

COUNTER CULTURE'S REAL DEAL

Gay-owned Counter Culture closed its doors for a brief hiatus late last month in anticipation of moving to a larger location. The all-vegan restaurant originally intended to set up shop in Sellwood but later pursued an invitation to anchor ground-floor space within Ecotrust's new Natural Capital Center, a renovated Pearl District warehouse.

The arrangement would have paired two companies promoting conservation and sustainable economies, and the new site would have provided larger space to accommodate catering services. But days before the June closing date, the agreement fell through when Ecotrust changed contract terms and later withdrew its offer.

Counter Culture owners Matthew Melendez and Eric Blegen say the restaurant had been doing well, but because the deal's last-minute cancellation left them without an operating location, they have been forced to liquidate business assets to pay off obligations while exploring other options.

The Portland Development Commission already has offered assistance, and Melendez says the couple could reopen in a different location. But because they would need to start over, he and Blegen are considering other options, including personal chef services and community-supported agriculture. A



PHOTOS BY MARRY DAVIS
mer, will be back in town Aug. 4 to kick off his nationwide People Have the Power Tour.

The rally will start 6 p.m. at the 15,000-seat Rose Garden. Invited guests include actor Danny Glover, singer-songwriters Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam and Jello Biafra of the Dead Kennedys and several other national entertainers and activist-celebrities.

Organizers promise the event will change the face of progressive politics in Portland. They also hope to mend the rift between Nader and mainstream Democrats caused by the 2000 presidential race.

Tickets are \$10 general admission, \$8 for students. A special fund-raiser with Nader and Vedder will follow the rally.

The all-day event will begin with the free Progressive Action Conference from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Memorial Coliseum. The gathering will feature several "stations" where people can learn the knowledge and skills necessary to be a better citizen activist.

The conference will provide a venue for 29 teach-ins and workshops covering a variety of

issues, allowing participants to get plugged into local campaigns right away. Topics include "The Gentrification of North and Northeast Portland," "Preserving Eagle Creek," "Missile Defense Issues," "The Phony Energy Crisis" and "The Corporate Assault on Public Schools."

Portland State University Queers and Allies will discuss "Gender and Sexual Identity Issues." Mike Edera of Rural Organizing Project will present "Taxes in a Democratic Society," and Jordana Sardo of Radical Women will educate people about topics of primary interest to women.

Lloyd Marbet, Pacific Green Party candidate for secretary of state in 2000, will discuss "Renewable Energy" and "Instant Runoff Voting/Campaign Finance Reform." Jose Palafó, a graduate student from University of California at Berkeley, will present "Anti-Immigration: The Braceró Issue."

Other participating groups include Peace in Columbia, Community Alliance of Tenants, Bicycle Transportation Alliance, Northwest RAGE, First Unitarian Church, East Timor Action Group, Sisters in Action for Power, American Lands, Fair Vote Oregon and Utility Reform Project. An Alternative Media Convergence will take place from 2 to 5 p.m.

"The conference is essential in pushing the progressive agenda," said Barbara Payne, Pacific Green Party Multnomah Chapter co-chair. "Getting these groups all on the same page, creating a venue where we can network and energizing more people is key."

Last August, Nader sold out Memorial

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Popular vegan joint Counter Culture was forced to close its doors after a move to the Pearl District fell through

decision is expected within four weeks.

To be notified about their upcoming plans, send an e-mail to matthew@counter-culture.com.

NADER RETURNS TO PORTLAND

Ralph Nader, who packed Memorial Coliseum during a campaign rally last sum-

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