

Food

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end rolls around.

Tom Driscoll, director of food services for University Housing, said in addition to all-time favorite foods such as pizza, students are trying out some new items these days.

"A lot of the traditional things seem to still be popular and a lot of students are experimenting with ethnic foods," he said.

But even though students are introducing some novelties to their taste buds, they remain loyal to traditional fast-food favorites.

"Traditional items still fly out of here really quickly, like pizza for example," Driscoll said.

Kristen Olmos, a health educator and a registered dietitian, said not having time to cook is no excuse for

not eating healthy.

She suggests stocking up on healthy snacks such as apples, string cheese or yogurt to satisfy cravings before being able to get a real meal.

"I think it's important if a person doesn't have time to cook, that they keep healthy snacks on hand," she said.

Olmos added most students still seem to prefer french fries and baked dishes over fruit and salads.

While many students seem to be taking advantage of Grab 'N' Go meals, many also do seem to take the time to sit down for dinner when possible.

Cindy Lund, manager of Carson Dining Hall, said the trend among students eating at Carson Dining Hall leans toward healthier habits, although their all-time favorite, Campbell's tomato soup, hasn't changed for years, and continues to

be offered once a week.

Besides vegetarian or nearly-vegetarian foods, students eat lots of fruit, she said.

"Fruit has always been a popular item," she said. "There also seem to be a lot more semi-vegetarians."

Like most food outlets around campus, Lund goes through loads of suggestion cards on a weekly basis to keep up with students' preferences and find out exactly what they like for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

She said her impression is that more students nowadays seem to grow up with healthier foods than just a few years ago.

"I would say that over the past five years, they have started to eat healthier," she said. "They're probably more familiar with non-fat food items more than they were five or 10 years ago."



Dan Brunell Emerald

Doug Randels serves a cup of joe to customer Pat Mackey at Theo's Coffee House, located on the downtown mall. Many businesses in the hub of town are hoping for increased revitalization efforts by the city.

Downtown

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Ellen Mitchell, owner of Backstage Dancewear at 62 W. Broadway, said she will be relocating her business to 380 W. Third Avenue at the start of November. Her present location will join the half-dozen other store fronts with a "For Lease" sign in the window because business has grown too large for downtown.

"There's really no reason for us to be here with a large mail-order business," she said.

Although Mitchell's company needs 1,300 more square feet of retail room, she said she would not leave if there were adequate parking and access to the mall. She favored the idea of opening Broadway Street to car traffic so shoppers could park right outside the store.

"Had (the city) made the decision to put the street through I'd probably stay," she said.

Other business owners in the mall admitted there were difficulties about being in business on the mall, but didn't have one magic-bullet solution to make the area a complete success.

Theo's Coffee Shop owner Brian Logan said he dealt with several problems after he opened his doors in April of 1999. He had to remove his patio seating for two months after he saw people dealing drugs right in front of his customers, and he has had to make a constant effort to attract people to the mall.

Despite the problems, Logan is committed to staying downtown.

"I think there's an energy down here," he said. "There's more happening down here than anywhere else in Eugene."

Logan also serves on the Downtown Safety Council, which is a loose-knit organization of city officials, residents and businesses that are working to erase the downtown mall's reputation as a dangerous place. He said there is hardly any risk of violent crimes in the downtown core, but that drug activity and drunkenness are a problem because

the city has a negligent attitude in policing the mall.

"These two blocks have been abandoned," he said.

Logan couldn't predict how Symantec's possible move from their current location would affect the revitalization efforts. He was disappointed the large business was leaving, but because the move probably won't take place until two years from now, he didn't know for sure if it was good or bad.

"There's lots of stuff going on, by 2002 the library is going to be open," he said, referencing Eugene's new public library, which should be a large draw to the mall area.

While Symantec's employees have helped support many downtown businesses, he said a different business could have a more positive effect on the mall in terms of the larger picture.

"There could be a better business in the downtown than Symantec for revitalization in terms of staying open after hours," he said.

But with or without Symantec Logan said Theo's will stay downtown.

"We'll just take it as it rolls," he said.

Mike Sullivan, the manager for the Downtown Visioning Project, has been leading the effort by the Planning Department to create a viable option to revitalize the downtown area. He said the chief goal is to bring the idea of "nodal development" into the area. This is a planning theory that localizes employment, shopping and services into small neighborhood clusters that translate into a smaller reliance on auto traffic.

"More compact growth works better for mass transit and is better for neighborhoods," he said.

Sullivan said the downtown area is prime for this kind of development.

"The downtown is sometimes referred to as the 'mother node,'" he said.

In addition to a new style of development, Sullivan said the city also has to bring in more housing options to get residents active

downtown all the time.

To make these changes, Sullivan said the city will have to start with streets. He said that when the project is completed it will likely include some plan to open part of the downtown mall to auto traffic. Doing so, however, will force the city to look at its parking options and will likely mean more parking garages.

Sullivan said the plan will be open to public comment at two meetings in October before it is presented to the City Council on November 15.

Eugene artist Raven Moon is one of the nearly 140 artists who make up the Circle of Hands cooperative art store that has been in business on the mall since 1996 at 44 W. Broadway. He said that while business is decent at its current location, if more people came to the mall the store could be "rocking."

"It's been great actually working here," he said, "but we would definitely like more business."

Moon said that in the four years he has seen businesses come and go due to the lack of pedestrian shoppers.

"We've survived when a lot of the people have moved away," he said.

To bring more people into the area Moon thought that there should be improved mass transit access and more residential units. He added, though, that he would like to see smaller busses he said don't pollute as much, and housing that didn't mean cutting down too many trees.

Skateboarding and bike riding have been banned on the mall in an attempt by the city to not let it turn into a hang-out for restless teenagers. Many teens still do hang out in the area, which has bothered some business owners. Moon, however, didn't think they were a problem. He instead argued that it was the police presence on the mall that actually drove prospective shoppers away.

"If I'm on the mall and I see a cop car there I'm going to avoid it probably," he said.

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