

# Mourning Noah DeWitt

EUGENE LOSES YOUNG CHANGE-MAKER, VISION-HOLDER

**N**oah Michael DeWitt was a shining example of how to be. His sparkling brown eyes would absorb pain from yours when you were sad. He'd listen to you talk about what makes you happy with rapt attention. He always carried pen and paper around with him — in a fanny pack, in the red milk crate on his bicycle or behind his ear. He'd sway his head and shoulders side to side with swagger when he heard a slap-worthy song. Noah absorbed his experiences of this world and spread the happy vibes from them whole-heartedly.

A leader, a rapper, a recycler, a fermenter, a gardener, a repper of natural foods stores, a bike rider, a chicken raiser — Noah left a deep mark on many hearts. In the chorus of his track, "Visions of Eyegene," he reveals the role he played in countless groups.

*All of y'all haters can try  
But can't divide the tribe  
All we trying to do is get higher  
So scam with your negative vibe*



PHOTO BY TAYLOR PARTEE JOHNSTON

Noah was the glue, the vision-holder that kept people together. One of the prime examples is his leadership of the *Oregon Voice Magazine*, a UO-funded publication. Under Noah's wings, the *OV* blossomed. Articles about bike lanes and acid trips graced the pages displayed in hand-decorated, "acquired" newspaper boxes. On newsstands, it looked and seemed like a grungy hipster publication. But behind it all was a warm community of creative and supportive peers Noah had a vital hand in crafting and culturing.

Noah handed the editorship of *OV* over to me when he left. In handing me the torch, he taught me to have greater faith in myself. He inspired me to treat my staff honestly. He left me with a beautiful example of community and creative execution, and he let me take it over fully — no expectations other than that I continued to love the *OV* like he did.

After leading the *OV*, Noah became deeply involved in the No Coal movement in Eugene. He was a member of the intentional community "Heart and Spoon." He continued to gather people around him to share big and small passions.

Noah was inspired by change-makers like Tupac and Gandhi. He was very concerned about our planet and our world, but he was incredibly happy to take what the world offered him and share it.

Untraditional is not the correct word for Noah. Also known as "Doodoo mang," "Noah Dee," "Doo doo," "YES-ah," and "No D," he was unlike anyone in this world. He embraced several aspects of hippie-dom: psilocybin, the bulk section of natural foods stores, Birkenstocks with socks. But he was also OK with drinking cheap beer, and more than OK with being a diehard fan of Beyonce. He was unashamed about spending hours perfecting one dance move.

Noah asked very little of the world. He distributed the *doppest* love and inspired what might as well be millions. He was not focused on what he could do for himself. He was focused on how he could bring his friends and family up with him to a higher place. As he once rapped,

"We all stars though, you should shine with me." ■

*Lucy Ohlsen of Eugene has been a freelance legislative reporter for EW, and she will be attending law school at the UO in the fall.*

**UO alum Noah DeWitt went missing at 2 am Feb. 15. More than three months later on May 27, his body was found in a well at a sewage pump station 3 miles from where he was last seen.**

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