

Older students face 'different' difficulties

By CHARLENE BELL
Of the Emerald

The University's "older student" population faces difficulties not widely encountered by the "average" student.

For example, most students don't have to worry about finding a babysitter nor are they fazed by a class full of acne-blessed 18 year-olds.

However, as the University's population of older students continues to swell, these problems undoubtedly will become more prevalent.

Staff at the University's Lifelong Learning Center, an organization designed to advise "older-than-average" students, have noted a steady increase in enrollment of older students at the University since the center opened in 1973. Currently, there are 5,839 students over the age of 25 enrolled in the University. The largest group is made up of 898 students between 35-44 years of age.

"We are just beginning to really define the function of the center," says Tom Nelson, center coordinator. "Right now we offer peer advising, and advocate personal problems like difficulties."

Nelson has learned that the greatest need older students have in adjusting to college life lies in finding opportunities to share similar problems and experiences with students of the same age.

In answer to this need, the center has started a support

group to aid older students in establishing social contacts. A typical group session provides an older student with the chance to relate personal experiences and problems or simply to let off some steam.

In some of these bull sessions a number of older students point out that they resent being treated like teen-agers by professors who are used to handling classes dominated by those under the age of 25.

"I was in a large class and I came down with the flu and the professor wanted a signed note from my doctor. I resented being treated like a kid. I mean, my God, I'm 31 years old," says Jean Schauerman, a staff member at the center.

Although the average student's social life may center around the University, for older students the campus is just a "stop" along the way home to their families.

What do families of returning students make of the situation?

Mark Albrecht, returning to school after teaching high school English for 13 years, says "My family is very supportive, as a matter of fact, I spend more time with my family than I did when I taught. I liked teaching but I grew frustrated with administrative pressure to do "busywork" like monitoring the halls. It was no fun for my family to deal with a bear around the house.

"Now I'm doing something I feel happy doing."

Dentistry defeats decay

By BRENDA THORNTON
Of the Emerald

For some people, a trip to the dentist is as enjoyable as... well, an impacted wisdom tooth.

They dread dental check-ups and put them off year after year, believing that they are saving themselves a lot of pain, anxiety and money.

However, according to Dr. Tom Westfall, 509 E. 13th, these misguided folks usually end up requiring major dental work, which translates into tension, trauma and high bills.

"Decay spreads as rapidly as one millimeter every three months," says Westfall. "We recall our patients every six months in an effort to prevent complications, which could result in nerve involvement, root canal work or even tooth extractions."

Westfall stresses that preventive dentistry is painless.

"Routine check-ups are stress-free," says Westfall. "And preventive dentistry will save patients money in the long run. Fees are scaled by procedure."

"Preventive dentistry is more than a check-up twice a year," adds Westfall. "The patient must develop his or her own daily dental routine."

"Brushing well — completely cleaning every

once a day is better than brushing sloppily numerous times a day," says Westfall. "It's a good idea to use a fluoride toothpaste and follow brushing with flossing."

A good diet also compliments conscientious dental care.

"Students especially should be aware that nutrition plays an essential part in maintaining healthy teeth," says Westfall. "They tend to be more into junk food than a balanced diet."

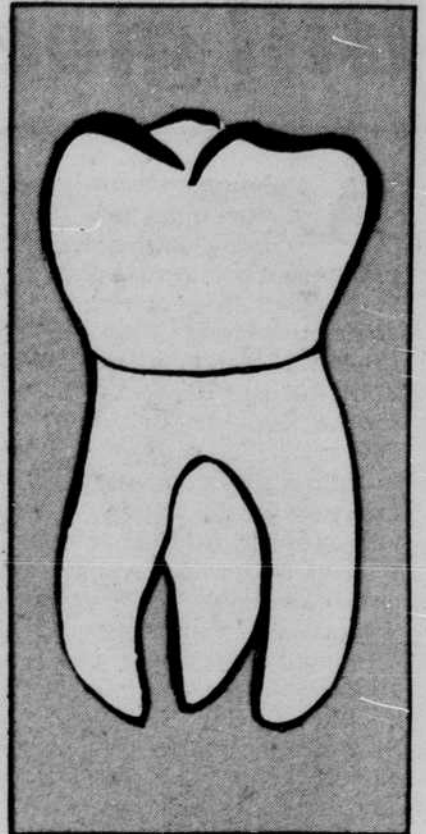
If the ballpark figure of \$20 per visit sounds too high for your pocketbook, Lane Community College offers an alternative to private check-ups.

Sharon Hagan, coordinator of dental hygiene at Lane Community College's Dental Clinic, points out that the clinic does not advertise its prices, "but ours are less."

"Although we aren't as expensive, our patients may pay with their time," says Hagan. "Because we are a learning institution, patients may wait longer for our services than they would in a dentist's office."

Dental hygiene students, supervised by a trained dental hygienist and a staff dentist, clean teeth, take x-rays and instruct patients in home dental care.

"Our services are open to anyone," says Hagan.



Graphic by Max DeRungs

"However, patients are evaluated in order to expose our students to a broad range of dental needs. Anyone who is willing to be placed on a short call list is welcome to make an appointment."

Hagan also welcomes anyone interested in dental hygiene as a profession.

"Anyone considering the dental profession is invited to visit the clinic to observe. I'd love to talk to them."

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