

Trading booze for BUCK\$?

Sororities recently reaffirmed their anti-alcohol stance, but there might be a hidden reason why.

When University sororities signed the Select 2000 Initiative last week, they pledged to do a good deed.

They pledged to not co-sponsor events that had alcohol present so that drinking as a way of life might get one step closer to extinction. While up to 20 percent of a sorority's members can attend events at fraternities where there is alcohol (20 percent is considered co-sponsoring), the sororities effectively said that they will not center their lives around booze.

Though the pledge is largely a symbolic gesture — sororities are already substance-free — it does discourage organized, large-scale drinking.

Alcoholism and binge drinking are real problems on campus. Need some examples?

The Halloween night riots of years past certainly had the help of a few brewskies, and the damage to students' reputations and the community's pocketbook are not to be underestimated. A few MIPs issued to students in University Housing here, a few raging frat parties there. Even some deaths nationwide from alcohol poisoning and alcohol-related accidents at parties have surfaced in recent years. The effects of social influence on alcohol are everywhere.

The Designated Drivers Shuttle is so well-used they had a "drunk of the month" in an ad campaign last year.

It takes some courage to be at the forefront of a movement to curb this excessive alcohol consumption. The sororities should be rewarded for their leadership with praise, publicity and cries of good luck.

But they shouldn't get paid for it.

Monetary reward — \$3,000 in education grants to those sororities "going dry" now and \$1,500 to those phasing the initiative in — is a little suspect. We're not saying that the sororities

signed the initiative to get money, but the timing is a little convenient. When you take a leadership role, no one should have to dangle a carrot in front of you to provoke the first step.

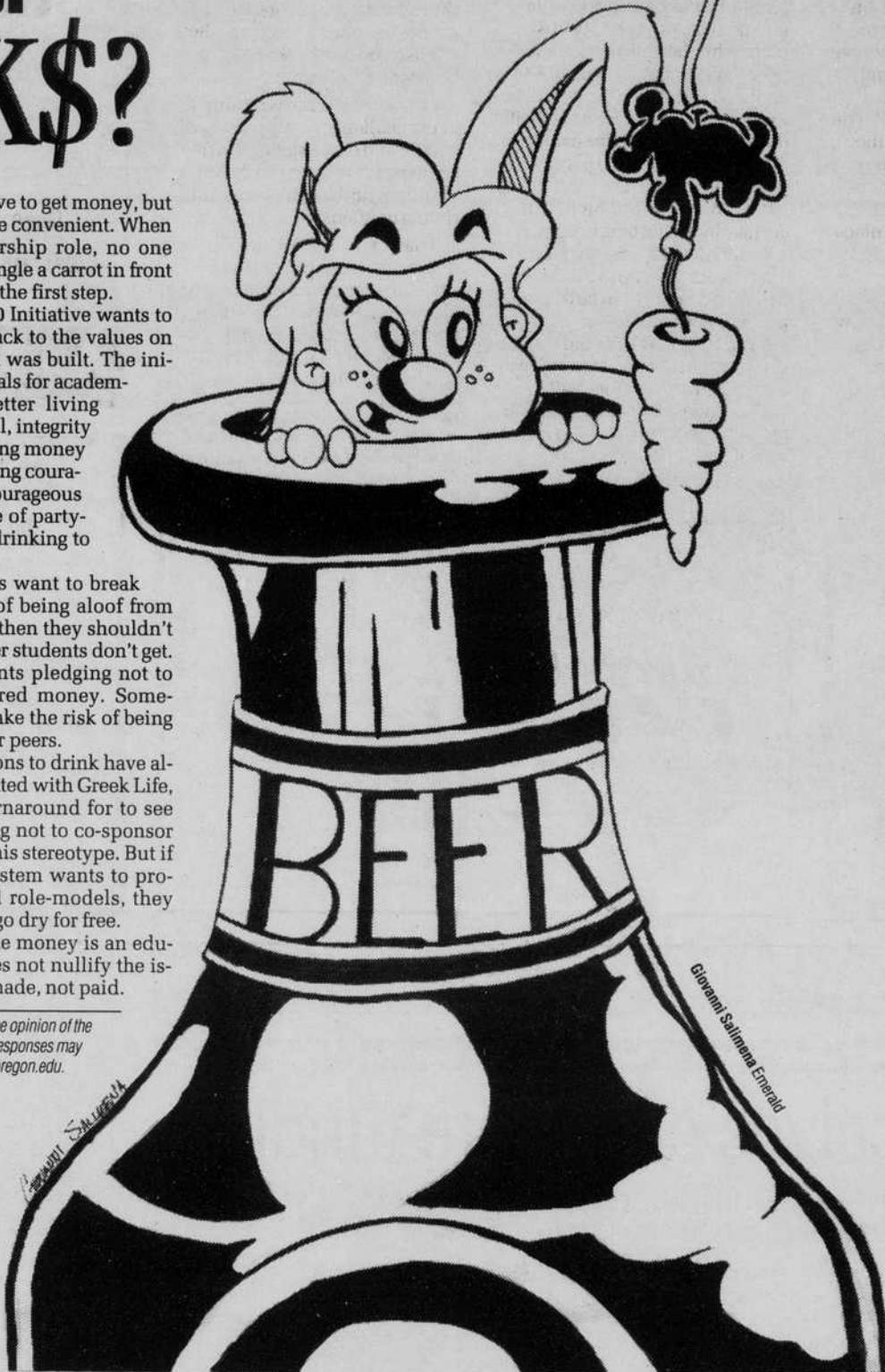
The Select 2000 Initiative wants to take Greek Life back to the values on which the system was built. The initiative outlines goals for academic excellence, better living and integrity. Well, integrity doesn't mean taking money as a reward for being courageous. And it is courageous to break the cycle of partying to drink and drinking to party.

But if sororities want to break their stereotype of being aloof from normal students, then they shouldn't get privileges other students don't get. Individual students pledging not to drink aren't offered money. Sometimes they even take the risk of being ostracized by their peers.

The social reasons to drink have always been associated with Greek Life, and it's a real turnaround for to see sororities pledging not to co-sponsor events that feed this stereotype. But if the Greek Life system wants to produce leaders and role-models, they should pledge to go dry for free.

The fact that the money is an educational grant does not nullify the issue: Leaders are made, not paid.

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



Letters to the editor

Saferide's intent not sexist

Responding to Dustin Preuitt's letter concerning Project Saferide (ODE, Oct. 7), it was not our intention to claim that sexual assault does not affect the lives of men. We apologize if our wording gave this impression. Statistics do show that 10 percent of targets of sexual assault are men. Of the remaining 90 percent of sexual assaults, women are the targets. One in three women at the University will experience some form of sexual assault during her college career. Another element is that men make up 90 percent of the offenders. With these statistics in mind, Saferide continues to provide a safe transport for the primary targets of sexual assault.

Preuitt points out the "ridiculous notion" that a co-ed shuttle could result in incidents of assault. Sadly, other schools have tried a co-ed shuttle only to face incidents of assault and harassment. Preuitt's statement that the safety concerns held by women of this University are "ridiculous" only echoes the prevailing attitude that contributes to the perpetuation of sexual assault. The reality is that sexual assault is a very real issue to all students on this campus, with women as the predominant targets.

We welcome this open dialogue, as it is this type of discussion that helps eliminate existing struc-

tures and myths that reinforce an environment where sexual assault thrives. Unfortunately, the topic of sexual assault remains taboo and with conversations such as these; we are working to dismantle conditions that allow sexual assault to continue.

Jessie Wofsy
Project Saferide

Resignation leaves ASUO less student voice

Another student voice has been silenced. During the most recent meeting of the ASUO senate, Oct. 6, Autumn DePoe handed in her resignation, once again leaving the Journalism/ Arts and Letters seat empty.

With the resignation of DePoe, the students of our university have lost a powerful voice of representation. Although the accomplishments of any individual figure are debatable, DePoe always served one very important role with our student senate: the voice of dissent. While other student leaders jump on the bandwagon of symbolic compassion and empty promises, DePoe was determined to point out the hypocrisy of former and present leaders and was always quick to stand up for the average, starving college student.

Because of this independent, critical thinking, Autumn was ostracized and often times ignored by her colleagues on the senate.

I encourage all interested students to inform

themselves about their student leaders. We take and spend your money on a daily basis. Some leaders do it with discretion; others are quick to use YOUR money for personal gain and notoriety.

Opposing viewpoints should not be ignored and cannot be forgotten.

Eric Pfeiffer
ASUO Student Senate
News Director, KWVA

Despite mistakes, Smith was asset to DDS

What should have been said in the article about the Designated Driver Shuttle (ODE, Sept. 28) was that Brandon Smith took the bullet for past directors. Our riders are happy they don't have to sit in silence or face having a conversation with one of us! The dispatchers are happy that they can listen to music to keep them awake in that broom closet that is our office! Brandon Smith was also the person who came to Wylie (Chen, ASUO president) and Mitra's (Anoushiravani, ASUO vice president) door asking them for help to repair the program. He made a valiant effort to repair damages he and, more importantly, past directors had done to the program. He was a good director, and he made his mistakes, but he realized that and went asking for help. If I were treated the same way he was, I would probably be unable to comment myself.

Renee Bedney
Co-Director Designated Driver Shuttle

THE WEEK IN THUMBS



To Matthew Shepard's mom

Judy Shepard is appearing in a new public service announcement that tells kids and parents that harmful words do have an impact. The spot features students in high school saying things such as "fag," "queer" and "that's gay," followed by Shepard suggesting that hate prevention is the key to stopping violence against gays and lesbians.



To Litigation

Parents of Columbine High School shooting victims are suing their school district because the high school refuses to display memorials to slain students that have religious symbols on them. Litigation is not the key to mending hearts.

To Vandalism

Besides ripping off Monopoly and playing on our fears of school violence, the vandalism that appeared at the EMU and the south entrance to the University this weekend was just plain stupid and costly. Have fun at someone else's expense. Our tuition dollars are already stretched.

To the Anti-Ally

A Washington state judge has handed down an unusual ruling: No female lawyers are allowed to wear pants in her courtroom. Come on, as a woman she should understand the sexism of the dress code. Let's see guys wear stockings.