

SENATE SUPPORT



ASUA Executive Vice President Melanie Rainer has been one of the more active vice presidents in recent history, said ASUA senators. She has created a Senator of the Month award, encouraged senators to write letters to state legislators and initiated one-on-one meetings with senators to discuss their plans.

Rainer serves as positive senator adviser, role model

By Dana Crudo
STAFF WRITER

Melanie Rainer is beginning to wonder if ASUA senators see her as a mother figure.

In the first few months of her term, Rainer, ASUA executive vice president, has initiated monthly one-on-one meetings with each senator, has started up Senator of the Month and has requested that senators complete various assignments, like writing to legislators.

"I think in past years, people haven't taken such an active role," Rainer said.

"Some senators probably think I am Mom."

Rainer said these actions are necessary in order to make sure senators aren't wasting time and energy on projects that can never be done.

Senators agreed that Rainer's actions have had positive results.

"Personally we've had the most productive first three months as a senate because Melanie keeps us on track," said Senator Ben Weiss. "We become more focused and actually do stuff."

Many of these actions go beyond what the ASUA expects of its executive vice president.

"It's not explicitly stated that I have to have one-on-one meetings; it's just the way I operate," Rainer said.

However, Rainer faces the difficult task of encouraging senators to be proactive without stepping on their toes.

"Her job is hard because she needs to meet the students' needs and individual senators' needs," said Senator Sara Birnbaum. "It is hard to not be our boss and still be responsible. If we choose a project she doesn't support, there is an interesting conflict because

See RAINER/6

Student missing after boat accident

Mexican authorities continue search for missing Tucsonans

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MEXICO CITY — Mexican authorities were searching by sea and air for a UA student and four other Tucsonans, after finding their capsized boat in the northern Gulf of California, officials said yesterday.

The missing men set out in a small boat for a day of sport fishing on Saturday. They were identified as Mark Brinke, 47; Carl Hopper; Daryl Holland; Randy Howard and his son Joshua Howard, 21, a mechanical engineering freshman.

The men have not been heard from since they left Puerto Peñasco on the Mexican mainland headed for San Felipe, a popular tourist destination on the Baja California side of the Gulf of California.

The boat was spotted about 15 miles off San Felipe and 100 miles southwest of Puerto Peñasco, said Captain Rafael Muñoz, commander of the naval detachment at Puerto Peñasco.

Puerto Peñasco, also known as Rocky Point, is about 60 miles south of the Arizona border and is a popular weekend beach destination for Arizonans.

Munoz said three navy vessels and a helicopter were sent early yesterday to the site where the capsized boat was discovered, but none of the missing men had been found.

"The waves in that area are very strong and that added to the winds makes it a very dangerous area to navigate," said Munoz. "They probably got trapped in one of those currents and that made their boat capsize."

Mark Brinke's wife, Jane, told the *Arizona Daily Star* that she was upset that the boat was found capsized but she hoped it would accelerate the search for her husband and his friends. "Now we know for sure where they were, and the searchers know the area to search."

Hopper, 42, is an experienced fisherman and boater, his son Chris Hopper told the newspaper.

"He went down there a couple times a year with his boat, and Randy and Josh have been fishing with him for years," said Hopper, 20. "This is actually the second boat he's had, and they're just not stupid as far as taking dumb risks."



Howard

Class options will increase in spring

By Andrea Kelly
STAFF WRITER

Despite recent budget cuts, the UA is offering more classes to accommodate a record-breaking number of students on campus this year.

"It is the priority of the university to offer courses and meet students' needs," said David Cox, a senior associate to the provost.

This fall there were 5,598 classes offered, while last fall there were 5,536 classes, said Sharon Kha, spokeswoman for the UA.

The spring enrollment usually drops a little bit, but there

are still more classes available for the spring 2004 semester than in spring 2003, Kha said.

There are 5,404 classes available right now for the coming spring semester, an increase of more than 150 classes from last year.

The numbers may fluctuate because of cancellations resulting from unfilled classes, or teacher and classroom availability, Kha said.

Cox said temporary funds have allowed the university to offer more courses.

Some of the temporary funds come from the Provost's office, and some from individual departments.

See CLASSES/7

Alumni Plaza ready to break ground

By Dana Crudo
STAFF WRITER

ASUA senators were briefed on plans for the 3.7 million Alumni Plaza at last night's senate meeting.

The UA Alumni Association will organize a groundbreaking celebration on Nov. 7 on the Mall.

Construction on the 108,000 sq. ft. plaza, which begins during winter break, will be completed by Oct. 1, 2004.

Mike McDonald, a representative of the association, said the plaza would serve as a multifunctional open space where informal and formal events can be held.

In front of the Administration building, there will be an amphitheater where dance and

band performances can be held. There will also be a raised grassy hill where students can sit and watch the stage.

The plan includes planting 55 to 70 new trees between the Student Union Memorial Center, Administration building and the Modern Languages building, and enlarging the Joseph Wood Krutch cactus garden.

The project also includes several fountains, a statue and 8-foot plaza benches.

Students will be impacted by the construction, but the plans are to get the major work done in three months, McDonald said.

Bicycle and pedestrian paths near the Modern Languages building will be affected and bike traffic will be curbed elsewhere. Access to the union will be

restricted, with only the east side entrance remaining open through the whole project.

"The plaza will engage the alumni and connect them with their passion for the UA campus," McDonald said.

However, senators did have some concerns regarding construction.

Senator Brian Seastone commented on the fact that the plans required for a portion of the Mall to be paved, reducing the area where students can play football or toss the Frisbee.

McDonald said that only the portion in front of the Administration building will be impacted and that the paving is for aesthetic reasons.

Seastone also asked what

See ASUA/6