

Girgus Continued from Page 1

A large part of the program's woes can be attributed to Girgus' imminent departure for Vanderbilt University.

"The fact that I'm leaving has created the problem of replacement," Girgus said. "The general lack of funding and support here has suggested very little opportunity to develop the potential of American Studies here."

Provost Norman Wessells said it was too late for the University to seek out a replacement for Girgus.

Wessells said he and a number of others on the American Studies Advisory Council had expected Toby Edson, an associate professor in the Division

of Education Policy Management, to become the new director. Edson was the original director of the American Studies in 1986.

Edson, who has served on the American Studies advisory board for four years, said he made no firm decision to take over Girgus's position.

"Apparently there aren't too many faculty ready to put themselves on the line," Wessells said of the lack of applicants for the position.

As the leading possible replacement, Edson requested additional funds to improve the program, Wessells said.

"There were so many other needs," he said. "To ask for

\$50,000 right off, we weren't willing to make the commitment."

Girgus said the current program is inexpensive because a cluster of 100-level classes and a 400-level seminar and thesis class are the only additional curricula required to run the program.

All other required classes are offered by existing liberal arts programs, Girgus said.

Palmer said the closure of the program was unfortunate. "I had supported it at the time it was created," he said. "There was considerable support that if we couldn't enhance it we should close it."

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Several of the candidates also gave their support to the recommendations that the Lane County Housing Task Force made in its report that came out earlier this year. That report called for a non-profit corporation to be developed that would supply low-income housing. The report also calls for a permanent housing task force to be created.

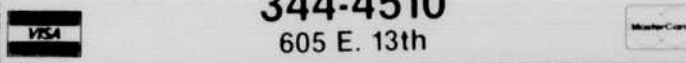
"This would be more than a one time gesture," said County Commissioner Cynthia Wooten. Wooten was a co-chairwoman of the housing task force.

Other candidates said they would support a business licensing fee in order to raise funds for the programs. County Commission candidate Randy MacDonald said that because the federal government has abdicated its responsibility for the homeless by passing the buck to state and local governments, it was necessary that "the buck stop here, at the local community. I agree we need to grow more (economically) to get more funding," MacDonald said. "But, as people get left behind we need to ask ourselves about them."

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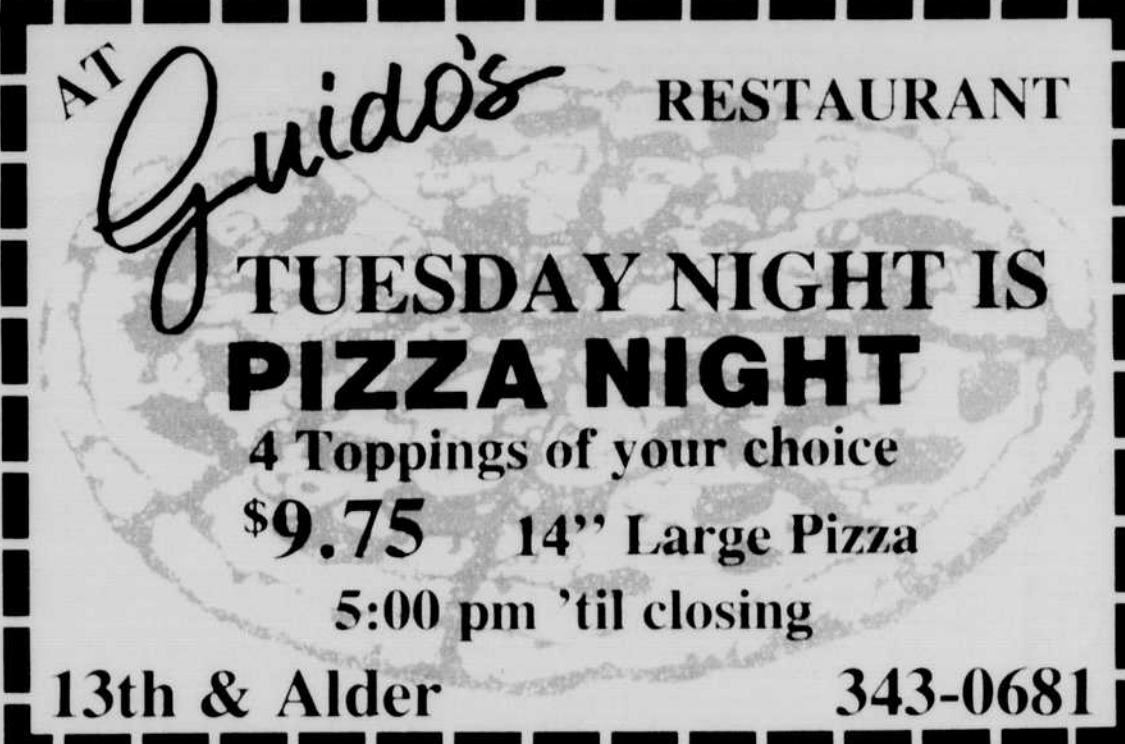
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