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Oregon defends physician-assisted suicide law

■ The state's congressional representatives condemn Ashcroft's action

By Brook Reinhard
Oregon Daily Emerald

Oregon Attorney General Hardy Myers filed a petition in U.S. District Court today for an injunction against the new stance on Oregon's assisted suicide law taken by the Bush administration.

The action comes hot on the heels of Attorney General John Ashcroft's memo released Tuesday that effectively overturns the only assisted suicide law in the nation. The law allows doctors to prescribe a deadly dose of pain medication to patients who are suffering from a terminal illness, but the Attorney General's new stance prohibits doctors from prescribing federally controlled medication in lethal doses. In addition, the Drug Enforcement

Agency is directed to determine if doctors are violating this prohibition. The memo does not outline how the DEA will carry this out.

"We've filed a temporary restraining order that will allow physicians in the state to continue following state law," said Kevin Neely, spokesman for Myers. He added the case may go all the way to the Supreme Court. "We will seek to resolve this at the highest level we can."

Congressional representatives from Oregon unanimously condemned Ashcroft's decision.

"I wish that the administration would focus on the security of all Americans at this critical time, rather than picking a fight with Oregonians on such a divisive issue," said Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Portland.

Rep. Darlene Hooley, D-Salem, also voiced concerns about the timing of the ruling.

"The Justice Department has more important duties than turning doctors who abide by state law into criminals," Hooley said.

Barring court action, the new memo will go into effect as soon as it's published in the Federal Register, said Pete Sheppard, Oregon's deputy attorney general.

A hearing on a temporary injunction is scheduled for 2 p.m. today.

"At this point we are advising Turn to **Assisted suicide**, page 8

NO FINISH LINE IN SIGHT

■ Eugene runner Marla Runyan, legally blind because of a genetic disease, has become one of the fastest women in the world

By Jen West
Oregon Daily Emerald

When Marla Runyan ran the 1,500-meter race in the 2000 Olympic games in Sydney, she saw only a blur of color fly by her. She could hear the pack move behind her as she pulled out in front, and — in a sudden burst of speed — each runner sprinted toward the finish line.

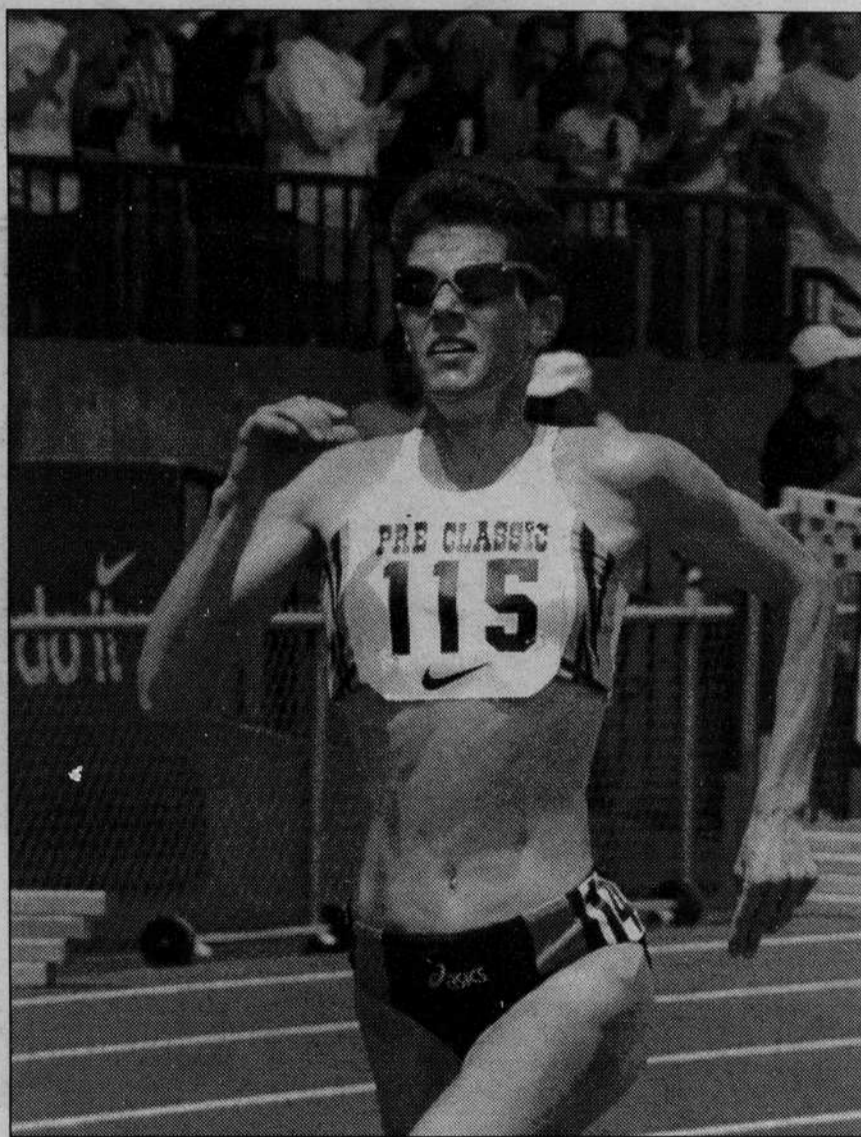
Those four minutes of Runyan's life depended on four years of training. She crossed the finish line, but when she stopped running, the images did not dissolve back into a clear picture. The world couldn't come back into focus, because Runyan is legally blind.

Runyan, 31, became the first legally blind person to compete on the U.S. Olympic team. Her eighth-place ranking for the 1,500 meter was the highest achieved by an American woman in the event's history.

"When you run as fast as I do, things tend to be a blur anyway," Runyan said in her newly released autobiography, "No Finish Line: My Life As I See It."

To be considered legally blind, an individual must have a visual acuity of worse than 20/200 in his or her better eye even while using eyeglasses,

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In 1996, Marla Runyan qualified for the Olympic trials and broke the American record in the heptathlon 800. In 2000, she became the first legally blind person to compete on the U.S. Olympic team, and she is training for the 2004 Olympics.

Courtesy photo

Board delays decision on tobacco ban

■ Tobacco sales remain a burning question as EMU Board considers student opinion, financial impact of possible ban at Erb Essentials

By Diane Huber
Oregon Daily Emerald

After much heated discussion and several motions to end debate, EMU board members concluded Wednesday's board meeting undecided about the sale of tobacco in the Erb Essentials store. But members voted to leave the issue on the table until the board can review information of other Pacific-10 schools that have banned tobacco sales.

The issue arose after biology Professor V. Pat Lombardi raised concerns that selling tobacco at the University conflicts with its mission and endangers students' health. But the profit from tobacco sales is allocated to student groups on campus, and some board members worry that this money would be tough to do without. At the board meeting two weeks ago, members decided to hold off on a decision until they knew whether students on campus support selling tobacco.

By the end of Wednesday's meeting, some board members were tired of the issue and ready to make a decision to sell or not to sell, while others still had many unanswered questions and

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University to offer new class on post-Sept. 11 issues, concerns

■ Professor Anita Weiss created the class in response to student interest following the attacks

By John Liebhardt
Oregon Daily Emerald

The events of Sept. 11 have stirred an intense curiosity among students nationwide that has spilled over into numerous teach-ins and lectures at the University. The international studies department announced they will offer a

full-term course on the issues surrounding Sept. 11 to further quench that thirst for knowledge.

The one-credit class, "In the Wake of September 11th: Issues and Concerns," will be offered next term in an attempt to study "issues concerning the U.S. relationship with the Islamic world and challenges within the Islamic world," Anita Weiss, an international studies professor, said.

Weiss said she put together the class to teach students about a large and complex set of issues,

"I think most Americans know so little about the part of the world in which we are currently engaged in a military encounter," she said.

Weiss said she will rely on a few outside speakers to give the class a more global scope. The class will cover political and economic issues in the Middle East.

Universities across the state with long-standing courses on the Middle East and terrorism are also seeing a great jump in interest in these topics post-Sept. 11.

Gary Perlstein, a professor of administration of justice at Portland State University has seen the demand for his class on terrorism grow so much that he offered a second section. He tries to make his class, "Perspectives on Terrorism," a historic and theoretical discussion of terrorism, "but this year there is a lot more discussion on Afghanistan."

PSU is also home to the nation's first federally funded undergraduate program for Arabic language and area studies. The international stud-

ies program's Middle East Studies Center, created in 1961, offers numerous courses in Middle East culture and politics.

At Oregon State University, Jonathan Katz has also seen increased enrollments in his "Islamic Civilization" courses. Katz, an associate professor of history at OSU, will teach a session at Weiss' class next term.

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