

## Drive-thru

continued from page 6B

al for this woman who has decorated her own chapel in cherubs and twinkly little stars to make a more intimate atmosphere for her customers.

A chat room just isn't her idea of romance.

Yet, always thinking of innovative ways to accommodate the special needs of her customers, Richards took her business one step further in 1991. She opened the world's first Tunnel of Love Drive Thru after witnessing a handicapped couple struggling to get out of their car on the way to the chapel.

After the couple agreed to her offer of marrying them while they were inside the vehicle, Richards was struck by the potential of a new business venture that has sincere than paid off. She was right in thinking other couples, handicapped or not, would like the novelty of delivering their vows in the same manner they might buy their lunch.

Although Richards tries to avoid references to McDonalds, she is very conscious of the similarities between her business and a fast food restaurant. Therefore, just months after its grand opening, she changed the set-up of the Tunnel of Love for two reasons.

Not only was she burdened with guilt over the impersonal atmosphere she had created, but she also began to experience asphyxiation from the car fumes.

Instead of just putting up a "Turn off motor" sign, the couple still stay in their car, and Richards walks out of her booth and up to the car window. To her, this switch "makes [the ceremony] more like a piece of heaven rather than a piece of hamburger."

In its 10th year of business, the drive-up window marries approximately five to 10 couples a day, cruising through the wedding lane in everything from roller skates to moving vans to limousines.

Once, Richards recalls, a couple was married in the back seat of a Cadillac with an Elvis impersonator for a chauffeur. Yet another party pedaled up to the window on a

bicycle made for five.

The "one stop, one shop, wedding enter," as Richards calls her endeavor, is certainly thriving in the city known the world over for oozing with similar establishments. Richards has been in the business long enough to know how to compete with the competitors, though, and she gives her customers what they want.

Open 24 hours a day, her nuptials mecca offers everything from a hair salon to gown rentals. "From the top of your head to the tips of your toes," Richards says; anything and everything will be taken care of, at any time of the day.

Las Vegas isn't the only place a unique wedding can take place. A few Eugene-area wedding planners say they are willing to accommodate the craziest of ideas.

The problem, however, is that these local businesses don't have much experience in organizing ceremonies at places other than the conventional church or park.

Jo Dial, the owner of D.J.'s Wedding Connection, says that she remembers a few couples who originally wanted their ceremony on a mountain top but eventually decided against the high-altitude services because they didn't want to impose on their friends and family. One problem, she points out, is that guests have to carry personal belongings, sometimes for quite a long trek. It's just easier to get married somewhere with all the facilities already set up, she says.

Holly Kohler, an employee at the Acorn Tree, another local wedding planning facility, says the craziest wedding she has ever helped organize was under a tent on a ranch.

So, Eugene is obviously a far cry from the bright lights and crazy buzz of Las Vegas, but Sin City isn't too far of a drive for the truly wild-minded.

For those thinking about elopement, a simple ceremony can be purchased for \$40 at Richards' chapel. A service with one red rose and one Polaroid photograph included costs \$60. Eighty dollars will get you the ceremony, a presentation of flowers, a bride's garter and two Polaroid photographs. Throw in an extra \$20 and you get the full package, which includes an additional Polaroid and a video of the ceremony.

... pst, did you know...

# Rhythm & Blooms

- 5th St. Market
- 24th & Hilyard
- Oasis Plaza
- U of O's Outdoor Flower Stand—13th & Kincaid

**Voted Eugene's Favorite Florist\***

All styles of Bouquets  
Natural or Elegant  
Freshest Flowers • Fragrant & Seasonal  
Delivery • Reasonable Prices  
Visa/MC

\*Eugene Weekly 1997, 1998, 1999




## Putting The Honey In HoneyMOON...

It doesn't have to be dirty to be good...

EXCLUSIVELY Adult



1166 South A • Springfield • 726-6969 • Open 24 Hours (Almost)



# The Stuff Dreams Are Made Of

The Downtown Athletic Club Conference Facility features an elegant ballroom with 20-ft high ceilings. We offer full-service catering for groups of 5 to 360 people... Perfect for your rehearsal dinner and wedding reception! We'll work with you to make your special day as easy and beautiful as a dream.

(Not just for members.)


For information, call us at (541)484-4011  
999 Willamette St., Eugene

# Bride's Corner

A Bridal Outlet

- Wedding gowns
- Bridesmaid dresses
- Accessories
- Tuxedo Rentals

Call Wilma Lantz for a personal appointment. 688-2198

**Nowhere to run to. Nowhere to hide.**  
The Oregon Daily Emerald on the world wide web.  
[www.dailyemerald.com](http://www.dailyemerald.com)