

IN BRIEF

Political analyst, activist speaks on campus today

Phyllis Bennis, a prominent anti-war activist and senior analyst at the Institute for Policy Studies, will speak about U.S. policy and the Middle East today.

Bennis has worked as an analyst and commentator on U.S. and international television and radio, according to a press release from Community Alliance of Lane County. She has written about United Nations and Middle East issues for nearly 20 years.

In September, Bennis joined anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan and other women in a protest in front of the White House.

Bennis will speak from noon to 1:30 p.m. in the EMU Walnut Room. The event is co-sponsored by Concerned Faculty for Peace and Justice and Progressive Responses, a program of CALC.

Tonight, she will speak from 7-9 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1376 Olive St. The title of that talk will be "Challenging Empire: Moving U.S. Politics Toward a Positive Solution."

— Jared Paben

History museum exhibits work by late UO architect

The Museum of Natural and Cultural History is showcasing a collection of Eastern Oregon photos by late University architect Garry Fritz.

The exhibit, "The Long View: Eastern Oregon Landscapes by Garry Fritz," will be on display through Dec. 22.

Fritz, a longtime University architect, was responsible for planning and designing buildings across campus. He contributed to the development and renovation of 25 percent of campus's total square footage. A graduate of the University's School of Architecture and Allied Arts, Fritz planned and designed Deschutes and Willamette halls, the Knight Library addition, the Law Library, the Lillis Business Complex and the expansion of Autzen Stadium. Fritz died in June 2004 of cardiac arrest.

Framed prints of the displayed photographs are available for purchase and all proceeds will benefit the museum and the Garry B. Fritz Memorial Fund at the Oregon Community Foundation.

The museum is located at 1680 E. 15th Ave. and hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays through Sundays, except major holidays. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$2 for seniors and people ages 18 and under, and \$8 for families (two adults and up to four children). Museum members, University faculty, staff and students are admitted free.

—Brittni McClenahan

Festival promotes diversity, community on campus

The 11th Annual Weaving New

Beginnings Festival takes place tonight in the EMU Ballroom with food, entertainment and a speech by Charles Martinez, interim vice provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity. Admission for this event is free.

The semi-formal event is meant to promote community and encourage diversity on campus, according to an ASUO press release. The event starts at 6 p.m.

Brandy Ota, office coordinator of the ASUO Women's Center — a co-sponsor of the event — said the festival is a good opportunity to make connections with other people.

"It can be seen as a diversity-building event," Ota said. "It's an opportunity for faculty, staff and students to come together and find out who their allies are."

ASUO Multicultural Advocate Ty Schwoeffermann spearheaded planning for the event.

"Weaving New Beginnings is about students meeting students," Schwoeffermann said. "It's a community-building event."

—Brittni McClenahan

National murder rate decreases to 40-year low

WASHINGTON — The nation's murder rate declined last year for the first time in four years, dropping to the lowest level in 40 years. Experts said local rather than national trends were mostly responsible.

The rates for all seven major crimes were down and the overall violent crime rate reached a 30-year low, according to the FBI's annual compilation of crimes reported to the police.

There were 391 fewer murders nationwide in 2004 than the year before. The total of 16,137 worked out to 5.5 murders for every 100,000 people.

That's a decline of 3.3 percent from 2003 and the lowest murder rate since 1965, when it was 5.1.

"The declines are relatively small compared to larger, steady drops in the 1990s, and the results are by no means the same across the country," said Professor Alfred Blumstein of Carnegie-Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

Kick nicotine habit for faster bone healing?

WASHINGTON — Smokers' broken bones take a lot longer to heal. But scientists now are studying whether giving up cigarettes for even a week or two after a fracture might make the difference between a speedy recovery and months of easy-to-reinjure mushy bones.

"There's a window," predicts orthopedic specialist Michael Zuscik of the University of Rochester.

If he's right, it could dramatically change orthopedic practice for the nation's 48 million smokers.

Bone damage is arguably the least publicized of tobacco's harms.

The first time many smokers ever hear of the problem is if they need

spinal fusion, a back operation that surgeons often won't perform unless patients kick the habit, and surgeons require a urine test from smokers to prove they quit. That's because the surgery is far more likely to fail in smokers than nonsmokers.

Smokers who break a leg require 62 percent more time to heal.

Possible bird flu epidemic threatens Asia; may spread

LONDON — Bird flu can be expected to spread to other countries, but the biggest threat of it mutating into a human virus that could kill millions remains in Asia, the World Health Organization said Monday.

The U.N.'s flu czar, meanwhile, called for resources to focus on the continent that has seen its flocks devastated by the virus and 60 people killed since 2003.

Local authorities moved quickly to stamp out the disease where it was found in Romania and Turkey in recent days, but in Asia the virus has become widespread and the continued mixing of people and domestic fowl creates conditions more favorable for its mutation into a strain that could catastrophically affect humans.

"There's no question that we will expect further outbreaks of avian disease in different countries," said Michael Ryan, director of the Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Alert and Response at the WHO. "The Americas, Africa and the Middle East are also very much in our minds."

—The Associated Press

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YWCA: Group strives to lessen racism and violence

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of the University's YWCA.

"It is our little step for helping prevent violence against women and other races," she said.

At least 1 in 3 women worldwide will be beaten or sexually assaulted in her lifetime, according to a 1999 report by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

In the first day, more than 40 people signed the YWCA's petition.

Carriere hopes the pledge will shine a new light on violence against racial minorities. More people are aware of domestic violence between a man and a woman than violence against people of a different race, she said.

"We hope to have awareness heightened consistently," said Alicia Soto, editor of YWCA's magazine. "People think that racism doesn't exist or inequality doesn't exist."

The YWCA's Purple Hands

Pledge is a way to make people aware of what they support and what is going on, she said.

Soto said YWCA has received support from victims of violence and the Broken Spirits Network, an online support group for victims of abuse.

This is the first year of the Purple Hands Pledge, but the YWCA hopes

"People think that racism doesn't exist or inequality doesn't exist."

ALICIA SOTO | Editor of YWCA's magazine

it will become an annual event.

The Week Without

Violence Purple Hands Pledge was created after Carriere participated in a similar method of raising awareness at her high school in Portland.

The University's YWCA is currently the only chapter using the pledge, but Carriere hopes it will be adopted by others.

Reach the crime, health and safety reporter at kgagnon@dailyemerald.com

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