

COMMENTARY

Tuesday, January, 7, 2003

Editorial

One less Savage shouldn't end campus debate about UO name

Last term, one of the more engaging controversies on campus concerned the radio station KUGN and a couple of syndicated shows they broadcast. For a few years now, the station has paid \$1 million to the University for the privilege of calling themselves "the voice of the Ducks" while also airing the shows of Michael Savage and Michael Medved, "shock jocks" who, in lieu of any constructive political ideas, spout offensive tirades against minorities.

Over the break, Savage's show, "The Savage Nation," was quietly dropped from the KUGN lineup. We did not, nor did anyone else in the campus community, call for Savage to be removed. However, we are also not going to lament this turn of events. Savage was not representative of what "the voice of the Ducks" stands for.

We do have to ask though, was this a purely voluntary act on the part of KUGN? We would like to believe it was, yet we cannot help but fear that might be naive. The University, already stung by the "O" logo fiasco, reaped a harvest of potentially bad press from us, The Register-Guard and other local media outlets for appearing to side with Savage and Medved. It is not too far a leap of logic, although it is purely speculative, to envision the Office of Strategic Communication exerting a little pressure on the station to diffuse the problem.

Most importantly, though, how does this change things? With Savage gone, we are concerned that the situation could go back to the status quo, with no examination of how we should examine those who pay the University hard cash to use the University's name and prestige. Should the University — as the administration seemed all too eager to do with KUGN — allow anyone with enough money to use our image?

What if next time, with respects to Cheyney Ryan, it's a college porn Web site? How about a cigarette manufacturer? What if they're willing to pay \$50 million per year to promote themselves with the University's name and image? Should they be subject to the same policy statements as every other part of the campus? How would this be implemented? And would such a protocol have its own pitfalls?

This is a debate that has been too long in coming to Johnson Hall. How does the University negotiate when businesses want to use its name or image? We hope that President Frohnmayer — and the rest of the campus community — will give this question serious consideration, before we end up with the "Official University of Oregon Sorority House Show-er Webcam — Home of the Wet Ducks."

Editorial policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

CORRECTION

The Jan. 6 article "KUGN's un-Savage broadcasting" and accompanying photo caption should have said that the radio station started broadcasting Dan Carlin's show Dec. 18. The Emerald regrets the error.

ALL ABOARD the funding train

Winter term has officially started, and students are returning from all areas of the country and using all modes of transportation to get here.

For some, they can drive to and from college; for others, it's an airplane; and for still others, it's the train. Since the days of the Old West, trains have always existed in the American imagination.

The slow-paced journey of the train allows one to appreciate the scenery lost when concentrating on driving or when flying thousands of feet above ground. Where else can one dine while viewing snowcapped mountains out the window, or roam around the multiple cars to stretch one's legs while still traveling?

Certainly, the train is an enchanting ride, but it is far and away the people on the train who are the most enchanting. There are fewer greater joys than boarding a train full of sleeping people at midnight to find your seat occupied by an old woman who, once you wake her up to inform her that you will be taking away her good night's sleep, proceeds to crawl over you every 15 minutes.

Or finding out at 1 a.m. that the two men in front of you are long lost soulmates and have decided to toast their meeting by drinking from a couple of 40 oz. bottles one of



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Just think about it

them happened to bring on the train, while sputtering out lines from their favorite Rob Schneider movie.

But that's half the fun, isn't it? People-watching, interactions. One of the more unfortunate aspects of the train, however, is its inevitable tardiness. Since the tracks were sold in the early part of last century to private corporations, private trains have the right of way. Freighters carrying anything from cars to televisions to food are prioritized and allowed to pass passenger trains, delaying the hundreds of people on board.

As if being last in line wasn't annoying enough, Amtrak has had to deal with the passage of the Amtrak Reform and Accountability Act. Passed in 1997, this act gave Amtrak five years to become financially independent and reduce its more than \$4 billion debt.

The government provides subsidies to Amtrak each year

in order for it to run efficiently, but it obviously decided that Amtrak's benefits did not outweigh its burden on the federal budget. Amtrak, it seems, is viewed as nothing more than an obsolete part of the American past that is best forgotten.

What no one in the White House or Congress has suggested, after the horrific events of Sept. 11, is to provide a larger budget to Amtrak in an effort to provide Americans with another way to travel besides flying. Amtrak, with more funding, could become similar to the highly efficient and fast trains in Europe, with the cost justified similarly to Eisenhower's decree that the highway system be built by defense dollars for national security.

Unfortunately, public transportation budgets have been continually slashed by both the states and the federal government in a never-ending battle to make ends meet — and it is the

poor who suffer. Amtrak provides a service to those who have limited finances that Greyhound attempts to replicate, but cannot.

The airplane industry is not completely independent of federal funds, and it is unrealistic to assume that what the airline industry cannot do, and is not expected to do, Amtrak can and is. According to CNNMoney online, the U.S. government gave more than \$5 billion in subsidies and loans to U.S. airlines after Sept. 11, money that was more than enough to compensate for the effects of the attacks.

As an avid rider of Amtrak, it is my opinion that the government should not focus all its efforts in supporting the bankruptcy filings of United and other such airline companies, but rather focus on supporting and modernizing real public transportation.

Contact the columnist at megghannfarnsworth@dailyemerald.com.

Students should get involved with Measure 28

Guest commentary

A decision has been dealt to the citizens of Oregon that will undoubtedly affect students regardless of the outcome. A vote, by referral of the state Legislature, will take place on Jan. 28 and will ask but one question of voters. Despite how you might weigh in on Measure 28, my question for you now is: Are you willing to take part, or will you allow others to make the decision for you?

This letter is intended to demonstrate not only the impact on students that both the passage or failure of Measure 28 will have, but, more importantly, what you're reading is designed to encourage you to simply participate in the process.

As you will know from a letter that was included in your January bill, the Oregon Legislature, in an attempt to balance the state budget, referred an income tax surcharge to the voters as Measure 28. Measure 28 would raise \$313 million in this biennium by increasing the state's payroll tax from 9 percent to 9.5 percent. Additionally, corporate tax would be increased

by 0.33 percent.

It is important to note that these increases would remain in effect over the next six years, but would then sunset. These aforementioned tax increases would be the result of a yes vote on Measure 28.

The letter in your January bill also explains the University's proposal for covering anticipated cuts that will be made as a result of a no vote on Measure 28. In addition to overseeing further cuts on campus, the University will administer a tuition surcharge for winter and spring terms.

For undergraduate and graduate students, there will be a \$10 per-credit-hour increase per term. For law students, who follow a semester system, there will be a \$15 per-credit-hour increase. If Measure 28 fails, undergraduate students registered for 16 credits will pay an additional \$160 winter term, and if they maintain the credit hours, a further \$160 in spring term.

The ASUO office and the University administration are prepared to help answer questions that you may have about the effects of Measure 28 on campus. Because of

the evident impact that this measure will have on all students, the ASUO is working to educate and inform the campus community so that anyone who is able and willing may participate in this vote-by-mail election.

If you have never registered in the state of Oregon, today is the last day that you are able to be eligible to vote in this election. The ASUO office is prepared to register voters and to update any changes that you may need to make in order to re-register.

We highly encourage you to take part in this decision making process — to refuse to be affected without any say. Douglas Adams once wrote that human beings, who are almost unique in having the ability to learn from the experience of others, are also remarkable for their apparent disinclination to do so. University students, however, have the ability to see the experience that has been had by many before, and, as a result, can act to change the current path laid by past apathy.

Students can make change — students can vote.

Rachel Pilliod is the ASUO president and the state OSA chair.