

Springfield: kinda romantic

MOMMIE EAREST PG
99¢ WITH FAYE DU AWAY



Two Springfield residents discuss Faye DuAway, the most popular foreign film star in town since Bruce Lee.

Springfield. No veggie burgers. No Birkenstocks. No foreign films with subtitles. Just meat and potatoes. Boots. Second-run movies. The town has *Character*: A perfect place for the perfect date.

First stop: the Fine Arts Theater. Home of all-American movies. B-movies. Bang-Bang-Shoot-'em-Up movies. But what a deal: two movies (usually) for—oh can you believe it—99 cents.

Ha. Who needs to pay *four bucks* to see some artsy flick in that tofu town next door? Ordinary folk can't afford it. Too busy making payments on the pickup, and paying taxes to Uncle Sam so he can give welfare and food stamps to all them no-good hippies and rich college kids.

So, the movie house is a little run down. Wha'dja expect for 99 cents? Buckingham palace? Bags of stale popcorn. Flat pop. Over-priced candy bars. Sneak in your own stuff.

Usually not too crowded. Unless *Grease* or a Clint Eastwood movie is playing. Watch out for broken seats. The film usually breaks. Or the sounds goes out. Or the bulb burns out. Kinda romantic.

Mind is sorta fuzzy after two movies and three-and-a-half hours. Time to eat. Hop in the four-wheel drive: Larry and Kathy's 24-Hour Restaurant is only half a block away.

No no-smoking sections. Dolls enclosed in Saran Wrap. Handmade peacocks, teddy bears, owls and butterflies are stuck on appliances. Carefully framed pictures of Kathy's Country Breakfast, Gingerbread and Cheesecake adorn the walls. Red gingham tablecloth faded to pink. No out of town checks cashed.

The coffee helps the fuzzy mind. Not good coffee, not bad. Easy to drink 10 cups and not notice it. Look at the baby blue menu: No sprouts.

No bagels. No espresso. No whole wheat spaghetti. No Red Zinger tea. "What's a Tex Burger?" "Just like a cheeseburger, but it has ham on it." Waitress' name tag says Shortstuff.

Saunter over to the jukebox while hamburgers are cooking. "Stayin' Alive" by the Bee Gees. "It's All Wrong, But It's All Right" by Dolly Parton. "I Could Never Dream the Way You Feel" by T.G. Sheppard. From the machine a cowboy wails "All dem women are beautiful lovers." Kinda romantic.

The door opens. In walk two women. One with an electric beater hairdo. The other one with starched, carefully coiffed hair cemented in place with gummy hair spray. Bought four cans when it was on sale at PayLess.

Hamburgers arrive. With a half-ounce bag of Nalley's. Crush the chips as an experiment. They take up one-sixth of the short water glass. Take the two healthy slices of onion off the burger. Not on a perfect date.

Two teens walk in. Tight levis. Cowboy hats. They hunch up to the counter to drink their 10 cups of coffee. With sugar and cream. An older version two seats down glances up at the boys, then looks back to his ninth cup of coffee. Absently mumbles thanks when the waitress adds to the cup.

Time for dessert. Gritty cake, limp strawberries and chemical cream—cleverly disguised as Strawberry Shortcake—come in a glass boat. Cinnamon roll is homemade. Moist. Sweet. Kinda gummy but okay. No nuts, raisins.

Drink another cup. Tiredness settles in. Even the coffee doesn't help. It's raining outside. But the best part of the evening is still to come—a trip to the A & B Gun Shop for a look at some great handguns.

Springfield. Kinda romantic.

by sally hodgkinson

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