

Cure sought for landfill odor

By Kelly Laughlin
The Print

A typical student's eyes may not be alert during an 8 a.m. lecture class, but if he's commuting from Clackamas, Milwaukie or Portland to the College via the Redland-Markplace interchange, his nasal passages are certain to demand attention. The reason? Rossman's Landfill in Oregon City.

The 100-acre landfill that opened in 1969 was put into operation at a time when the Metropolitan Service District was non-existent. Only design approval and a franchise license from the state and county were required in order to open. The Rossman site used to be a natural lowland swamp. The bacteria that settled there from the garbage created the noxious gases. Virtually every landfill in Oregon does give off an odor of methane gas and other combustible fumes. But the result of decomposition from the garbage, coupled with

the swamp locale at Rossman's created the additional amount of gas that was finally alleviated two years ago, said Merle Ervine, director of solid wastes for the MSD.

Part of a natural appendage to the swamp that connects with the Clackamas River used

to run directly through the landfill, creating an unbearable amount of odor problems, according to the operator and owner of the site, Jack Parker. When the MSD began regulating the operation of Oregon's landfills in 1977, workers there diverted the

stream away from the landfill at MSD's request.

Another cause for the smell, according to Ervine, is the steep incline located at the dump. "The flow of air from the hill results in accelerated decomposition of the wastes, and thus more odor, he said.

Currently, Rossman's collects nearly 4,000 tons of garbage daily. According to Charles Gray, assistant manager of the northwest regional office of the Department of Environmental Quality, the landfill "is the only currently open solid waste disposal site in Clackamas County. Nearly half of the solid wastes in the Portland Metropolitan area are dumped there," he said.

Before June or July of 1982, the projected closure date for Rossman's another landfill site must be chosen. Immediately, the problems of Oregon City landfill is faced with are being investigated by both Rossman's and the MSD.

By placing test wells and pipes in the landfill, the MSD and Rossman's hope to vent gases for both disposal and practical uses. According to Ervine, two types of systems could be used. A passive system would allow the gas to flow out of the pipes naturally. An active system would collect the gases to be put in a treatment facility and finally taken to a natural gas gridline. In Palos Verdes, Calif., an active system is run at a landfill which collects and processes enough gas to heat 1,400 homes in the area.

Additionally, the MSD plans to establish a resource recovery plant in conjunction with the new site, where the garbage will be ground, boiled, and from the steam, used to create power for the Publisher's Paper mill in Oregon City. The recovery plant is planned to go on line in the 10-acre plot adjacent to the Rossman site in 1984. By then the landfill will have closed. "The recovery plant will, of course, not be able to make use of all the wastes, so along with unrecyclable waste, the ash from the recovery plant would be dumped in the landfill," said Ervine.

Now, the MSD is inspecting prospective sites for the future landfill. The new landfill will not be located in Oregon City, but at a higher elevation. "The simple theory that gas rises means that a landfill at a higher altitude is more feasible," Ervine said. Proposed sites are the city of Durham in Washington County, Mira Mont Farm south of Wilsonville, 106th and Division.



ODOR EATER—The MSD is inspecting prospective sites for a future landfill site, when Rossman's closes in 1982. Proposed sites are the city of Durham in Washington County, Mira Mont Farm, south of Wilsonville, and 106th and Division.

Photo by Kelly Laughlin

Artist celebrates a childhood dream

Kelly Laughlin

The Print
Jeane Schwabe lives her profession.

While she agrees that's what a good watercolorist should do, Schwabe considers her 12-year addiction to the transparent medium a bit like a harmless disease. "I'm hooked on it. I had always dreamed of

doing watercolors as a child. I never dreamed it would lead to this," said the Hubbard artist.

Aside from making a substantial income applying brush to canvas, Schwabe's work gained West Coast recognition when one of her paintings was displayed alongside the state's finest works at the Seattle Northwest Annual Exhibition. Her

works are on display in the Fireside Lounge through Oct. 19.

Recently, an experimental painting, "High Country," was purchased by the Craftsman Press Calendar Company to appear in the 1980 calendar. "I was overjoyed," she said, "some of the finest watercolors in the nation appear on that calendar."

The painting is one of Schwabe's first experimental watercolors, made by applying an acrylic base on masonite, then tissue paper. The result, when the paint is applied, is a textured, abstract watercolor, with shapes and contours not found in most traditional watercolor paintings.

Schwabe said she doesn't want to carry her work too far into the abstract, although the tissue paper technique lends itself best to abstracts. "I want to stick to the subject matter. I don't think I would feel right making that big a transition in my work," she said.

Too much could be at stake if Schwabe switched from "realist" paintings to purely intangible images. Schwabe's

work is fresh, alive, and vivid in color. The scenes she paints reflect nature at ease: a tall grass meadow, a snow-covered bank, and a clear blue stream winding between birch trees. Schwabe sticks to the imaginable, but as she put it, "I have to work at it everyday to stay sharp. Watercolors can easily get away from you if you don't practice. It took me a long time to see things as a whole scene, rather than one object. That's one thing that comes from just practice, practice, practice."

One could call Schwabe a purist in the sense that watercolor is the only medium she's ever worked in. "There's so many ways to attack the canvas. You can go wet into wet for a bleeded affect or use a dry brush, but you have to have control. The average watercolor takes about one hour to finish. Add about 20 years of practice," she said, "and you can bet the next one will be as big a challenge as the first."

Schwabe's work will remain in the Fireside Lounge until Oct. 19, along with the works of five other Northwest watercolorists.



ARTISTIC ADDICTION—Jeane Schwabe displays "High Country," one of three paintings showing in the Community Center's Fireside Lounge until October 19.

Photo by Kelly Laughlin

Editor's note

The Print is looking for interesting people to feature. Since we feel that everyone at the College is unique, we'd like you to share with us any unusual hobby or interesting pastime. From speed-boating, skiing to needlepoint, no holds are barred. Contact Kelly Laughlin, feature editor, Monday, Wednesday or Friday by calling ext. 309 from 1-2 p.m. Or, come by Haller B. Become a celebrity!

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