

UNIVERSITY

Plastic mugs reduce paper waste

By Carrie Dennett
Emerald Reporter

The EMU Food Service and University Housing have offered reusable mugs as an alternative to paper cups for nearly six months, and the impact on waste reduction is clear.

"We've purchased about 15 to 20 percent fewer paper cups of all kinds, compared to this point last year," said Dennis Carr, EMU Food Service director.

Carr said the reduction would be even greater, but EMU Catering has had an increase in events where paper cups are necessary.

In an effort to encourage the purchase and use of the mugs instead of paper cups, Carr has increased the refill discount for coffee, soft drinks, hot chocolate, lemonade and iced tea.

When a customer uses a plastic mug, the discount ranges from 10 to 25 cents, depending on the beverage.

"It gives people a little more loyalty," he said. "It gives them an incentive to always stop here for their beverage."

So far, EMU Food Service has sold 5,500 of the 22 oz. mugs and 1,200 of the 12 oz. mugs.

Housing has virtually eliminated the need for paper cups in their dining facilities by purchasing a mug for each dorm resident.

"We're not using any cold paper cups," said Fred Babcock, Housing Food Service director. Some hot drink cups are being used in Catering and the Bean facilities because of inconveniences caused by the remodeling of the Hamilton cafeteria.

Babcock said this reduction amounts to 6,000-7,000 cups each day.

The price of the mugs sold by the EMU increased from \$1 to \$2 fall term, an increase that was unavoidable, Carr said.

"Our original order came on a joint order with Housing," he



Photo by Eric Evans

Plastic mugs have boosted the recycling efforts at the University. This year, EMU Food Service has bought 15 to 20 percent fewer paper cups and University Housing has saved about 6,000 to 7,000 paper cups each day.

said. The total order of 7,500 significantly reduced the per unit price.

When the EMU had to make a second order on their own, the order size (4,300) did not qualify for bulk discounts. In addition, transportation costs from the manufacturing plant

in Pennsylvania increased \$400 on the second order, in part because of escalating oil prices.

"We are making virtually nothing on the mugs," Carr said.

Transportation costs are now

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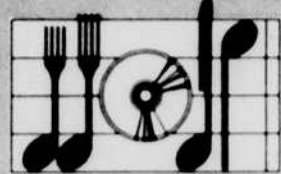
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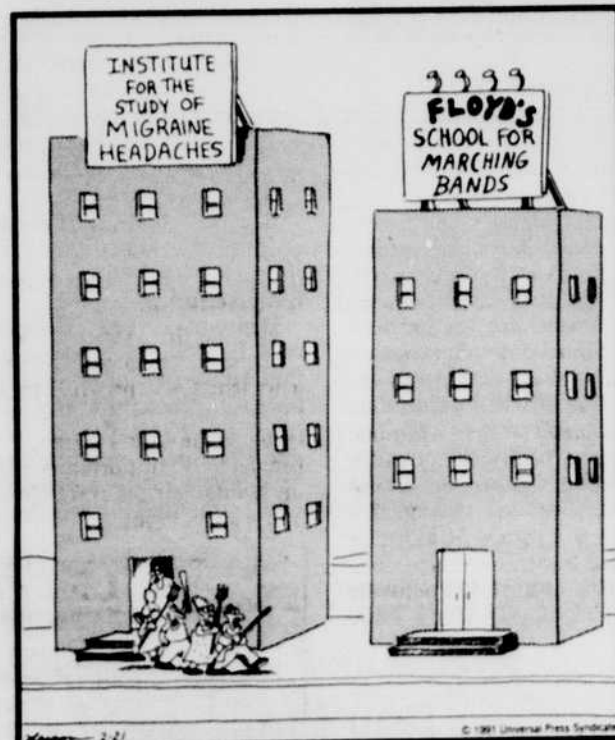


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