

# Probe underway on alleged assault

By Julie Shippen  
Of the Emerald

A former University student who claims he was beaten and robbed two weeks ago has hired an attorney to investigate the incident for information supporting a lawsuit.

Eugene police found Rob Seyler, 20, naked, beaten and unconscious in front of a sorority house early Oct. 28, but various officials and Seyler report they are still uncertain of who is responsible for the incident.

Sgt. Chuck Tilby of the Eugene Police Department said officers were dispatched at 6:39 a.m. Sunday morning to the vicinity of 11th Avenue and Hilyard Street, near the Alpha Phi sorority, where they located Seyler and called an ambulance.

According to police reports, Seyler was naked from the waist down, with a jacket laid over his upper body, and there was evidence of assault, including a lump over one eye.

Seyler has various scrapes on his arms and face, which he said were a result of the incident. He said his ankle is sore, that his nose may have been re-broken that evening, and that there are large scrapes elsewhere on his body. "From the looks of my hips, I would say I was drug somewhere," he said.

Seyler also said that doctors told him that he had a concussion and had a blood-alcohol level of 0.38 percent. A police department official said this level is dangerously high, as a 0.4 percent alcohol level is considered "critical" and one beyond that could be "lethal."

In addition, Seyler claims a doctor told him if he had not died from blood-alcohol poisoning, he would have died from hypothermia.

Hospital staff said they could not release medical information pertaining to the case.

Seyler also said his wallet, which contained \$350 in cash, had been stolen that night and he has not seen it or the clothing he was wearing since then.

Seyler was treated at the hospital and then taken to the jail after a routine records check showed a warrant for his arrest, Tilby said. According to police records, Seyler had failed to appear in court after being arrested for possession of stolen property. Tilby was unable to provide the original date of arrest.

Seyler said he was released Monday after proving to court officials that the arrest warrant was invalid due to a clerical error in the case's scheduling.

The last thing Seyler said he remembers before waking up in jail was passing out after drinking heavily in the basement of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity sometime Sunday morning. He said he and a friend had gone to the Beta house around 10:30 p.m. the previous evening following the fraternity's function with the Delta Delta Delta sorority, which had ended by that time.

Seyler also said he was there as an invited guest and that both members and non-members of the fraternity seemed friendly to him throughout the evening.

"I thought I was friends with most everyone in that house, but I don't know anymore," Seyler said.

But members of the fraternity, including Beta house President Blair Thompson, said they are unfamiliar with Seyler in general. "That's the first time

he'd ever been here," Thompson said in an earlier interview.

Seyler, however, said he had gone to the Beta house for similar gatherings on three prior occasions and provided particular names of members who he said were his friends.

In the same interview, Thompson admitted that although he left the house before the incident occurred, various sources had told him that Seyler had been beaten, stripped and urinated on before being abandoned outside the Alpha Phi house, located behind the fraternity, facing Hilyard Street.

Dawn Lynn Nussmeier, president of Alpha Phi, said that no one in the house witnessed the incident. However, police awakened the house mother and informed her.

Nussmeier also said a transient-type person came to the house the following Friday asking about the person he said he'd found last weekend by their house. She said this person claimed he had draped a nearby coat over the person and called the police.

Nussmeier added that she was unaware of anyone in the house being connected with the incident.

Earlier on, Thompson also claimed that persons outside the house were responsible for the episode and that he knew of no one in the house who was involved in it.

"Most of the things that happened to him (Seyler) were not caused by people here," he said. Thompson said that he believes a certain group of individuals is responsible for the incident, and said he has not seen these people since that night.

Since that interview, Thompson has met with Beta members and alumni, some of whom are attorneys, to begin a formal investigation of the situation. As of that meeting, held Saturday, Beta house members have refused to comment on the case, although Thompson was willing to release the above information.

Also investigating the incident are University officials and the Interfraternity Council, but both are unable to make a public comment at this time. According to IFC President Mitch Vance, there are certain guidelines that hold each fraternity and its members responsible for what happens in the house.

"I'm proceeding cautiously to prevent interference in the event of civil court case, but am again continuing investigation," Vance said. "In our eyes its not going to get pushed under the rug. If something did happen, we will definitely take some form of action. We're interested in finding out the real truth and holding people accountable for their actions."

Seyler's attorney, Douglas Haldane, said there are five possible legal theories the case could be based upon, including assault, outrageous conduct, intentional infliction of emotional distress, battery and false imprisonment. Both he and Seyler are unable to comment further on the case at the present, although Seyler said the investigation is now focused on three or four people who he believes may be responsible. Seyler would not say whether or not these persons are members of the Beta fraternity.

Tilby said police are not pursuing an investigation.



## Veterans gather on their day

United States war veterans were formally recognized Sunday, Veteran's Day, in ceremonies and services throughout the country. One such commemoration, at Eugene's Veteran's Memorial Building, 1626 Willamette St., attracted several veterans including these two elderly flag-carriers.

Photo by Tim Jones

# Martin Luther King Sr. dies at 84 of heart attack

(AP) — The Rev. Martin Luther King Sr., the father of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., died Sunday at Crawford Long Hospital. He was 84.

King was taken from his home to the hospital on Sunday, said Bernice Thompson, a secretary at Ebenezer Baptist Church, where King and his slain son had been pastors.

The son of a Georgia sharecropper, King's life was marred by the 1968 assassination of his elder son and the sniper slaying of his wife, Alberta, as she played the church organ in 1974. His other son, A.D., drowned in a backyard swimming pool in 1969.

Christine King Farris, King's daughter and only surviving child, told a hospital news conference her father was stricken Sunday afternoon at his home and was rushed to the hospital where "extensive resuscitation efforts were taken."

King died at 5:41 p.m. at the hospital. "It appears to be some sort of heart attack," said Dr. Bernard Bridges, King's personal physician, adding that no post-mortem examination was planned.

King had suffered from a chronic heart condition. He was hospitalized in

critical condition last month when his heart ailment was aggravated by a lung infection.

"On behalf of the King family I want to express my profound gratitude for the love, concern, sympathy and support and we appreciate the fervent prayers over the last few weeks," Farris said.

"I'm trying to be as strong as I can, as Daddy would want me to be," she said while surrounded by about 20 family members and black leaders, including Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young and the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Rev. Joseph Lowery.

"Daddy King did more for this city, the South and the nation than any of us yet realize. Before he was famous, Martin Luther King was always fighting for people's rights and standing up for the little people of this community, and telling people not to hate," Young said.

Lowery praised King's compassion and love in the face of adversity. "I don't know anyone 84 who has lived a better life."

Continued on Page 11