

Hart supporters set for primary as presidential campaign begins

By Michele Matassa
Of the Emerald

With Oregon's 1984 primary election less than a year away, Eugene and its University community — Democrats and Republicans alike — are loosening up for a long, hard game of politics.

On campus, a group of students supporting Democratic Sen. Gary Hart for president of already getting primed for the primary, scheduled for May 15.

"Friends of Gary Hart," a branch of the national organization supporting the Colorado senator, is going to "concentrate on grass roots campaigning," says Dave Berns, the group's volunteer organizer.

Berns hesitates to use the phrase "grass roots" because it is becoming trite and "in vogue," but he says it works.

The campaign team started its recruitment process in March. By now, 12 "hard-core people" are ready to staff tables, phone potential allies and do "whatever else we come up with," Berns says.

Berns, a senior in political science, says the group is using the student directory to call students whose majors are "politically oriented." The volunteers already have called more than 400 students, he says.

While the students canvass for Hart's political stands and ideas, the campaign is ultimately against Pres. Ronald Reagan, Berns says.

"Reagan's the person we ought to be targeting," he says.

The Democrat who counters Reagan probably will win the general elections, not the Democrat who counters Mondale and Kennedy in the primaries, Berns says.

Too often, Democrats "have a tendency to fight it out among themselves and by the time the election comes around, the voters question what the candidates are all about," he says.

Former Pres. Jimmy Carter and Sen. Ted Kennedy hurt themselves by aiming at each other during the 1980 primary, Berns says.

Despite an aim-and-fire-at-Reagan stance, Hart's campaign will not be a negative one, Berns says.

"What is a negative campaign? Ultimately,

if you are running against a person's issue stance, to me that is really effective. When it gets down to the name-calling and mudslinging, to me that's negative campaigning," he says.

Berns says the race against Reagan should be more issue-oriented.

"There are a lot of issues out there. The reason I like Gary Hart is he's talking issues," he says.

A major focus of the grass roots campaign for Hart will be educating people about his stands on those issues, such as labor, the economy and the military budget.

Because Hart is on the Senate Armed Forces Committee, he has a mistaken reputation as a war "hawk," Berns says.

Contrary to that misnomer, Hart supports an immediate nuclear freeze, opposes Reagan's MX missile proposal and prefers conventional weapons over nuclear weapons, according to Berns.

The campaign workers also will concentrate on getting Hart's name out because he has gotten little publicity in Oregon, Berns says.

"When people sit down and look at Gary Hart, he really could be the candidate of the students in '84," Berns says. Hart supports comparable worth (equal pay for equal work), affirmative action and environmental issues, he says.

He says the group also is trying to "target activeness" and get students involved in the campaign.

It is hard to attract students to a cause on a campus with so many interest areas, Berns says. But he is happy with the response the group has gotten so far.

Berns says he hasn't seen other campus groups organizing in support of presidential candidates but does know of statewide groups being formed for Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, Sen. Alan Cranston, D-Calif., and former Democratic vice-president Walter Mondale.

Speaking of student groups such as Hart's, Berns says, "I don't think it should be (unique) but it is. We've seen three years of an administration that I don't think people are happy with."



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Most students in the program are from Japan and Indonesia, but some come from Central and South America

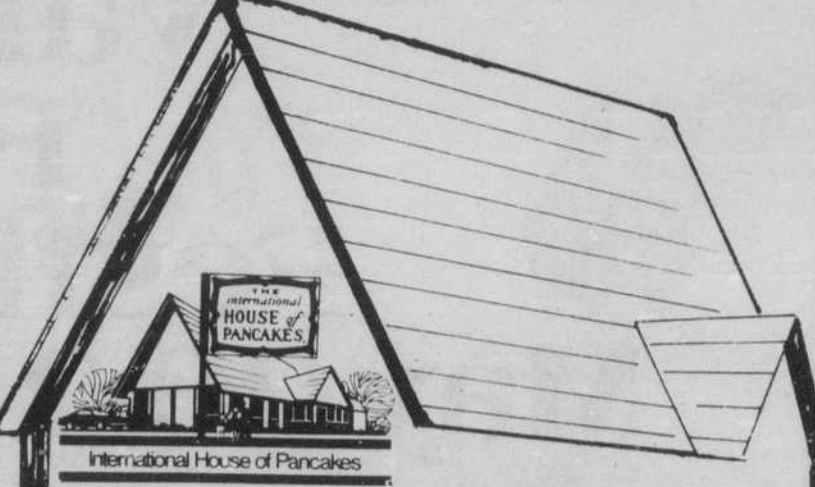
and the Middle East, says Susan Moran, AEI housing coordinator.

Families hosting the live-in students will receive a stipend for room and board. In return, foreign students teach their families about their home countries. Moran says host

families also help their guests adjust to life in Eugene.

Nearly 75 students between the ages of 18 and 25 will enroll in the program this summer, Moran says.

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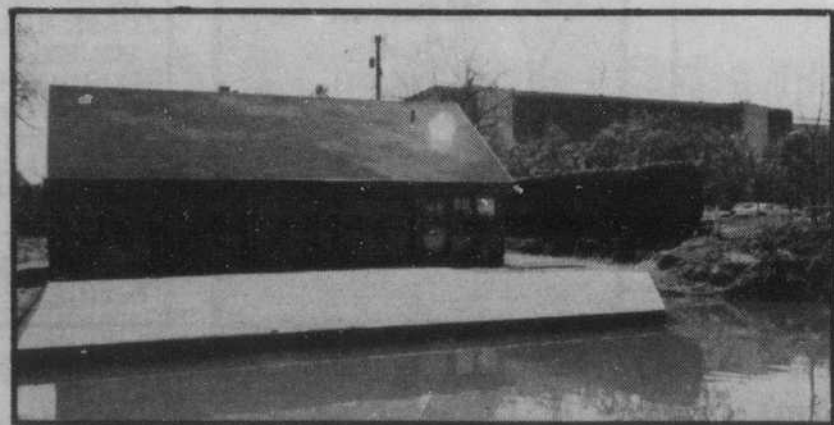
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