

COMMUNITY

Why go to some sunny island paradise, just go sit on your porch

By Gayle Forman
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

It happens every spring.

The days grow long, the sun pokes its head through the clouds, and Eugeneans emerge from their cozy houses and plunk themselves right down onto to their porches.

Now these are no ordinary porches. They are outdoor living rooms complete with all the amenities: big comfy couches, chairs, tables, magazines, books and cups of coffee that have been sitting there since last summer. They are carpeted with cigarette butts and lined with empty beer bottles.

To Eugeneans, who must endure months of endless gray drizzle, porches serve as a summer home, a way to drink in all of the sunshine and warmth that is available.

Jonn Lunsford spends his winters in a cold basement. Come springtime, he rises above ground and onto the porch.

"It's like our home on the Riviera," he

said of his porch. "It's our own Club Med."

Lunsford's porch is pretty typical by Eugene standards. It sports a couple of 1970s couches, some old chairs, plenty of reading materials, long-forgotten shoes and even the remnants of some pumpkins from two Halloweens ago.

Nicole Doran says that her porch looks like the average porch complete with cigarettes beer bottles and old pizza boxes.

"There's been a lot of eating, a lot of drinking and a lot of living on my porch," she said.

People migrate to porches to wallow in the warm weather, and then they are glued to their porches for the summer.

"After fall and winter, I gotta be outside every second of the day if the sun is out," Doran said.

Nice weather sun may entice sun-starved Eugeneans onto their porches, but the porch also serves as a sort of glue that holds neighborhoods together. Just sit on a porch any porch, and watch the world

walk down the sidewalk. Porches allow timid Eugeneans, who have been hiding indoors all winter, to meet new people.

Lunsford says porch-sitting gives him "a South Bronx feel in Eugene." When he sits on his porch, he talks with all his neighbors and catches up with all the latest neighborhood chitchat.

"The porch is the center of neighborhood discourse in Eugene," Lunsford said.

Doran says that the porches give her neighborhood a cozy feeling.

"Eugene porches are like a social linking system," Doran said. "You watch people, talk to people and meet new people."

Now Eugene is not the only town with great porches. Yet something distinguishes the porches in Eugene from other Oregon locales. They are furnished porches. They are populated porches. But why Eugene? Why are porches not so popular in Portland or Salem?

Lunsford has a few theories as to why porch culture is so pervasive in Eugene:

People are more trustworthy in Eugene, he says, and are thus less likely to steal all the goodies that are left on the porch.

Lunsford also feels that Eugene's college town atmosphere affords more acceptance of a messy porch than perhaps a more cosmopolitan locale.

Of course not everyone has a spacious front porch on which to lounge. Fret not. It is not necessary to have a porch of your own to enjoy the benefits.

Denise Hall does not have a porch. Yet she has spent countless hours lollygagging on friends' porches.

Hall says that porch-sitting is better entertainment than television. She has witnessed fights, chases and young love in bloom while sitting on porches.

So if you are new in Eugene, and you can't find any people on the streets, look away from the sidewalk and turn your eyes toward the porches. There, among the clutter, you will find Eugeneans basking in the glory of summertime. Go join them. They are waiting to meet you.

COMMUNITY UPDATE

• United Way of Lane County is looking for volunteers to assist with gardening, help rehabilitate homes, teach safety to kindergarten children, assist the Red Cross in marketing and work with developmentally disadvantaged adults. For more information, call the United Way Volunteer Connection at 683-9000.

• Delays are expected for drivers between Main Street and the south entrance of the Weyerhaeuser Company in Springfield. The city of Springfield suggests drivers avoid the area altogether until the work is completed in mid-July.

Free swimming is scheduled at Amazon Pool, at 26th Ave. and Hilyard St., on June 24 from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Local businesses are also providing free soft drinks and prizes. For more

information, call Amazon Pool at 687-5350.

• The Eugene Celebration is looking for garage and school bands to compete in a "Battle of the Bands" at the September festival. All bands are welcome to complete, providing at least half the band members are students. Entry forms and tapes must be received by August 15 to be considered. For more information, contact the Eugene Celebration office at 687-5215.

• The Celebration is also seeking proposals from organizations and individuals for new events. The deadline for these proposals is July 8, and it is recommended that people call the celebration office at 687-5215 for further guidelines.

• Dorris Ranch is looking for volunteers for ongoing summer

events, including children's tours, crafts, games and nature activities and Sunday Brunches. For more information, contact Casey Bemis at 726-4325.

• People who earn less than \$23,790 and are supporting a child at home may be eligible for the Advanced Earned Income Credit, which would allow them to take home \$100 more in each month's paycheck. For more information, call 1-800-829-3676 and ask for a W-5 form and Publication 596.

• The Industrial Strength Pride Dance, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, an uprising at a New York City gay and lesbian bar, will take place June 25 from 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. at the Vet's Club at 1626 Willamette St.

LUNCH

Continued from Page 1

Since that might mean raising tuition, Ransdell said, "This works out really well."

The lunches are prepared at five central locations around the county. Because classes are over for the summer, the county takes advantage of empty school kitchens, and in many cases, the meals are prepared by the same people who, at other times during the year, would be making regular school lunches.

Cunnington and Friestad said they were pleased to be doing something to help the community. "(We're) feeding hungry kids," Friestad said.

"I mean, what could be more important?"

Anyone under the age of 18 is invited to partake in the free lunches, or the free breakfasts that are also offered at a few of the sites. The menu changes every day, on a two-week rotation, but there is always a balanced offering including something from each of the four food groups.

Those interested in finding out more about the program should contact the Housing Authority and Community Services Agency of Lane County at 687-3900. Lunches will be served until August 19 in Springfield and until August 12 at all other locations.

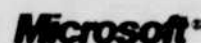
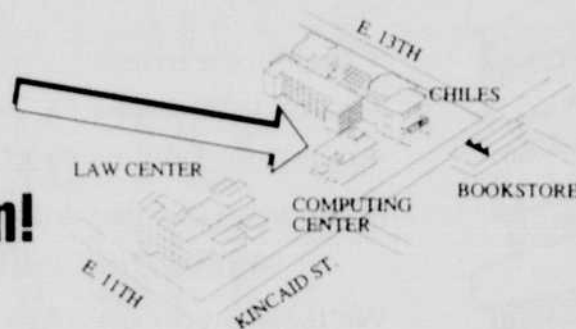
Q: We carry computers and we're on campus. Who are we?

Getting through college can be hard, but a good computer can make your life a lot easier. That's why we're here. We carry computers and software at special educational prices to match everyone's pocketbook, even yours.

But what good is a computer if you can't use it? That's why "support" is our middle name. We're here to support you. If you're stumped by your system or stymied by your spreadsheet, we can help. Dying for a computer, but don't know where to start? We'll help you make a choice that fits your needs.

Have a question? Come on in to room 202 of the Computing Center (across from Rennie's Landing), or give us a call at 346-4402. We've got a lot to show you, so come see us!

Hint: We are here Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm!



A: The Microcomputer Support Center, 202 Computing Center!