

Editorial

IFC probe reveals sordid coffee scam

Watch out. The Incidental Fee Committee in its indefatigable search for fiscal waste, has ferreted out yet another torrential abuse of funds. The discovery that the EMU staff gets coffee and tea, not at half of the retail value, not at a third of the retail value, but absolutely free, sent shock waves throughout the campus community Friday.

James Randall, the IFC chairman, used his precise mathematical abilities and investigative techniques to evaluate the magnitude of this scandalous waste. By multiplying the retail cost of a cup of coffee, which he estimated to be 55 cents per cup, and estimating the number of people who guzzle the IFC's "liquidated" funds to be 30 people, and by assuming each person drinks two cups a day, five days a week, every week of the year, he came up with a grand total of \$8,580, or rounded off, a staggering \$9,000 per year. He graciously clarified that it was a "ballpark" figure.

"Nine thousand is just a guess," he said.

Of course, employees probably don't drink coffee or tea during the four breaks between terms when the EMU is closed, and certainly less of the beverage is consumed during summer term when the EMU has restricted hours and fewer employees.

And, well, of course the estimates were based on a supposed retail value of the coffee. Duane Partain, the EMU food service director, said that the actual cost of providing coffee for employees is about \$630 per year. And incidentally, he said that even based on the retail value, the total would be \$1,920. And perhaps it should be mentioned that the average price of a cup of coffee in the EMU is 48 cents and that if employees had to pay for coffee they probably wouldn't drink as much. Randall was close to the amount of people that take advantage of the benefit, though. A greedy herd of 51 employees are eligible for the handout, but not all of them drink coffee or tea.

But not to detract from the IFC's noble effort driven by the committee's skillful and conscientious leader. The coffee isn't funded by incidental fees (the food service makes money and contributes the profits to other EMU programs), but as Randall pointed out, students pay for it indirectly. We appreciate Randall's ability to expand his authority. Just because he is the chairman of the Incidental Fee Committee doesn't mean he should limit his professional activities to the administration of incidental fees.

And Randall is no slave to status quo. Most employers provide coffee for their employees and consider improved employee attitudes and performance a result of money well spent. But Randall remains undaunted. He perceptively pointed out that students don't get free coffee, which is undoubtedly directly related to whether or not employees should get free coffee.

And how did EMU Director Adell McMillan respond to Randall's charges? Her sole defense to the IFC's piercing attack was that allowing the staff to consume free coffee raises employee morale and allows the staff to interact with the students. Sure. The old coffee-achiever defense. And even though the EMU is efficiently run by helpful and friendly employees, Randall reminded us that the EMU staff is incredibly overpaid. Some of those people actually make enough to pay taxes on their income.

We encourage the IFC to continue its hard-hitting investigations. For example, rumors have it that Panhellenic refuses to reuse paperclips. Why, that could add up to \$5,000 per year. And, incredulous as it sounds, widely circulated gossip suggests that the Commentator insists on leaving three-inch margins on all of its office memos — a disgraceful waste of paper.

GENEVA FASHIONS



Letters

Save services

To campus activists and others interested: It is a good thing to show solidarity in support against apartheid. That is an archaic system which should be abolished.

However, on the home front, have you heard, or done anything, about the Gramm-Redman Amendment? In short, this is a federal budget balancing act. While our federal budget could use balancing, another way needs to be found. Half the budget, represented by military contracts, social security, payment on the debt, etc., will be left alone. The remaining half is our social and support services. The people who can least afford to be cut from the budget are special education, vocational rehabilitation, maternal and child health and social services, work-study and other college financial aid, etc.

Do you realize at the state level, without federal incentives, P.L. 94-142, the Education For All Children Act, is just ink on paper? Do you understand the implications of cuts in these and other areas? Do you care? If you do, and would like to write to the conferees in the House of Representatives and Senate, feel free to contact me. The time is short and letters must be sent.

If we don't do something, there will be nobody left to speak for those who may not be able to speak for themselves.

Debi Place
Student and Parent

Coffeegate

Adell has the Mrs. Folger's Blues.

Flashed on the front page of the Emerald was another abuse of IFC funds. This time it's \$9,000 worth of coffee for 35 years. Yes, fellow students, this is a rip-off by the administrative unit of the EMU. Will we as students allow Coffeegate to continue?

Adell, the students of the U of O want no more of your java jive. If you find nothing wrong with the staff of the EMU getting coffee during their breaks and lunches, then you will not mind students getting free coffee during their breaks and lunches. Well Adell, if you mind students getting their liquid caffeine for free, then a fair compromise to end abuse of power is by having the price of yearly coffee consumption by your employees taken out of your salary.

Yes, fellow students, lets dock Adell's salary to cover the cost of her employees, and the cream and sugar they use as well. To cover a history of coffee abuse condoned by Adell, lets garnish her wages until the funds that have been skimmed by Adell's cronies during this coffeegate conspiracy put the IFC back into the black.

I espresso horror in the thought that the student body will allow itself to take two lumps and not stir up any trouble for the half and half bunch headed by the EMU administration.

Blake Louis Sliter
Political Science

Quite a gouging

This letter concerns the "coffee scam" (ODE, Oct. 24) cover story.

It really warms my heart and renews my faith in student government to see that James Randall is doing such a scrupulous job in overseeing the uses to which our incidental fees are put. So EMU staffers are getting free coffee and ripping students off to the tune of \$9,000 a year, are they? Well, let's see...\$9,000 divided by roughly 15,000 students comes to (GASP) 60 cents per student, per year. Quite a gouging, isn't it?

Can't you just see the people

who are done in by the excessive costs of college education, attributing their woes to that crushing 20-cent per term burden. Meanwhile, the "highly paid" EMU staffers are chuckling over this egregious scam as they drive off in their Porsches.

Mark Davis
Graduate Student, Biology

One-sidedness

What is it with you people? If adults wish to pollute their minds with fantasies of warriors and flying machines, that's their prerogative.

I don't like tomatoes. In fact, I'm mildly allergic to them. My problem with tomatoes doesn't give me the right to run around town tipping over produce carts. If others wish to eat tomatoes, it's OK. If people wish to watch "Rambo," it's OK. I'm reasonable enough to concede that what other people do with their time is none of my business.

When a movie is brought to campus, it is often a function of popular demand. I'm afraid the "one-person, one-vote" system is a reality you'll have to learn to live with.

You over-zealous, save-the-world types characteristically exhibit a one-sidedness that affords you all of the choices while the rest of us remain victims of your "better" judgment. I shudder to think of the irritation and inconvenience we might suffer if you could clearly express yourselves. As it is, you're little more than an irksome distraction.

Alex Gardner
Biology

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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