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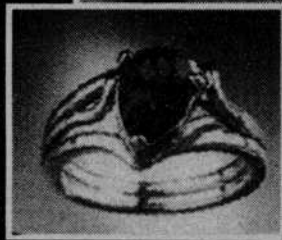
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Tingles can become dates

■ With a little effort, secret crushes can be converted into a shot at true love

By Christopher Arnold
For the Emerald

Valentine's Day is on the way, and it's the perfect time to profess your love to that hottie in your discussion section. You know, the one you're always looking for at the beginning of class, the one who distracts you so badly that you fill in the wrong Scantron bubbles.

Ah, there's nothing like being drunk on the rush of a secret crush.

"It's a stupid junior high thing, but it makes you all tingly inside," said Becca Eisenberg, a junior history major.

Transforming that tingle into a date can be challenging.

There's always the option of catching that special someone off guard. This strategy isn't foolproof, but it works on certain people.

Take, for example, Sarah Holmes, a senior multimedia design major.

"I want someone to come up and grab me and say 'I've been totally obsessed with you for, like, a year,'" she said.

It takes an extremely bold person to be so straightforward, or at least a person who has consumed a large volume of alcohol. But there's nothing wrong with a milder approach.

"Offer her a flower and ask if

she'll smile for you," said junior psychology major Aaron Scharfman. "It's worked for me twice."

Such suave tactics can be effective; however, any last minute nervousness can lead to disaster. Losing composure may leave you looking about as smooth as a pineapple.

When in doubt, there's always the tried-and-true method of offering a simple compliment. Recently, an amateur Don Juan used this approach on Lynette Werner, a senior majoring in psychology and sociology. "He came up to me and told me I was beautiful," Werner said.

"Do you know how good that made me feel? Unfortunately, it wasn't my boyfriend."

There are endless ways to express your love. Be enthusiastic. Be creative. Be confident.

But most of all, if you get that first date, don't screw up. "Talk about her 70 percent of the time, you 30 percent," said senior art history major Erik Ash. He said a casual dinner and a few drinks are the makings of a great first date.

Good conversation is key. "Girls really like to talk about themselves," Ash said, "and listening to them makes you seem gentlemanly."

Being polite belongs in anyone's game plan, but take care not to go overboard. Don't knock anyone over trying to hold a door open. Avoid frightening a date with ex-

travagant gifts, especially if the person recently discovered you exist.

Gifts can be intimidating, Eisenberg and Werner agreed. Use extreme caution when expressing passion with sappy inanimate objects.

"Roses are scary," Eisenberg said.

Remember that few first dates end in marriage, aside from rare cases in which a large volume of alcohol was consumed.

With this in mind, note that most people don't enjoy listening to a life story on the first date. These encounters often turn into grueling therapy sessions.

"You should say 'I like to work out, and I have a dog.' Stuff like that," Eisenberg said, "not 'one time when I was in second grade...'"

If these pieces of advice are news to you, highlight each useful quote, clip out the article and keep it with you on your date. When in need of help, simply excuse yourself and review the article in the rest room. This way you'll never find yourself dulling the pain of heartbreak with a large volume of alcohol.

"If they're interesting, it should flow naturally," Eisenberg said. "First you start talking about Spanish, then you talk about politics and pretty soon you're having sex on the couch."

Try crafty ways of showing love

■ Students can use their hands instead of their wallets to give added meaning to Valentine's gifts

By Kendall Larsen
For the Emerald

Every special someone deserves a unique and personal present for Valentine's Day. Even for those who are not artistically gifted, there are inexpensive, crafty ways to create gifts a sweetheart will treasure forever.

Craft stores such as Ben Franklin and Michael's in Eugene have low-cost basic materials to begin with. Sara Snellings, an employee at Ben Franklin, suggested decorating heart-shaped papier-mâché boxes with fabric, paper or paint and fastening the items with Mod Podge, a multi-purpose adhesive that can be used on the boxes.

"Boxes are really easy to do," Snellings said. Ben Franklin sells medium-sized heart boxes for about \$3. Photos, magazine clippings, beads and other decorations can be added to the box for embellishment.

Papier-mâché boxes are not only easy to make, but can become treasured keepsakes. Allie O'Grady's sister made her a "heart in a box" one Valentine's Day. The round papier-

mâché box had a picture of O'Grady, a freshman, and her boyfriend on the outside and was stamped with little pink and red hearts. On the inside was a small, red heart-shaped box with the name "Ryan" painted on it. The box was filled with colorful, love-themed confetti.

"This gift would work for anyone," O'Grady said.

Snellings also recommended using rose decals on handmade glycerin soaps. The soap comes in various colors and is sold in both pre-cut pieces and large bars. Dried flowers can also be put in the soap to add a romantic and pretty touch.

Kathy Hall, of Crafter's Alley in Springfield, said tying three different-sized, painted wooden hearts together in a row with pretty ribbon can be a sweet gift for a Valentine to hang on his or her wall. Decorating the hearts or writing names and phrases on them makes the present personal.

Another simple but creative idea is to make a "love garden" for a Valentine. Start with a small- or medium-sized clay pot and a few shades of acrylic paint. Paint the outside of the pot any color and allow it to dry. Then paint little hearts or dots in another color. To add variety, stencil a border of flow-

ers, hearts or individual designs.

Next, get some florist's foam, a package of jumbo craft sticks, a few wooden heart shapes and some colored confetti grass. Place the foam in the pot after the paint has dried and cover it with grass. Then paint two or three of the craft sticks and paint a few hearts as well. After they have dried, glue the hearts to the top of the sticks. Write personal messages on the hearts or even glue on photographs. Once the hearts are decorated, place the sticks into the foam.

Now add a few silk flowers to the "garden," or tie pieces of ribbon around each craft stick for the finishing touches. All of the materials can be found at Ben Franklin Crafts and should cost less than \$15.

For extra instruction on craft ideas, there are some Valentine's Day workshops available. Barb Simmons of Treasures from the Heart in Eugene teaches wood-working classes and will help her students create almost anything they want. These classes can cost from about \$6 to \$10, she said.

Michael's is also offering a "Valentine Candy Wrapper" course for \$2 on Feb. 11, and a "Coordinate Valentine Gift Tags, Cards and Envelopes" class on Feb. 12 and 13. The cost is \$10, plus supplies.

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