

It's Not Just a Café

Holy Cow, organic vegan!

I am writing in support of Holy Cow and to enumerate the various ways in which the decision made by EMU Food Services Director John Costello and approved by EMU board director Charles "Dusty" Miller was poorly made.

Holy Cow has been a university landmark for years and provider of organic, healthy, vegan and vegetarian food. The business is part of the reason why Eugene was voted as PETA's #2 most veg-friendly small city in America. For a lot of vegetarians and vegans, it's the only place at which they can eat on campus that is consistent with their ethical decision not to eat animal products. And even students who aren't vegetarian agree that the café serves up some darn tasty grub.

As a café with a commitment to serving organic vegan and vegetarian food, Holy Cow is upholding Dave Frohnmayer's April 26 Earth Day pledge to reduce the university's carbon footprint. The café composts, recycles, uses unbleached containers and encourages the use of reusable plates and silverware, cooks with



Holy Cow supporters are not anti-Laughing Planet. Who says there only has to be one environmentally conscious business?

organic ingredients and supports local farms, businesses and products. Holy Cow is a place like no other in terms of service, dedication, and commitment to ethics. It's not just a café; it's a welcoming space committed to environmental and social progress.

Furthermore, a vegan/vegetarian diet has been recommended as a way to reduce one's carbon footprint by the National Council for Science and the Environment. Groups such as the U.N., the National Academy of Sciences and even the FDA and USDA have warned against the detrimental effects of overfarming and meat production to the environment. It's sad that a university that is so interested in greenwashing itself and portraying an image of eco-friendliness cannot be bothered to support local, sustainable and green businesses, all in the name of the almighty dollar.

Laughing Planet is a great business. Holy Cow supporters are *not* anti-Laughing Planet. Indeed, many of us think it would be awesome if both Holy Cow and Laughing Planet were in the EMU. Who says there has to be only one healthy and environmentally conscious business? But Laughing Planet would not be a suitable replacement for Holy Cow, despite what the director of Food Services at the EMU may be telling us. They serve meat, for one thing, which is not in line with that space being reserved for a "vegan/vegetarian" restaurant. Laughing Planet is a chain and has not been a part of our campus community for 10 years, as Holy Cow has.

In November, Holy Cow presented a petition with 380 signatures expressing their support for the café's continued presence in the EMU. According to a Jan. 23 *Daily Emerald* article, Costello also received 15 emails and letters concerning Holy Cow's lease renewal. "We took note of that, but it wasn't enough to sway us," Costello said. Callous? I think so. It's distressing that a beloved café seems to be nothing more than a line on a budget sheet to some folks. Is that really how we want local businesses to be treated?

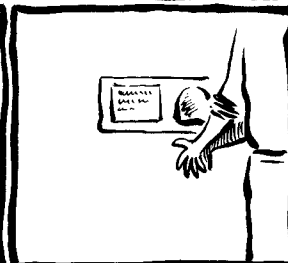
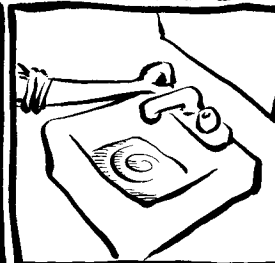
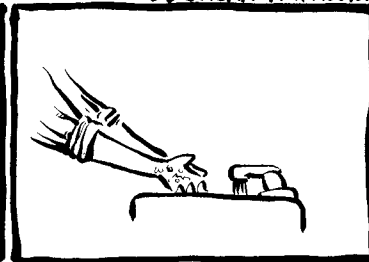
The director of the EMU board, Charles "Dusty" Miller, was invited, along with student supporters, to the Jan. 25 ASUO executive staff meeting. We were led to believe that this meeting would be an opportunity to get our questions answered. We were sadly misled. Miller did not appear adequately informed enough to answer questions concerning the nature of the decision made by the five-person committee to replace Holy Cow with Laughing Planet, and gave irrelevant answers to questions concerning issues of sustainability and the role of the vegan/vegetarian spot in the EMU food court. He repeatedly stated that a process was applied, and that the decision was final. It was clear that we should have been talking to the man who headed the five-person committee and who ultimately made the final decision. Why, then, was Costello not there answering our questions? It appeared to many of those gathered to support Holy Cow that morning that Costello cannot bother to answer to the students whose interests he is supposed to represent.

The community supports the UO as much as the university supports the community. It is sad to see that the EMU cares as little about supporting local, sustainable businesses as it does about its students' opinions: not at all.

Megan McClellan is a senior at the UO majoring in anthropology and German.

How to Be Happy

by Shannon Wheeler



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FINDING A SOLUTION

I hear a lot of people complaining about the homeless on the streets of Eugene and Springfield. If people spent half the energy trying to solve the problem that they did complaining about it, we wouldn't have the problem in the first place.

Then again, finding a solution isn't simple either. More low-cost housing, more and better paying jobs and better care for the physically and mentally challenged are just part of what is needed to help the homeless.

No matter whose fault it is or isn't, these people need a helping hand. Most of the people living on the streets and in shelters aren't looking for a handout — they're looking for a hand up. They are hard working people who want to be self-reliant.

Helping is as easy as donating to your local shelter or homeless organizations. In the Eugene/Springfield area you can donate to the White Bird Clinics, Shelter Care and St. Vincent De Paul. Even just being a sympathetic ear and giving of a little of your time and energy can make a homeless person's life better.

In cities all across the country, laws are being passed basically making it illegal to be homeless. Right here, it is illegal to sleep in a public place. Every public business has "Restrooms Are For Customers Only" signs. Every night all of the restrooms in all of the *public* parks and parking structures are locked up. By the very act of doing so the city is forcing the homeless to break the law by relieving themselves in public. Everywhere you look, there are "No Trespassing" signs painted on all of the Dumpsters.

There have always been two sets of laws in this country: one for the haves and one for the have-nots. Its time for the have-nots to stand up for themselves.

We send billions of dollars of aid to other countries to feed the poor and starving, and there are people living, starving and dying on the streets of our own.

For more information, visit

nationalhomeless.org, endhomelessness.org and svdp.us/emergency-assistance.php5

Donald Davis
Homeless in Eugene

DOWNTOWN AND MORE

Now that the people have spoken, it is time for a different, more creative vision for downtown. I am still an advocate for building a mix of low-, middle- and upper-end eco-housing to create a critical mass of residents in the Broadway core area, but I have also been intrigued by the idea of a park across from the library.

Kemper has bailed on building housing on the hole in the ground; I believe this is a good opportunity for a new plan. Given that downtown and the surrounding area has no municipal recreation center; my vision is to build an indoor pool/rec/community center complex along with a park across from the library.

I believe this would help alleviate some of the youth problems by providing an activities program and entice folks to move downtown (if and when housing is built) for the enhanced amenities, especially those who can't afford a DAC membership. And a downtown park would also be a better use of park money than giving it to developers, and would better serve the taxpayers. Imagine people reading books on a sunny day in the beautiful park across from the awesome library!

And while we're at it, how about trading LCC the Centre Court building at Broadway and Willamette in exchange for the Downtown Center? The DTC is falling apart, too small, the heat died, the pipes broke and LCC may not be able to float a bond to replace it. Trading LCC the Centre Court building would anchor that corner with a solid entity and possibly save both the city and LCC money.

Remodeling an existing building into an eco-friendly learning center would set a good example of community development.