

A SAFE WAY TO DRINK

EMU Pub Nights
bring alcohol into the open



There are house parties and there are bars littered around the University of Oregon, but for once there is an environment in which drinking responsibly is promoted on campus. Every week, on Thursday nights, "Pub Night" will be held at the Erb Memorial Union with emphasis on limiting consumption and having a good time. It is an event that will incorporate underage and of age students, creating an all-encompassing atmosphere.

Allen Faigin is the director of EMU Food Services and supports the event that began this past spring.

"I think this will be an opportunity to model responsible behavior on campus," he says.

Faigin doesn't foresee any problems with Pub Night because of its three-beer limit and serving of non-alcoholic drinks. In addition to Bud Light and other lighter, less expensive microbrews, this Thursday, Oct. 4, the event will serve Oakshire and a draft from Falling Sky Brewing, as well as bottles of local wine and coffee and tea. The selection of drafts

and wines will vary each week.

"We are fine with them coming in and grabbing a mocha," Faigin says of nondrinkers. "There is no need for them to have a [alcoholic] drink."

In creating such an atmosphere, Pub Night differs from college students going to bars and house parties, where limits on consumption vary and are often in students' hands.

Marci Torres, director of Healthy Oregon, echoes Faigin's stance on the EMU's safely structured event. She stresses the importance of having an environment that isn't focused solely on alcohol.

"We have music and other activities," she says. "There is the opportunity to play pool for free. It just gives people the opportunity to stay on campus."

The event serves food as well, which, Torres says, helps safely complement any alcohol consumption. Safe Ride is also available as a form of transportation from the event if people feel they are too intoxicated to drive home.

"Even after having one or two drinks, if it is proving to be

too much for them they have a safe way home," Torres says.

Torres says people 21 and older will have a wristband to show their legality, and a system will be implemented to track how many drinks they consume in order to make sure the drink limit is not surpassed. In addition, the event's staff has gone through liquor control training, learning what behavior to look for and to prepare for people who drink before attending.

This Thursday's Pub Night will be the fall's first, and given its growing popularity during last spring's trial, Faigin, Torres and their colleagues are hopeful it will continue to be a big hit on campus among faculty and staff and, more importantly, draw students away from venues with bottomless alcohol and unsafe practices.

"The whole point is to promote responsible drinking," Torres says, "to show that you can have a good time drinking in moderation ... while having other options to be involved on campus without having to go out into the neighborhood."

— Nick Poust



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