

Celebrating 25 Years

November 28 thru January 4
5:00 - 10:00 p.m. Daily
Louis Murphy Park
Dubuque

\$10 Per Vehicle at the gate

Discounted tickets (\$8) available at all DB&T banking centers and all Hillcrest locations.

Each night the 25th car will receive a \$25 Hy-Vee Gift Card! Courtesy of: **HyVee.**

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Hillcrest family services

FOODIE GARAGE EATERY

BY DANNY FAIRCHILD

The Foodie Garage Eatery is issuing you a challenge. Well...lots of challenges, actually. Maybe it's more of a dare. Well...lots of dares, actually. It dares you to take your foodie presumptions and prejudices and preschool pickiness and shove them straight up your own butt, hopefully dislodging your head. Though they evoke the word "foodie," you're not going to find some kind of hoity-toity fusion cuisine or any of your hipster food fads. Foodie Garage says, without much or any jingoism, "This is America. This is American food. We'd tell you to love it or leave it, but we already know you're going to love it."

They've got a point. Over the past few decades, Dubuque's culinary portfolio has expanded to the point where American food kind of takes a backseat sometimes. We often fall into a rut with American food where we just say, "good enough." We don't feel the need to elevate it. Foodie Garage says that's BS. And I agree. There's nothing better than the perfect burger. There's nothing more satisfying than a stack of pancakes larger than your plate. Are you really going to turn up your nose at the delicious contrasting flavors and textures of a tuna melt? Come to think of it, when was the last time you had a tuna melt? Scratch that. When was the last time you had a GOOD tuna melt? Aren't you ashamed it's been so long? I know I was. America has a lot to be ashamed of, but our cuisine ain't one of them.

Honda tattoos." I can hear my sweet clod of a father chuckling from the grave.

This location has always been a pretty intimate dining experience. If there's just a few people there, you're going to be inadvertently eavesdropping. I've gone twice now. The first time was a meeting of some church members. Long-time parishioners taking new members out for lunch. I think. Church stuff turns my ears off. The second time, I heard a conversation complaining about the roundabouts in a roundabout sort of way. Seriously, y'all. Roundabouts ain't hard. You just go. Just... go. But once the tables started to fill up, I was left to my own evil thoughts.

THE FOOD

Don't miss these wings, y'all. The menu touts them as hand-battered, which scares me a bit because battered wings are not my kind of wings. But these are crispy-skinned wings all the way, with sauce sticking to the wings and your fingers, instead of making them slip from your hand. I detect some kind of brining or perhaps buttermilk, or perhaps both. The skin is crispy and the meat is juicy and the sauce really ties to room together, man. If you're looking for a huge sauce selection, this ain't your place for wings. But we're talking wings as an app, here. So shut up with your garlic Parmesan or your sweet chili. Eat the wings, lick your fingers, and be happy you're alive. Foodie Garage dares you.

Tuna melt! I'm so excited to be writing about a tuna melt, you guys. I love tuna melts. On their face, they're such a throw-away menu item. "Welp! We have tuna salad sammiches. It wouldn't take much to slap some melty cheese on griddle it, eh?" It's usually listed, as it is on Foodie Garage's menu, with other kinds of sandwiches that don't even have descriptions because "tuna melt" says it all. And tuna melts are so easy in theory, but how many times have you ordered a tuna melt and even though the cheese was ostensibly melted, but the tuna salad inside is cold? How pissed off were you? I'm sensing I may be alone in my disdain. Okay, then... for my own gratification, then: Foodie Garage's Texas toast with a healthy amount of tuna salad and cheddar is hot and melty all the way through. It's like a grilled cheese and a tuna sandwich got busy and gave the love child

THE ATMOSPHERE

Though the cuisine might come from your favorite greasy spoon diner (their logo is a pinup waitress serving a burger and a drink), the garage theme is on prominent display (like I said, their logo is a pinup waitress serving a burger and a drink). Corrugated sheet metal adorns the walls and bathroom doors. The bathrooms kind of buck this theme by actually being clean, but the bathrooms are also adorned with signage that would be at home at your more tasteful fix-it garages, by proprietors who, though sweethearts, still take a certain amount of pride in being a bit of a clod with signs like, "I'm not insulting you, I'm describing you" or "You can only say WTF so many times a day until you just decide to start drinking!" Foodie Garage pledges its allegiance with signs like "Harley Davidson...Because nobody gets

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TUNA MELT



WESTERN AND FARMER DECKLYN BURGERS

up for adoption to loving parents. And then eaten by me. You should eat it, too. Foodie Garage dares you.

Pancakes! I ordered one pancake so I could say I tried the pancakes. I was expecting a reasonably-sized pancake. I was a fool. One pancake would have been enough for me had I not also just had a tuna melt. It's bigger than the plate. One container of syrup isn't enough for me. And they're so malty and good like your classic diner pancakes. I'm not even sure how you flip a pancake that large? Fast and confidently, I imagine. Just try to house a stack of pancakes that size. Foodie Garage dares you.

The burgers. I was going to write this article without trying the burgers. I felt I had enough info. I was a fool. My friends...these burgers are some of the very best in town. Nay, some of the very best in the Tri-States. There are some interesting burger ideas on the menu here, including Glen's Grand Slam Burger, featuring a beef patty, a sausage patty, a hot dog, and one egg on a bun with lettuce, onion, and cheese. Holy hell, amirite? Or Chuck's Hang-over Burger, which is a beef patty, egg, bacon, and hash browns served on a bun with cheese. Or Ultra's Sloppy Burger: A beef patty topped with bacon, served on a bun and covered in beef gravy. Foodie Garage dares you.

I kept my burger order pretty basic with a double cheeseburger, but even that goes above and beyond because we're talking TWO 1/2 pound patties! Served on a pretzel bun, no less! And then...get this. They asked me how I wanted my burger done. No restaurant that has

been open longer than 5 years has ever asked me that. My usual douchy response, even though I know very well I shouldn't do it, is to say, "Make it as rare as you're allowed to." I thought I might have a little pink. Nope. I was served an actual rare burger. I know that sounds gross to many of you, but screw you. It was MY burger. It was perfect. Absolutely perfect. You could tell they didn't abuse their meat by pressing it. They let the burger be the burger and didn't ring out any of that good, good burger juice. If I had lawyers, they would advise me not to recommend you get a hamburger prepared rare...but Foodie Garage dares you.

So far these dares and challenges have been unspoken. But perusing the menu, you'll see some actual bonafide challenges for you to accept and rise to. They have two walls of fame you could find yourself on: The Breakfast Challenge, and The Late Riser Challenge. The Breakfast Challenge is comprised of a 25" pancake, four eggs, four sausage patties, one pound of bacon, one pound of American fries or hash browns, two milks and one orange juice. The Late Riser Challenge features a five-pound burger served with lettuce, tomatoes, onions, and bacon to cover; one pound of fries; three sodas and two waters. Complete either one of these challenges in 30 minutes and you'll win a t-shirt and a wall of fame post on their social media.

So there you have it. The Foodie Garage Eatery is here...and they're going to kick your sorry rump. You've been warned. ■



FOODIE GARAGE EATERY

1091 UNIVERSITY AVE, DUBUQUE, IA

563-845-0131

FACEBOOK.COM/FOODIEGARAGEDBQ

Hours: Tue-Sat: 7 AM-9:30 PM; Sun: 7 AM-5 PM

DANNY FAIRCHILD

DANNY DOESN'T TAKE CRAP FROM NOBODY, BUT HE'LL TAKE FOOD FROM ALMOST ANYBODY. IF YOU WANT TO FIGHT DANNY, OR FEED HIM NOM-NOMS, EMAIL HIM AT DINING@DUBUQUE365.COM.



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