

Director to make food service palatable

By BRENDA TABOR
Of the Emerald

James Covington has been director of the EMU Food Service for two weeks, crawling through old storage rooms, inventorying green beans and generally orienting himself to the food service.

Covington hitch-hiked through Oregon 23 years ago, and says this was his first chance to get back. This is his second job with a university foodservice. He served as food service manager at a Texas university before coming to the University.

Why a university food service? "At my age I need to work with young people to feel young," he laughs. Covington wants to have an open-door policy to bring in student's suggestions and input.

EMU Director Adell McMillan wants the food service to break

even this year. Covington says achieving that will "definitely be a challenge." The new food director hopes he can be as successful here as he was bringing Tarnleton State University food service out of a deficit.

The secret to profit-making is "bringing labor and food costs into line," he says, "and it's one of the most difficult things to do."

He doesn't think the EMU Food Service is suffering from one main problem, but an accumulation of many small problems.

One of those problems is that "students aren't spending their money eating," he says. "People stop spending money when prices go up."

But reducing labor to cut costs will delete services, Covington says. Instead, he wants to get fuller utilization of personnel and increase volume in two areas, cater-

ing and the Skylight dining area. The new director hopes to draw a different crowd to the Skylight, rather than attracting current EMU customers. This will increase volume and not just redistribute customers. Before making any changes in the Skylight, he plans to get student feedback.

"I don't believe eating is a priority with students," he says. At noon they eat quick food, and are on the run so they don't have time for three meals, Covington says. But Covington quickly admits he, too only eats one meal a day.

To accommodate busy lifestyles, he plans to run competition with fast food outlets, offering burgers, pizza and another possible addition—Mexican food. Offering a different specialty food once a week or an Italian or Mexican Sunday dinner are other possibilities.

The new director would like to draw more people in for lunch, and even offer an evening meal in the cafeteria. Covington has mixed feelings about the Fishbowl. "It's a heavy traffic area but we're not pulling in as many people as we could."

Covington says the EMU already offers quality food at lower prices, but he says atmosphere is lacking, especially to the Skylight.

Unfortunately money for renovation and remodeling just isn't there. Covington wants to shift lines in the Fishbowl to make them more efficient, but that too would take a renovation project. So, for now he's started second coffee and donut lines in the morning to serve customers faster.

The new food service director has already make behind-the-counter changes. He's in the process of reducing a large inventory which ties up money. Covington says a large inventory is difficult to control.

"I don't intend to use our storage area as a warehouse" just because beans are on special this week. Those specials tie up valuable space, he says, and you have to ask whether the students will really eat them. He does plan to use competitive buying to cut food costs.

"I can't say we are going to make a profit in all the food service area this year, with food prices going up seven to eight per cent



James Covington

annually," Covington says. But, "I'm offering my management skills" to make the food service successful," he adds. "It has to support itself, and it will."

New teacher program okayed by state agency

A revised University program for teacher preparation in special education has been approved by the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC), the state's teacher certification agency.

Offered within the College of Education's teacher education division, the revised program is the first in Oregon to be adopted under new TSPC rules that emphasize two emerging national movements in educational personnel development: the movement toward aligning teacher education with institutions involved in or affected by the education and employment of teachers, and the movement toward "competency-based" teacher education. "Competency-based" programs focus on preparation that provides demonstrable knowledge, skill and competency to help pupils learn.

The revised program eliminates formerly required basic certification endorsements in specific categories of handicap. The program began with the opening of fall term and has been approved through August, 1981.

Previously, a person who wanted to teach handicapped children in Oregon was required to have, in addition to the required teaching certificate, an endorsement signifying special training in extreme learning problems, mentally retarded or physically handicapped.

These three categories, plus two other areas — trainable mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed — have been combined into two broad special education endorsements: handicapped learner and severely handicapped learner.

"The emphasis is away from preparing teachers in specific, limited categories and away from labeling children," says Knute Espeseth, coordinator of special education in the teacher education division. Espeseth chaired a

consortium subcommittee of school administrators, teachers, students and University faculty that worked last year to prepare the revised University program for TSPC approval.

"The education trend, which is reflected in the new TSPC standards and the new University program, is towards 'mainstreaming' the mildly handicapped into the regular classroom," Espeseth says.

"Studies show that many handicapped children learn faster when they are in regular classroom situations, rather than being grouped only with similarly handicapped children. Teachers need preparation to help integrate these children into regular classroom situations, as well as resource personnel who are highly skilled. That is what our new program hopes to do."

The program is designed for people who enter special education from fields such as psychology or counseling as well as education.

Basic certification endorsements in extreme learning problems, mentally retarded and physically handicapped can be completed this year, but must be completed by the end of summer session, 1977.

"This means we're really running two programs this year," Espeseth says. "We need to accommodate those students completing the old program and start others on their way to certification under the new TSPC-approved curriculum."

Under Oregon law, a basic certificate, issued upon completion of a bachelor's program in teacher education, is granted for three years and is renewable under certain restrictions. The renewal of a secondary (high school) basic certificate for one three-year period is contingent upon the teacher having begun academic work toward standard certification.

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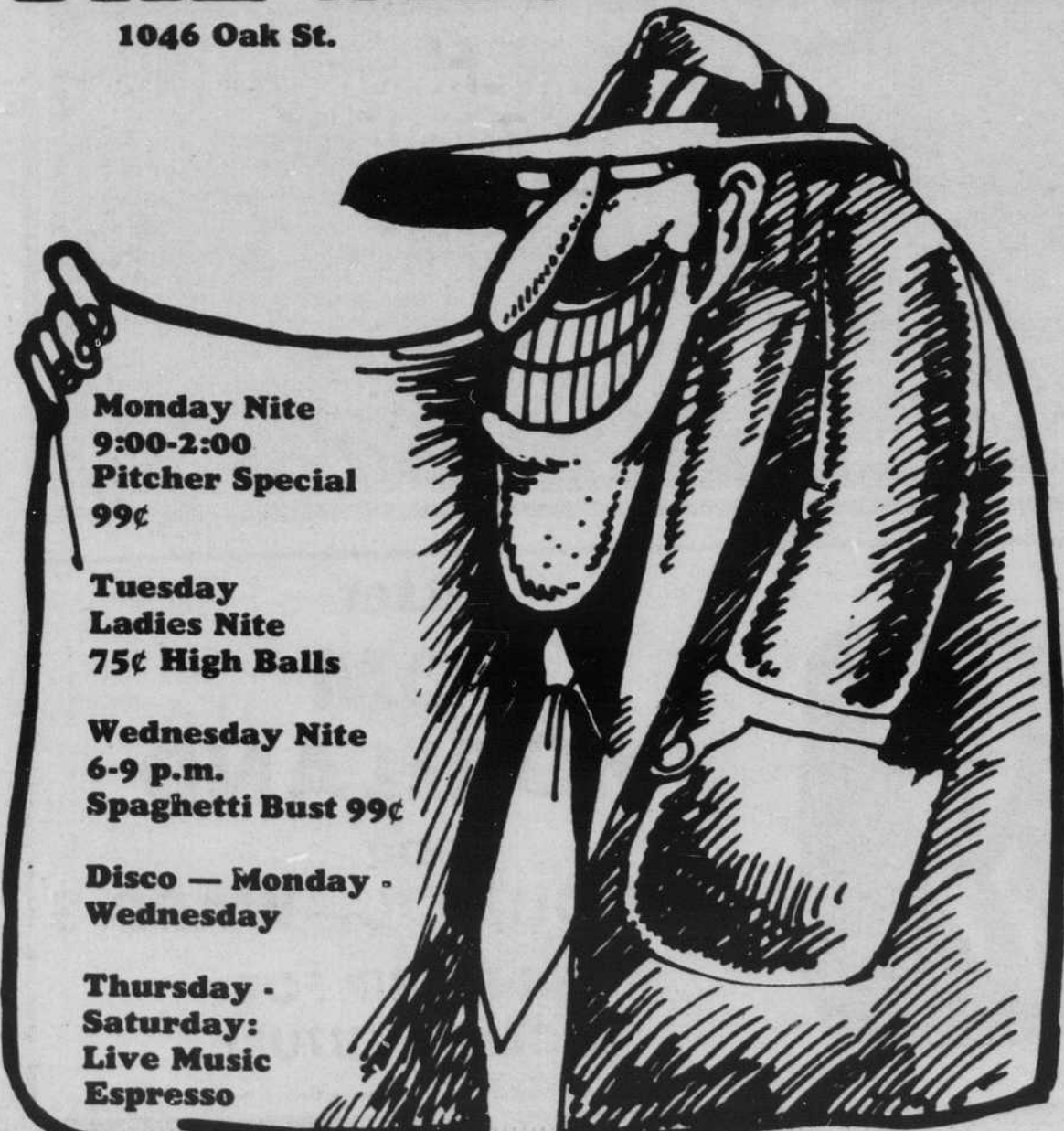
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