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City has 'head start' on decade, says mayor



Photo by Joe Schnabel

Eugene Mayor Gus Keller says 1979 was a productive year for the city despite budget cuts, the condominium controversy and increased traffic. Keller made an annual "State of the City" address Monday night to an audience of 80 people.

By TAMARA SWENSON
Of the Emerald

The City of Eugene has had difficulties in the past year, but they are nothing that can't be dealt with and handled effectively, Mayor Gus Keller said Monday night.

Keller told city council members and the nearly 80 people who gathered to hear his "State of the City" address that Eugene has a "head start" in dealing with problems as it enters the 1980s — its "precedent for creative problem solving."

The problems, he said, are budget deficits, the condominium controversy, and increased traffic. Recent solutions include making "peace" with the field burners and the completion of the Eugene/Springfield Metropolitan Plan.

The next three months, will be a critical period in the decade, he said.

Earlier this month the city began a series of budget cuts to eliminate a \$1.6 million deficit and ensure the city makes it through the fiscal year, which ends June 30.

Close budget examination of city programs and departments is especially necessary since Eugene voters will face a tax-base election, mandated by the Legislature for all cities that have gone outside their tax bases for the last three years, Keller said.

In May 1979, voters approved an additional tax levy of \$6.4 million to supplement the tax base, state and federal funds.

But, despite problems, the city began to realize some of the goals set in 1978, Keller said.

The recent accord with the grass seed industry should help to ensure clean air in the Willamette Valley, ending a conflict that began as the 1970s got underway, he said.

The updated 1990 plan, now the Eugene/Springfield Metropolitan Plan, asks citizens to focus on what they want their community to be like in the year

2000, Keller added. The plan has served as a guide for many council decisions.

"We were able to zero in on many specific problems when the condominium conversion issue came before us," Keller said, expressing optimism for "creative long-range plans to provide a variety of downtown living alternatives."

The city council approved a six-month condominium conversion moratorium last November, aimed at halting conversion of the Patterson and Willamette Towers, two Eugene apartment complexes which house a large number of elderly residents.

But the moratorium is only temporary — and it's facing challenge from the developers who own the buildings.

The City Council is scheduled to discuss Wednesday possible exemptions to the moratorium, provided in the city's legislation, for the Boise, Idaho, developers. The Portland law firm representing the developers has filed an appeal with the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals and a civil suit in Portland federal district court.

The mayor also cited improvements to Eugene's transportation system as a major accomplishment.

"Increased traffic is one of the growing pains felt in the central city and in the community at large," Keller said, adding that the council's approval of a large-scale paratransit program and of a parking program reduced the volume of employee traffic downtown, eliminating much of the congestion and parking shortage.

With population growth at an average 3 percent per year since the Metro Plan was first adopted in 1972, Eugene could have as many as 206,000 residents by 2000.

"The City of Eugene needs all of its citizens working together. ... I believe this is a city of open doors and open minds," said Keller.

"If we take the leap into the new decade together, this can be a pivotal year for Eugene."

Photographer captures drama of whale life

By STEWART WRIGHT
Of the Emerald

"Marine mammals are wonderful animals, highly evolved animals. There's nothing that moves so beautifully as a dolphin."

That's how National Geographic photographer Bill Curtsinger describes his feelings towards the creatures he has photographed for a good share of his life.

"But when you watch these animals day to day," Curtsinger adds, "you realize that it's a rough life out there."

"They have bellies to fill," he says. "Everything they do has a reason."

Curtsinger and Brower spoke to a full house in the EMU Ballroom Monday night and showed slides of a variety of marine mammals, including sperm whales, dolphins, and narwhals, known best for the long, spiral tusk which extends from upper jaw of males.

Ken Brower wrote the text of a

large, hardcover book called "The Wake of the Whale," filled with a decade's worth of Curtsinger's best photographs.

He agrees with Curtsinger's appreciation of whales and dolphins.

"We share a belief that that's enough," he says. "There's a school that wants to make little flipped gurus out of the dolphins."

Though people hold an intense interest in whales and dolphins, Brower says, the feeling isn't mutual — dolphins are only interested in dolphins.

Curtsinger began his career by working as a photographer for the U.S. Navy. He first photographed whales while based in Antarctica. And he has photographed them for the National Geographic.

He first explored the ideas that led to "The Wake of the Whale" with David Brower, Ken Brower's father.

The older Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth, collaborat-

ed with Ken Brower on other books of a similar format. "And one day," Curtsinger says, "Ken showed up on my doorstep and stayed for a month."

Much of the text is derived from Curtsinger's conversations with Brower and from Curtsinger's journal. Brower illustrates Curtsinger's experiences by photographing marine mammals around the world.

Brower describes the book as a "celebration of the animal." He says their book tries to "play

down the harangue" that is often associated with people who speak and write about whales.

Searching for whales tries the patience, Curtsinger says. He uses scientific data and reported sightings, yet he often puts in 10-hour days without seeing anything.

But when Curtsinger and Brower hear the whales' "singing," they say the waiting is worthwhile.

Brower says the "songs" are felt as vibrations — not heard.

Once the two even "felt" the whales' music while in a boat on top of the water, he says.

Curtsinger says his next project is photographing krill — a major food for whales — next month in Antarctica.

Brower plans to continue writing his monthly column in Omni magazine, and working on his first novel, which is about Micronesia.

Their stop at the University is (Continued on Page 3)

today

If declining enrollment doesn't cause enough headaches for college administrators, they also must worry about keeping students in school who do register. The teachers of a new class say they know how to do it. See Page 4.

Four ASUO officials, including Pres. Scott Bassett, will fly to Washington, D.C., with a University Veterans Association member late this month for an American Student Association conference — at a cost of \$920. See Page 5.