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Drinking: 'First Fridays' offers non-alcoholic fun

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the Multicultural Center, decided to help support non-alcoholic opportunities by creating "First Fridays." The Collier House stays open from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. on the first Friday of every month and attracts students with various entertainment acts. Bands such as Kerosene Dream from Portland and Mark Allen have played to crowds of about 75 people.

Eagle Park Slim, a blues guitar singer, and David Jacobs-Strain, a 14-year-old award-winning blues artist, are scheduled to perform this Friday.

Many students don't know about this opportunity to engage

in non-alcoholic fun, Hoover said.

Bill Reed, an electronic media major, has witnessed first-hand the pressures of college drinking.

"In our social group, especially on weekends, there's definitely a negative pressure on those who decide not to drink," Reed said.

Ridership on the Drunk Driver Shuttle has increased. The service's new van has enabled it to help more drinkers get home than ever before.

"During the OSU game, with the new radio and van, we were able to shuttle 100 riders," said DDS director Ryan Ositis. "We are still below maximum capacity — 120 to 130 riders a night."

Those who use DDS appreciate it. Reed said he and his friends use it whenever they don't feel safe to drive. "When I do decide to drink and I have to get a ride home, DDS puts up with my drunk antics," he said.

But the Office of Student Life knows the problem is not going to disappear.

"Students need to voice up," Hoover said. "They need to feel comfortable talking and being heard."

Many students view the problem of drinking in various ways. ASUO President Bill Miner sees a need for a place on campus where students can drink legally.

"We need a true student life on campus — not a restrictive one," Miner said. "There needs to be a place where students can hang with other students and grab a beer if they want." He hopes the EMU becomes the center of campus activity after the construction is over.

Other students believe in regulating their own behavior.

"Alcohol is not the enemy — just misuse of it is," said Sean Venus, an assistant brewer at a local brewery and a University student. "These are two different things. You can go out to drink, get sloshed and totally tossed, and you can go out in a social setting with friends and enjoy a beer."

Self-assessment test

If you answer yes to three or more of these questions, you could be using alcohol in a harmful way:

- ☐ Are you unable to stop drinking after a certain number of drinks?
- ☐ Do you need a drink to get motivated?
- ☐ Do you often forget what happened while you were "partying"?
- ☐ Do you drink or party alone?
- ☐ Have others annoyed you by criticizing your alcohol use?
- ☐ Have you been involved in fights with your friends or family while you were drunk or high?
- ☐ Have you done or said anything while drinking that you later regretted?
- ☐ Have you destroyed or damaged property while drinking?

- ☐ Do you drive while high or drunk?
- ☐ Have you been physically hurt while drinking?
- ☐ Have you been in trouble with school or campus police because of your drinking?
- ☐ Have you dropped or chosen friends based on their drinking habits?
- ☐ Do you think you are a normal drinker despite friends' comments that you drink too much?
- ☐ Have you ever missed classes because you were too hung over to get up on time?
- ☐ Have you ever done poorly on an exam or assignment because of drinking?
- ☐ Do you think about drinking or getting high a lot?
- ☐ Do you feel guilty or self-conscious about your drinking?

A social drinker typically:

Drinks slowly (no gulping).
Knows when to stop (does not drink to get drunk).
Eats before drinking.
Never drives after drinking.
Respects non-drinkers.

A problem drinker typically:

Drinks to get drunk.
Tries to solve problems by drinking.
Experiences change in personality when drinking.
Drinks when he or she should not (before work or class).
Causes other problems — harms himself or herself, family, friends and strangers.

An alcoholic typically:

Spends lots of time thinking about drinking and planning where and when to get the next drink.

Keeps bottles hidden for quick pick-me-ups.

Starts drinking without conscious planning and loses awareness of the amount consumed.

Denies drinking.

Drinks alone.

Needs to drink before facing a stressful situation.

May have blackouts: cannot remember what he or she did while drinking, although he or she may have appeared normal to people at that time.

Goes from having hangovers to more dangerous withdrawal symptoms, such as delirium, which can be fatal.

Has or causes major problems — with the police, an employer, friends or family.

SOURCE: American College Health Association

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