



Steve Miller

Photo by Greg Weed

## Local attorney starts ad campaign today

By LORRAINE NELSON  
of the Emerald

Although the Supreme Court ruled in June that lawyers may advertise, Eugene has had only one firm do so—until now.

Attorney Steve Miller intends to become a familiar name by launching what he calls a "relatively heavy" advertising campaign.

Miller started with newspaper advertising last Thursday and will be the first Eugene lawyer to do radio advertising, beginning today.

Miller says most attorneys may be hesitating to advertise because they "were waiting to see whether or not the Oregon State Bar was going to put forth guidelines."

Members of the state bar, meeting in Seaside Sept. 29 and 30, discussed advertising, but did not adopt guidelines. Members decided to submit proposals to a specialization committee for presentation to the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors will then hold public hearings and present proposals to the state bar at next year's meeting.

Meanwhile, according to Tom Hebert, general counsel for the state bar, "State bar rules which deny a person the right to advertise will not be enforced." Hebert says, "The bar has not come out and said what lawyers can and cannot do. It has said lawyers can advertise to the extent that is allowed by the Supreme Court."

Hebert agrees with Miller that lawyers may have been waiting until after the state bar meeting to advertise. However, he adds that "many lawyers have been around for awhile and reject the idea because it goes against their principles. It's new ground and they don't know which way they can go. They haven't been given any guidance and would hate to be the first to make a mistake."

Miller thinks a good way for the bar to regulate advertising "might be to adopt no guidelines, but instead require lawyers to send copies of all advertising to the bar. 'The bar would not act as a censor, but would have the information at hand in the event a citizen or member of the bar registers a complaint,' Miller said.

On June 27, the Supreme Court ruled that the constitutional rights of free speech of two Arizona lawyers had been abridged when the Arizona Bar Association reprimanded their legal clinic for advertising prices in a local paper.

The Supreme Court ruled only on the print media and then exclusively on the advertisement of fixed fees and hourly rates. Any specifics were left to the states.

Miller says the advertising of prices is a "legitimate concern" and can be "misleading." He says this is because "what people think they might need, they might not need. You're not selling a toaster; you're selling something much more intangible than a toaster." Miller offers his clients an initial consultation at no charge to explain services and rates advertised.

In reference to radio advertising, Miller says "the media also has responsibility for rates." He says, "Most lawyers (because of inexperience) will have to rely on the media, giving it an additional responsibility to present the advertising in a straightforward and professional manner."

For all radio advertising, Miller intends to receive the assurance of the station that his ads will be presented "without accompanying tasteless or humor-based comment."

Miller claims his advertising is staying away from anything alluding to quality, but that by listing prices he "will get across to people that I am offering very reasonable prices."

Miller offers an hourly rate for non-business clients at \$19.50 and estimates that anything comparable in the Eugene area would cost \$30 to \$40.

He says he is maintaining low rates to provide an alternative for those people "too poor to afford high prices and too rich to qualify for legal aid programs."

Miller estimates that "70 percent of the population isn't being adequately served (by lawyers)." He is scheduling weekend and evening appointments because "working people work days."

Why the low prices and longer hours? "I am just willing to work that much harder than other people would be for less money," he says.

Miller opened his Eugene office Sept. 26. He came to Eugene in July of 1976 and was employed by the University as the assistant to the vice president for student affairs, with "both administrative and legal responsibilities."

Before coming to Eugene, he was a partner in the Lake Oswego law firm of Robeson & Miller.

He holds a law degree from the University of Iowa, a Masters degree in journalism from Iowa and a Ph.D degree in higher education from the University of Oregon.

Oregon Daily Emerald

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The Air Force needs more leaders... pilots... air-crew members... math majors... science and engineering majors. You might be one of them, and the best way to find that out is in an Air Force ROTC program. There are two, and four-year programs. Scholarship and non-scholarship. Why not look into all of them and see if one fits your plans? It's worth it, brother.



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