

New fare may lure riders

LTD lowers bus fares

By MARIAN GREEN
Of the Emerald

University students may be pleasantly suprised to find they can climb aboard a Lane Transit District bus for at least ten cents cheaper than last week.

And that's not all that's new.

The transit district has been working in the past several months to revamp and streamline its bus system to meet the needs of bus riders.

The public transportation agency has held public workshops and hearings, a "transit day," conducted several surveys and launched a publicity campaign for its revised service.

Sunday was the culmination of all that effort when the new service went on line.

LTD redesigned its service because people's needs were changing, says Ed Bergeron, an LTD marketing representative.

"We were providing a bus system mainly for people who couldn't drive or afford a car. Now people want to take the bus to school or to work on a regular basis," Bergeron says.

In the spring of 1980, LTD's board of directors increased the bus fare from 35 to 60 cents — partially was responsible for a 28 percent ridership drop, Bergeron says.



Emerald graphic

LTD hopes to regain a good portion of that lost ridership by lower fares, Bergeron says.

As of Sunday, the 60-cent fare was lowered to 50 cents, and bus tokens, which can be purchased in the University area at 7-11 stores, the EMU Main Desk and the University Bookstore, cost only 40 cents. "Fastpass" monthly bus passes were lowered to \$16 for adults, \$12 for youths and \$8 for children.

"It's a good faith effort to get people back on the buses," Bergeron says.

The major route change involved switching the LTD bus system to a "line route" system, which means routes will run both directions, incoming and outgoing.

Bergeron says this switch allows roundabout one-direction

routes to be dropped without major rider inconvenience.

Under the new system, buses arrive most frequently at the route stops during morning and afternoon commuting hours when ridership is heaviest. For high ridership routes, that may be every half hour. On less crowded routes, buses may arrive less often, Bergeron says.

Formerly, LTD buses covered more streets in less frequent runs, he says.

"The trade-off has been coverage," he says but adds that LTD still passes within a quarter-mile of 86 percent of the Eugene-Springfield community's households.

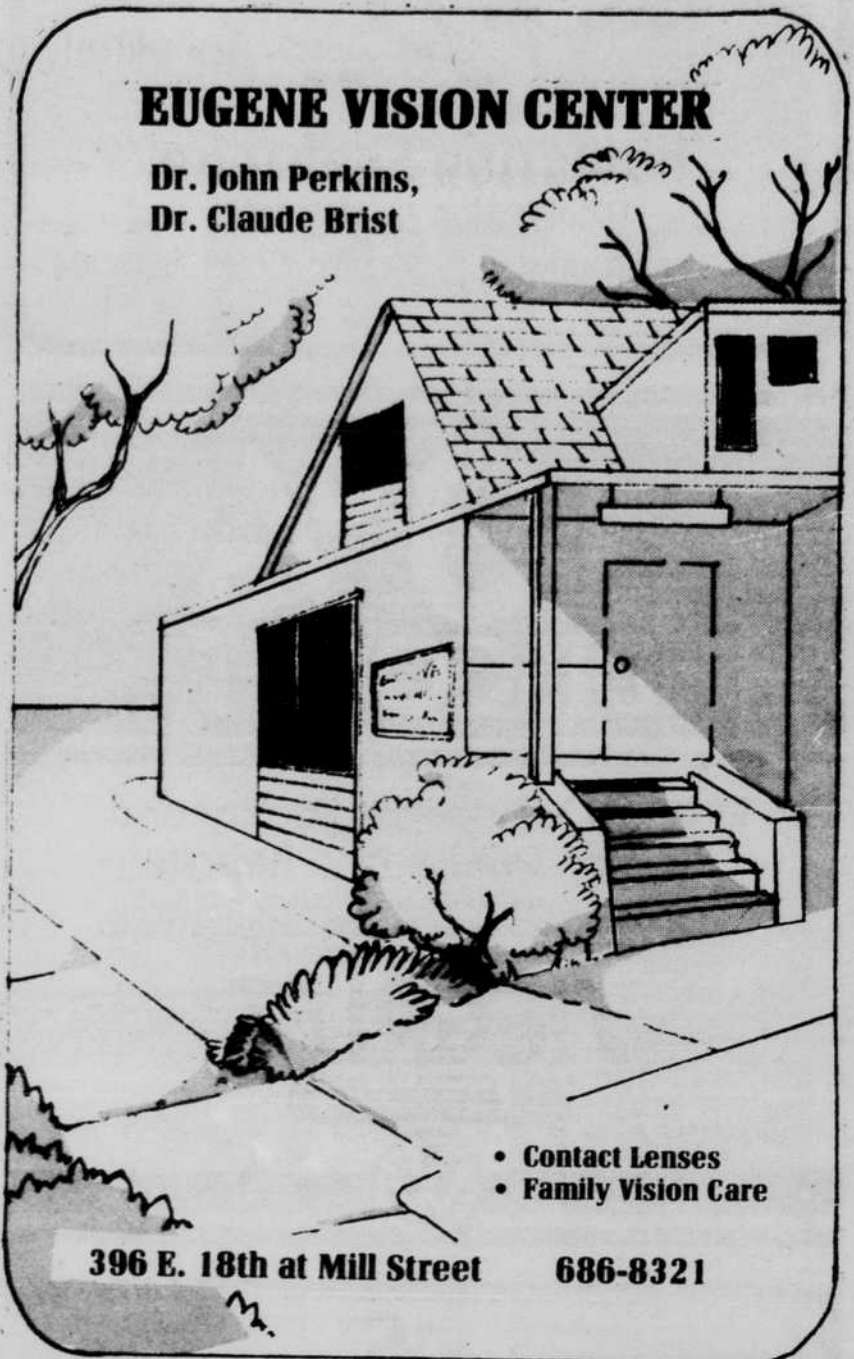
"Given the limited resources we have to work with, it only makes sense to allocate them where ridership is heaviest," he says. "When traffic is jammed and everyone is trying to get home, that's when we should have the most buses."

Bergeron says LTD will be monitoring the new system closely in the next few weeks and months in order to make adjustments.

To minimize rider confusion with the new system, LTD workers distributed leaflets to six Eugene neighborhoods outlining changes "so they don't get lost," Bergeron says.

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Cafe fire caused by fat fryer

Five Eugene Fire Department units responded to a blaze at the EMU Wednesday afternoon that caused an estimated \$3,500 damage to the student union building's grill area. Firefighters extinguished the fire in approximately 15 minutes.

A malfunction in the heating element of a deep fat fryer started the fire, according to Jim Jensen, a fire department inspector.

"We used fire extinguishers to keep flames knocked down," said Jim Covington, EMU food service director. "The flames were only about two feet high. I was happy with the way people handled it and there were no injuries."

The EMU was evacuated when the 2:15 p.m. fire alarm sounded. "The evacuation of about 350 people went smoothly with no injuries," said Adell McMillan, EMU director.

Preliminary reports that indicated the fire retardant system housed above the fryer did not activate during the blaze were false, according to Jensen. He reported the chemical retardant was released and helped to squelch the flames.

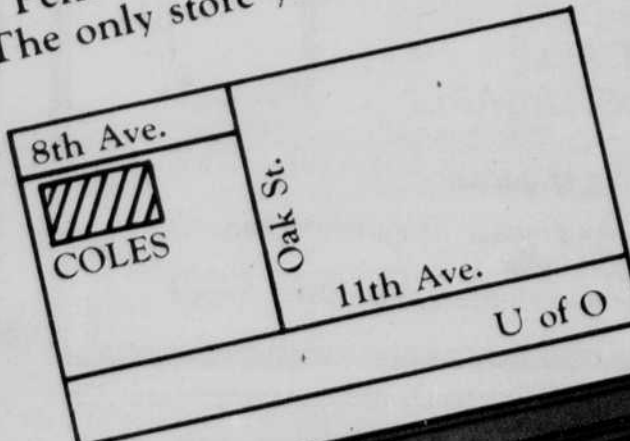
Although the retardant was released, the heating element thermostat of the deep fat fryer failed to shut the fryer off when the flames started.

"The system has been checked out now and is in good condition," Jensen said.

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