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Walkin' in the rain

Grab your umbrellas and don your galoshes. Eugene's famous drizzle is back. Walking between classes could prove to be a wet experience for the rest of this week. The forecast calls for increased precipitation through Thursday.

Photo by Jim Marks

Halloween blaze burns house

By Gerrit Koepping
Emerald Contributor

All was not well near the University Halloween night — a fire caused \$31,000 dollars damage to a house on Patterson Street.

Firefighters arrived at 951 Patterson St. at 8 p.m. Monday to find the top of the building in flames. Firefighters were alerted of the blaze by a phone call from a tenant in the building.

By the time firefighters declared the two-alarm fire under control at 10:15 p.m., two fire engines, two medic units, and 28 firefighters had been called in to battle the blaze.

Although no cause for the fire has been found, Eugene Fire Department officials believe the blaze started on the north side of the building in a non-occupied ground floor apartment.

The house originally was built as a single-family dwelling at the turn of the century, and currently houses 10 tenants. At the time of the fire, three people were in the building and all of them were in the lower floors.

The three made it out unharmed after being alerted to the fire by Jim Elers, who saw smoke and ran into the building to warn the occupants. Elers said he was unable to reach the upper floors of the building to search for and warn others.

"The whole place was encircled in flames; there was no way to get in there," Elers said, adding that he had smelled smoke two hours before he rushed the building.

Tim Birr of the Eugene Police Department said the fire moved rapidly through the building.

"We got a fire that spread very rapidly through the interior of the building. Mostly it appears to me to be in the upper levels of the building. However, the whole building was charged up with smoke. This building is what we would classify as a quick burner, it's an old building, there is probably very little fire stopping in it," Birr said.

Birr also said the building is a maze of apartments, which made it dangerous to search for people inside, and that the roof contained many concealed areas.

Birr said the building recently had "a problem with squatters."

"There were people who were staying here without authorization," Birr said.

Last week residents filed a complaint with Sacred Heart General Hospital, who owns the building, notifying it that there were squatters in the building's basement.

Mishael Veysey, a tenant of the building next door, said unauthorized people have been using the building for some time.

"There have been people squatting in it for the last two

months. Police have kicked them out numerous times, and they kept moving back in. But I am pretty sure it was empty at

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UO prof ponders the Philippines

By Greg Hough
Emerald Reporter

Nearly three years after Philippine President Corazon Aquino's stunning rise to power, her democratic government is "a great disappointment," according to University associate history professor Glenn May.

May, who is co-director of the Southeast Asian Studies department, will talk of recent Filipino society tonight as the featured speaker sponsored by The Friends of The University of Oregon Library. The free lecture will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Gerlinger Alumni Lounge.

May also will speak about his visit last summer to the Philippines in his lecture, "The Philippines: The Contemporary Crisis in Historical Perspective." He said his speech would focus on the Philippine economy and on the rise of the communist New People's Army (NPA) in the country.

According to May it is these two factors — the NPA and the economy — that most threaten the political stability of Aquino, who took office in early 1986 on a wave of Filipino and U.S. support that sent former President Ferdinand Marcos into exile in Hawaii.

"There's a major civil war going on (in the Philippines) now," May said. "The amount of killing there is incredibly high. At least 20 percent of the country is now controlled by the NPA."

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Photo by Andre Ranieri

Associate history professor Glenn May has traveled to the Philippines and says he is concerned for its future.

March for homeless brings issue to the fore

Emergency winter shelters needed

By Betsy Clayton
Emerald Associate Editor

Concerned residents and homeless people will rally today to increase awareness about Lane County's homeless population problems and to spur local politicians and agencies into action.

Titled "March for Shelter," the rally will begin at noon at the downtown mall fountain, where Superintendent of Schools Margaret Nichols and U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio will speak. Participants will then march from downtown to the Lane County Courthouse to hear speeches from mayoral candidates Jeff Miller and Emily Schue, and from some homeless people.

The goal of the march is twofold, said Marsha Brooks-O'Connor, program manager of Brethren Housing. "Our first desire is to create an awareness of the crisis, because the homeless situation is an invisible kind of thing," she said.

"We also want to get some cooperation with the city and the county. We're asking they treat this as a disaster, and that they come up with an emergency shelter site for these folks to make it through the winter," Brooks-O'Connor said.

Since 1986 the homeless population in Eugene has been growing, said Don Koster, director of Eugene Emergency Housing. In the fiscal year

1986-87, the Family Shelter House turned away 283 families, or about 1,000 people. In 1987-88 the house could not accommodate 697 families, or about 2,400 people.

"Already the first three months of this fiscal year we've turned away 294 families, just over 1,000 people," Koster said.

In addition, the amount of time homeless people stay at the shelter has increased. In 1986-87 the average length of stay was 9.5 days, while in 1987-88 the average increased to 14.5 days. Currently, the average stay is 20 days, Koster said.

"For every one-day increase in the average length of stay we serve 60 fewer families on an annual basis," Koster said. "But there is no limit to the time they can be here. We work with folks till they find a place to stay. If we turn them out, it's just perpetuating the problem."

According to State Employee Division statistics, Lane County has 47,500 people listed "at risk for being homeless," which is about 17 percent of the county's population.

"People of Lane County need to see this as a disaster county-wide and an immediate emergency shelter is needed," Koster said.

Both Koster and Brooks-O'Connor point to a lack of

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