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# Merchants reap benefits of Saturday Market move

By Dave Brown  
Of the Emerald

The first Saturday Market "in the park" filled the new location with shoppers and craftspersons Saturday, something that hasn't happened too much recently, says manager Howard Wade.

About 120 craftspersons — roughly 20 percent more than during the previous week — set up booths Saturday to sell their wares in the two fountain parks on either side of Oak Street downtown. Despite rain, more than twice as many customers as usual were strolling about a panorama of hand-crafted goods, musical entertainment and snack stands.

"It's been busy — real busy," Wade says. Parking lots are for cars, parks are for people, he adds.

Friends and affiliates continually congratulated Wade while he attended the market information booth Saturday afternoon. "Isn't this hot?" he often answered.

The scene in the parks was quite a difference from scenes in the parking lot the market has been calling home for the past 10 years.

The parking lot could accommodate 250 booths, he says, but 1976 was the last year there was an excess of merchants registering to rent space.

And business started downhill, gathering momentum about the middle of last year, Wade says. "It's been scary for a while," he says.

Last Christmas didn't help economically either. Rainy weather discouraged shoppers which in turn made some craftspersons decide not to set up booths.

The non-profit corporation began losing money. In April, most of the market's equipment including a performance stage, an information booth, outdoor furniture and promotion supplies was burned. Damages totalled \$10,000.

No arsonist was caught, but it

was unquestionably a set fire, Wade says.

Meanwhile the market's board of directors was spending money on promotions in an attempt to combat declining revenues.

They attempted to attract Hilton Hotel guests, and were successful to some degree, he says. Nevertheless, market revenues did not show much improvement.

By moving into the two fountain parks, the market's staff and directors hope to put some new business into the market.

The colorful throng of shoppers, merchants, entertainers and refreshment stand operators at the park location reflects more than the start of the Christmas shopping season or the promotion and excitement of the move, he says.

The parks offer a much nicer space to shop in, and connect to the downtown shopping area more directly. Those driving by can see the market panorama. The parking lot location was slightly elevated and obscured by buildings and trees.

The move also signifies an acceptance by the business community and the city, Wade says.

Market directors first entered a bid for use of the county owned parks in 1971 following its fledgling year under an elevated parking lot in the downtown mall. Instead, Lane County rented them an area on the county's Public Service Building steps. The next year, the market began renting the parking lot on Oak Street from the county at \$80 per Saturday.

However, the market's more recent request for use of the parks was backed by downtown businesses and the county.

At a Wednesday meeting, the City Council provided the market with \$18,000 to fund promotion of the move and transportation of market equipment to the new location.

Lane County is renting the parks to Saturday Market at \$25 per day. But the agreement is

only a probationary period to test for problem arising with interruption of city services.

Traffic or emergency vehicles could clash with Saturday Market shoppers crossing Oak Street from one park to the next.

At the sound of a fire truck leaving the nearby fire station, Wade looks up from the information booth. "I'm worried about it," he says.

He is concerned about a group of people who have just walked out in front of oncoming traffic, ignoring numerous market signs asking that they cross at the light.

Suddenly, surprised at the traffic they did not notice, they jump back onto the sidewalk.

"You don't stop for cars in the middle of Valley River Center. Why should you stop for them here?" Wade asks.

The market will continue on Saturdays until Christmas. There will also be a special Christmas market Dec. 19-23.

## Sign up for CIS class starts today

Preregistration for Winter term sections of CIS 210 and winter and spring term sections CIS 422 will begin today and run through Dec. 3 in the computer science department.

CIS 201 students must have a 2.7 grade point average for courses taken at the University prior to Fall 1982 or for transfer courses. For students in their first term, a combined Scholastic Aptitude Test score of 1150 must be achieved. Students must provide the department with supporting documentation.

The positions left in the CIS 201 classes after preregistration will be determined on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Students who want to enroll for CIS 422 must be admitted to the computer science department as majors and have completed CIS 315.

Preregistration hours will be 9-11 a.m. and 2:30-5 p.m. Monday through Friday in Room 66 PLC.

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