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Eugene Police prepare to hire 17 new officers

■ Both EPD and DPS are hiring, but applicants should be prepared for both stresses and rewards

By Lisa Toth
 Oregon Daily Emerald

The Eugene Police Department has some career advice for graduating seniors: Become a police officer.

Sgt. Kathy Flynn said EPD is looking to fill 17 open police officer positions.

In addition, there are also three openings for public safety officers with the University's Department of Public Safety, as well as a security officer position and a parking maintenance technician, said Tom Hicks, associate director of public safety.

However, police officers warned that these jobs aren't for everyone.

"Everyone watches every move you make — 24 hours a day," Sgt. Tom Eichhorn said.

Flynn said the 17 positions have opened not because the staff size of 183 sworn officers is increasing, but because about 20 members have either reached or exceeded age 50, at which they are eligible for retirement.

Oregon still has the highest unemployment rate in the country, and that became more apparent as about 150 people showed up for Tuesday's Police Officer Career Night hosted by EPD.

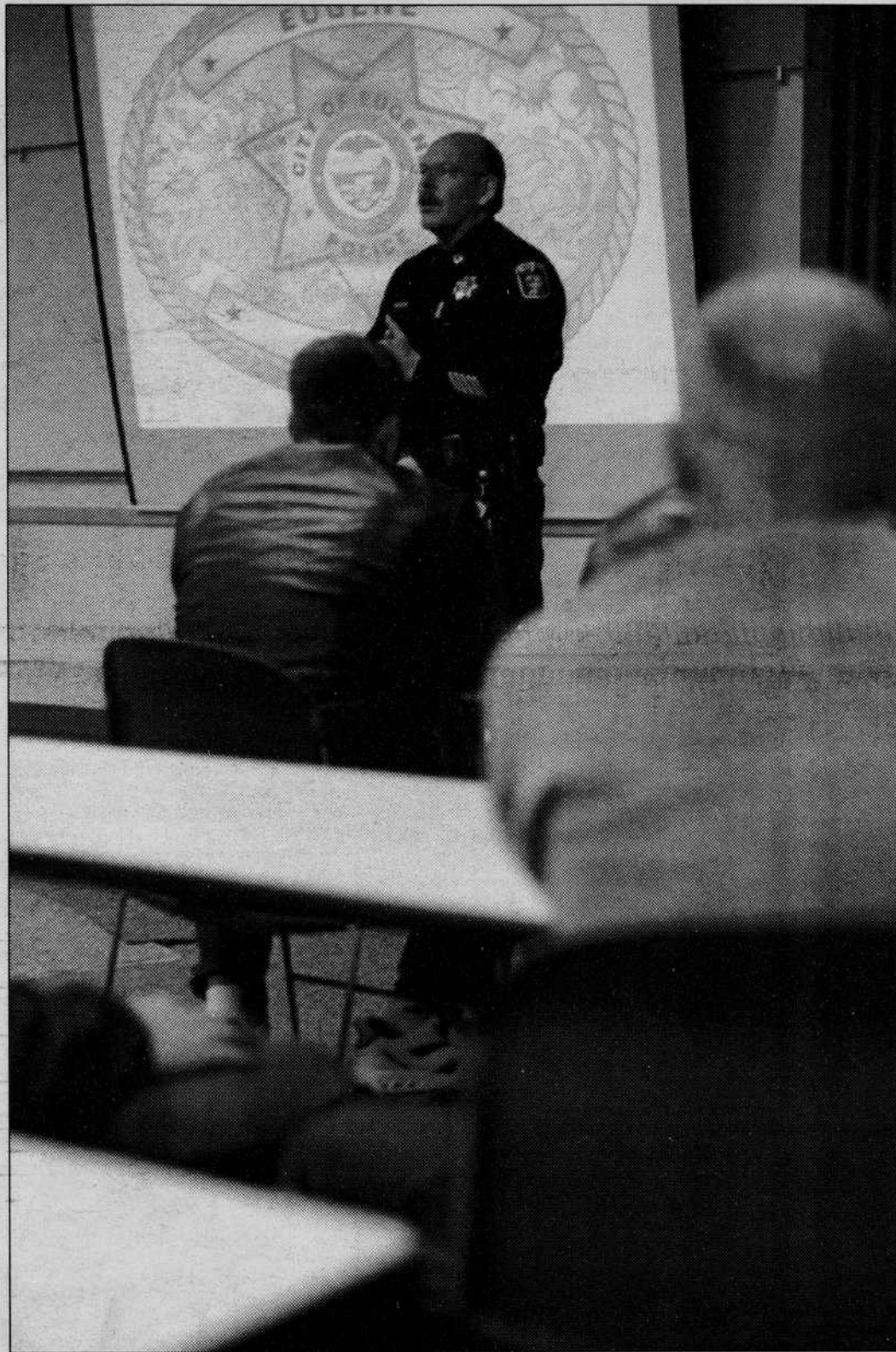
Staff members from EPD spoke about the responsibilities of their occupations — from the worst scenarios to the most rewarding. Eichhorn said the mental stresses of working under "physically repulsive" conditions and dealing with "arrestees" who have no respect for the law can make law enforcement unappealing. Eichhorn presented a not-so-pretty picture of the job conditions — being spit on, arresting parents in front of their children, directing traffic for hours in the rain and working through lunch breaks.

"It's the nature of the beast," he said.

But he balanced the negatives with the joys of the job — good benefits and a starting salary between \$38,958 and \$49,732 annually, and the chance to be a hero.

"You get the opportunity to help people who are really in need," he said. He added that putting handcuffs on a violent criminal who has preyed upon the weak and defenseless is "the greatest sound in the world."

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Capt. Steve Swenson of Eugene Police Department talks to possible recruits during the organization's Career Night. Approximately 150 people showed up Tuesday to inquire about the 17 open police officer positions.

Jonathan House Emerald

Assisted suicide survives legal suit

■ The Death With Dignity Act will remain intact in Oregon after a U.S. Court of Appeals hearing

By Brook Reinhard
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Federal District Judge Robert Jones ruled Wednesday that Oregon's controversial Death With Dignity Act will remain intact, at least until its expected challenge in the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco.

Jones issued a permanent injunction against Attorney General John Ashcroft's Nov. 6, 2001, ruling, which would have made it a crime for doctors to prescribe lethal doses of pain medication to terminally ill patients in Oregon under the Controlled Substances Act.

The judge's decision was hailed by supporters of assisted suicide as a major victory for patients' and states' rights and decried by opponents as immoral and unfair to doctors.

"We've been under a cloud of uncertainty," said physician and state Rep. Alan Bates, D-Ashland. "This will allow us to resume compassionate care for patients without the danger of losing our license."

But Dr. Greg Hamilton, president of right-to-life group Compassion in Dying, said the judge's ruling puts the desires of patients in direct conflict with ethical responsibilities of doctors.

The ruling is "inconsistent with our role as healers," Hamilton said. "Doctors need to value all people's lives equally."

Gayle Atteberry, executive director of Oregon Right To Life, echoed Hamilton's views.

"We're very, very disappointed by the ruling," she said. "No matter what the judge has said, it's wrong for patients to kill themselves."

Jones, while sympathetic to opponents of assisted suicide, condemned Ashcroft's November action, saying the attorney general abused his power.

"My task is not to criticize those who oppose the concept of assisted suicide for any reason," Jones said in his ruling Wednesday. But opposition to assisted suicide "does not permit (the Controlled Substances Act) to be manipulated from its true meaning to satisfy even a worthy goal," he concluded.

The U.S. attorney general's office is expected to appeal Jones' ruling to the 9th Circuit Court within the month.

"The (Department of Justice) remains convinced that its interpretation of the Controlled Substances Act as prohibiting the use of federally controlled drugs to assist suicide is correct," U.S. Assistant Attorney General

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Universities still find place for questionable donors

■ Many colleges and universities have accepted donations from sources in trouble with the law and society

By Kristina Torres
 Knight Ridder Newspapers

ST. PAUL, Minn. (KRT) — More often than they care to mention, colleges and universities quietly pocket big contributions from donors who land in society's doghouse.

Just look at the universities, including the University of Houston, that still plan to fill academic positions endowed in former Enron Corp. Chairman Kenneth Lay's name, or the

nation's roughly 40 Arthur Andersen professors of accounting.

In Minnesota, generous and high-profile St. Olaf College alumnus Dean L. Buntrock, founder and former chief executive of Waste Management Inc., who donated \$26 million to the school, recently denied accusations of accounting fraud by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

So how awkward is it for the Northfield, Minn., school to have a new Buntrock Commons student center?

"We are careful to deal with people who understand the mission of St. Olaf College," says Gordon Soenksen, the school's vice president

for advancement. "What (Buntrock) and his family saw was the need for a community gathering place. That's what they created."

Nobody, says the University of Minnesota's Norman Bowie, is perfect. And that's something to consider, even as there are boundaries of what's acceptable and what's not.

"There are two areas where institutions get in trouble," says Bowie, who holds the Elmer Andersen chair for corporate responsibility. "The first is if they're dealing with a shady character and they know it up front. The second is if they're dealing with someone who's done something particularly egregious."

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