



News
Bingomania argues the Eugene smoking ban violates the 14th Amendment.
 Page 3

Sports
The Duck women look to 'WNIT' against St. Mary's today at Mac Court.
 Page 7



An independent newspaper
Oregon Daily Emerald
<http://www.dailymerald.com>

Tuesday, March 13, 2002

SINCE 1900 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON EUGENE, OREGON

Volume 103, Issue 115

Oregon's budget woes worsening

■ Congress' stimulus package may mean more problems for Oregon in the short run

By Brook Reinhard
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Gov. John Kitzhaber may call the Oregon Legislature back to Salem for the third time this year, thanks to worsening budget scenarios and an economic stimulus package passed by the U.S. Congress last week.

The governor issued his line-item vetoes to the Legislature's second special session Tuesday, and will announce his plan to balance Oregon's budget at 11 a.m. today. He is expected to call the Legislature back into session in June, once the state's quarterly economic forecast is released.



KITZHABER

A third special session will probably be called even if the economic forecast doesn't

show a larger deficit because Congress' economic stimulus package will cause Oregon to sink hundreds of million dollars deeper into debt.

State Sen. Tony Corcoran, D-Cottage Grove, said the state may see even larger higher education cuts as a result of Congress' action.

"Higher education could be looking at more severe cuts — there's no question about it," Corcoran said.

Congress passed the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002 on Thursday. It provides 13 extra weeks of unemployment insurance to states with high jobless rates and federal tax breaks for business investment, but will likely strip \$148 million of revenue from Oregon's budget over the next two years. Oregon relies on the federal tax structure to set the state tax rates.

If a special session is called in June, Corcoran said the Legislature might try to amend Oregon's tax code so the new stimulus package doesn't hurt the state, but such action would require three-fifths approval by the Legislature.

Brian Rooney, a regional economist for the Oregon Employment Department, said Oregon will be hard hit by the new stimulus package.

"In the short run, it makes our state budget system more difficult," Rooney said. But he added that in the long run, tax cuts may encourage businesses to invest more.

Turn to **Economy**, page 5

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Evening Grosbeak

Rufous Hummingbird

Birds of a feather flock together

As spring draws closer, thousands of swifts and other birds will make their homes around campus

By Eric Martin
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Thousands of swallow-like birds, or swifts, circumvent the Agate Hall chimney each spring and autumn in a swirling column of black climbing hundreds of feet in the air.

The avian circle is a sophisticated holding pattern that occurs as the birds enter the chimney's confines to roost. The gathering has gained national recognition in birding circles as a premiere venue for viewing the Vaux's Swift as it begins or nears the end of its migration south. Peterson's Field Guide to Western Birds refers to the swift as "a cigar with wings."

Dan Gleason, who works in a University teaching lab, said as many as 15,000 to 20,000 swifts revolve around the

Turn to **Birds**, page 6

Students criticize fee forum publicity

■ Many who wanted to discuss proposed University fees said the meeting was inaccessible

By Leon Tovey
 Oregon Daily Emerald

While it didn't draw much of a crowd, Tuesday's public hearing on proposed University fee increases did draw some heated criticism.

Fourteen people attended the hearing, which was intended to allow students, faculty and staff to voice their opinions on a number of proposed fee and fine increases for 2002-03 — including a proposal from the Department of Public Safety that would allow a fee of up to \$5 to register bicycles. But students who attended the hearing in the EMU Board Room said the University did not do a good enough job publicizing it.

"I couldn't even find the room," junior Kiva Rice said afterward.

Rice came to object to the proposed bicycle registration fee, and called the meeting "inaccessible."

"I just saw the article (in the Emerald) this morning," she said. "If this was a more accessible meeting, I think every single student who rides a bicycle would have been here."

Rice apparently wasn't the only person to find out about the hearing late. ASUO President Nilda Brooklyn said she didn't even hear about the meeting until after it was over.

Donna Chittenden, who presided over the hearing, had no comment about the accessibility of the meeting at press time.

Others had no complaints about accessibility, but did take issue with

Turn to **Fees**, page 5

Former ASUO candidate runs for Oregon House

■ Executive candidate Gregory McNeill is running unopposed in the primary, but will face Floyd Prozanski in the general election

By Kara Cogswell
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Sophomore Gregory McNeill is following the lead of his former ASUO Executive running mate Maco Stewart into a race for public office, but he's taking his political aspirations one step further.

McNeill, who lost his bid for ASUO president, filed Wednesday as a candidate for the Oregon house's 8th district Republican primary. Former ASUO vice presidential candidate Stewart is vying to represent Eugene City Council Ward 3.

Although McNeill and Stewart remain in contact, they won't be campaigning together, McNeill said.

"We're helping each other out, but we're running separate campaigns," he said.

McNeill is running unopposed in the primary, but he will face Democratic candidate Floyd Prozanski in the general election. Eighth district Republican incumbent Cedric Hayden is now running to represent the 7th district because of legislative redistricting this year.

At 21, McNeill is barely old enough to run for a seat in the state House of Representatives, which is a large part of the reason why he is doing it, he said. Younger representatives could do more to solve the problem of low voter turnout among 18- to 24-year-olds, he said.

"Students need a more prominent voice in the legislature," he said.

A political science major, McNeill is the VP-Finance for Delta Upsilon fraternity. His past government experience includes three years' involvement with the student government at North Marion High School in Aurora, Oregon. He also participated in the 1998 Boys State mock government conference.

McNeill's platform will emphasize education. If elected, he said he would do things differently than other politicians who promise money for education in their campaigns, but once in office, budget money for schools that goes mainly toward administrative expenses.

"When people get elected, they budget money for schools ... (but) it doesn't actually make it to the teachers and the schools," he said. "That's something we're going to strive to correct."

If elected, McNeill said he plans to take a lighter class-load and distance education classes while the legislature is in session. He realizes some people may not take him as seriously because of his age, but he said he is up to the challenge.

"As a Republican in this area, it's going to be a real uphill battle," he said. "But I think we're going to give Prozanski a run for his money."

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