

Bike thefts high near campus

Joe Harwood
Oregon Daily Emerald

Bicycle theft is proving to be a lucrative trade throughout the campus area this fall. In terms of value and the number of bikes stolen already, 1994 is shaping up to be an expensive year for one-time bike owners.

A total of 58 bikes with a combined value of more than \$23,000 were reported stolen from Aug. 3 to Oct. 16 this year around campus. In comparison, only 56 bicycles were reported stolen during the first seven months of 1994, according to figures supplied by the Eugene Department of Public Safety.

Last week, within a six-day period, 12 bikes worth about \$4,000 disappeared from campus.

Expensive mountain bikes popular with college students appear to be the target for most thieves, turning the University into a veritable shopping center.

"The thieves are going after very high-end bikes," said Sgt. Dennis Baker. "Cannondales, Treks and (Specialized) Rockhoppers are very hot right now."

Bike thieves use a variety of methods — some crude, others ingenious.

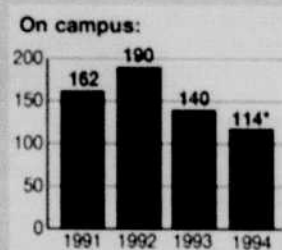
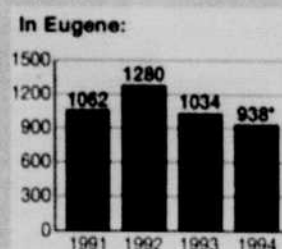
"They are defeating the U-locks with portable hydraulic hand jacks," Baker said. "By inserting the jack between the two sides of the lock, they push one of the ends out of the bottom of the lock."

Other methods include snipping steel cables with common wire cutters and for the larger cables, using bolt cutters. Baker said he's heard of thieves pouring liquid nitrogen on U-locks to freeze the metal, and then shattering the locks with a hammer. But some of the bikes stolen this fall weren't locked at all.

"Despite that, the U-lock is still the most preferable for security, because thieves can't saw or cut them," he said.

HOT WHEELS

If bike thefts continue to increase at the present rate, 1994's total will exceed totals of past years.



*Year-to-date
SOURCE: Eugene police department

EMERALD

However, one student found the U-lock didn't prevent his \$950 Cannondale from disappearing earlier this month.

"I locked it with a U-lock through the frame and front wheel to the bike rack in front of the University Inn one evening. When I came out the next morning, the bike and the lock were gone," said the student, who doesn't want to be identified.

University neighborhoods are not the only areas in Eugene experiencing a plague of bike thefts. Since 1991, city-wide thefts have hovered between 1,000 and 1,200 per year. The value of the newer bikes is going up.

In 1993, the take in all Eugene robberies was \$24,395. In stark contrast, the total value of all bicycles stolen that year was \$443,969, according to Tim Birr, a spokesman with the Eugene police department.

To fight the upswing in theft on campus, the Eugene police

department regularly sends plain-clothed officers to identified hot spots where the majority of bikes are stolen. But as with all such operations, the stake-outs are hit and miss, Baker said.

"We're planning to put out an expensive-looking 'bait bike' soon. We'll lock it up and wait for someone to try to steal it," Baker said.

Despite increased efforts, campus police and security officers find catching bike thieves and recovering property difficult. Often, students don't record the make, model or serial number on their bicycles, which makes tracing a stolen bike nearly impossible.

Baker suggests recording all pertinent information and then putting some type of personal identifier such as a birth date or driver's license on the bike in case the serial number gets scraped off by a thief. Students are required to register their bikes with OPS. Registration is free of charge.

"If victims have no way to identify a recovered bike, they don't get it back," Baker said.

Recovery rates for stolen bicycles in Eugene are between 8 and 9 percent, Birr said.

Sometimes students just don't want to cooperate with police.

On Oct. 13, a student observed a person riding a bike stolen from him the week before. Upon confronting the suspect, the student was told the suspect paid \$50 for the bike. The student then paid the suspect \$5 to return the bike and refused to press charges or provide police with the suspect's name.

Taking precautions such as always locking the bicycle frame to a stationary object (parking meters not included) in a well-lighted and well-traveled area greatly reduce the chance of theft.

"Students need to be aware that this is a big problem. They have to take it upon themselves to protect their bikes," Baker said.

"31 years of Quality Service"

Mercedes • BMW • Volkswagen
Audi • Datsun • Toyota



**GERMAN
AUTO
SERVICE,
INC.**

342-2912 2025 Franklin Blvd. Eugene, Oregon, 97402



LIVE MUSIC every night!

Satellite Sports • Pool • Games
Featuring Roosters Blues Jam
Every Monday only \$1.00

Tomorrow	The SKATALITES
Friday 21st	Unshakable Race
Saturday 22nd	Calobo & Higher Ground
Sunday 23rd	Rockabilly with The Sloe Gin Joes
Friday 28th	Jambay, Jerry Joseph & guests Skinhorse
Monday 31st	Halloween with Dopplegang

7th & High St. 484-7181

Beyond AIDS 101

NOT JUST ANOTHER AIDS WORKSHOP

*What can you do to
make a difference?*

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- Navigating Your Way to a Healthy Relationship
- Safer Sex: What's Practical, What's Not
- Personal Stories from People With AIDS
- Grief and Loss

Friday, Nov. 4, 1994 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 5, 1994 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Gerlinger Lounge

EDPM 407 and EDPM 507
CRN 12263 and 12272
1 credit P/NP only

ATTENDANCE AT ALL SESSIONS REQUIRED

ENROLLMENT LIMITED TO 75 STUDENTS
DEADLINE TO ENROLL: MONDAY, OCT 24
Conference fee: \$40.00 • Saturday lunch provided

Sponsored by Planned Parenthood
of South Western Oregon and
U of O Student Health Services



UO Student Health Center
Health Education Program

TRY IT and you'll like it!

*Pizanos
Pizza*

Fresh Baked!

3 Varieties Plus Special Daily
EMU Fountain Court & Fishbowl

6" Pizza and a free small Pepsi... \$2.95
Mon-Fri 11:00-2:30

Your Pizza Baked Fresh To Order!