

oregon daily emerald

Vol. 81, No. 14

Eugene, Oregon 97403

Tuesday, August 7, 1979

VA hands vet Rep marching orders

By SALLY HODGKINSON
Of the Emerald

Services to more than 600 University veterans will suffer when Dwight Eakon, a representative from the Veterans Administration, leaves campus this month. But the regional VA director, who issued marching orders to Eakon last week, says a tight budget and declining veteran enrollment make the Eugene "vet rep" position uneconomic.

"We don't like the idea, but for the sake of efficiency and cost effectiveness we have to do it," says John Vogel, director of the VA office in Portland. "We know the representatives are valuable, and services will suffer when they leave; there's no question about that. It's just simple economics. We have a limited amount of resources and a greater need here (at the regional office)."

Eakon helps veterans secure special GI educational benefits, answers general questions, screens all the paperwork, verifies enrollment and acts as a middleman between the regional office and

individual veterans. Eakon adds that he has probably dealt with all of the estimated 600 University veterans.

Eakon was the "center focus" for veterans trying to secure their educational benefits and the University will have to scramble to fill that void. Moseley adds, noting that the veteran clerk and the University Veterans Association will still be around to help.

"It's going to be difficult for veterans on campus to get answers," he admits. "We're going to have to pinch hit. I hope no one falls in the cracks."

Vogel says vet reps are disappearing from campuses around the country as veteran enrollment declines. He adds that veteran enrollment in Oregon is down 50 percent from a 1976 peak. The number of vet reps has decreased even more — from 22 to three. By the end of this month, the only campus vet rep will be serving Southern Oregon State College, Oregon Institute of Technology and Rogue River Community College three days a week.

Although the University predicts 650 veterans will enroll fall term, an increase of 50 over last fall, Vogel says there just isn't enough work for a vet rep.

"Even if 650 actually enrolled, it wouldn't change our decision," Vogel says. "There's not enough work to justify having a vet rep in Eugene."

Eakon says the amount of work he does is "uneven" from day to day. "I have really busy days but some days are slow," he admits.

John Lawrence, president of the University Veterans Association, says Eakon's transfer is going to harm UVA activities in addition to University administrative services.

In a letter to Vogel, Lawrence says, "It is definitely a threat to our programs for the VROC position to be pulled out. We do not have additional staff to cover the work load which will be created by this loss."

Lawrence adds that there will be a degree of "hostility and disappointment"

aimed at the UVA by veterans because of its inability to respond to their problems with the VA office.

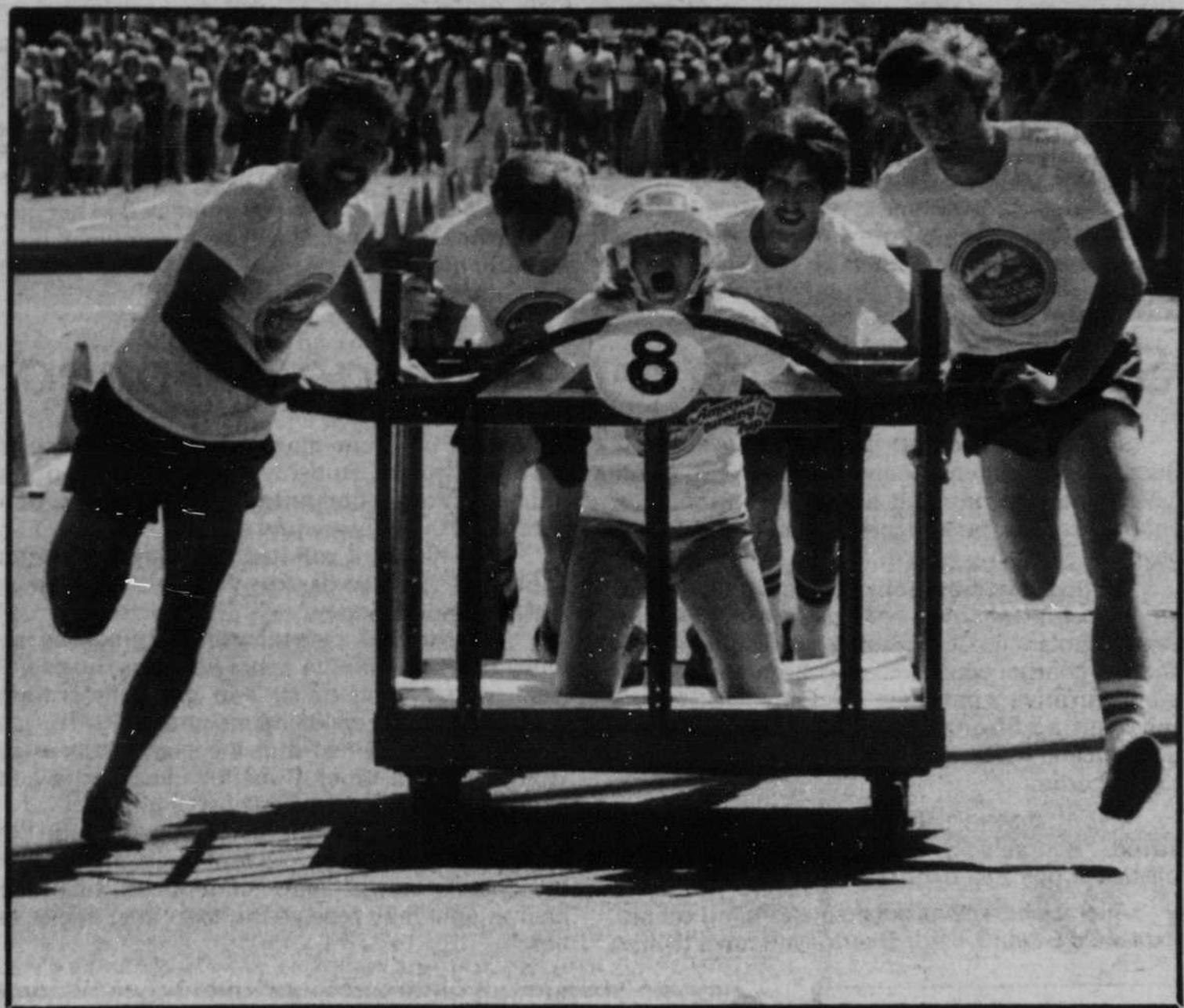
"The consequence will be a rejection of our outreach efforts in other areas not related to the GI bill," he adds.

Lawrence recommends that Vogel increase the UVA work-study staff by two positions to handle the increased work load related to educational benefits. He also asks Vogel to add three VA work-study positions to the staff of U.S. Rep. Jim Weaver, D-Ore., for "back up and follow through on problems we are unable to handle."

Vogel says he sees "no problem" in increasing UVA work-study staff. He adds that he isn't sure about adding staff to Weaver's office.

Eakon says the impact of increased UVA staff will depend on the amount of information, training and contact with the regional office the staff has.

"It might help, but it's hard to say," he adds.



Twenty beds gathered in downtown Eugene Saturday morning, squeaking and rolling into the mall, rumbling into position, snaking between the buildings to the race course — 12th Street from the Overpass to the Atrium.

And the race was on.

In the double elimination, two beds to

a heat, race all factors were taken into consideration, which bed was better dressed — the 7-11 hotdog, which bed was lighter, which team was stronger, and which team was faster — especially faster.

It all came down to speed.

The KUGN bed — powered by

members of the University football team, or the KPNW bed — OSU's football team, or KATR — the University's track team.

The 7-Up team — like the rest of the beds — was in the race, but the battle was between the athletes.

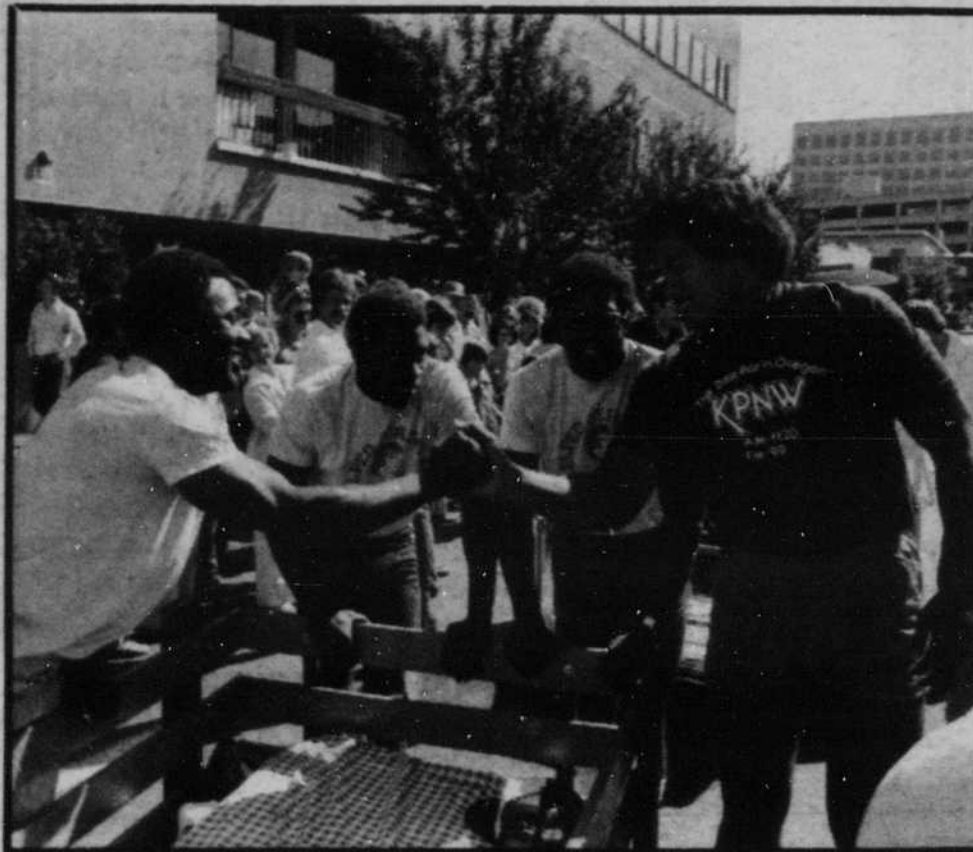
When the dust cleared KUGN had

again won the coveted Muscular Dystrophy Association Bedrace trophy. A "preview of the Rose Bowl," said Rick Ward, Duck wide receiver, after the football team out ran the broken track team bed.

Third place OSU's football team just smiled.

Beds roll to glory while athletes push

Photos by Jimmi Harris



today

A grievance filed against the provost's office last month, charging discrimination in funding decisions, was a "surprise," says Robert Albrecht, vice provost for academic affairs. An instructor claims he delayed funding decisions in an effort to kill folk-music courses. **See Page 3.**

Military efforts to improve the "peacetime force" seem to be aimed at troops for war. A report on the actions needed to meet defense mobilization needs urges veteran recall, lower enlistment standards and cites troop replacement figures — for the first three months of war. **See Page 5.**

Nestled in small, quiet house, the Cottage Grove Birth Center offers women a choice between a hospital birth and a home-like birth — close to the hospital. The house is each couple's "home," says Irene Nielson, a registered nurse who started the birth center three years ago. **See Page 6.**