

Oregon Daily Emerald

Lane County Fair is coming Page 5

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SINCE 1900 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON EUGENE, OREGON

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'Carelessness' caused Theta Chi fire, EFD says

Fraternity members, now without a home, contest a faulty electrical system produced Monday's blaze

By Jared Paben
Freelance Reporter

Fourteen members of the University's Theta Chi fraternity have been forced to find new homes after a blaze tore through the top two floors of their 78-year-old fraternity house Monday night.

The Eugene Fire Department ordered residents to vacate the house — effective immediately — due to extensive smoke damage, chapter president Dustin Funes said. Even though the house suffered structural damage only to its second and third floors, the smoke damage poses a direct hazard to people, he added.

Despite EFD's order to vacate, Funes

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Tuesday: Unexplained fire burns Theta Chi
Today: Fraternity house prepares to repair damage, meet University standards

said a housing crisis likely won't happen. The University has offered emergency boarding in the residence halls to affected residents; Funes said he didn't think any members have accepted, however. Instead, most have moved in with friends or girlfriends until the house can be repaired, he said.

Just exactly when that will be, Funes didn't know. He said the insurance company will evaluate the damage and determine if and how much it will pay to repair it. Funes said he likely won't know for about a week when the house will be repaired.

Despite that uncertainty, Funes held high hopes that Theta Chi members will be able to use the house by the start of the school year. He said once the smoke damage is repaired, members will be able to use 80 percent of the rooms, which should be more than enough to accommodate their needs during the school year.

Former residents wandered through the building's second and third stories on Tuesday afternoon, examining the damage's extent for themselves. Fraternity members and fire department officials seemed to agree about the fire's movement and effects.

The blaze started on the third floor sun deck on the east side of the building. The flames eventually engulfed two third-story



Jessica Waters Emerald

The Theta Chi fire dropped fiery material into this second story room, setting the room ablaze and causing extensive damage.

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City police look into sex crime allegations

EPD is investigating two of its own officers for unrelated contentions of inappropriate sexual behavior while the policemen were on duty

By A. Sho Ikeda
Reporter

A Eugene Police Department officer was jailed Tuesday on allegations that he — while on duty and in uniform — pressured four women into providing sexual favors, and a second EPD officer is also under investigation for an unrelated allegation of sexual misbehavior, police officials said.

The Lane County grand jury returned an indictment for Officer Juan Francisco Lara, 29, on Tuesday morning with two counts of second-degree sex abuse, one count of public indecency and third-degree sex abuse, and three counts of coercion and first-degree official misconduct.

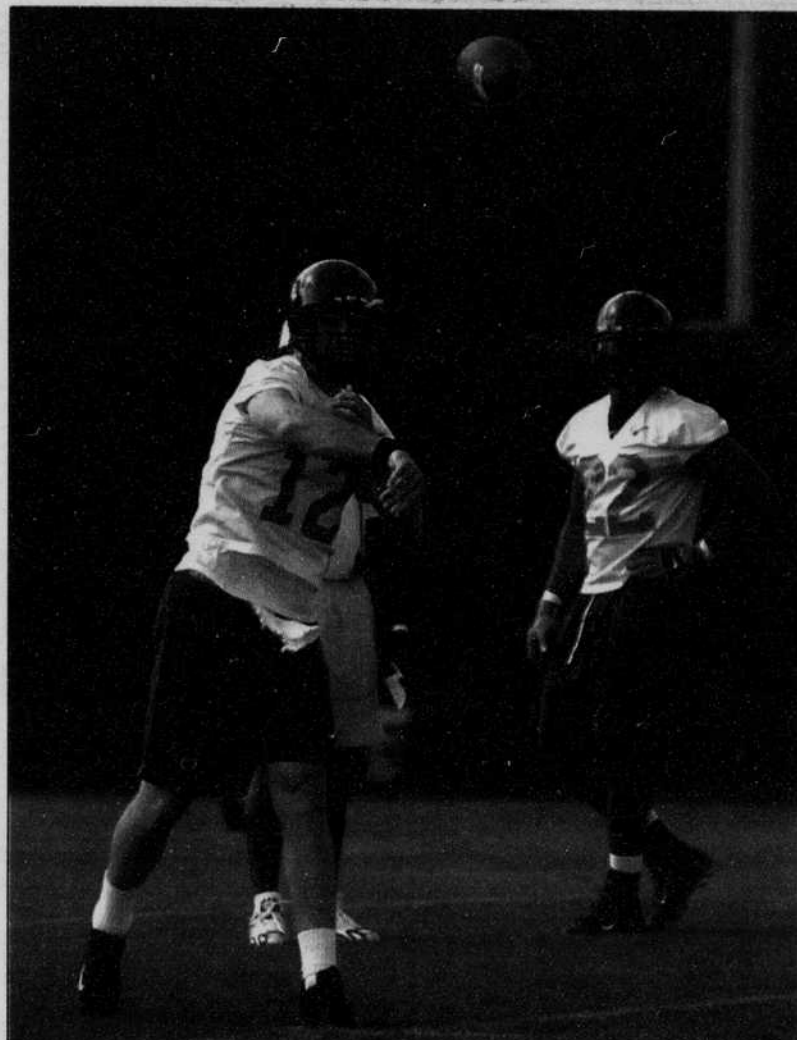
Lara, an officer with EPD since January 2000, was arrested at his home on Tuesday afternoon and was released from the Lane County Jail on \$250,000 bail.

The second officer, Roger Eugene Magana, 40, has not been charged with any crime and is an eight-year veteran of the EPD, department officials said.

"This is a dark day for the Eugene Police Department and the community we have sworn to serve," interim police department Chief Thad Buchanan said at a news conference. "Every police officer is harshly impacted when one of our own violates public trust, casting the shadow of suspicion over the rest of us."

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Q&A TIME



Jessica Waters Emerald

Quarterback Jason Fife takes a snap in Wednesday's practice as tailback Chris Vincent (22) looks on. Fife and Kellen Clemens will compete for the starting quarterback spot.

As fall football camp begins, questions remain for the team looking to reestablish itself after last season's 7-6 record

By Jesse Thomas
Sports Editor

As the Oregon football team headed to the practice field Wednesday afternoon for the first day of fall football camp, mixed aromas of uncertainty and success loomed in the air for a team that still needs answers.

At the beginning of Oregon football's 108th of season, questions of who will take the quarterback position, whether the defensive line will match the hype, and whether the Ducks have mentally recovered from 2002's 1-6 finish all remain unanswered.

"Until we improve, I think we have question marks in a lot of places," Oregon football head coach Mike Bellotti said in a press conference Tuesday. "And I say that because when you lose your returning tailback, returning tight end — until somebody steps up and proves that they're the person, we're going to ask 'Who is that?'"

So will Jason Fife or Kellen Clemens take the lead?

Both quarterbacks will be competing for the starting position throughout fall camp and into the season, and Bellotti is unsure when the position will be determined.

"I don't have a timetable for that," Bellotti said. "Right now I feel like Jason Fife and Kellen Clemens are equal, and we will give them equal opportunities with the first team and second team. It may be some time in fall camp, it may be the first game, it might not be decided until mid-season. And it may be a system that allows us to play two quarterbacks on some type of regular basis."

Fife and Clemens call each other friends and competitors, but Fife seems more concerned with the welfare of the team and its redemption.

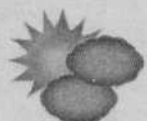
"Last season left a really bad taste in our mouth; the bowl game left a bad taste in a lot of people's mouths on this team," Fife said. "We don't care what anybody's saying about us anymore, we just want to go out there and kick ass like we used to."

The majority of Oregon's questions sit on the offensive side, however. With losses of Onterio Smith and Allan Amundson, the tailback spot is still wide open.

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University officials
comply with new
federal standards