

Deafness a plus Stuntwoman likes speed

By TAMARA SWENSON
Of the Emerald

A small, slender woman stands alone in the front of the room, while the audience listens carefully. Beside her an interpreter translates her speech, her hands moving carefully, signing for the deaf people in the audience.

Kitty O'Neil hesitates before speaking. The holder of three world speed records (the land speed record for women — 512 miles-per-hour, the quarter miler acceleration from a standing start — 392.54 mph and the 500-meter acceleration from a standing start — 412 mph), the stuntwoman and athlete is also an advocate for the deaf.

"My being deaf," she says, "is a positive factor. I can sleep late and I don't hear the telephone and I can concentrate. It's all the power of positive thinking."

Positive thinking, concentration and the future are the cornerstones of Kitty O'Neil's conversation. "You can never look back," she says. "What is done is done. You can never worry about it."

Although Kitty O'Neil doesn't worry about the past, the future is important. Currently she is involved in teaching others to build the self-confidence that she has.

"I want to teach people — all people — to get together and communicate, learn from each other. The more people communicate, the more self-confidence they have, the more beautiful they become."

Kitty O'Neil isn't limiting her activities to helping people build self-confidence, she is also planning on breaking the water speed record this fall. And next spring or summer, if she can find the car she wants, Kitty O'Neil intends to break the land speed record.

"I will have to go about 650 miles-per-hour to do it," she says. "My top speed has been 618 mph, only four off of the world record."

Kitty O'Neil held that 618 mph for 3.82 seconds. "I had over 700 pounds of pressure against my body, and couldn't see anything. But I can feel the speed drop. I can feel a lot of

things because I am deaf."

Her philosophy toward her handicap is summed up in one sentence. "Handicapped is just a word, not a way of life."

Being deaf is something she doesn't mind. "I enjoy the freedom it gives me," she says. "Nothing scares me. I just have to show people I can overcome. I am going to show that I can do anything."

Besides holding three world records, she is a professional stuntwoman.

"I love danger, I love the challenge. I love speed. I guess I'm a bit of a show-off."

Kitty O'Neil performed her first "stunt" when she rolled her mother's car. "I was sixteen then," she says. "I did it on purpose. It was just for fun."

Rolling cars is still her favorite stunt, but her specialties are the "high fall" and the "fire coat."

In the high fall, she has to hit a small spot on the ground "just right. If I miss, well — kaboom," she says, flattening her hands together. "No more Kitty."

The "fire coat" is one of her more dramatic stunts. Three men help the 90-pound woman into a coat weighing 165 pounds. Then, with only three minutes worth of oxygen, she is set aflame to perform the stunt. Three more men are needed to get her out of the suit afterwards.

"I love doing things with danger in them," she says. "But I like everything that goes fast even more."

At 33, life goes fast for Kitty O'Neil. Between setting speed records and performing stunts, she speaks for the deaf.

"Anyone can do anything," she says. "I'm Kitty O'Neil, I'm busy, and I'm normal. And so is everyone else."

Kitty O'Neil will be on campus again today to participate in a panel on handicapped women at 2:30 p.m. in room 110 EMU. Her visit is sponsored by the ALERT office and Iron Duchess, in conjunction with the Women's Symposium, in an effort to make the public aware of the handicapped.

Sexuality events scheduled

Today's theme for the Women's Symposium is sexuality. Here's the schedule of events; all will be held in the EMU.

9:30 a.m. Dream Interpretation, Room 108.

10:30 a.m. Cosmic Magnetism, Room 110; Female Sexuality, Room 111; Sensitivity, Sanity and Survival, Room 214.

11:30 a.m. Androgyny, Room 101.

Noon. Women's Sexuality, Room 214; Birthright, Room 108; Rape in Eugene, Room 111.

1:30 p.m. Lesbian Sexuality, Century A; Pre-Natal Education, Room 109.

2:30 p.m. Dance Workshop on Contact Improvisation, Dad's Room; Handicapped Women, Room 110.

3:30 p.m. Poetry Reading:

Roberta Hill, Forum Room.

4 p.m. Experimental Theatre Workshop, Room 101; Female Sexuality, Room 111.

5:30 p.m. Nanci Stern Speaks Out, Room 214; Guided Fantasy, Forum Room.

6:30 p.m. Images and Music, room to be posted.

8 p.m. The activist Stand of Mother Jones in Society, EMU Ballroom.

New VP (Continued from Page 1)

him with recommendations for those programs.

Chambers says the athletic ticket lottery will be a "nightmare" next year because of the new game pass plan approved by the IFC which divides the present athletic ticket into three passes, one for football and two for basketball.

"I really like the idea," says Chambers. "But I really question whether the athletic department will approve the plan."

The problem the athletic department has with the separate passes is whether there will be enough students buying football passes, says Chambers.

their football team," he says.

A combination pass will cost about \$56 next year due to increased ticket prices, more home games and the decreased IFC subsidy. The separate passes will cost about \$15 for football and \$21 for an "A" or "B" basketball pass.

Chambers says he has no

specific plans for ASUO elections but that he is "philosophically opposed" to handling out discount coupons to voters.

The lack of student involvement in the campus government is due to ignorance, not disinterest, he adds.

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Dorm manager regains position

A Carson Hall student manager dismissed in March on charges of stealing a beer keg from a dorm storage room has been reinstated after appealing to the University.

Student manager Chris Walsh had committed misconduct but did not steal the keg, Grievance Hearing Officer Allen McKenzie ruled.

In his written conclusion, McKenzie said that "even in industry and business an employee is given the benefit of progressive discipline before the ultimate employment penalty of discharge is applied. The facts of this case do not warrant termination."

McKenzie asked that Walsh be reinstated to his position or an equivalent post at his former rate of pay.

Walsh testified Friday that at about 1:30 a.m. on March 11, he and two friends returned to the dorm after a night of drinking. Knowing there was a half-empty keg in the storeroom, Walsh asked Resident Assistant Don Lightfoot if he and his friends could finish off the beer, which

had been purchased for a beach trip the previous Friday.

Lightfoot, noting the keg had been tapped 30 hours before, said the beer would probably be flat by Sunday morning anyway and gave Walsh and his friends permission to drink the remainder.

The group then took the keg off campus and finished it. Realizing later that there might be problems with students who'd helped buy the keg, Walsh paid \$17, half the keg's cost, to students who were in charge of its purchase. He then told his superiors what had happened to avoid misunderstanding.

Walsh was fired the next week for what housing officials believed to be theft.

Don Chalmers, Office of Student Advocacy director and Walsh's representative in the appeal, called the ruling a victory for students. "In this instance, a student employee was treated with respect and dignity."

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