

# Rape insensitivities may cause deputy "retraining"

Lane County Sheriffs Department deputies may undergo "re-training" to deal with rape victims as a result of a complaint filed recently by the director of the Eugene Rape Crisis Network, according to Chief Deputy Donna Lovewell.

Network Director Gail Wiemann cited six rape cases since June in which deputies allegedly treated victims as if they were lying and as if the rapes "were their fault."

When Wiemann brought her concerns to the department more than a week ago, Lt. Louis Hince investigated the matter, and the retraining idea evolved.

Under the plan, Wiemann would "retrain" the deputies, teaching them how to deal sensitively with rape victims, she says.

Both Wiemann and Lovewell are pleased with the solution.

"That's great," Wiemann says. "I can't think of anything better coming out of this. Maybe we can help them understand more about what a victim of rape needs."

Lovewell, also reacting positively to the idea,

noted that much of the problem was due to shorthandedness.

"With sensitivity, the time element has a big impact," Lovewell said. "If you have (only) three deputies, they can't spend more time on cases than 14 deputies."

Wiemann acknowledged that shorthandedness was "probably a factor."

However, she says, "I don't think pressure on the job is an excuse to treat someone with disrespect."

"I'm not saying they're all bad guys," Wiemann says. "But those women shouldn't be treated as if they're causing trouble and telling lies."

Lovewell says a difference in "purpose" caused part of the conflict between the network and the department.

"When we are investigating a case, we need cooperation from the victims. Our role is to see — if a crime has been committed — that the criminal is apprehended. Rape Crisis is there to counsel the victims."

## Encounters of the weird kind

### Fire of unknown origin summons campus security to soccer field

By Ann Portal  
Of the Emerald

Two campus security officers had a close encounter of the weird kind a couple of weeks ago when they were sent to investigate a complaint about a "demonic ceremony" at a University soccer field.

A report of the event, completed Tuesday, indicates that at about 9 p.m. on May 3, the Campus Security Office was called because of people dancing around a fire in the Gerlinger soccer field near 15th Avenue and University Street.

Arriving at the scene, security officer Al Young said he saw about 20 people seated in a circle around a 5-foot tall wood pole that was about 6 inches in diameter. Candles burned in dishes and were mounted on wood blocks around the circle, while inside the circle charcoal burned in a Hibachi. A knife with a 10-inch blade rested on top of the Hibachi, with the blade thrust into the charcoal.

Security officer Denise Briggs had already tried to approach the group's leader, Stephanie Fox, a University graduate student majoring in journalism, but was met with

"hostility," according to the police report.

As the two officers approached the circle together, Fox began dancing around the pole while the others began "chanting unintelligibly." Fox told the officers, "Don't come in — this is sacred ground."

Meanwhile, a man in the group picked up the knife, grasped the handle with both hands, and started walking toward Young with the "smoking" knife blade pointed at him. Young told him to put it down and he did. The "unknown" man then returned and symbolically opened the circle by making a cutting motion with his hands folded together.

Fox stepped out of the circle and accompanied the officers away from it, where she reportedly told them the ceremony was part of a SEARCH course called "Pagan and Witchcraft Theory and Practical Application."

Fox said she and other members of the circle were members of The Oregon Pagan Association, which is sponsoring the SEARCH class. The group had permission to use the field, she said.

According to files in the office of EMU Director Adell McMillan, the Oregon Pagan

Association became a registered student group in February. A registration form filed by Fox, president of the association, says the group's purpose is "To provide social and intellectual forums for pagan students and others interested in Western mystical tradition."

At the ceremony, Young informed the group they could not have a fire or a long-bladed knife on school property and asked them to leave, after notifying them of the proper channels for use of open spaces on campus.

Actually, the group had gone through those channels to hold their ceremony. In April Fox had applied to McMillan, who is in charge of the use of outdoor areas. Fox's application stated, "We are having a spring celebration with a Maypole. There will be some unamplified music."

McMillan was surprised Wednesday to hear of the campus security report about the group's activities. The application said nothing about fires or long-bladed knives, she said.

A reporter was unable to contact Fox or the SEARCH office for comment.

Sgt. Rick Allison of the Eugene Police Department said the incident is being looked into, but no action is being taken at this time.



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