

ISA coffee hour offers cup o' culture

■ The International Student Association's weekly event showcases differing group identities, but welcomes all

By Diane Huber
Oregon Daily Emerald

More new and diverse faces are appearing every week at international coffee hour, and the International Student Association is changing the theme of the event by encouraging more students to have a cup of coffee and talk with people from all over the world.

"We chose coffee because it's America — people drink it all the time," ISA co-director Shruti Shah said.

Coffee hour, which is held from 4 to 6 p.m. every Friday, has come a long way since it started in the mid-1980s. The event began small with

only 10 or 15 people. But in recent years, attendance has been reaching up to 100 people, Shah said.

Now, instead of just providing coffee and snacks, ISA has been asking student groups to sponsor coffee hour and present a part of their culture, Shah said.

"Our theme is unity and diversity," she said. "We're trying to reach out to student organizations that maybe weren't involved in previous years."

This includes student groups that aren't characterized by a specific ethnicity, she said.

ASUO sponsored a coffee hour for the first time after Sept. 11. The group used this time as a platform to educate people about the tragedy.

Recent sponsor Students of the Indian Subcontinent wore "salwaar kameez"—traditional, colorful out-

fits that can be dressed up or down depending on the details of the embroidery, Shah said.

SIS members encouraged everyone to participate in a traditional Hindu dance called Dandya.

The dance is performed during the nine-day Navaratri festival, but today younger people tend to perform the dance for fun, Shah said. Each person is given two wooden sticks, and the dancers form two lines. People rotate around the line, hitting their sticks against the sticks of those in the other line. Dancers rotate while traditional music plays in the background.

Next term, the Hawaii Club will sponsor coffee hour, and Shah hopes more student groups will sponsor coffee hour during winter term.

Tom Mills, director of the Office of International Education and Ex-

change, said he informs international students about coffee hour at the beginning of the year so they know where they can go to meet other students from their country.

"Coffee hour gives a focus to a time each week when students can meet students from their own countries and from other countries," he said. "In terms of adjusting to a new life, it can be a real help to meet other new students and to find out about the international programs available."

Saiyora Ismailova moved from Uzbekistan during fall term. Right away she became involved in ISA and began attending the coffee hour for fun and to socialize.

"You don't have to travel to meet people from different countries," she said.

Contact student activities reporter Diane Huber at dianehuber@dailyemerald.com.

News briefs

Fishing accident claims University student's life

Junior Ben Eder died when the fishing boat he was working on capsized off the Oregon coast Dec. 11. Eder, 21, was one of four men aboard the Nesika, a 40 ft. crabbing vessel owned by Eder's father, Bob Eder, of Newport. The boat overturned a half-mile off Yaquina Head as it lowered crab pots to the ocean floor, and washed ashore on Beverly Beach, just north of Newport.

Coast Guard crews searched for the missing fishermen without success before calling off rescue efforts the next day. Coast Guard spokeswoman Aida Cabrera said

the cause of the accident is under investigation.

Matt Harner, a 22-year-old Newport fisherman, was on a crab boat about a mile-and-a-half away from the Nesika when it went down. He described the weather conditions that day as "pretty rough," but not out of the ordinary.

"It was just random chance," he said. "No one could have seen it, and no one could have stopped it."

When he heard the Nesika had capsized, Harner said he prayed that Eder, a close friend and high school classmate, was not on the boat.

"He was a great guy," he said. "He had so much potential, so much going for him."

Eder graduated as class salutatorian from Newport High School in

1998. Eder, a biochemistry major, transferred to the University last year from Reed College in Portland.

When he had a break from school, he always came back to Newport to work on the fishing boats, Harner said.

"He loved fishing," he said. "He loved going out on the ocean."

— Kara Cogswell

Student energy fee reduced

Students will pay a few dollars less in incidental fees when a reduction in the energy fee goes into effect this term. Provost John Moseley agreed to cut the fee, originally estimated at \$30 per student per term, to \$20 for winter term.

University Vice President for Administration Dan Williams said

the provost made the decision partly because of conservation efforts led by student government leaders. A lower-than-expected natural gas bill for fall term as well as high enrollment also made lowering the fee possible, he said.

ASUO President Nilda Brooklyn said she was pleased with the administration's willingness to lower the fee. But she said her goal is to eliminate the fee altogether.

Brooklyn and other student government leaders plan to reduce the need for the fee with a campus-wide energy conservation campaign beginning this term, she said.

William said administrators will re-evaluate the energy fee at the end of winter term.

— Kara Cogswell

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