

# Eugene Celebration on the horizon

## Athletic events, parade, food and music to be featured

By Soo May Wong  
Emerald Contributor

*STEPPIN' OUT ...  
It's that time of year!  
Time for rubbin' elbows,  
dancin', flirtin',  
Cuttin' up, playin' with kids,  
and havin' fun.  
Fabulous music, extraordi-  
nary eateries, friendly competi-  
tions and artistic wonders. So  
grab a friend. Come as you are.  
It's time for Celebratin'!*

And so the poster urges.  
Yes. It is that time of the year  
again.

As the third weekend of Sep-  
tember dawns, Eugene shall  
don her garment of bright lights  
and colorful frills as she pre-  
pares for the great fanfare of the  
Eugene Celebration.

From Sept. 20-22, this down-  
town block party is expected to  
lure more than 140,000 party-  
goers. About a quarter of these  
are expected to include non-lo-  
cals, said Andrea Vollmer of  
Eugene's Parks, Recreation &  
Cultural Services department.

The celebration, which will  
offer a myriad of entertainment,  
food, artistic exhibitions, ath-  
letic events and cultural dis-  
plays, will spread over a 5-  
block radius at the hub of  
downtown Eugene.

The Eugene Celebration has  
been called the biggest event of  
the year. Past years have  
proved the enormous success  
of this big-scale party. Intro-  
duced nine years ago, the Eu-  
gene Celebration was motivated  
during a period of recession,  
Vollmer said.

Amid the slumping economy  
of the early 1980s, the celebra-  
tion served to generate income  
for local merchants and to  
rouse feelings of togetherness  
within the community.

Evidently, those objectives  
have not only been met, but  
have sparked a novel way  
where moneymaking is com-  
bined with merrymaking.

Since then, the celebration  
has become an annual affair. Its  
infectious popularity among lo-  
cals has spilled over to out-of-  
town residents. Visitors from  
out of state are beginning to re-



Photo by Andre Ransen  
P.J. Russell, Eugene Celebration clerk, hangs up the 1991 poster in the downtown Eugene Celebration office.

ceive news of great fun.  
Each year, a few events are  
looked forward to, namely the  
tradition of the opening cere-  
mony and the Celebration Pa-  
rade. After nine years of suc-  
cess, these events have ac-  
quired the term "tradition."

In line with this tradition, the  
opening ceremony will launch  
the party with speeches, music  
and dancing. The ceremony  
will be scheduled at the Miller  
8th Avenue Stage on Sept. 20 at  
6 p.m.

Live music will begin soon  
after, featuring bluegrass favor-  
ites by The Boohar Family and  
Fiddlin' Sue, Uncle T. and  
Johnny. A range of musical tal-  
ent, from new music to tropical  
jazz, will also be featured at the  
same time at the Hult Plaza  
Stage.

Meanwhile, the Michelob  
Jazz Festival at 5th Street Pub-  
lic Market will present Seattle's  
Bakra Beta, the street drum  
band that made a lasting im-  
pression with its performance  
at last year's celebration. The  
band will be accompanied by  
an instrument entourage of trap  
drums, conga marimbas, vibra-  
phones, pressure drums and  
other percussion instruments.

On the following day, the  
much awaited Celebration Pa-  
rade will glide down the streets

in a grand, yet informal caravan  
of color, marching bands,  
horses and numerous cause-  
serving organizations.

The parade will begin at 10  
a.m., heading downtown from  
South Eugene High School.  
Grand Marshall this year will  
be Jim Meeks, retiring head li-  
brarian from the City Public Li-  
brary. For a touch of sluggish  
glamour, look forward to the  
eye-catching Slug Queen as she  
slimes her way through the  
streets.

Upon completion of parade-  
watch, celebrants may ebb their  
appetites with the celebration's  
many food booths. There will  
be an array of food choices suf-  
ficient to appease hungry and  
healthy appetites or appetites  
just in search of something new.

As in the past, there will be  
numerous eatery sites — Ex-  
traordinary Eateries, Hult Plaza  
Stage, Michelob 5th Avenue  
Jazz Festival and the Saturday  
Market.

For an international culinary  
experience, tour over to Inter-  
national Fair, to be held Sept.  
21, on Willamette Street be-  
tween 10th and 11th avenues.  
The fair will offer international

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