

It's your choice: make it wisely

COMMENTARY

Jim Hill

With fall comes a host of traditions. Students are returning to campus, football and soccer games are being played and old friends are getting back together after the summer. One tradition that we have seen over the past two years has been a desire on the part of some people to engage in a major confrontation with police on Halloween night. Some traditions are not worth maintaining — this is one of them.

It is not my intent to lecture, threaten or insult the intelligence of the young adults in our community. What I want to do is speak honestly and openly about some choices that all of us have to face in the coming days and weeks.

This weekend many of you will have a choice of what you will be doing. There will be a number of special events happening throughout Eugene this weekend, and many of you will choose to attend some of these events. There will be a big football game at Autzen Stadium on Saturday, and I know that many of you will choose to go to the game. It's Homecoming weekend at the University, and many of you will choose to attend some of the events connected with this tradition. I also know that many of you will choose to go to at least one Halloween party on Friday, Saturday or Sunday night.

From the perspective of the Eugene Police Department, our choice would be NOT to be in the West University neighborhood, or any other neighborhood, managing the behavior of intoxicated young people. Our choice would be NOT to deploy tear gas, arrest people and answer news reporters and community members' questions about why disrespect-

ful behavior continues to plague the community.

This isn't about having fun. In fact, we have worked very hard to tell the community how to have fun without getting the police involved. I also know that the vast majority of young people, University students included, do respect each other and the police and that only a small number become involved in rioting.

Members of the Eugene Police Department, in partnership with the University, have been working for the past year passing out brochures, talking with students and parents, talking with landlords and meeting with and talking to student associations spreading the message that there is a way to have fun without getting the police involved. Given the choice, we would rather not go to someone's house and close down their party. We try to talk with everyone who buys a keg about how to have a great party without getting a citation for noise violation or for serving minors. What we have found is that most people, once they realize that we can be reasonable, are anxious to cooperate. That's a win-win situation.

Unfortunately, parties do not always end up with a win-win outcome. In fact, we have had more problems this year than ever before with people either misunderstanding the law or making a conscious choice to disregard it. The result has been people either being arrested or cited. A little cooperation would have made the situation better for everyone. When 17 officers have to spend two or three hours clearing out a party, it means that the rest of the community is being told that officers are not available to help them with their problem or issue. I often hear frustration from community members that our resources are diverted to manage parties.

I think it's important for people to understand the potential serious consequences of participating

in a riot, or even remaining in the immediate area of a disturbance after being asked by the police to leave. A person failing to disperse after being requested to do so by police is subject to arrest for disorderly conduct. Persons throwing rocks or bottles should be arrested, and we will do our utmost to do so. This can mean serious jail time, a criminal record and potential civil penalty. Police officers may sue the person or persons responsible for causing their injury just as any other person might do.

If necessary we will try to prevent injuries to police officers or other persons by using a new defensive weapon that fires a "beanbag." The beanbag is designed to momentarily incapacitate without a serious injury. I have an obligation to both officers and others to prevent serious injuries that can result from thrown objects. I believe this to be a justifiable option for selectively dealing with individuals who are engaged in dangerous, unlawful behavior.

But given a choice, we would rather NOT arrest anyone, we would rather NOT send any police officer to the emergency room with a life-threatening head injury and we would rather NOT have to use a beanbag round on a party-goer who thinks it's all right to threaten someone's life with a rock or a bottle. I do not want to replicate the experience of the Boulder, Colo., police department where a police officer was hit in the head with a brick and permanently disabled.

This is about choices. Your choices will dictate what our choices will be this coming weekend. We don't want to spend the weekend breaking up your party. I hope the choices you make will reflect your respect for the lives, safety and property of others. You have a choice — I'm asking you to please make a good one.

Jim Hill is the Eugene police chief. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

HANA'S

restaurant

Korean & Japanese Cuisine

Your choice of

50¢

Off All Dishes
Over \$4.25*

or a
FREE DRINK
with coupon

*excluding special menu.
Expires November 8, 1999.

***Low Fat**

***Low Calories**

***Brown Rice Available**

1219 Alder St.

Across the Street from Sacred Heart Hospital

JET Program

Japan Exchange and Teaching Program

Every year the Japanese government invites young people from the U.S. to participate in this unique program, to serve as Assistant Language Teachers or Coordinators for International Relations. Benefits include round-trip airfare, great salary, paid vacation, subsidized housing and a professional work environment.

Applicants must:

- Have U.S. citizenship
- Hold a Bachelor's Degree by July 2000

Representatives for the Consulate-General of Japan will be at the University of Oregon for an informational orientation:

November 2, 1999 • 12:00-1:00 pm • EMU, Rogue Room.

For an application or more information call 1-800-info-jet or the General-Consulate of Japan in Portland at (503) 221-1811.

Hard-hitting Action!

U of O Ice Hockey

vs.
UCLA

Fri., Oct. 29 7:00 PM
Sat., Oct. 30 7:30 PM

for more info call 346-3733

Pay only \$1 entry fee with coupon and student ID

* Sponsored by Club Sports, <http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~hockey>



Buy Factory Direct Save

AMERICAN MATTRESS MANUFACTURING

1 year same as cash. No down payment on approved credit.

RE-BUILT MATTRESS SETS

Price includes mattress and box springs:

Full & Twin Size Sets \$79

Queen Size Sets \$119

King Size Sets \$179

NEW INNER SPRING SETS

Price includes mattress and box springs:

- TWIN Size, Reg \$259.....SALE price \$139
- FULL Size, Reg \$319.....SALE price \$159
- QUEEN Size, Reg \$419.....SALE price \$189
- KING Size, Reg \$1,100.....SALE price \$389

Bring in this ad for FREE DELIVERY

Financing Available

Mon - Fri 9-8

Saturday 9-6

Sunday 11-5

4075 W. 11th

343-2690

Need to get rid of that old computer?
Get results with
Oregon Daily Emerald Classifieds!
Call 346-4343!

Invites You to Start Your Day
the **Healthy Way** with a
Jamba Smoothie

October Grand Opening Special

All Smoothies \$1⁰⁰ Off

Monday thru Friday from 7:30 am to 10:00 am
Located in the EMU

No other discounts apply. • Expires October 29, 1999