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KATE HORTON | PHOTOGRAPHER

Drix Rixmann, chairman of West University Neighbors, stands outside City Hall. The City of Eugene is looking to give the neighborhood associations a louder voice in city decisions.

City Council pushes for more citizen input

The council's "neighborhood initiative" goal, already in progress, will attempt to increase involvement of neighborhood associations

BY MEGHANN M. CUNIFF
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

The voices of Eugene neighborhood associations may become louder and stronger as city officials work on ways to increase neighborhood involvement in the Eugene political scene and to give more citizens a say in the city's decision-making processes.

The Eugene City Council recently listed neighborhood improvement as one of its priorities, and Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy said one of her big interests is making neighborhood meetings a place where all citizens feel welcome to

engage in dialogue about happenings around the city.

"What I'm interested in is: How do you make neighborhood associations attract a wider variety of the folks in the neighborhood and be a place that can facilitate differences of opinion?" Piercy said.

The City Council is still hammering out the details of its "neighborhood initiative" goal, and Piercy said the details of the city's plans for the neighborhoods haven't been "fully fleshed out yet" but said some steps are already being taken

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\$160,000 grant funds new African curriculum

Faculty members will use the two-year allotment to develop an African studies program

BY ADAM CHERRY
NEWS REPORTER

Students will soon have a better opportunity to learn about the culture, language and history of one of the world's largest continents.

The College of Arts and Sciences is introducing a new African studies initiative in the fall, after receiving a two-year, \$160,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Faculty members involved with the program said they hope to use the grant to remedy what they perceive to be a shortcoming in the educational opportunities available to students.

"There's really been no significant presence of Africa in the curriculum," said Stephen Wooten, program director and assistant professor of international studies and anthropology. "The addition of African studies to this campus is a significant step forward."

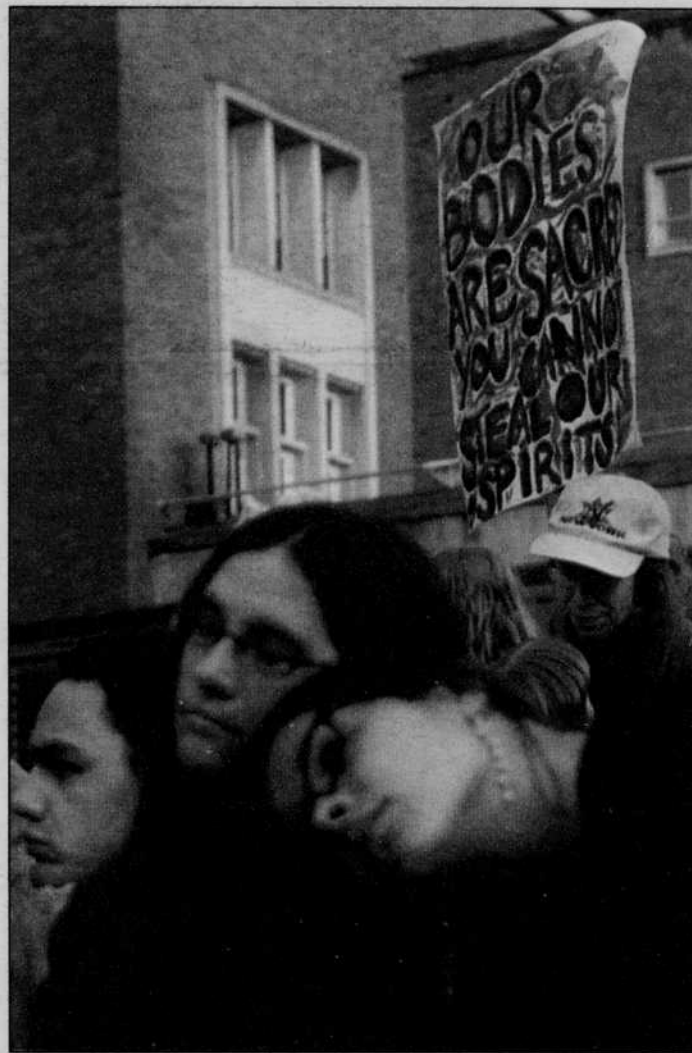
Wooten said the CAS African studies program will come in four segments: curriculum development, language program development, study-abroad program expansion and public lecture hosting.

A series of public lectures called the "Baobab Talks," and new courses entitled "Africa in Oregon" and "African Experiences" will be available in the fall.

"We will identify how and where Africa is represented in Oregon," Dennis Galvan, associate professor of international studies and political science, said of the "Africa in Oregon" course, according to a press release. "One area of focus will be African refugees who have settled in the upper Willamette Valley. The 'Experiences' course will be based on a mentorship model where students who have been to Africa can come together as a group and share what they've learned."

Wooten emphasized the importance of more instruction in African languages.

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NICOLE BARKER | PHOTOGRAPHER

Katya Blissenbach and Autumn Maker listen at the Take Back the Night rally. Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy was among those who spoke.

Take Back the Night



People gathered to 'March, Rally and Speak Out' as part of Sexual Assault Prevention Week

BY SUSAN GOODWIN
DAILY EMERALD FREELANCE REPORTER

For Tara Alder, Take Back the Night: March, Rally and Speak Out meant more than a march to raise awareness about the pervasiveness of sexual violence. It was a turning point away from an abusive relationship and toward personal freedom and safety.

"I wasn't just afraid to speak in public," Alder said, "I was afraid to speak at all. I had no voice. I arrived in Eugene pregnant after escaping my abusive boyfriend. After giving birth I had some reasonable support, but it wasn't until the Take Back the Night march and speak out that I realized I wasn't alone. Sharing my story in front of all those people empowered me and validated that what I shared was worthwhile to others too."

The annual Take Back the Night event, organized by the Women's Center, took place Thursday in the EMU Amphitheater. As part of Sexual Assault Prevention Week, Take Back the

Night "is an event to rally women together, support each other and walk down the street without worrying or looking over our shoulders in fear," said Jessie Genther, coordinator for the event.

Speakers included Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy, who discussed the importance of ending inequalities and discrimination to achieve a just society, and Women's Center Director Erin O'Brien, who spoke about her personal experience with sexual violence and how it led her to take action using tools such as theater, writing and therapy.

"I helped to organize Take Back the Night for four years because, to me, Take Back the Night made it possible for me to even acknowledge this part of my world, this part of my history, that my body had blocked out for so long," O'Brien said. "I spoke up and I spoke out."

A demonstration by the Sexual

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AMBER Alert receives electronic update

The system has been expanded to send real-time updates and to link the 50 states into a partnership through communication devices

BY EMILY SMITH
NEWS REPORTER

Oregon's AMBER Alert system has been expanded to distribute messages concerning child abductions via cell phones, lottery machines, personal computers and other wireless devices.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski announced he was "proud to be the first citizen of this state to sign up to receive AMBER Alerts," at a press conference in Salem on Wednesday morning, encouraging the public to join him in order to "create a safer environment for our children."

The AMBER Alert Web Portal will simultaneously send real-time updates through all forms of communication devices and, for the first time, link all 50 states into a partnership providing detailed information on an abducted child, right down to the nearest cross streets, according to the Oregon State Police. A consortium composed of states, law enforcement, the broadcast media and private corporations is fueling the Web portal.

The AMBER Alert, or America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response Alert, system

began in 1996 when the tragic kidnapping and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman in Arlington, Texas, motivated her parents and community to work with Dallas radio stations in an effort to broadcast a special alert in the event of an abduction.

Today the system operates in all 50 states and has assisted in the recovery of more than 200 children.

When the system is activated, most children are located, said Judy Hayes, program coordinator for the Missing Children Clearinghouse. Since Oregon began utilizing the AMBER Alert system last July, there have been nine activations and all have led to successful recoveries, she said.

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