

Opinions

Bumping elbows and opinions about new caf

By Matt Tessnear
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Raise your hand if you've eaten in the GWU cafeteria in 2007.

Unless you've been fasting, or don't live on campus, it's likely you've noticed the major changes in the cafeteria since returning to Boiling Springs for this spring semester.

Gone are the simple carpeted-and-tile floors. Gone is the mundane color scheme, replaced by warm reds and oranges. Black hanging TVs were traded in for flat screen TVs, which have touch-screen capabilities in the upstairs section of the caf. Long, cafeteria-style tables have given way to four-seaters in an apparent attempt to create a more intimate atmosphere. The salad bar is now a massive food center with salad, soup, bread and fresh cooking. I've entered the room multiple times to the sound of Billy Joel's classic "Piano Man." Maybe you get the picture.

And, to clarify, the food is essentially the same.



Tessnear

GWU's caf's facelift was purely physical. I promised myself I wouldn't address the new cafeteria in this column, but I followed that by promising myself to break it. After eating in the new caf for two weeks, I think the changes have set in enough for me to adequately address them. Renovations in the cafeteria, and the addition of comfy chairs and a flat-screen TV downstairs by the mailboxes, are the biggest physical changes to campus since my class invaded town in 2003.

The football stadium received a massive facelift several years ago, but the caf directly affects far more students on this campus. Most resident students eat in the caf at least once a day during the week, with freshmen eating there more. The changes to the caf are monumental, especially for Gardner-Webb, a school recognized by most of its

students for a lack of ability to change the everyday routine.

To this point, the mix of opinions on our eating arena has been about 50-50. I meet as many people who are delighted about the new atmosphere as ones who are disgusted. Those in favor of the changes don't seem to have anything to say other than "This is great," while smiling.

Students with criticism delve a bit deeper and provide reasons for their opinions. The critics like the atmosphere, find the music as an enhancement and approve of the attempt to better the living environment for the university's students. However, the critics also seem to be the ones that ponder the impact of the changes on the student body as a whole. The critics have examined the reality of the situation. The space in our Dover Campus Center wasn't large enough for such drastic changes.

I understand that our university would love to build a new campus center. I understand that changes

were needed to attract future students. However, the differences in the caf have taken away from the enjoyment just as much as much as they've added to the atmosphere.

As this university's number of students increases, the room in the caf was decreased over semester break. The size of the salad bar/food center in the center of the room, as well as the arrangement of the seating, provides very few lanes for walking. Maybe that's not a big deal for some, but I'm 6-foot-4-inches tall. I need a little room to move. I'm also fond of my personal space. I need a little room to breathe. I don't think I've eaten in the caf once without running over another student or bumping elbows as I strive to eat a meal. I try to be polite, but "I'm sorry" and "excuse me" just don't have the same ring when I use them so many times.

"We have great things in mind" has been the motto at GWU for about two years. With a new football complex, beautification projects throughout campus, and

now changes in the DCC, I truly believe that administrators are attempting to make this a great place for students. However, I'm not sure that the striving for great things always comes with a complete thought process.

I love the way our caf looks now. The atmosphere was downright dormant and boring before and, quite honestly, I had very little motivation to go eat any meal in that room.

But the potential for change wasn't met with a month-long renovation project. I've seen other private college campuses of comparable size and a comparable tuition figure. Some of them have recently made improvements and they have fit the profile and needs of the campus.

For example, Campbell University in Buies Creek recently changed its food service facilities. They added an on-campus Chic-Fil-A, which is an option on the meal plan. In a separate, existing building, a cafeteria and coffee shop were created. They also have two

other dining halls on campus, which provide different meal options. Gardner-Webb has slightly fewer students, but not enough to warrant having a narrow option of dining on campus. The caf's atmosphere is nice, but I'd rather sacrifice looks for comfort at some point. I'm currently at that point in our cafeteria.

I would've liked to have seen the university make serious strides to tap into the opinions of the student body before making the decision to renovate our caf. The quality of food service isn't improved by new tables and fancy TVs. Seeking a way to provide more dining options, in different locations, for our students would have pleased me more.

I would have rather graduated in May not having eaten in this pretty cafeteria, but knowing that additional meal options would be available to students in the future. That's just my opinion, and like the caf's new look, you can take it or leave it. For the last time, excuse me for bumping into you in the burger line.

OPINION: Age discrimination beyond older generation can affect college students, too

By Christine Tamer
The Lariat (Baylor U.)

(U-WIRE) WACO, Texas - I personally don't own a lot of expensive things, but my parents sure know how to sport the Benz. They dress up, go out and get treated like they're worth it.

Rolex watch equals a fast drink order at Ruth's Steakhouse.

Prada purse equals an instant dressing room at Nordstrom's.

Diamond rock equals a, "Can I get you a Pierre while you're shopping, ma'am?"

As a bystander, I have watched in amazement and have concluded that wrinkles on the face or money in the pocket equals respect, adoration and best of all, customer service.

We have all grown up hearing about the "isms."

I knew racism and sexism, but I didn't know much about ageism until I fell victim to it.

Ageism, as defined in the dictionary, is discrimination based on age. Going on 21 years, I am a victim.

This past weekend I strolled into a local restaurant for a late lunch. Naturally, I wasn't dressed to the nines, but was instead wearing my Baylor sweatshirt, holey jeans and that "I-just-woke-up-at-2 p.m." hair-do.

Regardless, I was bright, cheerful and found myself to be worthy of a nice afternoon.

But as I opened the door I instantly received a feeling of disdain exhibited by the waiter who begrudgingly sat me in his section. He looked familiar. Why the attitude, pal? I'm not going to shout profanities, spill salsa or stomp dance on the table.

Let me eat!
"What can I get you to drink?" he asked.

"I'll just have water with a lemon, please," I replied.

Twelve minutes later, it arrived. My first mistake was clear. When you order water, it conveys the message that you are either cheap or poor. Strike one.

The waiter returned to take my meal order. "I'll have the lettuce wrap appetizer, please."

He glared, "And?" I stopped and thought, "Oh no, oh no. He's going to spit in my food because I didn't order more. My meal tab would be \$8. Not enough. Twenty percent of eight is \$1.60. Should I get more? But I just want the darn lettuce wraps. I'm not a scorpion woman! I know how it feels to work for tips. I've been there; I'll tip you more. Just give me the wraps, oh please?"

"Excuse me. Anything else?" he asked.

"Nope, that'll do it. Thank you." I began to turn a pinkish color. This, my friends, is absolutely ridiculous.

Why should I be ashamed to order what I want? Why should I be discriminated against because I don't have the money for the crème brule and the seared tuna? I'm appalled. I'm outraged. I'm in college, and I just want to fill my stomach and be on my merry little way! I just want to be treated like a human, not a poor, rowdy college kid. What ever happened to good old-fashioned customer service?

Tom? That is Tom! I knew the waiter's face was familiar. He sat behind me in class last year.

Oh, Tom, you don't have a lot of money, either. You're a college kid, too. You can't afford the steak, either.

The anger began to boil. You hypocrite! You're 20, and I'm 20. Let me use young, hip language to convey my message to you: "What gives?"

Simply put, ageism is wrong. Even more ridiculous is the fact we are doing it to ourselves.

I even want to sometimes order off the kids' menu. Wait, I may have just crossed the line.

Students losing sight of educational goals

By Caitlin Cuppernull
The Daily Cougar (U. Houston)

(U-WIRE) HOUSTON - It's not unusual to glance around a classroom and see a good portion of people sleeping. If they're not curled up during the lecture, fellow classmates are text-messaging friends, whispering to each other or doing any number of things to avoid the one reason they are attending school: to learn.

While socializing is certainly an important part of college, it is not difficult to spend a few hours a day doing nothing but learning. In fact, that should be something to look forward to. College is the one time in a person's life where the main goal is education. In a University that is full of award-winning professors,

students should use their time at UH to benefit from this.

Students often claim that they have to go to college to secure a job or that their parents are making them. What was once considered a privilege is starting to be seen as a forced necessity. Those who don't have a desire to learn should not attend college. While it can be argued that a college education is required to have a high-powered career, this fact does not have to take away the pleasure of learning -- one shouldn't regard education as an obligation.

As tuition continues to rise, students should be thankful they have the opportunity to attend school -- no matter the reason they are here. However, that opportunity should not be

taken advantage of by wasting time and money sitting through classes one does not want to be in. A passion for learning should be the main reason to attend school, and this passion should extend well beyond classrooms and careers.

Freshman Caitlin Cuppernull is the Opinion Editor.

Bark about it!

Got a bone to pick about something going on at Gardner-Webb, in the community or elsewhere? Have an insightful thought you'd like to share? If you'd like to unleash your opinions about issues that are important to you, we'd like to publish your comments in each edition of The Pilot. E-mail us at pilot@gardner-webb.edu,

WISDOM ON WHEELS:

Four random wishes for 2007

By Jacob Conley
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Happy New Year, everybody. The new semester has started and people, myself included, have made New Year's resolutions. In my case, they last approximately 72 hours.

This year I've come up with a wish list of things I'd like to see happen in 2007. As usual, the majority of this list is sports-related, but to prove that I'm well-rounded and not solely a sports addict, I've also included a few personal goals and wishes.

1. I wish that Adam Morrison could find a barber in Charlotte that he likes. I can understand having long hair in Spokane to keep your head warm during the winter, but this is North Carolina. We usually have mild winters and, according to a roommate who ascribes to the gospel of global warming, it will continue to get warmer until the Arctic resembles Arizona.

Morrison is supposed to be the face of Bobcats basketball. If that's the case, the rest of the NBA thinks that we are mustache-wearing hippies. Adam, if you ever read this, here's a piece of advice. You're a great player, but you are not Sampson. Your strength lies in jump shots, not you hair. Please get it cut.

2. I wish I could convince people that you can't root for both Duke and North Carolina. It's impossible.

Don't believe me? Then listen to what Jesus says in Matthew 6:24: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other."

You can't have it both



Conley

ways. For me personally, I would never pull for UNC, even if they were playing the Iraqi national team and the winner received 2 tons of enriched plutonium. I hate them that much.

3. One of my goals for 2007 is to launch a line of Christian boxer shorts called "Joy Boxers." Slogans would include, "Turn the other cheek," "Be fruitful and multiply" and "Make a joyful noise." You get the idea.

If anybody has an idea for new slogans or wants to place an order, let me know.

4. I know I like to joke around a lot, but my last goal is a serious one. It is also two-fold. I want to represent Gardner-Webb to the best of my ability, not only as a member of SGA, but also as a member of the newly-formed Quiz Bowl team.

This is my opportunity to compete for and give something back to the school that has given so much to me over the past five years. I just want my readers to know that the other members of the team and I will try to be the biggest nerds in the Big South and bring that trophy back to Boiling Springs, where it belongs.

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