

# emerald

## Hilton openers fight cold, faulty door

by Marian Green  
Of the Emerald

The Eugene Hilton threw open its doors Saturday with the flourish and style expected of the grand opening of a grand hotel.

About 150 Eugeniens braved freezing temperatures Saturday morning to witness ribbon-cutting that marked the official opening of the 12-story, \$16-million hotel.

Barbara Shroyer, an executive assistant manager, said the opening was "pretty smooth" despite a few minor setbacks, such as the front door handle that fell off prior to the ribbon ceremony.

Ribbon-cutters Mayor Gus Keller, Hilton manager Alex Christ, James Fahs (president of Development Associates Inc., owners of the hotel), and Greg Dillon (a vice president of Hilton Hotels Inc.), first attempted to slice the ribbon with four-foot-long sissors of gold-colored cardboard but eventually achieved success with 12-inch brass-colored metal sissors.

"I'd like to thank the citizens of Eugene for helping make this commitment come about," said Keller, who predicted the Hilton would be "the heartbeat of downtown."

"We're very pleased to be here and will be happier when we get inside," said Keller, referring to the shivering cold temperatures.

Pink cheeks and numb red

noses of the 15 South Eugene High School band members who played jazz tunes for the crowd assembled in front of the Hilton were constant reminders of the cold.

The new hotel, which opened three months ahead of schedule, is part of a \$50 million performing arts center complex under construction between Sixth and Seventh Avenues and Oak and Olive Streets in downtown Eugene. A conference center opens in March and the Eugene Performing Arts Center is scheduled to open in September.

The hotel has two restaurants—Encore, which won't open until Feb. 1, and Oscar's, a moderately priced family restaurant. In addition, the hotel has several special suites and meeting rooms, including a special floor—the seventh—where guests can relax in a library-lounge or a bar.

Hilton employees expressed relief that the hotel was open.

"I've got all the nervousness out," said Rudolph Hawkins, a front desk clerk.

The hotel's 180 available rooms were "all booked up" for the grand opening, Hawkins said. When the Hilton is operating fully, 276 rooms will be available, making it the largest hotel in the community.

Doormen, tall and slim in silver and black uniforms, were on their best behavior as they cheerfully pushed open the

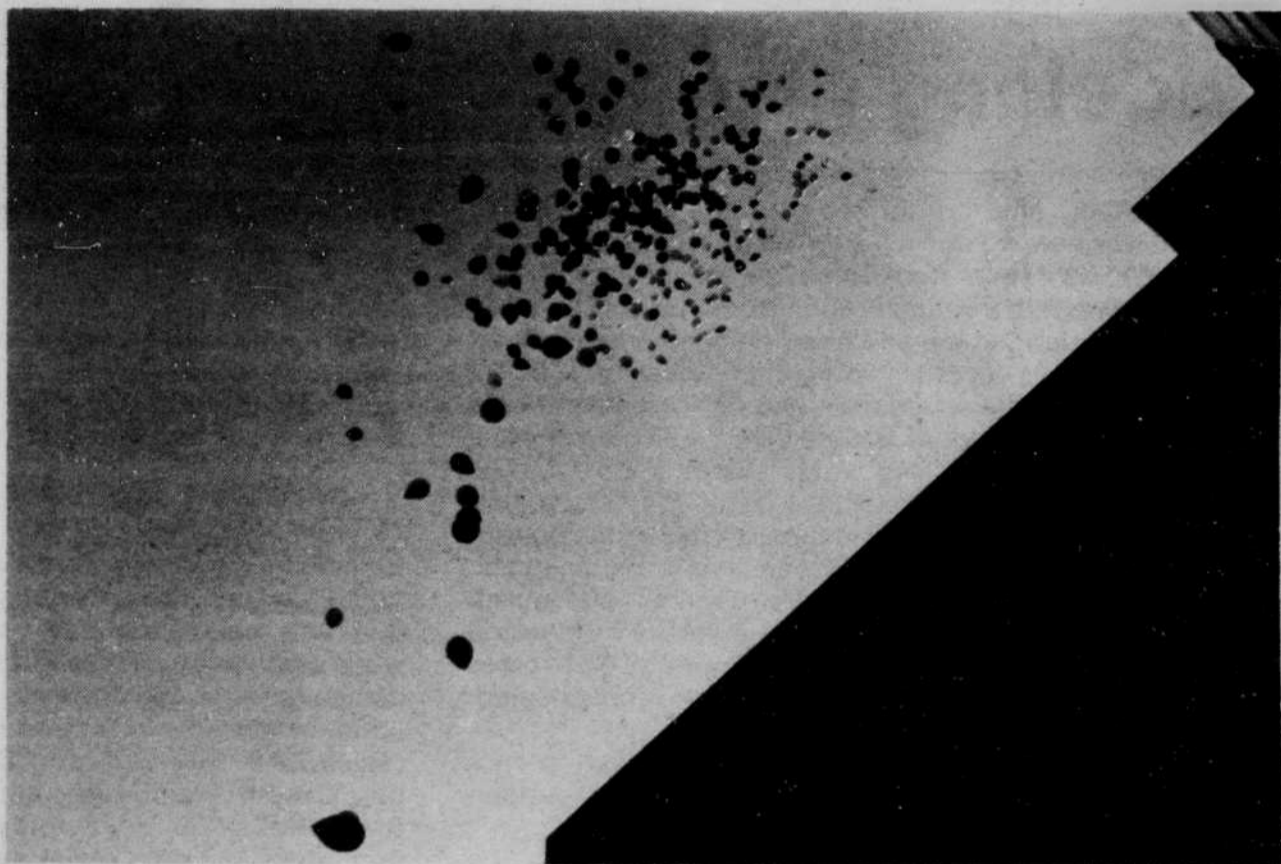


Photo by Mark Pynes

**Balloons released into the air at the ribbon-cutting ceremony were symbolic of the high hopes many have that the Hilton will add vitality to the downtown area of Eugene.**

heavy glass doors for entering and departing patrons.

"It's really neat to be at the door and have people make positive remarks about the place," said one doorman, Mark Hughes of Eugene.

Outside, long, silver-black Lincoln Continental limosines lined the turnabout, as valets paused briefly, waiting for the next automobile to arrive.

Dressed in fancy finery, visitors toured the Hilton, gazing from the velvety smooth furniture to the slanting skylights and riding the elevator to the top floor of the 12-story hotel.

Some, like John Fortna of Eugene, paid \$50 a room on opening night.

"I wanted to be here," he said, explaining that he rented two rooms—one for friends from

Medford. "It's a big event for Eugene."

Fortna said he has been involved in downtown development activities since 1974, and although he was invited to the invitation-only luncheon Saturday at the top-floor restaurant—Encore,—he declined.

"I was invited for lunch, but I have to go home and pack my suitcase," he said sheepishly.

### The Emerald's new clothes

Today's Emerald has a new look that completes a two-part redesigning effort that began Tuesday.

The new masthead and standing heads, set in eras bold and eras light typefaces, provide graphic consistency throughout the paper. The reversal—white letters on black background—sets the standing heads and the masthead apart from the black-letters-on-newsprint style of the rest of the paper.

Included in the new heads are new names for some sections of the paper. The "opinion" page has been renamed "platform" and the "inter/national news" head has been changed to "emerald inter/national." A new section, titled "back door" will begin Tuesday on the back page.

The new heads come after a "page shuffle." The editorial page was moved from Page 4 to Page 2; the inter/national page was moved from Page 5 to Page 4; and briefs and the cartoons *Bloom County* joined *Doonesbury* on the classifieds page under the heading "et. al."

### Salary cuts called 'unconscionable'

## Faculty faces budget nightmare

By Ann Portal  
Of the Emerald

Cutting salaries of higher education faculty and classified staff could create more problems than it would solve, according to several faculty and Oregon Public Employee Union representatives.

The 16-day furlough proposed by Gov. Vic Atiyeh last week, part of a \$28 million cut in higher education's budget, presents a "nightmare" of administrative and legal questions, says University Provost Richard Hill.

"Faculty salaries are already so dismal that asking the faculty to take a 6.5 percent salary cut is unconscionable," Hill says. The administration is totally opposed to such a cut, he says.

Becky Bragg, president of the University's OPEU chapter, says classified staff can afford the reduction even less than faculty.

"They're talking about the extras and we're talking about bread and butter," she says, pointing out that most classified

employees earn between \$700 and \$800 a month.

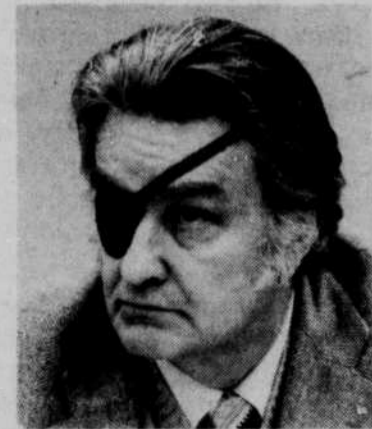
For classified staff and faculty, Atiyeh's proposal—which is based on cuts forwarded by the State Board of Higher Education—raises "a lot of legal issues," Hill says.

To begin with, both faculty and classified staff members work under contract agreements. To violate the faculty contract and place professors on furlough, the University "probably" would have to declare financial exigency, Hill says.

OPEU members, who just approved a two-year contract last July, would have to vote to re-open contract negotiations in order to get a pay reduction, Bragg says. Union members "overwhelmingly" opposed re-opening their contracts in a recent survey.

Without changing the OPEU contract, higher education support staff would have to be either laid off or put on a "temporary interruption of service" (which applies only if the furlough is less than 15 days).

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University Provost  
Richard Hill

The "temporary interruption" technique probably wouldn't accomplish much, because it would give staff the option of using accrued vacation time, and 1,500 employees have so much time accumulated that it would take more than a three-week furlough before the state would begin to save money, Bragg says.

The union favors lay-offs,

which would allow staff to collect unemployment and "bump" into positions at lower classifications, she says.

Hill points out another roadblock in slicing 6.5 percent from all salaries—not everyone at the University is paid with state funds.

Many staff are paid from auxiliary accounts, including feder-

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