



Gazette-Times photo by Barbara Reynolds

Merry Demarest requested the Mormon Church to excommunicate her because of the church's opposition to ERA.

# Pro-ERA couple want names erased from church roll

By Barbara Reynolds  
Of The Gazette-Times

Harold and Merry Demarest of Corvallis are scheduled to be excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints tonight, at the couple's request.

Neither has been active in the church for about nine years. But the Mormon stand against the proposed Equal Rights Amendment has led them to ask to be erased from church records, they say.

"While I remain firm in my belief that most Mormons are good, well-intentioned people, I can no longer allow my name to be carried on the rolls of the church," Merry wrote in a letter to Kay Salmon, bishop of the church's Second Ward in Corvallis.

"Just as I would not tolerate a government which would interfere with free exercise of religion, I cannot condone a church's use of its power to inhibit political expression by its members through threat of excommunication," she wrote.

Merry's letter refers to the well-publicized excommunication of Sonia Johnson of Virginia last winter. Johnson was excommunicated reportedly for her leadership of a group called Mormons for ERA.

Harold's letter to Salmon also criticizes the church's opposition to the ERA.

"It is because of the Mormon Church's political activities opposing this amendment that I request the relationship between me and the church be terminated by excommunication," he wrote.

Another Corvallis woman, Lynda Sandrock, was also excommunicated by the church this year at her request. Sandrock, similarly, was protesting the church's opposition to the ERA as well as Johnson's excommunication.

Following Sandrock's excommunication, local Mormon officials said that though the church is opposed to the amendment, it would not excommunicate a member for disagreeing.

The ERA would "demean women rather than ennoble them ... and would threaten the stability of the family," the churchmen said.

The Demarests are scheduled to appear individually before the church stake's High Council Court in the church at 4141 N.W. Harrison Blvd. Harold will be heard at 8:30 p.m., Merry at 9 p.m.

Merry is active in the Corvallis chapter of the National Organization for Women.

She and chapter president Carol Carver recently returned from the group's national convention in San Antonio, Tex., where she participated in workshops on promoting the amendment and on "reproductive rights," including abortion.

Those who say the amendment is dying are wrong, she says.

"The ERA is still a live issue. There are at least 800 federal statutes that treat men and women differently."

Some polls show that 56 to 58 percent of the public is in favor of the amendment's passage, she says, while 31 to 36 percent are against.

"And if you take those people who are against, and ask them if they favor equality of rights under the law, the overwhelming majority favor the text," she says.

One of the biggest misconceptions about the Equal Rights Amendment, she says, is its content. It actually is a short statement.

She tells the story of the time the local chapter had an information table on the ERA at a local store. A man had walked past the table and out the door, but trotted back in and asked for a copy of the amendment.

They handed him a chapter business card with the amendment printed on one side.

"He said 'no, I need something with the whole thing on it.' It took several times to explain to him that that was the whole thing."

The amendment states:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

Merry, trained as a mental health counselor but not presently employed, favors the ERA for a number of reasons; one is economics, she says.

"For every dollar earned by a man, a woman in a similar job earns 59 cents," she says.

Wages for women in Oregon are among the lowest in the nation, she added. For every \$1 earned by a man here, a woman earns 55 cents.

"It takes nine days of work to take home what a man does in five," she says.

Though Congress has passed some laws requiring equal treatment for women, such as Title 7 which calls for equality in employment, there are too many exceptions, says Merry.

"They exempted small businesses, Congress and the military," she says. "This is one reason we can't depend on legislation," she says, referring to the male-dominated Congress exempting itself.

In sessions at the women's national conven-

tion, the group passed a resolution that there be equal representation of women in "all levels of government," she says.

Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment will be the first priority of the National Organization for Women in the months remaining for ratification. The deadline is June 30, 1982.

Only 3 states are needed for ratification of the amendment, she says. 35 are required altogether.

Part of the women's conference was devoted to creating "new techniques for creative non-violent protest" against those who do not favor passage of the amendment.

"One of the first targets will be the Mormon Church," she says.

The Mormon Church, which she describes as a "multi-billion dollar industry," is "systematically blocking" passage of the amendment, she says.

Members of the women's group will picket the opening of a new Mormon temple in the Seattle area, she says.

But the Mormon Church is not the only target of the women's group, she says.

While the women at the convention declined to endorse a presidential candidate, they did endorse the Democratic Party platform and vowed to "expose Republicans for their medieval stance on women's issues."

Both Merry and Harold joined the Mormon church as teenagers and became inactive after only a few years.

"I have respect for individual Mormons," she says.

"I do not have respect for the way the Mormon Church manipulates members for their right-wing goals."

Merry says there is irony in the procedure for excommunication.

As a woman, she may be excommunicated by her ward bishop.

But because her husband is a church elder — a position from which women are barred — he must go before the High Council. The council is hearing both their cases only "as a courtesy," she says.

"So there's sexism even in the excommunication process," she says.

Merry is trying to decide between two buttons to wear to the hearing.

One says "A man of quality is not threatened by a woman of equality."

The other says "Honor thy mother — get her into the constitution."

# Corvallis Couple Say Church Excommunicated Them

CORVALLIS, Ore. (UPI) — A Corvallis couple say they have been excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at their own request because they objected to the church's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment.

Harold and Merry Demarest, in separate half-hour hearings last week, told a church court they no longer wished to be part of the membership of the church. The Demarests said the court made it clear they were not being excommunicated because of their support for the ERA.

Demarest, 33, an assistant professor of geology at Oregon State University, said one reason he decided

to ask for excommunication was newspaper reports last spring that alleged the Mormon Church in California had collected funds to back the campaigns of Florida state legislators who promised to vote against ratification of the ERA.

"As long as the position was just being taken inside the church and church wasn't bothering other people, it was all right for it to just go on in its way," Demarest said. "But I felt I could no longer be affiliated with a group taking such an active role in retaining and creating impediments to women obtaining their legal rights."

Mrs. Demarest, 31, a mental health specialist, admits she and her hus-

band are seeking publicity, "but not for ourselves. People should know there is a church with perhaps 1½ percent of the population which is influencing what happens in the country way beyond what it should be."

Richard Arnold, president of the Corvallis Stake, said he wanted to be sure the Demarests understood that people can believe in and support the ERA and still remain in the church.

"The church feels that the ERA is a moral issue and its passage would cause problems for the family, so the church has taken a position of non-support of the ERA," Arnold said. The church believes in equal rights for women, but not in the amendment, he added.

# Corvallis woman held at temple protest

From Associated Press  
and Gazette-Times Reports

BELLEVUE, Wash. — Anti-Mormon demonstrators for the Equal Rights Amendment say they will continue their protests this week during dedication ceremonies for the new \$12 million Mormon temple.

No demonstrators appeared by mid-morning today at the temple, where dedication ceremonies were being held, said Bellevue Police Capt. Dan Hansen.

A Corvallis woman was among 21 demonstrators, most chained to gates around the building, who were arrested on trespassing charges Monday.

She is Merry Demarest, who with her husband Harold recently was excommunicated from the Mormon Church at the couple's request.

They were led by excom-

municated Mormon Sonia Johnson in protest of the church's stand against the proposed constitutional amendment to guarantee equal rights for women.

Protesters said the demonstrations would continue and placard-carrying demonstrators returned to the temple in the afternoon. Inside, Spencer W. Kimball, president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, conducted formal dedication ceremonies for invited guests only.

"We wanted to be arrested to make the statement that women's rights are worth making sacrifices for," said Johnson.

"I'm visited by Mormon missionaries every month at my rural Washington home. It's simple justice that I came to visit them," said Dixie Lee Johnson of Cheney, state president of the National Organization for Women.

Another demonstrator, Marty LaBrosse, 47, of Kingston, Wash., filed a complaint with Bellevue police against a man she identified as "a Mormon guard" at the temple. LaBrosse, Washington coordinator of Mormons For ERA, alleged that the man pushed her to the ground and kicked her in the side.

During the morning demonstration, police had to carry a number of protestors

into police vans. At least two women were shoved to the ground or jostled by onlookers, witnesses said.

Police used bolt-cutters to snap wires and chains that held more than a dozen demonstrators to three gates at the temple, where dedication ceremonies began Monday and will continue through Friday.

Most of those arrested pleaded innocent to misdemeanor trespass charges and trial was scheduled for Jan. 16. They were released without bond.

However, Johnson and several other defendants entered stipulated pleas, in which they admitted facts of

the case and allowed a judge to sentence them without trial.

Johnson was fined \$250 and sentenced to 90 days in jail. But King County District Court Judge Melvin Love said she would have to pay only \$100 and he deferred the jail term on condition she break no more laws and that she stay away from the temple.

She said Monday was the first time she had been arrested.

Mormon leaders gave their side at a news conference Monday afternoon.

"It's absolutely incorrect" that any church funds have been used to fight ERA, said Erent Nash, president of the

Washington stake of the Mormon church.

About the demonstration, Nash said, "We're sorry they feel that way. It doesn't make us angry. We would defend their right to be there."

Another church leader said demonstrations actually help the church.

"People hear about the church and join," said Steve Glad, Northwest spokesman for the church. "We recognize that in the world there are a couple different forces, one good and one not so good. The work of the church is the work of Jesus Christ and his father. The demonstrators are in opposition to the work of the Lord that is going forth."



## Warm up to



# **Mormon Church, Moral Majority Draw Criticisms**

EUGENE, Ore. (UPI) — The Moral Majority and the Mormon Church were targets of criticism Sunday at the Oregon convention of the National Organization for Women.

The Mormon Church has funneled money and assistance to groups working for defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment, Merry Demarest, an ex-communicated Mormon, told one workshop.

She described the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as "highly organized, high motivated and directed by male leaders from Utah." She said Mormons for ERA has 2,000 members and many are jeopardizing their church memberships and jobs by supporting the women's movement.

The Moral Majority was described as "neither moral, nor a majority" by Barbara Boucot, a delegate to the 1990 White House Conference on the Family. She added, "but we can't ignore them."

She urged NOW members to take part in organizations combatting what she termed television censorship efforts by Moral Majority.

Delegates also were told, "The anti-abortion human life amendment has a better chance of passing in this Congress than the Equal Rights Amendment." Laura Albeitman, of Corvallis, an organization for the National Abortion Rights League, added, "That's something we're going to have to face."

Congress, of course, has approved the ERA but it still lacks ratification by the necessary two-thirds of the states.

Carol Carver, of Corvallis, was elected president of the Oregon NOW.



# Spreading the ERA word to Mormons

By Barbara Curtin  
Of The Gazette-Times

For Merry Demarest and Eric Dilsworth, their recent trips to Utah on behalf of the Equal Rights Amendment were hardly the stuff of a relaxing vacation.

In some neighborhoods of Salt Lake City, all the residents closed their doors against Demarest and said they had "no opinion" about the amendment.

But one Mormon woman was so opposed to it that she refused to discuss it with Dilsworth and ordered him off her porch.

And when Demarest took a break from her campaign to get a drink of water at a Mormon temple, a guide followed her to make sure she didn't cause any damage.

The two Corvallis residents went to Utah at their own expense as "missionaries" to seek support for the amendment. They joined teams of 10 to 20 volunteers from other states in a project sponsored by the National Organization for Women to drum up support in the heartland of the Church of the Latter-Day Saints, or Mormons.

Church leaders have strongly discouraged members from supporting the amendment.

Demarest and Dilsworth say that they believe the church also plays a key role in organizing and financing the anti-amendment campaign in other states. It must be ratified by three more states before June 30, 1982, if it is to become part of the U.S. Constitution.

The missionary role was a familiar one to their audience. The volunteers traveled in pairs, friendly and businesslike, just as Mormon missionaries do.

But instead of a religious message, they spread the word about the 52-word amendment that would make it uncon-



Merry Demarest says she got lots of abuse and some unexpected support when she campaigned door-to-door in Utah for the Equal Rights Amendment.

stitutional to deny equal rights to anyone on the basis of sex.

Demarest, 32, returned to Corvallis at the end of July after a two-week stint in Utah. Dilsworth, 25, returned this week after spending three weeks with another group.

Dilsworth, a doctoral candidate in physical chemistry at Oregon State University, said he felt the effects of sex discrimination early in his life. His mother was the sole sup-

port for her three children, and she scraped by on less than a man would earn, he said.

"I saw a lot of things growing up that maybe made me more aware than other men," said Dilsworth. He has served as an officer for the organization at the state and local levels.

Demarest was a Mormon from the age of 16. Last year she was excommunicated, at her own request, because of

the church's stand on the amendment.

A homemaker who devotes much of her time to political activities, she says that she too has felt the effects of sex discrimination. When she and her husband made out their wills last year, for instance, they found that Oregon's liberal laws were not enough protection for a non-working spouse.

"According to federal law, everything that we consider

earned in a partnership will be taxed, when my husband dies, as though it belonged only to him," Demarest said. "To get around that, we will have to fill out a gift form to me every year so that I can prove I have paid for things. I was in a rage for two weeks."

Under the amendment, laws in all states would have to recognize the homemaker's contribution to a marriage, she said.



Gazette-Times photos by John Brogg

Women's equality isn't just women's business to Eric Dilsworth, an Oregon State University graduate student who was a volunteer "missionary" in Utah.

When the volunteers arrived in Utah, they spent a weekend of intensive orientation to Mormon culture and the amendment. Then they fanned out to knock on doors, distribute balloons and canvass Mormon temples.

They asked people to sign a letter to President Ronald Reagan to urge him to support the amendment. They also asked Mormons to sign a post card to Spencer W. Kimball, the president of the Mormon Church. The card asked Kimball to reconsider his opposition to the amendment.

In a pilot study, 78 percent of non-Mormon Utah residents signed the letter to Reagan. Support among Mormons was harder to win; 30 percent signed the Reagan letter, and 17 percent signed the post card to Kimball.

Dilsworth and Demarest found their own reception mixed.

"Most were courteous, but some were terribly frightened," Demarest said.

One man outside the Mormon Temple in Provo, Utah, told Dilsworth he opposed the amendment. Men, himself among them, could not work beside women without being overcome by sexual drives, he said.

A Mormon woman signed Dilsworth's letter while her

father stood nearby, loudly proclaiming her support for Kimball.

"Can you imagine what courage that took for her?" said Dilsworth.

At one house, a Mormon

woman greeted Demarest with open arms. "I knew you were here, and I've been waiting for you," she said.

"That happened from time to time — enough to keep you perking," Demarest said.

## Around the area

### Bike rodeo to be Saturday

Youngsters can show off their bike-riding skills and have their bikes checked for safety at a Bike rodeo Saturday afternoon at Highland View Intermediate School, 1920 N.W. Highland Drive.

The event, sponsored by the Benton District of the Boy Scouts of America, is for girls and boys ages 8 to 10.

Youngsters can come any time between 1 and 4 p.m. to put their bikes through their paces. They will be asked to stop, ride a straight line, and turn corners with bikes under control.

Lt. Dave MacManiman of the Oregon State Police will inspect bikes and talk to youngsters about bike safety.

The rodeo is not a contest, and there will be no prizes, said Brad Harris, district scout executive. Participants will get reflectors and a book on bike maintenance.

### Windy Peak hike Sunday

Hikers can sign up now to join a day hike on Sunday to the Windy Peak Roadless Area in the Coast Range.

Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult. There is no minimum age for the hike, but parents should use their own judgment in deciding whether their children can make an all-day hike.

Transportation will be by car pool. The Corvallis Parks and Recreation Department, 501 S.W. Madison Ave., will reserve places until 5 p.m. Friday.

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**HAVE ERA/WILL TRAVEL.** Equal Rights Amendment activists Elizabeth Buck (far left) and Merry Demarest (far right) are given last minute encouragement by National Organization for Women officers Carol Carver, (center left) State Coordinator and Judy Fortmiller, (center right) Corvallis President. Buck will become an ERA Missionary to Utah and Demarest will assist with the ratification drive in Oklahoma. For ERA information, call 745-7226.

## ***Rights threatened***

Maxine Barnett's Jan. 17 letter was a bit misleading, but was typical of recent anti-choice propaganda.

The right-to-life propagandists use the fictitious ninth-month abortion, and even the usual first trimester abortion, as a smokescreen for their intent to legislate control of all aspects of women's reproductive lives. Major legislation proposed by the anti-choice groups would ban intrauterine devices and birth control pills as causing abortions.

Rather than mention the 8 million abortions since 1973, it would have been more consistent for Barnett to refer to the 1 trillion human ova destroyed over the last 10 years.

Barnett's reference to Hitler was especially appropriate, because he imposed a governmental ban on birth control and abortions (for

Aryans), just as our "pro-life" groups are attempting to do today. Both Hitler and the right-to-life movement resorted to the propaganda technique of the "big lie" to gain support.

The big lie of the right-to-life movement is that no distinction can be made between fertilized eggs and born human beings. While only 9 percent of Americans believe that the government should determine whether a woman can have an abortion, the right-to-life propaganda campaign has created a situation where the rights (and lives) of all women of childbearing age are being threatened.

The Corvallis chapter of the National Organization for Women is working actively to defend these rights.

**Harry Demarest, president  
Corvallis NOW  
3621 N.W. Sylvan Drive**



# Demarest to represent Northwest for NOW

Merry Demarest of Corvallis was elected Sunday to the highest governing board of the National Organization for Women.

Demarest, 34, is the first Oregon woman to serve on the 35-member board. She was chosen over the incumbent, Laurel Nett of Spokane, at the Northwest Regional NOW conference in Spokane.

Demarest was one of three people chosen to represent the interests of members in Oregon, Alaska, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. She will sit on the board that determines national policy for NOW, which has 250,000 members in 50 states.

She also will serve as regional co-director for the six Northwest states. As co-director, she will coordinate communications among NOW groups in those states.

Other Northwest representatives elected to the national board were Betsy Thomas, Moscow, Idaho; and Marie Brillante, Olympia, Wash.



Merry  
Demarest

They take office July 1.

Demarest has been a member of NOW since 1971. At her request, she was excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints because of the church's stand against the Equal Rights Amendment. She campaigned in Utah on behalf of the measure in 1981.

At the state NOW conference in Corvallis in March, she was elected membership coordinator for the western part of the state. She also has served as the board's action coordinator.



Harry Demarest calls the Corvallis NOW chapter to order.

Gazette Times photos by Bob Lynn

# NOW chief no libber-come-lately

*'He's . . . more for women than a lot of women are'*

By Barbara Curtin  
Of The Gazette-Times

There are some who might say that Harry Demarest — a jovial, bearded, 6-foot-6-inch bear of a man — lacks a basic qualification for being president of the Corvallis chapter of the National Organization for Women.

Nonsense, growls Demarest.

"When NOW was founded in 1966, there were men on the national board," he said. "NOW's bylaws don't discriminate on the basis of sex."

"Corvallis has always had active men in the organization, including Eric Dilsworth, who went away to work for the Equal Rights Amendment and never came back."

"Besides, you look at the civil-rights movement and you'll find lots of whites fighting for blacks."

Nevertheless, Demarest, a 36-year-old assistant professor of geology at Oregon State University, has chosen a somewhat unusual path for his fight.

He is the only man serving as president of a NOW chapter in Oregon.

He's not anxious to make a big thing of it — unless it will help draw attention to the many projects NOW has undertaken on behalf of women's rights.

First and foremost is the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, which with 238 co-sponsors has been reintroduced in the House of Representatives. The proposed amendment fell three states short of ratification last year.

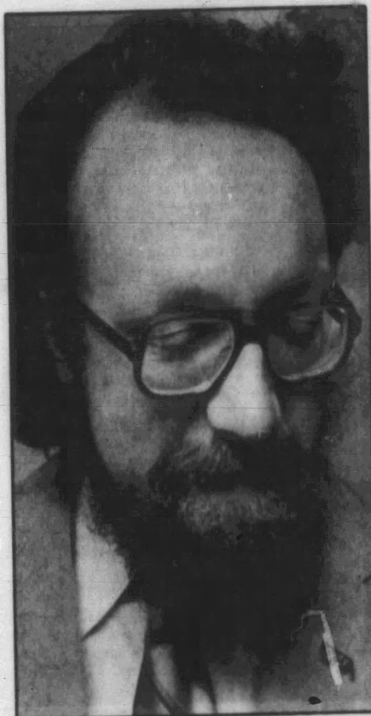
Next is "reproductive rights," or the assurance that women can decide for themselves when and if to bear children. NOW members are lobbying against three bills in the Oregon Legislature that would restrict sex education and access to abortion.

Another high priority for NOW is lesbian rights. Homosexuals, male or female, should have the same rights as other people to jobs and public services, the organization says.

NOW also has pledged to improve the lot of homemakers. The Corvallis chapter's May meeting will cover several bills concerning homemakers now before the Legislature.

The national organization's vitality has been mirrored in the Corvallis chapter, Demarest says. In just two years, local membership has grown from 23 to 123. Four Corvallis members — Carol Carver, Gretchen Summer Lillene Fifield and Merry Demarest — are on NOW's state governing board.

The local chapter will host the Oregon NOW Conference this weekend. National NOW President Judy Goldsmith will be keynote speaker, and



NOW's Harry Demarest.

workshops on a wide variety of topics will be offered.

When Demarest took over the leadership of the Corvallis chapter in January, he was no newcomer to feminist ranks.

His parents kept traditional roles — father working, mother at home — but both impressed him early on with the importance of justice for all.

"They taught me that everyone should have the same rights; that they should decide for themselves if they would reproduce or not; and that I shouldn't be prejudiced against people because of their sexual preference," Demarest said.

He and Merry, his wife of 15 years, always agreed philosophically on the need for women's rights, he said.

Gradually, he began cooperating more with the housework, and he took full charge of their daughter, Joan, now 12, when Merry took a three-month trip to campaign for the proposed ERA.

The turning point for Demarest came in 1980, when he and Merry asked to be excommunicated from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They hadn't been active in the church since their teens, but they publicly renounced it to protest the church's stand against the proposed ERA.

Until that time, Demarest had kept his beliefs to himself, partly in an effort to demonstrate his commitment to the academic world. But then, he became a card-carrying member of the National Organization for Women.

"I was completely out of the closet," he said with a smile.

He was happy to work in the rank-and-file until late last year, when it came time to elect officers. Several of the obvious candidates were committed as state officers; others were tied up with projects or were ineligible for other reasons.

"I began to realize I could make a real contribution to women's rights as president," he said.

When he called his first meeting to order in January, he wondered briefly if others would think it odd.

"But there were other men in the audience, and I feel pretty comfortable with it now," he said. "Nobody has acted differently than if it was a female heading the group, as far as I can tell."

Other NOW members say Demarest makes a good president.

"It has to do with the kind of person he is," said Fifield. "You feel you're working with him, not for him."

Demarest is adept at persuading people to get busy on several projects at once, according to Susan Lithgoe, a new member.

Merry Demarest says her husband's genuine interest in women's rights may stem in part from their daughter.

"He thinks she's wonderful," she said. "To think that her potential might be limited in any way because of such an arbitrary thing (as gender), has an impact on him, I'm sure."

There were no "negative reverberations" in Corvallis after Harry's election, she said, but there was some grumbling among NOW members in Salem and Portland.

The Salem chapter president rose to Harry's defense.

"She said, 'He's a helluva lot more for women than a lot of women are,'" said Merry.

# Right to Life organization holds state convention here

Right to Life — Oregon will hold its annual convention in Corvallis Saturday and Sunday at the Oregon State University Memorial Union.

Workshops will be held each day on topics including a critique on Planned Parenthood, the Biblical view of abortion and the meaning of the expression "right to life."

Hosting the convention is Corvallis Right to Life, a non-profit group concerned with preserving the right to life for the unborn, handicapped, elderly and ill.

Barbara Koegler, a spokeswoman for the group, says about 250 people are expected to attend the workshops, based on the numbers already signed up for a Saturday night banquet.

Picketing outside the MU from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. Saturday will be members of the National Organization for Women from around the state. Members of NOW will march to express their commitment

to the pro-choice position on the issue of abortion, says Harold Demarest, Corvallis chapter president.

Advance registration for the convention costs \$5 per day per person, and may be made by calling Koegler, 752-0277. Registration at the door will cost \$8 per day.

Dr. Jack Willke, executive vice-president for the National Right to Life Committee, will address a banquet Saturday night. Registration for the banquet is closed, Koegler said.

Barbara Willke will give the opening address at 9 a.m. Saturday in MU Room 105. The Willkes were active in efforts to promote the recently passed Irish Human Life Amendment.

Workshops will continue until 3 p.m. Saturday. Locations will be indicated by signs in the MU. Workshops run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday.

Films and videotapes will be shown throughout the day and free babysitting will be provided.



# *Racial minorities*

**To the Editor:** A letter writer (March 13) was perturbed about publicity given to blacks and other racial minorities, and says he "grew up thinking we all were Americans."

Is it possible that he is oblivious to the direct racism that existed in Oregon and persisted well into his adult years?

When he was growing up, members of racial minorities could not buy houses in Salem. Laws prohibited blacks from spending the night in Grants Pass. And in Ashland, blacks could not appear on the public streets, even in daylight. (An exception was the Pullman porter who was allowed to travel a single prescribed route twice a day between a shack and the railway station.) Racist practices like these persisted in much of Oregon well into the late '50s and early '60s.

If our society is to benefit from the talents of all its citizens, we must first recognize the racism which continues in our society and then work to eliminate it.

**HARRY DEMAREST**  
Salem

# ***ERA and gay rights***

**To the Editor:** A recent article and editorial suggested that there may be a connection between the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the issue of gay rights. This is not the case.

That the standard wording ("Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged . . . on account of sex.") would not apply to homosexuals was shown in a case involving the Washington State ERA, and opponents still used an anti-homosexual media blitz to defeat it.

The real issue in the ERA is economic. How long will we continue to permit businesses such as insurance companies to profit by underpaying female employees while overcharging female customers? How long will we permit right-wing politicians to exploit emotional issues like abortion and homosexual rights to trick us into voting against our own interests?

**HARRY DEMAREST**  
**Corvallis**

# Corvallis woman seeks NOW post

By Julie Ann Wind

*of the Gazette-Times*

One of the next National Organization for Women vice presidents may be a Corvallis woman.



Merry  
Demarest

Merry Demarest, a NOW member since 1971, is on a slate of candidates put together by NOW's "progressive action caucus" against another slate of candidates endorsed by resigning President Eleanor Smeal.

The election will be

held during NOW's national conference in Philadelphia on Saturday, and new officers will take over by Sept. 1.

The distribution of power within NOW is the campaign's pivotal issue, Demarest said in a telephone interview Wednesday.

"The question is, will we move to a corporate, executive officer model or do we base our power in the grass roots chapters," she said. "I believe this organization needs the perspective of the grass roots, and the grass roots needs support and communication that they haven't been getting."

If Demarest is elected, she will be in Washington, D.C., for two years. She said she plans to keep her Witham Hill house that she and her husband, Harry Demarest, live in with their daughter, Joan. The position she is seeking is a salaried job.

Demarest's slate, headed by Noreen Connell of New York, is considered the underdog. The caucus has been in informal opposition to the mainstream leadership at NOW for years, but only formally organized this year, Demarest said.

"The major issues of the Equal Rights Amendment, reproductive rights, racism, and lesbian and gay rights will remain the same as they have under the old leadership," Demarest said. "What we hope to change is the effectiveness of NOW."

Some changes in emphasis that Demarest wants are for NOW to give more attention to economic and child-care issues.

"Feminism is more than legislation. It is action in all areas — the personal perspective on the world, the interpersonal

See 'NOW,' Page A8



# AS I SEE IT

## Property seizures violate U.S. principles

By Harry Demarest

When a federal official can order a raid and seize tens of thousands of dollars worth of indoor gardening equipment from a Corvallis store when "no arrests are made and no charges anticipated," our society is in trouble.

Last Thursday's raid and seizure at Full Moon are frightening because they violate fundamental laws and principles which are basic to our society, and guaranteed by our constitution.

Using civil forfeiture laws in ways our founding fathers never imagined, our government avoids complying with the Sixth Amendment to our Constitution which guarantees, in criminal prosecutions a speedy and public trial, an impartial jury, and a right to hear and subpoena witnesses. The provisions in the Fourth Amendment against unreasonable searches and seizures, and in the Ninth Amendment against excessive fines, are not

limited to criminal cases, and they have also been violated in this case.

If the business violated any law, or any of its employees committed a crime, they should be cited or arrested and tried for that crime. If found guilty, sentences and fines at a level commensurate with the crime should be levied. If no crime was committed, the gardening supplies should never have been seized.

The gardening supply raids of last Thursday are just one example where government officials are riding the bandwagon of drug hysteria over the rights of our citizens. Customs officials board and search fishing vessels and yachts, search cars and seize vehicles in which drug residues are found. They produce no warrant, show no evidence connecting the owner of the vehicle to the substance, and guarantee no trial by jury.

Local and state police in Oregon are using civil forfeiture procedures to augment their budgets. In a state where budget crunches can mean police layoffs, can we be sure that general welfare, justice, and due process will take priority over budgetary needs? Of equal concern is the risk that politics, personalities, or race

could be a real or perceived factor in forfeitures, as in the raid on Full Moon.

None of us is safe from property forfeiture that's carried out by police, prosecutors, and informants without the usual safeguards of a jury trial, guaranteed counsel, innocent until proven guilty, and burden of proof. No car owner in Oregon can be sure that a marijuana seed won't turn up in the carpet of his automobile, if searched thoroughly enough.

The unchecked power of the government appointees we witnessed last Thursday is part of a hysterical reaction by our elected and appointed officials to the serious problem of substance abuse in our society.

Any real solution to our drug problem will be based on observation, reason, hard work, and appropriate funding, rather than hysteria and media events geared to the next election. It will include access for all drug abusers to effective treatment programs. It will punish drug dealers rather than gardening retailers. And it will not require us to give up our rights.



Harry Demarest

Harry Demarest is chairman of the Benton County Democratic Central Committee.



David Grubbs/Gazette-Times

Mike Kopetski, second from right, Democratic candidate for Congress, stands between his son, Matthew, and his wife, Linda, at the Old World Center in Cor-

vallis Monday night. The three, along with supporters, listen as Harry Demarest, Benton County Democratic Central Committee chairman, introduces the candidate.

# Kopetski makes House attempt official

By Joyce De Monnin

Gazette-Times reporter

Democrat Mike Kopetski formally announced his campaign for Congress on Monday in a series of stops that ended in Corvallis.

Speaking to about 100 supporters at the Old World Center, Kopetski said, "I love Corvallis."

The former state representative from Keizer lost his 1988 bid to wrestle the 5th District seat from Denny Smith by only 707 votes. More than 220,000 ballots were cast districtwide. However, Kopetski beat the Republican incumbent in Benton County, 14,770 to 10,483.

The 1990 rematch is being touted as one of the most closely watched congressional races in the nation.

In a brief speech, Kopetski outlined his main priorities, which include support for the environment, education, child care, crime prevention and "something better than the lottery numbers on Saturday night" for middle-class families.

Since the 5th District is home to Oregon State University, Willamette University and five other colleges, Kopetski said the congressman from this district should be known across the United States as "Mr. Education."

After a brief speech, Kopetski visited with local Democrats, who are optimistic about a Smith upset.

Smith hasn't announced his intention to run for a sixth term, but is scheduled to do so Feb. 13 in Salem.

"We're going to make sure Kopetski

has every resource of the Democratic Party," said Harry Demarest, Benton County Democratic Central Committee chairman.

Kopetski has a good chance of winning, Demarest said. Many people withheld their support of Kopetski two years ago thinking the incumbent Smith was unbeatable. "Now the naysayers know Kopetski can win," Demarest said.

Commissioner Pam Folts agreed. "He has an outstanding chance to beat Smith," she said. Kopetski's stand on the issues reflects the 5th District while Smith's voting record doesn't, she said.

Corvallis City Councilor Kent Daniels said Smith's voting record isn't good on education and social issues. Furthermore, he said Smith's involvement as a

director of a troubled savings and loan will probably influence voters. "Any connection has to be a troublesome issue," Daniels said.

Kopetski said he's ready to take his message to "thousands of doorsteps in the 5th District."

This time, he'll do it with more money. According to his campaign manager, Emily Smith, more than 1,200 individuals have already donated over \$140,000 to the election effort. At the same point in the 1988 campaign, Kopetski had raised only \$15,000.

In addition to the same kind of door-to-door effort that was conducted two years ago, the campaign will be able to purchase some advertising.

# County Demos retain Demarest

Harry Demarest has been re-elected to a two-year term as chairman of the Benton County Democratic Central Committee.

Last week's secret ballot was 38-2 in favor of re-election.

Demarest and other party officials were accused of racism this spring by Cal Henry, Democratic candidate for Benton County commissioner. Henry also called for Demarest's resignation.



Demarest

"My re-election shows that most precinct people realize that the charges weren't grounded in fact," Demarest said. "I hope Cal realizes that, too, and in the future helps us get Democrats elected."

Other officers elected were Frank Vanderpool, first vice president; Joan Yocum, second vice president; Roxanna Wolfe, secretary; and John Barlow, treasurer.





Kelly Shook/Gazette-Times

Benton County Democratic Party chair Harry Demarest inspects a hole caused by a bomb in the window of the party's headquarters on Washington Avenue and Second Street in Corvallis.

## Bomb breaks window at Democrat headquarters

By Chuck Westlund

Gazette-Times reporter

Benton County Democrats wanted to open their new office with a blast Sunday night, but the explosive device taped to their window was not

what they had in mind.

Sometime between 9:30 p.m. Saturday and 7 a.m. Sunday, someone taped an explosive device to the window of the new Democratic headquarters in downtown Corvallis.

See 'Bomb'/back page