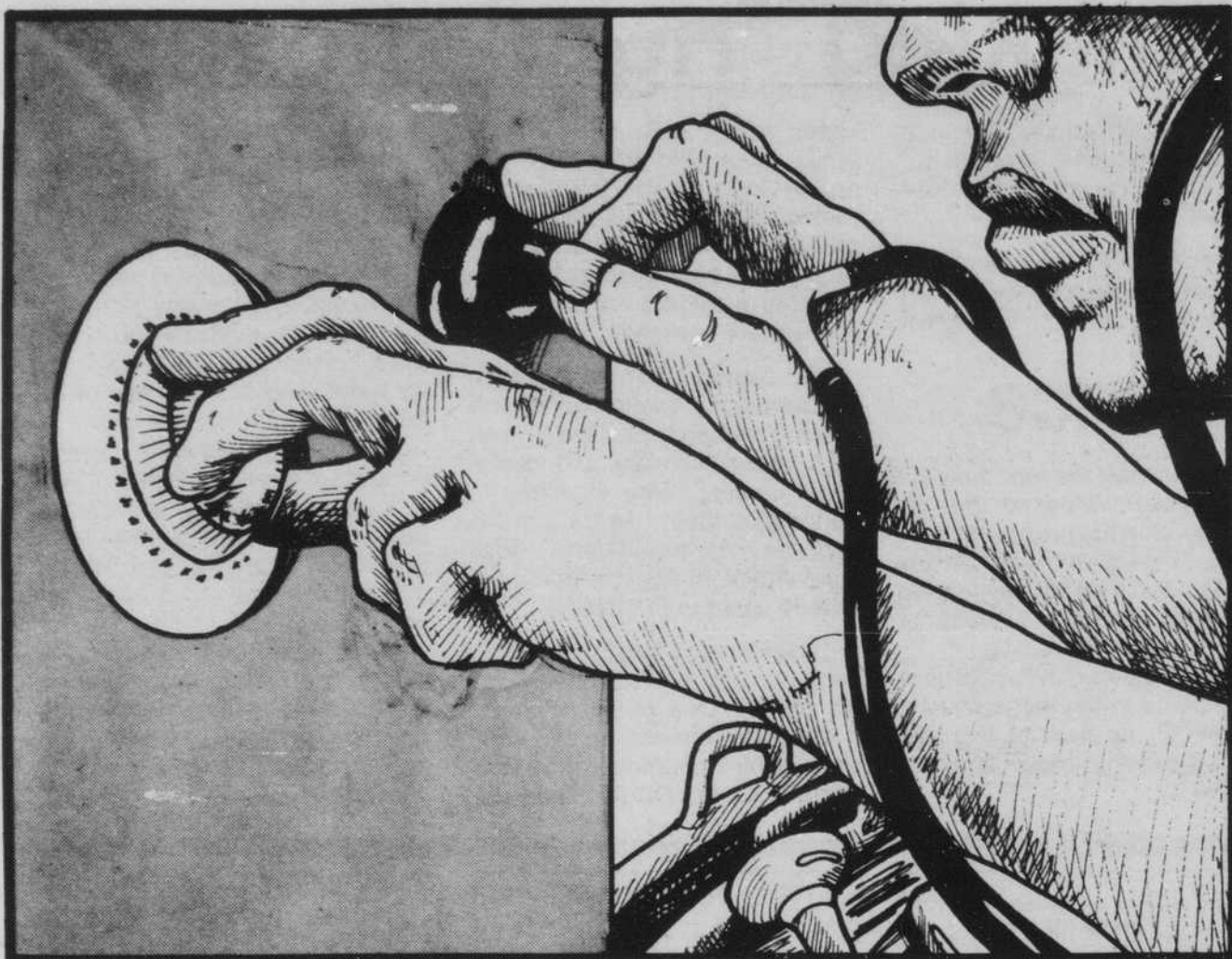




Burglary

University area hit more often

By KRIS BANVARD
Of the Emerald

One need not bar the door, bolt the sash and hire a watch dog to guard the house, but it might be wise to check the lock on that front door.

People who live near the University have twice the chance of being burglarized than the typical Eugenean, according to figures compiled by Pam Richmond of the police department's Crime Prevention Unit (CPU).

In 1977, 21.5 percent of Eugene's 1,235 reported residential burglaries occurred within about a mile of the University — in the area bounded by 30th Avenue on the South, Pearl Street on the west, the Willamette River on the north and Augusta Street on the east.

This means University students may not be immediately clear, but the figures do say that neighborhoods making up about a tenth of the city's area account for a fifth of its home burglary reports.

But statistics don't reveal, however, how many people live on that tenth of the city's land, and therefore, what the actual burglary rate is. And they don't say whether students are burglarized more often than other people.

Police stats may not say that a student stands "more chance of being burglarized than does the average Eugene resident." They do indicate, however, the people who live near the University stand a somewhat greater chance.

Where statistics fail, though, observation enters.

According to Richmond, students are more prone to burglary because "they move around a lot, keep odd hours and are usually not interested in security because they don't own the places where they live."

Younger people in general have the "it won't happen to me" attitude.

Fighting burglary is largely a matter of preventing it, Richmond says.

The CPU recommends little in the way of fancy alarms or barred window grates. It does emphasize the importance of having a decent lock and of marking valuables with drivers' license numbers.

The unit will loan an electric engraver to persons interested in marking their possessions. If marked goods are stolen and recovered, police can find the owners instantly by punching the inscribed drivers' license numbers into a computer.

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Marking belongs under this so-called "Project Identification" also deters burglary, since marked items are more difficult to sell on the black market.

"Recovery rates are very low," Richmond warns, but with project ID, "you're at least giving yourself a chance to get your property back."

In the way of door locks, the police recommend having a one-inch deadbolt lock with a tapered cylinder guard, to make it hard for someone to yank the entire lock from the door with a wrench.

Richmond estimates such locks start at about \$15 in most stores. "Given the opportunity, any lock can be defeated," Richmond says. "It's just a matter of making it not worth the burglar's time."

For people who aren't sure what kind of security they want, the CPU gives free home-security checks to show them how they can make their homes more secure.

"We always consider how much they want to spend on security before we recommend anything," Richmond says.

In addition to being transient, students leave their neighborhoods in droves during each quarter break, and leave themselves open to burglary. A burglar, knowing that a house or apartment will be vacant for a week, has more time to select his method of entry and to clean the place out.

Richmond says the best way to ward off burglars while on vacation is to make the premises look lived-in. Lights, particularly outside lights, should be left on. The CPU recommends having an electric or sun-sensitive timer that turns lights on and off regularly.

Burglars watch for patterns, Richmond says. Leaving a light on for an entire week may be better than nothing, but if burglars suddenly notice someone keeps their lights on all night, they might get suspicious.

"Some people even connect electric timers to a radio talk station, to make it sound like people are home," Richmond says.

In some cities, police will increase the number of times they patrol a neighborhood on request. Because of a shortage of patrol officers, Eugene is not able to do that.

Richmond thinks friends and neighbors can keep a better watch anyway.

"They should know what's going on — you can't expect a police officer to recognize everyone who looks like a stranger."

Besides, neighbors can pick up the mail or newspapers, or even mow the lawn — whatever it takes to make it look like somebody's home.

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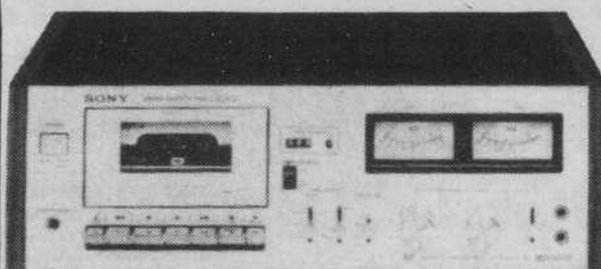
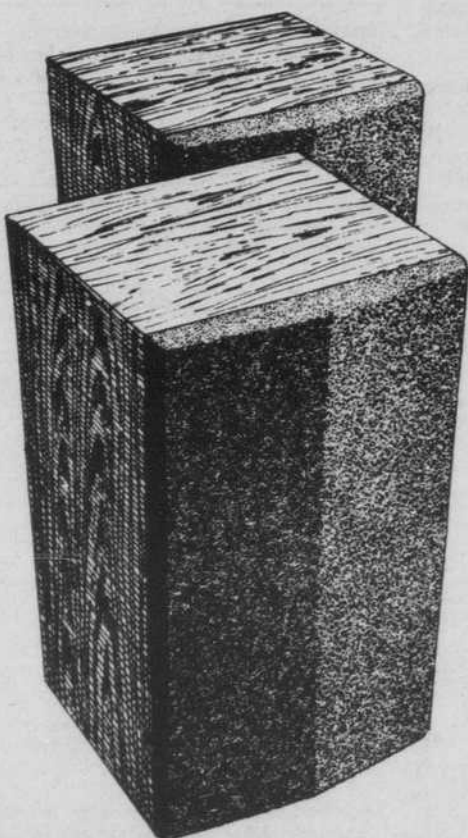
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