

Fixed incomes need not hinder a spectacular date

■ Looking for affordable entertainment even the most spend-thrifty tightwad would enjoy? Well we've found it

By Rebecca Newell
Oregon Daily Emerald

One of the things that makes college so great is that there is a plethora of things to do and see, and a variety of people to do them with. However, romance on the average college student's budget can often be a challenge equal to acing that chemistry exam.

If you want to make the right impression, have fun and still have some greenbacks left over for a rainy day — of which we have our fair share — a little creativity and adventure is a must.

Butte-iful sunset

There are few things more romantic than watching the sun go down on a city with the one who makes your heart race a little faster. Spencer Butte in south Eugene provides the perfect location within a short driving distance from the University. You can see most of the Willamette Valley

from the elevation of 2,065 feet, and even Mt. Hood and the Three Sisters on a clear day.

Parking is located off Willamette Street on the left just past Pruett Road. The hike from there is only a mile and a half, and you have the choice of two trails, depending on the difficulty of the hike you desire. If you're lugging a picnic basket or backpack laden with food — which is definitely suggested — then the easier route is your best bet.

Once you're at the top, enjoy the beautiful view, picnic dinner and company of that special someone.

Break-dancing

Whether you're car-less or just too lazy to do something off campus on a Friday night, the opportunity for a night at school can be much more appealing than it sounds. Take advantage of your student body card and go for some competitive fun at The Break, located downstairs in the EMU.

Head over to Gateway Mall for the \$1.50 movies — at that price, your change collection will do the trick — to see some older releases, or a movie marathon ... Don't forget to hit Tilt for a couple of games of air hockey and pinball.

For less than \$5, you can rent a pool table for an hour, or opt for table tennis. Board games are free or you can dispose of your change collection at the video arcade.

At 7:30 p.m., head to 220 Gerlinger (the ballroom) for a session with the Oregon Ballroom Dance Club. For \$3 a person, you and your date can dance the night away. And for those of you with

two left feet, the first hour of the night is designated to lessons for beginners.

After the dance session ends at 11:30, head over to The Buzz for a cup of coffee and share a dessert.

Mall-rat madness

For a night of no-brainer entertainment, the mall and a movie are a sure bet. Go to Gateway Mall for \$1.50 movies — at that price, your change collection will do the trick — to see an older release, or a movie marathon. Peruse Target for candy first, because the refreshment prices at the theater are high.

Don't forget to hit Tilt for a couple games of air hockey and pinball. The loser can buy the popcorn. Not exactly a date high on the swoon scale, but the people-watching alone will be something to talk about.

Nature calls

If a little nature seems to be the call, plan a trip the inexpensive way by utilizing the University Outdoor Program. The program helps organize cooperative, low-

cost trips. These types of events are great for fun in a group of diverse, outdoor-loving people.

For example, a day of rafting or kayaking on the Upper McKenzie River is priced at around \$15. The OP offers equipment check-out on a first-come, first-served basis. Head to the OP, located in the EMU basement past The Break, to scan their upcoming trip lists.

Eugene culture at its best

For the ultimate night of Eugene high-culture and people-watching, claim a spot outside the Hult Center on the evening of a ballet performance or a Eugene Symphony concert. Don't forget your flask of wine — can't forget about that romantic aspect — and cheese and crackers as refreshments for the visual entertainment.

It's Eugene culture at its best, and the attire ranges from jeans to formal gowns to guys in drag. The sights will be a definite conversation captivator and a good laugh is always an important component for a great date.

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Springfield

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live," said Paula Jenson, an employee of the University Alumni Association. "I don't think it has any pretensions about it."

Dorothy Lee Batten, an employee of University Campus Recycling, said that living in Springfield is "like living in a garden."

"Everywhere you go, there are flowers," she said. "It's biker-friendly, and it smells sweet. You can ride to the woods and the river in five to 10 minutes from wherever you are."

At the Gateway Mall, Glenn Noll, a resident of the Eugene Mission, said the array of 29 theaters at the complex is an attraction, especially since Wednesday shows at Cinema 12 are only 50 cents before noon.

Noll said he has seen Springfield growing in business over the last few years.

He pointed to six new businesses in the mall area — the Roadhouse Grill, the Outback Steakhouse, Big Five Sports, Hollywood Video, Circuit City and the South Umpqua Bank.

The wave pool Pryor mentioned is in Thurston, and gets 1,500 to 2,000 visitors a day during the summer, said Christine Crutcher, aquatics supervisor for the Willamalane Park and Recreation District.

"They come from all over the state," she said, pointing out that Portland is the only other location with a similar facility.

Another bright spot on the economic front is the number of minority-owned businesses.

"Hispanic-owned businesses are a recent development," said Dan Egan, executive vice president and general manager of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

He said the city has 20 to 30 Hispanic-owned businesses — "still quite small in the total scheme of things."

"But I also think that less apparent are the Hispanic professionals — architects, attorneys, accountants, doctors, police officers, teachers, executives and directors," Egan said.

Egan also spoke of easy-entry into community involvement in Springfield.

"If you ever said, 'I want to give to my community,' you can do that here," he said.

"It is so easy to get involved. Springfield is really open to citizen involvement. In that way, we're still not too large a town."

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