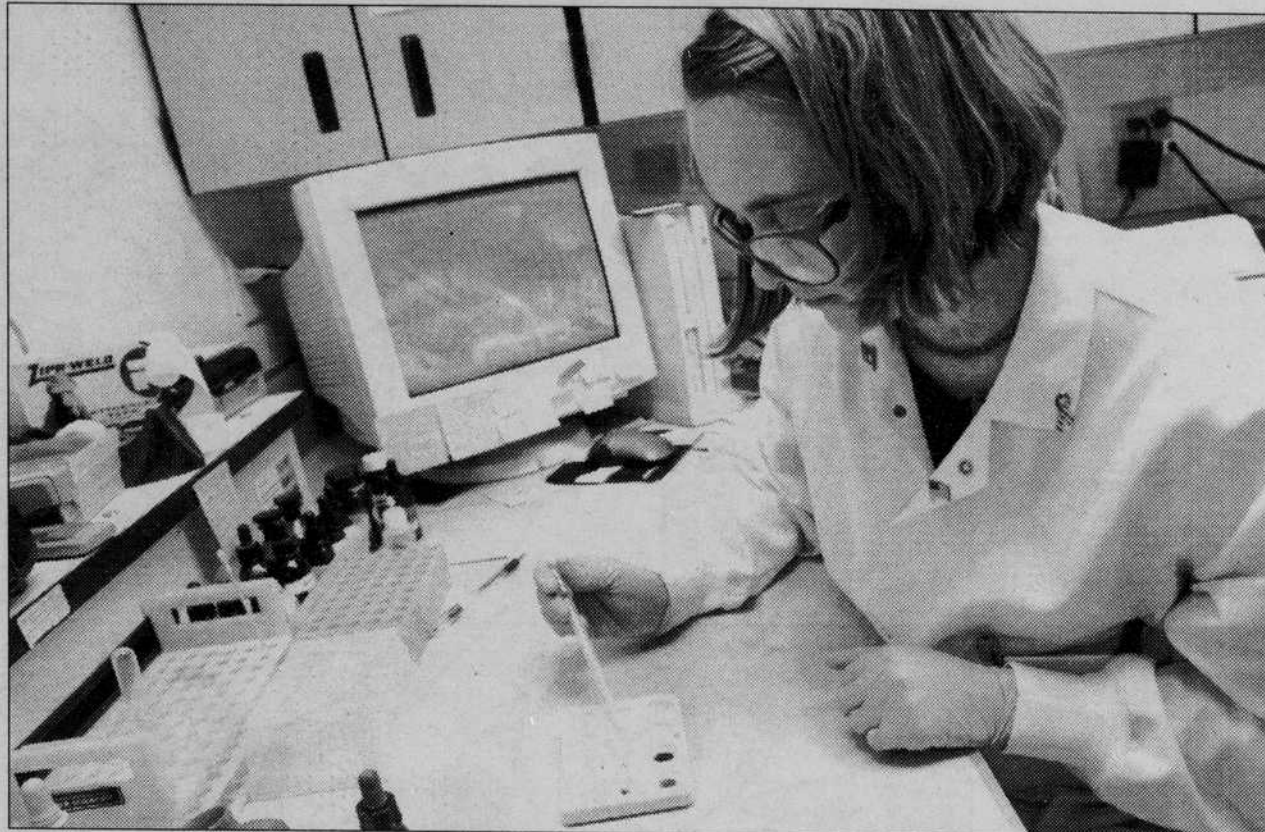


Questionable outcome



Adam Amato Emerald

Forensic scientist Casey Roberts runs tests on samples of drugs at the Oregon State Police Forensics Lab in Springfield. Roberts has already received a letter warning that she stands to lose her job two years after being hired if Measure 28 does not pass.

Ready to fire

Local police have already been given layoff notices pending the outcome of Measure 28

Caron Alarab

Crime/Safety/Transportation Reporter

As votes trickle in on Measure 28, the Oregon State Police can't help but turn a pessimistic cheek to what the failure of the proposed three-year state income tax increase could mean — less employees, less hours, but worst of all, less money.

If voters don't approve the \$300-million tax package for this biennium, \$6.33 million will be trimmed from Oregon's state police budget and 321 positions will be cut, Public Information Officer Lt. Glenn Chastain said. Many employees have already been given notice of impending layoffs, and with Measure 28's failure, the cuts will go into effect.

"Measure 28 has no chance of passing," Lt. Russ Burger said. "Right after the holidays and before tax season, nobody wants an increase."

As an area commander, Burger supervises operations in Springfield, Florence and Oakridge. The Florence and Oakridge justice courts are very dependent on state funding, and Burger said Oakridge is presently operating at 25 percent of its normal effectiveness.

"Even if (legislators) pull a rabbit out of the hat, the damage is done and no one is looking back," he said.

Chastain said 380 letters were sent to employees; 205 of which were sent to professional staff and 175 to sworn positions.

According to Terry Bekkedahl, director of the Oregon State Police Forensics Lab in Springfield, the sworn positions are uniformed officers who have been in the force since before 1990, the year the division turned to a non-sworn process. Sworn officers are involved in patrol, criminal justice and fish and wildlife, and make up 25 to 30 percent of the state patrol, Bekkedahl said.

"We're not anticipating any funding from that measure," he said.

The Springfield lab manages investigation evidence and court requests from several cities across the state, including Ontario, Pendleton, Bend, Central Point, Portland and Salem. As the second largest lab in the Forensics division, funding and employee retention are key to the effective processing of hundreds of criminal cases. Bekkedahl said the lab covers a variety of crimes from shoplifting to homicide, and added that the predicted loss of funding will significantly hinder performance.

"We serve the public," he said, "but we do the leg work for

Turn to **Police**, page 8

Testimony opposes pot fine increase

Community members spoke out Monday about a new city ordinance concerning marijuana possession

Jan Montry

City/State Politics Reporter

Eugene and Springfield citizens opposing a new city ordinance aimed at increasing the fine for possession of less than an ounce of marijuana voiced their concerns Monday night before the Eugene City Council.

The ordinance, which would increase the fine from \$100 to \$250, is designed to give more incentive for people to join a new, inexpensive diversion program that would cost about \$90 for any offender. The current state diversion program costs between \$600 and \$900, according to Municipal Court Judge Wayne Allen.

But the public forum was ideologically imbalanced, with nine people speaking against the ordinance and one speaking in favor.

Todd Dalotto, president of the Eugene-based Compassion Center, said many medical marijuana patients who can't afford the fee for a medical marijuana card turn to street use, and are thus subject to ticketing even though they are not feeding an addiction.

"There are a lot of people on the streets out there who are in possession of under an ounce of marijuana to mitigate symptoms or affects of their serious conditions," he said. "We need to look at removing all penalties for simple possession of marijuana."

Other detractors focused their debate around the unbalanced affect that increased fines would have on marijuana users.

"I consider this as more of a 'sin' tax that is going to affect the younger and the poor people the most," Cindy Noblitt said. "I think students have incentive enough."

Allen, who was the lone supporter of the ordinance during the public forum, explained that the intent is to expand incentive for a diversion program similar to what was done when the City Council increased MIP fines from \$100 to \$250 in 1999.

"We do this not to raise revenue, not to raise fines, but simply to make a workable diversion program," he said.

Allen added that students cited for less than an ounce and who want to choose diversion have a hard time affording the expensive and long state program.

Although councilors didn't vote on the ordinance, many responded to arguments the public gave and asked specific questions for further study.

Ward 1 Councilor Bonny Bettman said she came prepared to support the new diversion program.

"If people can afford to buy marijuana, they can afford to pay the penalty," she said.

But Bettman said the testimony at the meeting also gave her pause, especially from detractors who argued marijuana smokers using the drug for health purposes could be harmed.

Councilor David Kelly, Ward 3, said the council should not focus on the issue of legalization — which is what many community members spoke out about — but instead on the

Turn to **Council**, page 8

WEATHER

Today: High 50, Low 30, partly cloudy, chance of showers

Wednesday: High 43, Low 30, clouds becoming fog late

LOOKING AHEAD

Wednesday

The EMU Board continues doling out student fees to a variety of EMU programs

Thursday

When Hollywood comes to campus looking for talent, what does it take to make the cut?

Photos show faces of Gulf War

"Children of the Gulf War" will be on display at the Aperture Gallery until Jan. 18 before moving to OSU

Jacquelyn Lewis
Pulse Editor

This week, the Aperture Gallery in the Erb Memorial Union plays host to "Children of the Gulf War" — an art exhibit aimed at documenting the effects war and economic sanctions have had on the children of Iraq. The exhibit does not include paintings or drawings; real faces stare out of Japanese photo-journalist Takashi Morizumi's black and white images.

A woman clasps her dying child's hand. A small girl screams, belly distended, as she is treated for kidney and

liver diseases in Baghdad's Mansool Children's Hospital. Empty uranium penetrators are scattered across a barren landscape. The photograph's caption says reactors like this released 36,000 times the radioactive atoms released by the Hiroshima bombing. But other images show joy juxtaposed with grief — smiling children and adults, hands outstretched.

"It's basically images of the Gulf War in 1991, of the children and the effects of war," exhibit coordinator Janice Zagorin said. "This simply puts a face to what war is."

The display is sponsored by the UO Cultural Forum, Students for Peace and Lane County WAND (Women's Action for News Directions).

Zagorin said residents of Iraq are ex-

periencing increased leukemia and birth defects as a result of radioactive materials from depleted uranium used as missile hardeners during the Gulf War. "It recently came to people's understanding that the Gulf War was a nuclear war," she said.

This is the exhibit's second stop on its national tour, and its first appearance in Oregon. The photographs were recently displayed at the Berkeley Public Library. The next stop will be at Oregon State University.

Zagorin also coordinated a discussion, "Health Effects of War & Alternatives to a War on Terrorism," scheduled for Tuesday night at 7:30 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Medical Center Auditorium, located at 1255 Hilyard St. The

Turn to **Art**, page 8