

# Inhaling the Oregon Country Fair

By DONALD COULTER  
Of the Emerald

I had never been to the Oregon Country Fair before and I didn't know what to expect.

"It's like an expanded version of Saturday Market out in the woods," someone told me. Just another hippie scene, others said.

Wrong.

The best word I can find to describe this fair is BIZARRE. Wonderfully bizarre.

As I walk in the entrance, a marching band in costumes straight out of Alice in Wonderland passes by. A small kid with a silver balloon twice his size tugs through the crowd at knee-high level. A man on stilts reaches down and tickles the top of my head.

I turn the corner and come upon a group of musicians who look like they crawled out of a copy of National Geographic. One is playing a wooden flute and the others are beating on bongos and congas. Dancers in medieval costumes bob to the infectious rhythms.

The smells are intoxicating — barbecued chicken, corn-on-the-cob,



Photo by Erich Boekelheide

curried rice. I want a little of everything. Ten minutes in this place and I am famished, as if I had been fasting for a week.

There are exotic foods with names I

can't begin to pronounce. I make my decision, giving instructions with my finger as to what I want. Extra sauce? Sure, and sprinkle some of that brown stuff on top, please.

People everywhere are glowing with smiles. Everybody is high. Some are on drugs — in the span of a few hundred yards I am offered marijuana cookies by everyone but the Pillsbury Dough Boy — but most people are high on the joy of just being part of this three-ring circus.

Watching people is the best pastime. A court jester is eating a cream puff with a hand-carved wooden spoon. A woman dressed like an elf is juggling bowling pins. The winner of a Mahatma Gandhi look-alike contest is performing raga chants for a small crowd.

As I make a path toward one of the makeshift restrooms, I make eye contact with a guy who has painted his face in psychedelic colors. "Is this place for real?" he asks incredulously.

I reply only with a smile.

Nope, I think to myself. Nothing is real out here. And that's what makes it so much fun.

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## Conference 'successful'

Last week's seminar on legal solutions to help end racial disputes was "a definite success," says law school dean Derrick Bell.

"I think the four weeks of discussion and the increased awareness of the origin of some of the problems will be very helpful for those who are involved in litigation," Bell says.

"Racial Issues in a Time of Crisis," sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar for Lawyers and Judges, was held at the University from June 15 through July 10.

Thirteen seminar participants were selected from a field of nearly 60 applicants, Bell says.

"We've been looking at the history of racial issues and at the current problems in schools, protest rights, employment and housing, and have been trying to determine whether there are newer, better remedies that might be tried," Bell says.

Bell says the seminar addressed a number of questions including the impact of the current political climate on existing solutions to racial problems.

"Some of the housing remedies that the courts have been ordering assume the availability of federal funds for housing subsidies and things like that," he says.

"A lot of that support — community grants and what have you — is disappearing. So the question is, what good are those revenues that the courts have handed down in the context of a depressed economy?"

Nevertheless, despite these hard questions, Bell says he felt much was accomplished during the seminar.

"A few people approached me about writing in the area (of racial problems) and some approached me about the possibility of teaching at local law schools on a part-time basis," Bell says.

"So I think there are a number of positive spinoffs that can be expected."

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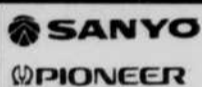
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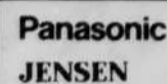


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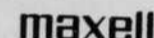


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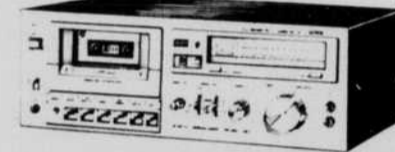
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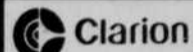
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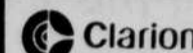
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