

Restaurateur throws hat into council race

■ University graduate and Doc's Pad owner Tracy Olsen will run on a platform of youth issues

By Darren Freeman
Oregon Daily Emerald

With the 2000 election cycle warming up, local restaurant owner and University alumnus Tracy Olsen is approaching the starting block to run for the City Council Ward 3 position, which represents the University area and is currently held by Bobby Lee.

Olsen said he plans to formally announce his candidacy and begin addressing his major platforms, including revitalizing the downtown mall and improving youth services, in early February.

A life-long Eugene resident, Olsen graduated from South Eugene High School and the University and founded the downtown restaurant Doc's Pad,

which he still owns and operates. Olsen has also served on the board of Eugene Active 2030 Club, a volunteer organization with members aged 20-40, that fund raises for local children service groups.

"A lot of people may throw at me my lack of political experience," Olsen said. "Maybe that's a positive thing. If you want to get involved and make a difference in this city, you can. I think I can make a positive difference."

Olsen, who lives and works downtown, said he is committed to revitalizing the area to make it "become a true heart of the city."

"People tend to get depressed when they talk about downtown, and there tend to be feelings of

gloom and doom," Olsen said. "People need to realize that positive things are happening. We can get good work done."

Though downtown probably won't be able to become the retail center of Eugene, Olsen said, it could still become the cultural center providing entertainment, restaurants and community centers.

Olsen said his goals for downtown are linked to his ideas for helping youths in Eugene. "If you walk through downtown, you see a lot of youth who don't have the direction to get off the mall," Olsen said. "Instead of playing loud classical music to drive them out of the area, let's give them something constructive to do instead of just hanging out."

Olsen said he'd work to open a downtown youth center and look

into providing other services for young adults. Also, Olsen said he would work to support and expand services for Eugene's youngest residents, those under the age of six.

"Tracy and I feel the U of O is a tremendous resource," said Deborah Harford, Olsen's campaign coordinator. "He would like to have as many students as possible involved with his campaign."

Bringing his campaign to campus, Olsen hopes, will help boost student participation in local government.

"I think in general the student community is somewhat apathetic," Olsen said. "They don't get involved and don't get out to vote."

Olsen said he would also work to improve understanding between students and the Eugene

Police Department, regarding parties and protests, and ensure that landlords properly maintain properties close to campus and not charge students top prices for location alone.

"Tracy has always been really knowledgeable and had the best and most creative ideas of how to deal with our issues," said Mike Clark, president of both Eugene Active 2030 Club and Marketing Consultants Inc. "I can't think of anybody who could do a better job filling in for and following Bobbie Lee."



OLSEN

Students have opportunity for advice on filing taxes

■ The IRS, along with local groups, offer a wide variety of help for students filing 1999 tax returns

By Brian Goodell
Oregon Daily Emerald

Contrary to popular belief, taxes don't file themselves. The only way to get the money back from the government that magically disappeared from last year's paychecks is to file with the Internal Revenue Service by April 17.

The IRS, the Oregon Department of Revenue and the American Association of Retired Persons are offering free tax help between now and the deadline.

In an effort to get tax help out to communities that do not necessarily have access to IRS offices in Portland and Eugene, the IRS Tax Mobile will make several stops in rural Oregon. The service is free to

anyone who plans to file this year.

"It's like a traveling IRS walk-in office," IRS Communications Manager Judy Monahan said. "You get one-on-one help from people selected because of their customer service skills. This is a job they're thrilled to do, and it's free."

The 30-foot motor home will make 17 stops in Oregon over 104 days during tax season. Taxpayers can pick up forms and publications, get answers to tax law questions, get help preparing basic individual tax returns and get advice on how to file electronically.

Citing the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, Monahan said students will want to pay close attention to the Hope Scholarship Credit and

the Lifetime Learning Credit. The new law allows students to claim a certain percentage of their tuition paid the preceding year on their federal tax return.

The AARP will sponsor Tax-Aide, a number of tax help sessions staffed by volunteers throughout Lane County. The purpose of the program is to assist low- and moderate-income people file their federal and state income tax returns.

"Some students may qualify for the Earned Income Credit," AARP District Coordinator Bob Bottage said. "The EIC is a credit for persons who work, and who may or may not have a child living with them. The credit has been increased again this year to a maximum of \$3,816 to those with two children."

Customer Assistance Days is a

Tax help

Volunteers will offer free tax help at the following locations throughout Eugene beginning Feb. 1 and continuing through April 15:

LCC Downtown: Front Lobby, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Saturdays

Eugene Public Library: 10 a.m.-3

p.m., Thursdays

Petersen Barn Community Center: 1:30 p.m.-4 p.m., Wednesdays, Fridays

Centro Latino America: 12 p.m.-4 p.m., Tuesdays

For more information on dates and times, call the AARP at 687-1777.

SOURCE: AARP

service provided by the Oregon Department of Revenue to assist Oregonians filing their state income tax. ODR employees will be available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., on Saturday, Feb. 5, April 8, and April 15. The Eugene office is located at 2350 Oakmont Way, #105.

"Fifty-nine cents of every tax dollar in Oregon goes to education," ODR Public Information

Officer Deni Cooper said. "Paying taxes is the responsibility of all citizens to ensure that the state is able to provide its public services. Students should take advantage of Customer Assistance Days if they need help or call the state's tax help line."

Taxpayers can contact Oregon's toll-free help line at 1-800-356-4222.

DEAD MAN WALKING

Susan Sarandon stars as Sister Helen Prejean in Tim Robbins' film of her memoirs of counseling death row inmates. Like Prejean's book, the film looks at the death penalty issue from all sides, navigating the complex personal, ethical and legal issues involved and balancing compassion for both the criminals and the people whose lives they destroy. Phenomenal performances from the Oscar-winning Susan Sarandon and Sean Penn, in the role of the inmate.



MOVIE: Free Tuesday, Feb. 1 at 7 pm in 180 PLC

Sister Helen Prejean speaks
Wednesday, Feb. 2 at noon in the EMU Ballroom. Free and open to the public.

- Co-sponsored by:
- ACLU of Oregon
 - Life for a Life Committee
 - U of O Cultural Forum
 - Oregon Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty
 - U of O Peace Studies Program
 - Oregon Fellowship of Reconciliation
 - U of O Student Activities Resource Office

- Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
- Sponsors, Inc.
- Oregon Peaceworks
- St. Thomas Moore Newman Center
- St. Vincent dePaul Society of Lane County, Inc.
- The Koinonia Center
- Wesley Foundation



Comfortable

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"The Friendly Used Levi Store"

photo by Chad Boulton

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