

Senior shares observations of Eugene

Nearly four years ago, I arrived in Eugene to begin my freshman year of college. I had lived in Southern California all of my life, with 15 of my 18 years spent living in the same house. Moving to Oregon was pretty traumatic. Besides leaving my family behind, I had to adjust to life in a place far different from what I was used to.

In the last four years, I have learned that Eugene is a unique, eclectic, amusing and fairly interesting place to live. For a while. Now that I am ready to move on to bigger and better things — Portland — here are my observations on a few of Eugene's distinguishing features.

- Everything here grows mold. I don't know what it is about this town, but it seems to be overrun by mold. How come you can't leave a nice, tightly sealed loaf of bread on the counter without it growing mold within 24 hours? I am tired of having to keep my bread in the refrigerator all the time. I think that if you sat in one place for too long, you might end up looking like Stephen King's character in the movie *Creepshow*. Yikes!
- Eugene drivers have no concept of distance or how fast their cars can accelerate.

Why do people here pull out into oncoming traffic when there is no way in hell there is enough time or space for them to make it? No wonder the speed limits have to be so low everywhere in Eugene. Here's a tip to people who do this: DON'T try this stunt

when you are visiting Southern California. People won't bother to slam on their brakes for you. They will just hit you so that they can use the insurance money to get a new Pathfinder. Or just shoot at you.

- Eugeneans love a festival. This town loves events.

There's the County Fair, the Country Fair, the Folk Festival, Fiesta Latina, the Bach Festival, the Asian Celebration, the Eugene Celebration and more. The list goes on and on. The only place that

Southern Californians gather en masse is the freeway. And that is definitely not a celebration. At least people here recognize that Eugene can be pretty dull and that they had better do something about it.

- There are not enough movie theaters in this town.

Before I moved here, I had never had the experience of not getting into a movie because it was sold out. But it has happened to me here at least half-a-dozen times. Trying to buy tickets in advance doesn't work, either. Just look at what happened when *Star Wars* and *Lost World* came out. And just try to get near the parking lot at Cinemaworld on a Saturday. Even with the expansion of Cinemaworld, there doesn't seem to be enough cine-

matic entertainment to go around. Of course, there's not much non-cinematic entertainment to go around either, especially when it's 40 degrees and pouring rain outside.

- Where can I buy some stock in an umbrella company?

To be fair, the rain here is really not as bad as non-Pacific Northwesterners make it out to be. (These are the same people who call this city YOU-gene, Are-RAY-gone.) What intrigues me most is those incredible Oregon natives who are not affected by rain at all. I have actually seen people who appear to not even get wet AT ALL, even in a down-pour. How do they do this? Some kind of human Scotchguard?

By the way, when it rains it is easy to tell who the Californians are. They're the ones trying to figure out how to hold an umbrella, a newspaper and a nonfat latte at the same time, all while zipping up their jackets. And the sidewalks on 13th Avenue were just not made to handle thousands of people with umbrellas trying to get across campus in ten minutes. I'm surprised there haven't been any major injuries yet.

I am looking forward to living in Portland. Wider, umbrella-friendly sidewalks. Tons of movie theaters. Better drivers. I hope I can keep my bread out on the counter without it turning into a third grade science experiment. When I move, I will miss Eugene, but in the same way that I miss California. It's a nice place to visit, but...you know.

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Angie: Strangers get close living in Lorax

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the "thief" wrote an apology note, all was forgiven. What was truly beneficial was the actual sense of community. Strangers became my closest friends in this environment that was accepting and interesting, where unique yet like-minded people flocked to. We did things I had never pictured myself doing: dancing in the kitchen on a daily basis, composting large amounts of food waste, all gathering around the one TV in the house to watch foreign films, drumming, and, what the student body most identifies the co-ops with (no, not marijuana — but that's a whole different subject), the parties.

I can say, without a hint of bias, that we hosted

some legendary parties. We're still talking about them, as is half the student body. At the Mardi Gras, from what I remember, the American Girls performed and all onlookers were dancing, drinking and socializing. What was great about the parties was that you could always count on meeting people.

But what I remember most about the Lorax is not the parties themselves, but the friends I made during all these semi-wild times are the ones who keep making memories. Meeting the love of my life in the Lorax is a definite bonus as well. This beautiful bearded man and the smiling faces of my other friends have made my U of O experience wacky and worthwhile.

"There are loyal hearts, there are spirits brave, there are souls that are pure and true, then give the world the best you have and the best will come back to you."

Anonymous



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