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Project Safe Ride off to a slow start

By Joseph Menzel
Of the Emerald

Project Safe Ride has gotten off to a slow but steady start since its debut April 21. But with more awareness of the program, ridership should increase, said Mercea Mabrey, the project's coordinator.

The ASUO-sponsored shuttle service was created to offer women a safe and punctual means of transportation around campus at night.

In its two weeks of operation, the shuttle has averaged seven passengers a night, she said. Signs designating shuttle stops will be installed shortly, which will further increase awareness, Mabrey said.

Most women surveyed said they would use the service depending on the circumstances.

"I'd use the shuttle depending on how far from the dorms I am," said Joyce Grondin, a junior journalism major. "If I'm at the EMU and it's still light outside, I'd probably just walk."

The backlash of criticism for excluding men from riding on or operating the shuttle is Mabrey's biggest concern. Men are not allowed to ride on the Safe Ride shuttle because "we never know who has the potential for doing something", Mabrey said.

In addition, the project's main objective is to eliminate any potential threat to women using the shuttle. For that reason, a change to allow men riders does not appear likely, she said.

However, men may work on the organization of the project. Men and women applicants will be considered equally for the program coordinator position, Mabrey said.

Campus Security will continue to provide escorts for women and men who fear for their personal safety, said Oakley Glenn, Campus Security's director.

"We are in full cooperation with Project Safe Ride to ensure the safety of the University community," Glenn said.

The shuttle service runs on the hour starting at 8 p.m. The route originates from the University Street side of the EMU. It then stops at the Main Library, the Law School, the School of Music, Amazon Community Housing and sororities and dormitories. The shuttle also stops at Oregon West Fitness Center on Franklin Boulevard.

A second shuttle van should be available for use in June, Mabrey said. It will be equipped for handicapped passengers and eventually will allow the shuttle to make more frequent stops.

Project Safe Ride is intended to be entirely self-sufficient but needs contributions from the community and local businesses for fuel and maintenance expenses, Mabrey said.

For information on the routes and time schedules, call the Project Safe Ride switchboard at 686-4362.

Gay men and lesbians 'pioneers' in legal arena today, speaker says

By Michael Rivers
Of the Emerald

Gay men and lesbians are all "pioneers" who are breaking new ground in the legal arena, said the legal director of National Gay Rights Advocates in the keynote speech for gay pride week Monday night.

Speaking to a crowd of about 50 people at the University law school, Leonard Graff said gay people stand at a crossroads and have decisions to make about the future status of gay people in the United States. Questions relating to gay people in the armed forces and to prohibitions against allowing gay visitors to enter the United States are among those that need to be answered, he said.

NGRA is a public interest law firm created to expand and defend gay rights, Graff said. The firm, which only takes cases that break new ground, has won test cases all over the United States, he said.

Graff, 36, said the NRG could be considered the "gay ACLU."

The United States has an adversarial legal system — if a person doesn't have someone to fight for their rights, they don't get them, Graff said.

He discussed various cases the NRG has been involved in, including employment and immigration rights, AIDS civil rights and couples' rights.

In one employment rights case, NRG forced Eastern Airlines to take a question off its job application which asked if the applicant had homosexual affiliations, Graff said.

The organization is currently in settlement negotiations with Pacific Northwest Bell, after an 11-year litigation over a PNB hiring policy that discriminated against gay people, he said. It may be the largest settlement in a gay rights case ever, Graff said.

NGRA also has succeeded in winning teachers the right to speak out in public for gay rights and has forced some insurance companies to change their policies as they relate to gay and lesbian couples, Graff said.

The guidelines of one life insurance company in California automatically declared ineligible people who listed anyone except a spouse or dependent children as beneficiaries, he said.

Securing rights for gay couples will be the biggest issue in the future, Graff said.

A primary target of NRG is sodomy laws, he said.

"Here in Oregon, and in a number of other states, we take sodomy for granted," Graff said, drawing chuckles from the audience. "At least it's not illegal."



Leonard Graff

There are currently challenges to sodomy laws in Texas, Minnesota and a number of other southern and midwestern states, he said. The most important is a case from Georgia which is currently pending before the U.S. Supreme Court, Graff said.

Georgia has one of the nation's strictest anti-sodomy laws, Graff said. All sex is a felony, "except between married couples in a well-defined position," he said.

English common law defined sodomy as anal intercourse, but it has taken on an expanded

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Prospective Research Park developer visits Eugene

By Paul Sturtz
Of the Emerald

The prospective developer for the Riverfront Research Park arrived in town



Maureen McAvey

Monday and was whisked through a whirlwind day of appointments with city officials and interviews with a group of University faculty members, the media and the commission chosen to oversee the development.

President Paul Olum said that although the Carley Capital Group was the only developer to apply, Monday's interview with Maureen McAvey, Carley's representative, was far from a formality.

"If for any reason we're dissatisfied with Carley... then we would have two choices," Olum said. "We could develop it ourselves or reopen the search and look for another developer."

McAvey answered rounds of questions ranging from inquiries into the company's past history, its attitude toward open research and the most curious of all to some people — why her company is interested in coming to Eugene.

McAvey mentioned "the unique nature of the community and this University," the University's strong research sciences and Eugene's high quality of life, including its low housing

costs, as being important in attracting companies to the park. She added that Carley was very impressed with the city's leaders and the "level of participation, the level of interest by community residents and community leaders."

McAvey said the company also was impressed with the faculty's commitment to the University, mentioning some cases where faculty members opted to stay at the University instead of accepting more lucrative positions at other institutions.

"We felt also that given the tremendous push both out of California and by some of the Pacific Rim countries, that Eugene had a potential to be a very thriving community (for these companies) at tremendous cost advantages," she said.

As McAvey spoke at the Commission meeting, some people lining the room quietly held aloft banners and placards protesting classified research, toxic wastes, animal testing and even one which protested the appearance of the developer: "We love the Willamette. The river's our own; Carley go home."

McAvey gave examples of the company's past experience in joint projects with cities and universities to illustrate its "long history of working in the open with different interests." She repeatedly mentioned one research park in Charlotte, N.C., as being a particularly successful example of cooperatively stimulating an economy.

The Charlotte development was started about five years ago and has grown to nearly four million square feet, a development more than four times what is planned for the Willamette River site.

McAvey said the company had not made any plans how the development should be sited or how big it will be. "It's certainly an extraordinarily attractive site and should in our view retain some of that pastoral setting," she said.

"We have not come in arrogantly to say 'Here's how it should be,' but rather to be a partner to the University and the city."

The Riverfront Research Park Commission will meet on May 21 to decide whether Carley will be chosen.