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Millrace gets cleaned out by students



Photo by Ted Shepler

Students from the University Inn, Marian Hall and several Greek houses worked together Sunday to clean up the Millrace.

By Frale de Guzman
Emerald Reporter

More than 50 student volunteers shouted screams of encouragement to each other as they cleaned the Millrace, located next to the University campus on Sunday.

The project began beneath the Patterson Street bridge located next to the University Inn. According to Andi Seabert, student manager of the University Inn and Marian Hall, students from the fraternity and sorority houses located along the Millrace as well as residents of the University Inn and Marian Hall worked together to remove the weeds that blocked drainage of street sewers that lead to the millrace.

Seabert said the Millrace was last cleared in 1985.

To attack this problem, Seabert and Jeff Partridge, member of Beta Theta Pi, set about recruiting volunteers to the Millrace cleanup crew. In addition, with the help of community liaison Brad Perkins, Seabert was able to secure aid from the City of Eugene.

However, despite the huge turnout of students on Sunday, many student volunteers still viewed the project with mixed reactions, Seabert said. "Many said that it (the Millrace cleanup) was a good thing but they were still hesitant (to take part)," she said.

To build student enthusiasm for the Millrace cleanup project, prizes were awarded to UI and Marian Hall residents for "the floor with the most number of people." Additional prizes were awarded to volunteers with "the most valuable item found" and the "ugliest object found," Seabert said.

As a result of these incentives, students have been more receptive to helping with the cleanup, Seabert said.

Despite the ooze of wallowing in the mud and unearthing objects, ranging from a dead fish to a telephone receiver, the job brought back childhood memories for some. "It's (cleanup) just like making mudpies," said Janelle Gates, member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority. "I haven't done this since I was a little kid," she added.

The Millrace cleanup project also has helped establish good relations between the residents who live along the Millrace. This project provided a "good chance for the people who live around here to get to know one another," Gates said.

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