

Pulse Editor:
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Pulse Relax



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Creativity can cure residence hall blues

Dear Nat: It's my first year in the residence halls, and I have extreme cases of spring fever and cabin fever. I'm anxious for summer to come so I can live in a real home again, and I'm having a hard time concentrating on my schoolwork. Every moment in my claustrophobic room is depressing, and I'm dying to just get out of here. How can I regain my focus and make the time appear to go by faster?



Natasha Chilingirian
Ask Nat

— Residence Hall Doldrums

Dear Doldrums: Oh boy, reading your letter sure resulted in some unpleasant flashbacks to my first year in the halls. Washing dishes in a communal bathroom sink, hearing booming music through the paper-thin walls at 2 a.m. and seeing the shocked faces of visiting family and friends as they gawked at my pint-sized living space are not memories that I am fond of. So you're certainly not alone — anyone who downsizes from a comfortable family house to a cramped room has the right to complain.

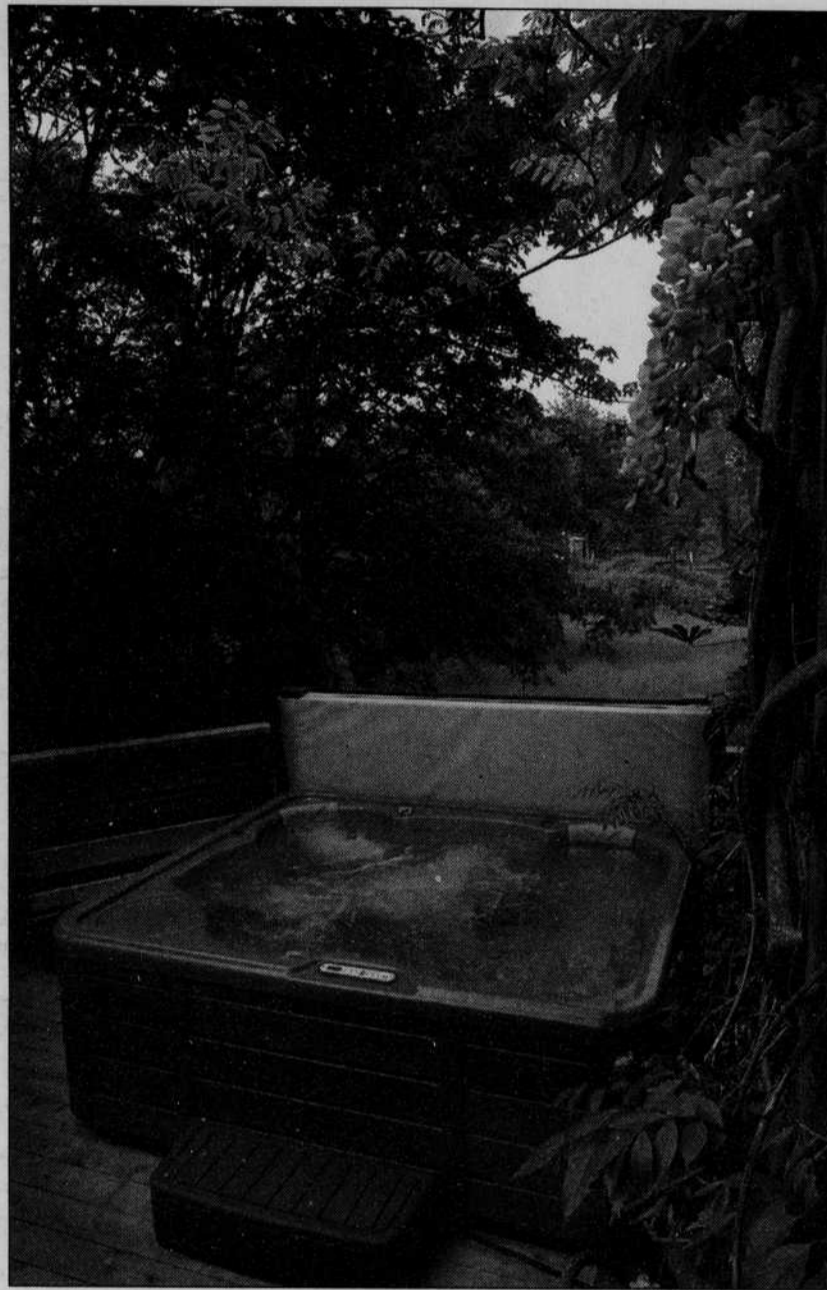
But hey — you've almost made it. With about four weeks left, there is still time to restore your concentration and shift your focus away from watching the clock. Make a homework schedule for yourself and go somewhere other than your room to study. A local coffee shop, the EMU and (if the sun ever comes out) the lawn are places that can give you a change of atmosphere. During leisure time, engage in activities taking place outside of your dreaded chamber. Go for a walk in the park, go downtown and, if possible, visit family and friends in other towns during the weekends.

I've always found it amusing to have some sort of countdown to the last day of school. Crossing off boxes on a calendar and writing down the number of days left has suited me fine, but I suggest taking this idea and upping the creativity level. How about making a jumbo construction paper chain and tearing a link off every morning? If that doesn't help the days speed by, at least it can make your room look a little less dull.

Sure, the residence halls certainly aren't the University's best feature. But I think that holding out in a crummy living situation can help you appreciate a future, higher-quality living condition. Chances are, you'll be highly thankful for your space once you move into a medium-size house or apartment. When the time comes to move out of the halls, you'll leave not only as a relieved individual, but as a stronger individual for enduring nearly nine months of living outside of your comfort zone.

Dear Nat: I'm traveling to Europe this summer, and I'm terrified to fly. It's never been a problem for me before, but ever

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Liz Carskadon for the Emerald
Onsen's 14 private hot tubs are surrounded with large plants to create a natural environment.

Bubbling away stress

Onsen, a local spa parlor, furnishes a clean, friendly 'outdoor' environment for relaxation

Hot spots

Mark Baylis
Pulse Reporter

Midterms had done a number on me. My girlfriend knew it; my friends sensed it. My roommates felt it. I was the walking embodiment of rigidity. Luckily, a cure was only a few blocks away.

My girlfriend took me by the hand, led me to the hourly hot tubs at Onsen, plopped my board-like body into the water and watched the color seep back into my complexion.

If a review could be summed up in a four-letter word, this review would say: "Ahhh."

Tucked away behind Franklin Boulevard, Onsen, located at 1883 Garden Ave., remains a relative secret, despite its 20-year history. I've lived in Eugene for years and have never known it was there. It's easy to miss — the one-story wooden oasis enjoys an inconspicuous setting amid trees and foliage, a little set back from the road. At night, the only telltale clue to the dimly lit building's existence is a subtle wooden sign rubbing elbows with the shrubbery.

Onsen has 14 private hot tubs available for hourly rental. Each room's approximately 12-by-12 size isn't huge, but is certainly ample. The tubs shun distracting decor for a natural environment, teaming two to three large plants with wooden walls, concrete floor, bubbling water and sky to provide the senses with all the natural elements. Each unit also houses a covered dressing area and a small shower.

Except for the bathrooms and the covered breezeway, the building is ceiling-free, essentially making it an outdoor establishment, with cubicle walls for privacy. On a clear night, this is heaven. Trees rise over the building, framing the open view of the sky. My tub just happened to offer an evening scene of the half-moon. The steam mixes with fresh air and the smell of pine and leaves. It's truly magical.

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Oregon nudists win increased exposure

A growing number of Oregonians are stripping away inhibitions — as well as their clothes and past preconceptions — as nudist camp memberships grow

Ryan Bornheimer
Senior Pulse Reporter

Squaw Mountain Family Nudist Club member Phil Moriarty sums up his attraction to nudism in three words: "I hate clothes."

Moriarty's simple philosophy is more illuminating than it might seem. It points to the essential component of a lifestyle far removed from the preconceptions of nudist organizations that have existed in the past. As the number of nudists in Oregon grows, the stereotypes are crumbling and a growing number of people are shedding more than their inhibitions.

As of today, there are eight clubs in Oregon officially affiliated with the American Association for Nude Recreation, the largest nudist organization in the United States. AANR represents 240 clubs and nearly 50,000 individual members.

The organization's name alone proves an increasing acceptance of nudist lifestyle. Until recently, the AANR was known as the American Sunbather Association, a much more ambiguous title that afforded its members a little secrecy in their nudist practices. But a more vocal defense of the lifestyle has perhaps resulted in less reason to hide.

Nudist clubs basically fall in to one of two categories, landed and non-landed. A landed club is a nudist organization with its own property and

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Jeremy Forrest Emerald

There are eight clubs in Oregon officially affiliated with the American Association for Nude Recreation.