

Safety concerns force observatory closure

ROBERT SCHOENBURG
Editor-in-Chief

The Haggart Astronomical Observatory, located on the John Inskeep Environmental Learning Center (ELC) grounds was closed down last week because of structural problems in the timber beams that make up the observatory's platform.

An examination by a structural engineer prompted the college to close down the observatory on September 28. Next March will mark the 10th anniversary of the observatory's opening.

The problem was discovered by CCC Plant Services after a woodpecker attempted to build a home in one of the timbers and the engineer noticed that the wood inside the timber was

rotting.

Observatory director Ken Cameron first heard about the closing on Monday.

"It's quite a blow," Cameron said. "About 1500 people a year visit the observatory. It's a truly unique educational facility."

Cameron has been with the observatory since the beginning and said it was built mostly by volunteers and with contributed materials.

"The timbers used for the platform came from the old Smuckers cannery," said Cameron.

Part of the structure is a concrete column that

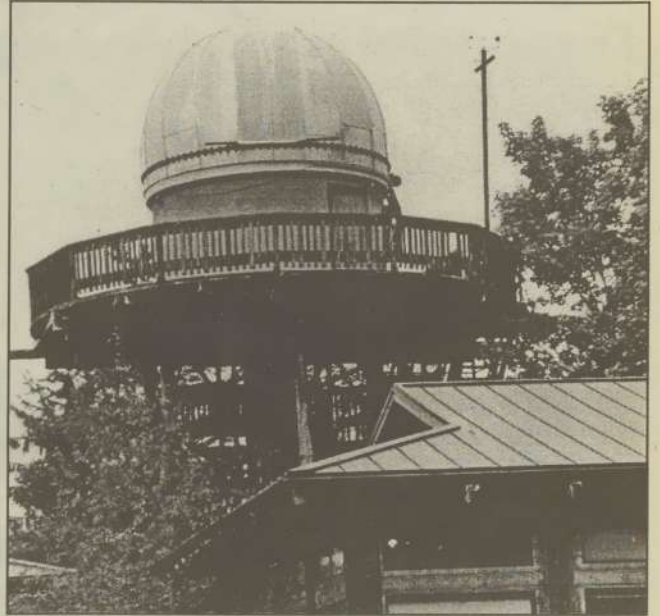
runs up through the center of the dome. On top of the column is the array of telescopes including a 24" Newtonian reflector telescope. The column is more like a tall table that isolates the telescopes from the rest of the structure to eliminate possible vibration.

On October 5 at 4 p.m. the college will hold a meeting to examine the problem at the observatory. The meeting will include the Science Department, the ELC and Cameron.

The observatory is one of only a few in the area, and is the only observatory in the state open all year long, said Cameron. "I hope we are up and running next spring for the anniversary," he said.

“About 1500 people a year visit the observatory. It's a truly unique educational facility.”

Ken Cameron
Director



TIMOTHY BELL / Clackamas Print

The Haggart Astronomical Observatory, located at the ELC, will hopefully be up and running for its anniversary next spring.

Garden: Nature reveals hidden remedies

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The young stems and leaves, collected before the plant reaches a foot in length, can be cooked and eaten as a vegetable. Care should be taken not to collect them after they get much taller than a foot, because the plant can accumulate heavy metals from the soil and become somewhat toxic.

As with any wild plant gathered for consumption, positive identification should first be made. This can only be done with practice and skill. As far

as medicine goes, Touch-Me-Not has long been used as an itch reliever for Poison Oak and Poison Ivy. The leaves when crushed become slimy, or mucilaginous, and can be rubbed directly on the affected area. This simple but effective application has been used for centuries, by Native Americans and European settlers alike.

When you pass through the Garden, stop and take a look as Autumn begins to settle in. Keep your eyes out for the subtle blooms and last-minute flings of nature. Enjoy.

Choir set to kick off

JOEL SHERPERT
Copy Editor

Clackamas' vocal music program is entering its 1998-99 season, and on 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 16, at the community at large can find out what the all the fuss is about.

The Choir Fundraising Kick-off at Gregory Forum will feature selections from the Clackamas Chamber Choir and the Male and Female Choirs, as well as vocal jazz groups Mainstream and Straight Ahead, with what choir director Lonnie Cline describes as "various and sundry solos" by vocal music students—a "choral sampler" of sorts.

The music will be a prelude to a presentation on the choirs' upcoming Eastern Europe tour next summer, with the aim of selling attendees on the significance of this endeavor to students' lives.

"We want to sing a little bit, but the main thing that we want to do is discuss our trip to Estonia, and the cultural exchange and concert tour," said Cline.

Cline encourages family, friends, and anyone else inter-

ested in supporting music students in this cross-cultural venture to attend. His desire is to create a booster organization for the various choirs' financial support.

The event will include the aforementioned singing component, a speech by a representative of the Portland-Tallinn Friendship City Association (an organization of Portland's Estonian community), testimonials of Clackamas students and alumni who have visited Estonia in the past, and presentations by representatives of various fund-raising groups.

The event will be the first of many Music Department events this term, including the **Instrumental Jazz Night** on Nov. 18, the Chamber Singers' performance of **J.S. Bach's Christmas Oratorio** with the Sinfonia Concertante Orchestra on Dec. 4, the Chamber Singers', Male Choir's, and Female Choir's **Christmas by Candlelight**, and the **Fall Alumni Vocal Jazz Night** on Dec. 11.

Further information on these events will be forthcoming as the term commences.

Eyes: Land clearing for agriculture

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According to Battalion Chief Ken Frentress of Clackamas County Fire District #1, the man who was burning 'slash' on his property adjacent to Clackamas was operating without a permit.

"He misled the Fire Protection Office [FPO]," said Frentress.

Normal procedure for slash burning, which Frentress defined as "land-clearing for agricultural

use," would be to obtain a free license from the Clackamas County Fire District #1 office.

This process would also include an inspection of the property by FPO officials, who may impose restrictions such as making sure that water is available.

Instead, the man who was burning reported that he only had a small brush pile the size of a Volkswagen. This would fall under the category of backyard burning, which only requires a

phone call to the Fire District to get permission.

As a result of the complaints from the college, the Fire District has revoked any current burn permits and all future burn permits to the property owner. Frentress added, "Unfortunately, the Department of Environmental Quality [in Salem] doesn't follow up on this kind of case, and we don't have the power to enforce the rules more than we've done already."

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