



EMU Rises Again

EUGENE AND PORTLAND RESTAURANTS SET UP SHOP AT THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON BY VANESSA SALVIA

For more than 60 years, the University of Oregon's Erb Memorial Union has anchored campus, serving as a study hall, food court, meeting place and event space for generations of students. The building was constructed in three phases between 1950 and 1973, and although parts of it are architecturally valuable and are being preserved, the building overall no longer seemed suitable for today's students.

With the \$95 million EMU expansion and renovation project nearly completed, the building is set to serve more generations of students as local and regional food vendors set up shop in the approximately 80,000 square feet of new space.

"In the upstairs area we have some of the national chains, but it was important to us that we also had a good local vibe happening," says Dan Geiger, the EMU's assistant director for communications and retail services.

Phase one of the food court opening includes Starbucks, Panda Express and Subway along with Portland chain Joe's Burgers.

Phase two, which should commence in June, includes the official opening of Chipotle along with Townshend's Tea House and a new pizzeria and pub concept from Falling Sky, a brewery with two locations in Eugene. At the time that Geiger spoke with *EW*, he mentioned another local food vendor that would likely move in but was unconfirmed, so thus far the tenant remains a mystery.

Rob Cohen, owner of Falling Sky, says the opportunity to open in the student union was too exciting to pass up. Students and faculty that were polled about what food options they wanted overwhelmingly said pizza and repeatedly named Falling Sky.

"We got a request for a proposal and we thought we would be a very good fit for it, and so we put together a plan and they chose us," Cohen says. "I think we fit well. They wanted a brewery and they wanted some farm-to-table seasonal food, and that's our niche."

Cohen says the pizzeria will be similar in scale to their other two locations in Eugene, with full service and menu

items such as chicken parmesan, corned beef and meatballs.

Many locals still mourn the June 2014 closing of the campus location of Holy Cow, which served healthy, fresh vegetarian and vegan food, and Cohen says he hopes his menu helps make up for that. "We wanted healthy food for the Holy Cow contingent, because that was a big loss to the campus community, so it'll be guilty pleasures with some healthy foods," he says. "But the centerpiece of what we're going to do is sliced pizza or half slice and salad, with several salads to choose from."

With Falling Sky offering a pub, Geiger says he hopes that students and faculty will enjoy a safe, closely monitored, on-campus location to consume alcohol. One goal is to "reduce the number of students traveling to off-campus locations and back at night," he says. "Falling Sky's approach is to offer a high-quality local product, as opposed to discounted cheap beer in a quantity that is sometimes featured in other locations."

For the teetotalers, the campus Townshend's Tea Co. location will invite people to study late into the night. Townshend's is based in Portland but has a Eugene shop. "People love to go to coffee shops to study," says Jake Gano, Townshend's VP of operations, "but you don't always want coffee, especially at night. We've always had a lot of students come to our downtown Eugene location, so now we will be a lot closer for them."

Joe's Burgers, which opened in February, got its start in Tigard's Bridgeport Village in 2010. Their burger-and-shake concept is a hit with the student crowd because, although nothing is made until the order is taken, wait times are minimal.

"We're not the artisanal-style burger with goat cheese and arugula and a brioche bun that you might think of as a Portland burger," says Joe's Burgers marketing manager Kiki Hanover. "We're just an all-American, really good no-fuss burger. We have a great veggie burger, gluten-free buns, and a vegan and gluten-free veggie chili on our menu ... something for everyone."

Produce is locally sourced, meat comes from Portland's SP Provisions and all packaging is recyclable.

So far, the new EMU space seems to be a hit. Dan Geiger says the food vendors now open have been consistently busy, and everyone is happy to be there. He says students today want more sophisticated food choices and want to try new things.

"If they're used to a Starbucks in their home town and there's a local option here, that might eventually get them to try local coffee or tea and more exotic tastes and flavors that they are not familiar with," he says. "I'm just so pleased to have Townshend's, Falling Sky and Joe's Burgers here. This is a great new concept that I think is going to hit it off well." ■



HAND MADE NORTHWEST CHINESE CUISINE

Daily Specials




**Any Sandwich (reg. \$6.99)
+ Meatball Soup (reg. \$5.99)**

JUST \$9.99

NOODLE HOUSE + Hot Oil Biang Biang Noodles (reg. \$11.99)

JUST \$8.99

1301 Patterson St.
MON-FRI 11am-9pm SAT-SUN 12pm-9pm

All Dishes Are Wheat Flour Based

show that you "like us" on  and get \$1 OFF of your meal (excluding teas)

Saturday Market



Every Saturday • 10 AM-5 PM • 8th & Oak • Rain or Shine



Feast at fifteen food booths every week in the great outdoors at Eugene's weekly Art, Food & Music Festival!





www.eugenesaturdaymarket.org




