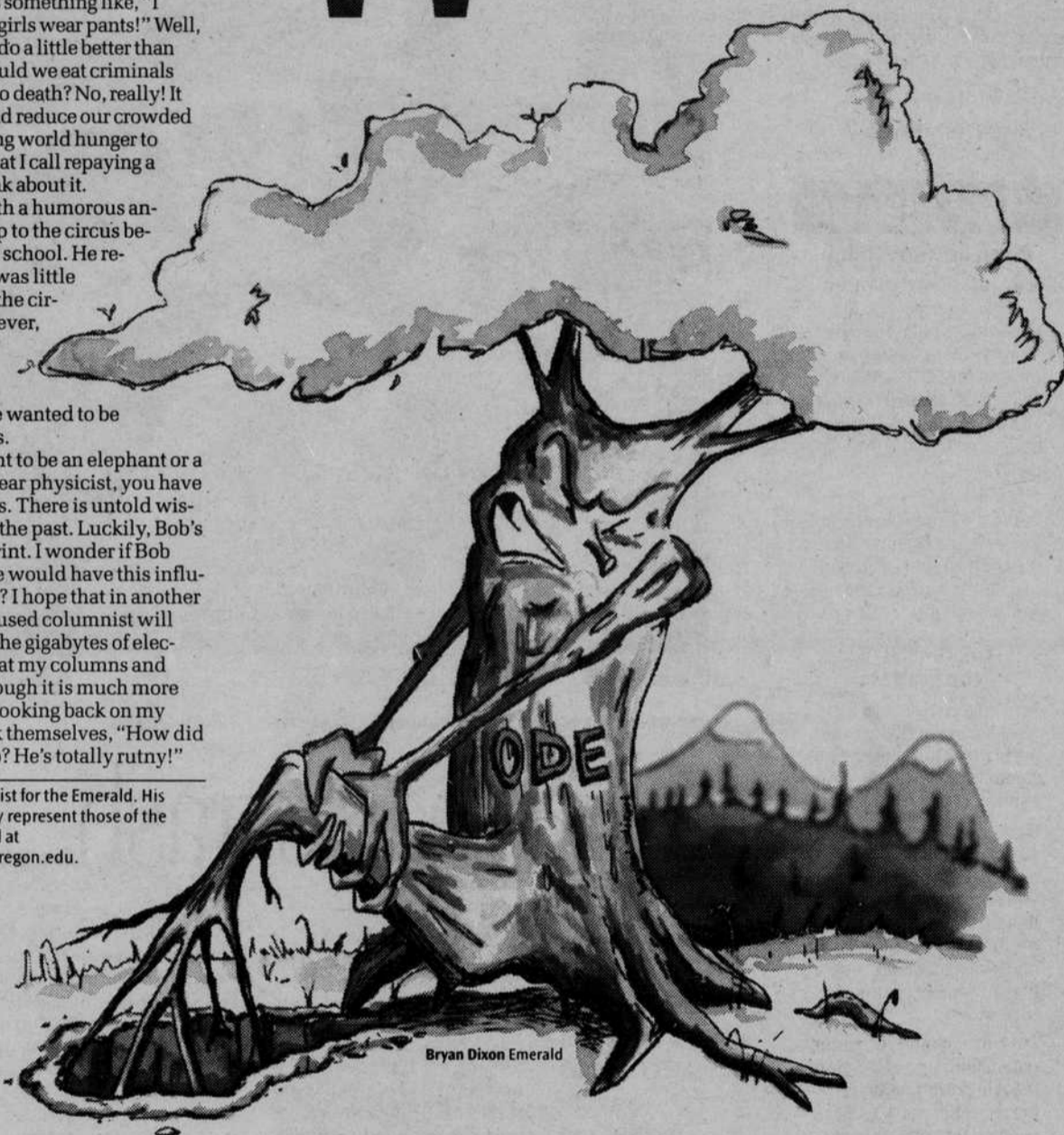
After we have dispersed with these formalities, Bob states that "we will become rash and say something untraditional." Well, I wager that saying something untraditional for Bob was something like, "I think we should let girls wear pants!" Well, I'm going to have to do a little better than that. Here we go: Could we eat criminals who are sentenced to death? No, really! It would save cows and reduce our crowded prisons while solving world hunger to boot! Now that's what I call repaying a debt to society. Think about it.

Bob closes up with a humorous anecdote about his trip to the circus before coming back to school. He remembers when he was little and wanted to join the circus. His mom, however, wasn't too enthusiastic. But Bob didn't want to be an acrobat or a clown. He wanted to be one of the elephants.

Whether you want to be an elephant or a columnist or a nuclear physicist, you have to respect your roots. There is untold wisdom in the voice of the past. Luckily, Bob's was preserved in print. I wonder if Bob ever thought that he would have this influence on the present? I hope that in another 50 years some confused columnist will look back through the gigabytes of electronic information at my columns and find wisdom. Although it is much more likely that anyone looking back on my columns would ask themselves, "How did this idiot get the job? He's totally rutny!"

Mason West is a columnist for the Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent those of the staff. He can be reached at mwest1@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

WISDOM OF THE AGES



Ensuring diversity is in our best interest

On Thursday, Feb. 24, 2000, the ASUO Executive received the incidental fee recommendation passed by the ASUO Student Senate. The initial budget recommendations were put together by the Athletic Department Finance Committee, the EMU Board and the Programs Finance Committee. The budgets will now be approved and signed by us, the ASUO Executive, and sent to University President Dave Frohnmayer.

We are approving a total student incidental fee of \$6,011,174 for the 2000-2001 academic year, not including upcoming ballot measures. Our budget provides endless services and programs that improve our educational experience, such as subsidized sports tickets, EMU services and more than 90 student programs.

One of the major highlights of this year's budget is the inclusion of a full-time director in the Multicultural Center. In the past three years, the MCC has been one of the most effective programs in the ASUO. This

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Wylie Chen & Mitra Anoushiravani

MCC director, which is long overdue, will provide continuity within the MCC, empower students to advocate on the local, state and national levels and enhance the students' efforts of ensuring diversity on our campus through the ASUO.

The MCC has played an invaluable role in enhancing diversity here. It has brought nationally renowned speakers to our campus, such as Yolanda King (daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.), Arun Gandhi (grandson of Mohatma Gandhi), educator and activist bell hooks and civil rights activist Tim Wise. This spring the

MCC will be bringing in activist and actor Edward James Olmos and former leader of the Black Panther Party, Bobby Seale, to honor retired professor Dr. Edwin Colman. Along with exceptional programming, the MCC has advocated for policy changes within our University. MCC staffers are also currently working on the base for an institutional plan for diversity that will set goals and a vision for the next five years.

The MCC director is vital to the betterment of the ASUO and the enhancement of diversity on our campus. The director will be able to provide the necessary tools to support the MCC through expansion and growth, which in turn will improve our entire campus community.

In addition to the MCC director budget expansion, the Oregon Student Association (the organization that represents students at the state level), has increased its budget to include an Oregon Students of Color Coalition Field Organizer on its staff. The position will provide statewide

support for students as we advocate for the issues of students of color.

As the ASUO Executive, we believe that we must enhance and embrace diversity on our campus to help each other grow and learn in order to achieve the best intellectual and educational environment at the University. We believe that the aforementioned budget increases supports student ideals.

We are genuinely excited to approve a budget that, for the most part, supports the student needs on campus. It is our objective every year to provide an incidental fee budget that ensures "the cultural and physical development of students." We are confident that the 2000-2001 budget testifies to our credence and is in the best interest of the student body.

These are the opinions of the ASUO Executive, Wylie Chen and Mitra Anoushiravani. They can be reached at 346-3724, asuopres@gladstone.uoregon.edu or asuovp@gladstone.uoregon.edu. Their opinions do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Emerald.

CORRECTION

In the Emerald's endorsements for ASUO ballot measures (ODE, Feb. 28), the reasoning behind the "no" endorsement for Measure 5, International Resource Center, should have read, "The Programs Finance Committee only gave the International Student Association \$3,345 of the \$6,045 it was requesting for the International Resource Center." The Emerald regrets the error.