

Fairground Parking Club initiates new members

by JOHN DVORAK
Nebraskan Staff Writer

Huddled together, the students stood with their breath coming in little puffs of white. It was 8:25, 32 degrees and a slight breeze was coming from the northwest.

Then the bus came, but since it had stopped at the other end of the parking lot first it was already filled. Six or seven of the coldest students piled in while the rest of their brethren sighed and calmly began the 15

minute wait for that same bus to come back from the campus.

It was not the first time they would be late for an 8:30 class because of the bus. And after almost three months in the "Fairgrounds Parking Club" they could stand a little cold.

Usually a second bus makes the shuttle run between the fairgrounds parking lot and the Mueller Tower. But it was not running Monday morning for some reason, so the students waited on.

Yes, the shuttle bus system and the fairgrounds parking lot have caused a few problems this year, Miles Tommeraasen, director of business and finance for the Lincoln campuses, said.

"Complaints on the fairgrounds lot and campus parking in general have dropped dramatically this year," Tommeraasen said. He admitted that he used to get a letter a day from angry drivers ("Some of them were pretty nasty."). Now he gets a letter or so each week.

"No matter what we do it won't be right in the eyes of everyone," Tommeraasen pointed out.

The fairgrounds lot, with space for nearly 1,000 cars, opened last year, but is just beginning to be heavily used this fall.

Tommeraasen and other University officials are anxious to make the concept of a shuttle bus and a parking lot far from the center of campus work — because in the future that will be the only parking available.

"We're a little ahead of most colleges and universities who are just now developing a shuttle bus system and away from campus parking lots," Tommeraasen said.

Actually, he continued, every campus parking lot between 10th and 17th streets and A and Vine Streets is doomed.

The comprehensive campus plan developed several years

ago for the University shows nothing but "trees, grass, sidewalks and buildings" in the main campus area, Tommeraasen said.

The plan shows huge parking lots on the far northeast and southeast corners of the campus in addition to the fairgrounds lot. A shuttle bus service would be imperative for them.

Students are already getting used to the idea they can't park within a block of their classes. In the near future faculty

members will have to get used to the idea too, Tommeraasen said.

"There'll be a real blow when the Unicameral gets around to appointing money for the library addition," he said. When work starts on the addition, the two big faculty lots north of Love will be destroyed forever and faculty members will be given other places to park — like the fairgrounds lot or a new lot now under construction west of the Harper-Smith-Schramm complex.

The fairgrounds shuttle bus will stop at that new parking lot, which is now being graded.

In fact, Tommeraasen envisions a shuttle bus system in the future that would serve not only far-away parking lots but most campus buildings as well.

Mint-buses could eternally make the rounds of campus buildings. A student or teacher could board the bus at the Law College and in five minutes or so could be at Nebraska Hall.

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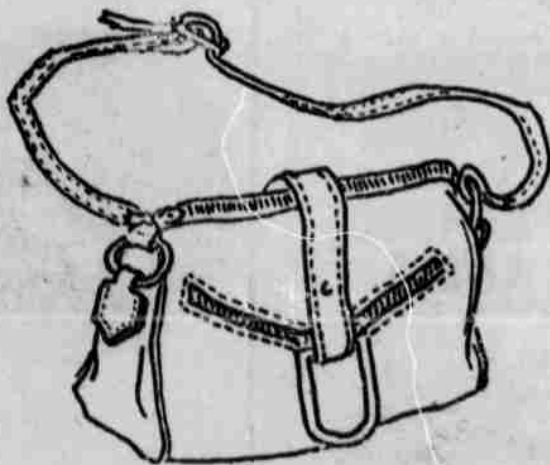
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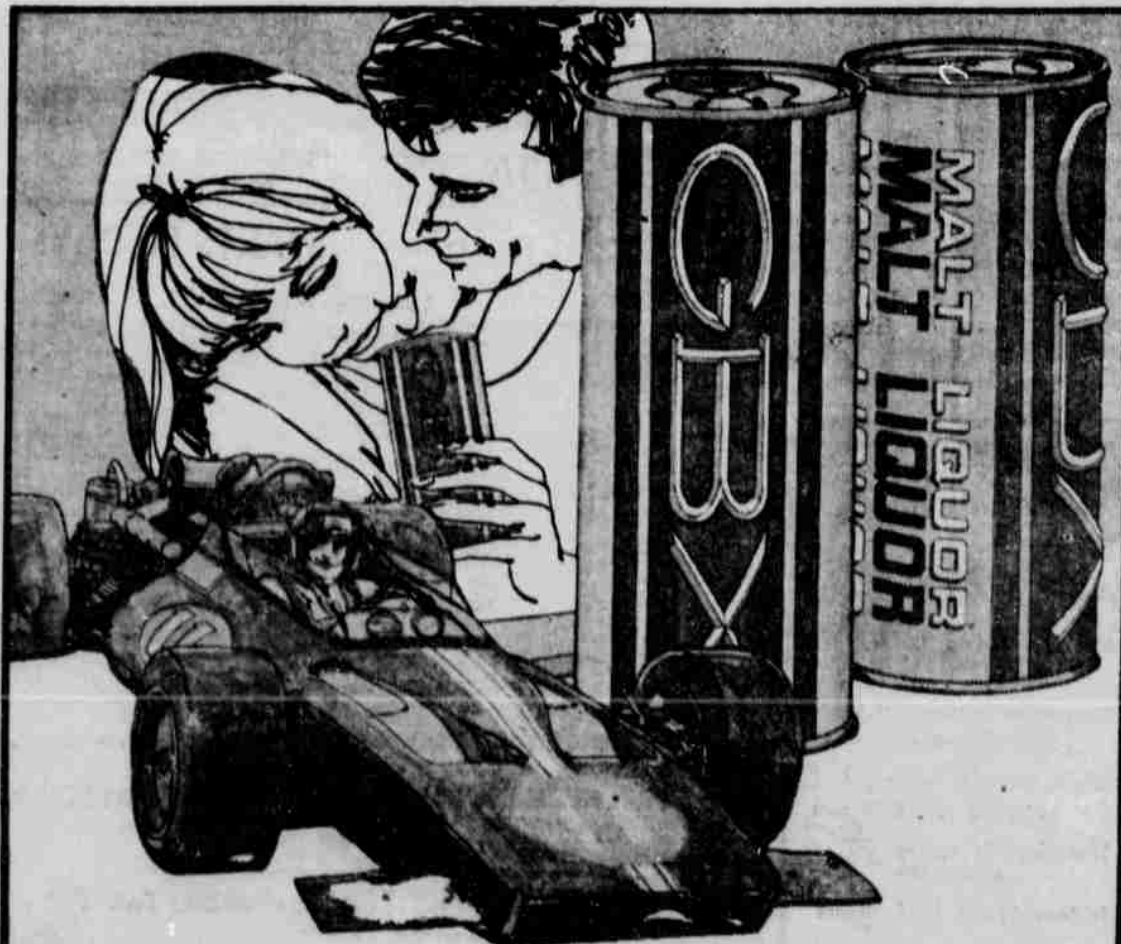


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