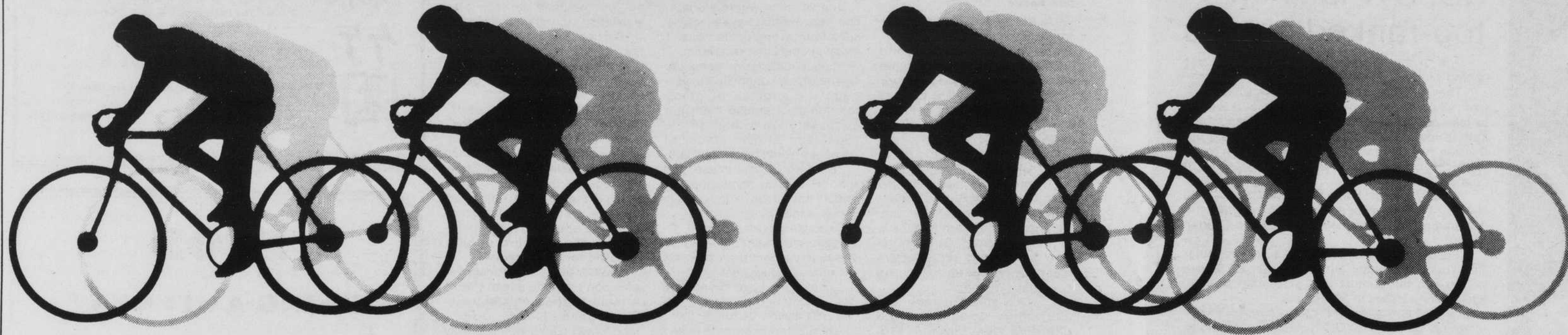




Emerald graphic

A pedaler's paradise

Bikeway construction increases ridership

Stories
By HARRY ESTEVE
Of the Emerald

The bicycle is emerging as a crucial mode of transportation in Eugene, thanks to an abundance of city bikeways.

That's the opinion of city bicycle officials and local bicyclists.

Eugene bicycle coordinator Charles Nordgaard says construction of city bicycling facilities is largely responsible for a dramatic ridership increase.

Nordgaard uses 18th Avenue as an example. In 1977, before 18th Avenue had a bike lane, 87 cyclists passed one street location during the course of a day. After a bike lane was added in 1979, 304 passed the same location in one day.

"It only makes sense," Nordgaard says. "When you provide citizens with streets, they use their cars. The same holds true for bicycles and bikeways."

Alder Street, the main artery to the University from the south, was traveled by 1,360 cyclists during one day in 1977. By 1980 the number of cyclists had nearly tripled to 3,527 a day.

"I think we can call that successful," Nordgaard says.

At the heart of the city's bikeway policy is the Eugene Bikeways Master Plan, an 88-page document that assesses the need for city bicycling facilities and details where each should be built.

When it was approved by the city council in 1975, the plan called for construction of about 125 miles of signed bike routes, striped bike lanes along city streets, and separate bicycle paths through city parks and along the Willamette River.

Since then the plan has been updated to reflect changes in people's cycling habits and to recognize new construction priorities. The plan now calls

for 150 miles of bikeways.

Currently, about 60 miles of bikeways are available to cyclists — enough to give Eugene a reputation as a pedaler's Promised Land.

Ranked with cities such as Davis, Cal., and Redmond, Wash., as one of the best U.S. cities for bike riding, Eugene is often used as a model by other communities designing bikeway systems.

Nordgaard says Eugene's success is due to a wealth of citizen participation and a "very supportive, very cooperative" city council.

Since approval of the master plan, the city has budgeted approximately \$70,000 each year for bikeway construction and maintenance.

But city officials say riders in Eugene's core area and around the University may not notice many changes because most of those paths have been completed. Most new construction will take place in the city's outlying areas.

Several cyclists who recently stopped on the Autzen bicycle bridge to watch the river and enjoy the unseasonal sunshine reflected what seems to be typical approval of Eugene's bikeways.

"I use it all the time," said Craig Spencer, a University art major. "It seems pretty good to me, but I think we could always use more."

"For bicyclists, this is the best town I've ever been in," he said.

Bonnie Craig, a 13-year-old bicycling enthusiast, said she uses the bikeways everyday for a five-mile ride to unwind.

"After school, you're all cramped up," Craig said. "Riding helps you relax."

But she says some of the older bikeways are starting to deteriorate. "Some repairs would be nice," she said.

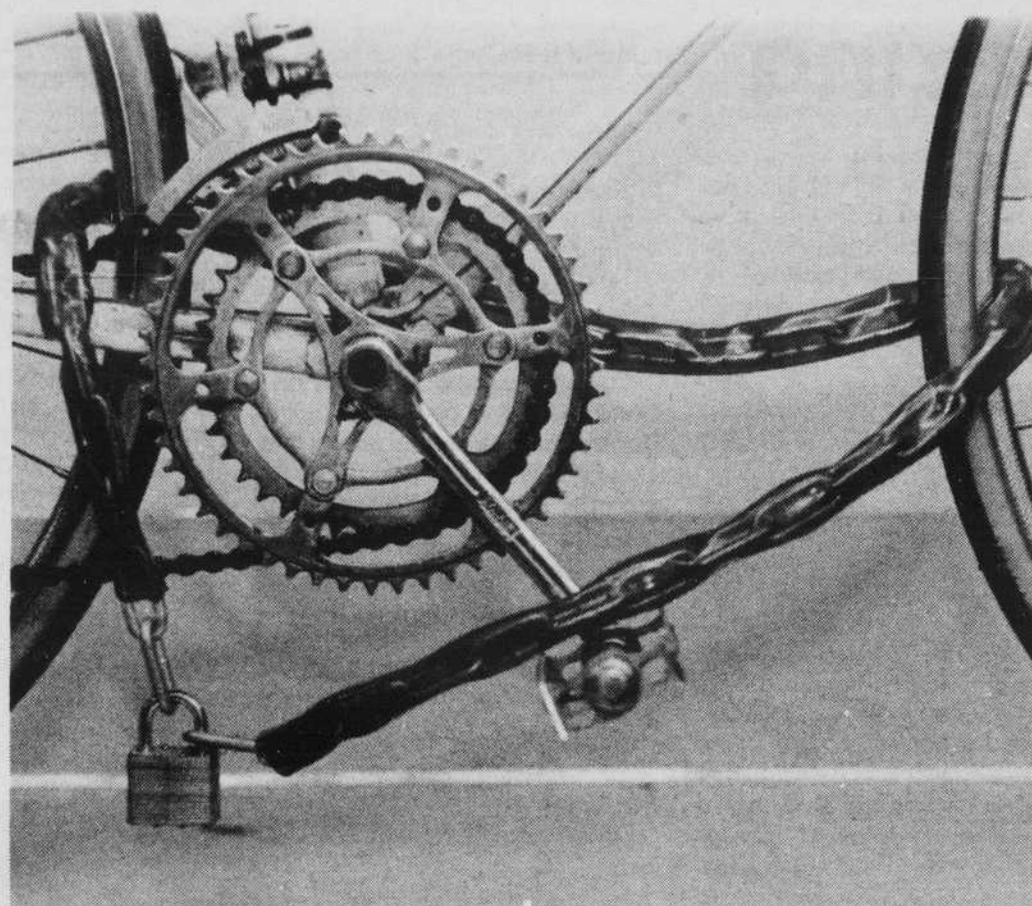


Photo by Steve Dykes

Bicycle registration helps beat theft

The thousands of bicycles parked on campus each day are the source of the University's biggest crime headache, says campus security officer Karen Riley.

Last year, thieves stole \$150,000 worth of bikes from the campus and West University areas alone, says Riley. He calls bike theft "the major crime on campus."

In 1980, 203 bikes disappeared from campus racks, and another 254 were stolen from West University neighborhood homes. These figures increase steadily every year, Riley says.

The high theft rate should make students think about registering their bikes with campus security, but not deter them for riding to school, Riley says.

The University's required bicycle registration program is the "only reliable way to return stolen bikes," she says.

When a bike is registered, its serial number is fed into a nationwide computer system. A bike can be identified and returned to its owner if found anywhere in the United States.

The return rate has been "almost nil" so far, but Riley says the new program hasn't been given a chance because not enough students register their bikes.

Many stolen bikes are found each year, but few make it back to their original owners. She said a stolen bike usually is stripped of its familiar features and repainted, making it difficult or impossible to identify.

Recovered bicycles that aren't returned to their owners are auctioned off each year.

Registration also serves as a "deterrent to a thief," Riley adds, "because he doesn't want to steal a registered bike."

This year, after campus security officers stapled notices onto unregistered bicycles to remind students of the \$2 required registration,

between 2,500 and 3,000 complied. This represents a "tremendous increase over last year," Riley says, and next year's theft and recovery statistics will be a more accurate assessment on the program's success.

The money from bike registration goes for construction of campus bike facilities.

In an effort to protect more bicycles, campus security will operate a registration booth outside the EMU every last Monday of the month for the rest of the year. Not only can students complete the \$2 registration at the booth, but they also can get their driver's license number stamped on their bicycle frame. Students can get the same services by taking their bikes to the campus security office.

Besides registering their bicycles, Riley urges all students to report any suspicious activity around bike racks. Thefts have been taking place in daylight and in plain view, she says.

"We have found that there are organized rings of bike thieves on this campus. They go up to a bike rack wearing a long coat, pull out a pair of bolt cutters, cut the lock and they're gone."

Although locks aren't a sure answer to theft prevention, Riley says students can reduce the chances of having their bike stolen by improving their security habits.

Too many owners fail to lock their bike to a rack, simply wrapping the chain or cable around the wheel and the frame. This makes it easy for a thief to simply pick the bike up and walk away.

Any student who sees someone walking through campus carrying a locked bike should contact campus security immediately.

Plain clothes officers sometimes watch campus bike racks, Riley says. But without the help of students, bike theft will continue to be a major problem.

University schedules bike experiments

Bicycles and pedestrians don't always mix well on campus — especially during the hourly class-change melee.

The University is aware of the potential for accidents and is working on the 13th Avenue bike-traffic problem, says campus planner David Rowe.

The new curbs and painted bike lane along the closed portion of 13th Avenue and Kincaid are the beginning of a "series of experiments" intended to find the best way to merge cyclists and pedestrians, Rowe says.

A sign informing bicyclists of the test will soon be placed at the campus entrance at 13th Avenue and Kincaid Street, he says.

During spring term the bike lane will be moved from its position along the north side of 13th Avenue to the center.

Cones, bike racks and paint will mark the new lane, "so we're not spending a lot of money," Rowe says.

Later in the term, the bike lane will be repositioned, this time with one lane running along each side of 13th Avenue.

University Physical Plant employees will study each position to determine which works best.

The recently constructed curbs have been the target of criticism but Rowe says, "they are just not complete, so they look a little strange."

Other changes being considered by University bicycle planners include dismount zones on campus walkways and bicycle restrictions during class changes.

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There is a vacancy on the Board of Directors of the University of Oregon Bookstore, Inc. The position available is to fill the remaining term of office, graduate student position. The term of office will end May 28, 1981. For purposes of membership on the Board of Directors, any fully accredited student in the graduate school, with a baccalaureate degree, who is registered at the University, may apply for this position. Graduate student Board members must carry and maintain a course load of not less than nine units.

All interested students or anyone wishing to nominate a person for the position should come to the main office of the Bookstore. Anyone having questions regarding the duties of the position should contact Jim Williams at the Bookstore. Applications will be taken until 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 4, 1981. Interviews will be given on Thursday, March 5, and a selection will be made at the forthcoming Board meeting.

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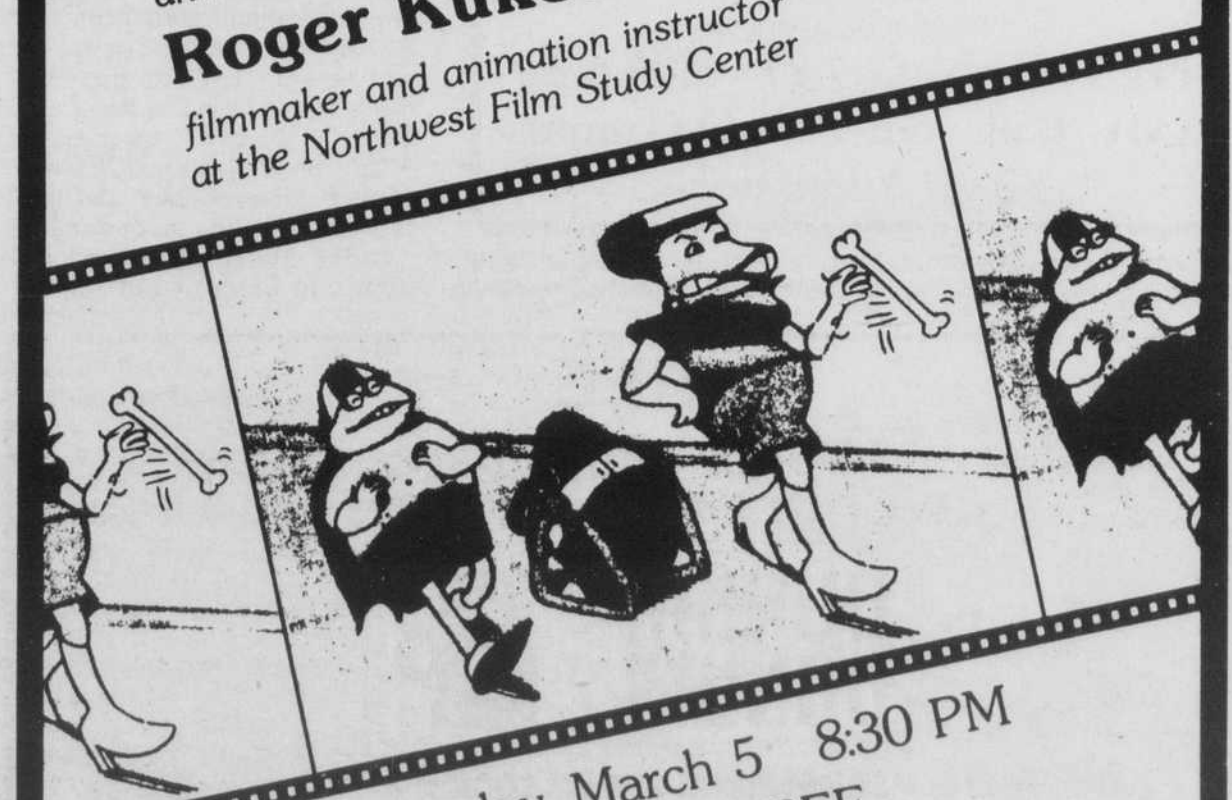
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