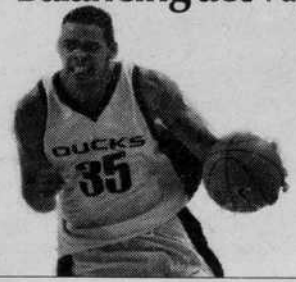


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Navajo court to hear Pfizer case PFC gives increases in lengthy meeting

The Navajo Supreme Court meets in the Knight Law Center today for a case involving drug company Pfizer, Navajo Nation members and Zuni Pueblo

Aimee Rudin
Family/Health/Education Reporter

The Navajo Supreme Court will convene in 175 Knight Law Center today at 5 p.m. to hear oral arguments on a case involving the pharmaceutical company Pfizer and 16 members of the Navajo Nation and Zuni Pueblo.

Justices will decide whether the case, which alleges that one of Pfizer's diabetes drugs caused liver damage among some tribal members, is appropriate for consideration by tribal courts.

The case will be heard by Acting Chief Justice Lorene Ferguson, Associate Justice Mar-

cella King-Ben and Associate Justice by designation Leroy Bedonie. Robert Yazzie, the current chief justice of the Navajo Nation, will offer opening remarks.

Former law school dean and Professor Rennard Strickland said the court's proceedings are similar to the Oregon Supreme Court's procedures.

Strickland, who is also the editor of the "Handbook of Federal Indian Law" added that the Navajo Nation is recognized as a sovereign nation, and all the same rules that apply to state supreme courts also apply to a tribal court. A decision by the Navajo Supreme Court cannot be overruled by a state court, but it can be appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Rosa Chavez, a member of the Native American Law Student Association, said attending a meeting of the Navajo Supreme Court would be similar to attending a meeting of the Canadian or European high courts.

"The chance to experience another nation's supreme court is a once in a lifetime opportunity," she said. "It is just a tremendous opportunity for cultural enrichment." The case, *Nelson v. Pfizer*, originated in a Navajo District Court. It was dismissed before hearings began because Pfizer questioned the district court's ability and authority to rule on a case involving off-reservation companies. The plaintiffs then appealed to the Navajo Supreme Court.

The Navajo Supreme Court must decide whether the issue can be resolved by a tribal court. If they rule that the case falls under tribal jurisdiction, the case will return to the district court to be heard. Otherwise, the case will be dismissed entirely.

The plaintiffs in the *Nelson v. Pfizer* case claim they sustained injuries from the
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PFC gives increases in lengthy meeting

The Program Finance Committee granted several expanded budgets in Tuesday's meeting

Ali Shaughnessy
Freelance Reporter

The ASUO Programs Finance Committee's Tuesday meeting ran an hour overtime and had all the elements of a television drama: laughter, tears and lots of money.

"Is there any other discussion?" asked PFC programs appointee Joy Nair toward the end of the evening. Hearing no reply, she voiced her own:

"Thank the lord."

The evening began with the Women's Center asking for a 9.75 percent increase in its budget. While the Women's Center pushed for more money to support a lesbian festival, PFC stood firm.

"I don't feel that I could support any more than the motion that's on the table," PFC at-large member James Tilford said. The motion he was referring to still gave the Women's Center a substantial increase of 8.71 percent.

PFC passed the motion, giving the Women's Center \$136,097 for the 2003-04 year.

Student Senate presented its proposed budget with a little extra flair. Senate ombudsman Andy Elliott recited the funding request in poetic form.

"There once was a body called senate— Who had lots of money but spent it," he began.

Elliott's creative efforts received laughter and applause, but PFC made clear to the senate it would not, in any way, be favored over other groups.

"We hold all groups to the same standards," PFC Chairwoman Kate Shull said in response to a question over the possibility of a 100 percent increase in office supplies. PFC members said they would not grant such a large increase because it would violate precedent.

The senate walked away with \$25,771 — 24.03 percent more than last year.

PFC also heard a budget proposal from its own Kate Shull, asking for money for PFC.

Nair lead the proceeding and even suggested PFC do some fundraising of its own.

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Leading the community

With two newly elected councilors, the Eugene City Council has a full legislative plate for 2003

Jan Montry
City/State Politics Reporter

They may seem like governmental faces in the crowd to many University students, but the members of the Eugene City Council have a bigger effect than students may think.

In fact, the eight council members could decide many big issues this year, from a marijuana fine increase to the location of a new sports arena.

The City Council, the legislative part of Eugene's government, develops policies and legislation for the city. Next to the City Council stands the city manager, who often oversees policy implementation and hires city staff.

This year, the City Council has two new faces: Ward 6 City Councilor Jennifer Solomon and Ward 4 City Councilor George Poling. Both Councilors were sworn in at Mayor Jim Torrey's State of the City address in January.

Solomon

Solomon, who represents mostly moderate and conservative areas of town, said her biggest surprise as a new councilor was adjusting to the influx of paperwork. Aside from memos and reports, councilors receive a thick packet every Thursday to review for Monday meetings.

Solomon's priorities this year include economic development and voter confidence, but she



Solomon



Mark McCambridge Emerald

City councilors meet on Jan. 13th to discuss the marijuana fine increase and to choose several new officers.

said her real passion lies in transportation.

As a member of a citizen committee, Solomon spent a year studying transportation in Eugene and helped develop a two-pronged funding strategy that included a gas tax increase and the adoption of a transportation maintenance fee. Now that the Council has approved the strategy, Solomon said she wants to help oversee its implementation.

"I really want to make sure it comes together efficiently and equitably," she said.

Poling

Poling, who also represents moderate and conservative areas, said the biggest challenge for him as a new member was his time commitment, which includes work on seven committees.

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WEATHER

Today: High 47, Low 23
Morning fog, then sunny

Friday: High 50, Low 25
Sunny, light wind

LOOKING AHEAD

Friday
MEChA brings author Victor Villaseñor to speak on campus

Monday
FOOD for Lane County gives us a look at hunger around the city

Vandalism victims mull likely connection

Following shoplifting incidents at three businesses, two store managers speculate a link between those crimes and recent vandalism at the same locations

Caron Alarab
Crime/Safety/Transportation Reporter

Three local businesses were vandalized Wednesday in what two managers speculate to be a string of related criminal activities. Store managers say several copies of the Feb. 4 Emerald were left at the locations.

The papers, which contained a story about shoplifting that mentioned the three businesses, were labeled with derogatory comments. The Eugene Police Department has not released any information regarding a possible link among the incidents.

"As of now, we have no suspect information," EPD spokeswoman Kerry Delf said.

A criminal mischief report was filed with EPD at 6:19 a.m.
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Bob Seymour (left) and Tom Boren from Lane County Glass repair a broken window at the University Bookstore Wednesday morning after it was hit by vandalism. Adam Amato Emerald