

COMMENTARY

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What time is it? It's 4:20!

OK, so I've been thinking some doing.

No, wait — doing some thinking. Whatever.

But dude, Sunday is 4/20, and of course, every self-respecting stoner around the world is going to get totally blazed — completely friggin' ripped, insanely high, toked to the max... uh, what? Sometimes I get side-tracked by the sounds of the words, you know?

Smokey D. Bud
 Investigative stoner

Oh, right — 420. So do any of us really know why we're celebrating? I highly doubt it. I mean, it's sure as hell not because it's Adolf Hitler's birthday and the anniversary of the Columbine shooting. So why?

I, Smokey D. Bud, humble investigative stoner, have taken it upon myself to plant my ass on the couch, pack a fat bowl and figure out where 420 came from.

The best place to start would be my good ol' stoner friends. Now get this — this is so sick: Last year on 4/20, my roommate stuck a 6-inch nug in his afro and walked from house to house, breaking off a little piece at each stop, like some extra-cuddly Pot Fairy.

My buds are chillin' in the basement, so after peeling myself from the couch, I mosey down to cop a squat, and on the stairs I hear, "I love being stoned, 'cause it's the only time I look for my glasses when they're on my head!" Hysterical laughing ensues.

These guys are perfect, bro. They have to know. So I ask them: Where did "420" come from?

"Isn't it the number of chemical compounds in THC?"

"No, no, I heard it's because the Grateful Dead did a song called '420 Highways' or something like that."

"Dude, it's the police code for a weed bust in some county in California. I know it is, 'cause some guy got busted there once. It was fully raw."

"It's the police code in Eugene, too. I heard them use it."

It's my old roommate, the one with the afro.

"The cops were kicking us out of a party," he says, "and they smelled the weed and shit, and the guy's all, 'Possible 420 at the scene,' with this punk-ass deep voice, into his radio."

Maybe they're onto something. So I call the Eugene Police Department. There is some confusion as I try to explain what I'm asking (dude, when isn't there some confusion?), but then they say it seems unlikely.

"An officer would normally say, 'I'm observing marijuana smoking in progress,'" EPD spokeswoman Kerry Delf says. "If it was actually used, it was an anomaly — or it could have been misheard. It's not a radio code in California or New York, as far as I know, and it's not a radio code here."

Damn. OK, now what? After hittin' the glass again, I decide to sit in front of the computer. You can find anything on the 'Net. Have you noticed that your eyes get really glazed over when you, uh, stare at a computer for a while? Yeah, me too. There are some incredible weed sites on the Web, bro. There's a clock that tells you where in the world it's 4:20 right now (www.420somewhere.com), and there's sites with all kind of cool shit to buy, and... wait. What was I doing?

Right, 420! Then, all of a sudden, I find it: An article in The Los Angeles Times last year that claims to have discovered the truth. Steve, a 47-year-old owner of a multimillion dollar business in San Francisco, is apparently one of the infamous "slackers" from San Rafael High School in Marin County, California. He told the Times that he and his friends started the "420" phenomenon by accident in 1971 when they were told about a marijuana patch growing near the Point Reyes Peninsula. From then on, at 4:20 p.m., kids would meet near the campus statue of Louis Pasteur to embark on a daily search for the crop.

So it's not a police code. It's not about the Grateful Dead and what hotel room

they stayed in (damn, I liked that one). According to snopes.com, an online site dedicated to urban legends, none of these rumors are true. There are actually 315 chemicals in THC, as reported by High Times magazine.

It was just a bunch of stoner kids, like me, having fun. And look where it's led: There's a 4:20 record label in California, and a band called 4:20. New York's 420 Tours sells cheap travel packages to the Netherlands (hell, yeah!) and Jamaica. Highway 420 Radio offers "music for the

chemically enhanced." And there's so much more — if you have time to go off on a tangent looking for it.

The 420 culture is everywhere now. At my Eastern Oregon high school, 4:20 p.m. was when the detention bell rang to let all the bad kids go for the day. We'd run to our cars, screaming "four-twenty" as loud as our raspy lungs could muster.

Given where it came from, it's no surprise University students have their own 420 rituals. Rumor has it that kids in the residence halls used

to wake up at 4:15 a.m. to gather on the Humpy Lumpy Lawn for a smokeout. Now that's dedication. Just thinking about it makes me tired. I need another bong rip.

Smokey D. Bud cannot be contacted, as he is a fictional character created by editorial writers. The characters and situations in this column are fictionalized for humor, while the details about the origins and use of "420" are true. The views expressed in this column do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Peter Utsey Emerald

Letters to the editor

Gabe brings RHA, ASUO experience to Senate Seat 4

In looking at the two candidates for Senate Seat 4, which is also an EMU Board seat, I encourage voters to look at candidate Gabe V. Kjos. I personally have known and have had the privilege of working with him for the past two years as a member of the Residence Hall Association. Kjos has proven himself an effective leader who listens to all views before making decisions.

RHA is very similar to the ASUO Student Senate, but on a smaller scale. The association deals with budgeting, working with campus groups and issues like viewpoint neutrality and creating sound policy. Gabe's experience as the vice president of RHA and as National Communications Coordinator, a position that serves our school on a national level to other residence halls, will be very applicable to the EMU Board.

Gabe also has been working as an ASUO intern for the past year, so he not only has the outside perspective, giving him the ability to think

"outside the box," but he also has the ASUO "insider" knowledge about the structure of the system. For these reasons and more, I proudly endorse Kjos as our next senator for Seat 4.

Jordan Marx
 junior
 political science

Support Jordan for social science seat

I am writing to express my support for Jordan Marx as your next social science senator. Jordan has been involved in numerous different campus organizations that contribute to his qualifications to hold this position. He has been very active in the Residence Hall Association Housing Government, which has a very similar structure to the ASUO but works on a more intimate scale. As a part of RHA, Jordan helped to deal with issues concerning viewpoint neutrality, budgeting, interacting with campus groups and creating sound housing policy. He was rewarded for his work in the RHA by being voted their 2001-02 Member of the Year.

Jordan has also worked for University Housing as a resident assistant for the past year. During his time as an RA, Jordan has had the

opportunity to face many different situations, ranging from alcohol poisoning and suicide to diversity and academic issues.

Jordan's commitment and work ethic, combined with his platform for diversity, campus safety, greater access to government and financial responsibility make him the practical student senate choice. So remember to vote Jordan Marx for Student Senate Seat 15, Social Science!

Celia Chung
 junior
 computer science

Christa and Greg will improve residence hall life

When looking at ASUO Executive candidates, there is only one ticket that is clearly ready to help better residence hall life for all students. Based on their experience in various aspects of student government and campus life, these reasons should give students more than enough reason to elect Christa Shively and Greg Bae to represent them.

Christa has proved her leadership ability in her tenure as EMU Board chair and has helped the communication between the EMU

and the senate greatly improve. As ASUO president and vice president, they will both fight to keep tuition low and not limit access to higher education by fighting to keep state aid.

One of their most important platform issues is to get a universal food point system between the EMU and University Housing, which is a very reasonable goal, and one that many students support, as well as reinstating a housing contract. When looking at an executive ticket, students must be able to elect a ticket that has a variety of experiences in campus life — and Christa and Greg exemplify this. Please join me in electing Christa Shively and Greg Bae as ASUO president and vice president on April 21-23.

Gabe V. Kjos
 vice president
 Residence Hall Association

Maddy and Eddy will be effective leaders

I am writing to offer my overwhelming endorsement of Maddy Melton and Eddy Morales for the ASUO Executive. Understanding the complexities of the position, from a local, as well as state and federal level, I can say without

reservation, that this ticket will work to represent all students.

Whoever is elected to the ASUO Presidency will also serve as the interim board chair of the Oregon Student Association during the final half of the legislative session. Having worked as an intern with the organization, and having lobbied extensively on the state and federal level, Maddy Melton would be well suited for this role.

Additionally, this ticket offers an established relationship with the United States Student Association (Maddy serves on the Advisory Committee) and, as a result, comes with a network of colleagues and student leaders who will collaborate to provide examples of what has worked elsewhere, as well as to organize around national issues concerning higher education.

In short, Maddy and Eddy are the only candidates who will prove effective next year in all arenas, from finances to diversity to legislative policy. They are true to their values and they will organize and fight to represent students at the University of Oregon.

Rachel Pilliod
 junior
 political science