

Oregon Daily Emerald

An independent newspaper



Making their mark

The Oregon wrestling team is No. 10 after taking on top competition over the break. **PAGE 7**

Money matters

The Programs Finance Committee doles out an 11 percent increase from last year's budget. **PAGE 3**

WEATHER TODAY



RAIN
high 50, low 37

SINCE 1900 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON EUGENE, OREGON

Chavez rescinds bid amid legal questions

By Laura Meckler
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Linda Chavez withdrew her bid to be secretary of labor Tuesday, saying that controversy over an illegal immigrant who once lived with her had become a distraction for President-elect Bush. She called herself a victim of "search-and-destroy" politics.

Chavez told a news conference the decision to bow out just a week after being named was entirely her own. But three Republican officials involved said she reluctantly stepped aside under pressure from Bush's political team, who made it clear their willingness to fight for her nomination had waned amid questions about her credibility.

Chavez allowed that she should have been more candid about the circumstances surrounding Marta Mercado, the Guatemalan woman who lived with her for about two years in the early 1990s. But she said it was "the politics of personal destruction" that brought down her nomination.

"So long as the game in Washington is a game of search-and-destroy, I think we will have very few people who are willing to do what I did, which was to put myself through this in order to serve," she said. "What has happened over the last few days is quite typical of what happens in Washington, D.C."

Over the weekend, questions arose about whether Chavez had paid Mercado for the jobs she did around the house and whether she knew Mercado was in the country illegally.

"I think I always knew that she was here illegally," Chavez said Tuesday. "I don't check green cards when I see a woman who is battered and who has no place to live and nothing to eat and no way to get on her feet."

But as recently as Sunday, Bush aides said, she had told them she did not know Mercado's legal status until after she moved out, and they repeated that to reporters. Mercado, meanwhile, was saying publicly that Chavez did in fact know.

Asked whether she told Bush aides the full story, Chavez said she did eventually: "I did not volunteer it in our very first conversation."

Chavez began her news conference with testimonials from people who said that she had helped them at various times in their lives. She said she had had difficult times during her childhood and there were always people there to help.

"And I vowed to myself that, no matter what happened to me in my life, that I would be there for other people," she said.

She described Mercado as a woman "who came from a very..."
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“So long as the game in Washington is a game of search-and-destroy, I think we will have very few people who are willing to do what I did, which was to put myself through this in order to serve.”

Linda Chavez
Nominee for
Secretary of
Labor



Tom Patterson Emerald

Some residents at the University Commons have been less than impressed by available amenities, swimming pool or no.

Tenants face complex issues

Students who had dreamt of living the high life were disappointed with a dose of reality

By Beata Mostafavi
Oregon Daily Emerald

With its freshly painted exterior, swimming pool, hot tub and gymnasium, the University Commons was advertised as a four-star student housing option when it first opened in fall 1999.

But according to some of last year's tenants, the apartment complex didn't live up to its image — and despite new management, tenants said some of the problems are not completely gone.

Previous residents have complained about problems ranging from "unfinished" apartments to curious fees and

claim the complex's management rarely responded to these matters efficiently. But the current manager, Pam Bryant, said she and her staff are completely new and most of last year's problems are no longer present. The previous management team that tenants complained about left for "personal reasons," according to Bryant.

Off to a bad start

Because of its brand-new status and promise to offer appealing features not many other complexes did such as

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Cost increase shocks businesses into conserving electricity

In the face of a possible energy cost increase, big businesses look to keep costs low

By Lindsay Buchele
Oregon Daily Emerald

Though homeowners can do basic things in the wake of EWEB's imminent rate hike to conserve energy, large production companies and smaller businesses will have to adjust their business practices significantly to cover increasing energy costs.

The Eugene Chamber of Commerce will soon address the issues surrounding the energy shortage that has gripped the northwest, said Terry Conolly, director of government affairs.

"This crisis is becoming a huge issue for high consumers of energy," Conolly said.

Energy consumers, such as paper production company Weyerhaeuser, are dependent on large amounts of energy for production processes, and EWEB is scheduled to vote on hiking energy

rates in March.

"EWEB has kept prices very low for us [in the past]," Weyerhaeuser spokeswoman Lisa VanWinkle said.

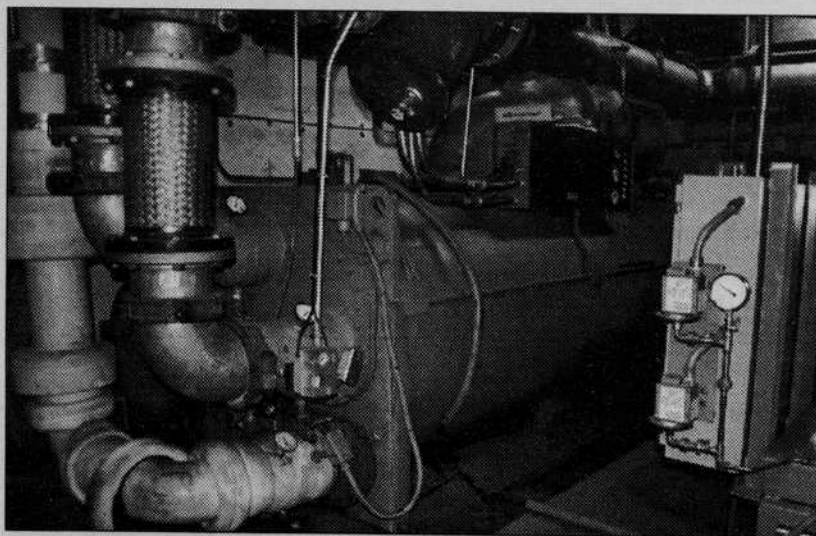
With the unavoidable increase in prices, however, companies like Weyerhaeuser will need to assess what their company can do to handle the price increase.

Weyerhaeuser produces some of its own power using steam generation in its paper production process. The company also uses other forms of power, such as natural gas and oil.

"We can keep our costs low as long as we keep using wood chips and produce our own energy," VanWinkle said.

Another big energy consumer, Sacred Heart Medical Center, spends \$2 million a year on utilities, including

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Laura Smit Emerald

Sacred Heart Medical Center is one of the many public institutions that will be heavily affected by the increase of electric rates. Its electric system, like this air conditioning pump, consumes a major amount of power.

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EWEB asked the University to run on generated power over the winter break