

**IN BRIEF**

**Senate allocates funds; seat vacancies remain**

The Student Senate released nearly \$3,000 in student fees to the University radio station KWVA, Asian Pacific American Student Union and the Community Internship Program at its fourth meeting of the year Wednesday night.

Senators also discussed taking action against Senator Rahmat Rahmat, who has not yet attended a meeting.

"We might be starting the process of removing him since he has not yet removed himself," Senate President Stephanie Erickson said at the beginning of the meeting.

According to the Green Tape Notebook, the guide to the rules of student government, Senators are allowed to miss only two meetings per term. More than two absences constitutes non-fulfillment of duties, punishable by removal from Senate. Rahmat has missed all four meetings to date.

The Senate currently has three empty seats after Senator Rob Craig, the law and graduate student representative, submitted a letter of resignation to ASUO President Adam Walsh on Sept. 28. He resigned because of a time conflict.

Also because of a time conflict, former Senator Khanh Le resigned effective Oct. 12.

Walsh must appoint a student body member to any unfilled position in student government "within a period of thirty calendar days of the vacancy," according to the Green Tape Notebook.

Walsh said he has not picked anyone for the position yet. He has received one application and is awaiting more law student applicants. Interviews begin early next week and an appointee will be voted on by the Senate Wednesday night.

The ASUO is accepting applications for a graduate student representative and applications for a student to fill the Programs Finance Committee seat. Submit applications to EMU Suite 4.

— Nicholas Wilbur

**Gas leak forces closure on East 13th Avenue**

A natural gas leak in a restaurant near campus forced emergency officials to close sections of East 13th Avenue on Thursday.

Northwest Natural inspected Hodgepodge around 10 a.m. after employees of the neighboring U.S. Bank smelled gas. Both businesses were not yet open at the time.

Inspectors discovered a worn stove connection was the source of the leak and ordered the restaurant to fix the leak before operating the equipment again, said Ron Marr, customer service supervisor for Northwest Natural.

Gas was carried from the restaurant into the bank via a ventilation system

the two businesses share. The gas was also blown outside onto East 13th Avenue and people walking by may have smelled it, Marr said.

During the inspection, all appliances were checked. Inspectors did not find an underground leak.

— Katy Gagnon

**ASUO sponsors concert to aid with Katrina relief**

The ASUO Executive is sponsoring a live Katrina relief benefit concert tonight from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. in the EMU Ballroom.

More than 100 people are expected to see live performances from Michael Kay and the Phormula, Lafa Taylor, Undermind, Serious, The Oneironauts, The Essentials as well as breakdancers, drum circles and disk jockeys. All profits will be donated to Oregon Food Bank, which will give to the Katrina relief effort.

Tickets will remain on sale at the EMU Ticket Office until 11 p.m. tonight. The cost is \$6 for students and \$7.50 for others.

— Nicholas Wilbur

**Cancun, Cuba evacuate luxury hotels before storm**

CANCUN, Mexico — Tourists packed Cancun's airport desperately seeking flights out and guests at luxury hotels shuttled to emergency shelters, trying to escape Hurricane Wilma as its outer bands battered the resort's white-sand beaches. Cuba evacuated more than 200,000 people ahead of the Category 4 storm.

Wilma, with maximum sustained winds of 145 mph, churned toward the Yucatan peninsula and south Florida after hitting Haiti and Jamaica, where it killed at least 13 people. The storm was expected to strike Cancun and its surrounding resorts and sideswipe Cuba early Friday.

Forecasters said Wilma then would make a beeline for Florida, where Gov. Jeb Bush declared a state of emergency, and make land-fall Sunday.

"At least for the next couple of days here, we think we're going to have a very powerful hurricane here in the Caribbean," said Max Mayfield, director of the National Hurricane Center in Miami.

**FEMA official excoriates his agency on Katrina**

WASHINGTON — In the midst of the chaos that followed Hurricane Katrina, a Federal Emergency Management Agency official in New Orleans sent a direct e-mail to Director Michael Brown saying victims had no food and were dying.

No response came from Brown. Instead, less than three hours later, an aide to Brown sent an e-mail saying her boss wanted to go on a television program that night — af-

ter needing at least an hour to eat dinner at a Baton Rouge, La., restaurant.

The e-mails were made public Thursday at a Senate Homeland Security Committee hearing featuring Marty Bahamonde, the first agency official to arrive in New Orleans in advance of the Aug. 29 storm. The hurricane killed more than 1,200 people and forced hundreds of thousands to evacuate.

Bahamonde, who sent the e-mail to Brown two days after the storm struck, said the correspondence illustrates the government's failure to grasp what was happening.

**Congress votes to shield gunmakers from lawsuits**

WASHINGTON — Congress voted Thursday to sweep away the ability of gun crime victims to sue firearms manufacturers and dealers for damages, answering complaints by President Bush and the gun industry that big jury awards could lead to bankruptcy.

Opponents called the 283-144 vote in the House proof of the gun lobby's power over the Republican-controlled Congress, but Bush said he looked forward to signing the bill. "Our laws should punish criminals who use guns to commit crimes, not law-abiding manufacturers of lawful products," the president said.

The Senate passed the bill, 65-31, in July.

The bill's passage was the National Rifle Association's top legislative priority and gave Bush and his Republican allies on Capitol Hill a rare victory at a politically troubled time when several top White House officials and GOP congressional leaders are under investigation.

**Report: U.S. soldiers desecrated bodies**

KABUL, Afghanistan — Islamic clerics expressed outrage Thursday at television footage that purportedly shows U.S. soldiers burning the bodies of two dead Taliban fighters to taunt other militants and warned of a possible violent anti-American backlash.

President Hamid Karzai condemned the alleged desecration and ordered an inquiry. The operational commander of the U.S. military in Afghanistan, which launched its own criminal probe, said the alleged act, if true, was "repugnant."

Worried about the potential for anti-American feelings over the incident, the State Department said it instructed U.S. embassies around the globe to tell local governments that the reported abuse did not reflect American values.

Cremating bodies is banned under Islam, and one Muslim leader in Afghanistan compared the video to photographs of U.S. troops abusing prisoners at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison.

—The Associated Press

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**Gender, Race, and Militarization**

A one-day conference exploring the ways in which militarization has become a deeply rooted dimension of U.S. foreign and domestic policies, and how related policies affect individuals and communities differently depending on gender, race, and class.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2005, 9:45 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M., ERB MEMORIAL UNION

Featuring California Congresswoman Barbara Lee as the keynote speaker as well as local and national scholars and activists, including Catherine Lutz, Lakshmi Chaudhry, Karen Houppert, and Gwyn Kirk.

The conference, free and open to the public, is made possible through a grant from the Carlton Raymond and Wilberta Ripley Savage Visiting Professorship in International Studies and Peace. Progressive Response is a cosponsor for Congresswoman Lee's visit.

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