

beginning of each term where students sign up for jobs which will work in with their class schedule. Each duty is credited with a varying amount of points, and members choose about three or four jobs until they accumulate 10 points. Officers' positions count toward job points as well.

A certain number of hours are also allotted each term for "work parties." Small and large house improvements, post-party cleaning, community services and special building projects are a few of the ways that members can fulfill their work party requirements. Typically, 10 hours of work are expected each term, but with some help, a radio and refreshments, the work can be fun.

Betsy Stalker, former house president at Janet Smith, says, "It's easy and it's actually fun. I like the jobs when I work with other people. Dishwashing isn't so bad when you turn on some tunes."

When people don't do their jobs, "you influence thirty-nine other people," Clark says. "You can't slough off at the co-op. You have to be responsible, or else there are other people who are going to get on your case. Maybe that's peer pressure, but that kind of peer pressure is good."

This summer, several Janet Smith residents earned work party credit by constructing a wood patio for the roof and painting the house. By doing their own maintenance and repair work, co-op members learn practical skills, strengthen their communal independence



Co-op living offers an attractive alternative to dormitory and apartment living.

Photo by Michael Clapp

and save money at the same time.

The unwritten rule that embodies the philosophy of cooperatives is that members learn to share, adapt, help and

respect each other, and they contribute their part to the well-being of the group as a whole.

The SCA is composed of a board elected by, and from, the members, and it meets twice a

month to discuss financial matters, house procedures and ideas for improvement.

Like any other small business, there is a lot of book-keeping and budget-balancing

to be done so in May the association hired Toni Daniels as its business manager. She says that whenever possible, SCA tries to do business with other cooperative organizations. "We try to support each other... (but) it's not always possible (because) sometimes co-ops can be more expensive than regular businesses."

SCA buys some of its food from local food co-ops such as Surata Soy Food, Starflower and United Grocers. It also uses Garbagios recycling services and interacts with the West University Neighborhood Association and the National Consumer Cooperative Bank.

Because of the high turnover rate in student co-ops, revenue is typically tight. Plans for future revenue generating projects are being considered such as providing accommodations for Eugene convention goers and monthly bake sales. When expenses are being met, any extra funds can be returned to the members in rebates or rent reductions, or used for house improvements and major purchases. "One of the real benefits of a co-op is that the profits go to the members, and they can control what happens to the surplus money," Stalker says.

The other advantages aside, most members say the best part of living in a student co-op is the friendship. Strong bonds and feelings of unity can grow between co-ops whether they stay for one term or several years.

"The co-op was the best thing I did for myself in college," Stalker says.

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