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EW DOES CORVALLIS

Looking for a duck fart in beaver country.

BY MELISSA BEARNS

It was a challenging mission: Assemble the staff, assign a designated driver and spend a Friday evening partying in Corvallis. We accepted the assignment and as usual, threw ourselves into it 110 percent.

After baking in the sun at the OSU "Where's it At?" street fair, the sunburned crew packed up the table, jumpstarted our geriatric VW bus and puttered on over to **Squirrel's Tavern**. Any bar that needs to have a sign telling people not to smoke pot or roll joints on the premises is OK by us. But seriously, Squirrel's is one cool joint, even if they don't serve hard alcohol and accept only cash.

The bartender knows his better-than-average selection of beers on tap, which include brews from Rogue, Deschutes, Widmer and PBR. They also have 10 high quality wines by the glass if you'd rather not swill the ales. During happy hour (technically happy hours since it runs from 4:30 to 6:30 pm) those fabulous microbrews are just \$2.50 and the PBR is just over a buck.

The food is standard bar fare with a few tasty exceptions including a salmon burger. Plus you can eat, drink and smoke outside in a separate seating area, something the smokers in our group thought was a big bonus.

We started our evening early, pre-happy hour, to be exact. Still our tab was just \$15 for six drinks. If you're looking for a rowdy night, go on a Friday but make sure you're there a little later than 3:30 in the afternoon. Don't miss the upstairs with foosball, pool, and our favorite, Ms. Pacman.

Also, check out the stage for the weekend shows. It's on a split level so you can see the band from both the upstairs and the downstairs — or spit on them, as Jeff pointed out. Two more items that earn Squirrel's big points with us — feminine hygiene products in the ladies room and condoms on your way out the door. Look for them in the little basket on your left as you're leaving.

By that time we'd worked up quite an appetite and headed over to **Bombs Away Café**. We're told by Amy, a senior at OSU, that if you're trying to avoid the Greeks and the jocks, Bombs Away is the place. The café has two seating areas, one in the front and one in the back, separated by the kitchen. We liked the back area better because it has a more intimate atmosphere — maybe too intimate for our large group but they squeezed us in.

The front area is decorated with tree limbs that have been cut and hung from the ceilings and draped in Christmas lights. The effect is really cool. That theme continues into the back where they use five-foot sections of bamboo. But enough about the décor.

The Bomber nachos kick ass with heapin' helpings of guacamole, black beans and corn salsa. The poppers were tasty. Jalapeño fries got all thumbs up but the mussels were the

highlight. Two minutes after they arrived at our table, nothing remained but a plate of shells.

"Wow!," said Jennine, already on her third shot. "We devoured them."

Jennine was not alone in the drinking department. We tried the margaritas (excellent), the lemon drops (seriously lacking), the cosmo shots (yummm-mmy), kamikaze's, sex on the beach and a few others. A long discussion about shots with interesting names, including the "duck fart" ensued and by the time we were finished, the crew had racked up a \$141 bar bill. In our defense, six of us were drinking so that's really

only about \$23 a person. Uh, huh. Sure. Whatever makes ya feel better, right? Maybe some ibuprofen in the morning, but I digress.

With half the staff departing for Eugene, only the hardy and hardcore remained: Amy (not on staff), Deena, Jennine and Melissa. Four ladies left to our own devices, we crashed a **frat house**, where earlier in the day Jennine and Deena had seen hot undergrad's boxing on the lawn. We dragged Galen away from studying for a CAD exam and wheedled him into giving us a tour.

When we learned it was a dry house and that the frat boys all sleep in group sleeping areas akin to bunk rooms, our stereotype of the animal house, non-stop party lifestyle was forever shattered.

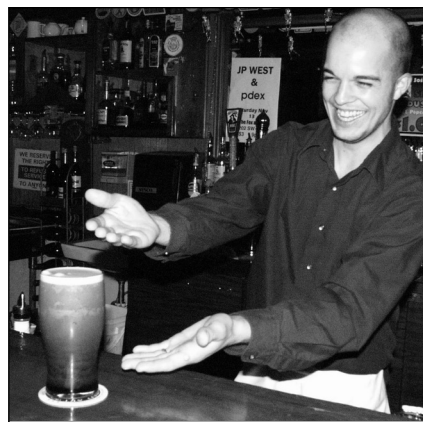
"So how do you manage, you know, the frat-boy booty call," asked Jennine with an innocent smile. Galen, good sport that he was, showed us the more private rooms.

Our tour over, we ambled over to the waterfront area and landed at **Fox 'n' Firkin**, our last stop. Sitting outside, the conversation turned to sex until we realized that the perv two tables down from us was listening intently to every word.

The Dimes, the band playing that night, arrived and as they were loading in and setting up, Jannine conned them into playing a few acoustic tunes for us at our table. They treated us to one of their best originals "'Til I'm Broken" and a cover of the Beatles' "Don't Let Me Down." With a sound that mixes Brit pop and homegrown rock, they put on a nice show, either acoustic or plugged in so check them out. They play.

Demonstrating impeccable timing, *EW's* Music Editor Ben Fogelson and his wife, Meagan, showed up just in time to catch the private concert and pound a few pints. Meanwhile one member of the party did a "blow job" shot (that's a kind of drink, really) from between the legs of our harried waiter, Jeff, ending up with half of it on her shirt. Things were starting to get a little out of hand and it was time to take the troops home.

We stayed to catch opener **John Shipe** (a Eugene local), saw half of **The Dimes'** set and then dropped the drunks off at their doorsteps in Eugene with Gatorade and aspirin. Viva Corvallis!



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