EMU center expands child care access

By JACK HATFIELD
Of the Emerald

"Mr. Fox and Mr. Rabbit were having tea. Suddenly Mr. Fox had an idea. Have another cookie, said the rabbit...."

Twice as many children will now be able to enjoy these nightly story segments due to an expansion this term in the Drop-In Child Care Center.

The center, located on the ground floor of the EMU, opened for business last November. Edd Casto, center program director, explains the reason for its creation. "We hoped the center would give students with children a chance to go to both day and evening classes, knowing that their children are safe, cared for and entertained."

Demand for the facility last year was overwhelming, says Casto. "At first there were few restrictions on the age of children entering the center," he added, "but there was such a great response that soon we had to cut down on the number of infants and school-age children coming in." Last year, Casto remembers, the center turned away approximately one child a day.

Acting on an Affirmative Action recommendation, the center raised the maximum of children handled each night from six to twelve this term. Age restrictions were also broadened to include children from 12 to 20 months.

"Affirmitive Action was interested in offering more women a chance to go to night school," Casto explains. "With our new entrance policy," he sayd, "we will be able to do this and handle most of the children who come to us."

Casto emphasizes that in spite of the enrollment increase, the center strives for quality in care. "At all times we have one civil service supervisor for each age level," he says, "and a varying number of work-study employes. Additional employes have been hired this quarter for the extra children."

The center is divided into several special interest areas within one room. There is an area for science, another for rough play, and even one for housekeeping. Some of these areas are defined by the actual structure of the building, such as the sunken story-telling pit, designed like a miniature coliseum. The science area features puzzles. Apple juice is on tap in the care center.

In spite of the many services offered, price for care has remained relatively low. Depending on the child's age and on whether or not one of this parents is a student, the charge may be as low as 85 cents an hour.

Only the rent of the drop-in center is subsidized. The cost of supplies, salaries and cirriculum materials all come out of child care charges. "Needless to say, we are a non-profit organization," Casto says.

The Drop-In Child Care Center is one of two child-care centers sponsored by the EMU. Casto outlines the logic behind having two separate centers. "The Child Care and Development Center (CCDC) only accepts children if they are left at least a half-day. They wil charge for this entire time even if the parent only wants to leave them for one class hour. On the other hand, we are set up to charge on an hourly basis and are open during the night as well," to provide flexible care.

Casto added that the addition of the drop-in center was recommended to handle the overload at the CCDC.

There haven't been any drastic changes in demand for the drop-in center yet, but Casto remains confident that expansion will occur. "When people who have been turned away before learning of our new openings, when rainy weather sets in, keeping kids indoors," demand will increase, he says. "Even if people decide not to use our service, at least this year no one will be turned away."

Mayor gives nod to Gus Keller

By TOM JACKSON
Of the Emerald

Eugene Mayor Les Anderson announced Wednesday that he endorses mayoral candidate Gus Keller to replace him as mayor. Anderson's comments came in a press conference Wednesday, which he calls his last, at least for this year.

Anderson said neither Keller nor Neil Murray, the other candidate for the office, "has a monopoly on hard work or good ideas." He added that their stands "on certain issues, as well as their leadership styles, lead me to endorse Gus Keller."

Anderson said "the most vital issue today is Eugene's growth, economic and physical." He said Eugene's per capita income ranks in the lower sixth of the nation's metropolitan areas. He added that the employment outlook will not be improving. He called for "new, clean industry and businesses," and added that "we must plan for them now in an attractive, controlled-growth environment."

"This is Keller's position," said Anderson. "It is mine, too."

Referring to Murray's proposals for pre-fab housing, solar components and handicraft industries, Anderson said these "are as impractical as they are unlikely."

He said Keller's "moderate approach to our major problems will mean continued, well-managed progress for Eugene."

Regarding the issue of transportation in Eugene, Anderson said "we need a balanced system of transportation," and said that "by encouraging the use of means other than autos with incentives and alternatives, this can be done." However, he added "the automobile is the problem now.

Les Anderson

We can't wish it away." He said Murray's record shows a policy of "forced inconvenience, with limited parking, no new arterials, and minimum traffic improvements. This," said Anderson, "will only compound the problem."

Anderson said he has made his endorsement near to the time of the election out of "fairness to the candidates."

TV program on nutrition begins 4th year

"Mulligan Stew," a nutrition education television program, will begin its fourth season Monday, Nov. 1, on two Oregon public television stations, KOAC-TV, Channel 7, and KOAP-TV, Channel 10.

The program, in which over 35,000 Oregon students participated last year, will be shown at 1:30 p.m. Monday with each program repeating at 10 a.m. Wednesday.

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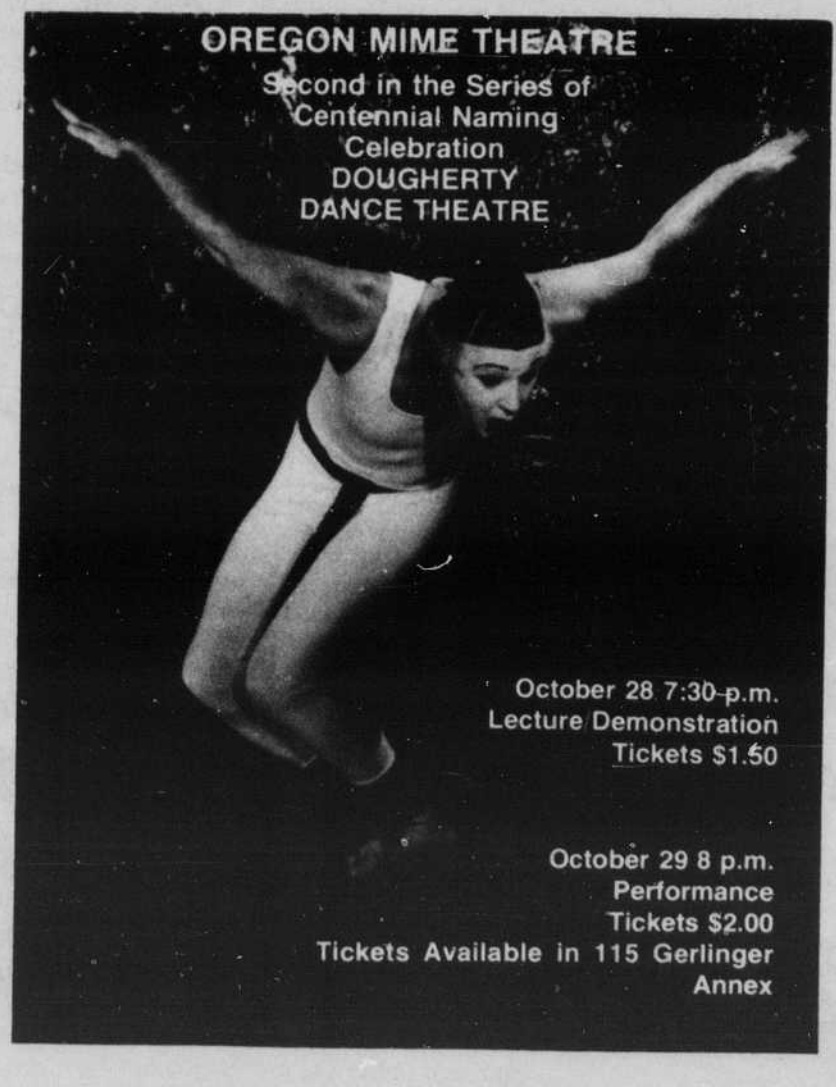
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