

County to assume control

Conditions improved at City-County Jail

Things have changed at the Eugene City-County Jail in the past two years.

Where before medical care was limited to a weekly visit by the doctor now there is an almost full-time nurse.

Where before the menu was, to say the least, limited and venison was about the only meat available there is now a balanced diet approved by the state health department.

The jail is presently spending some \$11,000 on a remodeling of the kitchen and

Eugene City-County Jail is entitled to medical care.

2. The quality of the care given to patients at the Jail shall be no less than that which is reasonable and customary for patients in the local community with similar problems.

3. The Jail is not an appropriate place to perform surgical procedures, complicated diagnostic tests or X-ray examinations. All such procedures will be referred to local community resources.

4. The program for medical care at the jail is in compliance with the recommendations of the State Committee on

swing. One would be for an increase in corrections personnel and the other for a criminal intoxicant program. At present under a July 1, 1972 Oregon state law there is a program for non-criminal intoxicants. Under this program the police take persons who are drunk but have committed no other offense for "drying out" at Buckley House, an alcohol rehabilitation house in Eugene. Allen sees two major advantages

hours have been changed to evenings for some inmates so it will be easier for their families to visit. Telephoning rotates through the five living units from 9 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

With the help of volunteers a large day room is nearing completion. The room will be a place for games, movies and a large library. Students from the School of Librarianship are helping catalog the

Story and Photos by Josh Marquis

has budgeted \$5000 more this year to provide beef regularly.

The County Board of Commissioners is now considering the mechanics of transferring the jail from the administration of the Eugene Police Department to the Lane County Sheriff's Office. Last year Eugene Chief of Police Dale Allen said, "I don't think the city should be in the jail business." Apparently the City Council and the County Commissioners share Allen's opinion as the recommendation before the Commission calls for the jail's transfer "as soon as possible."

The Emerald asked Allen what he felt were the most significant changes in the jail. One of the most important has been the replacement of police officers by civilian corrections officers. Allen says that this allows policemen to do the job they were trained for and that "each job is complex enough that they should be handled separately." The county says they will retain the existing personnel.

Allen pointed to the changes in health care as a major improvement. The county health department, in co-operation with the jail administration drew up a list of the following medical care policies at the jail:

1. Every person incarcerated in the

County Jail Health in the State of Oregon and shall encompass:

a. early diagnosis and treatment of disease and disability

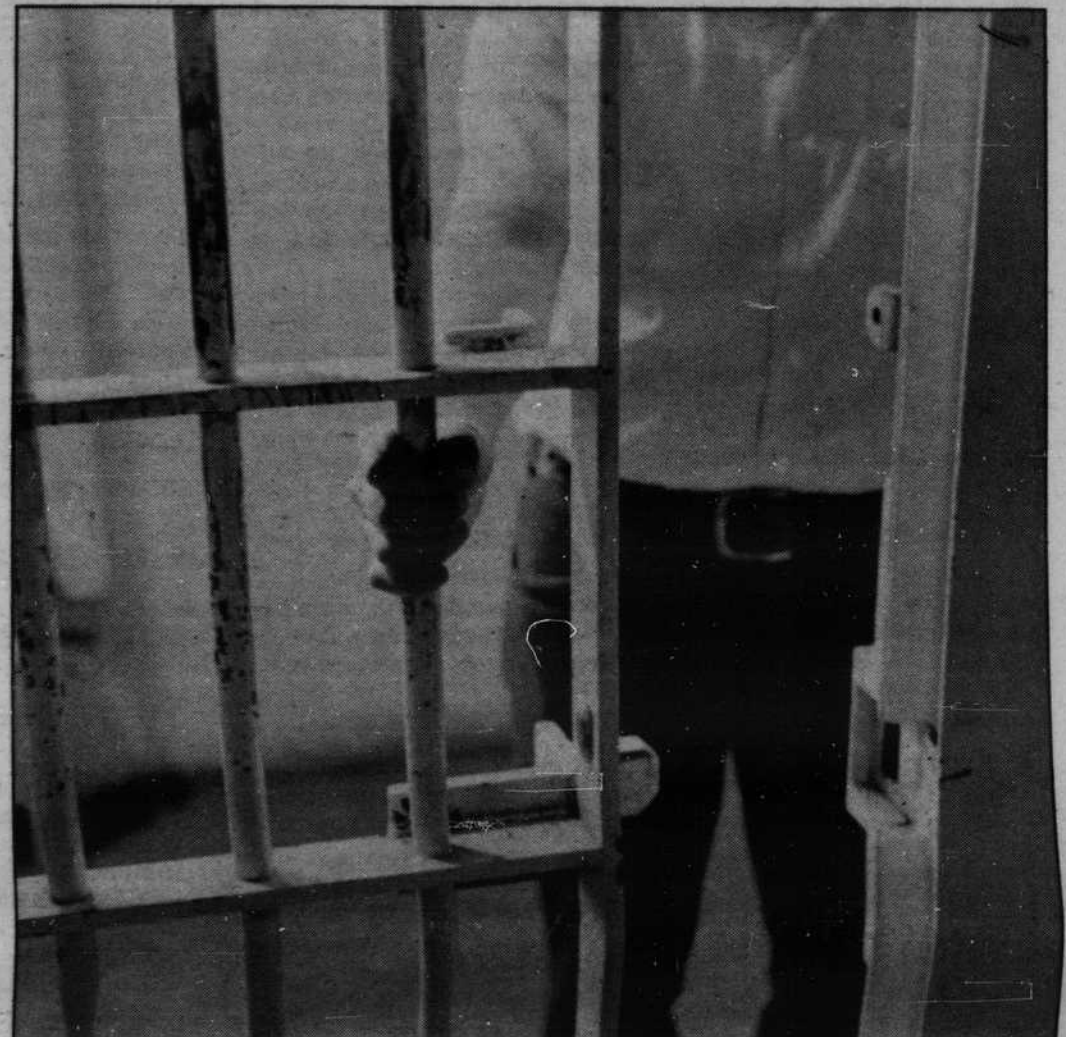
b. early medical rehabilitation of all prisoners

c. special training of all deputies and correction officers employed in jails in recognition of all illnesses, impairment of physical efficiency and mental illness, mental retardation and learning disabilities.

5. All patients needing hospitalization shall be taken promptly by the appropriate resource to the hospital without delay when such a request is made by a physician.

6. Prisoners with pre-existing chronic conditions will receive treatments for those conditions sufficient to maintain a reasonable level of functioning. It shall be solely at the discretion of the physician as to which conditions or symptoms demand or warrant treatment and the extent to which treatment shall be rendered. The physician may delegate under a series of standing orders procedures for the personnel at the jail to follow for handling of health matters.

Chief Allen also spoke of the two federal grants which the jail hoped to be able to



in the Non-Criminal Public Intoxicants program. "At the Buckley House a more medically-accepted way of drying out is used than could be attempted at the jail," says Chief Allen, "and it allows jail personnel to deal with criminal inmates."

The Criminal Intoxicant program, Allen explains, would be used for persons who were intoxicated and were committing other offenses as well. "Alcohol can be a significant part of these individuals' problem," explained Allen.

The Chief feels that the use of corrections officers trained specifically in their jobs outweighs the advantage of a previous program where most of the rookie patrolmen were rotated through the jail as a matter of course. Allen said that there is a need for personnel who are cognizant of the human needs of the prisoners.

Under the present arrangement the city and county share the "capital costs" of the jail or the building and inventory but the county pays for about 85 per cent of the operating costs. This is because all persons brought in by the Sheriff's office as well as all those persons sentenced in District or Circuit Court are counted as county prisoners. In a memo from Robert Elfers of the county Department of General Administration and Hugh McKinley, Eugene City Manager, a per diem rate per prisoner is suggested as a more equitable way of sharing costs.

The city and county are presently advertising for a permanent civilian jail superintendent. John Rutledge is the Acting Superintendent. Rutledge outlined some of the increases in inmate services. There had been many complaints about telephone privileges and visiting hours in the past. Rutledge explained that visiting

books now. It is now possible, Rutledge explained, for prisoners to earn their G.E.D. high school equivalency certificate while in jail. It is also possible for inmates to initiate or continue studies from Lane Community College while in jail and when they are released to pick up their classes at the point they finished at the jail.

Among the projects hoped for in the near future are a work release program, a volunteer co-ordinator and an alcohol control program. The latter would provide service to both persons in and out of jail and in educational programs.

Lane County Commissioner Nancy Hayward feels that since most of the operational funds for the jail come from the county it makes sense for the county to administer it. Hayward said that many of the changes such as the health program were initiated by county departments. She said that although there has been some hesitancy on the part of some in the past of handing over the jail to the Sheriff's Office for fear of losing some of the existing programs, Sheriff Dave Burks had made quite clear he intends to keep the same general structure.

Hayward praised Burks, who was elected sheriff this fall, as having taken it upon himself to report to the Commission though he holds elective office. Under the re-organization plan presently under study by the county the jail would remain in the Department of Public Safety of which Sheriff Burks is the director.

The jail has undergone a lot of changes since it moved into the building it now occupies in 1952. As prisons and jails become more a matter of public concern people in the corrections field hope that this concern will be reflected in governmental budgets.

