

# Wanted: good home for DDS

■ EMU House Committee continues search for a more permanent home for DDS, though options are limited

By Beata Mostafavi  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Nearly four months after an attack on a Designated Driver Shuttle dispatcher, the EMU House Committee still has yet to find a new space for the program that continues to operate from the ASUO Executive office.

In May, when an intoxicated man punched through the DDS door window and startled a dispatcher, the safety of the DDS dispatchers working alone late in the evening became of greater concern. The room, which may be in the process of becoming a storage space, has but one door and provides no other exit in the case of an emergency.

The unidentified man just stared into the office before leaving. He was never apprehended, but the dispatcher was not physically hurt.

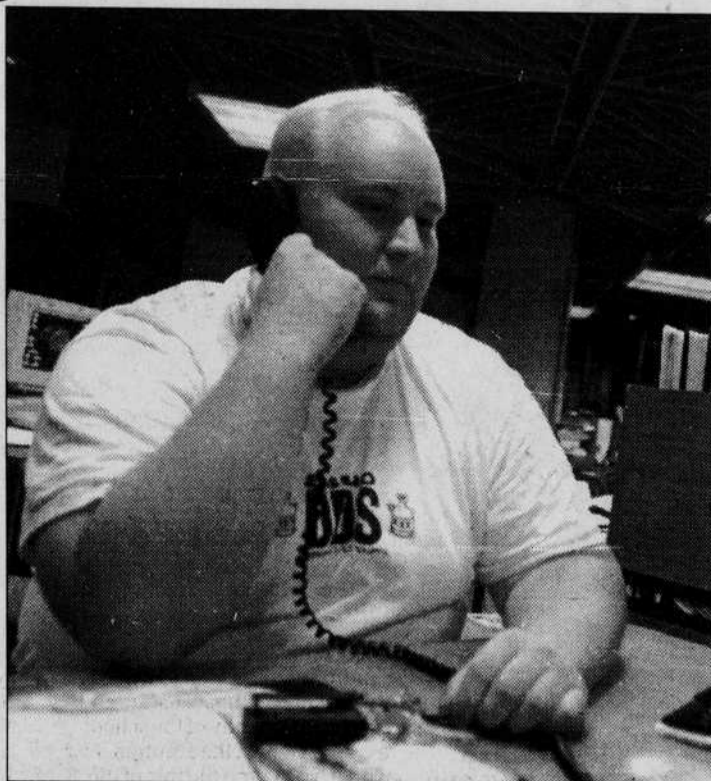
DDS moved out of its old office by the EMU parking lot because of the attack, followed by the decision to move dispatch into the executive office. ASUO President Jay Breslow is allowing DDS to send its vans from the office this year, though the plan was for them to be in a new, permanent location after summer.

Former ASUO Vice President Mitra Anoushiravani offered DDS temporary space in the ASUO Executive office in the EMU after the attack. But it looks like their stay may be a semi-permanent one, at least for this year.

"At the end of last year we had an agreement with DDS that they could stay here through summer but then move out by fall," Breslow said. "But classes are starting Monday and DDS needs to know where they're going to be. It's one of the most used programs by people on campus, and it needs a home. It is kind of cramped in here but until a place opens up, they're welcome to stay here in the ASUO office."

Debra Martin, advisor to the EMU House Committee, explained that many factors must be considered before the board can find a proper place for DDS, which is why locating office space hasn't been an easy task.

"It's not just the matter of not having enough space in the EMU," she said. "One of the big problems is



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DDS co-director Jeff Salchenberg strives to continue providing the University community with safe and sober rides home seven nights a week, despite cramped office quarters.

that [DDS's] space has to be in a place where their radios can function. Some of the places in the basement of the EMU are behind concrete and this makes it difficult."

The board has made different suggestions as to where DDS could move. A few suites have been considered but the student groups that occupy those offices would need to agree to share their space. Another option is for DDS to operate in an available suite in the basement and use a portable cart to transport their dispatch radios, but DDS staff said this idea would be inefficient.

Jeff Salchenberg, DDS co-director, said that the space DDS used last year should never have been used as an office in the first place.

"We had actually called the fire marshall before the incident, and they agreed that it wasn't a good place," he said. "It was unsafe and also, after the EMU closed we had no access to bathrooms, which was a huge problem ... It just makes me mad that it took two years for the board to vote on this. It took the incident of the DDS window being punched through for them to decide that maybe they don't want any stu-

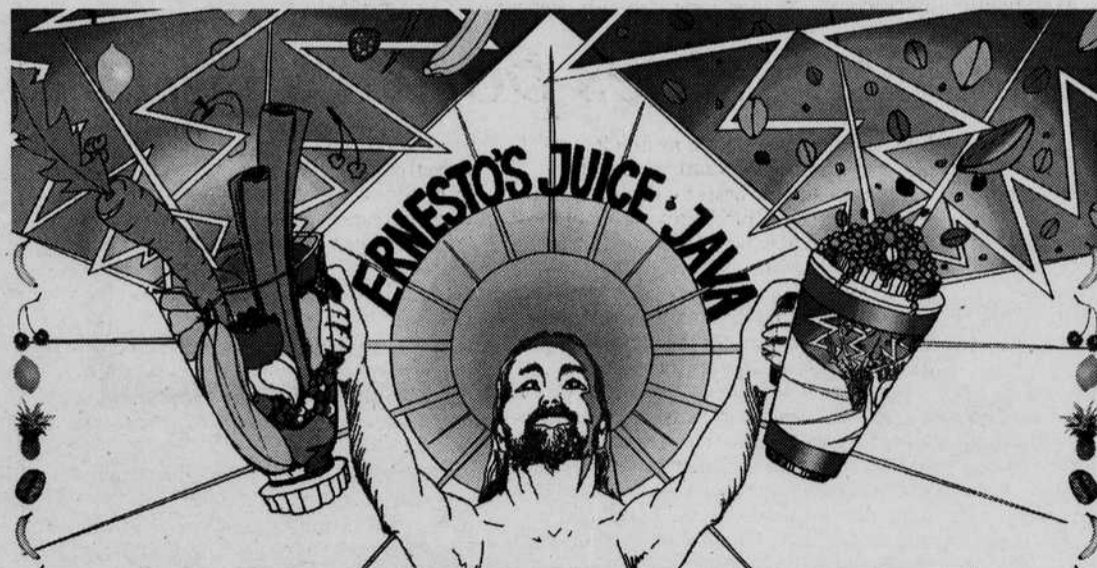
dent groups to be in there."

Daniel Valle, programs representative on the EMU board, agreed that the previous DDS office isn't suitable for any group.

"After DDS members came to us last year I brought it up to the board that the area wasn't safe and that it should only be used for other purposes such as storage," he said. "One of the board's main concerns is safety for the student groups, and we're not going to put anyone in there if it could cause them harm."

Salchenberg said that the long and lengthy process to obtain space for DDS has been frustrating and he isn't going to try again this year. For now, the DDS staff is just happy to be in a different place, though their space may be minimal.

"It is crowded and there are many people here during the day that kind of have to climb around us," Salchenberg said. "But our old office was so cramped and couldn't fit more than two people, yet we had to shove five people in there and I'm just glad to be out of there ... Right now we call this place 'temporarily permanent,' and we'll be here until they kick us out."



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