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Silence is not so golden



Junior Leslie Frye leads a group of 'radical cheerleaders' in a chant of 'No more silence' during a rally in the EMU Amphitheater on Tuesday afternoon. Rallies have been staged to raise awareness and urge administrators to improve safety in response to recent sexual assaults against women on campus.

Thomas Patterson Emerald

PFC under increased scrutiny

■ Student representatives call PFC's process into question after this year's budget allocation

By Diane Huber & Eric Martin
Oregon Daily Emerald

Members of student government and student programs are scrutinizing the process by which the ASUO Programs Finance Committee allocated more than \$4 million to student groups this year because some say PFC abused its power.

Student representatives made allegations that the committee didn't adequately prepare groups to present their funding requests and used inappropriate criteria to evaluate those requests as large blocks of student money hung in limbo. The Oregon Daily Emerald also reviewed poor or incomplete accounts of the meetings and had difficulty obtaining public records.

The money PFC divides up is drawn directly from student pockets as an "incidental fee" when they pay tuition. The fee pays for everything from student football and basketball tickets to the expenses of programs like Project Saferide, which offers women safe transportation at night.

ASUO senators passed the approximately \$4.3 million PFC budget on Feb. 27. Two senators who voted against the proposal, Peter Watts and Andrew Elliott, said they thought PFC number-crunching was top-notch but questioned the conduct of PFC members at several meetings.

They, along with other student groups like the Oregon Commentator, said PFC ventured into inappropriate territory when members let personal judgments interfere with their decisions to award funds to certain groups.

"Everybody who deals with budgets must look at a group based on merit, not based on their point of view," Elliott said. "They must divorce their opinion from the decision."

The meeting minutes from the Commentator's Jan. 17 budget hearing have PFC member Joe Streckert making personal assessments about the conservative news magazine's political leanings and its mission statement.

"I find a fair amount of your mission statement is inappropriate for a student group," Streckert said at the meeting. "The place for a mission statement is not to ... make derogatory statements about other groups or organizations. You are insulting faculty and other organizations."

"I won't approve anything that way. It's an insult."

Streckert said Tuesday that in retrospect he "would have liked" to push his personal opinions aside but still believes the Commentator's budget was decided on merits, such as spending history.

Commentator business manager Justin Sibley said he understands that meetings can become heated and tempers can flare. "There's no way any person can put away personal biases," Sibley said. "That's why it's completely unreasonable for only four people to make a decision on that amount of money."

The PFC is composed of seven members elected to one- and two-year terms. Two seats were vacated and not restaffed this year. The lack of members

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Nader to make whirlwind visit to Eugene this week

■ Nader's short tour includes a book signing, a fundraiser, a benefit dinner and speeches

By John Liebhardt
Oregon Daily Emerald

Ralph Nader's train has left the station.

In a whirlwind 18-hour tour, 2000 Green Party presidential candidate Ralph Nader will make five public stops in Eugene between Thursday evening and Friday afternoon.

Nader will begin his day Thursday at a fundraiser for the Lane County Pacific Green Party at 6 p.m. and will not stop until he gives the keynote address at the Public Interest and Environmental Law Conference at noon Friday.

In between stops, Nader will speak at the McDonald Theatre at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, and will sign books at the EMU Friday from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Greens also hope to persuade Nader to attend the after-party benefit at 10:00 p.m. at Cafe Paradiso.

Members of the UO Cultural Forum hope that Nader's speech at the McDonald will answer a lot of questions that still surround the 2000 election. It will be Nader's first trip to Eugene since the election, and the Cultural Forum has asked him to speak about his new book, "Crashing the Party: How to Tell the Truth

and Still Run for President." The book allows Nader to retell the 2000 election from his viewpoint, laud what he did right and point out what he would have changed.

"People are still curious on why he didn't drop out," said Geoff Hoffa, contemporary issues coordinator for the Cultural Forum.

"Obviously, Bush is in office, and a lot of people blame Nader."

Geoff Hoffa
UO Cultural Forum

Nader began his 2000 campaign as a challenge to the two party system, and he decried corporate influence in all levels of politics. With Democrat Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush running neck-and-neck during the last weeks of the campaign, many Democrats called on Nader to drop out and not to split the liberal vote. Nader refused to bow out, a move many Democrats felt tipped the election to Bush's favor.

"Obviously, Bush is in office, and a lot of people blame Nader," Hoffa said. "And they want to know why he did it."

Local Democrats said they don't harbor any animosity toward Nader, although they still

wish he would have dropped out of the election.

"I've always respected Nader, but I think he did a disservice to his ideals by staying in the election," said Mike Linman, co-chairman of the College Democrats.

Nader has a distinguished public career that began in 1965 with a book called "Unsafe at Any Speed," an expose of safety concerns within the automotive industry. He then moved to the legal sphere, working with lawmakers to create the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency. Nader also formed numerous citizen groups, including the Center for Auto Safety, Public Citizen and the Public Interest Research Group.

Local members of the Lane County Pacific Green Party hope that Nader's visit will ignite the spark he lit during his 2000 campaign for president. Since the election, local Greens have moved to other issues such as campaign finance reform and instant runoff elections, but local Green member Natalie White said it will be helpful to get a pep talk.

"It's always nice when someone from the national level comes to town and says, 'You can do it,'" she said.

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Ralph Nader's schedule in Eugene

Thursday, March 7

6 p.m.
Dinner with Ralph Nader
Fundraiser for Lane County Pacific
Green Party, Cafe Paradiso, \$50 -
\$100 admission on sliding scale

7:30 p.m.
Ralph Nader lecture and discussion
McDonald Theatre, seated \$10
general public, \$5 students, standing
room \$7 general public, \$3 students

Friday, March 8

10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Ralph Nader book signing
EMU, free

Noon
Keynote address
Public Interest and Environmental
Law Conference, EMU Ballroom,
\$75 conference registration