

With age comes wisdom — to spot cheap deals

Head to the local gathering places for senior citizens if you want to find low-cost eateries

By Alix Kerl
Oregon Daily Emerald

Face it, Eugene gets old. This time of year, everyone is ready to be done with finals and get out of here. Memorial Day weekend is a great opportunity to take a break from day-to-day life and do something out of the ordinary.

Maybe it's not the scenery of Eugene that's getting old, but the people. It takes awhile to notice, but soon we begin to notice that for most of the day we only see college-aged boys and girls. Sure, pro-

PULSE Cheap Date

fessors and non-traditional students are older, but for the most part, old people, babies and animals are a rare sight. Just going past Chambers Street to the west or Fifth Street to the north reveals a whole new world.

Here are a few places to go where there will definitely be a lot of old people. So many, in fact, that you will be stared at. Old people are great because, like college students, they have a lot of free time and are always on the lookout

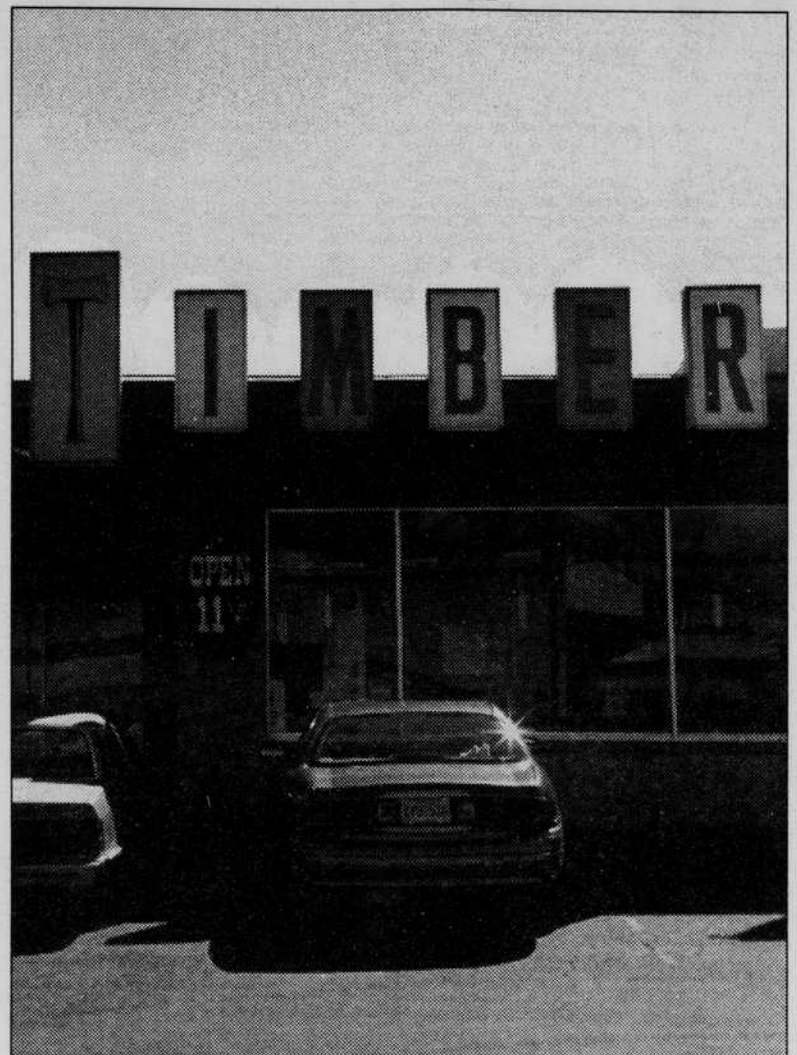
for cheap deals.

Old people love food. Shari's Restaurant, Deb's Family Restaurant and GJ's are all hot spots for the senior crowd — and they are all cheap. There are two Shari's in Eugene and two in Springfield, but the closest to the University is on 2950 W 11th Ave. It's a chain restaurant that serves up tasty potatoes and some fine pie.

There are three Deb's in Eugene — two Deb's Family Restaurants and one Deb's The Original. The Original, at 1290 W Seventh Ave., is top notch. GJ's is a tacky restaurant with good food that falls into the greasy spoon category. It has a country kitchen decor with fake flowers and ceiling fans. All of the restaurants are well-lit, comfortable and the waiters and waitresses are friendly. The food is easy to masticate and there are discounts for people of a ripe, gray age.

However, nothing can beat the Timber Topper, a '50s-style buffet with heaps of food and lots of old people. This gem is located in The Big Y, an eclectic little shopping center out on Sixth Avenue, past Garfield Street, a bit before Sixth turns into Highway 99. The Timber Topper isn't really a breakfast spot, but it opens daily by 11 a.m., which is breakfast time for many college students. Follow the orange light of the flickering florescent "OPEN" sign, walk in the door and head right for the buffet without sitting down.

The buffet is no puny spread; it's a true offering to the buffet gods. Imagine biscuits and gravy, fried chicken, macaroni salad, fried potatoes, caramel rolls and Jell-O, and the beauty of the Timber Topper will be revealed. In the buffet line, the dishes are supported with mounds of shaved ice and decorative parsley. Lunch goes from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is only \$6.50; dinner is \$8.50 and runs after lunch until 8 p.m. Coffee is only 75 cents a cup, which includes refills. When the waitresses come around, they put a dollop of cream in your coffee before the warm-up. The place is incredibly homey and comfortable. American flags are all over the place, and you sink right into the brown booths. Muzak chimes from ceiling speakers, playing choice hits like The Police's "Every breath you take."



Thomas Patterson Emerald

Timber Topper, at 2166 W. Sixth Ave., is a popular dining spot with both senior citizens and students — the low-cost, basic and hearty buffet may have something to do with it.

There are a few fun things to do near the Timber Topper, such as have a look at Harbor Freight Tools or go the liquor store, but these are more cowboy spots than senior spots. Coastal Farm and Home Supply, located just down the road, has a fair amount of old people, but one can only look at Carharts and farm tools for so long.

The real place to go to find lively old people having fun is Bingomania. The spot is located at 333 River Ave. and opens at 5 p.m. six nights a week (closed Tuesdays). Games start at 6 p.m., and a night of bingo goes until 10 p.m. On Friday and Saturday nights, bingo is called until 1:15 a.m.

Bingo is a pretty basic game that involves little skill, but Bingomania is nice enough to set aside a New

Player Table so that new players can get acquainted with the game. Another plus for first timers is that on Sundays and Thursdays in May, it is only \$5 for all you can play.

If bingo makes you hungry, you can go to the snack bar or wait for the dessert cart to make its way to your table. On Friday and Saturday nights, there are full dinners offered. Of course, there are always free coffee refills to keep you charged.

If you must play bingo on Tuesday night, head over to the Eugene Elks Lodge #357 at 2470 W. 11th Ave. Bingo goes from 6:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, and a light dinner menu is available.

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Lesbopalooza

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don't see us in the press," said Williamson, who is a pioneer of the women's music movement and co-founder of the first all-women recording company in the 1970s, Olivia Records.

Williamson said she has seen a change in this generation's female artists, because they have more access to recording labels. But when she started in the music business in the 1970s, she said labels often turned female artists away saying, "we already have a woman."

Other music companies had female artists, she said, but there were always men in the background, playing instruments or filling technical positions. She said even today, men's money pushes women artists into the forefront.

"It's a compromise (women) have had to pay," she said.

During the last three decades, Williamson said she has tried to en-

courage women to take the risk to come out of the closet sexually.

"Women needed me to be really strong," she said. "I give them the courage to be exactly who they are."

"Songs are spun through the air and passed through the body. That's when miracles can occur."

Cris Williamson
folk singer/songwriter

Through her music, Williamson said she hopes she reaches the audience and makes a difference in their lives.

"Songs are spun through the air and passed through the body," she said. "That's when miracles can occur."

In addition to music, Chicana Femme Dyke Celestina Pearl will perform poetry, spoken word and dance at Lesbopalooza.

Once a Eugene resident, Pearl co-founded and performed with the Fierce Pussy Posse Cabaret Theatre Company until she moved to San Francisco in January 2000.

Pearl will perform a unique strip dance with three other performers in which she begins dressed in a suit, peels the layers of clothing to reveal a little girl's costume, then ends wrapped in one large scarf. Warning: There will be some nudity.

"It basically is a statement of the different aspects of myself," she said. "They are a part of my personality and spirituality."

Tickets are available at the EMU Ticket Office and Mother Kali's Books. Tickets for one night are \$11 for general admission and \$9 for students. Tickets for both nights are \$16 for general admission and \$11 for students.

All ages are welcome.

E-mail reporter Jen West at jenwest@dailyemerald.com.

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