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PERSPECTIVES

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Cops are in our corner

Despite a lack of student interest, the new public safety station will be a boon to the campus community

The grand opening of the new West University Public Safety Station came and passed without much in the way of student support. Of the approximate 60 attendees at Thursday's ceremony, none showed up.

But that's OK. After all, we're college students, for crying out loud. We have more important things to think about, things like classes and social lives. A new police station just doesn't rate too high on our list of priorities.

That is, until we find ourselves strolling through campus or the West University area alone at night — experiences that don't exactly inspire a strong sense of security.

That's why the new station on the corner of 13th Avenue and Alder Street is such a welcome addition.

First, the station is in a prime location for handling campus crime, with a location that's almost as convenient as the 7-Eleven across the street. This means, ideally, faster response times and an increased police presence on campus and in the surrounding area.

Now before you groan that Eugene is becoming a police state or make a pig joke, stop and consider the merits of having such a prominent station so close to campus.

The old station, if you could even call it that, consisted of a trailer set up in the parking lot of the Alder Street 7-Eleven. Few people knew it was there

and consequently, there was quite a bit of doubt as to whether or not it was an effective crime deterrent.

The new building is larger, more visible and features a permanent officer on duty. Already, people have noticed a difference in the level of questionable activity around the area.

While the most vocal proponents of

the new station have been local businesses, students stand to reap benefits as well.

Consider that it's only the third week of school and already there have been several incidents that have posed threats to the campus community, including car thefts and myriad alcohol-related incidents.



Giovanni Salemena/Emerald

The new station will serve to enhance the sense of security of students on campus and in the West University area. And for any member of the campus community who has been a victim of crime, not to mention those among us who are simply sick of being offered "nuggets" every time we walk down 13th, this is good news.

As campuses and college towns across the country debate ways to insure the safety of students and community members, it's refreshing to see some real effort towards that end being instituted at a local level.

Perhaps the greatest benefit that will come out of the new station is the potential to improve relations between the campus community and the Eugene Police Department, which in the wake of last year's riots and other clashes, have been decidedly strained.

We often forget that the cops who confiscate our kegs and dole out MIP's are the same ones we turn to when our car stereos or our bike come up missing.

The bottom line is this: no matter how much we extol the virtues of the new station, you probably won't care about it anymore or less than you did before we started. The new corner station probably won't make any immediate impact on your life. It's more like a pocket knife or a extra button; you won't realize how necessary it is until you need it.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Thumbs



TO THE INFORMATION SUPER-HIGHWAY:

A man who used an Internet chat room to confess that he killed his daughter was recently sentenced to 40 years in prison. He should have just stuck to "So, what are you wearing?"

TO AMESTY INTERNATIONAL:

Venerable human rights groups recently announced it will look into alleged prisoner abuse in the United States. Maybe the inquiry will bring the country a step closer to leading by example.



TO HANDWRITING:

School administrators are arguing over whether to teach young students traditional cursive or italic as a primary writing technique. Why argue over which is better? Teach students both, make their handwriting illegible and "doom" them to become doctors.

TO THE SUPREME COURT:

Justices recently ruled that public school teachers have no right to free speech in the classroom. We don't need no education...

Letters to the Editor

Registration ends today

I write to encourage all students who have not yet registered to do so. The deadline is today, October 13.

Registering to vote and then voting is the most effective way to influence the many decisions that will have a direct effect on your life, both as an individual and as a university student. A strong student voice at the ballot box is central to our ability to persuade the state's lawmakers to reinvest in higher education.

The ASUO Main Office in Suite 4 EMU has voter registration cards. Please stop by today and register if you haven't already and then vote in November.

Dave Frohmayer
University President

Students need to speak up

Attention students! The last day to register to vote for the November 3 election is today if you have never previously registered. If you have previously registered, you have until November 26, but why wait? The importance of students voting this year is undeniable. So many issues will depend on strong student turnout, like freezing our already high tuition and keeping our ability to organize and advocate for student issues. For the first time this decade the state of Oregon is seriously looking at reinvestment in our colleges. So many candidates and ballot measures will hinder or assist this process. Without a strong student turnout this will not happen. So to keep it simple please register and then go to the polls, vote by mail or get involved with the process.

Today there will be students on the street with registration cards and they will help you make your voice heard in this state's capital. Our student leaders need your support. Without the strength of a university's voice shouting as one at the legislature we cannot make a difference. In order to shake the stig-

ma of student apathy the University community needs to make a statement: we want our state to care about its universities and more importantly, its students. In-state and out-of-state, we all live in Oregon and should be heard. If tuition is a concern for you, take notice that the only way to make a difference is to represent. It takes two minutes, but its impact will last for years and aid students in our fight to achieve the right to a quality education.

Matt Swanson
ASUO State Affairs Coordinator
Spencer Hamlin
Student Senator

In defense of fraternities

I once shared Ashley Bach's prejudices against fraternities (ODE, Oct. 9), but I now know fraternity life can be a worthwhile and rewarding experience.

While a freshman at another university in Oregon, I believed fraternities were nothing more than institutions meant to perpetuate inequalities introduced in high school.

I assumed fraternity members were shallow, ignorant, spoiled children interested only in perpetuating various good ol' boy networks. Over the years, however, I recognized my own prejudices against fraternities and I eventually joined a fraternity.

At my undergraduate university, I refereed intramural sports. When I objectively observed men playing in those leagues, I realized fraternity men were, for the most part, better sportsmen than other participants. While some individuals (or in some cases, entire houses) perpetuated the "frat guy" stereotype, the vast majority of fraternity men were honest individuals who treated their fellow players, referees and audience members with respect.

As a graduate student, I taught biology labs for a number of years and met many students and cowork-

ers who belonged to fraternities. Again, the vast majority of them were honest, upstanding individuals committed to leading the best lives they could.

At my former university, I even dated a fraternity member. I never understood why he remained in a fraternity where a handful of brothers would openly despise and ridicule him, perhaps even physically assault him, had they known he was gay. I only knew he valued his life and experiences in the house too much to leave — the sense of community and brotherhood was too important for him to sacrifice. Furthermore, I was impressed that those brothers who knew he was gay treated both of us with respect and welcomed me in the same manner they welcomed the girlfriends of other brothers.

In law school, I have experienced fraternity life as a member of Delta Lambda Phi. Contrary to the array of existing prejudices and stereotypes, I wouldn't give up my fraternity experience for a nothing. Our fraternity, like almost every other one on campus, is committed to improving the lives of its members by establishing a common bond of brotherhood and camaraderie. We attempt to improve ourselves by holding each other to the highest standards of honesty, respect, integrity and dignity. Quite simply, I am a better person for having joined my fraternity.

Mr. Bach and others should remember that fraternities are institutions which can be used to improve the lives of their members or abused in ways that harm their members. The choice between good and harm will be made by the individual members of a fraternity it is not a decision inherent within the institution itself. Mr. Bach may hold the opinion that fraternities as a whole do more harm than good, but it has been my experience that a fraternity can improve the lives of its members.

Joel Corcoran
Law