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Montana Kaimin, February 12, 2020

Students of the University of Montana, Missoula

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DATE BY DEADLINE

Three stories of swiping right the old-fashioned way



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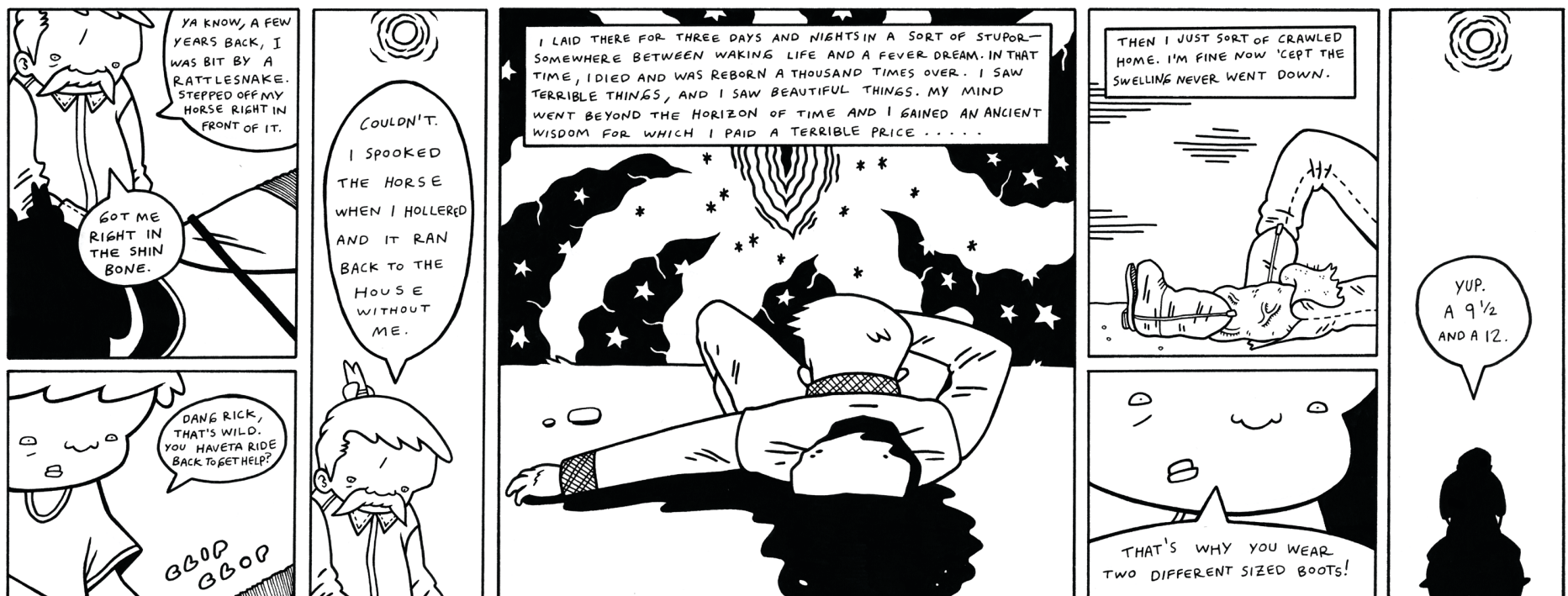
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COOPER MALIN | MONTANA KAIMIN

UM Dining may be trucking up the wrong tree

After UM Dining’s last food truck attempt survived less than five years with many changes to the location and menu, UM is now bringing a new selection of food truck vendors to campus starting Feb. 12 to 14 for students looking for some late night grub.

But these trucks won’t bring back the iconic “bombs” on the Galloping Griz menu (pour one out), and they definitely won’t be the golden ticket solution to keeping campus-bound students fed and happy.

Sure, any sort of variety of food students can find on campus will be a step up from the repetitive options at the Food Zoo, and parking the food trucks behind the Lommasson Center is convenient for students in the dorms. Exciting and convenient is great in the short term. But in reality, these trucks won’t meet the needs of students.

UM Dining’s Galloping Griz Food Truck opened in 2013. And, for less than five years, it moved from

Missoula College to the Main Campus, from multiple meals a day to only late night snacks. During the last half of 2017, it lost UM Dining close to \$33,000 before it was shut down in March of 2018. Now, it is sitting empty waiting to be sold.

What is different with food trucks on campus this time around?

Bringing in vendors rather than running a UM-owned food truck is an easy and no commitment fix for UM Dining without having to invest in anything long term. UM Dining will receive 10% of the sales without having to pay anything up front to the vendors.

Vendors might not be the right solution. Noodles Express pulled out of the UC Food Court in 2018 and Jus Chill’n moved out of the Fitness and Recreation Center in 2019. We’d mention the constant cycle of vendors in and out of Harvest’s location in the Food Court, but the list is too exhaustive.

Students also won’t be able to use any meal plan at the trucks. While not every student who attends the University uses a meal plan, all students living in dorms are required to pay \$2,836 each semester for one. Having to pay out-of-pocket after already paying for a meal plan is just not an option for most UM students.

The incoming food truck menus likely won’t be wallet-friendly. Anyone who’s ever bought noodles after getting sloshed at the Badlander has shelled out a minimum \$10 for some might-fill-you-up-might-not stomach bombs.

What students need is an affordable, permanent food option. One with a healthy menu would be ideal, but UM Dining doesn’t seem to think that’s a priority.

So yes, late night food trucks sound super enticing and exciting, but this isn’t the long-term solution students need or the budget-friendly option they can afford.

LIKE IT? HATE IT? WISH WE WERE DEAD?
Email us your opinions at
editor@montanakaimin.com

LATE NIGHT FOOD TRUCKS RETURN TO CAMPUS, PAGE 5

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

Edited by Margie E. Burke

5		3						
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9	3		7			8		
8				9				4
	7	4	6					
	2			5		4		
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HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answers to Last Week's Sudoku:

8	7	4	2	1	5	6	3	9
1	9	6	3	4	7	5	2	8
5	2	3	8	6	9	1	4	7
3	8	2	9	5	1	4	7	6
6	5	7	4	3	8	2	9	1
4	1	9	7	2	6	3	8	5
2	6	8	1	7	4	9	5	3
9	3	5	6	8	2	7	1	4
7	4	1	5	9	3	8	6	2

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Beer burglars, expunged exploits and forester fouls

PAUL HAMBY & DANTE FILPULA ANKNEY

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JAN. 31: WEEKEND EXPIATION

University of Montana officer Lt. Brad Giffin clarified a campus-wide alert issued Feb. 1 about a man whom residents suspected of trying to break into their homes. After seeing the alert, the man himself immediately reached out to UMPD, and said that he was new to the area and simply mistook the apartments.

FEB. 1: TREE TROUBLE

A man called UMPD saying that he spoke for the trees! Specifically, he spoke for one in particular that had snapped during the record-setting winds over the weekend. The destroyed deciduous threatened cars parked nearby. Facility services arrived and retired the tree.

FEB. 3: GROUNDED

UMPD officers were called by a fed up mother to settle a disagreement between her and her son. The 14-year-old refused to relinquish his phone and after diffusing the argument, the child was issued an ungovernable youth citation.

FEB. 4: ENTHRALLED LISTENERS

UMPD was notified by a concerned onlooker of a child and mother sleeping in a car outside Lewis and Clark villages. Officers arrived to find that the child was unwilling to leave the car until they finished an audiobook. Officers took no action and disappointingly chose not to report the title of the captivating audiobook.

FEB. 5: LAWLESS FORESTERS

The foresters on campus took the tradition of terrorizing law students a little too seriously in preparation for the 103rd Foresters' Ball. In revenge for the theft of

Bertha, the stuffed moose head that normally decorates the stairwell of the W.A. Franke College of Forestry, some unknown foresters paid the Alexander Blewett III Law School back tenfold. Along with a platoon of pines stationed throughout the building, furniture found itself stacked, recyclables and trash was spread across the floor and a baby changing station became flooded with hand sanitizer. Custodial staff also noted another innovation of havoc this year. In the spot where the pilfered piece of taxidermy rested was a puddle of motor oil.

FEB. 6: BEER RUN

Missoula police called UMPD for aid in a manhunt after somebody made off with a 30-pack of beer from Noon's. After following the footprints in the snow across the Higgins avenue bridge, officers were unable to locate the man. Lt. Giffin could not name the brand of pinched pilsner, but did note that since it was a 30-pack, it was probably cheap.



CASSIDY ALEXANDER

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POWER OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT

UM administrators shut down a censorship attempt by the UM Foundation, which requested a professor gain approval of a speech before it was given later this month. Tobin Miller Shearer, director of African American studies at UM, said he believed he was under additional scrutiny after four white students won UM's MLK essay contest, the Missoulian reported. The results of the essay contest received copious public backlash. Miller Shearer brought the censorship issue to UM's faculty union, which pushed it along to the President's office and was resolved.

HEADING TO THE BIG LEAGUES

Award-winning Griz linebacker Dante Olson will be showcasing his skills at the 2020 NFL Scouting Combine Feb. 24 to March 1. Olson graduated in December and will be playing alongside 336 college football standouts. Olson is Montana's all-time tackles leader, with 397. He is the first Grizzly to make the combine since

Zack Wagenmann in 2015 and could find himself among this year's NFL Draft.

VAPERGATE ISN'T OVER YET

Another vaping-related illness has been reported in Montana, bringing the total to seven illnesses and one death, the Helena Independent Record reported. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported over 2,700 people have been hospitalized and 60 people have died from vaping-related illness. Montana began a 120-day ban on the sale of flavored vaping products Dec. 18, and the legal age to buy vaping products is now 21 under federal law.

MT SENATORS SPLIT IMPEACHMENT VOTES

Montana senators split votes in the impeachment trial of President Donald Trump, who was acquitted of charges Feb. 5. Republican Steve Daines voted to acquit Trump for both obstruction of justice and abuse of power. Democrat John Tester voted to convict on both articles. All votes in the trial were split along party lines, with the exception of Utah Senator Mitt Romney - R, who voted to convict for abuse of power. [Sen.] Daines is up for reelection this year.

Late night food trucks return to campus

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Food trucks are returning to campus this month, nearly two years after UM's own food truck suspended regular service.

The trucks' arrival comes in response to student requests and conversations with the Associated Students of the University of Montana, according to Byron Drake, interim director of Campus Dining. He said three outside vendors — Sonny's Original, Two Chicks' Scratch and Great Ape Crepes — will start serving food in February.

"Students have asked for the opportunity to have some late night food truck options," Drake said. "We'll probably have more as the weather warms up."

The food trucks are set to operate from 6 p.m. to midnight in the parking lot behind the Lommasson Center, Drake said. The Corner Store, a convenience store in the Lommasson Center, has also extended its hours this spring to 10 p.m., rather than 8:30 p.m.

Two Chicks' Scratch plans to operate on Thursdays. It serves Mexican food as well as cheeseburgers and BLT sandwiches, according to owner and operator Sheri Martinez.

The Great Ape Crepes owner and operator James Mabiuss said the truck plans to operate on Fridays. It serves sweet and savory crepes.

Sonny's primarily serves cheesesteaks and fries and plans to operate Wednesday through Friday, according to owner and operator Daniel DiMezza. He said Sonny's might consider expanding to weekends or lunch hours if there is enough demand. Martinez and Mabiuss said their food trucks probably won't consider this option.

"Typically, there is not enough business for them during lunch hours on campus," Drake said. "Saturday and Sunday night I don't think would be great for them. But, if one of them wanted to try it, I wouldn't say no to that."

The University's Galloping Griz food truck enjoyed rising profits from 2014 to



A customer purchases a cheesesteak from Sonny's Original Cheesesteak employee Aimee Osborne. Sonny's is a new food truck coming to the UM campus. It will be available 6 p.m. to midnight Wednesday through Friday. SAVANNAH STANHOPE | MONTANA KAIMIN

2016 until its loss of \$33,000 impacted UM Dining in the second half of 2017 amid menu changes, the Kaimin previously reported. It cut back from daily service to special events the following spring. Savannah Willison is a student supervisor at the UC Food Court who worked at the Galloping Griz from the fall of 2017 until it closed.

"It's a bummer that the Galloping Griz got shut down," Willison said. "That was usually a good option for people who either missed the Food Zoo or wanted a good study snack."

Drake said Campus Dining put the Galloping Griz up for sale around the end of fall semester. It has not yet received a firm offer.

The food trucks do not accept meal plans, according to Drake, since that

would increase the University's costs without increasing money coming in. He said the vendors will pay a 10% cut of revenue to Campus Dining, which is less of a financial risk.

Drake said Campus Dining would consider the Lewis and Clark student apartments as another potential site for food trucks, though the department has no plans to do so yet. He said the trucks could also park by Aber Hall for a night, which is located on the other side of campus.

"There's kind of a risk on their part because that gets them away from the main traffic," Drake said regarding food trucks going to the residence hall. "But there might be enough interest from the Aber folks to go, 'We'll go to a food truck, bring it out here.'"

Brian Fulton, a student senator and manager at the UC Market, said he thinks the return of food trucks is a great idea. He said he hopes the vendors will focus on what students want, taking into consideration dietary restrictions.

Sonny's offers veggie sandwiches that can be vegetarian or vegan, and Great Ape Crepes has vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free options, according to their owners. Martinez said Two Chicks' Scratch can provide vegetarian and vegan food on request.

All three food trucks will be on campus by Feb. 12-14, according to Drake. Big Dipper ice cream truck may also join them starting in mid-April, according to an email from Bryan Hickey, Big Dipper chief financial and operating officer.

Pantzer Hall to get first housing makeover in decades

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The University of Montana is planning to renovate Pantzer Hall for the first time since its creation in 1994, according to UM Housing. The renovations will start this spring and will likely finish up before students return in August, UM Housing director Sandra Curtis said.

"I've been around 24 years and we have not done a major remodel like this," said Jameel Chaudhry, the Missoula campus architect for the University of Montana. "It is to the tune of \$4 million-worth of remodels that would happen on Pantzer alone."

Though UM Housing does upgrade dorms periodically, the 2020 Pantzer project will be the largest on-campus remodel since 1995.

New retail bonds in September 2019 added more than \$146 million to UM's budget, \$62 million of which was designated to on-campus infrastructure. These funds made the renovations possible, according to Curtis.

The University will invest the bonds to revitalize housing, dining, recreation facilities and educational spaces. The renovations should reduce the University's carbon footprint, UM President Seth Bodnar said in a 2019 press release.

The Pantzer project will replace furniture in bedrooms and study lounges. Chaudhry explained that the dorm will be repainted with a new color scheme, and the linoleum floors and carpets will be replaced.

The bathrooms, group living spaces, lounges and the laundry room will also be upgraded. Metal plating is set to cover the yellow exterior walls on the fourth floor. The concrete semi circle north of the building will be replaced with bricks.

"The things that you see and notice will be all newly done," Chaudhry said.

The Missoula campus has not had any major student housing changes since Miller Hall upgrades in 1995. That project added fifth floor single suites and



Renovations in Pantzer Hall will replace the yellow exterior on the fourth floor. EMMA SMITH | MONTANA KAIMIN

extended the building to feature the first three-room pods on campus. UM-issued bonds also funded this expansion, according to a September 1995 Kaimin article.

UM Housing Director Sandy Curtis explained that dorms are usually upgraded in small ways. In the last two decades, the housing department replaced furniture and carpets, and re-tiled floors. Behind the scenes, UM also rebalanced air systems, which sets how hot or cold each individual room can get.

Most importantly, Curtis and Chaudhry said UM added safety features to all dorms on campus. It spent more than two decades putting sprinklers in every room in every building.

"That has been a big push for the last two decades, to make sure the life safety systems are there," Chaudhry said. "It

is not the case for most campuses that have dorms from the 1950s and 60s."

Pantzer Hall was constructed just after the Miller renovation. It was part of a wave of UM expansions in 1995 and flaunted a price tag of \$8 million to build. Chaudhry considered the dorm the most progressive building UM created for students with disabilities. Along with the Gallagher Business Building, it became the first 100% accessible building on campus.

"We are really grateful that we have this opportunity to do this for the students," Curtis said.

UM Housing did not provide an official start date for the Pantzer project, but Curtis said the department is preparing for the upgrade in the very near future.



Study lounges like this one on the fourth floor of Pantzer Hall will get new furniture after renovations this spring. EMMA SMITH | MONTANA KAIMIN



The University of Montana food pantry, located on the first floor of the University Center. HUNTER WIGGINS | MONTANA KAIMIN

28% of UM students experienced homelessness in the past year

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A recent report from the UM Basic Needs Committee showed 28% of University of Montana students experienced homelessness at some point in 2019, compared to the 17% national average of university students who were homeless in the past year. The University is now taking steps to combat student homelessness and help students meet their basic needs.

In 2019 alone, 67% of UM students experienced a basic need insecurity like housing and food instability, according to the #RealCollege national survey. In 2019, 45% of UM students experienced food insecurity.

Some students, including University of Montana senior Dylan Bohbot, have experienced both housing and food insecurities. Bohbot was kicked out of his house the day before Thanksgiving in 2019. He spent nearly

two months moving from house to house and sleeping in his car until he finally found a house a week into the spring semester.

"It was a mixture of sleeping on my friend's couch, on my friend's floor, or in my car... I couldn't find a place that was affordable, or when I did find a place, they wanted a \$100 application fee, and I wouldn't do that," Bohbot said.

Committee. For Bohbot, it meant failing a class and barely passing the second.

"I didn't have anywhere to do homework, except on campus," Bohbot said. "This sucked because I was two points away from passing [biology class], and maybe if I had privacy to study instead of coming here and studying with a friend until 1 a.m., I could have passed."

"It was a mixture of sleeping on my friend's couch, on my friend's floor, or in my car..."

Housing and food insecurities can also impact people's emotional health, well being and academic career, according to Adrienne Smith, the director of the University Center and active member of the Basic Needs

Bohbot said he also felt like a burden to the friends he was staying with, which is a problem for many people who rely on friends for a roof over their heads.

Bohbot used many resources on campus,

including the UM Food Pantry and the ASUM Renter Center. Kat Cowley, the UM Food Pantry student coordinator, said she saw 69 students visit during January 2020 alone. Students can visit the Food Pantry twice a month, where they can get canned, dried, fresh and frozen foods. Visitors can also collect hygiene and personal care products as well as some winter clothing. Bohbot said the service is a great resource that saved him money.

The ASUM Renter Center is another UM resource for students experiencing basic need insecurities. The Renter Center helps students sort out housing-related problems and understand tenant rights.

Despite the current resources, Smith said there is still a lot to be done.

"Though we have accomplished a lot, collecting data and opening a food pantry is just a start. There is so much work to be done in this area and what campus can do for students," she said.

Students may be able to earn degrees faster with micro-credentials

AIDAN MORTON

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University of Montana Provost Jon Harbor pitched a new way to earn a degree faster to the faculty union at its last meeting: micro-credentials. These digital credentials would certify a student's competency in a particular skill or trade. Faculty Senate Chair-Elect Chris Palmer said the senate will have to hear more before anything is decided.

"The idea and approach are interesting," Palmer, a chemistry and biology professor, said in an email. "But we will want to have an open discussion regarding how all of this fits for UM, its faculty, and its students."

According to Palmer, this will include determining systems of approval for courses or other experiences and deciding how a micro-credential program would fit with current UM policy and degree offerings. Harbor used brewing and hunter education as examples of programs that could be provided at UM. Palmer mentioned a potential personal finance credential under the School of Business, as well.

Harbor referred to the University of Buffalo's defined micro-credential program in his presentation. Students at the University of Buffalo can earn a micro-credential for only 11 credits, according to UB's Office of Micro-credentials.

Additionally, UB offers both credit-bearing and noncredit micro-credentials. UB students can take courses through the university to fulfill the 11 credits. However, students who have mastered a skill set outside of the classroom could receive a badge through this program to prove competency in a skill.

Although a noncredit micro-credential doesn't appear on a UB student's transcript, the student is awarded with a digital "badge" to put on resumes, LinkedIn or social media. Palmer said UM is open to both of these options.

"When we talk about a liberal arts education, we talk about how it prepares students for leadership, or that



KAITLIN CLIFFORD | MONTANA KAIMIN

it prepares students to be adaptable or to have a global perspective," Palmer said. "Some of these micro-credentials might be things like that."

These achievements could be leadership experiences, campus or volunteer work, or a particular skill or activity. The idea of noncredit micro-credentials is something Justin Mason, director of e-learning at the University of Montana-Western, is excited to introduce in Dillon.

"It's an extra way for students to show employers who they are and what they can do," Mason said.

He said he hopes offering micro-credentials at UMW encourages students to co-author programs or certificates with their professors. Evolving industries create a "war for talent" among students entering the workforce. Micro-credentials give students the opportunity to have control over their education and degrees, but also enable them to showcase accomplishments and skills, even if they're outside the classroom, he added.

"These things create a need for continued life-long learning," Mason said. "I think higher education is trying to

figure out how to meet that need."

Mason also plans for students to "stack" micro-credentials, or pair various credentials to build higher certifications. This creates a path for people who otherwise don't have a way to earn higher credentials, he said.

Palmer said UM is forming a committee to evaluate micro-credentials. Officials hope to have a review process in place by next fall. The committee will consist of members from the office of the provost and registrar, faculty senate members and ASUM representatives.

Psychology professor helps launch a 'living lab'

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A University of Montana professor and the Missoula Public Library are teaming up to bring interactive research from UM to Missoula, using a living lab.

"The idea for the living lab is to provide the community, children and families and adults with the opportunity to engage in the research that's being conducted at UM," Rachel Severson, an associate professor in developmental psychology, said.

Severson will run the living lab once construction on the new Missoula Public Library building is completed. The lab, which will be located on the first floor of the building, will give the public the opportunity to observe and interact with research. Research groups will rotate through the space, which will have its soft opening within the new library in June and its grand opening in July. A grant from the National Institute of Health is the project's primary source of funding. This grant will also pay for a DNA double helix climbing structure to go inside the library.

Severson said the living lab will mainly include psychology and neuroscience research, but she has received feedback from some Missoula residents saying they also want to learn more about physical sciences. Provost Jon Harbor's research group will bring geoscience research to the lab.

One of the researchers on rotation will be SpectrUM staff scientist Amanda Duley. SpectrUM is a hands-on science center that will also move to the new library once it opens. Duley will conduct neuroscience research at the living lab.

Severson's own research lab, the Mind Lab, will do much of its work in the living lab as well. The Mind Lab focuses on developmental psychology. Right now, Mind Lab scientists are studying how young children, ages 3 to 5, respond to videos of robots.

Shailee Woodard will manage the

living lab. She is a graduate student studying psychology under Severson in the Mind Lab. Woodard explained that the Mind Lab's work centers around theory of the mind, which explores how children understand what happens around them. She said children will often attribute human traits to nonhuman objects such as stuffed animals.

"We're especially right now interested in how they do that with robots," Woodard said. "Do they think robots can have intentions? Like can they try to do something? Or are they just doing what they're doing because of programming?"

Woodard will manage the planning and opening of the living lab, and coordinate with researchers who want to use the space and host a high school research mentorship program. She also said the lab will be open to student researchers who want to use the space.

Severson and Woodard are excited that the living lab will be open to children and teenagers. They hope to break the "lab coats and beakers" stereotype.

"When I was a kid I didn't know anything about psychology research. I had no idea this was an option for my career until halfway through my undergrad," Woodard said.

Not only will the lab actively engage students, it will also be an outlet for research findings in Missoula. Honore Bray, the Missoula Public Library director, is excited to host the living lab in the new library. She said it's a safe way to engage children and families in the research UM conducts. And, the public will be able to better access findings from the research.

"I think it's really important for them [the public] to see what the University of Montana produces. And people hear about research, but they never actually get to see it happen," Bray said. "Missoula has a chance to be a part of that." Anyone walking through the library will be able to see the research done at UM.



UM professor of developmental psychology Dr. Rachel Severson developed a Living Lab for the new Missoula Public Library to help educate the local public on scientific findings in a wide array of topics.

CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN



CONTRIBUTED | PIXABAY

Food waste becomes garden fuel thanks to UM Catering

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UM Catering has kept 31,000 pounds of food waste away from the landfill as of its fifth month of composting this February.

Eva Roche, UM director of sustainability, said with the help of graduate student Andre Kushnir and catering manager Colton Buford, a pilot program for catering in the University Center launched last October. Sustainability is using its budget to fund the first six months of the program, and Roche said she hopes catering will keep the program going.

"If we can divert waste from landfills that's always a benefit," Roche said.

Roche said rough estimates show catering has reduced waste by nearly a third. Some bins were even introduced to the kitchens in the UC Food Court, spreading the compost to another major food producer on campus.

Catering service manager Lexie Zeller said the transition to composting has been smooth. She said catering employees throw out a lot of food at events, and it's nice for the scraps to serve a purpose instead of becoming waste.

UM Catering isn't the first group on campus to compost. The Food Zoo has been composting for over a year.

The Missoula Compost Collection LLC picks up all the food scraps from campus and takes them to Garden City Compost. There, the scraps are transformed into grade-A compost, which can be sold to people for their gardens.

Sean Doty is the founder of Missoula Compost Collection. After graduating from UM with a degree in environmental studies in 2016, he took an Americorps job writing zero waste plans. Afterward, Doty had a hard time finding a job, so he

took his zero waste and environmental knowledge and made a business out of it.

Around the same time his business started up, the city got a new compost facility, which can bake down just about anything—from compostable cups to small bones.

Doty explained the important benefits of composting. He said food that goes to landfills gets sealed underground, where it can't access oxygen. So when the food breaks down, it produces methane, "which is one of the more aggressive or stronger greenhouse gases that drives climate change," he said.

Doty also said the nutrients derived from food waste can be healthy for gardens and help restoration projects.

His business has grown in the past years. Doty collected over a million pounds in 2019 alone.

"It's pretty much me just running around like a wild man," Doty said. He is

in the process of hiring his second employee to help handle his roughly 500 resident and 60 business pick ups.

Doty is proud of his business and the impact he has had on local businesses. He said he noticed more restaurants using compostable supplies. He is also doing what he can to encourage youth to live sustainably, starting a free compost pilot program at Jeannette Rankin Middle School.

Roche said she is excited to see what the future of composting on campus will look like. She said the next step will be to make the UC Commons, outside the food court, a zero-waste center on campus. She said some packaging items sold in the food court aren't compostable or recyclable, making her project an ambitious one. But, the UC might introduce compost bins to the commons area soon so consumers can contribute to waste reduction.

UM Opera Theater set to perform two new shows

HANNA CAMPBELL

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Piano music opens the scene, starting the eerie and dramatic mood that is evident throughout the opera. Then comes the voice booming through the rehearsal room. The UM Opera Club has started its final rehearsal for its upcoming performance this week, and members are excited.

The University of Montana Opera Theater is preparing two operas for its performance, and members have been practicing for the entire school year. The first is titled "The Medium" and depicts a woman who, with the help of her daughter and servant, convinces people they are hearing the voices of their deceased children. During one of the this-is-your-dead-child-speaking sessions, the woman actually hears a voice and, in turn, loses her mind.

The second opera the theater is performing is called "Gianni Schicchi," which tells the tale of a family who enlists the help of a trickster to gain their family's lost fortune back, only to realize too late that they have been played.

Choosing the operas can be tricky, according to David Cody, the opera theater music director. When picking an opera, professors have to take into account the student's skills, area of expertise and numbers.

"We are looking for something that they can handle, challenge them in the right ways and also be something

the audience is going to want to see," Cody said.

The UM Opera Theater is a branch of the UM School of Music and provides students a platform to expand their skills. Meghan Stroup, a graduate student studying vocal performance at the University of Montana, plays the main character in "The Medium."

"This is what I'm interested in and want to do all the time," Stroup said. "[The Opera Theater] gives a lot more people an opportunity to play different roles and do different styles of opera."

Cody Graves, a junior at UM pursuing a major in vocal performance, also thinks that the Opera Theater, although a required elective for his major, is a good addition to the School of Music.

"You do have to do it, but I also just really enjoy it. It's fun," Graves said.

As for the upcoming performances on Feb. 14 and 15, theater director and professor Anne Basinski is very enthusiastic about it.

"We are so excited! Pieces have been coming together very quickly," Basinski said. "We have everyone here [at the rehearsal] taking a look at things and so any little whoopsies or mistakes, we can fix."

UM Opera Theater presents "The Medium" by Gian-Carlo Menotti and "Gianni Schicchi" by Giacomo Puccini, Dennison Theatre, Feb. 14 and 15 at 7:30 p.m.



Opera Club members Anela Thomas (left) and Cody Graves (right) perform a scene from "The Medium" by Gian Carlo Menotti. The opera is a one-hour long, two-act drama about a medium named Madame Flora and the clients who come to her to speak with their dead loved ones. CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN

I like how
you roll.



Stop by the Music Building Bus
Stop on Valentine's Day from
7:30 to 10:00 for free coffee
and snacks and learn how
to love your commute.

UDASH

First Friday exhibit at MAM reimagines western film

ALEX MILLER

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Sitar plucks and New Orleans zydeco rhythm bounced off the intersecting concrete, brick, steel and glass walls at Missoula Art Museum. Attendees moved slowly through the three stories of galleries, being careful to place their beverages on white-clothed tables before taking a look at the new installments.

The Missoula Art Museum, or MAM, is one of many local businesses taking part in the monthly First Friday art crawl. The museum has been involved with First Friday since the event started, MAM is also celebrating its 45th anniversary this year.

Brandon Reintjes, the curator at MAM, loves the opportunity that an event like First Friday provides for the community. He said having the gallery open later affords more people a chance to soak in the art on display, which busy work schedules may prevent them from doing during regular hours.

"We provide an opportunity with First Friday to welcome the public in to experience the museum in a way they may not otherwise," Reintjes said.

Friday welcomed a new pair of post-modern exhibits to the museum. Artist Gordon McConnell's "When the West Was Won" traveling gallery moved into the third floor, giving attendees an opportunity to admire his unique style.

The gallery, which was meticulously curated by Leanne Gilbertson, is his first traveling exhibit. The Billings-based artist said he has never had someone pay such close attention to his work like Gilbertson did.

The crux of McConnell's style is based in the recreation of scenes and imagery from old Westerns that the artist grew up watching as a child. As a kid, he would plant himself in front of the family TV, soaking in the black and white heroics of his favorite stars.

"I wasted thousands of hours



Corinne Cook leans in to read the description on one of Gordon McConnell's paintings. "I don't know much about it, but there's sadness in it," she said "It's almost bittersweet." HAZEL CRAMER | MONTANA KAIMIN

watching western TV shows and movies," McConnell said.

Much of his work mirrors that fascination, with many pieces appearing in black and white. McConnell, who will be turning 70 this year, has built a distinct style. However, he does not pigeonhole himself when it comes to creating new work.

"I've kept a trademark image going for a long time, and I've continuously found ways to approach it differently," McConnell said.

"Gunpoint" is one of his newer works on display. While it still uses the contrast of light and shadow seen in old Westerns, it is not a pure recreation of a particular scene.

Instead, it features over 30 different gun-fighters' hands clutching revolvers from a variety of different films. The idea came from a dream McConnell had, where at the end of the gun there is nothing but oblivion.

Postmodern art took over the second floor of the museum as well, in the form of the Perception exhibition. Artists Ellen Garvens and Barbara Weissberger's pieces are stills made from household objects like cardboard and aluminum foil, placed in unusual ways to challenge the viewer's perception.

Siera Hyte, the education assistant at MAM, hosted a drop-in workshop where visitors could use a variety of found objects

to take a selfie in the style of Garvens and Weissberger. The booth was covered with different items, including bubble wrap, wrapping paper and mirrors.

"I'm super excited, we've been coming up with different ways to make the First Friday more engaging and social for our visitors," Hyte said. "Taking pictures will be a really good way to do that."

The next exhibits at MAM will be focusing on deconstructing colonization through Native art. Hyte said the museum will ask guests to tell stories about the pieces, using their knowledge to act as crowdsourced curators. The new exhibit is set to launch in early March.

Rising singer-songwriter bringing love for the Big Sky on path to stardom

AUSTIN AMESTOY

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Mike Murray said he finds “rejuvenation through solitude.” That didn’t make for easy going as the Montana-born singer-songwriter’s career began to take off. Now, he’s playing over 200 gigs per year.

“It’s sort of like an introvert’s worst nightmare,” Murray laughed.

Murray, a 35-year-old Kalispell native, managed to bust through the barrier facing many small-town musicians with big dreams. With lyrics that channel his day-to-day experiences living in Montana and being human, Murray’s popularity has soared with local audiences.

Murray said his personal barrier was overcoming his shyness, which made it difficult to approach strangers about potential gigs.

Thankfully, he said, that’s a problem of the past. These days, the venues often come to him.

Missoula music junkies have the chance to hear Murray’s original music when the Mike Murray Duo plays at the Top Hat on Thursday, Feb. 13.

His music flirts with a smattering of unique styles, from his folksy 2011 debut album “International” to the alternative rock of his most recent release, 2018’s “Difficult Days.”

With four albums out in the wild and a fifth due to drop sometime this spring, Murray’s rise to stardom came with lessons, both about himself and what it means to be part of the human experience.

“I’ve learned to be grateful for anyone who enjoys my music,” Murray said. “Not being focused on trying to ‘make it,’ but being more sensitive to recognize the areas where I’m already making it.”

“Making it” wasn’t always a sure thing for Murray. At the start of the last decade, he still naively hoped that fame and fortune would be waiting for him down the line, he said.

Turns out, fame was partially in the cards — especially in the Montana music scene. While he’s done some touring across

the West and even played gigs in Europe, the majority of his shows are in and around the Flathead Valley. “Difficult Days” debuted in 2018 to consecutive sold-out crowds at Colombia Falls’ LaSalle Grange Theatre.

It also landed a spot on the 2019 Grammy nomination consideration list for “Best Rock Album.”

Despite his recent success, Murray remains rooted in a love for Montana. After graduating from high school, he spent eight years traveling abroad. When he returned, the beauty of his home state struck him with a new appreciation that continues to grow.

“It was around that time that I wrote ‘Bury me in Montana,’” Murray said, referencing the second track on his 2015 album, “Tumbleweed.” “I’m increasingly aware how lucky I am to live here.”

In fact, the musician who completes the Mike Murray Duo joked that Murray writes just three kinds of songs:

“Songs about Montana, love songs and love songs about Montana,” Christopher Krager said.

The 50-year-old bassist said he’s made a career out of being a sideman, accompanying many singers prior to meeting Murray in 2013. One of them was Rob Quist, the Montana Democratic nominee for the House seat in 2017’s special election.

Krager said that while Quist, whose identity as a musician was central to his 2017 campaign, was great to work with, Murray’s character is what keeps him coming back.

“Not only is he a great songwriter, but he really is a great human being,” Krager said.

The question of what it means to be human drives Murray, who said the ultimate goal of his music is to remind listeners that they’re all part of something bigger.

“There’s a feeling that you’re not alone when you hear music that identifies with what you’re going through,” he said. “I hope that they’ll see that we’re all more similar than we are different.”

Mike Murray Duo will play at the Top Hat on Feb. 13, at 8 p.m. Learn more about Murray and his music at www.mikemurraytunes.com.



CONTRIBUTED | MIKE MURRAY

DATE BY DEADLINE

Three stories of swiping right the old-fashioned way



Editor's Note

People are strange when you're a stranger, especially when they ask you out on a date. That's exactly what three members of the Kaimin staff did over the past week without the help of phones, friends or apps, starting at the University Center. What follows are three stories of rejection, connection and reflection. They come courtesy of our intrepid, single volunteers: media intern Nonoka Mori, newsman Dante Filpula Ankney and arts and culture editor Erin Sargent.

NONOKA MORI

Video intern

It was on my second day on the job as the videographer intern, I was approached with the opportunity to be part of a Valentine's Day social experiment.

If I said yes, I had to go up to strangers and ask them out. If whoever I asked said "yes," that person also got to be part of this experiment.

As I prepared to campaign myself as America's next Real-Life-Tinder-Bachelorette, I started thinking of all of the bizarre experiences I've had in the past with the app. Tinder is an interesting place. For someone who does not want any encounters with serious romantic relationships, it truly is an app made by the gods.

A match on Tinder led me to do the most ludicrous, and desperate, thing I have ever done. I was swiping left and right like I usually do, and I came across this beautiful man who wrote he was half-Chinese-half-American from L.A. and living in Bozeman. He started the conversation right after we matched and we clicked right away. He was as passionate about producing and making music as I am. But I was mostly drawn to him due to him having a big-city open mindedness that I like to think I have. Not to be prejudiced, but I've had bad experiences with small town boys with no understanding of the world outside of their hometown. He was also the most attractive person I have wanted to have any affiliation with.



Nonoka Mori stands outside the Montana Kaimin office. PHOTOS CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN

"I don't get nervous very easily over a date, but I was quite nervous for this one since the topic of my Tinder history might come up."

- Nonoka Mori

Since I just got out of a year-long relationship four months prior, didn't have school and I had just quit my job to get EMT certified, I had a lot of free time on my hands. So, I thought "fuck it" and went to Bozeman to visit this man, whom we'll call "C."

Keep in mind, besides talking to each other on the phone, "C" was a total stranger. He could have been a catfish for all I knew. Still, I grabbed some cash, packed my things and went to go visit this handsome stranger three and a half hours away.

He was a nice guy, but not interesting enough for a semi-long-distance relationship.

Yes, you might call me stupid, desperate or other worse names (I do not justify my actions), but I was also very lonely after my break up and needed some excitement in my life. I know for

a fact that everyone can relate to those dark moments that we aren't very proud of. Everyone has those impulsive decisions made at desperate times.

I walked into the University Center to meet up with the videographer and photographer who tagged along as I put myself in vulnerable situations with a big chance of rejection and humiliation.

The first man I approached looked like he was in his mid-20s; he had brown hair and a little scruff. He was eating homemade soup as he stared into his phone. Target acquired. As I got closer, his face turned into a grimace. Soon, I found out that he's in a four year committed relationship. Whoops.

Now that I'd gotten the sweet taste of complete rejection, I prepared myself to go find another potential date. I saw the familiar face of a guy who ran in the same social circles as me. I have never personally spoken to him, but he had this radiance of kindness that allowed me to feel OK approaching him after the previous rejection. He was sitting at one of the two-seater desks on the second floor by himself.

The photographers took their positions right in his line of sight, but when I approached him, he gave me his full attention. I asked him awkwardly if he would have a moment to talk and when he said yes, I quickly informed him of the details of said "experiment."

He was quite appreciative of the fact that I, as a female, went up to a stranger and spontaneously asked him out on a date. He was aware of the fact that it was for the school newspaper, but still seemed impressed.

We went out on a date the next day.

When I was preparing for the date, I realized that I have not been on a "real date" in a little over a year. That is, actually going to get food or drinks and having compelling conversations without sexual arrangements being the top priority. Not going to lie, I don't get nervous very easily over a date, but I was quite nervous for this one since the topic of my Tinder history might come up.

I drove up to Liquid Planet across from campus to meet up with River Nuzzo, an undeclared third-year student. He had a gentle smile with a hint of anxiety as he greeted me and the photographer. We snapped a few awkward photos here and there, and finally began our date.

I sensed him being hesitant to be vulnerable for a split second, but as soon as we started talking, striding past the small talk, we instantly became comfortable in front of each other. We talked about how crazy it is that in the 21st century, first dates with someone you meet in real life (without Tinder), are sort of rare. Soon, we started talking about heavy topics such as sex, drugs, depression, mindfulness, etc.

There was a moment we even discussed why a lot of men in my experience have longed to be called "Daddy" during sexual intercourse. I have been curious for a while now why psychologically men longed for that dominant-submissive dynamic. We couldn't come up with an exact conclusion, but the fact that this "derogatory" topic came to us so naturally was quite fascinating. He even brought up what could be considered an alarming topic: love.

"Love should not be a frightening thing. It shouldn't be taboo. People should say it more," he said.

We were able to talk about such matters in the most comfortable and gratifying way. Almost so that whenever we changed the subject to a topic that was more small-talk-worthy, like the weather, it became a little uncomfortable.

This was odd for someone who only mostly accepts casual affairs, to find myself enjoying the company of someone on a date. When he mentioned his experience battling with mental illness in a transparent yet lighthearted way, I started to feel a vivid connection. His part of the exchange in our conversation had an overarching theme of softening the edges of social stigma, which I found alluring.

We ended up leaving the cafe feeling fidgety due to over consumption of caffeine, but wanted the date to continue. We drove around for a bit, finally realizing we had been talking for two hours straight.

Who knows, I may never talk to River again. Heck, we might become something great or something horribly unpleasant. I am thankful for the real experience of connection, which I have not felt in a long time. I was so caught up in the two-dimensional world of Tinder/Snapchat/Instagram for so long that I had forgotten the real value of a first date. So, thank you River for reminding me of the importance of face to face encounters.



Dante Filpula Ankney smiles after coming back from asking the first girl he met in the UC out on Feb. 5.



"We were Fred and Daphne, and I was about to drive the Mystery Machine around Missoula until we found her phone."

- Dante Filpula Ankney



DANTE FILPULA ANKNEY

News reporter

Any confidence I had going into different interviews week to week working on the news team for the Kaimin was

thrown out the window as I walked up to the UC doors. I nervously clasped my hands and prepped for the worst as I ran through the lines I rehearsed in my head.

I took a short walk up the stairs



and into the UC. I sat down in the Commons, scanning the room for the cutest, but least threatening girl I could see.

I've concluded that being born at the turn of the century has been a blessing and a curse when it comes to dating. Never in the history of my 20 years on this earth have I had to ask a girl out face-to-face. Let me take this time to apologize to my family, who are most definitely disappointed in that fact alone.

But, in the age of social media DM's and Tinder swipes, why would I have to? If I'm interested in a girl I can type out a sincere "Hey, what's your snap?" without ever putting myself in a compromising situation.

After sitting a cool 20 to 30 minutes pondering potential dates, and with the obvious annoyance of my coworkers waiting for me to make a move, I approached a table of two girls and one guy with my eyes set on the girl with the tan colored Carhartt beanie.

"Look... If you had... One shot... Or one opportunity... To seize everything you ever wanted... In one moment... Would you capture it... Or just let it slip? Yo, his palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy."

Eminem never spoke truer words for the situation I found myself in. I walked up and with the voice of a pubescent 14-year-old and said, "H-eEe-yY. Will you go on a date with me?"

"Me?" she asked.

"Yes," I assured her.

Tricia Joyce is a freshman at UM studying finance, or economics or maybe both. She hasn't decided. She is a new member of the women's golf team on campus. After jumping over the hurdles of scheduling conflicts, she agreed to a date. We settled on Bridge Pizza and a walk downtown for First Friday.

When she walked out of the doors into the Lomasson parking lot Friday, I was planning on getting out and meeting her. I

hesitated. By the time I had the door about halfway open, she was at my car getting in, leaving me in an awkward limbo. I tried to play it off. I couldn't let the first awkward interaction plague the entire date.

On the short drive down Broadway and across the Higgins bridge, we talked about the basics. She told me she was from Butte, and I told her I was from Laurel. From there, the conversation ranged from our high schools to people on campus we both know.

When we arrived, I mentioned the photographers from the Kaimin that were stationed outside ready to take our picture. It felt like my mom asking to take a picture of me and my date before our first high school dance. Awkward.

Families packed Bridge Pizza, so we stood patiently in line, got two pieces of pepperoni pizza and shuffled our way between small children and misplaced chairs to eventually find a seat.

I folded my pizza in half and took a bite as she shook the grease off of hers. We talked about everything we loved about Missoula, like new friends we have met, and things we hated, like the roads.

As we threw our paper plates away and headed toward the door, I started questioning my date decisions. I asked her if there was anything she would want to do as I thought, "cause like, I mean, like, we can go to First Friday if you want but like also if you would rather do something else, we can definitely not go..."

We ended up walking downtown, dodging puddles, and stopping by art exhibits and shop displays long enough to take a glance. To be perfectly honest, I don't know shit about art, and I'm not even sure I entirely know the point of First Friday in Missoula, so I have no idea why I chose it as a first date.

After a stop at Mary's Mountain Cookies and a few quick bites of a snickerdoodle and caramel cookie, we headed back to my car.

I'm really in my head now. This date has been approximately an hour and a half, we haven't really done anything and I can't tell if she is just acting like she is having a good time because she is nice, or if there is an off chance she might actually be enjoying the date.

As we opened the doors to my car, she stopped.

"Where is my phone?" she said.

"I'm not sure. You don't have it?"

"No, I thought I left it in

your car but it's not here."

I automatically go to the worst option: that it was stolen from my car. I started checking my pockets on the off chance it might be in one of them. Why would I have her phone? Who knows. I'm lost here.

"Where's the last place you remember having it?" I asked, the one question that pisses everybody off after they lose something, as if it would somehow be helpful.

With no possible leads, she said she might be able to use the Find My Iphone app on my phone. She entered her Apple account and password to ask for the six-figure authentication code sent to either her sister or her mother's phone. I let her use my phone to call both.

With no answer from either, there was one option left. We retraced our steps.

What she doesn't know is that she saved me from admitting to a failure of a date and instead provided a real life mystery to solve. We were Fred and Daphne, and I was about to drive the Mystery Machine around Missoula until we found her phone.

I tried to convince her that it really was OK as she repeated the words "I'm sorry" and "I'm so embarrassed" with an exhausted look on her face.

After missing a turn, I drove onto the next street to get back to Bridge Pizza, our No. 1 suspect for where the phone might lie. However, through my obliviousness and/or carelessness, I turned onto a one-way street.

I quickly swerved to the side of the road as the sounds of horns blared and Tricia yelled, "WAIT I THINK THIS IS A ONE WAY."

Now we're both embarrassed.

When we made it to Bridge Pizza obeying traffic laws, her Apple Watch buzzed when we entered with a notification. This meant we were close, real close.

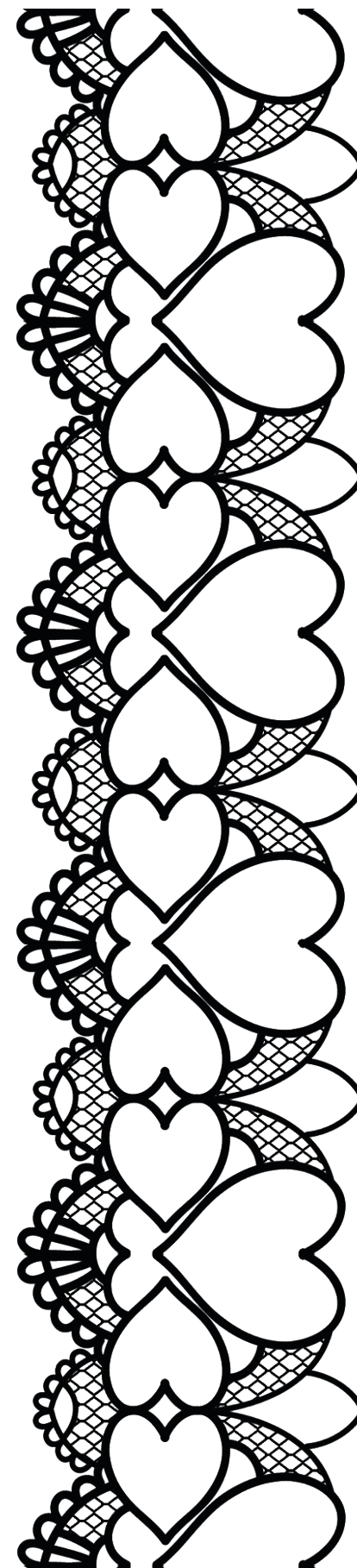
The cashier at the counter exclaimed "Yay, you came back," when Tricia asked for the phone.

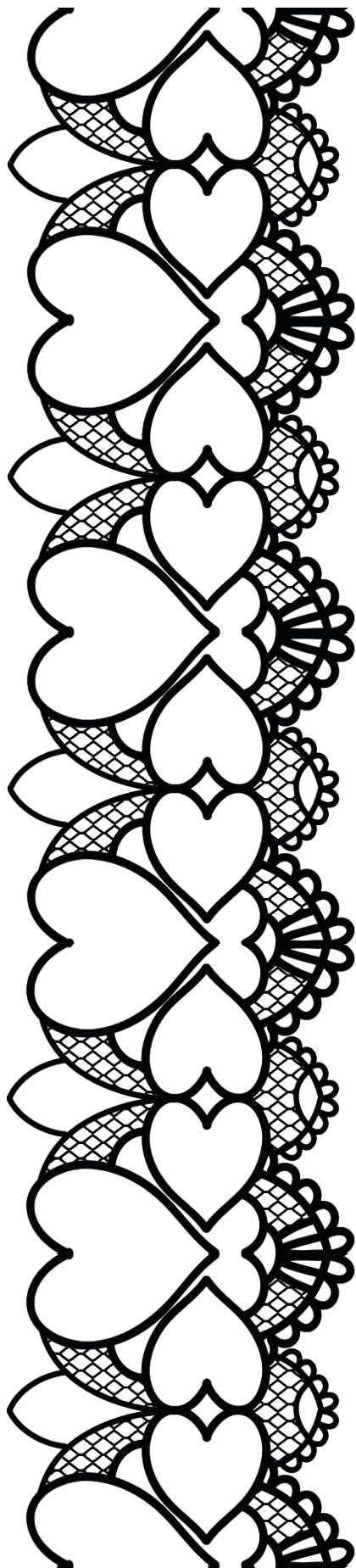
The mystery was over and the phone was found.

After 10 more minutes of driving and laughing about the mishaps of the night, we decided the night was eventful enough and that I better take her back. Through the laughs and smiles, I parked the car and we both got out.

I gave her a hug, thanked her for coming on the date and we said our goodbyes.

We plan to keep in touch, and I'm looking forward to another date in the future, one off the record.





Erin Sargent watches Nonoka Mori approach her date from across the UC on Feb. 6.



“If you haven’t taken yourself on a date to a fancy restaurant alone, 10/10 recommend.”
- Erin Sargent



ERIN SARGENT

Arts & culture editor

I have this vivid memory of a car ride with my mom in the seventh grade, where I cried to her about how none of the boys in my class wanted to date me. She flipped on the turn signal and said that, probably, the boys in my class were intimidated by me.

Now, I get that this was the “mom” thing to do. She was stuck in a car with a crying seventh-grade daughter who just wanted a boy to tell her she was pretty because that’s what Disney Channel said was happiness. I’m sure she meant it as a compliment. She raised me to be smart

and strong and independent, and that can be intimidating when your name is Noah and your voice hasn’t dropped yet.

But the whole “intimidating” argument is one I hear a whole lot lately. It’s what my big sister tells me over the phone and what my coworkers say when I go out with them. It’s what everyone in the Kaimin office said, too, when it turned out the boys I approached in the UC did NOT think I was the catch my arts reporters hyped me up to be.

So hearing “you’re just intimidating” from my friends still really feels like that “mom” way of comforting me when people reject me, you know?

For some reason, everyone thought I was going to crush this challenge, regardless of how often I repeated myself to them: I do not have as much game as some people think I do.

So while Dante and Nonoka both got dates and numbers, I tried to decide where exactly I should live out my life as an old and gray spinster. The woods of Northern California maybe? I could totally get into the whole Redwood Forest witchy vibe.

This is not to say that I really do think I’m going to be alone forever. I just happen to be incredibly unlucky.

Unlucky because the first boy I approached (running after him like a sad, sad puppy) shrugged me off with a mumbled, “Sorry, I have a girlfriend.”

Unlucky because the second boy I approached (again chasing after him and managing to stop him next to the UC stairs) seemed very ready to get out of the situation by any means possible. Eventually, I think he decided if he just got my number, he could say something about texting me and then never see me again. So I gave him my number, and he has yet to text me. I can only hope that maybe, just maybe, I accidentally misdialed my own number and Andrew really, really tried to reach out, but to no avail.

If you’re reading this Andrew, call me at the Kaimin office.

Unlucky because the third boy I approached (sitting at a table after finally learning my lesson about chasing boys through the UC) was incredibly sweet, but unavailable to go on a date by deadline. I still got his number. Have I texted him yet? Nope. Turns out, despite all this, I’m still a little bit of a coward.

It’s just that I’ve done this kind of thing before. I’ve approached guys for their numbers. I’ve sent the first Tinder message every so often. If guys even do decide to respond to me, it’s usually with a message so overtly, disgustingly sexual that I want to throw my phone in the Clark Fork and never look back.

So it was a little hard to remain optimistic in all of this. When the day ended, and I still didn’t have a date, I wasn’t entirely sure what I should do. I still had to write this story, regardless of how “intimidating” I might be. Two out of three reporters had dates to write about, but three out of three reporters needed to go on dates.

That’s how I found myself googling “romantic date locations missoula.” That’s how I found myself making a reservation

for one at the Pearl Cafe. That's how I found myself walking into a prime date location on a Thursday night, dressed up, by myself.

And I'm not gonna lie, it felt pretty pitiful at first. It felt like that scene in "Forgetting Sarah Marshall" where Jason Segal tries to get a table at a restaurant and Jonah Hill says, "Just you?"

And I'm Jason Segal.

For me though, the hostess was a woman from my hometown. She was my theater teacher when I was in the second grade, whom we all called Binky. When I told her I was taking myself out on a date, she beamed and seated me at the corner table by the fireplace.

When my waitress came by with a basket of bread and a glass of water, I asked her which wine would go best with my order. She pointed me to a sauvignon blanc that made me feel like a real, grown-up, intimidating lady, in a surprisingly nice way.

I ate the fanciest meal I've ever spent my own money on, read my book and didn't have to keep an awkward conversation with a boy going. I felt pretty damn good.

I lingered for almost two hours. When I finally paid my check and got up to leave, an elderly couple seated nearby stopped me.

"Are you traveling from somewhere?"

"No, actually, I live here. I just felt like taking myself out on a date."

I couldn't decide if the words made me sound pathetic. If they would take pity on a 21-year-old girl who was so single that she actually went on a date by herself.

But instead, they smiled really big at me and introduced themselves. The woman, Carol, told me she used to be a travel agent, and she would take trips by herself all the time.

"How gutsy of you," she said. "You know, once you can do something like this by yourself, you can do anything."

Carol is my hero.

And dammit, I think she's right. I walked out of the Pearl and into the snow, feeling like I could 100% throat-punch any problem that might come my way this week.

My hope is that this reads as empowering, and not in a desperate attempt to do so. Because I really did feel great sitting alone at the Pearl Thursday night. To take a night off from my crazy editor workload (peep the Big Sky Documentary Film Fest spread on page 20) and let myself have some alone time.

Would I still like to be dating someone? Sure, who doesn't? But I don't feel lonely just because I'm not.

My family raised me to be fierce-

ly independent and this felt like that.

And maybe that's what makes me intimidating, but I don't think I care.

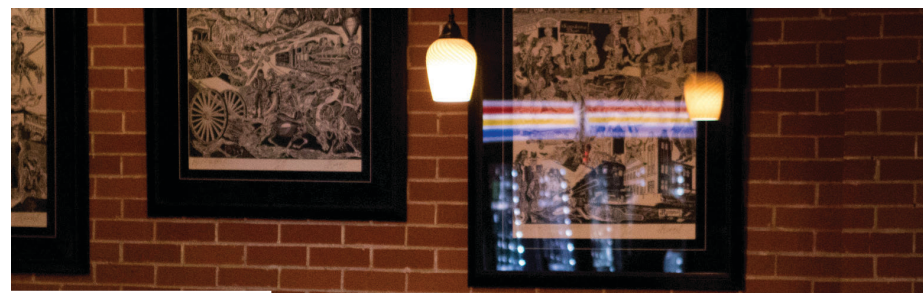
If you haven't taken yourself on a date to a fancy restaurant alone, 10/10 recommend. I can't promise you it won't be weird at first, but I can promise that you'll feel pretty damn good with yourself, too.



ABOVE: Erin Sargent walks up to the Pearl to take herself on a date.

TOP RIGHT: Dante Filpula Ankney and his date, Tricia, sit down to eat amongst the Friday night crowd at Bridge Pizza.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Nonoka Mori and her date, River, get ready to begin their date at Liquid Planet Grille on Arthur Avenue.



Big premieres in the Big Sky: 149 films at Big Sky Film Fest

MEGHAN JONAS

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The largest nonfiction film festival in the American West is back to make Missoula think, feel and consider new perspectives.

The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival opens Friday night, Feb. 14, and continues until Feb. 23. It is the festival's 17th year, and it will continue to prove the importance of showcasing diverse voices.

"It's a very specific type of event," executive director Rachel Gregg said. Because all of the films are nonfiction, there are very real implications in each piece, whether that's the impact of plastic in the United States or the revolution in Armenia, according to Gregg.

The Big Sky Film Festival is the largest film festival in Montana. Nearly 150 films are represented this year, 20 of which are having their worldwide premiere.

The films are made and produced in more than 50 countries, bringing diversity and different perspectives to the festival. Of the films, 70% will be represented by directors, producers or subjects at the festival.

Many films have distinct Montana roots, including "The House That Rob Built." The film follows the former Lady Griz coach Rob Selvig and how he ushered strong, accomplished women into the world while building an impressive program that still resonates at UM.

Outreach is one of the largest parts of the Big Sky Film Institute's mission. According to Gregg, there are students who come to the festival now who remember when the Institute came to their elementary schools. Gregg said fostering a love of film is rewarding for everyone involved.

And when it comes to fostering a love of filmmaking, the Institute also values promoting the voices of promising filmmakers.

DocShop is a Big Sky Film Festival event geared directly toward students or beginner filmmakers. It's a free event for UM students and is designed to help filmmakers navigate the gig economy of filmmaking, learn how to work with collectives and collaboratives, network and grow a passion for documentaries.

Attendees can attend workshops and pan-

els led by other filmmakers and producers. They are able to learn through the experiences of others and culminate a sense of personal sustainability to avoid burnout in the industry. Gregg says the mission of DocShop is to help budding filmmakers realize that making documentaries is a sustainable, real career.

DocShop ends with the Big Sky Pitch, where attendees can pitch their films to funders and industry representatives from the likes of HBO, the BBC, PBS, the Sundance Doc Fund and the Tribeca Institute. It's an opportunity like no other and pushes forward the goal of outreach for the Big Sky Film Institute.

For the 2020 Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, almost 2,000 films were submitted for selection. For six months, a panel of 12 reviewed the films, narrowing it down until a smaller panel made the final selections. Joanne Feinberg, festival programming director, combed through selections until she narrowed it down to the final 149. She says she is consistently blown away by the power of the stories told, making it hard for her to choose a favorite.

With almost 150 films, it can be slightly intimidating for audiences to choose which films they want to see. But Gregg and Feinberg have some tips. The films are organized by strands, ensuring that viewers don't have to comb through a plethora of films to find one they are interested in. Some examples are Nature, Activism, Stranger than Fiction, Sports and Younger than Yesterday. The festival has made sure there is something for everyone.

And if viewers still can't pick, Gregg and Feinberg suggest attending a shorts block. Some themes are the power of women, investigative journalism, immigration and love. The average filmgoer sees three or more films, but with the student ticket price of \$7, students are encouraged to watch as many as they can.

The Big Sky Film Festival opens Friday at the ZACC with a Valentine's Day theme. Audiences can expect to feel the love with stories that tell of the lives and loves of queer people, a couple reconnecting despite Alzheimer's, the stories of broken hearts told through sock puppets, an exotic dancer and her former fan-boy turned romantic partner, and a transgender rocker finding love and identity on both sides of the gender line.

EDITOR'S NOTE

With more than 140 films featured at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival, it can be tricky to know where to start. Here are a few picks from the Kaimin Arts & Culture team that give you a look into what you can see at the four screening locations around town in the next two weeks. From a boxing club on the Blackfeet reservation to brewed beer in Palestine, or roller skating in L.A. to heartbroken sock puppets, we think it's safe to say you'll find something you'll like.



ABORTION HELPLINE: THIS IS LISA

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In 33 states across the country, women are unable to use government insurance, including Medicaid, to help pay the cost of an abortion.

In Philadelphia, the Women's Medical Fund works, with donations, to help American women cover the expense when they have no other funds available.

The funding group, or WMF, is one of many in the country. The women who work at the call center have a certain amount of funding they are able to use each day, and each woman working on the call line goes by the name "Lisa."

"Abortion Helpline, This is Lisa" directors Barbara Attie, Janet Goldwater and Mike Attie are taking on the Hyde Amendment of 1976, a legislative ban on the use of federal funds to help cover the cost of abortion procedures. It's named after Henry Hyde, the Republican congressman from Illinois who sponsored the bill.

A dial tone plays between each scene. It is impossible to ignore the number of women who call the health line every day, trying to decide how to cover the cost of a procedure and still pay their rent, take care of their children or buy groceries.

It's impossible to ignore the reality that the Hyde Amendment is targeted at poor women, leaving one out of three women who have Medicaid insurance seeking an abortion forced to carry their pregnancies to term.

In "Abortion Helpline," we watch Rep. Cynthia McKinney address the House. "The Hyde Amendment is nothing but a discriminatory policy against poor women, who happen to be disproportionately Black," she says.

"Mr. Chairman, we can't save the unborn children of the rich," Congressman Hyde says. "Thank God we can save some of the children of the poor."

"Abortion Helpline, This Is Lisa" makes its northwest debut Feb. 15 at the ZACC, 3 p.m. and Feb. 19 at the ZACC, 1:30 p.m.



ANAS V. THE GIANT

AUSTIN AMESTOY

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Turns out, Facebook isn't just following your every move like a desperate ex, it's also deliberately ignoring the complaints of those damaged by fake news schemes.

This 16-minute nail biter follows Anas Modamani, a young Syrian refugee who fled to Germany in 2015. To celebrate, he snapped a selfie with prime minister Angela Merkel and got more than he asked for when the picture went viral — for all the wrong reasons.

Directed by Adrienne Collatos, a prestigious film producer with more than 40 credits to her name, "Anas v. the Giant" is a tightly crafted documentary worthy of a much longer runtime.

Modamani is a sympathetic figure, but Collatos doesn't confine him to that label. Instead, we see him as a fighter, a

survivor of the Syrian Civil War who came to Germany hoping for a better life, only to face a new battle against forces much more nebulous than armies.

"Anas v. the Giant" offers a unique perspective on the wave of nationalism that swept through Europe following the onset of the Syrian refugee crisis. As thousands of migrants faced an onslaught of racism and prejudice at the gates of Europe, Modamani had to contend with that racism manifested in the gross form of "the Giant," Facebook.

At one point, Modamani's German host mother remarks, "We met on Facebook. Crazy, isn't it?"

Crazy, indeed. Those looking for another reason to loathe the upturned noses of Silicon Valley will love "Anas v. the Giant."

"Anas v. the Giant" makes its northwest debut Feb. 20 at the Elks Lodge, 6:30 p.m.



BREWED IN PALESTINE

ALEX MILLER

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"Brewed in Palestine" is an up-close and personal look at the Khoury family and their craft brewing company Taybeh Beer. Located in the old city of Taybeh on the West Bank, the family and company operate on a fragile border.

The film, directed by Emma Schwartz, aims to provide a micro view of a Palestinian family to add texture and context to the macro tension between Israel and Palestine. Schwartz had been living on the West Bank, and kept hearing about the Khoury family and their brewery. It wasn't until she had a Taybeh beer in Tel Aviv that she decided to reach out.

"I wanted to tell a story about what I experienced about life in Palestine," Schwartz said.

The process of producing the beer to get

it to market is very difficult for Taybeh because Israel has strict export policies. If the Khourys missed a boat for shipment, they would have to wait an additional week before they could make another attempt.

During the film, an already difficult process becomes nearly impossible for the Khoury family.

In December of 2018, the Israeli army shut down the city of Ramallah. All roads, in and out, were closed off, preventing Taybeh from exporting beer for a week. Schwartz got trapped in the city as well. She and her crew were capturing some background footage when the lockdown began.

"It's really a remarkable testament to what people go through," Schwartz said.

"Brewed in Palestine" will be making its Montana premiere Monday, Feb. 17 at the Wilma, 1 p.m. and Feb. 22 at the Elks Lodge, 6:30 p.m.



L.A. ROLL

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Never has there been a documentary that “lets the good times roll” quite like this.

In “L.A. Roll,” director and cinematographer Helki Frantzen takes viewers on a groovy tour of Los Angeles roller skating culture as the film navigates the ups and downs of a beloved hobby threatened by rink closures and urban tragedy.

“L.A. Roll” had me physically grinning and bobbing my head to the collective heartbeat of the skaters, in no small part due to Frantzen’s camerawork. Never has the marriage of director and cinematographer in one person been so sweet as when it results in sweeping shots of gleeful skaters pouring their hearts out on the rink. For much of the doc, I felt like I was there skating alongside them — and I couldn’t wipe that goofy smile off my face.

If the main strategy of “L.A. Roll” is to hook the viewer into the colorful world of Los Angeles roller rinks, then its

secret weapon is the poignant message it carries about the importance of fostering connections in a disconnected and often drab world.

As the roller rinks frequented by L.A.’s many skate clubs begin to shutter, one by one, the group is forced to adapt to new and less familiar venues. The closure of its most-frequented joint leads another rink across town to extend an invitation. Fountain Valley Skating Center’s floor, once occupied only by the occasional ballerina, soon booms with swirling circles of skaters.

In many ways, the narrative success of “L.A. Roll” hinges on juxtaposition. Many skaters see the rink as a place to escape the doldrums of work and school. Frantzen follows a group of mechanics as they work, dust-covered, on an old red beater. At night, they kick up dust together on the floor, working on a different set of wheels.

You don’t mind if I catch the next flight to L.A., do you?

“L.A. Roll” makes its world premiere Feb. 19 at the ZACC, 4 p.m. and Feb. 21 at the ZACC, 6:30 p.m.

FEELS GOOD MAN

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Memes are art. I’m not joking.

Having been a dank meme lord and Shrek worshipper for a good chunk of my life, I’ve seen that the strangest viral trends can act as a vehicle for creative expression and political commentary, just like any great painting.

Unfortunately, art can be dangerous when in the wrong hands.

Such is director Arthur Jones’ thesis for “Feels Good Man,” which chronicles Pepe the Frog’s troubling evolution from a comic book protagonist, to a strange, but harmless, meme, to the unofficial mascot of the alt-right movement.

I had some knowledge of Pepe’s abrupt transition to Nazi status, but I had no idea that its impact beyond the internet was this great. We watch as 4Chan uses the frog to repel female internet users, inspire hate crimes and even influence the 2016 presidential election.

The documentary footage is supplemented with a psychedelic background

score and eccentric animations of Pepe and his friends from his origin comic, “Boys Club.” They give the film a unique atmosphere and add to the creepy, cult-like nature of the 4Chan incels.

But by far the most powerful moments of “Feels Good Man” are those we spend with Pepe’s creator, Matt Furie. His futile attempts to get the frog back into his control are heartbreaking and it reminds us of the emotional connection artists form with their work. As someone who hopes to pursue filmmaking, this one struck a chord with me.

Admittedly, the film feels too long and loses some of its emotional punch in the last third. But “Feels Good Man” is a horrifying reminder that both art and the internet have a dark side. I’ll be thinking long and hard next time I’m about to hit like on an “All Star” remix.

“Feels Good Man” plays Feb. 15 at the Wilma, 8:30 p.m. and Feb. 22 at the ZACC, 2:45 p.m.



BROKEN: A SOCKUMENTARY

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Something about sock puppets just triggers sadness. The downward slope of their mouths makes it look like they're permanently frowning, and you can never quite tell what's going on in the blank states of their googly eyes.

Perhaps that's why they're the main focus of "Broken: A Sockumentary." In this film, director Hannah Dougherty collects interviews of people who have experienced an abrupt end to a relationship.

And the audio of both Dougherty and her subjects is mouthed by, you guessed it, sock puppets.

This is apparently the first entry in a series that, as the synopsis on the festival's website puts it, "investigat[es] the human experience." Thus, it at first seems strange that the film's main players aren't human.

However, using animals or inanimate objects as metaphors for our feelings has

always been a powerful tool, stretching back to Aesop's fables and the like. Puppets, in particular, have a strange way of connecting to our psyche.

"Broken" does just that, largely thanks to its stellar puppeteers. Each hand's subtle movements and ticks make these socks feel alive.

In addition, Dougherty refrains from making her direction showy, a gentle approach that places the attention solely on the emotions of her subjects.

On paper, a wool sock crying mid-interview sounds silly, but because of the careful calculations of Dougherty and her performers, the scene is bizarrely, and emotionally, resonant.

Bizarre and emotional are two keywords when describing "Broken." It's a somewhat risky experiment that fell into the right hands, creating a shockingly moving experience. Elmo, eat your heart out.

"Broken: A Sockumentary" plays Feb. 14 at the ZACC, 7 p.m., and Feb. 21 at the Wilma, 1 p.m.



BLACKFEET BOXING: NOT INVISIBLE

AUSTIN AMESTOY

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It's going to take a long time for "Blackfeet Boxing: Not Invisible" to stop replaying in my head.

Directors Tom Rinaldi and Kristen Lappas craft a powerful journey into the heart of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women movement (MMIW) and the boxing program one man started in hopes of fighting back.

The ESPN-produced film centers on three families from the Blackfeet Nation, each of which has faced the realities of MMIW in different ways. One of them is the family of Ashley Loring, a Blackfeet woman who disappeared in 2017.

The film opens on breathtaking overhead views of northern Montana, where the Loring family has taken the investigation of Ashley's disappearance into their own hands. The contrast of the surreal landscape to the search unfolding across it is gut-wrenching. It sets the stage for a beautiful film, both in look and message.

The namesake and focus of the film is the Blackfeet Nation Boxing Club. Founded in 2003 by former probation officer and boxer Frank Kipp, the club sees dozens of kids learning the skills of self-defense needed to fight back and prevent their own disappearances.

I was blown away by how deftly "Blackfeet Boxing" communicates the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous people, while also celebrating the triumph of the boxing club and some of its most successful athletes.

"Blackfeet Boxing" tackles MMIW head-on, much like its athletes, and shows us that hope must never be lost. Kipp's club grows from a few fighters to an entire team, all boxing to honor the missing. And, although it's been two years, the friends and family of Ashley Loring continue their search.

The faces of MMIW are not invisible, and neither is "Blackfeet Boxing."

"Blackfeet Boxing: Not Invisible" makes its world premiere Feb. 19 at the ZACC, 1:30 p.m. and Feb. 23 at the Wilma, 3:30 p.m.

Dating as a Native? It's more complicated than sovereignty

JORDYNN PAZ

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So, I started dating someone. Weird to admit to a bunch of people I don't know, but we're just going to roll with it. When we started dating, I asked to look at his tribal ID; he's an enrolled member of the Blackfeet tribe (sorry, Mom). I looked first at his ID picture (awful like anyone else's) and then looked at his blood quantum. I wanted to know how much Indian he was and if it was enough for his kids to become enrolled members of the Blackfeet Nation.

As our relationship has progressed, we've come to know each other really well and confide in one another about our struggles, our hopes, our dreams and all the other things that connect one person to another. But with this progression comes the ever-burning question of, "What about our kids?"

Now, before my mother freaks out, he and I do not have kids, nor are we really planning that right now. However, that doesn't mean that I'm not thinking about it. I'm not saying I'm ready to procreate with this guy, but children are something I think about ... a lot.

I think about my future children pretty regularly and what their lives are going to be like. I think about this because my children's lives and experiences are really going to depend on who the dad might be.

You see, I'm an enrolled member of a federally recognized tribe (Crow), but according to my tribe, I do not have enough "Indian blood" within myself to pass onto my children. This means that if the father of my future children is not an enrolled member of my same tribe, my children will not be considered Crow.

The concept of blood quantum comes from government "influence" over tribes to establish citizenship requirements. The point was to prove that someone was Native American in order to allocate benefits like health care, land allotments and other treaty rights. Because of this, however, we have come to an exclusionary system that will eventually be the end of many tribes.

So this leads to existential questions when it comes to dating and marriage.

Dating someone within my same tribe

is the obvious option but is difficult to do, especially if you come from a large family in a small community. You're related to everyone. Not only is that a barrier when it comes to relationships, but it also limits people who are interested in the same things you are, with the same goals and passions.

So I've opened my options up to dating people outside my tribe and occasionally, outside my racial/ethnic group. However, this leads me to the earlier dilemma of enrollment.

Now, you might ask, "Jordynn, why does enrollment even matter? Just date who you wanna date and love who you love."

And you're right. It shouldn't matter. But it does.

Being an enrolled member, despite being a colonial imposition on our communities, has become incredibly intertwined with Indigenous identity. Your Indian blood has become integral to your "legitimacy" as an Indian.

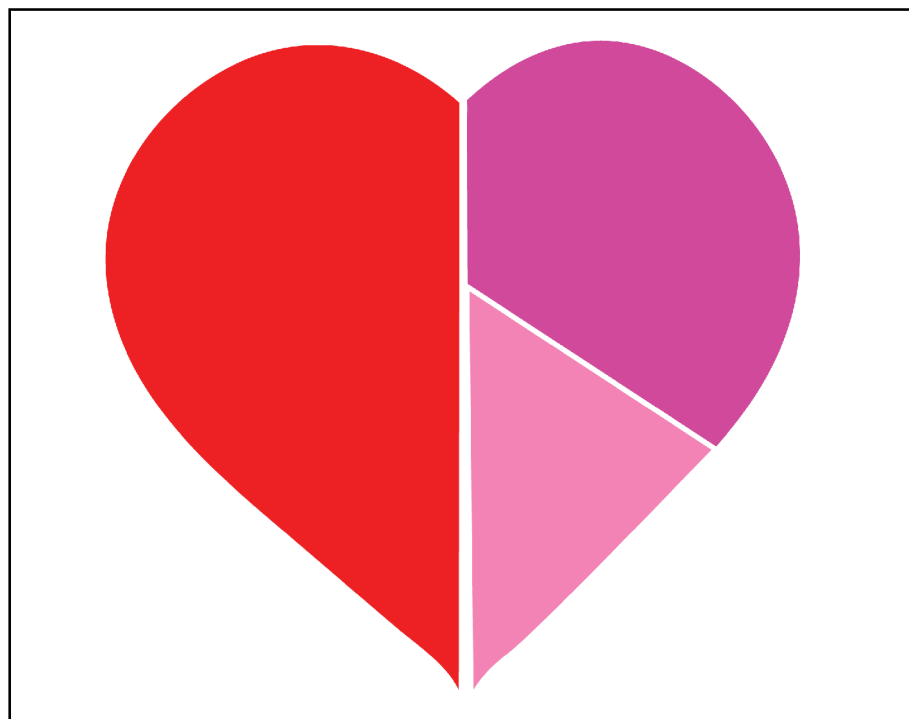
Within my community, I've seen too many individuals ostracized because they are of mixed race. While we as Indigenous people are discriminated against in white societies, our communities also discriminate against those of different racial backgrounds.

I have a certain level of privilege in my community for being brown and I do not want my children to ever feel like they do not belong.

Not only does enrollment play a part in identity, it also gives you access to treaty rights such as healthcare and education, and allows you to participate in certain tribal activities, such as elections and, within some communities, participation in ceremonies.

When it comes to my future children, they will be Apsaalooke (Crow) people no matter what because I am Apsaalooke. But I don't want my children to face exclusion or discrimination because of a piece of paper.

To boil that down, I want my children to be enrolled somewhere, which leads me to date other Indigenous people of federally recognized tribes who have enough Indian blood to pass on to our future children. A real shitstorm if you ask me, but still something that'll be very much be on my mind as I eat my romantic dinner with my new guy this weekend.



LINDSEY SEWELL | MONTANA KAIMIN

MANSFIELD DIALOGUES

SPRING 2020: A NEW DECADE - WOMEN LEADERS AND POLICY MAKERS

All Dialogues take place from 12:00 – 12:50 PM
Theta Rho Room, Mansfield Library (Level 4)

Feb. 25 Responding to the Growth & Diversity of Recreation Use on Missoula's Rivers
Christine Oschell, PhD, River Recreation Manager, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Mar. 9 Japan & East Asia: A Regional Perspective from a U.S. Ally
Mie Oba, Professor, Liberal Arts Section, the Faculty of Engineering, Tokyo University of Science

Mar. 24 How Arts Programs Build Leadership Skills at Home & Around the World
Kia Lyszak, Executive Director, Zootown Arts Community Center

Mar. 31 Native Women as Policy Leaders
Annie Belcourt, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice, University of Montana

Apr. 8 Female Leadership in Environmental Initiatives in Southeast Asia
State Department Fellows from the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative

Apr. 14 Women on the Front Lines of Public Policy
Dr. Sara Rinfret, Associate Professor & Chair, Department of Public Administration & Policy, Blewett School of Law, University of Montana

Free & Open to the Public

For More Info Visit: www.umt.edu/mansfield

Break up w/ your boo, it's retrograde time

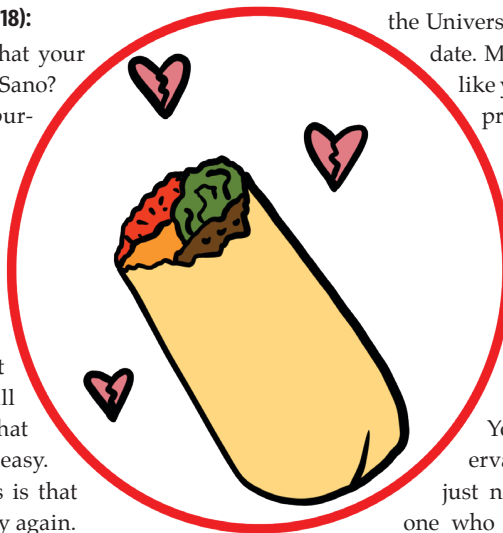
Well fuck, Mercury is about to be in retrograde again. Bad timing considering it's Valentine's week. Are you single? You're probably safe. Are you dating? Yikes. Here's how to survive love week in the shadow of Mercury.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18):

Shit fuck shit. Is that your ex in line at Taco Sano? Screw the breakfast burrito, it's time to run.

PISCES (FEB. 19 - MARCH 20):

We really hate to play into Pisces-being-overly-emotional stereotypes about you guys crying all the time, it's just that you guys make it so easy. The punchline to this is that you're crying on V-Day again.



ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 19):

Ok, so we are so happy for you for getting the number from that rando you met at Pie Hole last weekend, but is there any way for us to convince you not to go on a romantic date with them? The wedding Pinterest board you've been making is kinda freaking us out.

TAURUS (APRIL 20 - MAY 20):

Do it. Slide the "Will you date me? Check yes or no" note you wrote during the first week of classes to the stranger who sits next to you in Intro to Stats. You'll either have a date or a free hour every Thursday when you drop out in shame.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUNE 20):

You are casting your hook out into the water that is every bar downtown, but no fish are biting. We don't know what to tell you. You don't smell weird if that's what you're worried about.

CANCER (JUNE 21 - JULY 22):

You do have a date this Friday! With all

six seasons of Glee. Ooh baby. The episode where Finn makes the "Grilled Cheesus?" Prime television.

LEO (JULY 23 - AUG. 22):

Go stand in the middle of the UC commons at lunch time and just shout to the University that you need a date. Maybe someone will like your spunk and approach you?

VIRGO (AUG. 23 - SEPT. 22):

You've got it all figured out! The perfect V-Day! Massages! A four-course dinner! Roses! You've made the reservations! Now you just need to find someone who will actually date you!

LIBRA (SEPT. 23 - OCT. 22):

You keep positioning yourself at the same corner table of your favorite coffee shop hoping that someone will see you and just, like, get you, you know? This is not a music video, please stop pretending that it is.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23 - NOV. 21):

You know what's SUPER romantic? Your job. You should totally start dating one of your coworkers. What could possibly go wrong?

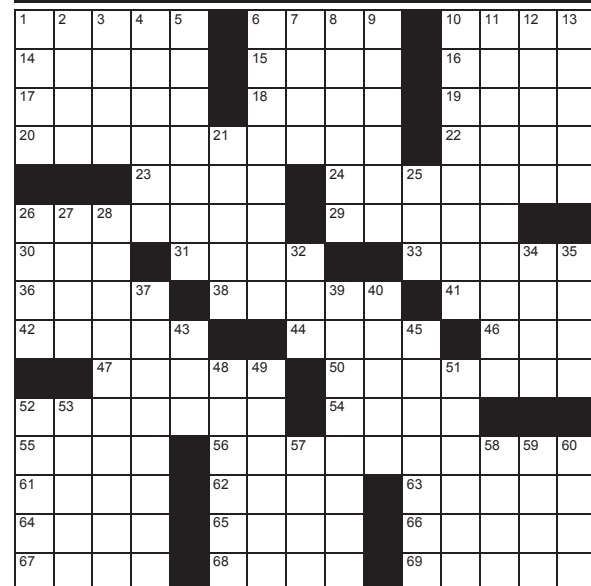
SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 - DEC. 21):

It's just you, some EasyMac and the plants in your apartment that you've named as a means of feeling less lonely.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 - JAN. 19):

Maybe it's time to go dig yourself a snow cave on Mount Sentinel and hibernate for a few months. You can always ask your friends to take notes in your classes if you're worried about missing anything important while you're gone.

The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke



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ACROSS

- 1 Philatelist's buy
- 6 Copycat's request
- 10 Open, a little
- 14 Study aide
- 15 Positive aspect
- 16 Millennium Falcon captain
- 17 Overhead
- 18 Worst finish
- 19 She, on the sea
- 20 Payment
- 22 Storybook start
- 23 Pond denizen
- 24 Trainee
- 26 Series featuring Joe Friday
- 29 Ready for a refill
- 30 Headstone abbr.
- 31 Consider
- 33 Sum up
- 36 "The Sound of Music" backdrop
- 38 Word before school or route
- 41 Cowgirl Evans
- 42 Equestrian command
- 44 Spare parts?
- 46 "What'd I tell ya?"
- 47 Regarding, old-style
- 50 King who wrote "Joyland"
- 52 Cowboy's pal
- 54 Church bell sound
- 55 Beginning to cry?
- 56 Gymnast's roll
- 61 Chris who played Captain Kirk
- 62 Minnesota player
- 63 Orphan of comics

- 64 Circle parts
- 65 More or ____
- 66 Weighed down
- 67 Anagram for 68-Across
- 68 "Anything ____?"
- 69 Freshwater fish

DOWN

- 1 Have the lead
- 2 Toothpaste holder
- 3 Molecular bit
- 4 Bekins specialty
- 5 Role-play, say
- 6 Painter's problem
- 7 Shepard in space
- 8 Hired goons
- 9 Think highly of
- 10 Like chocolates in a sampler
- 11 The Man in Black
- 12 Lewis Carroll heroine
- 13 Rodeo performer
- 21 Canary's call
- 25 30-day mo.
- 26 Downer
- 27 Nettle
- 28 Make an ____ (stop by)
- 32 GPS predecessor
- 34 Aweather's opposite
- 35 Ball-__ hammer
- 37 Summer attire
- 39 Give out
- 40 "Door's open!"
- 43 Slammer
- 45 Gourmet seasoning
- 48 Get cozy
- 49 Bricklayer's tool
- 51 Two-dimensional
- 52 Kind of cross
- 53 In flames
- 57 Magnolia State, briefly
- 58 Menu option
- 59 In ____ of (replacing)
- 60 Campsite sight

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

A	D	D	S		S	H	A	P	E		P	A	R	K
F	R	E	T		C	A	R	O	L		A	L	O	E
R	A	C	Y		I	N	C	O	M	P	L	E	T	E
O	B	E	L	I	S	K		C	O	L	L	E	E	N
				L	E	N	S		T	H	R	U	M	
A	C	E		T	O	R	E		E	M	A	I	L	
H	E	R		O	R	I	E	L		E	L	V	E	S
E	L	A	N		S	O	N	A	R		L	A	V	A
M	E	T	E	R		T	A	C	E	T		N	E	T
				B	E	A	U	T		G	E	A	R	
						P	R	O	S	E		S	E	C
A	G	I	T	A	T	E		G	O	K	A	R	T	S
J	U	B	I	L	A	T	I	O	N		C	U	R	E
A	R	I	D		L	U	C	R	E		A	M	E	N
R	U	S	E		S	P	E	E	D		O	P	E	D

Cross-country ski, Galentine's party and local comedy

Wednesday 12

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRIP IN GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

Wednesday is the deadline to sign up and join the UM Outdoor Program on a trip to cross-country ski through Glacier. Ski the trail system along the North Fork of the Flathead River and stay at the North Fork Hostel along the river over Valentine's weekend. The fee includes transportation, lodging, park entry fee, permits and gear. *Informational meeting at 5 p.m. at the Outdoor Program.*

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Donate some of your red stuff for the American Red Cross Blood Drive. Donors are needed to aid in emergency care. Plus, they'll give you a juice box or a cookie probably. *Todd Building 204, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.*

Thursday 13

GALENTINE'S DAY: PURSUE YOUR PASSIONS LAUNCH PARTY

Join the ladies of Blackstone LaunchPad at the launch party for their new online course in partnership with Pursue your Passions: Build Your Brand & Network. In true Leslie Knope fashion, there will be a waffle bar, an essential oil station, a Skin Chic sponsored lip-bar, a face mask station, a DIY Nail Bar, a yoga corner, a DIY Valentine's Day station and more.

Blackstone LaunchPad, 4 p.m.

GALENTINE'S PARTY AT THE MERCANTILE

Just in case you missed Blackstone LaunchPad's Galentine's Day, the Merc has your back. The Montana Scene, Sobba Cycle, Create Art Bar, Skin Chic and Olive + Iron are teaming up to offer you special discounts, treats, crafts and cocktails.

The Mercantile, 5 p.m.

ZACC COMEDY SHOWCASE

August Ansley hosts the ZACC stand-up and variety comedy showcase, with some of Missoula's best comedians! We're not kidding

when we tell you it'll be funny.

The ZACC, 7:30 p.m.

Friday 14

SWEETHEART SKATE

Grab your boo, force them into some ice skates and take advantage of Glacier Ice Rink's two-for-one admission and concession specials. There will be romantic lighting and music, and you can set photo evidence of the evening in their photo booth. Admission is \$6 for two adults or \$4 for two youth/seniors. Skate rentals are \$3 per person.

Glacier Ice Rink, 6 p.m.

VALENTINE'S DAY SQUARE DANCE

Join the Woodhogs Old Time Stringband and Caller Caroline Stephens for Freecycle's Valentine's Day square dance. No dancing experience necessary and beginners are more than welcome! Bring your friends, your boo or just yourself, too. Suggested donation \$5 to \$10.

Freecycle, 7 p.m.

Saturday 15

UM OPERA THEATER & SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PRESENT "THE MEDIUM" AND "GIANNI SCHICCHI"

The UM Opera Theater presents its biennial opera production, in collaboration with the UM Symphony Orchestra. The shows are two one-act operas, each about an hour, both performed in English.

Dennison Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday 16

RACHEL CARGLE: BLACK SOLIDARITY SUMMIT KEYNOTE

The University of Montana Black Student Union, African American Studies Program and Student Involvement Network are hosting an evening with Rachel Cargle: a public academic, writer and lecturer. Cargle, who has been featured in Harper's Bazaar, Mashable and Jada Pinkett Smith's Red Table Talk, is this year's Black Solidarity Summit

keynote speaker. Her activism and academic work are rooted in providing intellectual discourse, tools and resources that explore the intersection of race and womanhood. The event is free and open to the public.

University Center ballroom, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Monday 17

PRESIDENTS DAY: NO SCHOOL

There will be no classes and no offices open at the University of Montana in observance of Presidents Day.

Tuesday 18

MENTAL HEALTH PANEL

Mindfulness in Law Society and the Blewett School of Law are presenting a mental health panel. The discussion seeks to extend the

conversation about mental health in law school and the legal profession beyond substance abuse. The discussion will also cover personal stories about what kinds of advice and support are actually helpful. *Blewett School of Law room 201. Noon to 1 p.m.*

COMMUNITY LECTURE SERIES: 'WOMEN AND CITIZENSHIP: JEANNETTE RANKIN AND THE FIGHT FOR THE VOTE'

Celebrate the centennial of the 19th Amendment with communication studies professor Sara Hayden. Hayden will be presenting as part of the UM Alumni Association's Community Lecture Series, "Honoring the Centennial of the 19th Amendment and What it Means to Be an American."

University Center Theater, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.



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and a wave in the afternoon.

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Transfer time: UM football loses three players, brings in two

JACK MARSHALL

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Football player Dareon Nash posted a photo on Instagram Feb. 3, with his arms outstretched and a chain around his neck. The post would be typical, but the former University of Montana cornerback was wearing a University of Idaho jersey.

"I rolled the dice and watched them bet on everybody but me," said Nash in the post caption. Nash, who is a communications major, is one of three football players from UM who have reportedly transferred. The other players are offensive guard Esai Longoria and wide receiver Jesse Owens.

According to Colton Clart from the Lewistown Tribune in Idaho, "Nash will expectedly start right away at the boundary corner position." Nash joined the UM football team in 2016 after graduating from Charter Oak High School in Covina, California.

After redshirting for a year, Nash played 36 games in three years and racked up 75 tackles and five interceptions for the Griz. Two of those interceptions and 39 of those tackles were made in 2019.

A day after Nash announced that he was transferring, offensive guard Esai Longoria posted on Twitter, "The last 4 years have been a blessing. Thank you so much to the coaches, my teammates, and Griz Nation. That being said I have decided to enter the transfer portal as a graduate transfer with the hope to continue my academic career and athletic career as a defensive lineman!"

Longoria came to UM in 2016 after playing high school football for Vallivue High School in Caldwell, Idaho. After redshirting his first year, he played in seven games for the Griz in a three-year span. He has not yet announced where he will transfer.

Wide receiver Jesse Owens went to Billings West High School before he announced he intended to play football at UM in 2019. He redshirted in 2019, but was named UM's Offensive Scout Team Player of the Year in November. In early January, several media outlets, including the Missoulian and 406 MT Sports, announced that Owens would be transferring to Montana State to play basketball.



Dareon Nash celebrates with fellow cornerback Justin Calhoun after an interception near the Monmouth end zone. Sept. 21, 2019 | LIAM MCCOLLUM MONTANA KAIMIN

In an interview with 406 MT Sports, Owens said, "My goal is to go in there, get back into basketball shape and get comfortable playing again."

Both Nash and Longoria will be eligible to play immediately after transferring, but Owens will have to sit out one year at MSU.

UM has been able to bring some transfers into the school to replace the players that left. UM announced on Jan. 17 that safety Omar Hicks Onu and cornerback TraJon Cotton were transferring from Oregon State.

Onu played during the 2016 and 2017 seasons for Oregon State, where he netted 49 total tackles and one interception. In 2018, he didn't play due to injury, and he put his name in the NCAA transfer portal in October 2019.

Cotton only played in two games during the 2018 season at Oregon State. Cotton requested a transfer following the 2019 season.

It is likely that Onu will be able to play in the 2020 season, but Cotton may have to sit out.



University of Montana offensive guard Esai Longoria runs out with the team ahead of the game. LIAM MCCOLLUM MONTANA KAIMIN

Freshman phenomenon? Pickens shows promise in Big Sky play



LEFT: University of Montana forward Jamie Pickens guards an Idaho State player during the game on Feb. 8. RIGHT: University of Montana forward Jamie Pickens scores a point for the Griz while falling during the third period of the game. Pickens scored four points for the Griz during the game. CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN

GRIFFEN SMITH

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With less than a minute left in the Griz-Cat game, freshman Jamie Pickens lined up to shoot free throws against No. 1 Big Sky conference ranked Montana State University. With cool composure, Pickens converted both free throws to take the lead for the Lady Griz.

"It has been incredible to see her transition," head coach Shannon Schweyen said. "She's just getting better and better every game."

Although Montana lost the game, Pickens' free throw is one of many defining moments for the freshman's emergence on the University of Montana basketball team.

Pickens has not started a game as of Feb. 6, but subbed in for 19 of the first 20 Lady Griz

match ups, and averaged 7.5 points while playing less than 17.4 minutes per game. Every three minutes on the court, Pickens averages 1.3 points, the best points to minutes ratio on the team.

Pickens grew up in Helena and played with Schweyen's daughters in fifth grade.

Missoula was a second home to Pickens, who has family in town. After attending Lady Griz games as a kid, she signed with UM in November of 2018. She joined a team filled with familiar faces, like her old middle school teammates Shelby and Jordyn Schweyen, coach Schweyen's daughters.

"I always got a good feeling when I went to campus," Pickens said. "So, being here, I knew this was the right place for me."

Another familiar face, senior McKenzie Johnston, the leading scorer for Montana, played with the other school in Helena, Cap-

ital High. Johnston and Pickens were rivals then, but the freshman was happy to share the court with the Lady Griz veteran coming into college.

"She actually was someone I looked up to a ton," said Pickens. "I grew up watching her, and I knew that I was gonna come play with her so that was really cool."

During her senior year of high school, Pickens was awarded the all-time scoring record at Helena High, putting up 1,204 points. She received the Gatorade Montana player of the year her junior and senior seasons.

"She's been a kid who we had high expectations for, as she was a very successful high school player," Schweyen said. "She is not one-dimensional at all."

Pickens' shooting percentage lies at 41.4%, which is .4% above the team average. Her minutes are limited, as low as 10 minutes

against Idaho. Yet, Pickens has scored in every Montana game to date.

Pickens is not the leading player for the Lady Griz, but she still sees her position as important.

"If I can step into a role that's contributing, then that's a big deal for me," Pickens said. "I'm all about helping out."

As the team enters its final month of play, Pickens said she hopes to finish strong. She and the rest of the Lady Griz are looking to win their first Big Sky championship tournament since 2015. The team started the season 13-9, with an 8-5 conference record that puts the Lady Griz in fourth place in the Big Sky.

"Take it one game at a time," Pickens said. "We need to execute, do what coach says, and I think that will lead to big things."

Montana plays at Weber State on Feb. 13 in Ogden, Utah.

UM track athlete shows promise in football

JACK MARSHALL

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At his first track meet of the year, UM's Aidan Diggs was named Big Sky Conference Men's Track and Field Athlete of the Week. But, before the sophomore received awards for the track team, he was placed on the UM football team.

"My teammates like to joke around and say I was on the football team for a week, but yeah, I was on the roster," Diggs said.

Diggs joined the football team his freshman year at UM in the spring while he was still on the track team. Despite making some roster cuts while he was trying out for cornerback, Diggs didn't like the conflicting schedule between

"He's one of the best athletes I've ever coached," said Mohammed Oliver, Diggs' high school track coach. Oliver is a former NFL player who also ran decathlons at the University of Oregon. He met current UM track head coach Brian Schweyen while Schweyen was competing for Montana State's track team.

Oliver advised Diggs to visit UM because of his faith in Schweyen's track and field coaching. After his visit, Diggs committed to run track at UM in 2019.

During his freshman season, Diggs competed in more than 11 events, including shot put, 110m hurdles and the pole vault. Diggs placed third in the Big Sky Championship for the decathlon during the outdoor track season in 2019.

"My teammates like to joke around and say I was on the football team for a week, but yeah, I was on the roster," Diggs said.

track and football. He eventually returned to the track team.

"I wouldn't say that it's out of the picture, but I definitely like focusing on track," Diggs said when asked about a potential return to football.

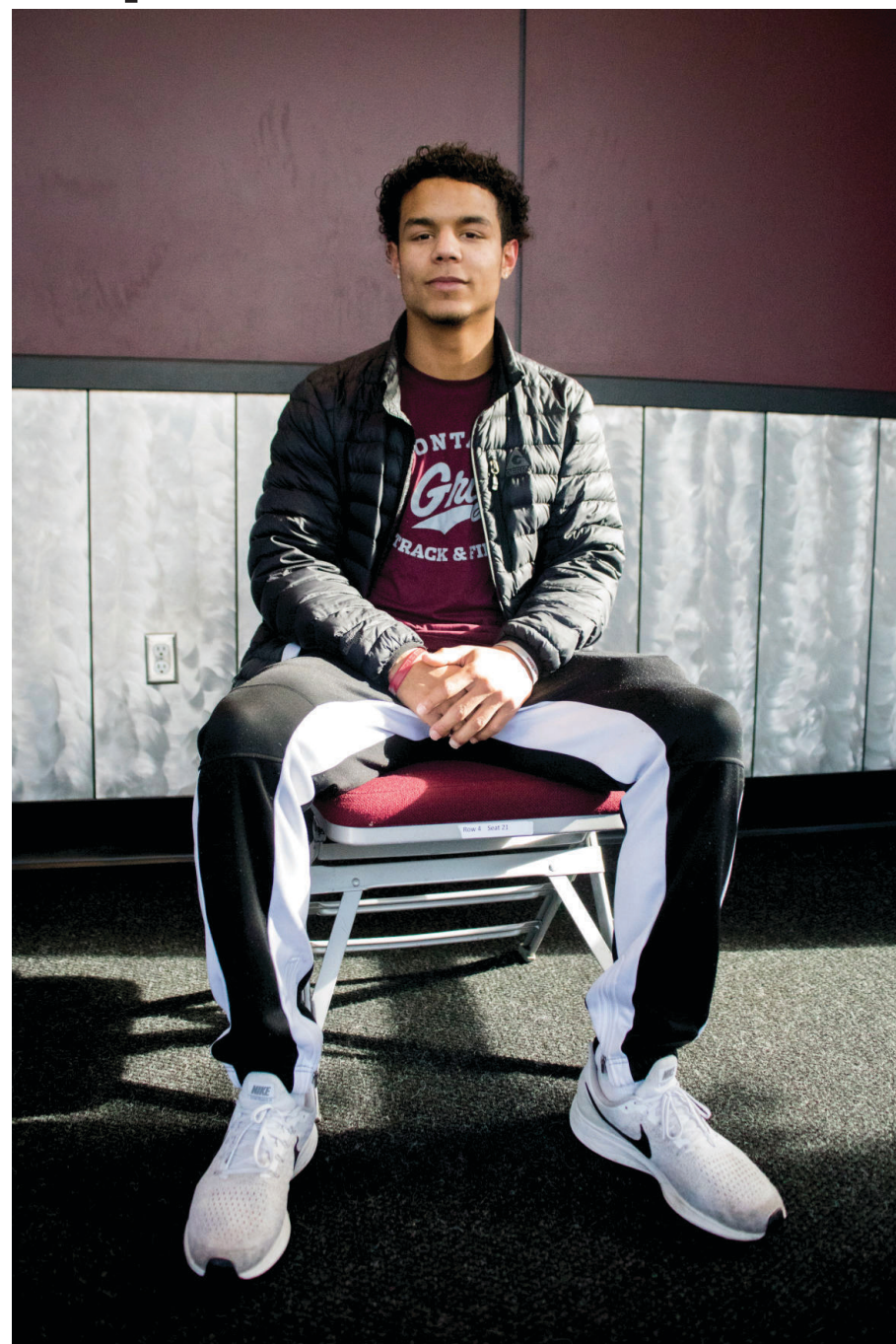
Before he committed to UM, Diggs attended Millenium High School in Goodyear, Arizona, where he ran track, wrestled and played football. He initially only ran track to stay in shape for football, but he quickly realized his talent in the sport.

Although he tore his meniscus during his junior year of high school while wrestling, Diggs was able to rebound from his injury and win the Arizona state decathlon his senior year.

Diggs broke almost all of his personal records and won the long jump at the Stacey Dragila Open, the first meet of the 2020 season in Idaho on Jan. 17. His long jump distance was 23'10", over a foot longer than his previous best of 22'4."

Diggs was named the Big Sky Conference Men's Field Athlete of the Week after his long distance performance. At UM's latest track meet, the Idaho Team challenge, Diggs achieved a new personal record in the 60-meter hurdles and placed third overall in the event.

When Diggs is warming up for an event, he likes to listen to music, but most of the time he must first kick his sister, Alaina Diggs, off of their Spotify account. Alania is currently a freshman on



Aidan Diggs in the Grizzly Hall of Champions at the Adams Center. CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN

Northern Arizona's track and field team.

Despite quitting wrestling after his sophomore year of high school, Diggs said he and his teammates

still mess around and wrestle from time to time. When asked if he was the best wrestler on the track team, Diggs replied, "I'd like to say so."

Dance team starts GoFundMe to pay for travel to Big Sky Championship

GRIFFEN SMITH

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For the last two years, the University of Montana dance team fundraised money to go with the basketball teams to the Big Sky Conference tournaments in March. The team opted on Jan. 17 to start a GoFundMe for the 2020 season.

UM Dance already raised over \$7,000 online since the start of the GoFundMe, which is still short of the team's \$10,000 goal. Dance coach Colby Harms noted that the GoFundMe is only part of the equation to make it to the tournament.

"The girls also go around town to local businesses and ask supporters and donors and people that just love Grizzly athletes to support," said Harms. "A lot of people step up and say yes."

The dance team is made up of 13 women who audition for the team, and members usually have trained in studios since a young age, explained Mary Fahlman, a third-year member on the team. During her freshman year she tried out via a video call from her home in Canada.

"I've trained since I was three years old to get to where I am now," Fahlman said.

To prepare for performances at Griz athletic events, the team practices three days a week and also does weight training in the UM Athletic Champion Center.

UM Dance and the cheer team form the spirit squad. At every home game, the spirit squad creates chants together. The dance team races onto the court during timeouts to perform dance numbers, often with Monte joining in.

Harms and Stacy Richards co-direct the spirit squad.

Brynn Molloy, the associate athletic director for marketing and community relations, explained that a recent change in how the tournament is run sparked the team's fundraising.

Molloy said the athletic department used to fund the dance team's travel expenses, back when UM was a hot team host. A hot team host refers to when the best team in the conference is selected to host the tournament. However, the Big Sky con-



The University of Montana dance team performs during one of the first timeouts of a Lady Griz basketball game. CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN

ference elected in 2015 to choose neutral locations to host future championships. Now, since both basketball teams always leave town for the tournament for a week, Molloy said the price for the spirit squad to attend

ence get to play in the tournament. Before 2016, only the top eight teams could play.

The change also guaranteed both basketball teams would travel every year for the Big Sky Conference championship,

"They are the face of the game-day atmosphere," Molloy said. "The players take care of the action on the court or field, but the cheer and dance teams are the ones who try to get the fans into it."

the conference has increased significantly.

Since the decision, the tournament has been hosted in Reno, Nevada, and this year, in Boise, Idaho. The tournament changes guarantee that all 12 teams in the confer-

ence get to play in the tournament. Before 2016, only the top eight teams could play.

While both teams are present at games, the cheer team is funded by the athletic department and does not have to aggressively

fundraise. However, dance team members pay yearly dues. Harms said the fundraising motivates the dance team to create a high-intensity environment.

"They are the face of the game-day atmosphere," Molloy said. "The players take care of the action on the court or field, but the cheer and dance teams are the ones who try to get the fans into it."

In addition to hyping up crowds, the dance team works on community service projects in Missoula and on the road. Last year the team went to a children's hospital in Boise. Molloy hopes to do that and more in this upcoming tournament.

"In between games, we don't just twiddle our thumbs," Molloy said. "The dancers will have study hours and do community involvement down there too."

The 2020 Big Sky Championship starts on March 9 and goes until March 14. It features both the men's and women's teams.

Griz softball ready for the spring season with undefeated preseason

LUKE SCHMIT

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The University of Montana softball team won its first two games of the season Feb. 7 in New Orleans. The team, which finished fourth in the Big Sky Conference in 2019, was undefeated in pre-season exhibition games and will travel for four more tournaments before playing at home in April.

UM didn't lose many players from last year, with all but three players returning. Big Sky's 2019 Top Newcomer and Second-Team All-League first baseman, Cami Sellars returned. She is coming into the 2020 season with a .374 batting average. Last season, she earned the program's record hitting streak, which she set at 18.

"Cami has been a great hitter. That's something she's been known for over the course of her career, at whatever level. Now she's hungry to not be just a hitter," head coach Melanie Meuchel said in a press release in January. "She wants to be an overall ball-player. She wants to be known as someone who plays and competes hard and has fun doing it."

The other part of the infield is just as impressive. Shortstop Lexi Knauss and second baseman Maygen McGrath, both batted around the .300 area in 2019.

The pitching bullpen will look different this season, with all-conference pitchers Maddy Stensby and Colleen Driscoll not on the team this year. The Griz has three pitchers on the roster including freshman Ashley Ward, who was named the Gatorade Nevada Softball Player of the Year in 2019.

During fall exhibition games, the team defeated all of its opponents. It came into the 2020 season undefeated. Montana outscored its opponents 156 to 3 points over-



all in all games combined, playing teams such as North Idaho, Carroll College and Columbian Basin. These exhibition games did not impact the spring season, they are looked at more as a preseason. Last season the Griz finished 4th in the Big Sky Conference.

The season started in New Orleans at the latter's Big Easy Classic. The Griz won both games against Central Arkansas and Louisiana Tech. Montana won each game by one run.

This was the first of five tournaments the Griz will play this season. The team will be traveling to Las Vegas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, California and Phoenix this season.

The Griz won't have their first home game until April 1st, when the team will host the University of Providence. It will be the latest date the team has ever had to play at the Grizzly Softball Field during the spring season.



ABOVE: University of Montana infielder Lexi Knauss heads onto the field to continue her warmup between innings on March 17, 2019.

LEFT: University of Montana sophomore outfielder Brooklyn Weisgram dashes from second to third base near the middle of the second game against Utah Valley University on March 16, 2019. The game was a victory for the Griz 10-3. LIAM MCOLLUM | MONTANA KAIMIN

Gallery

Riders go big at Snowbowl's first USASA Slopestyle Competition

SAVANNAH STANHOPE

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Competitors in Snowbowl's USASA Slopestyle Competition gave the crowd waiting in the ski hill's long liftlines something to watch on Saturday, Feb. 8.

The 28 riders in the event didn't hold back, catching big air, styling plenty of grabs and perfectly executing 720° off-axis rotations.

"They're really sending it big," one parent in the crowd commented.

USASA Regional Events are the first step in the Olympic pipeline. Participants start off their competitive career here, with the eventual hope of working up to elite level competition such as the Grand Prix, World Cups and Olympics.

In the past, Missoula athletes had to travel to compete in the events, but this year marks the first year they got to compete on their home mountain.

"I'm super excited we get to be here, it's been really great except the whole

no internet thing," USASA event coordinator Chris Ralph said.

The course was visible from the lift-line and bar. Many Snowbowl skiers stopped to watch some of the big tricks being styled by the competitors.

One such onlooker was UM Ski Club President Henry Deluca, who watched the event throughout the day, in between hitting the slopes himself.

"The best part about skiing and things like this is the community that gathers around it," Deluca said. "Everyone's just up here having a good time."

University of Montana junior Hunter Schumann also took a break to watch the event for a while.

"The competition was super cool to watch, there's really amazing talent there," Schumann said.

The next ski competition will be the Snowbowl Cup Gelände Championship. Skiers will be launching up to 200 feet off of Snowbowl's 70 foot jump on Feb. 22 and 23.



ABOVE: Jude Owens watches his fellow competitors after finishing his round in the competition. **TOP RIGHT:** Soren Fanning comes out of his corked spin, preparing for the landing. Tricks were judged on how they scored in seven categories including initiation, apex and landing. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Marco Petrilli releases a tail grab as he completes his rotation. The Inland Northwest series of the USASA Regional Events goes to Big Sky, Great Divide, Silver Mountain and now, Snowbowl on Feb. 8. Twenty-eight participants took part in the USASA Slopestyle Competition at Snowbowl.