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Perspectives

To beer or not to beer?

We all know beer doesn't grow on trees, but that doesn't mean it shouldn't be cultivated in a campus garden. The ASUO Student Senate recently voted to remove from consideration a measure that would have allowed a beer garden to operate on campus, but there should be a campus beer garden on the ballot for some important reasons.

Laying aside the extremist views of both the ale-guzzling few who feed on the fermented drink like others breathe air and those who believe college students should be drier than a forsaken desert, the debate about a beer garden on campus is a valid discussion.

On the one hand, there is an understandable sentiment that a venue dedicated to beer on campus would send a message to students that the University community takes lightly the responsibility and effects of alcohol consumption. Also, opponents may argue, the majority of traditional students couldn't even use the beer garden as they are underage, and, therefore, the use of student incidental fees would only benefit a small group on campus. The proposed fees would have been about \$9.98 per student per term for a total of \$500,000 per year for two years.

Those are reasonable concerns, though the worries behind them can be diminished and dismissed to some degree.

First, until recently, Clancy Thurber's Pub served beer on campus until it closed because of financial problems. So the message that beer is acceptable on campus is already established. And the fact that the University would be involved in overseeing the sale of the alcohol would assure a high standard of enforcing serving laws, preventing underage purchases within the campus community.

Second, the argument that the majority of students would be unable to use



the facilities would be accurate, though misleading in its implications. Working under the assumption that most traditional students will be at least 21 years old by the time they are seniors means that all students will eventually have access to the garden's refreshing springs. The likelihood is high that most University students would benefit more directly from a beer garden than most of the other student groups and facilities that are currently funded by incidental fees.

There are also practical political reasons to get the beer garden on a ballot for students to examine. By placing such a widely popular issue on a ballot, the results would most likely be that more students would get involved and educated about their stu-

dent government and actually make a choice about their campus, and most people would agree that broader participation would definitely be a positive thing.

As it stands now, there is a good chance that the beer garden issue will be forgotten for a considerable period of time. In the past, the issue has been raised and postponed, only to be set aside again, according to Student Senate President Jessica Timpany. That would be a shame if it were to happen this time. The decision not to consider the ballot stems from the belief of many senators that there were too

many questions that needed to be answered before the ballot should go to the voters.

This issue could be turned into a political and campus morale success if the students had their chance to vote on it. Then they could have the final decision over whether this environmentally friendly campus wishes to add one more student-friendly garden to its beautiful campus.

This editorial represents the view of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Letters to the editor

Racism the real issue

It was a shock to open yesterday's Emerald (ODE Feb. 1). After front page headlines of "Black history takes center stage" and "Diversity still concern," the second page suggests what a person of color's experience will actually be, via the cartoon of a kid staked over a fire while savages — Native American? African? — dance round in loincloths. No wonder "diversity" remains a concern.

Such off handedness confirms that racism is systemic here, where the talk is of "diversity" and "learning to get along." This babble refuses to recognize racism and its benefits for (white) people's basic to our political and economic power. Eugene and Oregon proclaim virtuous innocence. My wife and I spent last weekend with a Trinidadian-Canadian here to lecture. Her off-campus inn was a joy of racist insults: small incidents individually, grossly offensive together. A trip to the Florence beach to be chased and sprayed with sand by young louts on dune buggies and stopped by the police for making a U-turn in a cul-de-sac was icing on this confection of delight.

Racism is never idle. Your ugly car-

toon shows the tip of an iceberg that white people here must break up. It's "our" problem. Token Native Americans, Chicanos, African- and Asian-Americans are not here to teach us about a problem we make them confront daily. Why do so-called "diversity interns" not think to contact MEChA? Why do you not learn from your own page 8, recounting John Rucker's suspension for offensive racist remarks?

Timothy J. Reiss
professor, comparative literature

Everyone should be offended

Given the front-page stories on black history and diversity (ODE, Feb. 1) I was appalled by the overt and arrogant racism provided by the page-two "cartoon" — with images of ... what? African savages? Native American savages?

I am sure that all the University administrators who have been talking lately — to me and other faculty of color — about how they are committed to "diversity" are as shocked as I am.

I fully expect you will be flooded with protesting letters — as well as with letters purporting to "explain" that it was "just a cartoon" or that it was not meant to depict people of color. Perhaps we shall be told that it is not racism but only a mildly "insensi-

tive" gesture by a staff who did not realize what they were doing by portraying such stupid, ignorant and ugly racial stereotypes.

Of course EVERYONE's feelings should be offended. French students and labor union activists responded quickly to efforts by the French right wing to label their 1968 revolution a "German Jewish effort" because one of the leaders had a parent who was a German Jew. The day following the appearance of signs reading "Send the Jews to Auschwitz," the entire city of Paris awoke to new signs reading: "We are ALL German Jews." Such collective opposition to racism would, at this moment, be a very significant gesture.

I do hope that the newspaper intends to take some immediate action to prohibit such activities in the future.

Patricia Penn Hilden
professor, history
director, Ethnic Studies Program

Forget beer garden

It has come to my attention that the ASUO Student Senate has turned down a proposal letter for a new beer garden in the EMU. I, for one, am grateful there is some common sense in our student government. With a price tag of \$1 million, I question whether this project makes any finan-

cial sense at all. There are several drinking establishments off campus nearby. Taylor's and Rennie's Landing are both within a very short walk off campus. This project is nothing more than typical "pork-barrel" spending and a huge waste of student incidental fee money. Senate President Jessica Timpany is "worried" this measure will soon be forgotten. I urge her and our other senate members to forget this gross waste of our incidental fee money. This beer garden makes no sense to me when it seems the Programs Finance Committee won't fund student child care better. I should hope there are a few fiscally responsible people in ASUO. So, please, no beer garden in the EMU. It's nothing more than a big waste of our incidental fee money.

Kayla-Ann Emmons
business and communication studies

LETTERS POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be limited to 250 words. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, clarity, grammar, style and libel. Letters may be dropped off at EMU Suite 300.

THE WEEK IN THUMBS



Lighting the way to safety

Last Wednesday and Thursday students began a series of walks, sponsored by the ASUO and accompanied by representatives from University offices of Public Safety, Student Life and Facilities Services. The walks will work to identify unsafe and poorly lit areas on campus.

To a lot more hats in the political ring

Almost 30 people added their names to the list of candidates in the upcoming ASUO elections after a filing deadline extension. Now there will be a healthier crop of those vying for the presidential and vice presidential ticket and the Student Senate seats.



To tuning out the deaf

Eight hearing-impaired Oregonians were forced to file a federal class-action lawsuit in an attempt to force theaters to use closed-caption devices that would allow the deaf to enjoy movies like the rest of us.

To handling more than pans

An overaggressive panhandler demanded beer money from two shoppers, an elderly woman and a male shopper, outside of the Albertson's on Coburg Road. After the two refused, James Douglas Ray, 37, reportedly pulled a knife and threatened the man. The transient was charged with first-degree robbery for the incident last Monday.