

WHAT I DID OVER SUMMER BREAK

Some UO faculty fear changes to the Oregon Administrative Rules regarding student records — compliant with the USA PATRIOT Act — are a threat to student privacy. In a June 20 UO public hearing, 12 faculty and administrators discussed these changes to the rules. The changes in question regard the UO's obligation to surrender student records, without notifying the student, in the event of being subpoenaed. There are also changes regarding student directory information.

In a letter to the media, biology Prof. Frank Stahl writes, "In May, 2003 ... the UO Senate expressed its interest in the nature of university compliance with the USA PATRIOTIC act. University General Consul Melinda Grier assured the Senate that no requests for information had been received by the university. Despite the ... interest of the Senate in this matter, and ... the passage of a Senate motion seeking a statement from the UO administration regarding plans for compliance, no mention was made by General Counsel Grier of the planned rules change."

Barbara Pope, professor emeritus in Women's and Gender Studies, and author/editor of the UO Resolution on the PATRIOT Act, also held the administration suspect, saying, "We wrote the resolution in the best faith of the administration to cooperate, gather information, and have a give and take ..."

Faculty were also disturbed that the pre-hearing on the changes was set for June 3, during "dead week," and the June 20 hearing was exactly one week after students had been released for summer break. Such scheduling, faculty say, could mean student privacy was being threatened without students knowing it. Louise Westling, professor of English, said, "I have protected student privacy as directed by administration ... I am stunned that this change would happen, almost in secret."

Chereck responded, "I did not in any way see the relationship with the PATRIOT Act. This week when I did, I gasped for air." He

said the changes were only edits to dense legal-ese. In fact, the rules — actually federal law according to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act — had been in place since the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994.

When faculty realized these rules were existing federal law, they and Chereck discussed specific wording concerns. They were worried about the UO surrendering information under subpoena by "the court or other issuing agency ..." They also had questions about releasing student information based on "a reasonable need to know ..." Chereck assured faculty that these concerns would be addressed.

Pope responded, "We're not here just to make trouble ... we want to be heard."

—Bobbie Willis

COPS DENY PROBLEM IN PARAMILITARY RAID

The Eugene Police Department, after being leafletted at an awards ceremony, has acknowledged a formal complaint from the Whiteaker Community Council (WCC) and denied any wrongdoing or policy violations in a drug raid in the Whiteaker neighborhood.

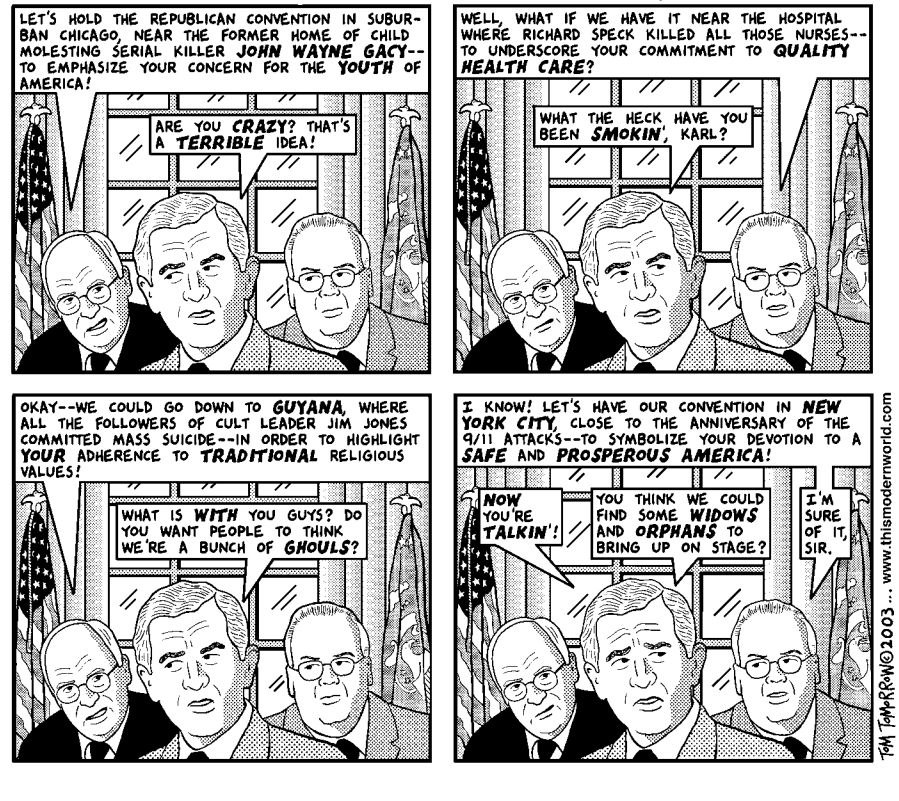
The complaint filed April 30 was in response to a fruitless paramilitary raid on a home Oct. 17, 2002. The complaint outlines the "well-founded concern that the police tactics and weapons used unnecessarily endangered everyone in the area: the residents in the properties being searched, the police involved in carrying out the operation, and the many innocent adults and children living in the vicinity." A lawsuit against the police by the families raided is also pending, citing excessive use of force in the incident.

The EPD had not acknowledged the complaint for six weeks even though the "Tell Us About It" form for commendations and complaints states: "Our policy is to complete the investigation within approximately 30 days from the date we receive the complaint. If that is not possible we will notify you of a delay ..."

The response finally came after members

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



of the WCC quietly passed out fliers complaining about the lack of response at an EPD awards ceremony June 11, says Majeska Seese-Green of WCC.

The letter of response from Sgt. Kel Williams says "the matter has been closely examined," and that Chief Buchanan is "satisfied that, both legally and procedurally, EPD officers applied for and served the warrant in a manner consistent with best police professional standards, and with our policies."

Regarding the complaint that the paramilitary action endangered citizens in the area, the letter states, "Such a concern is understandable to the uninformed ..."

Seese-Green responds that the biggest problem is with the policies, or lack of policies, restraining the actions of EPD.

—Ted Taylor

ESSN GATHERS TO TALK TAXES, CELEBRATE YEAR

Two successful labor and tax organizers from Los Angeles will share their experiences and insights as keynote speakers for the annual meeting of Eugene-Springfield Solidarity Network (ESSN) and Jobs with Justice from 7 to 9 pm Tuesday, July 1. The meeting will be at the First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St.

Last November, a coalition of labor and community organizations in Los Angeles County won a historic victory by passing the first property tax increase in California in 20 years. The tax hike was targeted at maintaining the county's crumbling public health system by providing funds for vital community clinics and regional hospitals responsible for providing care for the county's 2.7 million uninsured.

Like Oregon, California has been the battleground for a right-wing anti-tax agenda, and the state's public services are facing similar cuts as Oregon. The lessons of this victory in L.A. County will be shared by two organizers from the campaign, Ericka Smith from the Service Employees International Union Local 660, and Amy Hall from the Committee of Interns and Residents.

"Their campaign was built on a broad community-labor coalition, was based on one-on-one organizing, and used creative actions on the streets to increase the campaign's

visibility and move its message in the public," says Sarah Jacobsen of ESSN.

The meeting kicks off ESSN's campaign for tax justice. The event is open to the public. For more information, call ESSN at 736-9041 or e-mail essn@efn.org — TJJ

CYCLISTS STOPPED

Two African-American men on bicycles were stopped by a Eugene police officer on Broadway near Almaden late in the evening of June 16 and one of the men was pepper-sprayed in the eyes.

Reports from bystanders conflict with police reports. "Sirens and the flash of several police cars drew my attention to two black men with bicycles surrounded by police," says Sherry Franzen, a member of CopWatch. "A man was sitting on the curb and called out to me saying he'd been pepper sprayed in the face for riding without a bike light. I was ordered to leave, to 'go home' or I'd be arrested. In my opinion, I was home."

Franzen says neighbors on the scene told her, "When the other man asked why they were arresting his brother, a cop held a gun to his head."

According to an EPD report, Ronald Rebers, 23, and Ruben Charles Vaughan, 25, were riding bicycles down a dark street without lights and were stopped by officer Scott Dillon at 10:45 that evening. Rebers complied with Dillon's orders to get off the bicycle and sit on the sidewalk, but Vaughan was angry, combative and "wouldn't get off his bike."

In the ensuing verbal exchange and "escalating hostility," the officer says he threatened Vaughan with OC gas (pepper spray) and when he was "concerned for my immediate safety" shot a "one-second burst of OC spray to the eyes." Finally, after backup arrived and after threatening Vaughan with a baton, the suspect "complied" and was hauled off to jail. Following a subsequent search, Vaughan was found to be carrying a six-inch knife and "metal knuckles" and was charged with interfering with police and carrying a concealed weapon, according to police. Vaughan could not be reached for comment.

Rebers was cited for a bicycle equipment violation and released. — TJJ

Happening people

BY PAUL NEEVEL

Ken Raymen

Thirty years ago, when he was employed in the controller's office of Rutgers University in New Jersey, Ken Raymen cut back to half-time work so that he could volunteer half-time at an elementary school. "I've been doing it ever since," says Raymen, who was recently named volunteer of the year in Springfield schools for his efforts at Page Elementary. When he moved to Eugene in 1986 — "My brother has lived here since '71" — Raymen imported a program of intra-school team competitions that he had developed in New Jersey. During the '90s, Raymen organized "Teamwork" contests at four Eugene elementary schools. "I was doing the whole thing myself," he notes. "Eventually I burned out." After a move to Springfield, he began volunteering at the Page School library in 2000. "Then they asked, 'How about doing lunch recess?'" he notes. "I get to see all the kids — I love that." During the past school year, Raymen has founded a non-profit corporation, We All Win, Inc., to organize supplementary educational programs in the Springfield district. "Ken is a pretty awesome guy — we love him," says Page Principal Carole Sterry. "He also gets other people to volunteer." — Paul Neevel

