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Cafe creates 'community' in city

The Morning Glory Cafe works with Out of the Fog to create a relaxed atmosphere and eco-friendly food service

Aaron Shakra
Pulse Reporter

The color of the walls and decor are fitting for the name. Colorful greens, yellows and lively plants adorn the interior of the Morning Glory Café & Bakery.

The restaurant, located at 450 Willamette St., is kitty-corner to the Amtrak train station. It opened in 1997 and underwent expansion in 2000. The current owner, Ceciley Slocum, purchased the building in order to create a sense of community within the boundaries of the city.

"I see this as an experiment," Slocum said. "I wanted community." Slocum, a graduate from the University, received her degree in political science with a focus on the environment and community. She said Morning Glory makes business decisions with a keen awareness of environmental and social sustainability. It almost exclusively supports organic food and local farmers, and it constantly makes food donations to a variety of organizations and causes.

This awareness takes even the smallest of details into consideration. The restaurant uses recycled or scrap paper to advertise daily specials. Flour bags become garbage bags. All food scraps are composted. Tinfoil or plastic wrap is rarely used. There's a 25-cent "eco-tax" applied to customers taking their food home in containers. Any leftover food is given to homeless people or tree-sitters.

The menu is largely vegan, and where it isn't, it's indicated otherwise. However, everything is vegetarian. Whether this is a bane or a

boon for customers, the cafe still offers a diverse selection of meals.

Contained within Morning Glory is Out of the Fog, a local coffee business. Although the two establishments operate independently (Out of the Fog arrived at this location in 2001), they share the same core business edicts.

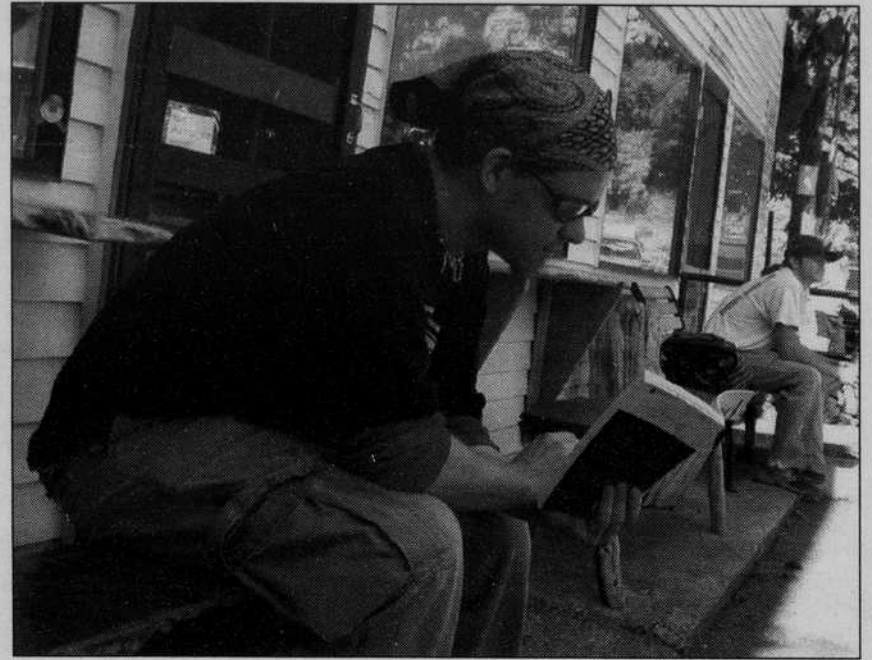
"It's really a family — we all hang out with each other so much that it's really comfortable. All of our consciousness have melded together," Slocum said. "We don't really make that much money, so it helps to split the bills."

Out of the Fog serves organic coffee purchased exclusively under fair trade conditions. It offers a variety of blends, along with other drinks such as cold-press lattes and smoothies. They produce their own chai tea; in comparison to other coffeehouses in Eugene, this is a rarity. They also adhere to the 25-cent eco-tax — this is accented by a "One Earth, Indisposable" sign hanging below the menu.

Morning Glory is open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Out of the Fog opens at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. On Sunday and Monday, coffee service ends at 6 p.m.

Many of the employees of both Morning Glory and Out of the Fog have worked at the establishment for numerous years, and many are activists. Jitterbug, a "counter mama," came to work at the establishment with the background of a forest defender.

Jitterbug spoke briefly about the details of forest defense and matched Slocum's sentiments regarding the origins of Morning Glory.



Mark McCambridge Emerald

Adam Perryman enjoys a book and a coffee outside of Morning Glory.

"It started with a strong environmentally and politically active hue," she said.

Morning Glory has a large number of regular customers, but it also attracts plenty of business from first-timers and those stopping between train breaks. Slocum said that some train passengers have made this a regular stop.

"We have a big fan club, and this keeps things going," she said.

More often than not, there's music playing. On a given visit, customers might hear the likes of Neil Young, Ani DiFranco or Hanuman.

The walls of the cafe feature a variety of artwork, usually rotating on a monthly basis. This is a popular attraction for Morning Glory — their walls are booked through August of next year. Artist Eva Edelman's paint-

ings are on display through October.

Sumer, an artist whose works have been featured on the walls of the cafe in the past, also works at Morning Glory as a "dish warrior." She "started working as a dish monk," and discussed her "way of the dish." She creates an alter-ego mentality when washing dishes.

"I'm totally about battling the filth," she said.

The establishment also plays host to other events. Live music performances and poetry nights for high school students happen often. There's also a "drag" theme night on the third Friday of every month. Those who attend can read poetry, play music and sing songs — whether in drag or not.

Contact the Pulse reporter at aaronshakra@dailymerald.com.

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