

Police

continued from page 1A

happy with the Party Patrol and its policies. Confrontations between students and officers issuing citations are common. Students take issue with the use of scarce resources to police what they see as a minor problem.

In addition to the riots, the EPD noticed an increase in alcohol-related calls for service, which include disputes at bars, disorderly parties, furnishing alcohol to minors and noise complaints. Complaints peaked in 1998 at 2,499, according to EPD reports.

"We thought that was way too many," Gilliam said. "It's amazing how many calls we don't even get to because there are just so many of them."

EPD had been issuing more warnings than citations, going to parties and asking hosts to quiet down and keep things under control.

"They weren't getting the message," he said. "They were taking advantage of our niceness."

EPD changed its tack and is now practicing "zero tolerance," or as Gilliam characterized it, a consistent enforcement policy. Minors caught drinking are no longer merely given a warning. The new policy, which is costing taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars annually in overtime, is reflected in the number of MIPs issued in the years since consistent enforcement began. In 1997, EPD issued 505 MIPs. By 1999, that number had nearly tripled. There is no tolerance for other alcohol and partying related offenses either. Gilliam said the Party Patrol is also issuing more citations for furnishing alcohol to minors, open containers and noise violations.

Although EPD has adopted a more aggressive stance when it comes to enforcement, officials realize they will never completely eradicate partying and under-age drinking.

However, the department is trying to curb what Gilliam called a "tremendous drinking culture" around the University.

"U of O has a reputation of being a party school — people come for that," he said.

In addition to the enforcement, EPD is involved in a variety of education and outreach programs meant to discourage underage drinking

and irresponsible partying.

Paying the price

The cost of staffing the Party Patrol is of concern to many. Taxpayers spent \$92,000 on overtime pay for Party Patrol officers in fiscal year 2000. In addition, the Friday and Saturday night patrols pull officers away from other areas of the city to patrol the party beat, leaving some neighborhoods without coverage.

"It's just very staff-intensive," Gilliam said. "It's costing the taxpayers a lot of money."

EPD has been looking at ways to recoup some of these costs. The department is especially concerned with the cost of responding to the same address multiple times. An ordinance currently being reviewed by the City Council would assess a special response fee to individuals who host parties that require multiple police responses to the same address.

Eugene City Manager Jim Johnson noted that the idea for the special response fee came, in part, from ordinances already in existence in Corvallis and Berkeley, Calif.

Ward 3 City Councilor Bonny Bettman, who represents the neighborhoods where most of the Party Patrol's calls for service originate, said she is generally opposed to the philosophy of a fee-for-service approach to policing. She said, however, that she would support a version of the special response fee ordinance "with some clarification and maybe some tweaking."

"It's worth a try. Right now, it is the only solution," she said. "The ordinance is attempting to strike a balance, focusing on illegal activity and being a deterrent. It puts the onus on the party giver to be responsible."

"Nobody thinks it will eradicate partying," she added.

Christa Shively, ASUO community outreach director, has been involved in talks with EPD about the special response fee ordinance. She said she understands the rationale for such a fee and even supports the general message it tries to send.

"They're going back to the same residence from year to year because people aren't practicing responsible partying," she said.

But the current version of the ordinance is too loosely worded and open to interpretation, Shively said.



Party Patrol officers of the Eugene Police Department respond to a call of a noise disturbance at a fraternity house Oct. 20.

Erin Swanson-Davies Emerald

Unwelcome guests

Relations between the Party Patrol and the partygoers they interact with are often hostile. It's not surprising, considering the circumstances surrounding most of the interactions between the two groups. Students don't understand why there is so much attention being paid to their activities.

Jay Thomas, a member of Theta Chi fraternity, was visiting the chapter house Friday night when a squad of police arrived to investigate a noise complaint. Thomas, a senior of legal drinking age, watched as police issued MIPs to people around the party. He said he wonders why so many police officers are necessary to bust what could hardly be described as a large, out-of-control party.

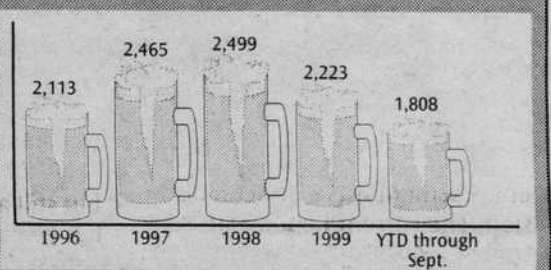
"There's methamphetamine houses in this area," he said. "That is far more dangerous."

Connor Sellers, a senior who was also at the Theta Chi fraternity, said he thinks the Party Patrol is a "terrible misallocation of funds."

Police enforcement of partying at other some Pacific-10 Conference

EPD calls for service . . .

Eugene police have recorded a recent decrease in calls for service for alcohol-related offenses, including disputes at taverns, disorderly parties and loud music.



Source: EPD

Russ Weller Emerald

schools is decidedly less stringent than enforcement in Eugene. James Tomlinson, a University of Arizona student who was issued a MIP citation while visiting Eugene for a Ducks football game, said that police in Tucson are much more lenient when it comes to underage drinking and parties in general.

Sgt. Randy Fougner with the Tempe, Ariz., police department, said police who patrol Arizona State University spend most of their time "dealing with getting the

party broken up. Checking IDs and policing alcohol violations is an ancillary concern."

Eugene police said they need to go into the parties they bust with lots of officers for their own safety. Party Patrolers have been injured in the line of duty by drunken students who get out of control, Gilliam said. Six were injured last fall.

"Of course, if it turns out to be a candlelight dinner with two people, it's a little bit of overkill," Gilliam said.



You are cordially invited
to attend your
NEW Career Center's

OPEN
HOUSE

Thursday,
October 26, 2000
Second Floor, Hendricks Hall

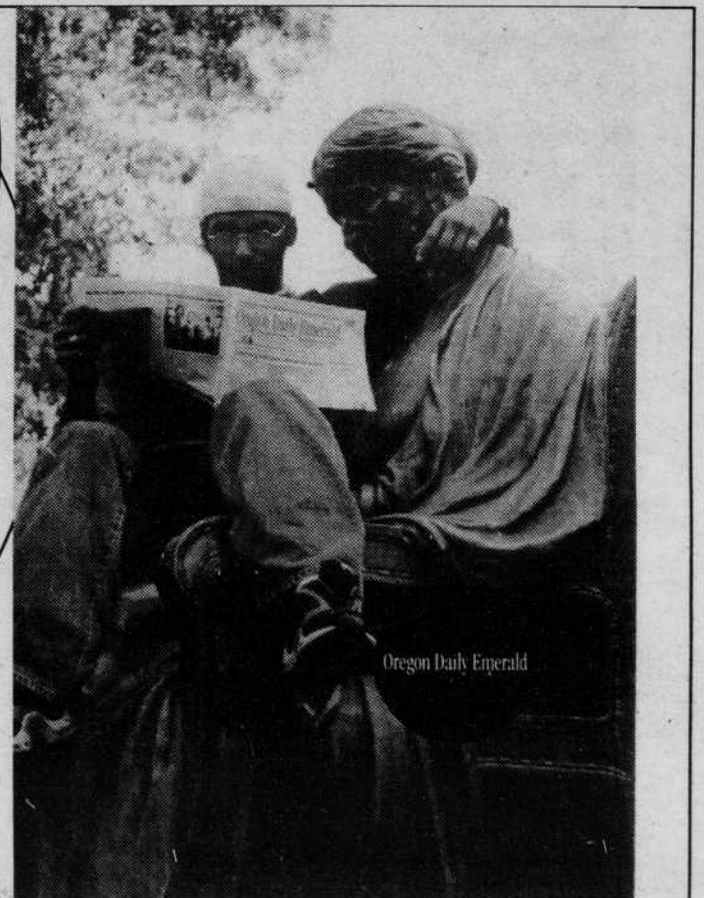
We wish to welcome you into the 2000-01 school year
in our newly remodeled office.

Please feel free to visit us between the hours of
10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
for this special occasion.

Refreshments.

THERE'S
ALWAYS
A REASON
TO PICK UP
THE ODE

Visit an old friend.



Oregon Daily Emerald