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A little imagination brightens a 'dungeon'

By Kim Carlson
Of the Emerald

It's predictable.

On a student budget there just isn't a lot of money to spend redecorating habitats. As long as one has the basic refrigerator, stereo, feather-pillow and dishwasher, what else is there?

That's what many naive students might think until they step into a "Furnished 2 bdrm apt., close to campus, NO PETS."

Suddenly they realize the bright red, stained carpet is just too ghastly to live with. And how can students with books survive without shelves?

Cathy Roth, an interior designer at the Eugene Planing Mill has some ideas for students faced with decorating problems.

First, she recommends sisal (woven) mats to camouflage ugly floors. They are available at most import stores in a variety of sizes.

Also, carpet remnants can be purchased for relatively little money and be used as floor covering also.

Creating a focal point in the room with a large plant can also detract from the floor, she says.

Katherine James, of High Street Interiors advises dwellers to take advantage of brightly colored carpets by using similar bright colors throughout the room. Or, for the more daring decorator, she recommends painting the ceiling to match the floor.

Two department stores, Meier and Frank in the Valley River Center and The Bon Marche in the Downtown Mall both have large selections of bed sheets, which, according to James, make inexpensive furniture covers, curtains and pillows.

By using cord or ribbons to tie

the corners of the cloth to the furniture, students can really alter the entire appearance of "apartment complex furniture," says James.

Shelving material is available at the Eugene Planing Mill, as well as "sounding board" which, when covered with cloth, makes good bulletin boards, says Roth.

James recommends building shelves 14 to 18 inches from the ceiling so they won't take up space, yet can serve two purposes: room for books, plants and other collections as well as wall decorations.

If privacy is a problem, Roth suggests hinging two or three doors together to create a room divider. Conveniently, the Planing Mill has a bargain priced selection of doors, starting at \$7.50 each.

Spray-painted galvanized garbage cans and step ladders can both be creatively used for storage and tables, Roth says.

James advises students with a knack for agriculture to take advantage of plants and baskets when decorating their living spaces.

The Basket Market, on Washington Street has a huge selection of wicker and spray paint available for creative decorators who are looking for a touch of color.

Roth says that wall hangings such as quilts, flags and fabric panels can be hung easily using velcro strips, one portion attached to the cloth and the other attached to a lath.

There isn't an inexpensive cure-all for ugly interior space. However, with a little imagination and some petty cash, students can transform what looks like a dungeon to a modest castle.

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