

## Drunk driving will continue to kill

Drunk driving fatalities in Oregon declined significantly last year as a result of tougher laws, widespread education campaigns and the social stigma attached to driving under the influence.

A survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that in 1993, Oregon experienced the fourth-largest drop nationwide in the proportion of alcohol-related traffic deaths to all traffic fatalities, down 21.4 percent since 1982.

The study also found that the number of people killed in U.S. alcohol-related traffic accidents has plunged from 25,162 in 1982 to 17,461 in 1993.

Playing a major role in the declining fatalities, at least in Oregon, are the stiff and expensive penalties for driving with a .08 or higher blood-alcohol level. The aggressive nature of the punishment meted out to those who drive under the influence acts as a somber deterrent. Police also use more sophisticated tools for detecting people who are driving impaired than in the past. Passing a field sobriety test is no longer a drunk driver's greatest challenge. Portable breath analyzers and flashlights that detect alcohol are two examples of the new technology.

Education efforts by groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving appear to be paying off. MADD has shown the public graphic proof over and over of the consequences of drunk driving — the loss of life, family, friends and freedom for the offenders.

Most importantly, campaigns to eliminate teenage drunk driving are getting through to those needing the lesson — teenagers. The percentage of teens who die in alcohol-related fatal accidents in Oregon is 29.8 percent, well below the national average of 40.7 percent. Again, tough laws act as powerful a deterrent. Anyone under the age of 18 loses driving privileges if convicted of any alcohol-related crime, including minor in possession.

Police officials say another explanation for the drop in traffic fatalities are the mandatory seat belt laws and improved safety features, including air bags, on newer automobiles.

Laws and consequences do not stop everyone from sliding behind the wheel after a few too many drinks. That's where an evolving social conscience lends a hand in the struggle to stop drunk driving. The public education and designated driver programs are effective and successful tools in increasing public awareness. Moreover, drinking and driving is simply no longer acceptable in many social circles.

While the news is heartening, much work must be done on the costly reality of drunk driving. Oregonians shouldn't rest until all alcohol-related traffic injuries and deaths reach zero.

Be aware, especially over the holidays, of celebrating too much. Take time to arrange a designated driver or taxi if holiday plans include intoxicants. One University student has already lost his life in an alcohol-related traffic accident this year. Let's prevent more deaths.



### COMMENTARY

## Residency rules discriminatory

Linda Hancock

W e, Jeanmarie Dawson, Audrey Harris and I are seeking full Oregon residency. On Nov. 27, an article appeared in *The Register-Guard* about our efforts. Since then, we have been treated as though we are exposing a second Watergate.

We are contacted daily by the media from various states. The Associated Press, radio stations (including NPR) and television stations. Dawson was spit upon on campus in an expression of "Californians go home." She has been verbally abused by Oregon students, and our children have been harassed at school. When we finally asked an Oregon reporter why there was so much excitement over our appeal, he informed us it is because Oregonians hate Californians. So what have we reviled Californians actually done? We are challenging the exclusionary nature of the new residency rules. In 1993 we moved here, enrolled our children in local schools and sports and entered the University. This summer we applied to the University for in-state residency status but have been denied because being parents is not considered a primary activity. Yet we each chose Eugene for our children's sake.

One in our group, who is an undergraduate, was accepted to many schools, including Harvard and Purdue. She chose the University because of Eugene's school system and a higher quality of life for her children. A reporter pointed out that she is saving a lot of money going to this university instead of Harvard. Not really. Though Harvard is indeed a few thousand dollars more expensive per annum than the University, Harvard's financial aid package is much more generous, and she would not be accruing such a large student debt.

Another in our group, who is pursuing her doctorate, graduated from a top 10 school (No. 1 one in her field) yet did not even

appealed to her academically and were suggested to her (Harvard, Yale University and Rutgers University) because she did not want to raise her child in Cambridge, Mass., New Haven, Conn., or New Brunswick, N.J. All in our group were intent on leaving our home state and would have uprooted our families and relocated whether or not we were accepted to an institution of higher learning.

We seek full residency because we consider Oregon our "domicile" as defined by the Oregon State System of Higher Education: one's "true, fixed, and permanent home and place of habitation" (Rule 580-10-029(1)). We discovered that the new rules are written in such a way that virtually no one relocating to Oregon can receive residency status.

Like most states, Oregon mandates that within 30 days of relocating to Oregon a person must exchange her driver's license and car license plates from her home state for an Oregon driver's license. In addition, a person must decide whether to continue to file taxes in her home state or give up residency for Oregon residency.

Notwithstanding these state requirements, OSSHE has its own supplemental set of residency rules and, surprisingly, they discriminate against older adults and parents. We are allowed to become residents in the eyes of the state of Oregon, but the OSSHE has separated itself from the state.

The Nov. 29 *Emerald* editorial stated that "out-of-staters who moved to Oregon knew the rules and should have considered the consequences before relocating." However, when we obtained information from the University, the new rules had not even been adopted. We were never informed that we would be judged under rules going into effect after we started our programs.

Should students not have been informed that they could never be considered full residents in

this state? To be fair, the University School of Law grandfathered in students who began fall term 1993. Even if those of us who entered the University fall term 1993 were grandfathered in, where does that leave students who move here, lock, stock and barrel with children, spouses and lovers, and relocate their whole lives? Instead of exceptions being made, the rules need to be addressed. The same editorial stated that the "effect of Proposition 9 [sic] was the virtual collapse of California's university system." I found that statement more than a little puzzling considering that California universities, specifically UCLA and UC Berkeley (my alma mater), are among the best in the nation.

In any event, in 1993, despite observing 20 years' worth of the draconian results of California's Proposition 13 and despite Oregon's claim for pride in and support of its education system, Oregon passed Ballot Measure 5. One of the results of that measure was a gutting of state support for education. Oregon then made the conscious decision to aggressively recruit out-of-state students. The University Bookstore at one time even sold sweatshirts with the imprint "University of California in Eugene." *The Register-Guard* recently ran an article on that very topic and noted that the University targets wealthy areas in California — a curious move given Oregon's public resentment of Californians. The amendments to the OSSHE's administrative rules adopted Nov. 22, 1992, serve to deny residency to virtually all students who had not already lived in Oregon for 12 consecutive months before Nov. 1, 1993. While we certainly understand any university's need for residency requirements, OSSHE's rules are written either with an anachronistic conception of "student" in mind — young, mobile, childless, unencumbered,

Turn to RESIDENCY, Page 3A

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