

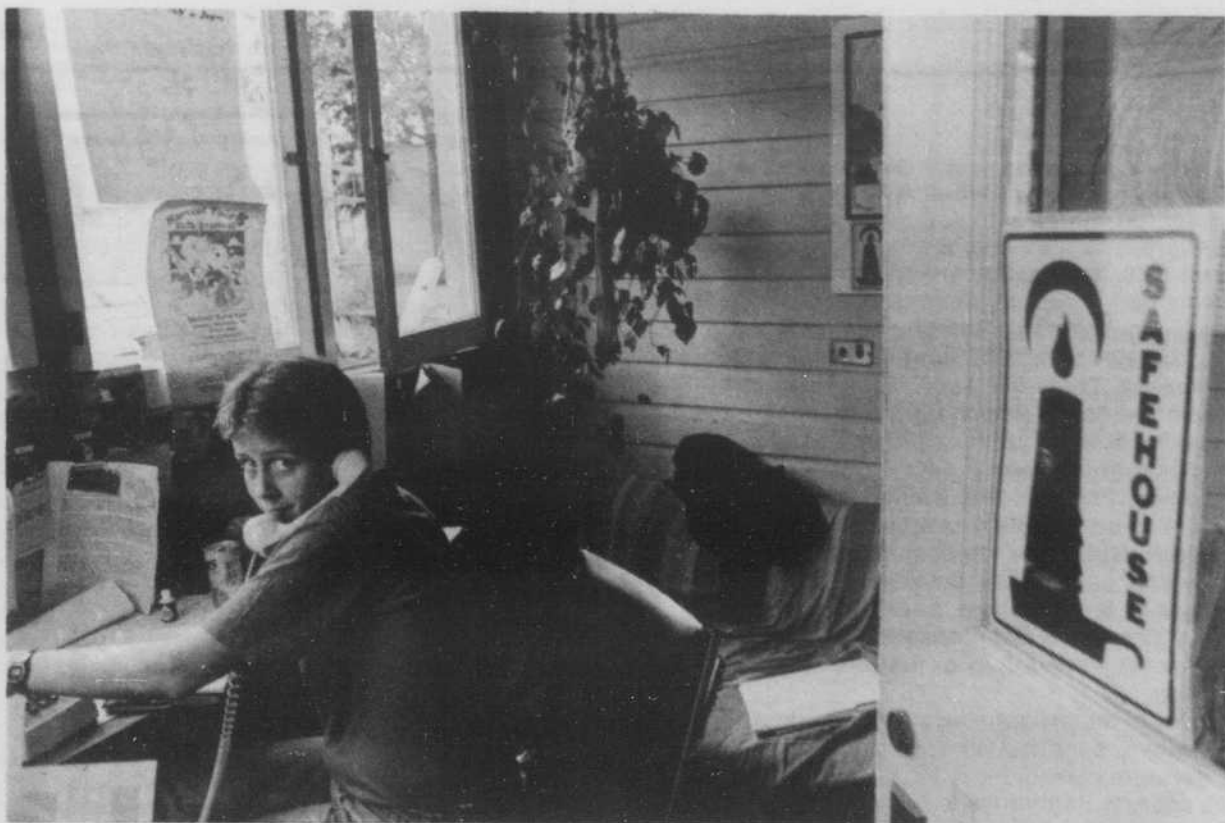


Photo by Dave Rodewald

The west University neighborhood is introducing the 'Safehouse' part of its crime prevention program.

Campus neighborhood begins new crime prevention program

By David Brown
Of the Emerald

"Fire!" shouted twenty women in a basement room of Sacred Heart Hospital.

"The janitors just about freaked out because they didn't know that this is part of the class," says Charlean Maclean, crime prevention coordinator for the West University Neighbors.

"They all came running in. 'What is it! What is it!'"

It was "voice projection" practice, part of a class designed to educate women on rape prevention.

Cries of "help" or "rape" might draw apathy or fear from bystanders. "But fire, most people just automatically respond to in a positive way," Maclean explains.

The class is part of the West University Neighbors' crime prevention program.

In a high density neighborhood where the population fluctuates from 4,000 to 7,000 students every year, crime prevention can present problems, Maclean says.

Lack of community organization — neighborhoodness — coupled with the finding that "most violent crimes happen to or are committed by persons of 15 to 29 years of age," produces a high crime area, Maclean says.

But the West University Neighbors have banded together to prevent their neighborhood from becoming a high crime area.

They have developed a prevention program which has claimed some successes over the past four years in an area that abuts the University. The neighborhood extends nine blocks from Kincaid Street to Willamette Street and ten blocks from East Broadway to East 19th Avenue.

The crime prevention program offers installation of dead-bolt locks — the only charge is for the price of the lock — to residents who arrange a home security check. The check is performed by the Eugene police department's Community Officer Patrol, which promotes crime prevention and community education.

Since the program's inception in 1978, reports of residential burglaries in the west University neighborhood dropped from about 150 to 82 last year. Most of that decrease was in non-forced burglaries.

But west University neighborhood reports of bike, auto and other thefts rose significantly from 628 in 1980 — including 20 auto thefts — to 756 last year — including 31 auto thefts. Police records showed a city-wide decrease of reported thefts during that period to 4,005 in 1981, 192 of which were auto thefts.

"Whenever we can, we set up bike marking booths. And that's free to anybody who wants to have their bike marked. We do that a lot around the University," Maclean says.

The number of bicycle thefts reported in the neighborhood rose from 155 in 1978 to 282 last year.

Burglary and bicycle theft are main concerns, Maclean says, but "rape prevention is still a very important focus of this program." Police records show a city wide increase from 39 reports of rape in 1980 to 46 last year, despite an over-all decrease in crime reported in the city. Meanwhile, reports of rape in the west University neighborhood fell from 11 in 1979 to one 1 last year.

Those numbers, Maclean cautions, represent only a fraction of rapes actually committed.

This year, reported rapes and other sex offenses have decreased on a city wide scale. But that may not be because of a decrease in crime, according to an internal city memo from Police Chief James Packard.

"We do not know if these totals reflect fewer incidents or fewer reports of incidents. We suspect it is the latter. . . ." the memo states.

Actual incidents of rape on a national scale could range from five to 10 times the numbers reported, according to 1980 FBI figures.

The greatest decrease of reported rapes in the west University neighborhood occurred in 1980, the year in which convicted rapist John Paul

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