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# NEWS

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## The BUZZ on campus

Representatives from the University's Yellow Jackets Volunteer Program will begin recruiting new members in the fall

By Jillian Daley  
 Oregon Daily Emerald

They won't sting you. These Yellow Jackets are actually here to help.

The University's Yellow Jackets Volunteer Program, an assault prevention group made of students, faculty and staff, will begin recruiting in the fall during Week of Welcome.

The program began in the middle of spring term after a rash of assaults against female students occurred around campus.

Volunteers patrol campus in pairs, equipped with flashlights, radios and their signature yellow coats. The program's participants and creators agreed to the policy that volunteers are not meant to intervene during a crisis situation, they are meant to be the eyes and ears of the University.

Director of Public Safety Tom Fitzpatrick of the Department of Public Safety said that the idea was based on that of a neighborhood watch, and that the mere presence of uniformed patrollers might be enough to help deter future attacks on students. DPS, along with the LGBTQA, and Alpha Phi Omega, a service organization, were some of the groups instrumental in jumpstarting the program, Vice President for Student Affairs Anne Leavitt said.

Fitzpatrick added that budget constraints prevented DPS from hiring more officers.

Some said the Yellow Jackets program might be a better alternative.

"I just feel the campus community would be better served by preventative measures rather than policing measures," University student Shane Cuddihy told the Emerald on March 12.

The Yellow Jackets serve a different purpose.

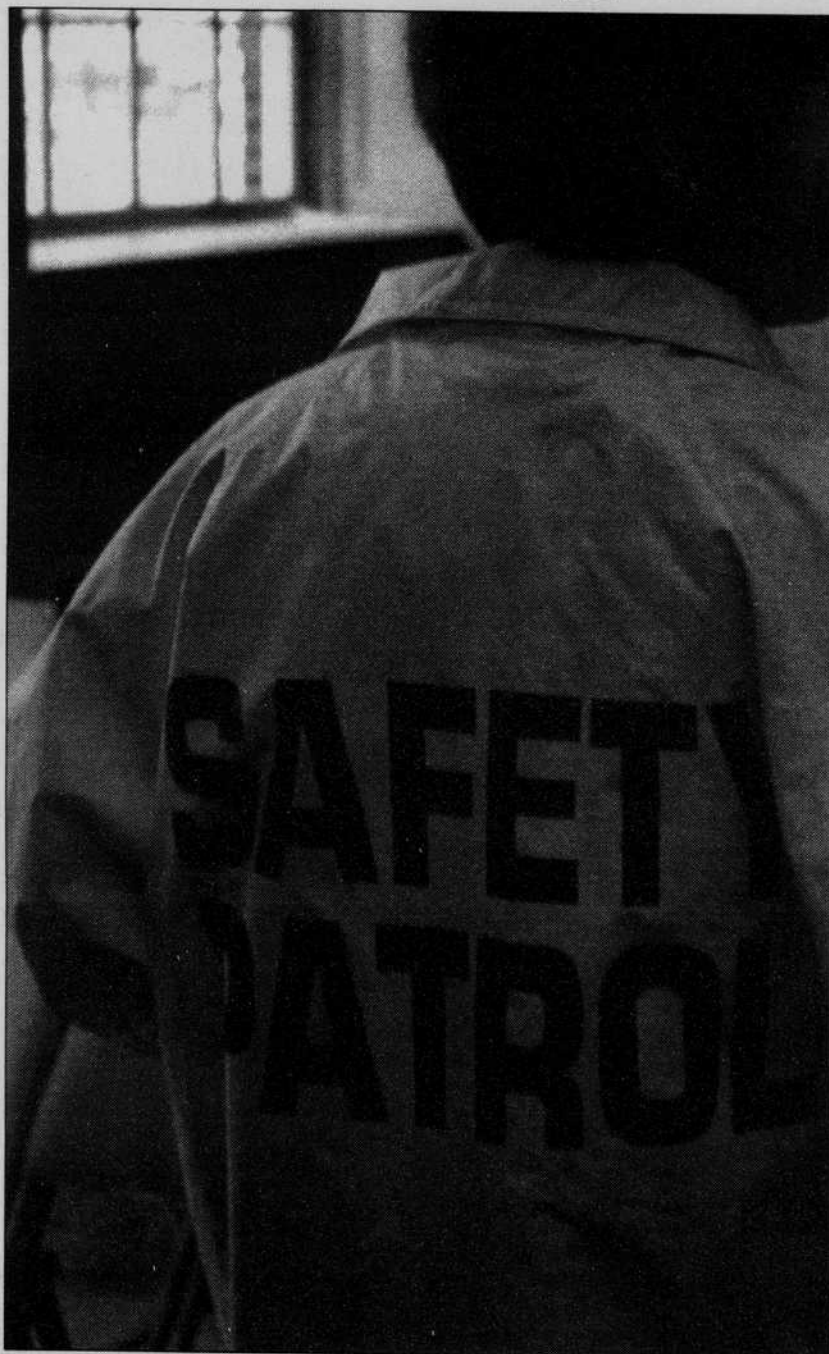
"We look for any suspicious activity," Yellow Jackets student coordinator Meghan Madden said. "We also escort students on campus or if people are alone they can walk up and ask for an escort."

Madden said their bright uniform attracted a few jeers while the pairs went out on their shifts, but overall people have been grateful for their presence, and support the program.

Madden added that, in spring term the program could not fill all the time slots, so volunteers had to do double shifts. About a dozen people helped kick off the program, but it was around 25 strong by the end of spring term, she said. Madden said the small turnout was probably because of timing.

She hopes that by the beginning of fall term the group will have an easier time recruiting people. Madden said getting 100 people involved is the goal.

Night Ride, the co-ed version of Saferide (a women-only assault prevention service) which began this summer, offers another means of keeping students safe. The group's existence began in response to complaints of violations of the 1972 Title IX Higher Education Acts this



Adam Jones Emerald

After a short break, the infamous Yellow Jackets have returned to patrol campus.

past year. Title IX stipulates that women and men should have equal access to services. Night Ride is aimed primarily at the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and minority population, as these groups are often

victims of hate crimes.

Night Ride will also be recruiting volunteers for the fall.

Contact the reporter at [jilliandaley@dailyemerald.com](mailto:jilliandaley@dailyemerald.com).

## Officials to inspect Autzen's sprinklers

Eugene Fire Marshal Mike Thrapp says the investigations could start as early as today and could take about a week to complete

By Brad Schmidt  
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Preliminary investigations into allegations of faulty sprinkler installation during the Autzen Stadium expansion could begin as early as today, Eugene Fire Marshal Mike Thrapp said.

After being invited to meet with contractors, subcontractors, city inspectors and University officials Wednesday to form a "methodology everyone agreed on," Thrapp said the fire department will conduct random inspections — which will include areas throughout the entire project as well as those alleged to be in violation — in order to produce an adequate test sample.

"We're treating this as a partnership," Thrapp said of the relationship between the University and the fire department. "I do the enforcement and they want assurances it's right."

The sampling process could take about a week, Thrapp said, adding that it may take longer.

All dates remain speculative, however. Ultimately, Thrapp said, the investigation will be completed "when (he's) done."

In the meantime, fire officials will continue to monitor the ongoing construction at Autzen Stadium. Determining if changes are necessary will take place as each allegation is investigated, Thrapp said.

"Right away, you're going to start to realize what your failures are and your successes," he said. "I'm going to be taking note to see whether (the allegations) are true or not."

If inspectors find that additional work is required, such changes likely would not delay the stadium's Aug. 31 reopening.

Thrapp said he hadn't anticipated beginning such an inquiry until next week, but added that Cosco Fire Protection, the subcontractor installing the sprinkler system, is eager to begin inspections immediately.

"To me, this is actually moving faster than normal, considering the magnitude of this project," Thrapp said. "I actually anticipated starting next week."

It is not yet possible to conclude where the financial ramifications and placement of responsibility will fall, even if Cosco is found to be at fault.

"Usually, outcomes are determined long after I'm out of the picture," Thrapp said.

The allegations — which include improper sprinkler pipe installation and inappropriate craftsmanship — were first made public Friday when an anonymous letter was sent to city officials and local media.

The Emerald provided Thrapp with the locations of improperly hung

## Group to hold how-to seminar for skeptics

Faculty members from the Center for Inquiry Institute are holding a workshop in hopes of dispelling current fads about the paranormal

By Brad Schmidt  
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Beginning today, a handful of faculty from the Center for Inquiry Institute will convene at the University with doubters of the supernatural hoping to dispel current fads about the paranormal and to discuss better communication techniques for their skeptical beliefs.

The seminar, expected to draw about 60 people, is titled "The Skeptic's Toolbox."

"This workshop is a how-to for skeptics," Institute Director Austin Dacey said. "It's a hands-on course in skepticism."

Running through Sunday, the seminar will help participants investigate extraordinary

claims through the use of reason and evidence, Dacey said.

"We believe that normal explanations need to be ruled out before others are examined," Oregon Health & Science University clinical psychologist Loren Pankratz said.

First, participants will learn the basics of skepticism. The focus will then shift to helping skeptics find better ways to explain their views to the public and media.

"It will give you new debating techniques (to use) on believers of the paranormal," Dacey said.

The event isn't intended to be a rigorous academic seminar. Dacey said participants will do a host of activities such as role playing and added that the atmosphere should be fun.

"We have a lot of the same people who keep coming back again and again," said University professor Ray Hyman, who has been running the annual seminar since 1992.

This year, Hyman has shifted the focus of seminar to presentation. Many skeptics, he said, possess rude and confrontational traits and don't know how to argue their feelings appropriately.

"We try to teach them to focus on the issue and not the person," Hyman said.

No undergraduate credit will be given for participation in the seminar, but three credits can be earned toward a certificate of proficiency from the CFI Institute — a nonprofit organization that defends reason and scientific inquiry. The cost of the seminar is \$198 per person for CFI credit and \$149 without. Food and housing will also be provided at rates of \$215 for a single room and \$195 for a double.

"It's open to all," Dacey said. "You don't have to be of a particular mindset to participate."

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