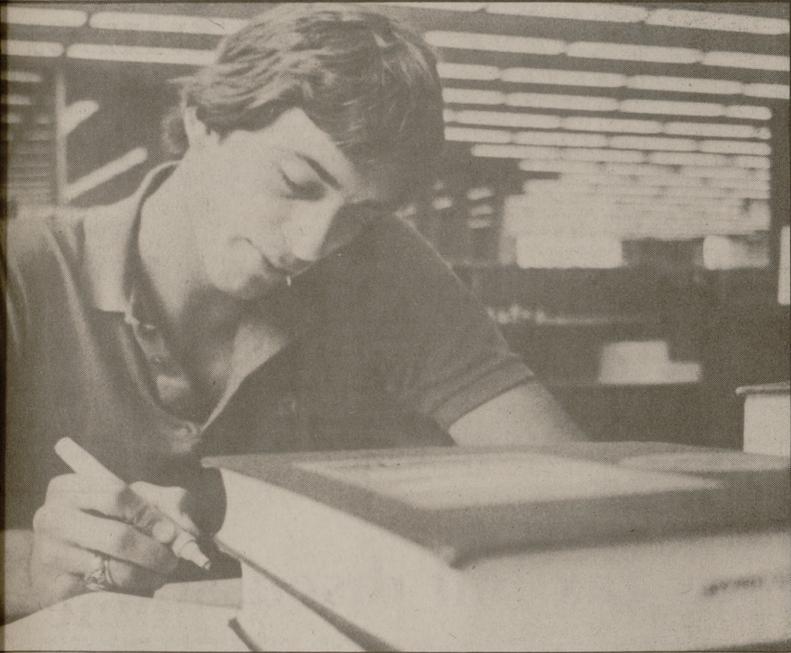


National



**Back to the old grind** Staff photo by Greg Gammon

Yes, it's that time again, ... study, study, study. With only two days of classes into the first summer session, students are already finding it necessary to study. Scott Thayer, a senior in Accounting from Syracuse, New York, takes time to start studying in the Sterling C. Evans Library, a favorite spot for many students to get away at.

Economist says oil future OK

United Press International  
SAN FRANCISCO — Economist Milton Friedman and a panel of petroleum experts painted an optimistic picture of America's energy future as they told a group of petroleum scientists that the country will be more energy independent this decade than last.

Friedman told the 66th annual convention of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists Tuesday that oil prices will decrease over the next five years, as long as there is peace in the Middle East and the United States continues to develop alternate energy sources.

He said the current high price of oil products were the fault of past government policies such as oil price controls, which he said discouraged U.S. companies from finding new domestic supplies.

"OPEC is not the problem," said Friedman, "Washington is the problem."

The Nobel Prize winner said there is no danger the U.S. will run out of oil, and compared current predictions to that effect with similar predictions made in the 1920s, when experts said the world had only a decade of oil on hand.

Ted M. Geffen, petroleum engineer and consultant and an international expert on enhanced oil recovery techniques, told the press that new recovery methods "offer the possibility of recovering substantial amounts, estimated to be within the limits of 20 to 50 billion barrels from already located domestic fields." He said this could double the amount of existing U.S. reserves.

L. W. Funkhouser, exploration and production vice president for Standard Oil of California, predicted increased deep gas drilling barring an unforeseen decrease in investment funds.

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Chemical specialist claims 2,4-D herbicide harmless

United Press International  
OLYMPIA, Wash. — Allen Erickson says his blood proved there was nothing dangerous about herbicides.

"There's a big hue and cry about nothing, as far as I'm concerned," said Erickson, a chemical specialist for the state of Washington Department of Natural Resources, who rarely sees a week go by without handling the substances used to kill unwanted brush and trees in state forests.

A few years ago, Erickson sent a bottle of blood over to the state laboratory for analysis. He said there wasn't a trace of the chemicals he's been heavily exposed to for more than a decade.

"That's one of the reasons I don't believe there's a problem," he said.

Erickson is one of those on the "humbly" side of the growing controversy over the herbicide 2,4-D — a chemical sprayed every year in Washington state on more than a million acres of grain fields, about 50,000 acres of forest and along hundreds of miles of road-sides and power line rights-of-way.

Every spring, the herbicide is used to kill weeds in the wheat fields, unwanted alder and vine maple in young Douglas fir forests and undesirable roadside brush.

Other officials say Erickson's relief about the lack of 2,4-D traces in his blood is misplaced. Unlike substances such as DDT, the herbicide does not accumulate in the human body. That makes testing for its health effects especially difficult.

Defenders of 2,4-D contend it is a valuable and safe tool for providing abundant crops and maximum timber yields. They say there is no evidence the herbicide may be hazardous to human or animal health.

Others believe 2,4-D should be banned as a potentially toxic chemical that may be an agent in causing cancer, birth defects or miscarriages.

"I don't consider that it's safe to

expose any unwilling person to that chemical, because there are so many adverse effects," said Dr. Ruth Shearer, an Issaquah, Wash., biochemist and geneticist.

Last year, Dr. Shearer reviewed all the available scientific data on 2,4-D for Seattle Metro, which is responsible for water quality in Lake Washington and considered using the herbicide to control aquatic weeds.

Her conclusion was that more careful, undisputable tests are needed. She believes studies in Sweden, the Soviet Union and elsewhere suggest a possible cancer connection.

She said there are clear ties between the herbicide and temporary or long-term numbness in the extremities, respiratory impairments, hypersensitivity to all petrochemicals and bleeding and hemorrhaging.

Shearer believes this bleeding connection could be related in some way to the incident that has sparked arguments over 2,4-D: the unusual number of miscarriages reported last year in the tiny town of Ashford, Wash.

Out of 10 conceptions between July and December 1979, women

in the logging town near Mount Rainier reported seven miscarriages, one stillbirth and one infant death.

State health experts were called to investigate suggestions the problems might be the result of 2,4-D spraying in nearby forests. The result was a study by Dr. Sam Milham, an epidemiologist for the Department of Social and Health Services.

Milham concluded last December that there was no connection between the problems and herbicide spraying.

In Milham's opinion, 2,4-D is "an exceedingly safe agent."

"I'd hate to see it go. We can't raise wheat or rice in this country without 2,4-D," he said.

Robert Matthews, president of the Washington State Pest Management Alliance, an association of industry groups, said that if there were any problems with 2,4-D, "they certainly would have shown up years ago."

Grape and apple growers in eastern Washington won restrictions on aerial spraying of 2,4-D this spring because the drifting chemical was damaging their crops.



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