

## University events help educate community

■ **OUR OPINION:** Pride Week and Holocaust conference were needed

In the midst of midterms and fresh springtime air, the University held two very progressive and much-needed events this week: Pride Week and the Holocaust ethics conference. And though you probably could not help but notice these occurrences with functions such as Queerfest taking place in the EMU Courtyard, it is still important to recognize and appreciate that the University is taking action to increase students' levels of acceptance and awareness.

Despite what some Oregonians would argue, this state is not one of the most diverse and accepting places to inhabit. Only last month, flyers were posted around campus by a white supremacist organization. The OCA's headquarters are located in Salem and despite our wishes, they continue to express their disgustingly closed-minded opinions.

On a national level, the FBI just received a letter threatening to kill 1,200 Jewish executives and doctors in the United States unless Israel withdraws its military forces from Lebanon and pays \$12 billion in compensation by this Sunday. A letter like this proves that this nation is not yet properly dealing with issues of diversity.

This news article was buried inside the back pages of the *Oregonian*, which is also quite disturbing. A threat of this volume should be printed on the front page to warn these doctors and executives of possible harm. Though the validity of the

letter cannot be proven, the issue should not be given less attention than a corrupt politician.

One of the main reasons that racism, anti-semitism and homophobia blossom are because people apparently prefer to ignore that they exist. This preferred ignorance only leads to more long-term negative results and less tolerant attitudes.

No one expressed this view more eloquently than Elie Wiesel, whose parents and younger sister died at Auschwitz. When Wiesel returned to Buchenwald years ago to look for the remains of the camp he found trees had been planted and that there was no plaque commemorating the dead Jews. A plaque was planned, however, for Nazi criminals who had died.

Once we start to forget our progress and the terrible events that have taken place as a result of previous generations' ignorance, we stop learning from history and start repeating it.

The events supported by the LGBA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance), the Jewish Student Union and other parties were of vital importance because their goal was not to allow people to forget two important things: that the Holocaust did occur, and that there are many non-heterosexual students on this campus.

It is great that these minority factions are growing in numbers and strength and letting the entire University and surrounding community know it. This week's events, hosted by the University, are a major accomplishment for all.



## Bean parking takes wrong detour

The University has a wee parking problem. The Office of Public Safety routinely issues far more parking permits than it has spaces to fill. OPS can't always guarantee season ticket-holders spaces during games because of the shortage.

Commuters have grown resigned to circling the campus several times before securing space on a side street.

At the same time, the University is accepting more out-of-state, vehicle-dependent students than ever before.

And as if living in Bean Complex weren't bad enough already, the University has lately decided that adequate parking space might be too much of a luxury for its dormitory residents, too.

A task force was created by the University to respond to the parking crunch. Its solution: make room for commuters by booting the residents of Bean Complex from their parking lot on the east side of campus. The problem with its solution: band-aids never healed anybody.

The "lot of choice" for Bean's dispossessed is in the hinterlands of the University estate, in proverbial "Bean F--- Egypt." The University is proposing that students leave their cars across the river and through the trees, in an overnight lot a mile away at Autzen. Apart from exposing their cars to theft and damages, students will also be expected to walk their vulnerable selves past bridges and bogeys to reach their vehicles. During football games they'll be forced to relocate again or get towed.

What the University is NOT proposing is to deal with its escalating and enduring parking problem by building a parking garage. The University's budget is even tighter than its parking. At \$14,000 per parking space, the estimated cost of a parking garage would run up to \$5 million.

Not even the University's revenues from all those surplus, irredeemable OPS permits can cushion the cost of such a venture. Five million doesn't even seem like an inflated figure when one considers that the tiny checkpoint kiosk outside of Oregon Hall cost \$38,000.

But then, the checkpoint is worth it. (All visitors ever do is take up parking, anyway).

Which leads to the most sensible solution of all. Instead of inconveniencing Bean residents or building a parking garage, maybe the University should construct an army of little green and yellow checkpoints, one for each lot, road and sidewalk on campus. At \$38,000 per checkpoint, the University could afford more than 100 tiny checkpoints for the price of one parking garage!

Instead of permits, (evidently meaningless anyway) all vehicles will be required to pass a little uniformed attendant who will allow only

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as many cars on campus as he or she deems proper. Once the little attendant decides that enough cars are parked on campus for the day, the less-lucky drivers will have to turn around and take a gamble in the petty-theft district of Autzen Stadium — a sort of "game of lots."

This would be a fun and egalitarian way to cope with inadequate parking! Tiny checkpoints also soften the smack of discrimination present in the University's plan.

Unlike coddled commuters, dormitory residents will be hard-hit by the proposal. Many residents feel they are already being "taxed" by the University as part of their residence fees. The University demands \$400,000 a year in fees from University Housing because of housing's classification as an "auxiliary." This money is culled from students' dormitory costs.

When students are expected to purchase parking permits in addition to those costs, it's reasonable to expect they might resent having to park 'n' ride to their homes. (Commuters, on the other hand, already have the advantage of not living in Bean; they should recognize that shuttling to and from Autzen is a small price to pay for big mercies).

Meanwhile, the University should admit that their plan is merely a stop-gap and begin identifying spots to put those vital checkpoints. Or better yet, begin brainstorming ways to embezzle money from the Casanova Center (or wherever) to build a much-needed parking garage. Enrollment is not going to decrease, and until Oregon Public Safety reduces the number of parking permits it issues, (it has found "no perceived need" to do so) the University's problem will continue to grow.

Most of the finer details of the University's tentative arrangement — such as security at Autzen and shuttle service — have yet to be worked out, but residents are already pissed. Those who know about it, anyway. There is currently only one student on the task force committee to represent the 300-400 students who regularly park in the Bean lot. Resident Assistants have been working overtime to spread the word and prevent the parking ban.

The University wants the problem resolved by fall of '96. This term is almost over. Students will find that some unpleasant changes have quietly gone into effect while they were on vacation unless they arrive at a compromise now.

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## Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co. Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. A member of the Associated Press, the Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union.

Unsigned editorials represent the opinion of the Emerald editorial board; signed columns represent the opinion of the columnist.

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