

distractions

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arts & entertainment

In search of the ideal ice cream

Ice cream. Smooth, cool, creamy ice cream. It's the one thing besides springtime that makes living in Eugene worthwhile.

You see, Eugene has more than its share of ice creameries, with a variety of flavors and styles. Depending on one's tastes, the Ideal Ice Cream could be found in a number of places, from the high tech pink plastic chain restaurant to the "new kid on the block," an "authentic Italian" ice cream place with Italian top-40 songs on the stereo.

Although the specific flavor and qualities of the Ideal Ice Cream is a hopelessly individual choice, we at **distractions** wanted to establish an objective comparison, some sort of overall ranking of some of the local ice cream shops. Also, it was a hot evening and we were hungry.

Because of the limited size of our pocketbooks and our stomachs, we were forced to limit our study to shops in the general area of the University campus. Because flavors vary from shop to shop, and because you will never find two people who agree on their favorite flavor, we felt it necessary to sample a variety of flavors. At the same time, each shop has its specialties, so we also ordered what the friendly scoopers recommended as the most popular flavor. Then we remembered that many people go for ice cream especially for sundaes, while other people only like cones, so we had to take that into account.

In the end, we ordered a hot fudge sundae and two cones (one our choice and one which the friendly scooper suggested as the most popular flavor) from each ice creamery. Our four judges then noted the serving size, texture, flavor, appearance and overall enjoyability. One judge also tested the ice creams' ability to stick to his clothes.

Although we had intended to go through our list alphabetically, a lack of communication and some confusion about the alphabet led us to our first stop. **Gantsy's**.

Gantsy's is sort of like the old time soda fountains you've seen pictures of, only aged slightly, and with luminous yellow and green paint. They sport an extremely long list of flavors — we stopped counting at 78. Some of the flavors are a bit exotic, like Moolky Wayee and the now-defunct Chicken Ripple, but no one can say they don't have a good selection. Our choice was Irish Coffee. The friendly scooper recommended German Chocolate.

"I get a slight refrigerator flavor..." started Refrigerator Mouth.

"Yeah," agreed the Quiet One, "like it's been..."

"Stored!" finished Conehead. Slurp, slurp, chomp, slurp. Drip.

"It's very milky, rather than creamy. Thin, very light and milky, with little ice crystals."

"That's because it's been stored," deduced Conehead triumphantly.

"But it's still ice."

"I just got a strand of coconut about an inch long!" announced Banana Hater.

"Are you sure? You sure it's not something else?"

Banana Hater paled slightly. Slurp, slurp, chomp, slurp.

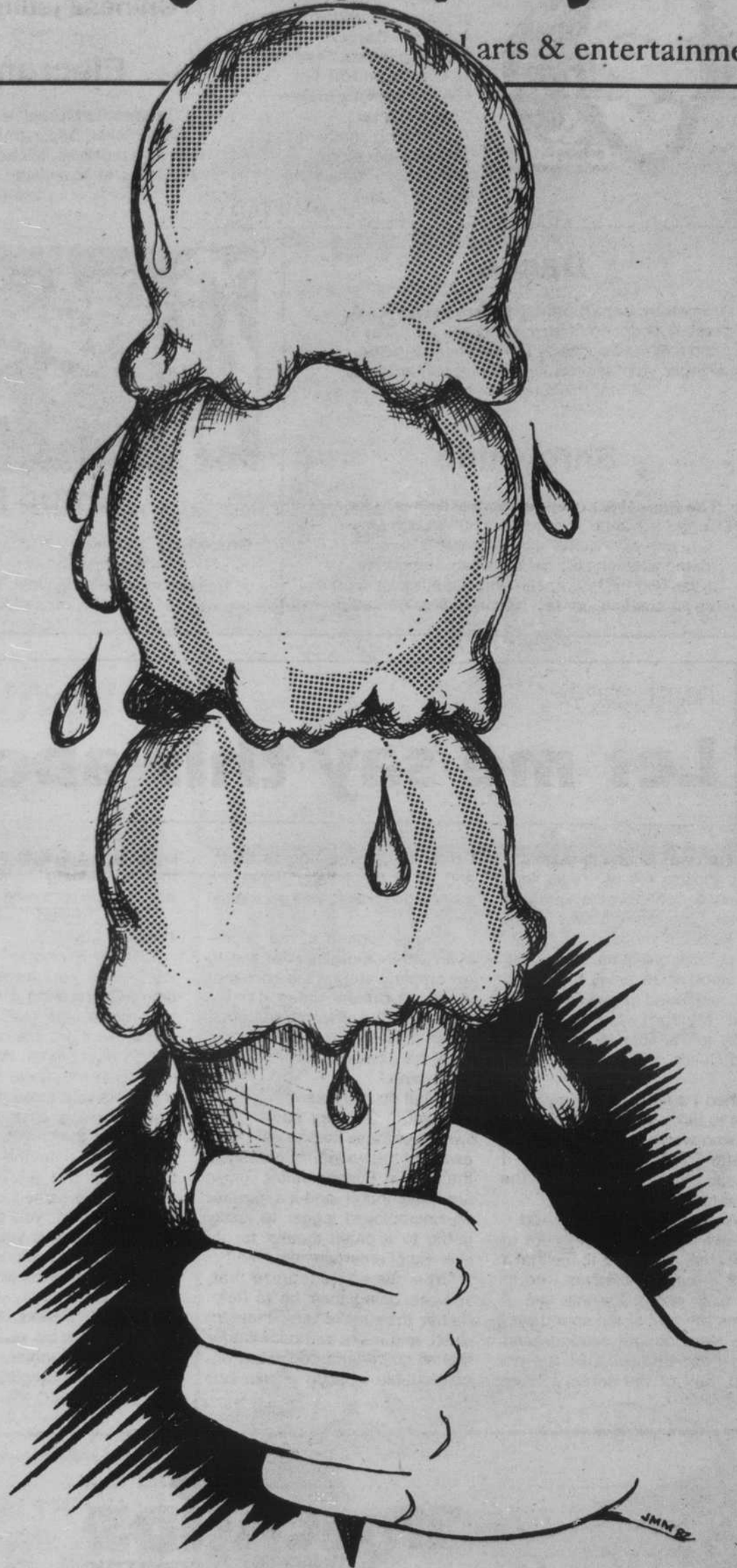
"This cone stinks! Can you smell that?" said Conehead.

"Awww, you just don't like plain cones. It smells nice and... cone-ish."

Slurp, slurp, chomp, slurp.

After ascertaining that the sundae was topped with a *real* maraschino cherry (not a red grape) and with *real*

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graphic by Jean Meyer

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