



9-15-2016

## To Know the Locals

Pat Sturm

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview>

 Part of the [Fiction Commons](#), [Nonfiction Commons](#), [Photography Commons](#), and the [Poetry Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Sturm, Pat (2016) "To Know the Locals," *Westview*: Vol. 32 : Iss. 2 , Article 35.  
Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/westview/vol32/iss2/35>

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Westview by an authorized administrator of SWOSU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu](mailto:phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu).



# To Know the Locals

by Pat Sturm

Seek the cafe with the most cars,  
The cafe with TAKE STATE  
tempera painted all over the windows  
in gaudy school colors like  
purple and green, the cafe  
reasonably named Al's or Bertha's.

Look for Pearl, the waitress who  
drops menus on your table  
as she slides water glasses across  
the one next to you, flips open  
her order pad and promises,  
"I'll be right with ya."

For quick, guilt-producing  
eggs, bacon, and pancakes, order the  
"2x2x2 for \$2.99," and commit  
all the gastronomic sins—loaded fat,  
calories, and sugar—before ten a.m.  
Pearl keeps hot coffee coming.

Observe a large family filling long or round  
tables where four generations look at  
mirror images of themselves,  
past and future. The youngest, curious,  
pokes up her head and clips Pearl's elbow  
just as the waitress arrives at the table,

arms proudly lined with five plates  
of the special. She saves all but one,  
smiles through gritted teeth, and  
hollers to the cook, "One more two-by!"  
Leave a big tip and take a jar of homemade  
peach jam placed next to the register.

