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COMMENTARY

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Editorial

Parking issue needs solutions for both long- and short-term

With enrollment projected to hit 20,000 next year, the University's parking situation is in dire need of attention. More drivers will be wanting to park on campus, which will result in more parking headaches. With only 3,250 parking spaces available and more than 6,000 permits sold, the University has to take action now before the situation worsens.

In 1996, the Campus Planning Committee reviewed the campus parking system and outlined suggestions the school should take to alleviate future parking woes. After six years, little headway has been made on the suggestions because there hasn't been any leadership — or real initiative — to implement the suggestions.

Under the current structure, there is only one person in the Department of Public Safety who deals directly with the day-to-day realities of the University's parking situation — including ticketing and responding to parking complaints.

But if we are serious about implementing the suggested parking initiatives, there needs to be more than one person involved in the project.

To start, the University must hire a person to directly plan short- and long-term solutions to the parking problem. The position could be funded without much difficulty — according to University planner Fred Tepfer, the University has about \$1 million in reserve for parking projects.

The next step for the University would be to decide on a concrete timeline to follow through on the committee's suggestions. The initial ideas from the 1996 plan included a zone parking system, designated carpool parking and encouraging use of Lane Transit District's park-and-ride system.

The plan to create a parking garage should be a last resort for the University, and the committee's suggestions reflect this. Plans to build a parking facility have been floated since the 1980s, and the idea has always been sunk by various opponents, including the Eugene City Council and neighborhood associations. A parking structure may be necessary someday, but for now, planners need to look to improving and maintaining the spaces already established.

Once the new parking planning liaison position is filled, the committee's short-term solutions need to be promoted to current and incoming students alike. The liaison should also make sure students are educated about new alternative transportation methods and promote their use. This way, new students won't have to guess what the University is doing about their parking needs, and the channels of communication can open up.

Advertising of the new parking solutions also needs to involve the ASUO. We hope ASUO President-elect Rachel Pilliod will make improving the parking situation on campus one of her term's hallmark accomplishments. Getting students enthused about parking alternatives is a daunting task, but we believe Pilliod has the energy and rallying power to do so.

The University needs to make this project a priority and act with the same tenacity as they did to secure funding for the Autzen Stadium expansion or the Lillis Business Complex construction. The parking woes will only continue to worsen when more students flood the campus in the fall. Creating more parking spots will only encourage more cars to park in them, and the University needs to work to get more longevity out of the spaces already available.

Editorial Policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.



50 years of Dick Clark's 'American Boredom'

Which is more pathetic? The entire combined legacy of the show "American Bandstand," or its "50th Anniversary Celebration," staged this past Friday night to the embarrassment of the culturally sentient all across "this great country"?

And I do mean staged.

During its long, painful crawl from silly teen obsession to downright asinine national pop culture phenomenon, "American Bandstand" has come to symbolize all that is fake, sick and wrong with the music industry.

If the producers of the show were to select a mascot to symbolize its rich history, they would be forced to resurrect the dead half of Milli Vanilli.

Of course, even dead, Milli (or is it Vanilli? I never could keep them straight) would have a pulse like a thundering hydraulic pump compared to "American Bandstand" creator and emcee Dick Clark.

But it's not like I'm saying anything particularly revolutionary here. Better men and women than I have been joking about the vampire-like quality of "America's Eternal Teenager" ever since he resurfaced in the '80s as Ed McMahon's straight man on "Bloopers and Practical Jokes."

Incidentally, has McMahon ever considered that the poisonous mold that chased he and his wife from their mansion, after strangling their pooch like Michael Myers, might actually be

a hilarious gag soon to be televised to the unrestrained joy of millions?

Maybe not.

A far more likely scenario is that the mold was a form of righteous plague visited upon Big Ed's estate by the angry God of the Old Testament for entering into a business contract with the devil.

Think I'm indulging in hyperbole?

Well, think again. Think hard. In fact, I defy you to think of a celebrity more likely to have ingested the blood of babies in an insidious plot to defy the laws of time and age.

Yet, even if Dick is innocent of that last charge, he's still guilty of getting off scot-free during the "Payola Scandal," while men of honor like Alan Freed were bankrupted and reduced to the stuff of gibbering ex-greaser legend. As if that isn't bad enough, how about helping to shape a mainstream musical environment less creative than Fabio with writer's block.

Where do you think the first "boy bands" came from? Long before "Back Sync" and "Color My New Edition on the Block," Dick was taking young boys with no appreciable

singing talent and a great head of hair, and shaping them into the teen idols of yesteryear.

You remember people like Fabian and Paul Anka, don't you? No? What a surprise.

Dick Clark has been creating and promoting talentless one-hit-wonders more than twice as long as MTV, and if that's something to celebrate, it could only be in America.

Speaking of celebrating, I posed a question earlier. By now you see the folly of "American Bandstand," but what about its 50th anniversary special?

Here's a brief synopsis, and I swear I'm not making any of this up.

After leading into a live performance — by such groups as K.C. and the Sunshine Band, Wild Honey and The Village People — with the comment that disco was one of his favorite periods in the history of music, Clark dropped the bombshell.

Capping off this incredibly special night of music would be an all-star big band, consisting of music and television legends like Sheila E, Leif Garrett, The Pointer Sisters and Jerry Springer, backing Little Richard on a medley of oldie rock favorites.

Jesus wept.

And Jerry played a mean guitar.

Dick Clark may be the devil, but you have to admit, he's got great taste.

E-mail columnist Jacob TenPas at jacobtenpas@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald.



Jacob TenPas
 Columnist

Letter to the editor

Students can excel without supporting inequality

In response to Robert Kelso's letter ("Graduation pledge shows bigotry," ODE, May 2):

"Survival of the fittest" does not mean that only the strongest, most ruthless and least caring of others survive. The true Darwinian definition is "species with the most successful reproductive strategies flourish."

Humans, like other primates and most mammals, use complicated methods of nurturing, kinship ties and concern for the well-being of those close to us to achieve success. The "legitimate philosophy" Kelso refers to is nothing more than the modern incarnation of Social Darwinism — a 19th-century ideological distortion of evolution used by the powerful to justify the gross inequality and injustice of the economic system they control.

• Is it "bigotry," "big brother"-ish,

or "prejudicial" to assert that your right to swing your fist ends where my nose begins? What's so terrible about asking students to think about the far-reaching social and environmental consequences of the careers they pursue, to at least look at those companies that swing their fists without regard to the noses they're hitting and ask, "Do I really want to be a part of that?"

• Nobody forces students to sign.

Jeremy Jacobs
 Eugene