

Program helps victims recoup losses

By GARY NORRIS
Of the Emerald

Geoffrey Alpert, a former University sociology and political economy professor, will head Lane County's newly formed Victim Assistance program to aid victims and witnesses of major crimes, District Attorney Pat Horton announced Thursday.

Alpert, 29, has done extensive work with corrections institutions and served as Director of Research for then Gov. Jimmy Carter's Georgia administration.

Although he will be doing other work for the District Attorney's office, Alpert said the

Victim Assistance program will be his most important job.

"A forgotten segment of the criminal justice system is the victim," Alpert said, "We don't really know much about them or what they want."

Alpert said some crime victims have been reluctant to cooperate with prosecutors in the past "because they got nothing out of it and were ridiculed by defense attorneys."

"Why should a victim bother (to testify) if there are no benefits?" Alpert asked. "There are rewards with this program. They can get back what they lost."

The Victim Assistance program won't focus on any specific target group, according to Alpert. He said anyone who is the victim of a crime may be eligible for benefits under the new law, Oregon HB 2278, and he plans to mount a public information campaign to outline the program's services.

A goal of the Victim Assistance program is early return of stolen property. Police departments sometimes keep stolen goods longer than the thieves, according to Horton. He said substituting photos for evidence in court could help speed the return of property to owners.

"This will eventually result in cleaning out

the evidence lockers," Horton said. "We recently found some evidence that had been there since 1956."

Other program goals include:

- Restitution payments to victims of assault or theft. The new law allows benefits of up to \$23,000 in some cases, according to Alpert. Families of deceased victims may also be eligible for benefits.

- Transportation to and from court for the old and daycare service for parents appearing in court.

- Implementing new legislation to pay hospital bills of victims who have been assaulted.

All my children

By GLEN OZONWOOD

doesn't seem that exciting somehow, but maybe it's just what Erica needed.

Back in Pine Valley (where all roads lead), Ray's been having a tough time of it. Since he got canned at The Chateau his finances are in sorry shape. Now that the Martins aren't planning on giving him any dough, his prospects aren't looking too good either. The other day he stopped by the Martins' to see what they had to steal. Joe and Ruth fooled him and stayed home, so he broke into the Tuckers' instead.

All he got for his trouble was a hundred bucks, but he got to watch Ruth get undressed for bed. She shouldn't have been undressing by the window anyway (maybe she gets her kicks by showing off), but in the process Ray saw her diamond necklace. He's really convinced now that the Martins have a lot of dough.

Of course, Ruth is telling herself that Ray's left town and she won't have to deal with him again. But, he's still pretty pissed about not getting any dough for Tad, and besides, a character on this show can't just disappear and leave everything groovy.

And speaking of the Martins (they really dominated the tube

this week), Danny's a little confused. He's squiring Devon around, but yesterday he ran into Brooke at school. She's concerned that she can't use Danny like she used to and she's trying to get him interested again. It hasn't worked yet, but Danny boy is starting to think about the times they spent together. With no one around to pet and stroke him, he's getting lonely.

But, Brooke hasn't let her setbacks with Danny stop her. She's

reaching an understanding (wink, wink) with Tom Cudihy and Wednesday she went to work at The Goalpost. See, with Erica out of it for awhile, the restaurant needed a new hostess. Brooke's trying the job temporarily.

Across town, the young Tylers are really having their problems. Donna quit going to the shrink and Chuck called Estelle for help. She talked Donna into going back and it was an interesting session.

Remember, Donna's not handling the news she's sterile very well and Dr. Polk (her shrink) is trying to help her. During their last session they started talking about Donna's dad. He started making improper advances toward her when she was 13 and Donna's so ashamed of it. Anyway, she screamed a little, flashed back a little and sobbed a little. In the end, she was just as crazy as when she went in. It's going to be a long, hard fight, Dr. Polk.



Ol' Ray wasn't content with just being sleazy, he had to be dishonest too. I mean, we're all a little bit dishonest when it comes right down to it, but Ray broke into the Tucker's (they live next to the Martins) and lifted a hundred bucks. Not an acceptable mode of social interaction anywhere. But, more about that later. First, off to New York.

Erica's looking real bad. Mona and Nick are in the hospital giving what comfort they can. Thursday, Nick made the supreme sacrifice and proposed to Erica. Seems she had lost the will to live and Nick was trying to give her a reason to go on. The thought of spending forever with Nick

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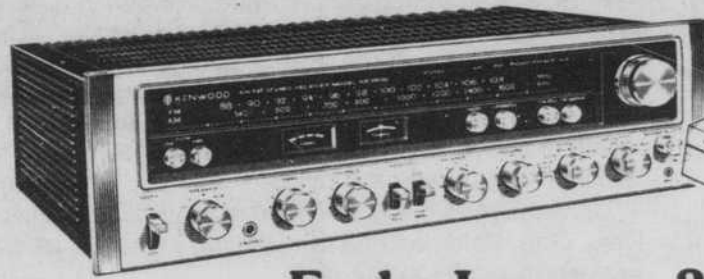
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