

A safe haven for veterans

By Mike Sims

Of the Emerald

Steve Tice asserts that there aren't many safe places in America for Vietnam-era veterans — safe in the sense that vets can comfortably learn to accept their war memories and adapt to everyday life.

Tice is team leader at one haven for Vietnam veterans: the Vet Center, a national re-adjustment counseling program. Eugene's Vet Center is located east of campus at 1966 Garden Ave., near the corner of Franklin Boulevard and Villard Street.

Congress created the Vet Center program in 1979 with a commitment to "help without

hassles" by and for Vietnam-era veterans. The program defines a Vietnam-era vet as any person who served in the military between Aug. 4, 1964 (the date of the resolution calling for increased U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia) and May 7, 1975 (one week after South Vietnam fell to Communist forces).

Tice explains that Vietnam veterans can find comfort, counsel and practical assistance in "moving toward a more quality life in America" through Vet Center programs.

"Our primary expertise is in working with combat veterans who are experiencing difficulty in the stress recovery process from having served in combat," Tice says. He adds that the center also serves Vietnam-era non-combat personnel.

In addition, the Vet Center provides referral services re-



Photo by Michael Clapp
Steve Tice and Kim Maynard offer a brotherly welcome and "help without hassles" to Vietnam-era veterans at the Vet Center east of campus.

garding Veterans' Administration benefits and other community resources. Veterans that are entering or returning to college or enrolling in vocational rehabilitation programs can find counseling and advocacy services through the center.

Vets who were exposed to the defoliant known as Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam also can find related information and service referral.

Tice emphasizes that women are very much a part of the Vet Center program, either as war veterans or as partners of veterans. Special support groups and informational seminars are available for both.

Advice and counsel also are available for children, parents and friends of Vietnam veterans. The center offers a variety of group discussion pro-

grams, workshops and seminars; group meetings keep the staff busy four nights a week.

•A veteran's group meeting focusing on understanding the group process, skill building, rap group purpose, intent and dynamics meets each Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

•At the same time on Wednesdays, an introduction group meeting is held with emphasis on inter- and intrapersonal communication and symptoms and effects of Delayed Stress Syndrome.

•Spouses and "significant others" in relationships with veterans meet as an informational and support group Thursdays from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

•An Alcoholics Anonymous group geared toward veterans meets Mondays from 7 p.m. to

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