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GRAVITY

AN EXPERIMENTAL FASHION EVENT



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023
 Silver Dollar Fairgrounds, 2357 Fair Street, Chico
 \$40 pre-sale tickets, \$50 at the door
 Doors 6:00pm Show 7:30pm
 No host bar - KZFR

KZFR 90.1 FM

THE BOOT STORE

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 CHICO'S NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE



SECOND & FLUME

by **Melissa Daugherty**
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Fall

I moved to the North State in the late-'90s, but somehow I still haven't acclimated to the heat. Every summer, I count down the days till fall and obsessively check the seven-day forecast.

But I don't stop at Chico. In fact, most of the time, I'm actually more interested in the temps elsewhere, particularly in places that hold special meaning in my life.

I have roughly a dozen locations saved in my phone's weather app, and I often scroll through them and woefully recite the numbers to my husband.

"It's 64 degrees in Albion," I note, longingly. A beach there is where he proposed to me 15 years ago.

"It's 75 in Moorpark," I say. That's where he grew up.

"It's 72 in Palo Alto," I point out. We take our son to Stanford for medical care.

A few friends who've spent their entire lives in the Chico area tell me to lean into the heat. Some claim to enjoy the triple digits, which makes me wonder if long-term exposure has fried their brains.

I don't care what they say, summers here are oppressive. The sweat. The stench. The heaviness that envelopes the region like an electric blanket. Most days, I feel smothered, as though I'm gasping for air. Sleep eludes me.

I've tried to trick myself into enjoying the season, but that's hard to do when it's 80 degrees at dawn. When I start the day feeling like burnt toast, I tend to stay cranky, even in air conditioning. Sometimes I question whether I even belong here.

Where I grew up, in the East Bay, our house didn't need A/C. In the summer months, we'd simply open our windows at night to let the cool breezes inside, then close everything up during the day. That would never work in the North State.

Each May, when it starts heating up, I hope that the approaching season will be different. That maybe, just maybe, I'll finally enjoy a North State summer. But in 25 years, that's never happened. Instead, the same cycle repeats itself: I suffer and loathe it.

By late-June, I feel like a plum that's fallen to the ground and is slowly withering away. A month later, I'm just a prune. It's like reverse seasonal depression. The kind that comes with too much daylight.

One of the things that gets me through mentally is booking a coastal vacation for the peak of Chico heat. I'm no sadist, but there's a certain satisfaction that comes with sitting by the sea and hearing everyone back home complain about the weather.

After we return, I get a compulsion to call a real estate agent. By now, it's August.

"Time to put the house on the market," I say in this imaginary conversation. "We're moving to the beach!"

But then I think about what a pain it'll be to get the house ready to sell. Plus, I'm busy preparing for my kid's return to school. And just about the time he starts settling into a routine, it's late September.

Finally, the tell-tales of fall have arrived: Nighttime temps drop to the 50s and daytime highs dip to the 70s. I look around and see my neighbors' house fully decorated for Halloween.

I find myself breathing deeply again. Sleep comes with more ease. I think about the fact that I've lived here longer than I've lived anywhere else in my life, including my hometown. Then I remember that I met the love of my life in Chico, tied the knot out in the orchards of Hamilton City, and gave birth to my son up in Paradise.

Suddenly I realize the North State isn't so bad after all. For eight months of the year, I actually quite love it.

Melissa Daugherty is editor-at-large for the Chico News & Review