

Obituary: Community remembers Hatoon's positive presence on campus

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of three decades she became a well-known member of the campus community who was subject to myth and speculation — a factor magnified by her mental illness. He has been working for the last month to find a new place for Hatoon to stay within the neighborhood but had been unable to locate her relatives or children.

"A lot of it is just not able to have been confirmed enough to where I would feel comfortable saying 'this is truth, this is the reality of it,'" he said. "Everybody thinks they

know something."

Professor emeritus of English Edwin L. Coleman said he had been friends with Hatoon for 30 years.

"Hatoon was quite a character. She had her moments of brilliance, even though she would sometimes get off into her own world."

When Coleman first met her she was not living on the street, but he could not say when she took residence on the streets of the University neighborhood.

"I just talked to her yesterday; she was asking about my son," Coleman

said, adding that he retired three years ago but is often on campus. "I always asked her about her daughter. That was really a source of pain (for her) because she had lost contact, not because of distance, but because of their poor relationship."

Coleman said Hatoon told him that her daughter had married and moved to Seattle.

"I'm going to miss her; I really will. She's sort of an icon," he said of Hatoon.

Ellis echoed Coleman's sentiments. "Hatoon was what everybody

wants to believe a homeless person is in Eugene: a person who had a family, had a home, and for whatever reason developed some mental illness that caused them to decide that they needed to live a different lifestyle," Ellis said. "But she functioned. She knew her Social Security, managed to take care of herself, never caused any trouble, never got herself arrested and was a good addition to the neighborhood. It's a damn shame."

Rogers also noted that Hatoon was a positive presence to those who lived and worked around her.

"She would always compliment me on how I looked, and she would compliment a lot of people on how they looked. She loved little kids, and she would always go up to them and kind of coo and make funny little talks with them," she said. "She was just a part of our lives every day. I will miss her a lot, and it's going to be really strange going by there and not seeing all of her things there. It was great that people just let her be there and just sort of accepted her."

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