



Photo by Hiroshi Takagi

From bayonets to skulls to . . . dust

Flea market offers large assortment

By **JOCK HATFIELD**
Of the Emerald

Deer skulls, German bayonets, radios, empty bottles of Crown Royal, people and elephant-tusk lamps mix up on sporadic Sundays to form the Picadilly Flea Market at the Lane County Fair.

Lines of customers move up and down the aisles and tables of assorted and varied dust covered stuff. "What's this?" a customer asks one of the booth owners, indicating a rusty metal thing which looks like the offspring of an ice-cream machine and a thumbscrew.

"A lard press," the owner answers. "They used to put the lard in here," she points to nowhere in particular, "and it would come out this hole."

Further down the row lay piles of "Scooby Doo" comic books, flat irons without the handles and a brass bird cage.

"It's great," commented one University student, a frequenter of the Picadilly market. "A lot of the stuff is over-priced, but there are

good buys, too. I bought a leather saddlebag worth over \$50 for \$12. The people are great to talk with, too."

On the other side of the tables, barricaded from the customers by their merchandise, stand the entrepreneurs. One couple, a tall friendly man wearing a hat and checkered shirt, and his short, smiling wife, stood behind 1920 waffle irons, toasters and lamps. "Just call us Earl and Twiggy," says Earl. "That's what everyone calls us."

Earl and Twiggy have been selling at the market periodically for four years, ever since Earl retired. "I couldn't quit working," said Earl. "I went hunting, fishing — all of it; but I got bored, so we had to get back out and do something."

Earl pointed to a large archaic radio, marked \$10.50. "That's an old timer, from the '30s," he says. "We picked it up along with that toaster in Eureka."

Earl and Twiggy move around the West Coast collecting and selling items in flea markets along the

way. "My wife and I have a house trailer, and we just travel wherever we want," he said with a laugh. "We do run into some trouble though, storing all the stuff in our trailer."

Earl displays a picture of his most valuable items, which he traded for in Roseburg. They start at the bottom with wooden bases carved in the shape of tiger paws, move up to a combination of an elephant's tusk and spear body, and finish with a rhinoceros belly lampshade and a lightbulb.

"They are elephant tusk lamps," says Earl. "They were made in Africa, near the diamond mines in 1904." The lamps are now on lease to Wildlife Safari, according to Earl. "No, we don't make much money at these markets," he said, "but we enjoy it."

In back of a table filled with leftover pieces of war; bayonets, officers' daggers, various rifles and a red and black Nazi flag, sat another seller, Leon Blum. "I've been fascinated with this sort of thing ever since I was growing

up," says Blum, who has sold at the market three times. "I'm interested in history, and these things communicate it."

Judy Brown of Eugene sells baskets made out of bread at a cost of about \$6 each. Dough is rolled, shaped in a criss-cross pattern, baked and varnished. "We can make about two in an hour," says Brown, sitting behind a dozen of the baskets.

Behind a "Savage 91" hunting rifle, and several dozen clamp-on Mason jars, sits Alan Hertzog and his family. "We found most of the jars in an old hayloft," volunteers Hertzog, who, with a large flowing beard and a small smiling face, has a rather religious appearance. "We climbed up in this old barn, and found the whole place full of them."

Several women paw through a box of black spidery-looking metal things. "They're harness buckles," explains George Richardson, who discovered the buckles

in Junction City. "They were in the old harness shop — you know, for horses." Richardson says customers can do anything they want with the buckles.

A.B. Wagoner of Eugene sits behind a jungle of house plants which merge together and frame him in a large wreath. "I grow the plants myself out in the back yard," says Wagoner. The prices of the plants range up to \$2, but Wagoner says in his three years at the market, he has not been out to make money. "I'm retired, and I guess you could say it's a hobby."

Others are more interested in the financial aspects of the market. "Do you think I'm going to talk to you when I've got customers walking by?" says one man standing behind, among other things, a boot-shaped cigarette lighter and an American flag labeled "comforter."

The Picadilly Flea market is one of two operating out of the Lane County Fairgrounds.

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