

Protest ends white rights group's meeting early

By **DEBBIE CENZIPER**
Alligator Writer

Although the white student union was able to read part of their constitution aloud at their second meeting Friday night, it ended when a protester insisted on "educating them with some statistics."

David Padgett, a member of the Fraternal Loyal Order of the 99, stood and disrupted the parliamentary procedure of the meeting to write statistics on the blackboard he said would help clarify the issue on Affirmative Action and minority enrollment.

The Loyal Order is a national non-Greek organization designed to educate, motivate and protect the black community, Padgett said.

Mark Wright, the white student group's president, conducted the union's second meeting in parliamentary procedure because the first meeting had been disrupted by about 60 protesters who debated issues. Wright told Padgett to sit down because he "had not been recognized by the chair." When Padgett refused, Wright adjourned the meeting.

But before the adjournment, Wright and his new vice president, sophomore Steve McCormick, fielded questions from the crowd and read aloud part of their newly-formed constitution.

Wright read that the group aims to: establish equal rights for all races, abolish preferential treatment of all races, eliminate racial tensions and provide a forum for those opposed to the unfair treatment of whites. The group plans to submit their constitution to UF administrators sometime in the next few weeks.

The group has its officers, Wright said, but he refused to give out names because some officers are afraid of receiving threatening phone calls or being labeled racists.

Wright said the group is open to all UF students regardless of race, sex or nationality as long as they oblige by the group's rules and procedures.

He also said he wanted to acquaint possible members with what the group stands for and what they hope to accomplish in the future.

"The time for silent understanding is over," he said. "The white student union will serve as a hand to unite us in a time of intense racial tension."

Meetings with the Black Student Union and dialogues with different campus groups can help promote understanding between the races, Wright said.

"We're really out to help race relations," he said.

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Leader says BSU will persevere despite formation of white group

By **ANTHONY LEDERMAN**
Alligator Writer

Black Student Union President Roxy Oliver said her group would never stoop to the level of the white student union to fight.

"Blacks, as a race, have learned to persevere against whites," Oliver said after a group meeting Thursday. "We're not formed to combat any organization on campus."

Oliver said that the purpose of her group is to create an environment that promotes a social and respectful environment for blacks on campus, not defend itself.

"We are made up of strong individuals who have strong character," she said. "Something like the WSU isn't going to tear down our strong character."

Oliver said she feels the force be-

hind the white student union is to counteract and combat her group.

"I think any group formed in opposition to another group has no true premise," she said. "(Mark Wright's) organization was formed to go against BSU."

Oliver said her organization is not on campus just for blacks.

"If Mark Wright ever came to a BSU meeting, he would have learned that," she said. "There are quite a few members who are black and quite a few who are white and active."

The only chance to stop rising racial tensions on campus is education, she said.

"It can only happen if everyone is honest," she said. "Honesty is the beginning. If whites just said, 'My problems with blacks are...' and if blacks said, 'My problems with whites are...', then we could get somewhere."

Gas leak leaves officials searching for a solution

By **NICOLE SNEED**
Alligator Writer

To find a way to clean up the aquifer contamination, the Department of Motor Pool may call on Mother Nature to fix its mishap.

Last week, the Florida Department of General Services found leaks in the steel pipe joints of two of four gasoline service pumps at UF's physical plant. Gas had been leaking for an undetermined length of time and about 1,000 tons of contaminated dirt was found in the excavation.

Officials are not sure if the gas has leaked into the Floridan Aquifer, which supplies drinking water to most of the state. Workers will test today for water contamination, officials said.

One professor said the answer to groundwater contamination is Mother Nature.

Environmental engineering professor Joseph Delfino said of the three common techniques used for getting gas out of the groundwater, the newest and cheapest choice is a process called bio-remediation,

which uses petroleum-eating bacteria. It is like a Pac-Man game where the bacteria are little Pac-Mans and the dots are the gas, Delfino said.

"If you feed (the bacteria) oxygen and stimulate their metabolism (with nutrients), then they will chomp on the gas," Delfino said.

Although bio-remediation requires further research and takes longer than other clean-up options, Delfino said it cleans spills efficiently and inexpensively. He said

it takes longer than other methods because the bacteria must be cultivated before they are placed in the spill.

Another process called air stripping relies on the natural volatility of gas. In this process, a blow motor pushes the tainted water up through a tower and lets it trickle down the sides, where it has a chance to evaporate.

Delfino said air stripping is the most common method used to clean ground water, but it is expensive and it releases gas fumes into

the environment.

"It may cause a little air pollution but it is a convenient way to get rid of surface gas," Delfino said.

A third alternative called carbon absorption uses a pump to push water through a special carbon filter to catch the gas so it can be recycled. But the bigger the spills, the more filters used, and it can be costly.

Delfino said he can't estimate how long the bacteria would take to clean up the soil because he doesn't know how big the spill is.

Petty and band urge fans to save world

By **ANTHONY LEDERMAN**
Alligator Writer

Tom Petty did more than just play guitar and sing songs in his hometown Saturday night — he urged the audience to save the world.

During the almost two-hour concert in the O'Connell Center, Petty and the Heartbreakers mentioned several times the importance of preserving the environment to the record near-capacity crowd of 10,628.

"We might not have 50 years to save the world — we might not even have 10," Petty said both at a news conference and during the show.

Petty and the Heartbreakers played in Gainesville for the first time in seven years, although Petty said he often comes home unannounced.

"Like anyone coming back to their hometown, we're all very nervous about playing tonight,"

Petty said at a news conference prior to the show. "It's really a dream come true to be here."

Petty, who promoted Greenpeace during the concert, said he became aware of the ecological problems when he and the Heartbreakers took a two-year break from touring.

"Since I've become aware of the ecological crisis we face, I do not use Styrofoam or things that are not bio-degradable," he said.

Petty said he is aware of such things as how long he showers. He said the solution is for people to understand that everyone makes a difference.

Noticeably in awe of the crowd, Petty and the Heartbreakers played most of their hits, including "Refugee," "Breakdown" and "Don't Come Around Here No More."

"It's been too long — way too

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Tom Petty and Heartbreaker Mike Campbell, who have been performing together for more than 20 years, play to a record crowd Saturday night at the O'Connell Center. Inset: Tom Petty: "It feels really good to be home."

PHOTOS BY SUZETTE COOK—ALLIGATOR

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long," said Gainesville resident and long-time Petty fan Mark Denison.

"It was awesome," said junior Julie Knight, who sat in the front row. "Tom Petty was wonderful."

Many fans said they felt Petty was especially appreciative of the crowd's support.

"It seemed like he really enjoyed himself," journalism junior Cathy Hufford said. "I had heard rumors that he didn't want to come to Gainesville."

Petty said the Heartbreakers had not played Gainesville sooner because they tour mostly in the summer, when there are not as many students at UF.

"We really haven't toured in the winter because we're all older now,

with families and children," Petty said.

"We always wanted to come back," he said. "We'd much rather play here than in Jacksonville."

Petty said his arrival in Gainesville Saturday sparked thousands of memories.

"I've got so many relatives and families in the crowd that I've got to be good," Petty said during the show.

Petty dedicated the ballad "Southern Accents" to his mother, who was at the show, and the late James "Dub" Thomas, who died Jan 9. Thomas owned Dub's, where Petty started his career with the band Mudcrutch.

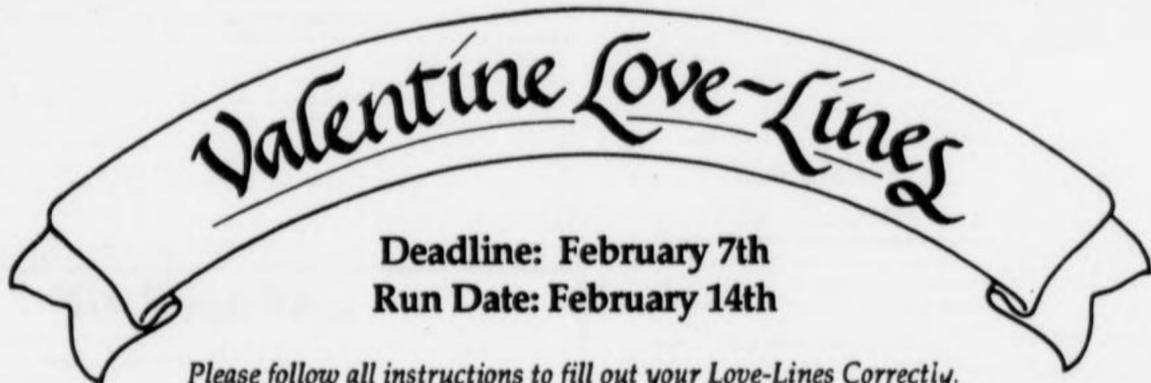
"Thank you for giving us a job when we needed one," Petty said, referring to Dub.

Gainesville Mayor-commissioner Cynthia Chestnut presented

Petty and the Heartbreakers a key to the city prior to the concert, proclaiming Jan. 27 "Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers Day."

"I never dreamed when I was living over the Gator Groomer that one day I'd be sitting down talking to the mayor," Petty told the crowd.

"People ask me, 'How does it feel to be back in Gainesville?' Well, it feels really good."



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