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Summer visitors keep dorms open all year

By ANN PORTAL
Of the Emerald

The guests include cosmetologists, nurses, bus drivers, firefighters, cheerleaders and skywriters.

The host is the University and its housing department and the occasion is summer term — three months when campus dormitories become a center for conferences, workshops and conventions.

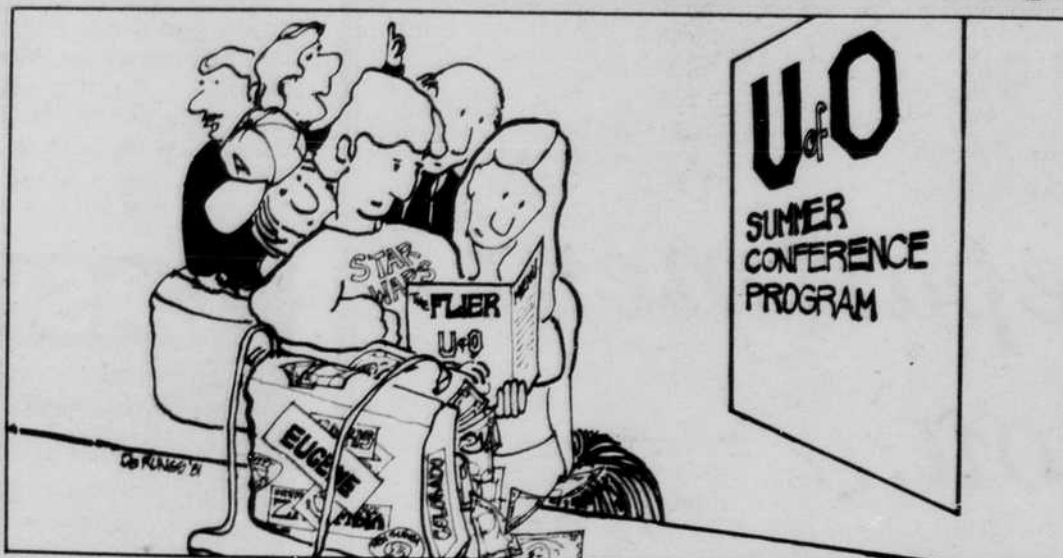
The participants are members of state, regional, national and international groups. German students bunk near math teachers and trombonists are just down the hall.

"You name it — we have it," says Marge Ramey, assistant housing director.

Ramey, who is the keeper of the inn for the University's summer visitors, says the University's reputation as a conference center has grown enormously over the past six years.

Ramey supplements word-of-mouth publicity with annual fliers that describe the "many good reasons to bring your group to 'Oregon' this summer." The result is 76 groups arriving between June 14 and Sept. 14.

The emphasis on summer meetings was the brainstorm of the former housing director, she says, who saw the financial potential of 1,500 empty dorm rooms that



Graphic by Max DeRungs

housed only a few hundred summer students.

And that potential has been realized. Summer housing revenue has increased from \$89,000 in 1976 to more than \$500,000 this summer, Ramey says.

The summer income allows the University to keep school-year dorm rates within the lower third in the country, she says, because the money is not earmarked and goes into the housing department's general fund.

Why do professional groups choose a college campus for meetings?

Because they're cheap, Ramey says.

The University charges \$10 per night for a double-occupancy room, which includes towel service, but no maid.

"What we're offering is not a private bath or T.V."

The dorms charge \$10.15 for three meals a day and the policy is all-you-can-eat, prepared by a food service that "won rave reviews from Olympic athletes," according to the flier.

The University also offers unique services — like catered picnics at Jasper Park and classrooms and meeting rooms set up in dormitories.

Groups aren't encouraged to come for

purely financial reasons, Ramey says. The University considers summer a time to show off the campus to prospective students, parents and friends of parents, she says.

"The campus looks nice, and they have a good time."

Also, keeping the dorms open allows the University to retain its entire food service and custodial staffs, in addition to hiring about 500 students, employing launderers, and patronizing local merchants.

The University is liberal about the groups it houses, Ramey says. Even political organizations such as the Citizens Party and the U.S. Student Association have assembled at the dormitories — groups are turned down only because of an occasional lack of space.

The housing department maintains a friendly relationship with local hotels and motels by refusing to house individuals or couples visiting the University or traveling, she says.

Also, Ramey says she recruits groups for the school year, although they will stay at motels because the dormitories are full.

Students and conference participants are kept "quite separate," she says.

"They're really not very compatible. We spend a lot of time seeing that their needs are met and that they are made happy."

City council vote approves Emerald Canal task force

The Eugene City Council voted unanimously to create an Emerald Canal Feasibility Task Force Tuesday night. The vote came after a 40-minute public hearing during which a majority of the speakers spoke out in favor of the project.

Councilor Mark Lindberg proposed the formation of the task force to address "severe questions and problems that need to be answered," and said the canal "is a dream, a concept that deserves a widespread community dialogue."

The proposed canal would wind its way through downtown and the West University neighborhood, connecting the Willamette River to the Amazon Ditch via the Millrace.

The committee will study financing, economic effects, flood control, irrigation and power generation possibilities, as well as aesthetics, and housing and

commercial development. It also will conduct at least two public hearings before making its final report to the city council in December of 1982.

Eleven Eugene and Lane County residents, along with representatives from the city council, the county board of commissioners, the University and the Historical Review Board, will make up the task force.

Lindberg said the study will not tap into the city budget or require staff support because the Army Corps of Engineers will supply a \$50,000 technical assistance grant.

In other action, the council voted to table a revision of Eugene's parade ordinance for further consideration after American Civil Liberties Union and National Lawyers Guild representatives expressed concern over the "unconstitutionality" of the proposed amendment.

Specific objections to the ordinance focused on a

clause that gives the police chief the power to deny a parade permit if "reliable information shows that parade participants intend to cause violence during the course of the parade."

Eugene resident Bob Golden said the council needs to reconsider an ordinance that would "limit the arbitrary power of the police. The rules should state that the only police consideration should be traffic control."

ACLU attorney Bruce Smith said a clause imposing insurance obligations and costs for extra police services on parade organizers could constitute "severe prior restraint."

After City Attorney Tim Sercombe pointed out that the proposed ordinance states that payment for extra police protection or overtime would be required of organizers, and that when the funds of a group are insufficient, insurance requirements can be waived, the council unanimously voted to reconsider the proposal.

'A six-pack to go'

An innertubist mixes the serious business of beer-drinking with the pleasure of floating down the Willamette River as a way to escape the sweltering heat earlier this week. Temperatures cooled Wednesday and should remain in the mid-70s today. Forecasts call for only a 10 percent chance of rain today.

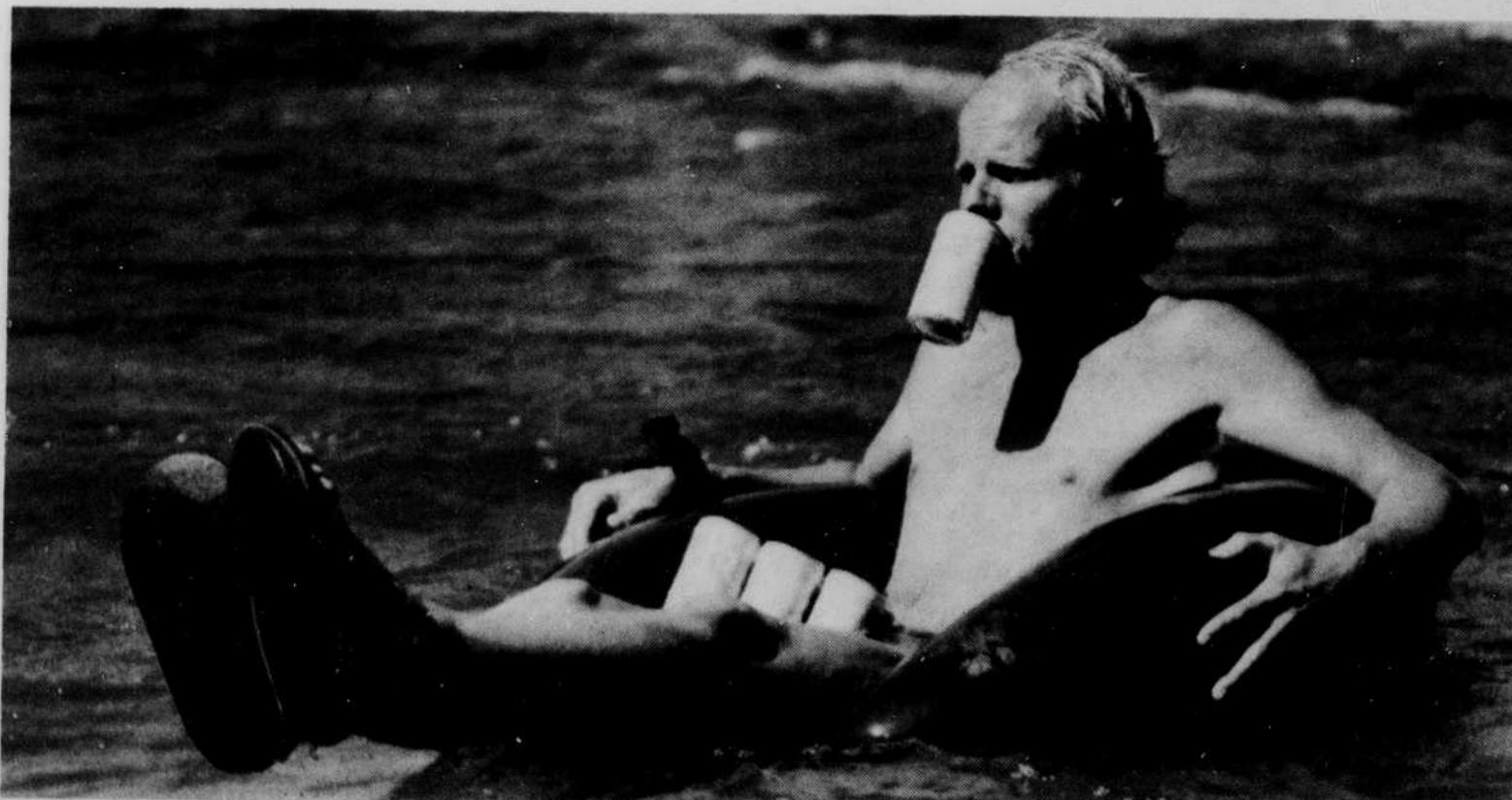


Photo by Bill Wack