

Residence hall life for a new millennium

Resident assistants help keep students educated, informed and entertained with events like 'Guess the Straight RA'

Alexander Tam
Freelance Reporter

The residence halls are packed once again for a new school year, bringing a diversity of incoming students. And that means another busy year for resident assistants, whose work it is to help new students adjust to college and life in the residence halls.

RAs reach out to students by organizing various social and educational activities and events. Events include movie nights, pizza parties and football game parties.

One of the year's key events was "Guess the Straight RA." On Wednesday, about 120 students attended to speculate about the sexual orientation of six RAs. Students asked questions about the RAs' personal lives, ranging from sexual topics to the CDs they had in their cars. Later, they had the opportunity to discuss the issue with the panel.

"The lesson to be learned is that you should not judge a (person's sexual orientation) by their appearance

or what their interests are," RA Nicole Haskell said.

According to Residence Life programming Assistant Director Jim Bajczyk, events like this are just one aspect of the main objective: to inform and educate students. Bajczyk said the events are also an important opportunity for residents to socialize, meet new people and enjoy campus life. The general feedback from students about the recently-offered social activities has been strongly positive, Bajczyk said.

When an off-campus riot occurred last month, RAs and University Housing decided to respond by organizing additional activities for students during the following weekend, he added.

"We are going to do everything we can on campus to keep students here and keep them involved," Bajczyk said. He added that residents in each hall can choose the activities they would like to have. Skiing, hiking trips and massage demonstrations are some of the many options that have been previously organized based on student ideas, he said.

"The residents need to know we have the money," he said. "We have the ability to do programs they want. We just need the ideas."

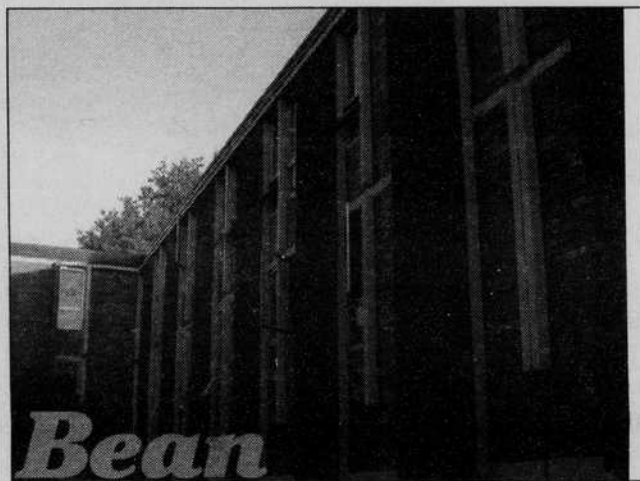
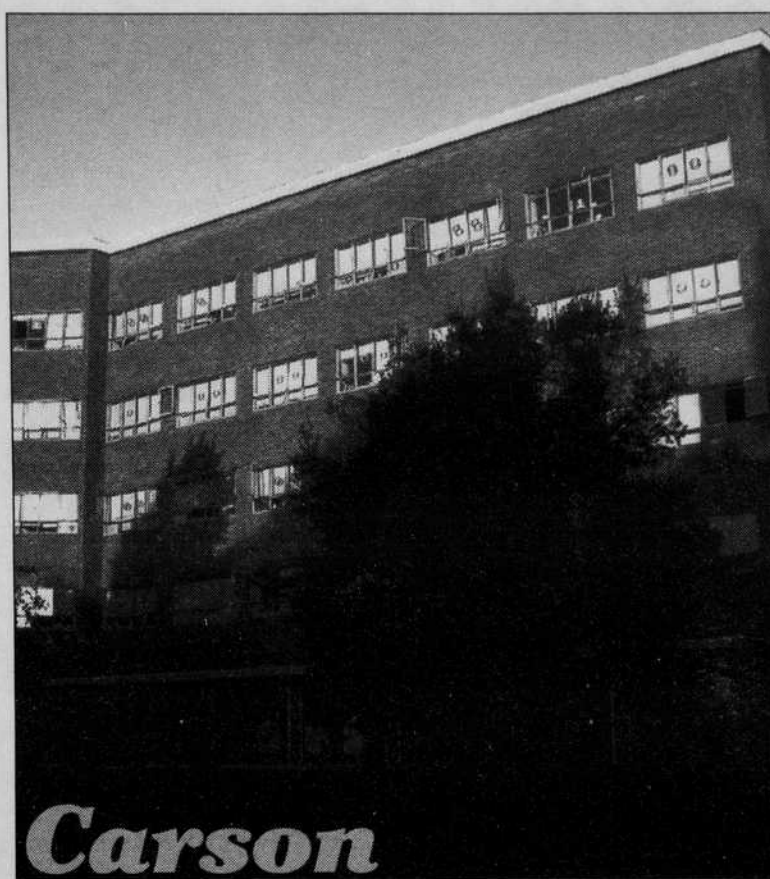
Throughout the course of the school year, resident assistants and complex directors will plan as many as three events each week for their complexes. Bajczyk said there is more emphasis this year on better-attended, quality programming, as opposed to previous years, when there would be many activities but few students who would attend.

Bajczyk said resident assistants are required to do a certain amount of social and educational activities each term. The beginning of the year will primarily focus on getting students to build relationships in their individual halls. As the year progresses, the programs will become more educational as residents develop a level of comfort with each other to share personal experiences.

"We want (students) to get to know each other, interact with each other, and with events like 'Guess the Straight RA,' we want to educate them and encourage tolerance with each other," Moore Hall RA Lisa Larkin said.

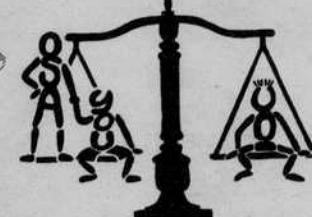
A calendar for the planned events will be available online in November.

Alexander Tam is a freelance writer for the Emerald.



Need a Hand ?
with University related problems ?

Student Conduct Code
Faculty Misconduct
University Housing
Grade Disputes
Discrimination



Office of Student Advocacy

FREE Advice and Representation

346-3722
EMU, Room 334

OSA is an ASUO program funded by your incidental fee

EAT. LAUGH. PRAY.
(repeat as needed)

Discover the meaning of life through Christ
St. Thomas More Newman Center...
Catholic Campus Ministry
1850 Emerald Street (across from Hayward Field)

Mass Schedule: Sat. 5:00 pm & Sun. 9:00 am, 11:00 am, 7:30 pm (Student)

Phone: 346-4468
<http://www.newmanctr-uoregon.org>
e-mail: newman@newmanctr-uoregon.org

Social Connections	Faith Community	Societal Commitment
• Coffee Houses	• Meaningful Retreats	• Social Service Projects
• Progressive Dinners	• Engaging Masses	• Charity Fund Raisers
• Sports Events	• Guest Speakers	• Alternative Spring Break



Give Me Five!

Run your for sale item in the ODE classifieds for five days (items under \$1,000) ... if you don't sell it, we'll run it **5 more days for free!**