

Packed halls have students camped in lounges

■ Crammed halls and waiting lists face new dorm residents, and some greek hopefuls must sleep in living rooms

By Lisa Toth
Oregon Daily Emerald

Incoming freshman Jenifer Walsh arrived at the residence halls from Las Vegas expecting to be "camping on a cot."

The economics major was one of seven students temporarily placed in the lounge in Gano, a hall in the Bean Complex, instead of a typical room. But the conditions are more comfortable and spacious than the students had anticipated and the group has remained positive about starting their college experience in the very public living quarters.

These students, along with others boarded in McAlister and Schafer halls, are going through Greek Recruitment Week, which begins Sept. 28. They must be moved out of temporary housing and into their potential greek houses by Oct. 13.

If they decide not to join a chapter, Walsh said that University Housing promised to find rooms in the residence halls for the students.

The living situation is tight, but housing is facing full capacity this year, a change from last year when Housing lost money because of low residency. This year, things are different: University enrollment is up, and a new campaign to promote life in the residence halls has drawn students.

And while living is cramped now, housing officials said that by the fourth week of classes the residence halls should be operating smoothly as students move into greek houses or move off campus.

"As we get cancellations for regular residence hall rooms, people in the temporary spaces will be moved into those vacant spaces if they are

Campus housing stats

2000-01 expected enrollment: 17,400
1999-2000 enrollment: 17,278
2000-2001 returning residents: 309 checked in
1999-2000 returning residents: 407 signed up
1998-99 returning residents: 358 checked in
SOURCES: Enrollment Management and University Housing

choosing not to join either a fraternity or a sorority," Bean Complex Director Mark Brinkmann said. The full capacity of the residence halls is partly due to enrollment growth at the University. Jim Buch, associate vice president for enrollment management, said that last year enrollment was at 17,278 and, by the fourth week of school this year, it is expected to reach 17,400 or more.

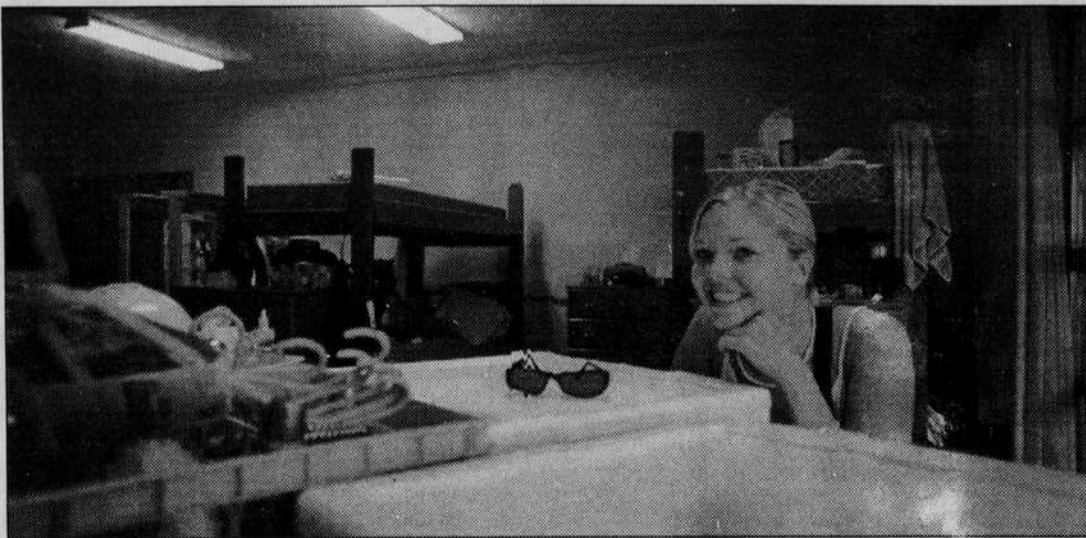
University Housing Director Michael Eyster said that by the end of fall term last year, the residence halls had a net loss of 82 occupants. By the end of spring term that number reached 238.

The majority of the 3,102 students entering on-campus housing began moving in on Sept. 20, but only 60 of those incoming freshmen were granted single rooms, according to Eyster. The 531 students who requested single rooms were placed on a waiting list and boarded in double rooms.

"I doubt we will get through our waiting list like we did last year," Eyster said.

But returning residents aren't complaining. Eyster said that of the 400 returning residents, 260 requested singles. University Housing was able to accommodate all 260.

"Returning residents get priority in room selection," Eyster said,



Dan Brunell Emerald

The University is offering temporary housing for more than 400 women and men who want to join a Greek house. The University has given them a deadline of Oct. 15 to move out.

adding that by the fourth week of school, residence hall occupancy should reach the "comfortable capacity" of 3,125 residents.

Last year, the drop in housing occupancy made for a tighter budget, which must cover costs independently from the rest of the University.

"This year, we have more financial ability to spend money on services for students because we are full," he said.

Eyster added that upgrades and services for residents this fall include special-interest halls, such as the popular Cyber Hall, a fresh coat of paint in many rooms and residential Freshmen Interest Group halls.

Aside from adding improvements to advertising material and their Web site, University Housing wanted to welcome students to residence life in a new way, Eyster said.

"Something small but noticeable we did was to put 'O's in the windows to help students feel more a

part of the community and the University," he said. Eyster also said there are currently 107 students on a waiting list to get into double-occupancy rooms at the University Inn.

Unlike last year, Eyster said that this year University Housing stopped promoting residence hall housing to Lane Community College students. However, there are still 63 LCC students who will be living in the residence halls.

Eyster said University Housing is also starting site preparation for a graduate student apartment complex. The development will offer 72 one-bedroom and studio apartments for graduate students.

"I don't know if we'll have fewer graduate students living in the residence halls," Eyster said. "What we are doing is providing options for a certain segment of students who didn't have options before."

The complex will be located between Moss and Villard streets, just

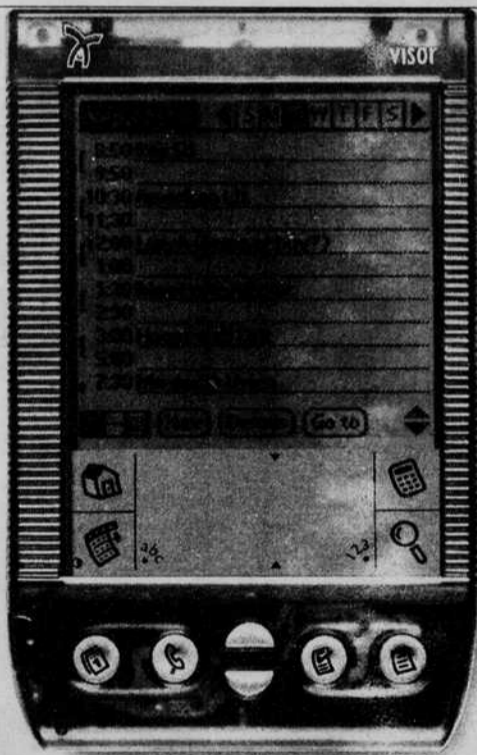
north of 15th Street, and is expected to be completed one year from now.

As with Oregon's student housing, Oregon State University's residence halls are also overflowing due to increased enrollment. With 3,400 housing contracts signed, OSU converted resident advisors' rooms and study rooms into living spaces for incoming residents.

OSU Assistant Director of Housing and Dining Services Eric Hansen said this increase is because of the renovation of residence halls and more targeted marketing to keep students better informed about their housing options.

Hansen attributes the squeeze on housing to the closing of one residence hall for renovation, which is expected to re-open next fall along with a new residential building.

"We will be able to accommodate the enrollment growth in the expected housing demand for the fall 2001," he said.



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