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Summer rent: It's a bargain

By Julie Shippen
Of the Emerald

Students often find that life in Eugene during the summer is an unpredictable existence at best. Jobs that opened with the campus's yearly exodus seem to fill overnight. The class load that appeared manageable is suddenly eating up all the hours set aside for leisure. And then there is always the on-again, off-again weather to contend with.

What the academic diehards who remain in Eugene can count on, however, is being able to find a place to live with a convenient location and a discounted rental rate. Much to their delight, apartment shoppers can be settled in an afternoon by simply driving up 18th Avenue and surveying the amazing selection of now-available apartments.

Landlords and property owners, on the other hand, say they view the situation with less enthusiasm. Though this housing circus occurs every year, many proprietors are never sure if their complex will soon resume its 100 percent occupancy or not.

"We've had a more difficult summer than usual," says Wayne Shanpz, manager and owner for more than seven years of the Ridgewood apartment complex located at 942 E. 18th Ave. According to Shanpz, fin-

ding tenants has been a harder task because a larger number of students completed their degrees this year and left the community altogether.

"Normally we have a carry-over of around one-half, but this year everybody graduated," he says. Shanpz estimates he has only two or three student tenants who have stayed on, leaving him with more vacancies than usual.

And for apartment owners, vacancies mean financial losses. "We lose money every summer," Shanpz says. "You just have to make the adjustments. It's just a part of being a landowner."

Shanpz is one of many who offers rent discounts as a way of getting tenants back, at least for the summer. For a one- or two-bedroom apartment at the Ridgewood, around \$30 is knocked off the summer rental rates, he says.

Charles Slocum, manager of the Student Manor at 1442 E. 18th Ave., says the seasonal renters in his building are definite bargain hunters.

"I'd say the vast majority, say 14 of the 17 now here, came to take advantage of the summer rent," Slocum says. Though he had to deal with about a 75 percent turnover, Slocum says the building is full for the summer.

"We're normally not full until July," he says. The reason for the high occupancy is due to the large number of "dorm refugees" this year, he says, who also were offered a slice off the price.

Slocum says he doesn't have any tried-and-true formula when figuring rent discounts, though. "I judge kind of how everyone else is doing it," he says. But no matter what the final rate turns out to be, it doesn't cover the owners mortgage, Slocum adds.

Joy Poust, a property manager with Lamson Associates, agrees that the apartments are tougher

to fill this year.

"This summer was another ball game. I have more vacancies this year than last," Poust says. Usually her complexes are about 95 percent full, but this year's rate is down to 80 percent occupancy, she says. Renters of the houses and apartments she manages also get rent discounts, Poust says, which vary with the size of the unit.

The length of the tenant's stay is becoming increasingly flexible, too, according to her business associate, Sabin Lamson.

"It'll be off and on. I've rented a place for five weeks this summer, which is something we normally don't do," Lamson admits. He estimates the majority of newcomers to their properties are part-time residents and "probably half are not students."

Poust finds the same true of her rentals. "I have a lot of people coming for summer school such as school teachers."

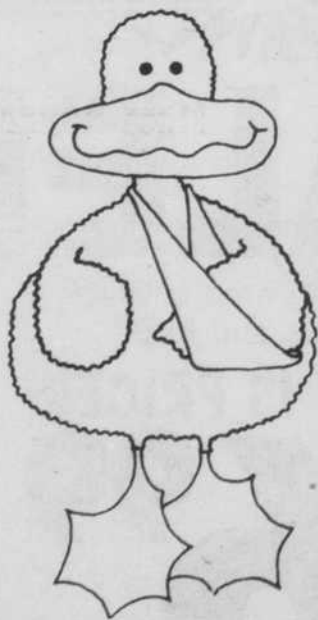
One building on the street enjoying full occupancy is the Woodside Manor, a huge complex of quad units, managed by Cynthia Woodard and her husband. According to Woodard, she has already taken reservations by renters for fall.

"We generally have zero problems," Woodard says. In fact, the Woodside Manor's waiting list runs even during the summer, she adds. Quad rates there are discounted between \$30 and \$40 from the normal rent figures, which are somewhat higher than usual quad rates, but still lower than apartment renting.

"We're one of the most expensive (quads) for summer," Woodard says. "And even though we have strict rules, we do fill up rather quickly." Bargain hunters there will still have to comply to the house laws during the summer to stay, which includes turning down their radios and televisions after 8 p.m., she says.

Not only does she not mind the turnover, Woodard says she prefers these more serious-minded summer tenants. "I enjoy dealing with students that are not freshmen," she adds.

For information on available housing, contact ASUO Off-Campus Housing at 686-3731 or 686-4341.



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