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## Community

# Oregon leading nation in bank robberies; numbers still rising

By Cami Swanson  
Emerald Reporter

At first glance, Rob Van Kamp seemed to be an average college student.

He had attended classes at Lane Community College. Although not actually taking classes at the University, Van Kamp participated in fraternity rush last fall.

Then he allegedly robbed a bank and a credit union in the Eugene/Springfield area.

"He was a real easy guy to get along with," said Josh King, a University student who went to junior high with Van Kamp. "He's the last guy you would think would rob a bank."

Van Kamp, who has confessed to taking \$47,600 from a bank and a credit union that was robbed twice, is one of three men responsible for seven local bank robberies occurring this year. This rash of local

bank robberies has elicited concern from area banks and credit unions.

"(Bank robbery) is of course our worse fear," said Leah Murphy, vice president of operations for the U-Lane-O credit union at 488 E. 11th Ave. Murphy said that although the credit union has never had a robbery, employees are pre-

pared to handle such an emergency.

age) dropped in 1987 and 1988," he said. Enyart attributed this decline to stricter sentencing of convicted bank robbers during years 1984 to 1986. "Virtually all of them received relatively long sentences," he said.

Last year, there were 363 bank robberies in Oregon, which led the nation in its per

**Last year, there were 363 bank robberies in Oregon, which led the nation in its per capita bank robbery rate. Only two other states, California and Florida, reported more total bank holdups.**

capita bank robbery rate. Only two other states, California and Florida, reported more total bank holdups.

Ruble said U.S. Bank is "re-aligning" its security to cover areas that need greater protection.

U-Lane-O has "a lot of security procedures," Murphy said. She said the credit union holds regular mandatory meetings to keep employees "staying on their toes."

Tim Birr, the Eugene Police Department's public information officer, said the department offers a crime prevention presentation for financial institutions. The presentation includes training bank staff what to do in case of a robbery.

The FBI offers a similar program for bank employees.

"For some reason that (aver-

## Students, hosts benefit from exchange program

By Laurie Smith  
Emerald Contributor

A new friend, a new understanding of another way of life and a new perspective on the world is what one might gain by participating in an international student exchange program.

So says Cindy Lewis, coordinator for Mobility International U.S.A., a local student exchange program.

The program will be held in July, and invites students from around the world to participate.

"The purpose of this project is to bring young persons to the United States to participate in a program which emphasizes leadership skills, community service projects, river-rafting, camping and homestays," Lewis said.

Applications to participate are still being accepted, said Lewis, adding that the program is looking for people 20 to 25 years of age, including those with disabilities. Foreign nationals also are encouraged to apply, Lewis said.

Mobility International is also looking for homestay or host families in the Eugene/Springfield area to open their homes to visiting exchange students.



Cindy Lewis

In addition to friendship and encouragement, homestay families are asked to provide sleeping space, some meals and transportation, Lewis said.

Francie Plumb, who participated in last summer's program, said it is an experience she'll never forget.

Plumb and her family opened their Eugene home to Ottmar Paul, a German exchange student. Although Paul is visually impaired, Plumb said her family had no trouble adapting.

"In fact, it was one of the most enriching and enjoyable experiences my family has ever had," she said.

For more information, call 343-1284 or write to MIUSA, P.O. Box 3551, Eugene, OR.