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Eugene, enrolled at the University and actively began fulfilling her duties as Miss Oregon — making at least three personal appearances a month.

Peterson keeps her role as Miss Oregon and her role as a student but said she would like to combine the two more. Recently she helped the Athletic Department with an Oregon Football video.

After completing college, Peterson would like to work in the entertainment business, she said.

"I want to leave a lot of doors open to always have options,"

she said of her career goals.

Other options include work in the recruiting and administrative departments of a modeling agency. Peterson said, although she once participated in an evaluation program through an agency and was told, "You just have that average Californian-look."

"I want to dispel the myth that the Miss America Pageant is just a beauty contest," she said, "but that is something we will be fighting for a long time. I wish the word pageant could be changed to program."

She noted that 50 percent of

the competition is based on talent, and that all of the winners receive scholarship money rather than cash or prizes. And she disputes statements that pageants are exploitive in any way, speaking in favor of the swimsuit competition.

"It's a matter of liking yourself and having confidence in yourself to walk out there," she commented. "And it's each girl's choice; no one is saying she has to participate in the pageant."

The Miss America Pageant has never read the girl's measurements on television,

and this year it chose to drop them from the biographical sheets as well.

Because it is not a 'beauty' pageant, Peterson explained, the girls are allowed to pad the rear and breast portions of their swimsuits if necessary. This is not allowed in the Miss USA Pageant, which has no talent portion and where beauty is weighted heavily in the judging.

The Miss America Pageant represents an image, and to safeguard this image all contestants must sign a contract

and follow certain guidelines, Peterson said. None of the rules or guidelines imposed by the pageant present a problem for her, she said, because "I don't want to do anything that would make myself or the pageant look bad."

Speaking in favor of the pageant, Peterson said, "Everything you do for the pageant is something you should already be doing, like taking pride in yourself. You get a training of skills to use in life, like speaking intelligently, building confidence and perfecting a talent."

Asia

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and 30 years of age," she said.

Joo, who came to Eugene from Idaho more than a decade ago, said as long as Asians were physically distinct, they would not be able to assimilate into the mainstream American society.

"I grew up a discriminated American Asian, and even now discrimination exists. You can see it in every school."

She said Asian children (together with children of other minorities) were very often bullied, teased, ignored or even set on to fight with other children.

"Assimilation has a negative connotation. It means giving up the culture you are born with in order to become an American. But we are not white American," she emphasized.

She said she hopes the council would help American Asians and others to realize this and to help change this attitude.

"I also hope, by and by, members of the council will be more representative of the various ethnic groups. Members should only act individually if there aren't enough people to form a group. The representatives should also check back with their groups so that they truly serve the community they represent," Joo added.

Lee hopes the council would be the primary center of information and help for Asians and those who want to know about them. She also hopes the council would set up a scholarship fund for the children of American Asians.

"The impression that most young people have of Asia are of dirty streets and tight quarters. We hope to see this changed," she said.

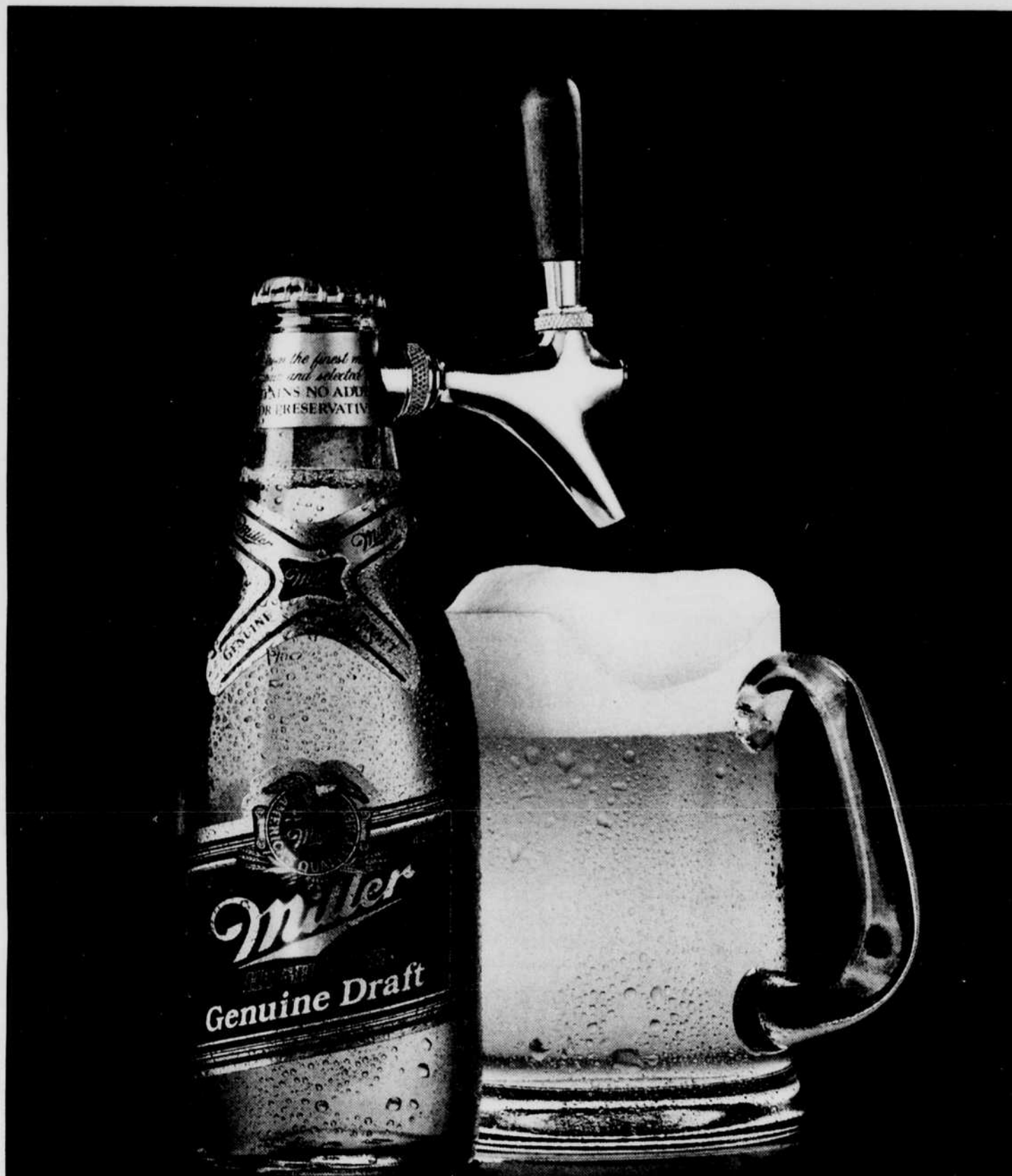
"From about only 10 families in the '50s, the number of Asians here have grown. The kind of problems we used to have in housing, education and the day-to-day hassles of life have become less and less over the years. But there will always be problems facing new Asians (coming) to America," Lee said.

The head of the University international studies program, Gerald Fry, said the council has been helpful in bringing different cultures together and has been a source of help to the community.

"It becomes more important now that Oregon is making linkages with Japan, China and Southeast Asia," Fry said.

The international studies program through one of its graduate students also helped the council in the Asian celebrations and the publishing of their business directory, Fry said.

"You could call us a mini United Nations," said Ho of the council.



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