

BOSTON ON THE \$HEAP

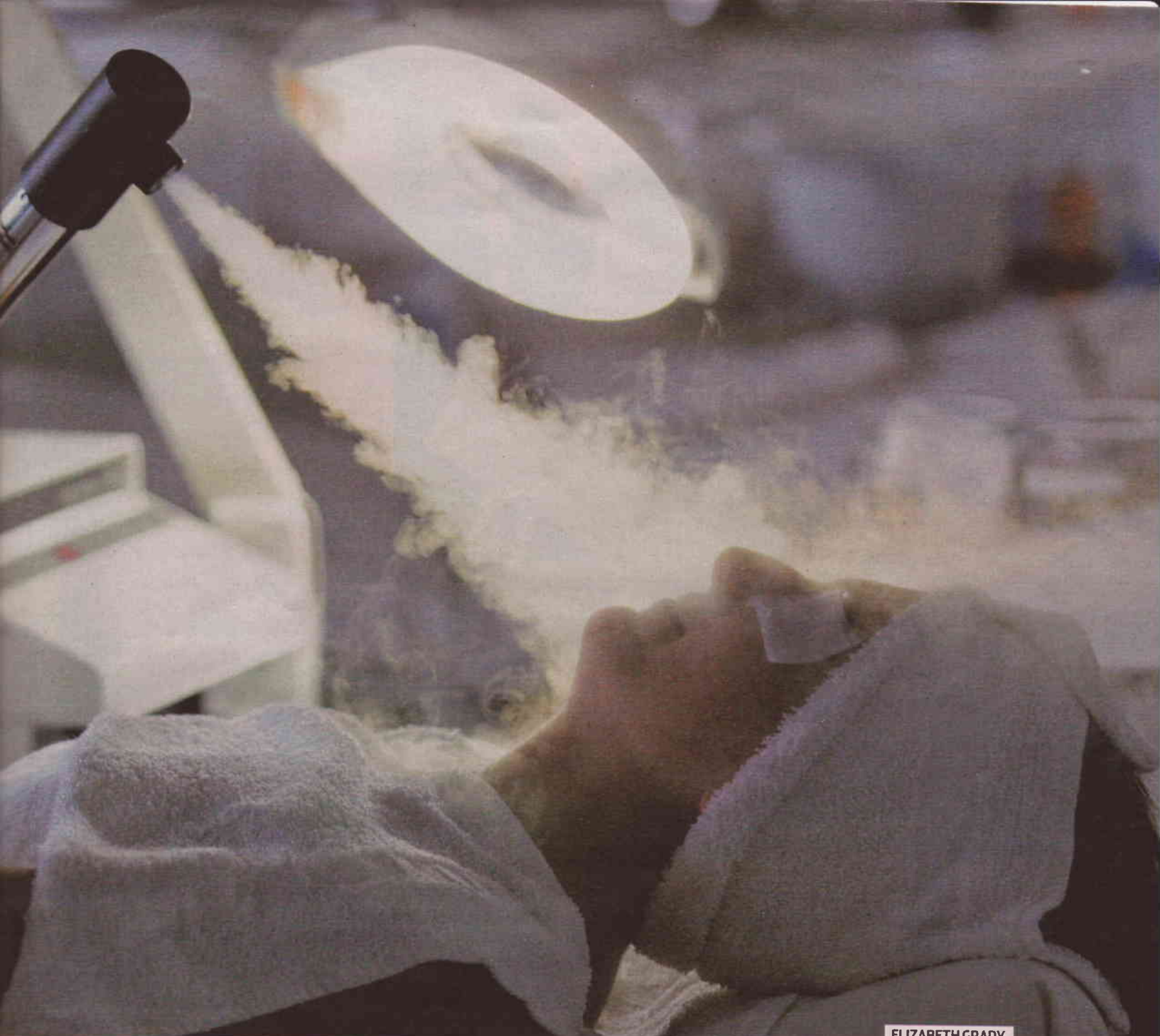
EVER SINCE THE PURITANS set foot on our rocky soil in 1620, Bostonians have spent a great deal of time and energy trying to live on the smallest amount of money possible. For centuries that meant eschewing the finer things in life and making do with only the basic necessities – and having the basic necessities patched, resealed, resoled, or shellacked when they eventually did fall apart. The Puritans may be gone, but their ethic lives on. For Boston's bargain seekers, getting a deal isn't a sport like it is in New York – it's more of a genetic thing. It's an approach to life that holds that spending more than you have to is not only unnecessary, it's a moral weakness, a sign of laziness, an unwillingness to do the work needed to find a good deal. This list is all about making those fantastic bargains just a little easier to find.

— Kris Frieswick

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SECRETS TO LIVING LARGE FOR VERY LITTLE COST — OR NO MONEY AT ALL

HER CHEAP CHOICES Free jazz Friday and Saturday nights at Four Seasons' Bristol Lounge → Volunteer ushers see the show free at the



ELIZABETH GRADY

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BEAUTY SECRETS

Call ahead to book your \$10 basic facial or \$25 to \$45 foil at one of several area **BLAINE BEAUTY SCHOOL** locations (Boston, Framingham, and Malden schools for hair and some skin-care services, and Hyannis, Lowell, and Waltham for additional services including manicures, waxing, and full-body skin treatments). Instructors are present for all services.

Blaine Beauty Schools, 30 West Street, Boston, 617-266-2661; other area locations listed at www.blainebeautyschools.com

You don't need an appointment for a \$3 manicure given by a student at the **CALI FOR NAILS ACADEMY** in Dorchester. Hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Cali for Nails Academy, 204 Adams Street, Suite 2, Dorchester, 617-436-6766

ELIZABETH GRADY, the high-end national spa and salon chain, has a training center in Medford that offers, at half price, most of the services available at Elizabeth

Grady salons. Needless to say, appointments go very quickly. Massage clinics run about twice a week throughout the year; just call the school to ask, and soon a student will be practicing Swedish moves on you. Aesthetics clinics - instructor-supervised facials, waxing, and other salon treatments - run all year too, but the schedule changes every six months or so. Call the school to find out when clinics will be held or to be put on the e-mail list, which will notify you of clinic dates. As soon as the schedule is announced, start dialing for an appointment.

Elizabeth Grady, 222 Boston Avenue, Medford, 781-960-0126



EATING FOR LESS

What's not to love about a bar named after a poet who did some of his best work while sloshed?

BUKOWSKI'S TAVERN, named to honor Charles Bukowski, has an awe-inspiring beer menu and is famous for its burgers. You can try a burger or a foot-long hot dog for a paltry \$1.69 every weekday before 8 p.m., and add a side of fries or mashed potatoes for \$1.10.

Bukowski's Tavern, 1281 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, 617-497-7077, and 50 Dalton Street, Boston, 617-437-9999

On the first Wednesday of every month from 5 to 7 p.m., the food shops in the **FANEUIL HALL MARKETPLACE** offer free samples. Choose from Boston Chowda, Carol Ann's Bake Shop, and more.

Faneuil Hall Marketplace, 617-523-1300, faneuilhallmarketplace.com

Discounts on appetizers pack **MCCORMICK & SCHMICK'S**, the seafood place near Park Plaza, every afternoon from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. and again from 10 p.m. to midnight. There's a two-drink minimum, and the menu changes nightly, but you can't lose with the thick, juicy \$1.95 cheeseburger or a pound of fresh mussels for \$3.95.

McCormick and Schmick's, 34 Columbus Avenue, Boston, 617-482-3999, mccormickandschmicks.com



NEWS RESTAURANT & LOUNGE in the Leather District has decided that Wednesday night is Ladies' Night, and women dine free on a three-course meal – salad, entree, and dessert – from 5 to 10 p.m. in the lounge. (You have to buy your own drink.) Entree options usually include chicken, fish, and vegetarian choices.

News Restaurant & Lounge, 150 Kneeland Street, Boston, 617-426-6397, newsboston.com

The self-service wine-tasting machines at the Brookline branch of **THE WINE GALLERY** let anybody over 21 sample from 16 whites and 32 reds – all free. This miracle of science is called an Enomatic by its makers, but it's known as the "wine jukebox" by the people at the Wine Gallery. Each taster gets a free card with 12 credits on it. The card lets the user "pay" the

jukebox. The Wine Gallery also hosts informative, non-jukebox-mediated wine, beer, and liquor tastings at both its locations. At the Brookline store, beer tastings are held on Thursdays from 5 to 7 p.m. and wine and spirits on Fridays from 5 to 7 p.m. and Saturdays from 3 to 6 p.m. Tastings at the Kenmore Square location (where there's also free valet parking – score!) are held on Thursdays from 6 to 8 p.m. for beer and on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 8 p.m. for wine and spirits.

The Wine Gallery, 375 Boylston Street, Brookline, 617-277-5522, and Hotel Commonwealth, 516 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, 617-266-9300, wine-gallery.com

CULTURE SHOCKS

The owner of Newtonville Books, Tim Huggins, has created a trifec-



LUCKY'S LOUNGE

from the surrounding Fort Point Channel neighborhood. In a nod to the starving-artist status of many of its customers, Lucky's has free live music most nights of the week with no drink minimum. On Wednesday, there's jazz; on Thursday it's '60s and '70s R&B, soul, funk, and rock; and Friday nights feature local bands. But you might want to save yourself for the big daddy of them all – Sinatra Sunday.

Lucky's Lounge, 355 Congress Street, 617-357-5825, Boston, luckyslounge.com

Every Tuesday night, from 7 to 8 p.m., the Comedy Studio, just outside Harvard Square, does its live magic cabaret show for free.

THE MYSTERY LOUNGE, started by local magicians in 1997, begins at 8 and usually costs \$10. But you can get a sneak peek at the magic in the second-floor lounge an hour before the show. You'll see jaw-dropping close-up magic – card tricks and the like – and there isn't even a drink minimum. Who knows, maybe one of the magicians will pull \$10 out of your ear.

Mystery Lounge at the Comedy Studio, Upstairs at the Hong Kong Restaurant, 1238 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, 617-661-6507, mysteryslounge.com

show early – the place always fills to capacity.

Four Stories, fourstories.org

LUCKY'S LOUNGE is an underground place, any way you look at it: It's in a basement, and there's no sign. Just look for the mysterious staircase at the corner of Congress and A streets, and head on down to join the creative types



THE MYSTERY LOUNGE

salon, Four Stories features a happening DJ, a cool club space (so far, all events have been held at The Enormous Room in Central Square, Cambridge), and readings by four authors – mostly locals. Because Slater lives part time in Japan, Osaka and Tokyo are on the 2007 schedule before Boston, where the fun is slated to start in April. Each night has a theme (such as Power Plays: Tales of Love, War, and Politics or Crime and Punishment: Stories From the Big House). Join the e-mail list for details, but get to any

ta of free with his **BOOKS & BREWS** series. He hosts author readings, discussions, and book signings at his store. Then, after the free entertainment, attendees are invited to stroll to Ariadne, a local bar, for free appetizers and a free drink. *Newtonville Books, 296 Walnut Street, Newton, 617-244-6619, newtonvillebooks.com*

Started by local writer Tracy Slater in 2005, the **FOUR STORIES** reading series rapidly became one of the hottest gatherings in the city. Built around the idea of a

YOU CAN GO TO THE MOVIES FOR FREE



The powers that be in Hollywood have identified Boston as a prime location to get intelligent feedback from members of the viewing public before movies go into general release. There are a number of ways to score free tickets to screenings — signing up with a few websites that distribute them is the easiest. Or, if there's a movie coming out that you know you want to see, go to its website; many offer free advance-screening tickets. (There is a catch. Getting free screening tickets often requires you to sign up for an e-mail newsletter or a spam list. If you provide a fake e-mail address or opt out of receiving spam, you're often not eligible for the tickets.) In most cases, even though you will be holding a free ticket, seating is first come, first served. Make sure to arrive at least an hour prior to movie time to ensure a spot.

Entertainment Weekly magazine's website periodically has free tickets to local advance screenings. You'll have to check back frequently, because a listing disappears when the screening is over or all the tickets have been given away. ew.com/freescreening

Free Movie Screenings lists links to movie studios' offers. Most of the linked sites are easy to use, even allowing users to print out tickets – though some require personal information and entry in a drawing for access. freemoviescreenings.net

Wild About Movies has reviews, a critics' forum, and access to free screening tickets. You'll have to search out listings for free screenings in the Boston area, but there are plenty. The site also has links to win free DVDs. wildaboutmovies.com/screenings

Free comedy at the Green Dragon Tavern near Haymarket on Monday nights → Work-study gets you free classes at Cambridge's Dance Complex