




Today	Tuesday	Wednesday
		
High: 66 Low: 45 Precip: 20%	High: 65 Low: 44 Precip: 10%	High: 61 Low: 44 Precip: 30%

IN BRIEF

Oregon Guard, Reservists to receive free tuition

Oregon National Guard and Reserve members who have served in areas of active hostility since Sept. 11, 2001, will receive free tuition at Oregon University System colleges starting fall term 2005, OUS reported Friday.

The State Board of Higher Education approved the Voyager Tuition Program at its March 4 meeting. The program will waive remaining institutional fees not covered by federal tuition assistance for eligible Oregon Guard and Reservists. All seven of the state's public universities will offer the remission.

According to a press release, OUS is working to exempt the program from legislative fee remission caps.

Students must be Oregon residents, admitted to the campus they wish to attend and working on their first degree in order to be eligible for the program, according to an OUS fact sheet. Students must exhibit satisfactory academic progress to continue receiving assistance.

The University is expected to receive less than 100 Voyager-eligible students. OUS calculated that more than 600 would use the program statewide for an estimated total payout of \$316,900.

— Adam Cherry

Campus construction project closes sidewalk

For the duration of the Living Learning Center construction project, the fencing along the north side of East 15th Avenue will be moved onto the street. Students can use the temporary crosswalk at the east end or the raised crosswalk at the west end in place of the walkway on the street next to the site. The sidewalk will be closed to provide moving space for heavy equipment.

The Department of Public Safety also asks students to avoid creating a traffic hazard alongside the construction site. Those with questions or comments may contact DPS at 346-5444 or the project manager, George Bleekman, at 346-2625.

— Emily Smith

Hazelnut industry reacts against deadly fungus

SPRINGFIELD — Authorities have discovered a deadly fungus on the branches of the nation's oldest commercial hazelnut orchard.

The Eastern filbert blight has, in the past, decimated Oregon's hazelnut industry and led to a quarantine of affected orchards as recently as last year.

As part of an aggressive campaign to stamp out the blight, officials will spray the 80-acre Dorris Ranch as early as next week. The Dorris Ranch is the oldest commercial hazelnut orchard in the nation.

Located just south of Springfield, the trees at the Dorris Ranch orchard date to 1903, and more than half of all commercial filbert trees in the United States originate from the ranch's nursery stock.

Officials have been scouring trees all over the region for signs of Eastern filbert blight, which infiltrated Lane County orchards about a decade ago.

At Dorris Ranch last August, orchard manager Garry Rodakowski found little black pustules on a single branch of a single tree — evidence that the blight had landed.

Rodakowski cut and removed the branch and flagged the tree for close observation.

— The Associated Press

Programs Finance Committee

Three student positions take big cuts

Pay for the president, vice president and radio station general manager may be 75 percent less next year

BY PARKER HOWELL
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

Despite last-minute concerns that new pay rates approved for student-group leaders would unfairly cut pay for the ASUO president, vice president and the general manager of campus radio station KWVA, the Programs Finance Committee finalized its allocation of student money Friday.

The new pay rates reduce funding for each of the three positions by three-fourths or more. Pay for the president and vice president positions will drop from \$8,400 per year to \$2,100 per year, while the general manager's pay will be cut from \$6,600 to \$1,500 per year.

The PFC approved a 6.91 percent increase for a total budget of about

\$5.23 million next year.

Although it falls within the maximum 7 percent increase allowed by the Green Tape Notebook, the budget exceeds the 5.62 percent benchmark approved by the ASUO Student Senate earlier this year.

Senators will hear the budget during its Wednesday meeting.

The PFC targeted the stipend model for cuts, approving an 8.9 percent overall increase earlier in the process as a way of remedying excess budgetary spending. Stipends came under scrutiny this summer when University President Dave Frohnmayer expressed concerns that some groups received more money for stipends than programming.

By decreasing the number of paid positions some groups can have,

reducing pay for all positions by \$25 and changing payroll stipends into scholarships, the PFC was able to save enough money to use its budget recommendations for all groups.

The committee previously considered using the ASUO Executive's recommendations, which only account for groups' spending and fundraising habits.

Yet ASUO President Adam Petkun told the Emerald he is concerned that reducing the president's stipend from \$700 per month to \$175 per month next year will deter some students from running for the office. He said students vying for the position need to be able to work about 40 to 60 hours per week with "very little pay."

"What I'm worried about ... is that it affects who has the ability to run for ASUO president in the first place," he said, adding that the reduction might make the ASUO a "place where only the privileged can work."

KWVA General Manager Charlotte Nisser expressed similar concerns to the PFC on Friday, noting the general manager's pay will decrease from \$550 per month to \$125 per month. She said students who work as the general manager are working the equivalent of a full-time job because they are on-call 24/7 in case something goes wrong at the station.

Petkun said the president's duties also prohibit a student from working other jobs to supplement his or her income.

"I think that if someone's dedicated to the job, it's very hard to have any work outside the ASUO at the same time," he said.

He said the vice president would be similarly affected.

Despite his concerns, Petkun said it was necessary for the PFC to examine stipends.

"While I definitely see this as a

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BUS SERVICE MAY CEASE ON MARCH 7th, 2005.

LTD Wants to Make Sure You Still Have a Way to Go.

As early as March 7th, the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), Local 757, may go on strike. Lane Transit District (LTD) will not be able to operate bus service during the strike. Once a settlement has been reached, LTD will be committed to getting buses back on the road as quickly as possible. LTD's Guest Services office will be closed but if you call 687-5555 we will have staff to assist you.

What you can do:

- ▶ Register at ltd.org for **carpool-matching**. It's easy and fast. Sign up to drive as well as ride.
- ▶ **RideSource** will continue to run and serve those passengers who are eligible. We expect demand to increase significantly. Medical appointments may be given priority over other trips.
- ▶ Go to the **LTD website for information** on ways to get around including links to the City of Eugene for Bike Path Maps.

Please plan ahead. For further information, log onto www.ltd.org or call LTD at 687-5555.



Lane Transit District