

Tuesday, July 29, 2003

EDITORIAL

Council's DPS ruling violates common sense

Ward 4 City Councilor George Poling, a former Eugene Police Department officer, said Monday that it is important to expand Department of Public Safety powers now, as opposed to waiting for student input, in order to allow for greater student awareness of the changes when school starts this fall.

Gee, thanks. We give a feeble golf clap to the notion that students will have the opportunity to be more involved in finding out about a decision we had absolutely no say in making.

Despite all the laughable arguments Monday in favor of quickly passing the proposal, all but one councilor — Betty Taylor of Ward 2 — ended up siding with Poling.

Even Ward 3 City Councilor David Kelly, who openly fought to get student voices and floated an amendment to that end during Monday's meeting, eventually voted in favor of the proposal. Our knight in shining armor backed down when he realized his attempts to stall the proposal had failed, proving that he really didn't mind handing out new powers to anybody capable of holding a flashlight and passing a test.

In fact, Taylor was the only councilor to go beyond the student-voice argument and question why the city would give more police powers to people who are not really police. Hmm...

OK. Fine. Have it your way.

Just wait until these "trained" University officers start frivolously handing out citations to students. Think our courts are hurting now? Wait until DPS officers send hordes of students to municipal court for violations stemming from playing music too loudly in the residence halls or, God forbid, getting a bit tipsy.

Better yet, wait until DPS officers mistakenly cite someone for trespassing on University property. What happens when they realize the error? What could simply be a question of rescinding the order must now go through the city court system.

Poling, though, argued that if officers can cut down the time it takes to detain and cite a student or community member for breaking the law on campus, then police would have more time to focus on more important issues.

Great idea. We're talking about college students who drink beer while underage or make too much noise in their dorm rooms, not violent criminals. EPD shouldn't be involved in that.

Let's give those guys who carry flashlights and drive 1990 Chevrolets around supermarkets similar power, provided they receive "training." After all, it would save EPD time and would make our community safer.

We should really think about handing over more power to the security officers in the mall, too; EPD shouldn't really bother with shoplifting crimes. Citation, misdemeanor, what's the difference?

Hell, we're just a quick jaunt away from giving them all handguns and the means to gun down unruly students and citizens. We've already given DPS the right to arrest, and now they have the right to issue municipal citations.

Well, Mr. Poling, we like your rationale. Thanks, in fact, for doing us all such a great service. That's a wonderful path we're headed down.

Perhaps we'll be so lucky as to have the county rezone the land where city councilors reside.

While they're on vacation.

To which they can return, and find a locked-and-loaded, "trained" security officer standing guard.

EDITORIAL POLICY

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailymerald.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 month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

TRUE LIES

Ever see an action movie in which soldiers shoot their guns straight into the air? I think of the movie "True Lies," when terrorists — celebrating their impending nuclear attack on America — shoot their machine guns straight up for a solid few minutes.

Ever wonder what happens to those bullets when they come down?

Here's real life: Celebrating the deaths of Odai and Qusai Hussein this past Tuesday, Iraqis throughout the capital city fired their weapons into the air. Here's what happened: About 31 people were killed and 76 were injured when those bullets, instead of disappearing into the dark recesses of space, fell back down on Baghdad, according to newspaper Al-Mutamar.

Sir Isaac Newton figured that out more than three hundred years ago; think about it, guys.

Interestingly, while some celebrated the Hussein deaths, others questioned whether the reports were true. Despite overwhelming evidence: photos, multiple positive identifications — including matching scars, dental records and even a matching serial number on the steel plate in Odai's leg — many still believe the United States is trying to trick them.

Not everything is a conspiracy, guys.

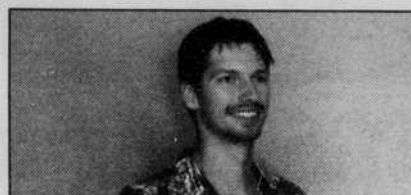
Oh yeah, speaking of conspiracies, Jeb Magruder, a former deputy campaign director for Nixon's Committee to Re-elect the President, now says the president did order the Watergate break-in after all. Three decades after the fact, Magruder now said he overheard former Attorney General John Mitchell get the go-ahead from Nixon over the phone. Some historians dispute the claim, however, saying there would be recorded tapes of such a conversation. The new information didn't draw much attention from state papers, though. Hardly a ruckus!

Oh, and speaking of ruckus, I glanced over at the TV on Friday and saw something that made me bust up laughing. It was a room full of lawmakers erupting into a Jerry Springer-style brawl. What a show! I kept trying to figure out who was sleeping with whose sister.

I didn't see the full report, but I figured it was some unstable Southeast Asian country. This weekend I saw in the paper a picture of lawmakers grabbing and shoving each other, with a woman surfing on top of the crowd and some guy has his hand on her breast. It looked



Peter Utsey for the Emerald



Jared Paben
 Hell in a handbasket

like Pantera visiting the Men's Warehouse.

Anyway, get this: It was in Japan! Whoa, dude! This isn't some Third World country! This is the second-richest country in the world, and their lawmakers are throwing hooks that make Mike Tyson look like a four-year-old girl throwing a tantrum in the Wal-Mart toy aisle. If only they had that on pay-per-view!

Anyway, speaking of Tyson, the entire town of Jefferson, Wis., has gone on strike to protest Tyson Foods, Inc., the world's largest meat company. After 470 workers started striking at the local Tyson plant, the town of about 7,300 has stepped up to battle the meat giant. For example, businesses are offering discounts, and locals are collecting items to help the

striking workers. The mayor supports the strikers, too. Some businesses have even boycotted Tyson meats. For example, Ken's Towne Inn has stopped putting their pepperoni on its pizza, all in an effort to turn the heat up on the company.

Oh, speaking of heat, Eugeneans have finally tired of complaining about high temperatures. I know I have. In Phoenix last week it hovered at more than 110 degrees, and the week before it reached 117 degrees. An Associated Press article said that, because of the heat, windshields are shattering, dogs are getting shoes, so they don't burn their paws and candles are melting indoors. Inmates have gotten permission to wear only boxer shorts and people are really, really grumpy, the report states.

Rumor has it that people are cooking their Tyson hot dogs on car hoods while they stay inside and watch, you guessed it, Japanese-subtitled episodes of Jerry Springer where the guests deny making phone calls and shoot guns into the air. Ah, true lies.

Jared Paben is a freelance reporter for the Emerald. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

Valuable Urban Farm site must be preserved

Upon reading Jesse Thomas' July 22 article "Mac to the Future," I was surprised by the fact that the University Urban Farm was not mentioned once. One of the seven proposed sites for the construction of the new Mac Court is

the North Campus/Riverfront Parkway/Old Coca-Cola Bottling Plant/Urban Farm. I feel that the very fact that the Urban Farm exists at this site has been ignored in much of the discussion during the site selection. I have and will continue to communicate with University President Dave Frohnmayer about this issue because I feel that selection of the North Campus site is unnecessary, given the number of other sites available. The Urban Farm is a year-round project that involves a large number of students, faculty and community members. I urge anyone not familiar with the Ur-

ban Farm to walk across Franklin Boulevard and personally understand and appreciate it for what it is: a peaceful, productive haven that serves our University community in a unique way.

I am a fourth-year student in international studies and Spanish here at the University. Because of the interdisciplinary nature of my studies, I have had the incredible opportunity to take courses in a variety of departments. A major part of my experience has been shaped by the two terms I have spent at the Urban Farm. The focus of my work in international studies is directly linked to many of the issues I have learned about and explored through the Urban Farm class. I believe that the hands-on experience of working and learning as part of the Urban Farm's strong community has been an especially important part of my studies because of the way it has allowed me to apply many of the theoretical concepts discussed

in my other classes.

The Urban Farm is much more than just another course offered by the University: It is a community education project with deep roots in the local community as well as national recognition as a model program. The physical roots of the Urban Farm run deep and any farmer familiar with this incredible site can confirm that we have some of the most fertile, healthy and biodynamic soil in the region. The relocation of the Urban Farm would force us to rebuild it from scratch, practically nullifying the past 20 years of effort and commitment that farmers have devoted to it. It is imperative that it not be considered as a possible construction site and that the University recognize the valuable resource that it is.

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ONLINE POLL

Each week, the Emerald publishes the previous week's poll results and the coming week's poll question. Visit www.dailymerald.com to vote.

Last week: What's your favorite way to enjoy the summer sun?

Results: 33 total votes

Hiking and exploring the mountains — 24.2 percent, or 8 votes

Barbecues, parties and wild camping trips — 24.2 percent, or 8 votes

Four words: Television and air conditioning — 18.2 percent, or 6 votes

Dipping in the river and swimming in the ocean — 15.2 percent, or 5 votes

Bike rides and strolls in the park — 9.1 percent, or 3 votes

Leave me alone! — 9.1 percent, or 3 votes

This week: Do you regularly donate blood?

Choices: Yes, it's my duty as a citizen; Yes, I like the cookies and juice; No, I am ineligible to donate; No, needles hurt; Leave me alone!