

Even in this city of bicycles, cycling responsibly is key

Eugene offers many resources for individuals interested in human-powered transportation

Commentary

David Niles

Whether you ride seasonally or year-round, Eugene is a great place for bicycling. Bikes are everywhere and in so many different varieties: recumbents, tandems, tricycles, bikes for hauling loads, bikes that fold, bikes no one would want to steal, trailers, trailer-cycles and on and on. People use them to commute or compete, for recreation, for meditation and to earn a living.

Not surprisingly, bicycles — pound for pound the most efficient form of locomotion — are also manufactured here. Eugene is a city of bicycles.

In Eugene, it is easy to ride down the street and feel like you are part of the community — not just a bike community, but the general community. Try that in most other American cities, and you may quickly feel like you are a nuisance for car drivers who feel that bikes belong in playgrounds and not on the road. So celebrate that you are

in Eugene and that bikes belong.

Being part of a community that supports cycling comes with some responsibility.

First and foremost, know how to ride safely and lawfully. When you are riding in the street, your bike is a vehicle, just like a car. Same road, same rules.

Red means stop. Nothing does more to tarnish the image of bike riding than seeing someone on a bike blow through a red light or a stop sign. This spring, we are fortunate to have around campus a bike riding officer from the Eugene Police. She will be helping to remind people of our city's expectation for people to ride safely and lawfully. Same road, same rules, same fines.

We hope that people driving in cars are respectful and skilled when sharing the road with bikes, but that is not always the case. Do not be complacent. Be predictable and visible when you ride. Bike lanes are only a painted line, not a physical barrier.

Another part of the responsibility of riding a bike in Eugene is the knowledge that you can take with you if you leave. I hope you will not be satisfied if riding a bicycle is not a safe option where you choose to live or work. Your knowledge, skill and genuine enjoyment for riding a bike is a powerful model for change and emulation.

Give respect and get respect. Bike riding is good clean healthy fun. It is your lifetime fitness membership. Same road, same rules, more fun.

Whatever your interest in cycling, Eugene has something for you. Here are some points of interest:

- **Bicycle maintenance class at EMU Craft Center** — fills up fast.
- **Lane County Bike Map** — brand new, available at bike shops.
- **GEARS** — noncompetitive group rides. Call 345-3181.
- **UO Cycling Club** — racing/training.
- **UO Outdoor Program** — group off-road riding opportunities.

■ **Burley Cycling Classic** — July 2-5 tandem stage race, July 4 criterium on campus.

■ **Portland Bike Show** — latest in gear, March 13-14.

■ **Human Powered Parade** — in June, fun for all ages. How about a UO section?

■ **C.A.T.** — a nonprofit with many volunteer opportunities 344-1197.


■ **NW Auto Auction** — auction of bikes recovered by Eugene Police, April 3. Call 689-3901.

■ **peplemoving@lists.uoregon.edu** — an email list server of information on campus transportation issues.

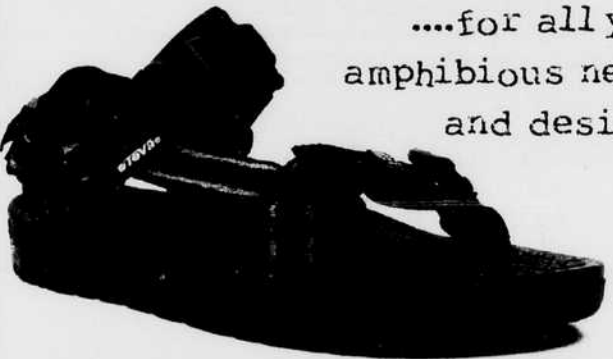
■ **Eugene Bicycle Coalition** — advocacy group. Call 345-2110.

■ **Travel Affordances** — a new university program offering incentives for faculty and staff to use human-powered transportation, spring 1999.

David Niles is the bicycle coordinator for the University.



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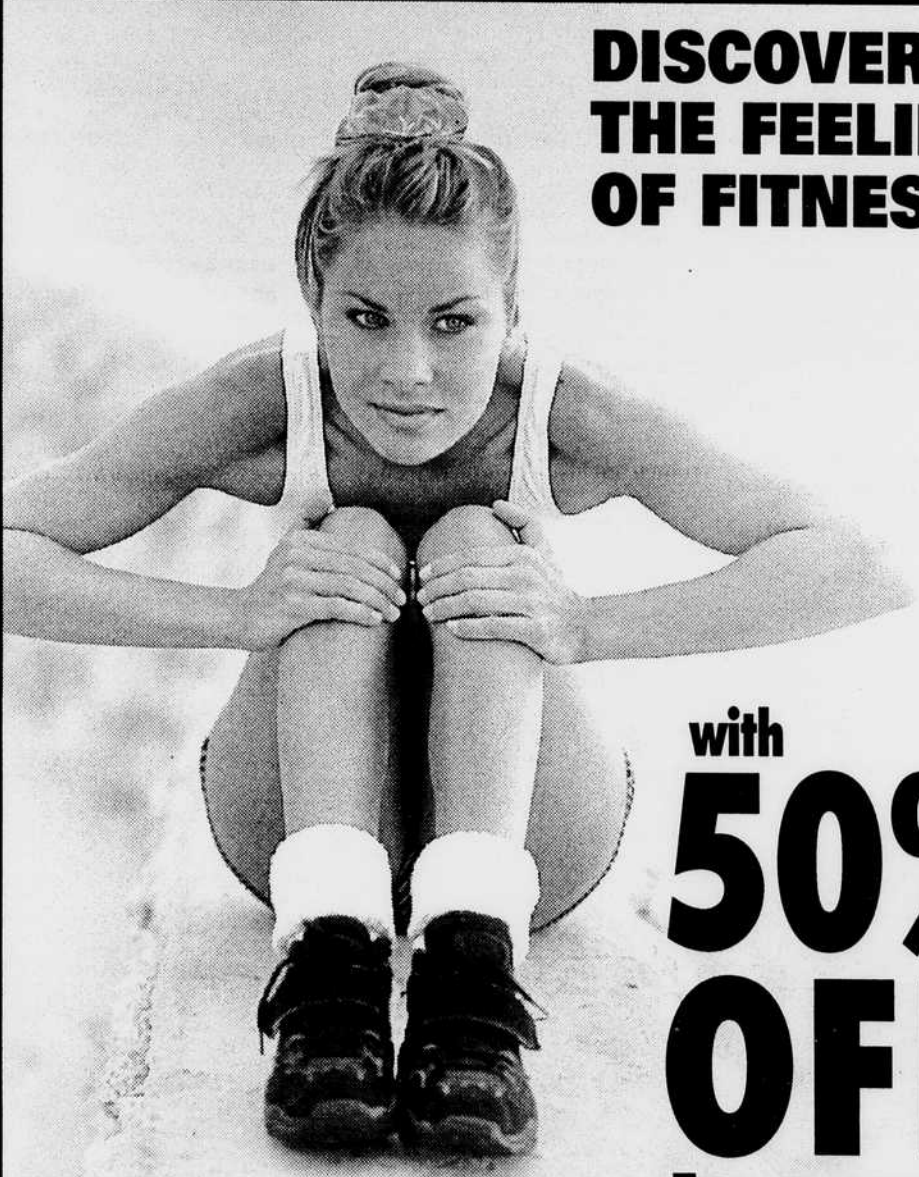
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