

Sheriff candidate calls for change in priorities

By LANCE DICKIE
Of the Emerald

David Larry's campaign slogan, "A Friend on the Force," summarizes his community oriented changes envisioned for law enforcement, if elected Sheriff of Lane County.

Larry, running as an Independent, outlined his plans for change at a Thursday morning Eugene Hotel press conference, and later as a noon-time speaker to 100 students at the Free Speech Platform.

Revised enforcement priorities, improved officer training and Community Advisory Boards are seen by Larry as keys to improving the quality and "tone" of law enforcement in Lane County.

In terms of re-ordering police priorities, Larry said he would place a greater emphasis on crimes which actually threaten persons and property. The candidate cited the example of arrests for hitch-hiking, which have out-numbered the combined arrests made for speeding, reckless driving, careless driving and speed contests, as at best, an inappropriate use of the officers' time and more generally as a source of resentment towards the sheriff's department.

In calling for improved officer training, Larry stressed that he did not mean instruction in the technical skills of day to day police work, but in more community oriented skills, such as those required in handling family quarrels, mass demonstrations and drug abuse.

Larry pointed out that such training would not require additional expense to the taxpayer, because existing agencies and programs, such as White Bird, could be used as information sources. Larry praised efforts by the Eugene City Police in improving community relations.

Replacement of traditional uniforms with blazers and a relaxing of appearance codes were described by Larry as constructive moves towards "umanizing" law enforcement personnel in the eyes of the public.

"The police are the most visible and active form of the government that most people encounter, and if we are to have a positive relationship between



David Larry

Photo by Peter Grant

the police and the community, we must orient our administrative efforts around this goal," Larry said. To facilitate this relationship, Larry said he would create a series of Community Advisory Boards throughout the county.

According to Larry, the people of the local communities and the deputies assigned to the area could work toward establishing a rapport that would encourage a trust and respect for one another.

Larry stated, "The Sheriff's department cannot best serve the law enforcement and safety needs of the community unless it is open to voices of the people."

If elected Sheriff, Larry said he would call for an evaluation of the benefits of continued participation in the Lane Interagency Narcotics Team (LINT). At present, Larry feels LINT has been ineffective in its efforts to control the flow of hard drugs into the county.

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