

# Eugene accommodates cyclists

*Bicycles are not toys in this city. In this special section, bicycle rules and regulations — both on campus and off — are discussed. So are local bike shops, safety suggestions and theft prevention measures.*

By ERIC JONES  
For the Emerald

Amid a steady stream of traffic a young woman sings as she pedals her three-speed equipped with bulky fenders and a large basket. A racer shifts gears and passes the woman.

The scene could be almost anywhere in Eugene. More than 80 miles of bike routes in Eugene and Springfield radiate from the University, connecting the campus with West Eugene, River Road, Valley River and Springfield. A 10-mile bike path skirts both banks of the Willamette River, providing long, leisurely rides and allowing access to riverside parks and neighborhoods.

Three bike bridges cross the river — the Autzen Bridge, the Greenway Bridge at Valley River, and the Willie Knickerbocker Bridge just below Interstate 5. A new, lighted stretch of bike path connects the Knickerbocker Bridge with Franklin Boulevard. Bikes also can cross the Ferry Street Bridge.

And work continues on new bike routes. The Amazon bikeway is being rebuilt with a tunnel under 30th Avenue, and according to Charles Nordgaard, bicycling co-coordinator for the city, a new city policy calls for including bike lanes whenever a street defined in the bicycle master plan is reconstructed.

The original plan for 150 miles of bikeway in Eugene has been expanded to more than 170

miles. "We're adding more all the time," Nordgaard says.

A map compiled by the Eugene Public Works Department and Peter Eberhardt, a recent University geology graduate will be published sometime this fall. Eberhardt says the map, based on Portland's bike map, will be on a larger scale than the present map and will use a four-color code to indicate safe routes.

Nordgaard says the University generates much of the bicycle traffic in Eugene. Counts taken on Alder Street last year showed between 1,000 and 2,000 bicycles passing in a single day, twice the amount carried by most other routes in the city.

Nordgaard says he feels that more cooperation in bicycle planning is needed between the city and the University.

"(The University's) facilities connect with ours. We've got to have consistency, because lack of consistency can lead to confusion," he says.

University planner David Rowe agrees that the University and the city don't always work together, but he says, "cooperation is a two-way street."

In defense of the 15th Avenue bike lane between University and Agate streets, which has been criticized by city planners for not conforming to city standards, Rowe says, "It works — there haven't been any accidents, not even any near misses."

Rowe also says the city has not been willing to cooperate with the University in designing a connector path along the south side of the Willamette River.

"Despite our objections, the city has designed a bike path right through the center of the biology experimental gardens," he says.

Eberhardt, a member of the city's bicycling committee, says that everyone is welcome to express his or her ideas to the city.

"It's the best way to help us fine tune such a big system," he says.

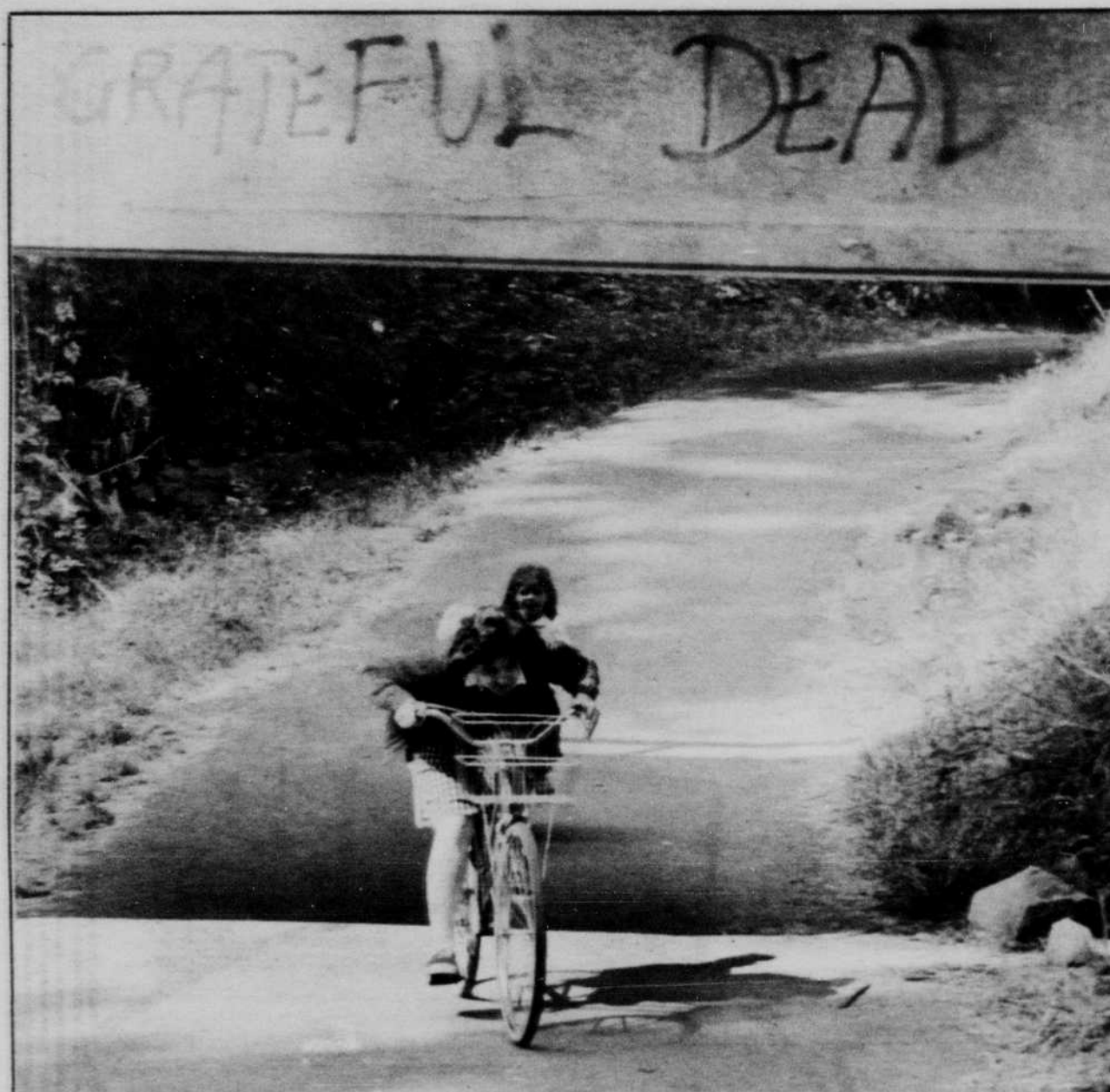
Nordgaard says the importance of bicycling as a means of transportation has been firmly established in Eugene, and now the biggest project is safety education.

"Bikes are no longer toys, they're now commuter vehicles," he says.

Nonetheless, "Sprocket Man," a red and blue-suited "superhero" who looks a lot like Spiderman, appears in educational comic books and locally televised public-service announcements to carry his message of safe bike riding.

Nordgaard warns cyclists that most accidents happen because motorists aren't aware that bicycles are in the street. Following traffic rules and wearing a helmet can prevent simple errors in judgment from becoming fatal accidents, he says.

Nordgaard has worn a helmet since he received a concussion after being struck by a car. **Continued on Page 24B**



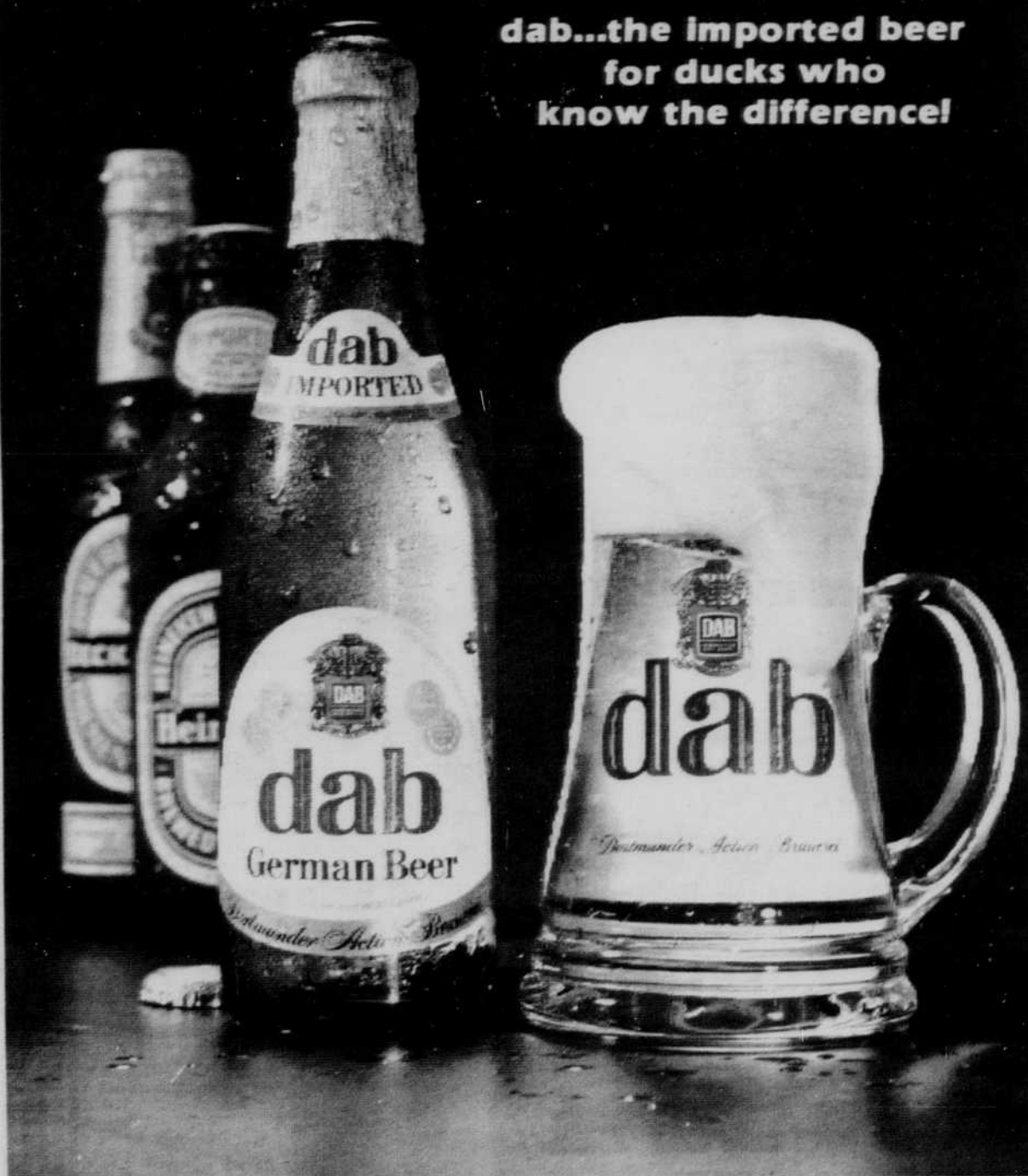
On the paths, cycling is a breeze. Miles of paved bike routes provide easy riding for families or single commuters.



In the city, caution and safety equipment are necessary, but ample bike lanes keep cars and cycles separate. Photos by Erich Boekeheide

## DUCK BEER

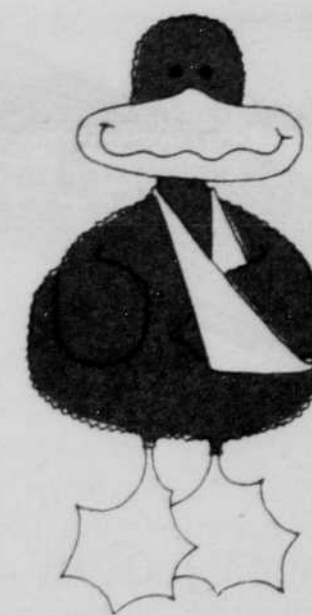
dab...the imported beer for ducks who know the difference!



DESSERTS AND COFFEE DRINKS

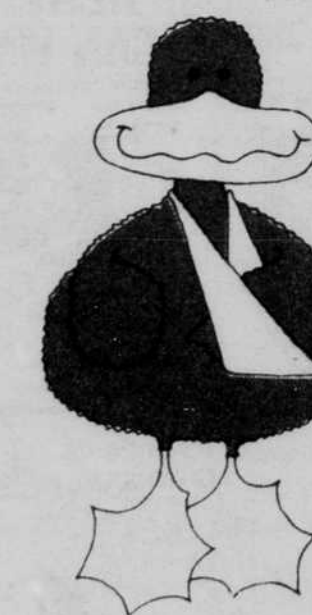
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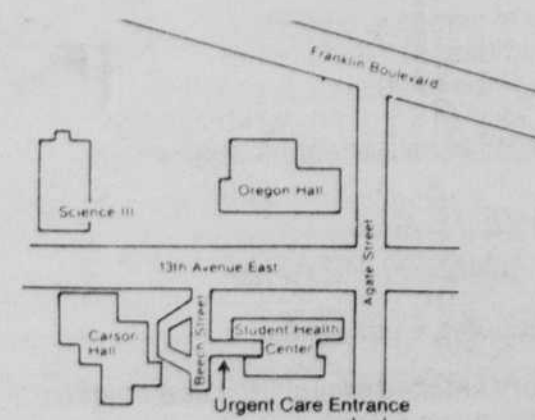
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