

NEWS

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Greg Bae for the Emerald

Sapphire, who was Miss Gay Texas in 2001, performs at a drag show Sunday afternoon during the Eugene Pride festival in Alton Baker Park.

Local residents celebrate annual Pride festival in Alton Baker Park

■ The Eugene Pride celebration provides food and entertainment for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community

By Jillian Daley
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Rainbows were the rage Saturday as the 11th annual Eugene Pride celebration hit Alton Baker Park from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Amidst a plethora of booths and performances mushrooming around Alton Baker, Eugene's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community members had a chance to be visible and experience a safe space.

Some attend partly because they enjoy the safe space. "I just like the openness (and) people getting together," festival attendee Lisa Alitzer said.

A full roster filled the Pride stage. The event's performance list included local groups and artists Cris Williamson, Paula Vaden, Deb Cleveland Band, Soromundi and Jordan Blumberg-Engel.

"I love that a lot of (the) queer community can come together," guitarist and vocalist Blumberg-Engel

said. She performed original scores, such as "Not Your Boy" and "Blown to Bits."

Also featured were the square-dancing Rainbow Wranglers and a drag show put on by the Imperial Sovereign Court of the Emerald Empire, which is a local drag show organization.

"I like my performance to be Vegas-like," drag show artist Sapphire said. Sapphire was dressed in patriotic colors with ostrich feathers in her hair and long veils flowing from her arms. She plans to enroll at the University in the fall.

Vendors at the event included Womenspace, Wicca, the group Q and the University LGBTQA. Q-booth volunteer Stephanie Carnahan explained the group's plans to start a queer community center in Eugene.

"Our mission is to promote queer progressive social change," Carnahan said.

Other booths included the Human Rights Commission, the HIV Alliance and a child care area. Pride sponsors included PFLAG, the Equity Foundation and Ruby Chasm.

People at the event had a range of reasons for attending Pride.

River Jeffries and Rosemary Childs

took advantage of the free child care while attending their first Eugene Pride.

Jeffries and Childs explained what brought them to Eugene Pride this year.

"I was looking forward to seeing more of the queens," Jeffries said, pointing out her daughter, Amber Rose, in the play area. Childs, however, "was looking for the free veggie-dogs," she said, while her son, Palaram Brashers, held her hand.

Eugene resident Gary Miller said his reason for attending was his friends. "There are a lot of people (who attend Pride) that I don't see very often," he said.

Pride was a day of celebration for both festival patrons and the committee who set up the event.

The Pride committee's main goal is for its committee members to have fun. "If it's not fun, we're not doing it; because if we have fun, everyone there is going to have fun," coordinator Amber Lunch said.

"It's a nice day to bring people together. It's just a safe, healthy venue," Pride committee member Harriet Merrick said.

Contact the reporter at jilliandaley@dailyemerald.com.

New contract increases UO GTFF salaries by 10 percent

By Jillian Daley
 Oregon Daily Emerald

University graduate students have a reason to smile 10 percent wider.

The University signed the Graduate Teaching Fellowship Federation's new contract, which increases the minimum salary for graduate student workers 6 percent this year and 4 percent next year. Ten percent is the "largest raise (University graduate students have seen) in nearly a decade," Temporary Staff organizer Ashley Overbeck said.

The contract went into effect on May 20 and continues to the end of March 2004.

Overwhelmingly, GTFF members were in favor of the contract. Before sending it in to the University for approval, GTFF members ratified it 330 to 3, said Overbeck, also a GTFF member.

"I think overall (the University is) very pleased with the contract," Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Richard Linton said.

The GTFF has been campaigning for a better contract since the group first began meeting in September, GTFF Negotiating Team member David Cecil said. Over the summer, the GTFF hired researchers to work on the campaign, so they would be prepared for the fall meeting, added Cecil, who is also the acting union executive council chairman.

The GTFF was in a good position to fight for change this year. "For the last several years, we traded wage increases to maintain health insurance. We made wage concessions for years, and (the University was) willing to work with us," Overbeck said.

However, Overbeck said tactics are what won the plum contract this year. The group's victory was based "very much on the presentation of hard data," Vice President of Member Communications Sasha Tavenner Kruger said.

One of the GTFF's key tactics in implementing the hard data to get the raise was a simple comparison to other universities, Kruger said. Before the raise, University GTFs made about "30 percent less than the average graduate employee at comparator institutions," she said.

Cecil said the difference in pay can hurt graduate recruiting.

"The University can't attract and retain graduate workers if they can't pay them," he said.

Renewing the contract gave the University a chance to show graduate students their value to the campus.

"I think it's a strong statement on the University's commitment to graduate students and also recognition of the importance that GTFs play in meeting the mission of the University," said Linton, who is also the Graduate School dean.

However, money was not the only issue at stake. The GTFF added a clause protecting transgender workers from discrimination in the workplace, making it "the most comprehensive contract in the country," Overbeck said. Only one other contract in the nation mentions transgender people in its text, Overbeck added.

Contact the reporter at jilliandaley@dailyemerald.com.

LTD routes undergo changes in response to decreased budget

■ University students who rely on the bus may need to find new routes now that the Lane Transit District has made significant schedule changes

Students who rely on Lane Transit District for summer transportation may have trouble finding a bus schedule to fit their needs.

Spokesman Andy Vobora said LTD cuts frequency every summer because many bus riders are students. This year, however,

changes usually saved for September will take effect this month.

"We also made more substantial changes because of budgetary concerns," Vobora said. Below is a list of major changes effective June 16:

- Service to 4J schools, the University and LCC has been adjusted to reflect the reduced demand during the summer months.

- Weekend final departure times from the Eugene Station have been changed. The last bus will leave the Eugene Station

- at 10:40 p.m. on Saturdays and 7:30 p.m. on Sundays.

- Route 11 Thurston will operate every 15 minutes on weekdays until 5:30 p.m. and then every 30 minutes until 11:40 p.m.

- The Breeze will operate every 15 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on weekday evenings and Saturdays.

- Route 62 VRC/Oakway Center has been eliminated.

- Route 27 Fairmount and 33 Jefferson no longer will operate on Sundays.

- Because of summer activities at the Lane County Fairgrounds, there is a temporary Park & Ride site for riders of Routes 75X Sacred Heart and 7 UO/Westmoreland. The Park & Ride will move to the west parking lot of the Faith Center, located at 13th Avenue and Taylor Street, and will return to the fairgrounds on Sunday, Sept. 22.

Schedule changes can be found in the Rider's Digest or online at <http://www.ltd.org>.

— Jan Montry