

police BEAT

• A 19-year-old University student was the victim of a theft from her automobile sometime between Nov. 14 and Nov. 17 on the 1300 block of Alder Street. The student last saw her car

stereo, valued at \$500, on Nov. 14 before leaving for the weekend. Police have no suspects at this time.

• A vending machine, valued at \$750, was severely damaged on Nov. 27. A machine attendant reported to police that the machine, located on the third floor of Gerlinger Annex, had been the subject of criminal mischief. There are no suspects.

ET ALS

MEETINGS

Gay Asians Project will meet today at 3:30 p.m. in the Koinonia Center. For more information, call 346-1134.

MISCELLANEOUS

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Alliance will sponsor a social hour today at 4 p.m. in the LGBA office, EMU Suite 319. For more information, call 346-3660.

EMU Craft Center will be registering for winter workshops and classes beginning today at 10 a.m. The Craft Center, located on the ground floor of the EMU, offers workshops in photography, jewelry, ceramics, woodworking, weaving, bookbinding and much more. For more information, call 346-4361.

Eugene gets New Year's alternative

■ **HOLIDAY:** First Night is a dry alternative to the holiday's traditional alcoholic parties

By Melissa Lebach
Community Reporter

First Night, an alcohol-free, family-oriented New Year's Eve celebration, will provide the Eugene community with a variety of music and entertainment to ring in the new year.

The event will feature eight to 10 venues through which the event will proceed throughout the evening, with a wide range of activities including mimes, magicians, puppet shows, face painters, theater groups, comedians, dancers and musicians along with several youth activities.

A Chinese dragon will lead the procession of First Night participants starting at 7 p.m. At midnight there will be a finale to bring in the new year.

The goal of First Night Eugene is to offer an alternative to traditional alcohol-oriented New Year's Eve parties. This is a way to change community norms, said First Night Eugene committee chairwoman Katherine Henderson.

First Night, which focuses on the performing and visual arts, began in Boston in 1976. Since then it has grown to approximately 160 cities in North America. First Night Eugene will be the first First Night event in the state of Oregon.

"People can get together and have fun on an otherwise risky night," Henderson said. "It will be fun in all sorts of ways."

Not many people go out on New Year's Eve because of safety concerns and because there aren't very many activities for families, he said.

First Night Eugene would benefit the community by starting a fun, safe and sober holiday tradition, Henderson said in a funding request submitted to the Eugene City Council.

The First Night Eugene Steering Committee requested \$2,500 from the Eugene City Council to provide Eugene Police foot patrol services for the event. The council approved the request.

The First Night Eugene Steering Committee is made up of different individuals who are connected to the Eugene community, and the Substance Abuse Prevention Program has been working on this project since June.

Henderson said the committee

has three considerations for this project: It should be alcohol free; it should support performing artists by reimbursing them for their services, and it should not accept sponsorship funding from brewers, distillers or distributors of alcohol.

First Night Eugene is scheduled to take place from 4 p.m. on Dec. 31 to 1 a.m. on Jan. 1. First Night Eugene has secured 10 indoor and outdoor locations at which 40 to 50 performances will take place.

First Night Eugene is estimated to run a total cost of \$25,000, Holden said, part of which goes to paying the performers for their services. It is privately and publicly funded through donations and fund raising.

Henderson said that the committee is still raising money because it hasn't met its goal.

"We need more money, but we have enough to make it happen this year," Henderson said.

Entry buttons will be sold starting two weeks before the event for \$3 each, and children under 12 get in free of charge.

First Night Eugene is looking for volunteers. For further information about the event or becoming a volunteer, call Lane ESD at 461-8230.

Honor society recognizes professor

■ **AWARD:** Mortar Board taps Ron Wixman as professor of the month

By Abe Estimada
Student Activities Reporter

When geography professor Ron Wixman received the professor of the month award in class Tuesday morning, he didn't know what to think.

"I stood there absolutely dumbfounded, fumbling for words," he said.

When representatives from the Mortar Board, a senior class honor society that distributes the award, stepped into the professor's Geography 103 class, Wixman didn't even realize who they were.

"I don't have very good hearing," he said. "I thought they said they were from the Water Board."

While Wixman expected just another social group to give its pitch, the Board members suddenly presented him with a plaque, honoring him as professor of the month for November.

"It really threw me in a very pleasant way," Wixman said.

The Mortar Board, which has been giving out the award for the last three years, determines its winners by student nominations. Courtney Hanson, chairwoman of the award committee, said the votes it received were heavily in Wixman's favor. "It was a clear majority," she said.

In nominating Wixman, students described the professor as "colorful," "knowledgeable," and "interesting." They said he makes his classes interesting with a combination of personal experience, humor and realism.

Wixman, who has been on the faculty at the University for 20 years and primarily teaches 400- and 500-level classes, said in an institution that focuses primarily on research, he has always put teaching first. "I see myself as primarily a teacher," he said.

He likes to present his lectures from a personal standpoint, thereby causing students to see the issues in the context of their own lives. Frequently, he

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When students recognize your teaching, it's what really makes the job worth it.

— Ron Wixman
Professor of the Month

”

said, this shocks students into seeing things more clearly and looking at their lives in a new light.

"I make [students] very uncomfortable, but they're awake," he said.

Using shock value and a personal connection with students, Wixman has found his style doesn't appeal to everybody. "Some students hate it. Some love it," he said.

While Wixman has received several awards from the University faculty during his career, he marks this honor as the most important. "When students recognize your teaching, it's what really makes the job worth it," he said.

Grand jury declines to indict man who killed drug dealer

■ **SHOOTING:** Gagnon said the man threatened to kill his daughter

to be the use or imminent use of unlawful physical force," Harclerod said.

Gagnon, a Springfield appliance repairman with no criminal record, is married to a schoolteacher. A neighbor at the couple's house said Tuesday that the family had left town.

The shooting occurred just before 7 p.m. Nov. 21 in a front booth inside a Carl's Jr. restaurant. Moments after Carlson arrived at the restaurant for a meeting arranged by Gagnon's daughter, police said Gagnon entered and fired a single shot from a .38-caliber pistol at nearly point-blank range.

A man standing in line to order food at the restaurant at the time of the shooting pulled out his own pistol and held Gagnon at gunpoint in the parking lot until police arrived.

In Gagnon's mind, Harclerod said, he believed authorities couldn't or wouldn't help his daughter.

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