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High-tech park underway

By Paul Ertelt
 Of the Emerald

Construction on a high-tech park in West Eugene will create immediate jobs, but there is no way to predict how many people would eventually be put to work at the site, planners for the project say.

Construction on the first of five buildings begins this week at Willow Creek Park at the site off West 11th Street on Willow Creek Road. The building and site work for a second structure are due to be completed in November.

Developers of the project hope to attract "clean" high-tech industries to the site, such as manufacturers of computers, electronic equipment or pharmaceuticals, says Bill Sloat of the city's business assistance team. No tenants have been lined up for the site yet, but several companies have shown an interest, he says.

The park is being heralded as an "incubator" facility, for entrepreneurs setting up in business for the first time, or for companies that have started somewhere else and are looking for a better location.

"New business can hatch there or can move there in the embryo stage," Sloat says.

The building being constructed is basically a shell that can be adapted to suit the needs of a variety of tenants, says Tom Moreland, architect for the project.

"It's designed to be anything from an office building to a shipping and receiving office," he says. "It's designed for a mixture of uses; it's very flexible."

Though the project is financed by private interests — Gonyea Associates of Eugene — the developers have worked closely with city and

business leaders in planning the project. Since the failure rate of new businesses is high, a committee of local business people will screen prospective tenants to find businesses they believe have the best chance of surviving.

Sloat says Eugene has several factors that make it attractive to new businesses. One factor is the area's work force.

"The labor force here has been incredibly solid," he says. "We have a solid work ethic."

Another factor is the proximity of both the University and Oregon State University. The park will not compete with the proposed research park on the Willamette River, Sloat says, but will complement it.

Economic realities have changed many people's attitudes in the last few years, and more people are open to this kind of development for Eugene, he says.

"This city and county desperately need jobs," Sloat says. "Young people getting out of college and high school will no longer have to move away to find jobs."

Sloat concedes that many of the newly created jobs will be relatively low-paying assembly jobs, but he believes jobs in any form will be beneficial to the local economy. The nation as a whole is going through a "transitional stage," he says, and high paying industrial jobs are fast disappearing.

Though plans have been made to develop only 10 acres of the 210 acre site, Sloat envisions a future community growing up around the park. The project probably will cause a rise in local population, Sloat says, but careful city planning will prevent Eugene from becoming another "Silicon Valley."

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Computers in education to be featured

Free computer data base searches, extensive software and hardware exhibits, and showings of the latest video and film materials await participants in the University College of Education's fifth annual summer conference.

Emphasizing practical educational applications, "The Computer: Extension of the Human Mind III" is scheduled for August 1-3 at the Eugene Community Conference Center on 7th and Oak. It is sponsored by the University's Center for Advanced Technology in Education.

"The conference will address the significance of the computer as well as the critical issues related to the impact of the computer in education," said Bruce McKinlay, a program organizer at CATE. "It is for a wide variety of people, from computer coordinators to teachers and administrators interested in what computers mean for their students' futures."

An exhibit hall will feature presentations by hardware and software vendors. A theater showing the latest video and film materials related to computers in education will also be available throughout the conference.

Keynoting the conference will be David G. Moursund, a University computer science and education professor who is editor-in-chief of The Computer Teacher magazine. He will examine the potential impact of computers and how computers can improve education.

CATE will offer hands-on opportunities for people with various levels of computer expertise in pre- and post-conference workshops August 1 and 4.

The cost for the main conference is \$95 and \$30-45 for the workshops. Registered students may attend the conference for \$55. For more information, call 686-3405.

et al.

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS is holding an instructor training class in home nursing. Anyone with nursing or home health experience is eligible to take the course and become a volunteer instructor. The class will meet from July 27 to July 29, for a total of 15 hours. For more information, call The American Red Cross at 344-5244.

THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADMINISTRATION offers undergraduates and graduate students majoring in trade-related fields the opportunity to gain paid, hands-on experience in their field through their Co-op Education Program. Students rotate between periods of full- or part-time work and full-time

study. Co-op employees may be given the opportunity for employment with ITA following completion of their academic and work-experience requirements. Applications are due on July 27. Students interested in the program should contact the International Studies Program, 837 PLC, or call 686-5051.

THE LANE COUNTY SPECIAL OLYMPICS needs volunteer, coaches and aides for the Sports Training Camp July 29 to Aug. 4. The camp will run two three-day sessions and will be held at Sky Camp in Fall Creek. Volunteers are also needed for summer fund raising projects. For more information, call Toni or Cindy at 747-3536.

THE LANE COUNTY RED CROSS CHAPTER will sponsor a monthly blood pressure clinic at the U.S. National Bank in the Oakway Mall Wednesday beginning at 10 a.m. The screening fee is \$1 per person. For information, contact Linda Easton at 344-5244.

WHITEBIRD CLINIC will be offering their quarterly new volunteer training program beginning July 19. Introductory training is available in community service, crisis intervention, CPR and first aid. Credit may be arranged through the University and Lane Community College. Please call for an interview prior to training sessions. For more information, call 342-8255.

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