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A green Halloween party

■ The Green Party brings the bash to the University as a fundraiser for Ralph Nader's presidential campaign

By Mason West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Ah, Halloween. A time for sweets, spooks and — politics? Although the combination of costumes and candidates may seem unlikely, supporters of presidential candidate Ralph Nader are making it happen — and at the University, nonetheless.

The Green Party is hosting a costume party fundraiser Sunday open to the public to promote awareness about the Nader campaign and other party issues.

This unorthodox function is just another aspect of the grassroots campaign that the Green Party is running. By focusing on real personal connections instead of dollar signs, party members such as office manager and volunteer coordinator Richard Alevizos are carrying their message forward.

"We're looking for people to make an effort and get people to vote," Alevizos said.

Mike Meyer, the event producer and a local DJ, said he thinks this event serves as a way to shake things up.

"It's kind of bucking the big media forces to let them know we're there," Meyer said.

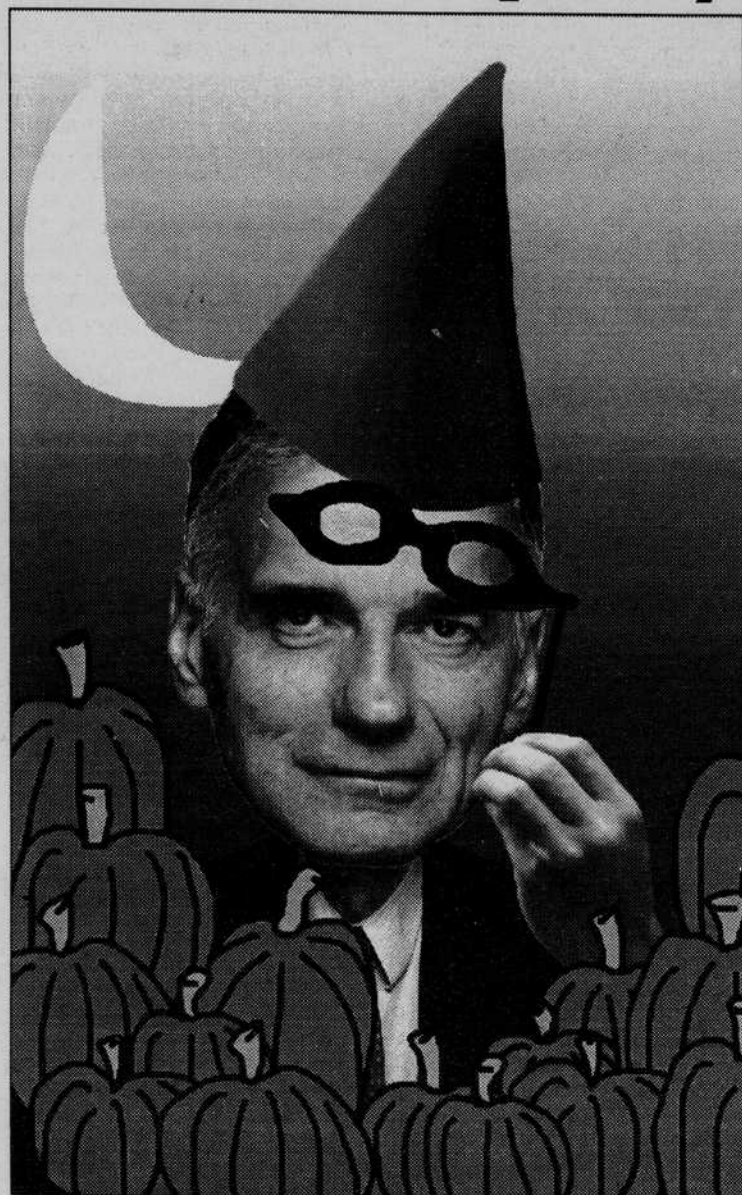
Meyer is weary of the lack of media attention that has been given to Nader. He said he thinks the way the Republicans and Democrats dominate what the public sees and reads is unjust to other options, such as the Green Party.

"Our cause is a fight to gain our democracy back because Nader has been censored out of this campaign," Meyer said.

But this event is not trying to focus on any feelings of neglect that members of the Green Party may have. In fact, Meyer hopes it will make people forget about the bad things altogether.

"I'm hoping for a festive atmosphere to celebrate our successes," Meyer said.

The successes of the party are substantial. For example, during the last election, Nader received as much 25 percent of the vote in certain areas in Eugene. Statistics like these have caused the party to make optimistic



Russ Weller Emerald

projections for as much as 75 percent of the vote in the same areas during the next election. Numbers like these take their campaign from stirring up the barrel to having a valid chance at winning, Alevizos said.

Alevizos attributes this success to the grassroots nature of the Nader campaign.

"What I find really curious is [that] these two campaigns [Bush and Gore] have spent way more money than any other campaign in history, but they're still having trouble getting people to vote for them," he said.

Even though the Nader campaign may not have the big budget, it can still bring out some big names.

Headlining the fundraiser is author Ken Kesey, along with his companions, The Merry Pranksters.

"Our band will be playing a cadenza for Nader," Kesey said. "And like Nader, we aren't playing to win, just to play."

Kesey was drawn to this cause by contact with the man himself, Ralph Nader.

"He's tall, intense and somehow funny," Kesey said.

The fundraiser will be Sunday at 8 p.m. in Agate Hall. Tickets can be purchased at CD World, the EMU ticket office and the Lane County Nader headquarters at 228 W. 11th. All profits go to the campaign.

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