

Christmas has come and gone, but after months of rumors it looks like Walmart is coming to town. I wish I could get excited about the Big Box coming to the north coast, but it leaves me ~~me~~ cold pondering the potential impact of world's biggest retailer moving into the Bayshore Mall. Besides, did we not vote <sup>to close</sup> Wal mart out just over a decade ago?

Perhaps you say, I sound like some occupy Wall Street fanatic, but, I am not opposed to big business: I drive a GM <sup>Toyota</sup> car and I bet a lot of you listeners drive cars too, and guess what, they are all made by big companies. If it was GM or Toyota coming to provide real jobs in Eureka, I'd be much more inclined to favor ~~the GM~~ <sup>them</sup> than a cheapo <sup>grocery</sup> retailer that likes to put the competition out of business, ~~and put these people~~.

~~I suppose~~ Some would try to justify it from the perspective that Walmart might save the Mall from bankruptcy or something; but I have never been a big fan of indoor shopping Malls. "When you've seen one mall you've seen them all," has been my motto ever since my kids were teenagers: while they didn't like the slogan then, now that they are older I think they agree.

Maybe you could say we need the jobs; yes, that is painfully true, but Walmart is infamous for its low pay, lousy benefits and cavalier attitude toward employees. Why do you think their goods are cheaper? Because they pay their employees poorly! Surely, a local store owned by mom and pop should treat its employees and its customers much better. Speaking of locally owned stores:

Some years ago my brother in law who lives in Red Bluff was crowing about how Walmart was coming to Red Bluff and would give a boost to the local economy. What Red Bluff got instead were storefront windows on Main street saying "For sale, for rent, for lease." Wal mart drove Mom and pop <sup>shop</sup> out of business -- by the bushel: selling cheap plastic trinkets and other goods at a price with which Mom and Pop could not compete. Are we naïve enough to think this would not happen here? Some have commented that they do not think Wal mart will compete with, let alone, put out of business, any other retailers in the area: how about Target, Sears, K-Mart, Rays, and all the local hardware stores! ~~Do we really want to put ourselves at the mercy of Walmart by risking these retailers?~~ The jobs gained at Wal mart will likely soon be balanced out by the jobs lost by local stores, equaling little or no jobs gain for our region—and a net loss in salaries that will mostly be shipped back to central headquarters Bentonville, AR.

I am not sure if Walmart in Eureka is *fait accompli*, but I hasten to say that if it does go in, I will most likely not shop there even if there sell cheaper underwear—simply as a matter of principle. Whether or not Wal mart comes to town, I urge consumers in Humboldt to consider where and how you spend your dollars. After all, every customer purchase has <sup>a</sup> moral consequence, ~~of which we can only see if we give a thought to something bigger than the idea that cheaper is better.~~ <sup>One that can only see if we give a thought to something bigger than the idea that</sup> Wal mart is unlikely to make Eureka or Humboldt a good place to live, at least, I for one, can live happily without it.

This has been Dan Price for community comment

It's a Walmart after all: Chain retailer announces opening at Bayshore Mall  
Grant Scott-Goforth/The Times-Standard