

Gay fraternity shuns stereotypes and celebrates friendships

■ **RUSH:** Delta Lambda Phi will be joining other fraternities this week in attracting new members

By Ashley Bach
Student Activities Reporter

"It seems like such an oxymoron — 'gay fraternity,'" says Mark Ditton, a recent University graduate.

Ditton is eating dinner at the Glenwood restaurant with some friends: Ryan Lepicier, Max Sabo, Enrique Andrade and Brad Dunshie — all University students and all members of Delta Lambda Phi, the University's first gay fraternity.

While public perception of fraternities often constitutes a bunch of white males drinking and chasing women, Lambda Phi, a national organization founded in 1986, strays far from that stereotype.

Ditton, who's president of the Eugene colony (the group hasn't reached chapter status yet), said being gay and being greek don't have to be mutually exclusive.

"We're not a support group; we're not a counseling group, and we're not a coming-out group. We're more of a social group," he said. "And that's what a fraternity is."

Ditton and charter Vice President Andrade said that for now, as they gain more members, they simply want to provide a place where gay and bisexual men can go and spend time with friends.



Sophomore Ryan Lepicier and seniors Max Sabo and Enrique Andrade enjoy dinner at a Delta Lambda Phi meeting on Tuesday night. Delta Lambda Phi is the University's first gay fraternity.

"[Our sexuality] is simply our common bond," Andrade said.

Delta Lambda Phi, say its members, is also an alternative to the usual gay social scene.

"A lot of socializing with gay people is hanging out in bars," Lepicier said. "This [fraternity] is an outlet from that."

While the fraternity has been growing nationwide since its inception, it wasn't until spring term last year that it proposed to

start a chapter on the University campus.

After former student Douglas Knecht worked with the ASUO to gain recognition, he formed an interest group, and the fraternity's national office sent out information and applications. Weekly meetings soon ensued, and a colony was formed.

"Some of the people who started it are now gone," Ditton said. "Now our emphasis is on recruit-

ing."

And recruit they do. In the midst of rush this month, numerous flyers, an information line, Web page and word of mouth all have helped to garner new members.

While some flyers have been torn down and a few prank calls placed, reaction has generally been positive.

"Everything's going quite well, actually," Andrade said.

In the future, a membership to the University Intrafraternity Council, community projects and social events with other greek houses are all possibilities. But in the meantime, Ditton said, the fraternity will continue to hold events with its own members.

"It'd be great if we got together with the greek system, but we're also okay with just doing stuff on our own," he said.

Dinners, pizza feeds, road trips and a possible dance are planned as well as numerous rush activities. Weekly meetings have attracted a maximum of 15 people with a core group of about seven.

"We just hang out and have fun," Andrade said.

While there are many groups on campus geared toward homosexual students, colony leaders see themselves as offering a unique service, even if other gay and lesbian groups don't agree.

"We thought we would be completely accepted by the gay community, but people have said that we're trying to be straight — that we're trying to copy the straight fraternities," Andrade said.

However, the Delta Lambda Phis know their purpose and will continue to work toward it, members said.

"We can make a difference for gay men in the future just by being visible with our lives, by saying this is the way that I am, and you can choose to accept me or not," Lepicier said.

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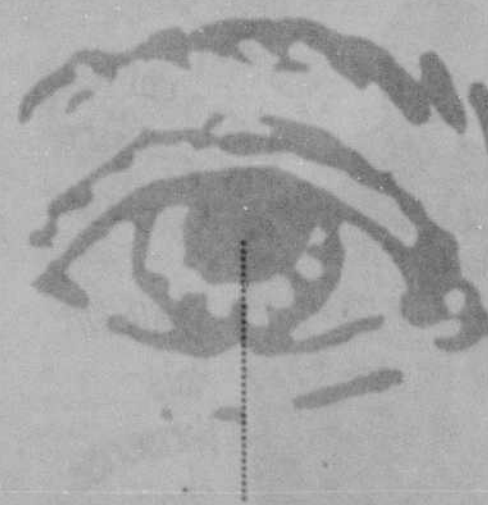
Buffet: Tues-Fri, 11 am-2 pm • \$5.00, Seniors \$4.50

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POSTER



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Prizes

- Students: \$100
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Pick up poster contest guidelines and registration at the Student Health Center or the ASUO office in the EMU. Posters are due by February 16, 1996. For more information, call 346-4467.

Sponsored by Student Health Advisory Committee

ET'ALS

MEETINGS

Survival Center will sponsor an Endangered Species/Wildlife Conservation meeting and show films today from 1 to 3 p.m. in the Multicultural Center. For more information, call 345-3927.

Survival Center will meet today at 3 p.m. in EMU Suite 1. For more information, call 346-4356.

EMU Board of Directors will meet today from 4 to 9:50 p.m. in the EMU Board room. For more information, call 346-3705.

Oregon/Guatemala Sister University Project will meet today at 6 p.m. in the Multicultural Center. For more information, call 346-4207.

OSPIRG will meet tonight at 7 in Room 123 Pacific. For more information, call 346-4377.

RELIGION

Newman Center will offer a student Mass and social tonight at 9 in the Newman Center, 1850 Emerald St. For more information, call 343-7021.

MISCELLANEOUS

Golden Key National Honor Society will offer an information table today from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in EMU lobby. For more information, call 686-4916.

Women's Center will offer a Sexual Assault Free Environment work-

shop tonight at 7 in EMU Cedar Room E. For more information, call 346-4095.

Outdoor Program will show the video "Beyond the Groomed" today at noon in the Outdoor Program office. For more information, call 4365.

Career Center will offer a Resume/Cover Letter Writing workshop today from 3 to 4:30 p.m. in Room 12 Hendricks. For more information, contact 244 Hendricks or call 346-6001.

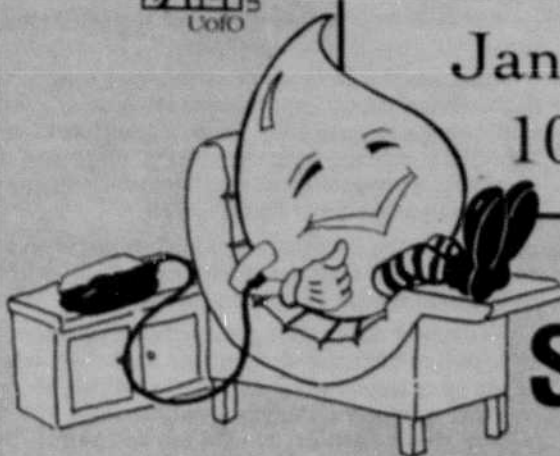
Outdoor Program will sponsor an Avalanche Awareness Clinic tonight at 7:30 in Room 100 Willamette. For more information, call 346-4365.

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• Student Alumni Assoc.



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