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# STEAKING A CLAIM

13th Avenue's newest addition, the Philly Grill, recently opened its doors to the campus area

By Mason West  
Oregon Daily Emerald

**W**ith broad arms and a barrel stomach, Matt McAllister looks just like a cheesesteak man might look. Perhaps, then, it is of little surprise that he finds himself managing the Philly Grill, the newest addition to the smorgasbord of restaurants in the campus area.

McAllister, 30, was born and raised in Springfield and graduated from the University in 1999 with a degree in economics. So to capture the true East Coast sandwich flavor, he and co-owner Richard Mellert, 32, went on a two-week survey of cheesesteak cities, including Philadelphia and New York.

"Not a bad vacation," McAllister said.

On Thursday, he oversaw the team at the Philly Grill working the first "lunch rush," while trying to iron out some opening bugs.

"We can't use the key for the weekly special, but we'll probably start it (Friday) with the Philly," he said.

The "Philadelphia Cheesesteak" is the staple of the restaurant and what sets it apart from the four other sub shops in the East 13th Avenue campus area. Mellert, a dedicated cheesesteak lover, said simply, "You can't get a good cheesesteak around here."

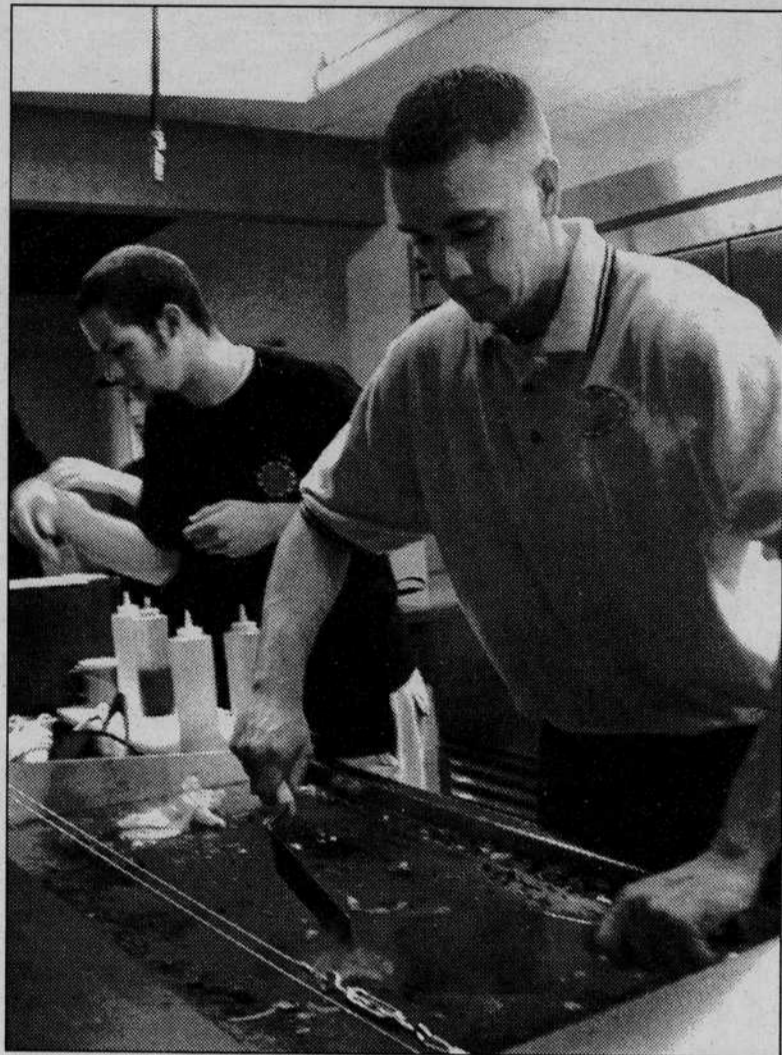
But Mellert isn't putting all his eggs in one basket. The menu includes a variety of subs, including the "Scooby Snack Sub," which allows diners to create their own.

When Mellert secured the location at 860 E. 13th Ave., previously home to Face the Music, he decided to further diversify the business by creating the Blue Buffalo to serve pizza and wings. Mellert said the Blue Buffalo, also located inside, will begin operation toward the end of next week.

While taking a break from his meal, senior music major Marshall Bex said that offering different meal options through the Blue Buffalo was a good idea to hedge the restaurant's bets.

"Anywhere you go, it seems like there's a lot of sub shops — it's hard to tell how this one will do," he said.

Bex was pleased with the cheesesteak he tried on Thursday,



Thomas Patterson Emerald

Kyle Banes and J.J. Colwell build cheesesteaks at the Philly Grill on 13th Avenue. The process is a hallowed tradition to the true cheesesteak connoisseur.

and said he will probably come back. But Campus Sub Shop employee Alyssa Oziel said there's more to sub culture than the sandwich.

"People have their loyalties," she said. "Our place is a bit more affordable, so people come here because they know it's cheap."

Senior political science major Kevin Baptista gives his allegiance to Big Town Hero, where he eats every day.

"I don't even like that Quizno's moved in," he said. "I probably won't even go in there (Philly Grill)."

Jeff Alie, the other Philly Grill owner, said that the restaurant isn't trying to capture the whole market, but "just a slice — no pun intended," he said.

But Christi Rapp, co-owner of Big Town Hero, said she wonders

how much more the market can be divided.

"There really isn't enough to go around. There's too much competition, especially since the EMU opened up restaurants," she said.

Mellert and Alie have a lot riding on the success of the Philly Grill and the Blue Buffalo; the two have plans to eventually franchise the restaurants. Mellert said one of the reasons this location was designed more elegantly than other sub shops was to be a "showpiece" for potential buyers. But when all is said and done, the prize is in the pudding.

"You might come into a place once because it looks good, but unless the sandwich is good, you're not coming back," Mellert said.

E-mail senior Pulse reporter Mason West at masonwest@dailyemerald.com.

## Air travelers should pack their patience

■ Starting today, Eugene Airport is employing stricter methods of checking travelers' baggage

By Brook Reinhard  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Travelers flying from Eugene Airport today will have their luggage examined more closely because of more stringent bag checking methods.

"We're telling customers to pack their patience," Horizon Air spokeswoman Cheryl Temple said.

Airport officials are being patient as well, as Horizon and the other two airline companies that service Eugene Airport haven't said what security measures they'll use to screen baggage for bombs. Congress passed the Transportation and Aviation Security Act on Nov. 19 and required airlines to check bags using one of four procedures. Starting

today, bags must be examined by hand, screened by special bomb detection machines, passed by the noses of canine bomb-sniffing squads or kept on the ground until the bag's owner is aboard the plane.

"The airlines are not quick to fully discuss what they're doing," Eugene Airport Director of Operations Mike Coontz said. The Eugene Airport doesn't have one of the million-dollar bomb machines yet, and there are no dog teams in place, so airlines are left with two options. Manually searching bags is more thorough, but could cause long lines. And 100 percent bag matching, the security process that requires a passenger to be on the same plane as the luggage, has its own problems.

Coontz reiterated that a passenger failing to show up for a flight after checking a bag would have the bag yanked from the cargo

hold of the plane, so no-shows could cause considerable delays. Bag matching doesn't foil suicide bombers, and right now the government only requires airlines to bag-match on the first stage of a flight. This may streamline the process, but does nothing to keep passengers safe from bags transferred onto planes on the second or third leg of a journey. In fact, a transferred luggage bomb destroyed Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988.

Coontz said whatever method the airlines use, they'll have to work out problems on their own.

"Baggage screening is not within our oversight," Coontz said. "Although we will work with the airlines, at the end of the day, I don't check up on them."

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