

Shoplifting

Laws change odds on getting caught, jail sentence

By CAROLYN BEAVER
Of the Emerald

Because of recent changes in Eugene's shoplifting laws, Chuck Spinner, Office of Student Advocacy attorney, warns, "don't do the crime if you can't do the time."

Two provisions of the law, which previously kept many persons who were arrested for shoplifting out of jail, have been either removed or substantially weakened.

Spinner says before the changes made, an accused shoplifter could try to make a civil compromise with the store or forfeit bail — both in exchange for no conviction and no record. Now courts

will allow the compromises only in "extreme cases" and will not allow the bail forfeiture at all, he says.

"The court decided it wanted to make sentence practices more equitable...and not give those with attorneys any advantage," says Spinner.

Spinner says this is because most of the time it's attorneys who work out civil compromises with stores, and they are usually the only ones who know about bail forfeitures.

"We've only been able to get one civil compromise since the law has changed," comments Spinner, "It involved documented severe family trauma...bodily harm and things like that."

After weakening attorneys' abilities to civilly compromise and eliminating bail forfeiture, the rest of the law states a person can plead not guilty and have a trial or plead guilty and hope for leniency, Spinner says.

"There's now 'a real high probability' that persons convicted of shoplifting will spend two days in the Lane County Jail, continued Spinner.

"Although sentence practices vary, as well as the judge's attitudes and circumstances surrounding the case, the most common sentence I've seen is a combination fine or community service and two days in jail," he says.

Most of the time judges will allow students to spend their time on the

weekends, says Spinner, so their class schedule is not disrupted, "yet most people, obviously, find it a very disheartening experience" to have to go to jail at all.

Spinner says he doesn't think people are aware of the severe penalties.

"Most of the shoplifting cases involve three or four dollars worth of materials, not large amounts of money," he says, adding he doesn't understand why people take the risk.

Along with facing some jail time, Spinner warns potential shoplifters "that the magnitude of the problem has grown so large, it's worth it for stores to spend massive amounts of money on security systems."

...Of environmental concern



By KATHLEEN MONJE
Of the Emerald

Between 3,000 and 5,000 protestors are expected to march Monday in a demonstration against the Trident nuclear submarine base in Bangor, Wash., a Live Without Trident representative said Saturday.

"There are people coming from as far away as Montana and California," said spokesperson John Fitzgerald. Many Canadians, including members of the Greenpeace Foundation, are also expected to demonstrate.

The demonstrators with ladders and mattresses are expected to cross through gates and over six-foot barbed wire fences onto the base itself shortly after sunrise today.

The anti-nuclear group has said its intension is to fill jails in the area with non-violent protestors, bringing international attention to the movement.

"We expect 400 to participate in civil disobedience and cross onto the base," Fitzgerald said. "That's the latest estimate."

Eugene and Springfield city councils and Lane County Commissioners have reached a compromise on bus ridership goals that should eliminate a major obstacle to agreement on the T-2000 plan.

At a joint meeting Thursday, the officials approved a settlement proposed by Eugene Mayor Gus Keller. He recommended that each jurisdictional area keep its adopted public transit goals and consider adoption of a joint goal in five years, when a major update of the plan is scheduled.

The Eugene City Council has decided on a goal of 15 percent bus ridership for personal trips. The county goal is 10 to 15 percent, while Springfield's council feels five percent is more realistic.

Ollie Snowden, T-2000 pro-
Oregon Daily Emerald

gram manager, called Keller's proposal "A good compromise" Thursday, saying he no longer considers it essential to adopt an areawide goal.

Snowden said he considers the different goals "all compatible in the short run."

The Lane County Audubon Society will leave on its annual field trip to the Malheur National Refuge Saturday.

Chip Jobanek, local bird identification expert, will lead tours through the refuge during the three-day trip. Activities are planned through Monday.

Camping or hotel accommodations are available; the general public is invited to participate. Information and pre-registration are available from Jeanne Wojack at 343-6665 or Bruce Wilson at 484-1372.

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