

has been a problem. Gund said. "Until you have a drive-by shooting, people just aren't interested. Some people just don't realize what a gang can do to a community. Life is immaterial in a gang situation."

Gangs can affect all segments of the community and so the coalition is divided into four subcommittees which are "the thrust of the organization," Gund said. The subcommittees try to deal with specific problems in their area of interest.

The subcommittees are divided into education, youth, business and government committees in an effort to interest most people and organizations in the Lane County area.

"We are trying to draw from all segments of the community," Gund said. "We know we're headed in the right direction."

The coalition has grown considerably from its original size. There is a constant influx of new members. At the most recent meeting, one-third of the group were new members.

The growth of the group adds to the education of the people and the success of the group. "Any grass-roots organization by citizens will help. Just getting the word out helps," Gilliam said.

"It'll get worse before it gets better. But if you sit back and do nothing it will only get worse," Horton said.

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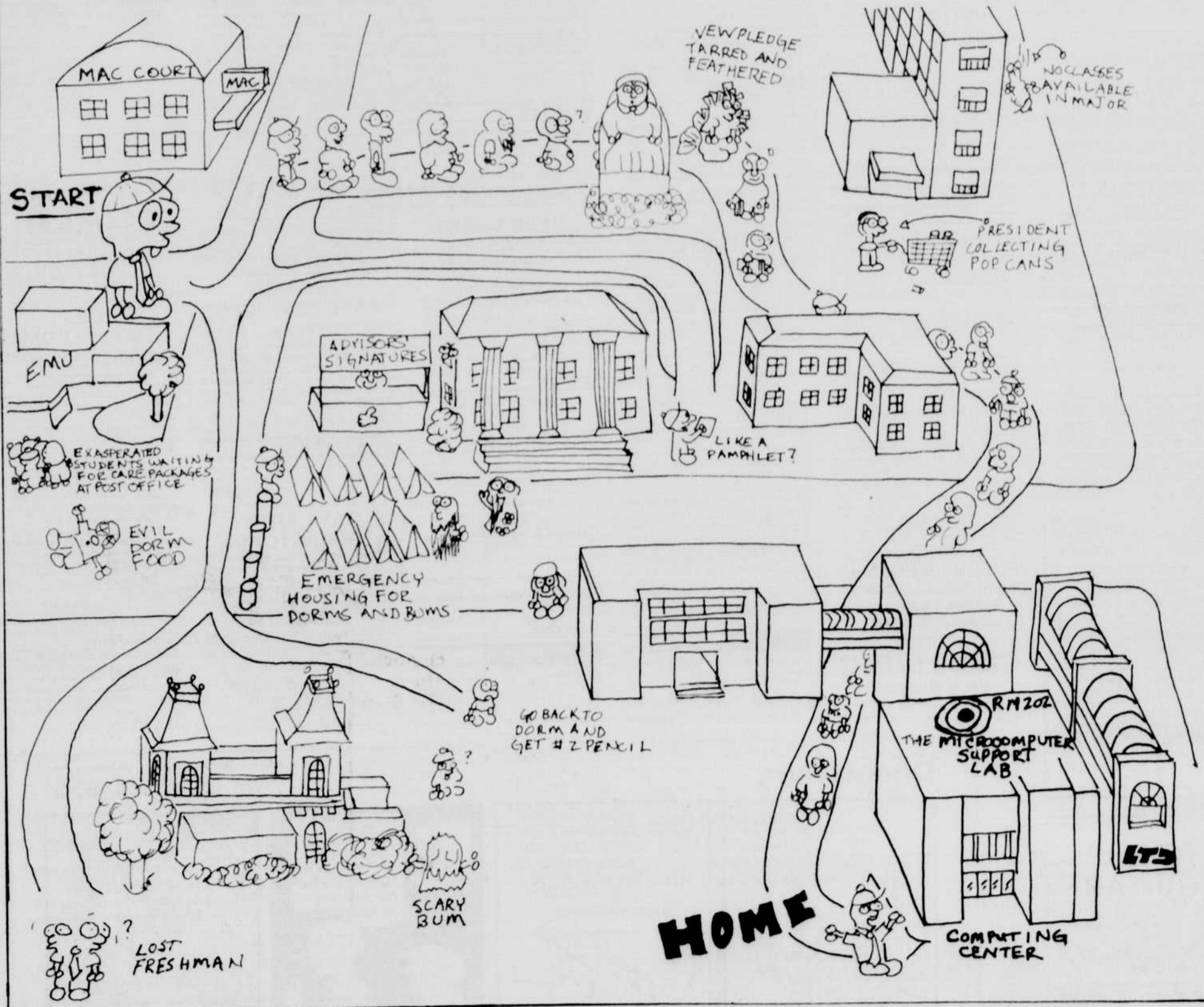
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