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9-3-2010

### Montana Kaimin, September 3, 2010

Students of The University of Montana, Missoula

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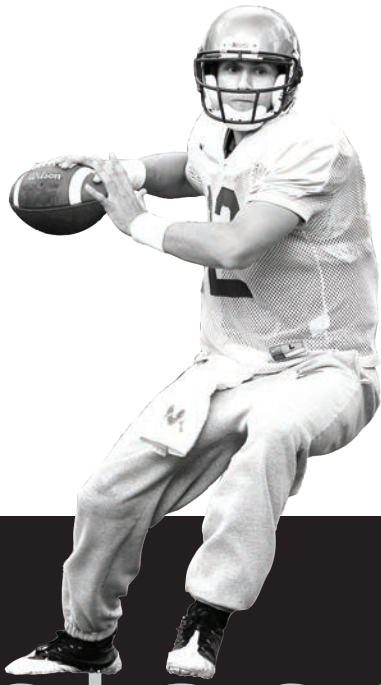
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**9 NEWS** Bernice's adds a pinch of jazz



**8 SPORTS**

Griz prepare to open season Saturday

**5-7 FEATURE** Few things have colored the Montana landscape as much as wild fire. Today, the Montana Kaimin looks at the story of fire in the American West. Then and now.

# montana kaimin

Volume CXIII Issue 4

www.montanakaimin.com Friday, Sept. 3, 2010

**HISTORY: FIRE SPECIAL**



R.H. McKay/Courtesy USFS Northern Region Archives

Loggers in Coeur d'Alene National Forest, which was torched in the Big Burn of 1910.

## The Red Scourge

The fires of 1910 still burn in Montana's memory

**Neil LaRubbio**  
Montana Kaimin

Around 3 o'clock in the morning, A.J. Breitenstein awoke to his phone ringing.

The sky loomed outside his bedroom window in the color of old rose, and an odor like campfire lingered in the wind. An editor from the Missoulian called to tell Breitenstein that a train of refugees was chugging into Montana from Western Idaho with a hurricane of fire chasing it down. The train would arrive in Missoula within hours. Breitenstein hung up the phone and dressed quickly. As secretary for the Missoula Chamber of Commerce, he arrived at his office within 30 minutes, tasked with assembling a relief effort for what would later be called the Big Burn of 1910.

Six hours prior to Breitenstein's alarm, the drought-stricken trees surrounding Wallace, Idaho, carried crowns of fire down from the mountains. The woods of Idaho and Montana had been sick with fire that summer, like a bad case of scarlet fever. Then, on Aug. 20, a godly wind corralled the smaller fires into one another so

that by the following evening, one massive sweep of flames set on a course to burn a 3 million-acre hole through every forest and town in its path.

"You never saw anything like it," recounted W.H. Barnett, from Wallace, to reporters for the Missoulian. "The fire came up Placer Creek, south of town, and crossed a heavily-timbered ridge more than 1,000 feet above the streets. A regular gale was behind it when it hit the crest of the hill, and sparks flew several hundred yards ahead of it."

"This was 9 o'clock and the business portion of the town was crowded with people. No one dreamed that we were in real danger."

**Razing Wallace**

Wallace, a town of 6,000 at the time and the financial, and agricultural epicenter of the region, sat in a cup-shaped basin with mining towns dotting the higher gulches and mountains surrounding. Cautious designers had attempted to "fireproof" the town's buildings using steel and brick after a previous fire had burned wooden homes and businesses

See 1910, page 5

**CAMPUS**

## University kicks off new Native project

**Erin Cole**  
Montana Kaimin

As the echo of heavy raindrops bounced off the roof above the classroom, Jody Ground explained to his 14 assembled students his expectations and hopes for their class.

"I'm not going to lecture. We're going

to discuss things," he said. As a senior double majoring in anthropology and Native American studies with a minor in communicative studies, Ground is at the helm of his first university class, which from all outward appearances, looks and operates like a First-Year interest Group, or FIG.

Yet, this is a misnomer. The class,

known as the Learning Community until the students pick a new name, is actually a pilot project, according to Fredricka Hunter, the director of American Indian Student Services at the University of Montana.

"We didn't do any marketing, and it wasn't offered to everybody," she said. Instead, Hunter broached the idea to

incoming Native American freshmen, and those interested filled the class roster.

"We just thought we would find freshmen who would be interested in being part of a cohort, who would be interested in taking core classes with other Native

See PROJECT, page 4



70°F | 45°F

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EDITORIAL

## The morning after

You're welcome in advance, introductions and explanations

by Chance Petek with Alex Gersovitz



My name is Chance Petek and his name is Alex Gersovitz. I attend the University of Montana, while Alex, my assistant, is on leave from Reed College. And women are one of the only things we've consistently given a shit about our entire life; the jigsaw puzzle of craziness, the incomprehensible nature that is women. For this reason, we are writing the newest incarnation of the Kaimin sex column.

In high school we were nerds. Though more hip, more sarcastic and probably smarter than you, we were often passed over by the opposite sex. But, out of a kind of necessity, we started to look at interactions and behaviors. And we learned.

We learned that the strong rule the weak, but the clever rule the strong. We learned that confidence, hygiene, humor and a good smile could compete with loudmouths in branded t-shirts. We learned that college girls aren't impressed so easily.

We believe in having personality, charm and charisma, not Ed Hardy. We believe in Michael Cera and Seth Rogen.

Now, we're the guys you turn to when you get sick of flash and aggressiveness.

At the same time, we write for all men. We write for the bros, the pretentious illiterates, the average joes and the perfect man.

We write for the hipster assholes in your upper level English or history conference who are busy saying "grotesque purjuration" and "corporeal manifestations." The ones outside smoking in tight black pants, almost apologetic for the space they take up in the world.

We even write for that hippie deadhead on the couch next to you, who makes up for his heavy marijuana use by expounding on some mish-mash of philosophy concerning treatises on Freud and Kant in a surfer-bro accent. Word vomit slurs out of his hazy brain in attempts to woo a spinning head that will somehow be impressed and confused into going home with him.

We don't advocate abstinence. We advocate fulfilling basic human needs. We live in a base reality, with wildly different sexual ethics. Curious young people possess imaginations and build real desires. Sex happens.

And, on a deeper level, there's something beautifully masochistic about all the successes and the failures. It's a game people play during every interaction. We constantly test each other for a compatibility that we often abuse and choose to throw away in the hope of a better prize. Such are the mistakes that make our young adulthood so memorable.

Through botched opening lines, speeches well rehearsed and poorly executed; through the embarrassing firsts, the pregnancy scares and the insomnia — we're constantly fascinated by women: the Crazies, the Scenesters, the Sororities, the Religious, the Hippies, the Vanillas, the Jewish American Princesses, the California Valley Girls, the Southern Belles, and whatever endless other types await us.

And through all the insanity, we learn. We sit back and laugh — muse and impart, misty-eyed — about all the places we woke up, all the names we forgot and all the things we figured out. Of course we're still learning, but we're happy to share what we already know.

You're welcome in advance.  
chance.petek@umontana.edu

# ↑ BIG UPS + ← BACKHANDS

## Big Ups

George Dennison was slated for retirement on Aug. 15 but stuck around due to delays in finding a replacement. The man owns a house on a golf course; any delay in retirement must be like waiting in line for the 4 p.m. conga line at the retirement home.

It's Pflu season. The Pflu crew is here. Swine Pflu cure found in new head coach. One Pflu over the Cuckoo's Nest. Pflugratulations! It's a New Head Coach. Big ups goes to Coach Pflugrad for giving us wonderfully corny headlines. Anything beats "It's Bobby's World" at this point.

Big ups to the Oregon State football player (also a Kalispell High School graduate) who attempted to bull-rush a cop out of a three-point stance in his birthday suit. We at BUBH envy the staff at OSU's paper for the full page "spread" he gave them after he was tazed. At least there's someone out there trying to be a good role model for our football team.

Big Ups to Bob Dylan for not dropping dead in Missoula when he visited this week. We don't want to be known as THAT place.

Big ups to Bob Dylan for smoking Kool cigarettes since the 1960's, and still not dropping dead in Missoula. God knows we need a cig after this week ... and that performance.

## Backhands

Mariner Energy gets a backhand for their oil platform catching fire Thursday afternoon, ending about a 22-day safety streak for all oil companies operating in the Gulf. Luckily, Mariner hasn't reported any oil spilling from their well; maybe they learned a lesson from BP's handling of the oil spill. On second thought, I'm worried.

Glenn Beck's rally on the Lincoln Memorial earns him a backhand this week. Right when he had me convinced that the terrorist in the Oval Office was flooding Pakistan and illegal immigrants are the explanation for an increase in coke induced high-fives, he pulls a stunt like this, and totally redeems himself.

Too much fungus can be a very bad thing. Such was life for the trees circling the oval. Any returning student should have noticed campus was waxed cleaner than Christina Aguilera before the filming of "Dirty." Hopefully they went "green" and chopped the moldy trees into wood chips. Backhand to fungus; Big up to Christina.

Backhands to the guy who held the Discovery Channel hostage. I know, Shark Week gets a little old after a decade of reruns, but it's no reason to lose your head over it. I'll give him a second backhand for ignoring the disclaimer at the beginning of MythBusters that advises against "attempting this at home." Myth: Taking on a SWAT team will end well for you. Busted.

KAIMIN COMICS

## AT GRIZ GAMES:



H 10

# montana kaimin

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## Heard around the OVAL

"If I was the type of guy that had sex with sleeping dudes ... well, you'd be in trouble."

~heard near Don Anderson Hall

"I should get a clue. We've been on three dates and he still won't even introduce me to his dog."

~heard on the Oval

"Yes, ma'am, he was yelling about his weiner."

~heard near the Gallagher Business Building

## police blotter

First week of fall semester...

### Medical marijuana mix-up August 27, 12:34 a.m.

A man in the Lommasson parking lot was caught smoking marijuana. He claimed to have a medical marijuana card and produced documents that indicated he did. Officers warned the man about smoking on campus.

"You can't smoke medical marijuana on campus. You can't smoke any marijuana. It's pretty simple," Director of Public Safety Jim Lemcke said.

### Vanishing valuables August 28, 11:44 a.m.

Ten students in the Skaggs building reported they had money stolen from their belongings after they departed from their classroom to attend a lab elsewhere on campus. The students apparently left jackets and purses in the Skaggs classroom. While they were gone, someone snuck in and stole money from the students.

### Computer creeper August 29, 11:13 a.m.

A man using a computer in the Skaggs Building was asked if he was a student at the university. He did not respond but got up and left the building. The man appeared to be in his forties with a gray beard. Officers suspect he was not a student.

### Good Samaritan August 30, 2:29 p.m.

A man who found money on campus returned it to the Office of Public Safety. Lemcke will not disclose the amount of cash or the exact location it was found in case someone calls to recover the funds.

"The person who turned in the money was definitely the hero of the week — a good Samaritan," Lemcke said.

### Skulking students September 1, 12:15 a.m.

A report came in that three students were trying to open various doors in Don Anderson Hall. The rabble-rousers were journalism students trying to get into the building to finish assignments. One of the three was barefoot.

**Pissed?  
Pleased?  
Petrified?**  
Write a letter to the editor or a guest column.

Letters should be 300 words or fewer, and columns should be about 700 words. Please e-mail both to [opinion@montanakaimin.com](mailto:opinion@montanakaimin.com), or drop them off in Don Anderson Hall 208. Make sure to include a phone number.



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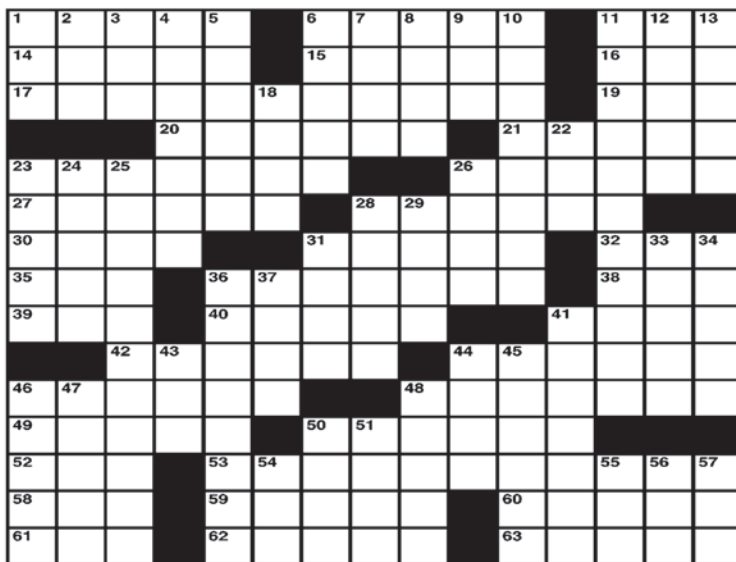
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FOR RELEASE SEPTEMBER 3, 2010

### Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

- ACROSS**
- What some sirens do
  - 1990s-2000s Irish leader Bertie Pres.
  - counterparts
  - It may be blank
  - Food processor setting
  - Outback critter
  - Like a dialect coach?
  - End of an academic address
  - Periods
  - Amount-and-interval numbers
  - Not connected
  - Reel art
  - Knack
  - Whalebone
  - New York home of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
  - Three-time French Open champion
  - Its symbol is Sn
  - Musical knack
  - Web danger, and a hint to this puzzle's theme
  - Murcia Mrs.
  - Nutritional stat
  - Like some panels
  - Genesis locale
  - Key of Mozart's Symphony No. 40
  - Where the Maine sank
  - Expects
  - Consequences of an all-nighter
  - Obsess
  - Titania's consort
  - General on a menu
  - Answer from LL Cool J?
  - Where Nina Totenberg reports
  - Inuit for "women's boat"
  - Gives some TLC to, with "in"
  - Doofus
  - They're heavier than foils
  - Source of brown fur



By Anthony J. Salvia

9/3/10

- DOWN**
- Airport safety org.
  - Last letters on some lists
  - Slicker
  - Performer with five #1 hits in his first year on the Billboard charts
  - One at the edge of the gutter
  - Record label launched in 1968
  - Pitch
  - Lover of Psyche
  - Toon dog
  - Most impoverished
  - Christmas?
  - Cable
  - "Semper Fidelis" composer
  - It may pop up in a clearing
  - Vending machine insert
  - Fish-eating mammal
  - Capacitance unit
  - Herbivorous reptiles?
  - Bass symbol
  - Joy of "The View"
  - A or Ray
  - City SE of Cherbourg

### Thursday's Puzzle Solved

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

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9/3/10

- Papas of "Zorba the Greek"
- Family matriarchs
- "For real?"
- Oxford fellows
- Become balanced
- Athletes for Hope co-founder Hamm
- Word on a towel
- Embraces
- Cigna competitor
- Mud daubers, e.g.
- Smells
- Boy with a fishing pole in a '60s sitcom title screen
- Highlands hillside
- Rock concert fixture
- U.S. Army E-6, e.g.
- Jamaican genre
- Phila. setting

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Montana

**FIG**  
From page 1

students and having some discussions and activities off campus," Hunter said.

Yet the class has a larger purpose than merely resembling a FIG. Rather, it is piloting a plan for a Native Living and Learning Community to begin at UM in the fall of 2011. The Living and Learning Community will consist of around 50 Native American freshmen who will live in the same building and attend the same classes.

"They will be housed together, will also have components of core classes together and they'll also have the opportunity for professors to go into the living area and teach," Hunter said, adding that other cultural components will be added to the mix.

The move comes about as UM hopes to improve its Native student retention rate. Hunter said she looked at what other universities, such as the University of North Dakota and Arizona State University, were doing to help their Native American students.

"What I've been able to understand is that, especially we as a people, we're very interdependent, and we believe in an extended family so I think that a lot of our students who



Steel Brooks/Montana Kaimin

**Jody Ground discusses**, with students, the logistics of the Native American student Learning Community he's teaching this year. The class operates like a FIG and is in its trial year. The school hopes to turn it into a Living and Learning Community.

are coming here to the UM are really lonely because we don't have that sense of community and you don't know anybody," Hunter said.

While many students experience the same emotions dur-

ing their first semester, Hunter said Native American students experience a unique adjustment.

"It's more difficult to reach out because you're going through a cultural transition,"

she said. "Sometimes you're coming from a very rural area to Missoula, which can sometimes be very overwhelming."

Hunter said AISS will soon start marketing the Living and Learning Community to high

school seniors this year.

"It will be a first-come, first-served basis," she said. "I'm thinking that when other students find out about our program, there will be a lot of interest."

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Level:

- 1 2  
3 4

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SOLUTION TO THURSDAY'S PUZZLE

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

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

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# the man on top of Blue Mountain



Gene Miller calls his wife Myrtle from the Blue Mountain fire lookout. They speak briefly each evening since he lives in the tower all summer with only a few short breaks. She also will drive to the lookout with new books, old newspapers and dinner every few weeks.

**T**HE SOUTHERN stand of blue spruce and Douglas fir have escalated nearly 30 feet from their sapling heights, but Gene Miller's watchful gaze remains largely the same. The creases at the corner of each eye are a little more pronounced, yet the reflection of Missoula Valley history captured within them lingers, melding past and present. He sees the small, industrious town 3,176 feet below both as it was and as it is. Miller, 73, speaks less now about what will be and more about the past 35 years in the one-room fire lookout atop Blue Mountain.

He knows change is an ironic constant. It's like wind that sometimes rustles pine needles and sometimes bends branches to their snapping points. Miller knows some of the wind's habits — from what direction it usually comes and how hard it usually blows — but not even he surmises the unpredictable.

continues on page 6

## 1910 From page 1

to the ground.

But nothing could withstand the brutal force of this new inferno. Invading from the east side of town, it licked up the Wallace Times building first. Next, Worstell's furniture store and the Coeur d'Alene hardware store fell as the fire easily seized the entire business district.

Blinding, choking-hot smoke poured through the streets. Red-hot firebrands as big as baseball mitts rained onto the town. Everyone was ordered to evacuate. Some stubborn people stood with garden hoses on their front yards.

Through the confusion, Fred Anderson and his wife struck a lucky mode of escape. On the Northern Pacific Railway tracks, Conductor "Kid" Brown's engine and caboose waited. People packed into the boxcar. The Sisters of the Cath-

olic hospital loaded patients and nurses onto the train. Men climbed on top when the caboose filled up and clung from the tender or any other place that could hold them. One man hauled into town with his horse. With a tear in his eye, he patted his steed's muzzle, kissed him goodbye and boarded the train.

Between 9:30 and 10 p.m., the train could wait no longer. It built steam, set motion and charged away from Wallace.

### A call to arms

Operators for the Milwaukee Road and Northern Pacific were receiving telegraph and telephone communications as updates of the events streamed into Missoula, which was, and still is, the regional headquarters for the US Forest Service.

At only five years of age, the Forest Service had the barest notion of an agency objective other than to free the forests from private interests. Montana and Idaho were still vast

wildernesses without many established fire access trails.

The town of Missoula, on the other hand, had a distinct social order. Fraternal organizations and churches were prominent in the community, and even the mundane facets of life weaved a tightly-knit social fabric. The Daily Missoulian, as it was known, published occurrences of visitors to town, community gossip, or brunch party announcements in their "Local Brevities" section. "A.E. Walsh of Stevensville spent Sunday in Missoula visiting with friends," reads one announcement. "C.C. Perry, bookkeeper at the Scandinavian-American Bank, and Engineer Vacain of the Northern Pacific, will spend Sunday on Rock Creek fishing," reads another.

In the forests, "All hell broke loose," chief forester W.B. Greeley reported, but in the early hours of the Big Blowup, the city of Missoula and its lucid lines of communication coalesced be-

hind a singular call for help.

Breitenstein arranged for a hot breakfast to be served by Charlie Schrage of the Grand Pacific Hotel. He established a general headquarters for the relief committee in the upstairs rooms of a building on Front Street. Money, donations and supplies were collected and distributed from there.

Managers of the Florence Hotel on Front Street donated serving tables. Mrs. F.S. Lusk sent dozens of fresh eggs. In the dark hours before the sun rose above Mount Sentinel on Sunday, Aug. 21, Schrage and warehouse manager of the Missoula Mercantile, Tyler B. Thompson, sped through the streets of town. They arrived at a warehouse and loaded their car with ham and breakfast meat for the refugees.

With word spreading fast, donations began piling in. John R. Toole met with Breitenstein and handed him a hefty \$50. After Toole, a guest of the Shapard

hotel donated a \$5 bill, saying another \$5 could be cajoled if needed. But even though Breitenstein could orchestrate these efforts on the fringe of this great disaster, he had no idea how many refugees would arrive, or in what condition.

### Fly-by-night train

When the train of refugees pulled into Mullan, Idaho, not a breath of relief filled their fragile lungs. Instead, the wind gushed smoke from the west. Backed with the force of a tornado and now generating its own weather system, the fire ripped through the forests as Kid Brown hooked another boxcar onto his locomotive. Brown's train did not stay in Mullan long before the main fire caught up with it.

Crown fires like the Great Fire of 1910 occur when flames leap from one treetop to the next like a line of matchsticks igniting. There is a terrible beauty in crown fires when

See 1910, page 12

# All along the watch

**A**S A LOOKOUT, he must spot fires, guide men to put them out from afar and use the advantage of his height to warn them of changes less noticeable from the ground. Gene Miller detected three small burns this year, including in Alder Creek. This fire season has been wet and slow compared to last year's watch.

So Miller looks and listens for visitors almost more than he scans the damp evergreens.

He wears his dark green US Forest Service jacket to lessen the wind's chill as he steps out to the catwalk rimming the small cabin. He greets a visitor approaching the steep steps to his summer home.

"Hello!" Miller shouts down.

"Are you open?" asks the man below.

"Yes. Come on up if you'd like. The views are much better up here."

The traveler from Arizona is afraid of heights, but determined to swallow his fear, he slowly climbs the three flights of narrow planks to where Miller patiently waits.

"Wow."

He hadn't intended to say it so loudly. He'd planned to greet Miller first, but the vista was too overwhelming.

Peaks of a progressively softer blue ascend into view, some as far away as Graves Peak 30 miles past the Idaho border. The roads and homes of Missoula and Lolo wrap around half of Blue Mountain. Beyond an ATV trail and Workman's Saddle, wilderness stretches to the cloudy horizon. The advertising phrase "Big Sky Country" now resonates with magnificent truth for the traveler who thought mountains would obscure, not open, the view of heaven and Earth.

This reaction is standard.

Miller remains silent out of respect for the common, but profound discoveries of his visitors. He understands.

Miller, a retired Missoula school teacher, used to relish the change from teaching middle school math, science or history.

"When I came up here it was to get my sanity back, because it's a very different pace," Miller said. "And as far as what I tell and teach people, I'm not being judged on that like at school."

Miller notices the guest stands with his arms crossed and back hunched, so he invites the man into his 14-by-14-foot home to escape the wind.

The Arizonan forgets to introduce himself. He is too curious.

"What's the elevation here?"

"Six thousand four hundred and thirty-five feet to the peak," Miller answers.

"How high is the tower?"

"Forty feet to the floor and 10 to the top of the cab."

The Arizonan puffs his cheeks and whistles. He doesn't speak much again until they share goodbyes, absorbing the absolute quiet that rises so far above Missoula's boisterous bustle.

"Go down the top flight of steps backward," Miller says. "It's easier that way."

The heights-conscious man listens and carefully makes his way down to his older Ford Taurus.

It's not long before another visitor arrives.

About 10 people venture 14 miles up Blue Mountain Road to the lookout every weekday. Miller sees dozens each warm weekend.

Young Matthew VanHorn asked his parents Nicole and Jason to bring him and his older brother Nathan.

The two boys excitedly point to the dotted homes of Missoula but quickly seek other diversion. They investigate papers, binoculars and the tail of a flying squirrel that lie on the short counters.

Miller gives them a bag of stickers, bookmarks and other Forest Service goodies from his "treasure drawer" when he notes their dissipating thrill.

Nicole and Jason ask numerous questions about the

landmarks around them, while the boys, once again bored, begin petting Miller's small dog Sparky.

The Swan Range. Sheep Mountain. Rock Creek. Nine Mile Divide. Miller points through the panes as they listen.

He shows them the round map of the Osborne Fire Finder at the room's center. He explains to Nathan and Nicole how to rotate the edge, line up a pinhole and crosshairs with an object on the horizon and then locate it on the map beneath using the thin copper ruler.

"I regret that I didn't come up here sooner," Nicole says. "I've lived in Missoula 31 years and had never been up here."

Miller chuckles.

"I've been up here 35 years so I probably would have seen you if you did," Miller says.

Nicole nodded. "I didn't know what to expect be-

cause you can see the city here and there on the drive up, but then you get above the treeline...." she said, searching for the right adjective. "It's just amazing."

The same awe of being able to see "the whole world" inspired Miller to become a lookout. His interest in the Forest Service started as a young boy growing up in Condon.

During the summer fire crews were stationed near his home, and he would play games with the children who came along.

"They had a lookout right there by the station," Miller said. "We'd climb up that. We'd watch the fire fighters as they'd strap on their tools and pack their horses. Just a good lot of watching."

Miller's seen a lot of things people today would call the history of western Montana.

Teens from rural towns moved out of their home-



**Three flights of stairs** steeply climb to the cabin of Blue Mountain fire lookout where Gene Miller and Sparky spend their summers. Miller has worked at the same U.S. Forest Service post for 35 years watching for fires and sometimes directing crews to the burns.

story and photos by Jayme Fraser

# tower

to attend one of the area's two high schools. Miller studied at Flathead Valley High School with 250 other freshmen. One classmate was UM President George Dennison.

He would graduate with only 200 of his peers, not because of dropouts but because of deaths. Medicine and safety science has advanced much since then.

He remembers when Reserve Street went no farther north than third Street and no homes climbed the South Hills.

He remembers when a white "H" on Mount Sentinel and an "S" on the South Hills were removed because there wasn't enough room to add a "B" for Big Sky. Only Loyola's "L" and the university's "M" remain.

Even the mountains are different.

Blue Mountain didn't become a national recreation area with trails and additional roads until the 1980s.

"The lookout didn't used to have so many visitors," Miller said.

It's more difficult to recognize what has not changed.

The Forest Service likely bought the fire finder at the beginning of the 20th century, but Miller notes the checker-boarded colors depicting ownership on its map have shifted.

Sparky has chased grouse on the evening walks with Miller for years, but before that he had another companion.

And though Miller's stay at the lookout nears its seasonal end, he will return to share the same lessons on landscape and history he has been teaching for years.

The Forest Service has already sent many of the area's lookouts home for the fire season.

Miller suspects he has one, maybe two more weeks before he rejoins his wife near Potomac.

But he expects to be back next summer. And the next.

"I plan to do this as long as my health and my wife's health is good," Miller said.

The trees, mountains and winds will greet him once again in late spring. Even if the trees of a nearby peak burn in a driving wind.

Miller will be there to see it.

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**The Osborne Fire Finder** at the center of the Blue Mountain fire lookout is older than the cabin itself. Gene Miller shows a young guest how to sight along the copper ruler to determine a fire's coordinates. The original lookout, which was built in 1929, was replaced in 1962 with a sturdier one from Baldy Mountain.



**Gene Miller** walks the road that loops around the Blue Mountain fire lookout each evening. Sparky, his companion on the summer-long assignment, loves to chase blue grouse and chipmunks during the regular excursion.

## UM students struggle with slow 2010 fire season

by Justin Franz

A century after one of the most destructive fires in American history — 1910's "Big Burn" that devastated the Northern Rockies of Idaho and Montana — the fires of 2010 have proved to be far less tragic.

That didn't mean Amanda Bauman, who plans on returning to the University of Montana for this semester after fighting fires with the Sula Fire Crew in the Bitterroot National Forest, wasn't tired when she got back to base late Tuesday night after her crew spent six days fighting a fire near Hamilton. Six days of getting up at dawn, hiking into the woods, digging line and running hose will take a lot out of anyone. Especially when it's for 16 hours at time, day after day.

"You get up the next morning and do it again," Bauman said.

Even though it's hard work, Bauman should feel lucky to have a job making money fighting fire this summer, since many students who chose to work with private contractors — which usually pays considerably more — have been left without because the few fires that have flared up this summer have been taken care of by government agencies.

Jared DeMers, a 2007 UM graduate, works with Griz One Firefighting. DeMers started fighting fire in 2004 as a way to make money over his summer

vacation. Like many students, he depended on it to survive the rest of the year.

"It's really good money because you're out there in the middle of nowhere and there is nothing to spend it on," he said.

With two consecutively small fire seasons the students who fight fire aren't the only ones suffering, according to Shane Hart, owner of A1 Fire Services, based out of Lolo, Mont. At any given time during a busy fire season, Hart has up to 30 people working for him, and has a list of 50 to 60 people ready to work every year.

He estimated that there are 400 private contractors in the region, ranging from 'ma and pa' operations with only a few people, to full scale ones like his. With 2009 and 2010 being slow seasons, he predicted that many won't be around in a few years, but he remained hopeful about his own business.

"We borrow more money to get us through the lean times," he said. "About the only way to get through."

Hart said that he believes the main reason why private businesses have had a hard time finding work on fire lines is that government agencies have expanded the amount of equipment they own and people they employ. Although that means the government agencies can fight more wild flame, Hart said this will cost more for taxpayers.

"We're the last to get called, we're the low man on the totem poll," he said, adding that the government only pays contractors when they are fighting fire, not waiting to.

"The more they ramp up with taxpayer dollars, the more it hurts the little guy and the kid going to college," he said.

But even the students who were lucky enough to land consistent work with the government are going to be struggling, like UM senior Jordan Koppen, who worked for the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. He spent much of his summer working in Clearwater Junction, north of Bonner, and even though there were different projects to do while not fighting fire, it still doesn't pay as much as when the flames are flying, which usually leads to overtime and hazard pay.

"I pretty much depend on firefighting, and it's been a tough year, so I'm scraping to pay tuition," he said.

And if future seasons look like this year's, Koppen doesn't know if he'll stick around.

"If something else comes up with better opportunities, I may just take it because times are slow with fire," he said.

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## FOOTBALL

## Griz begin season with familiar foe

Troy Warzocha  
Montana Kaimin

With a new coaching staff in place and a horde of new players donning jerseys that are hot off the press, it may be the Grizzlies' opponents who are more recognizable to fans when Montana opens its season against Western State on Saturday.

This year will mark the second consecutive time the Griz open their season against the Western State Mountaineers. The Mountaineers represent a Division II school located in Gunnison, Colo.

On paper, the Griz throttled the Mountaineers a year ago for an emphatic 38-0 opening-day win.

However, to those who remember the actual game, it's hard to forget that the Mountaineers fought tooth and nail against the Griz, giving up only 10 of those points in the first half.

"Offensively, they're somewhat similar to what we are," Head Coach Robin Pflugrad said at Tuesday's press conference. "They're wide open. Last year, in that first quarter, they moved the ball downfield and got close to the red zone a couple times in the first quarter and we didn't play particularly well, especially in the first half."

The slow start by the Griz would become a theme through the 2009 campaign, and at least this Saturday starting center Alex Verlanic is keen to the type of fight the Mountaineers can muster.

"They're going to be fired up and ready to play," Verlanic said.

Going into the contest the Grizzlies have the edge over the Mountaineers in skill position players, history and a home field that annually boasts the largest attendance in the Football Championship Subdivision.

Quarterback Andrew Selle and running back Chase



Greg Lindstrom/Montana Kaimin

Quarterback Andrew Selle looks for a receiver during practice on Wednesday.

Reynolds are 2010 Walter Payton Award candidates, cornerback Trumaine Johnson is a candidate for the Buck Buchanan Award, and there are bound to be at least 25,000 football-starved fans looking to see the Griz pursue a third consecutive title game appearance.

Despite the potential for another blowout, the Mountaineers have the Grizzlies' undivided attention going into this year's clash.

"Obviously, you always want to play better," Selle said. "Coming into my senior year, after I haven't played for a year, you always challenge yourself to be better than the game before and obviously our last game was the national championship against Villanova, so if you're going by that number I'm going to try to be the very best I can be and be better than I was in that national championship game."

If there's one advantage that the Mountaineers have, it's that they've alleviated their opening day anxieties. "I think it's a terrific advantage for them," Pflugrad said. "Those first-game jitters and all those issues they've already gotten out of the way. They've already traveled and that's a plus for them, there's no question about that. So I think they're going to play much better than they played last weekend."

Last weekend Western State opened up their season with a 45-20 loss to Fort Hays State.

Selle, Reynolds and top wide-out Jabin Sambrano must be licking their chops after the Tigers racked up 543 total yards on the Mountaineers in the win. The yard total is dwarfed only by how coldly efficient the Tiger offense was throughout the contest.

Fort Hays State averaged 7.9 yards per play and had their best offensive output since Oc-

tober of 2004.

The only chance the Mountaineers really have is to take advantage of an offensive line that features four new starters and somehow find a way to beat new defensive coordinator Mike Breske's multitude of blitz packages.

"We're fast," said senior defensive tackle Tyler Hobbs. "We like to play fast. We're going to be coming from all angles. It's a fun style of defense to play. It's a little bit new."

It's been nearly nine agonizing months since the Grizzlies fell to Villanova 23-21 in the national championship game, and new coach Robin Pflugrad is well aware of the monumental task that awaits him after the ball is kicked off.

On top of having to replace 19 seniors and construct a new staff, he had to make sure the people he brought in can handle the sometimes outrageous ex-

pectations that surround the Grizzlies each year.

"Expectations in Missoula and in the state are unreasonable. I explained that to them - you're not coming into a situation that you're rebuilding. You're coming in basically to the University of Texas of the [Football Championship Subdivision]. So those are tough expectations."

Outside of just being the season opener, the game against Western State will mark Pflugrad's debut as the 34th head coach at UM.

While it will be his first time on the sidelines in this new position, Saturday's game isn't Pflugrad's first rodeo with the Griz.

Pflugrad was the wide receivers coach under former head coach Bobby Hauck in 2009 and has brought with him a new spread offense that hopes to move the ball quickly and neutralize teams that like to put pressure on the quarterback.

For eight years, he was an assistant under the legendary Don Read before taking assistant positions at Arizona State, Northern Arizona, Washington State, and Oregon.

With all the hubbub about what is new and different with the 2010 Grizzlies, securing a win over Western State is the oldest and most traditional thing they could do.

"For me, this game is my championship game," Reynolds said. "Every week, we prepare for a championship game. For me -being a senior- each Saturday you go out there could be your last Saturday. It doesn't matter who we're playing we're going to give it our all."

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## CROSS COUNTRY

## Young and old look to lead women to conference title

Taylor W. Anderson  
Montana Kaimin

When the Montana women's cross country team takes to the trails this weekend, both familiar faces and new blood will have the Grizzly program running with purpose.

The 2010 UM cross country season starts gentle this weekend with the men's and women's teams running an intra-squad meet Saturday.

The women's team brings experience from last year back onto the track. Seniors Brooke Andrus, Bridgette Hoenke, Katrina Drennen and Kara DeWalt return to lead the Grizzlies on a team that is both senior- and freshman-heavy.

If last year's results hold

any weight, Drennen will once again pace the field. Drennen finished third in the Big Sky Championship 5,240-meter race. She ran a 6:07-minute mile average to place 17th in the NCAA Mountain Regional 6k, qualifying her for nationals where she placed 174th overall.

Preseason polls have placed the Grizzlies at the No. 3 spot, behind Weber State and Northern Arizona. Third-year head coach Courtney Babcock said she has high expectations for her women's squad.

"Katrina going to nationals last year I think just helped everybody," Babcock said. "You can see that in track because now they can kind of see what's attainable."

Babcock said the team will benefit from the seniors passing their experience to the incoming freshmen runners, although Babcock said many of the freshmen already have the tools to make an instant impact.

"Two of them, Annie [Moore] and Keli [Dennehy], will probably run right away," Babcock said. "I don't always like to run the freshmen right away, but you know they'll come in and make an impact this year for sure."

Drennen said the team's top seven runners are stronger this year than her three previous years at UM. "We've never had it before on the Montana cross country

team," she said of the team's talent level. "It's kind of a fight to be on the top seven traveling team."

Babcock's coaching style continues to be a refreshing and helpful presence to members on the team.

"She really leaves our success up to ourselves," Drennen said. "She's there with all the tools, she's an Olympic athlete."

Babcock opened Thursday's practice with leg and core work before a period of visualization, a drill where the team listens with eyes closed to Babcock reading a story of a mythical race that mentally prepares them for a race.

"Courtney's positivity has been the number one reason

why we've been successful," Drennen said.

The UM women's team received two of the nine Big Sky coaches' first place votes in the pre-season rankings. The top three, Weber, NAU and Montana, go into this season within five points of each other.

NAU has dominated the Big Sky for a good part of the last 20 years. But with the guidance of Babcock and the solid mix of veteran and young runners, the Montana women can continue to build upon the success of last year, with the goal of winning the team's first conference title since 1984.

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## MISSOULA

# Bernice's adds a pinch of jazz

Hannah J. Ryan  
Montana Kaimin

Blues quartet Mudslide Charley added salty rhythms to the bread dough at Bernice's Bakery on Thursday night.

The saxophone and harmonica got the audience's feet tapping on the patio of Bernice's as the bakers pulled piping hot stuffed hard rolls out of the ovens. Lovingly named "Blues & Bread," this event occurs on the first Thursday of each month.

"We started putting on Blues & Bread with the idea of matching good, sustaining bread with free music to pull everyone through the hard economic times," said Scott Hevener, general manager of Bernice's.

Hevener emphasized that the hard rolls aren't only made for consumption. These gold nuggets should be savored. They are offered fresh once a month and shouldn't be missed, he said.

"They are divine straight



Sally Finneran/Montana Kaimin

Fresh bread sits on the counter of Bernice's Bakery Thursday, while Mudslide Charley entertains a crowd for Bernice's Blues and Bread event. Proceeds from the event are donated to the Missoula Food Bank.

out of the oven," Hevener said. "Our employees know when these things are baking and sometimes stop by on their

way home from the bars. It's a little secret from us bread makers to the public."

Marco Littig works the elec-

tric guitar and is lead singer for Mudslide Charley. Littig also co-owns Bernice's with his

See BERNICES, page 10

## CAMPUS

# Beats by the 'M'

Emerald Gilleran  
Montana Kaimin

A wave of livetronica music flooded the bars this summer. Supported by traditional sounds familiar to jam band and funk fans, the inventive electronic style is finding a home once again tonight at the bottom of the "M."

"Beats by the Books" is a show put on by the University of Montana's Business Careers in Entertainment Club and features three acts, each fitted neatly into this popular Missoula music niche. Peacetreaty, Bock's Elder and DJ Coma will be bringing the bass at the Phyllis J. Washington Amphitheatre at 5 p.m.

The event is one of many BCEC will put on this year.

"It's imperative we keep up to date on current music trends on campus, as well as the social trend in attending shows," said BCEC member Caitlyn Fransen.

The trend right now, Fransen said, is shifting toward bigger beats and bigger bass.

"This is pretty much really heavy bass dance music," said the show's headliner Angelo Patino, a member of Los Angeles-based group, Peacetreaty. "I incorporate different keys and sounds, but my main goal is just to make people dance with big tracks, big drums and big bass."

Peacetreaty, gathering a following in Los Angeles' electronic music scene by blasting bass-heavy dubstep rhythms, is made up of three members who perform separately under one moniker. Tonight, Peacetreaty's Angelo Patino will represent his group.

Patino, 22, said he has no idea what to expect but is excited to come to Montana. "I'm super stoked the show is at the University," he said.

Mac Kelly, BCEC president, said Patino should expect an enthusiastic turnout, and should come with as much energy as he can. "Everyone should expect a huge sound system and a big dance party," he said. "That is Missoula, I have no doubt it will be amazing."

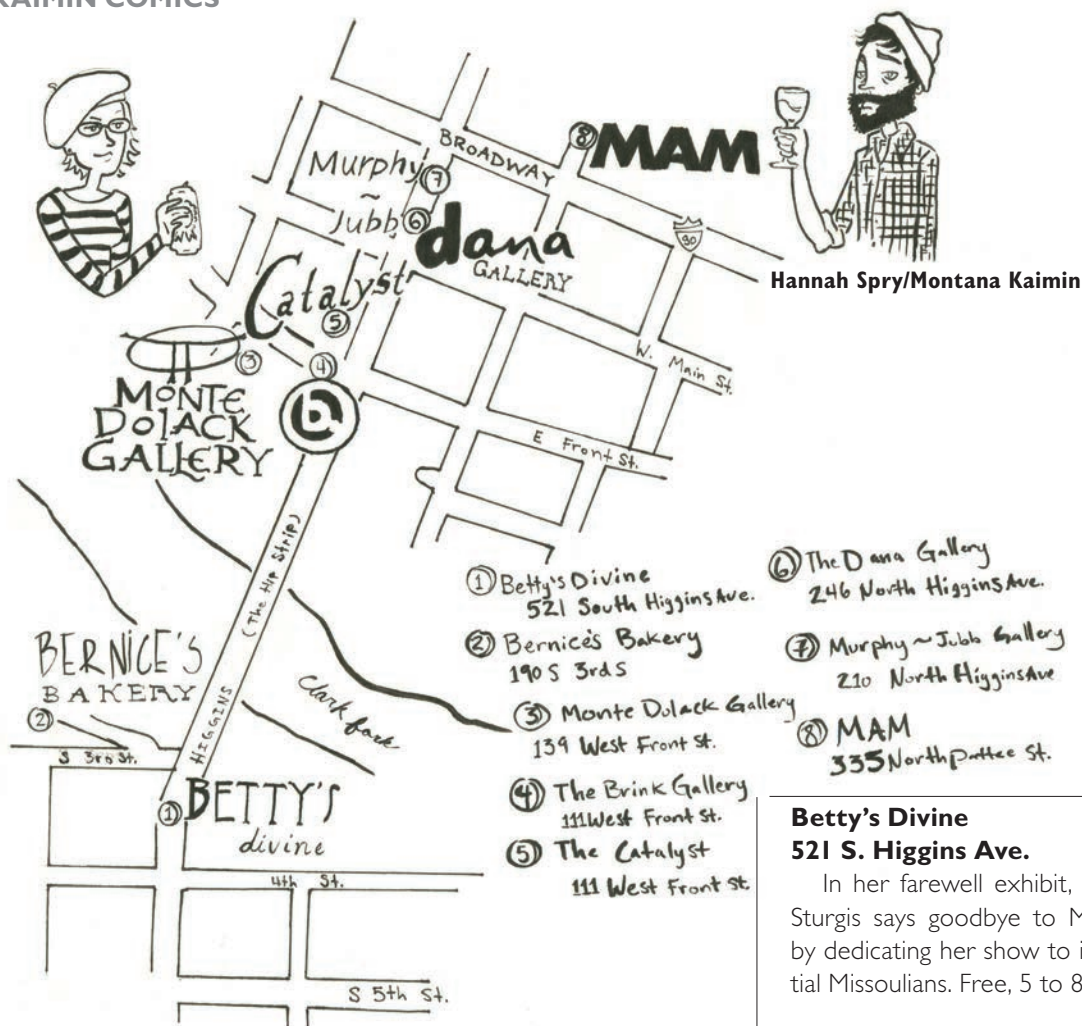
BCEC member, Amy Ettinger, said Patino's style is key to bringing as many people to the show as possible.

"This show exudes Missoula, not only because of the location but because of the mix of all kinds of people that listen to this style of music," she said.

See BOOKS, page 10

# First Friday Gallery Listings

## KAIMIN COMICS



### Missoula Art Museum 335 N. Pattee St.

Along with the standard six grand exhibitions, featured photographer David J. Spear showcases a mosaic of unforgettable Montana shots from the 1970s contrasted with Manhattan of the '80s and '90s and the Flathead Indian Reservation of today. Spears will host a 7 p.m. talk on his work. Beer, wine and other beverages will be served. Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

### Dana Gallery 246 N. Higgins Ave.

Inspired by life on the ranch, Montana artist Shirle Wempner's impressionistic horses, birds, bears and dancers prowl in the Dana Gallery's "Introducing Shirle Wempner." Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

### The Catalyst 111 N. Higgins Ave.

Photographer Marcy James changes her style for this exhibition by showing sketches. Free, 5 to 7 p.m.

### The Brink 111 W. Front St.

A gang that quite possibly put the fun in funky, Washington artists Renee Adams, Howard Barlow, Justin Colt Beckman and Justin Gibbens introduce their "Call of the Wild" series, an exhibition inspired by life in the West. Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

### Betty's Divine 521 S. Higgins Ave.

In her farewell exhibit, Amber Sturgis says goodbye to Missoula by dedicating her show to influential Missoulians. Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

### Monte Dolack Gallery 139 W. Front St.

Monte Dolack's showcase debuts a fresh series of acrylics inspired by Glacier National Park in commemoration of the national park's 100th anniversary. Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

### Murphy-Jubb Fine Art 210 N. Higgins Ave.

UM alumnus Kendahl Jan Jubb's nature-influenced "New Watercolors" series is introduced. The showcase of brilliantly colored paintings of Montana flora and fauna is accompanied by the acoustic performance of Stan Anglen and Friends. Free, 5 to 8 p.m.

### Bernice's Bakery 190 S. 3rd St. W.

It's all about the bees, and not the birds at Shana Mattheis' "The Amazing Bee Show." Art inspired by bees, including beeswax and resin paintings, adorns the walls of Bernice's Bakery. Free, 5 to 8 p.m.



Local blues band Mudslide Charley plays Bernice's monthly event to promote warm hardrolls and quality tunes. Sally Finneran/Montana Kaimin

**BOOK**  
From page 9

Patino said it's his loyalty to his music style that keeps the fans coming.

"I try to keep it cool with my fans, and I think they respect that. Without my fans, I would be nothing, and I try not to forget where I came from," Patino said. "I get to express myself through music. I love the electricity in the air from a really big crowd. There's no better feeling. It's music that I love, and how people respond and feed off it."

BCEC puts on several shows each semester to provide members with practice promoting events.

Fransen said this may be the club's biggest event "because everyone has money from their refund checks to spend."

The event is open to adults ages 18 and up, and admission is \$7, or \$5 with a Griz card.

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**BERNICES**  
From page 9

wife, Katherine.

"It's a great way to promote our bread. People usually get the hard rolls the day after they're baked, missing them when they're best," Littig said.

Phil Hamilton, who plays the saxophone and harmonica for Mudslide, had weekday bar hoppers calling out for "more sax!" by the time they were wrapping up for the evening.

Tahj Bo manned the bass,

"We started putting on Blues and Bread with the idea of matching good, sustaining bread with free music to pull everyone through the hard economic times."

Scott Hevener, general manger of Bernices

and his improvisation had everyone rhyming with him.

Ultimately, it was drum-

mer Roger Moquin that kept it all together and had the locals asking for CDs and inquiring

enthusiastically about later shows.

"They should play more often," said Greg Luther, a University of Montana creative writing graduate student. This Blues and Bread evening was his first, and he said he heard about it while hanging around Bernice's.

"Mudslide Charley is always here first Thursday and sometimes there is a guest musician. Last month we had a walk-up performer; she really was a hoot," said Hevener.

The event, which is a promotional opportunity for the local bakery, also donates 25 cents of each hard roll sold. So far Littig estimates Bernice's has collected a couple hundred dollars for the food bank.

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# Bottoms up to charity



Greg Lindstrom/Montana Kaimin

Sarah Kester pours a beer at the Kettlehouse's Northside Taproom Wednesday night.

**Emerald Gilleran**  
Montana Kaimin

Some people run a 5K to donate to charity; others like to drink to give back to the Missoula community. The Kettlehouse Brewery's Northside location offers that opportunity.

The brewery, known for its rich, hoppy flavors, gives fifty

cents of every pint sold to a local nonprofit Wednesday nights. It's called Community U-Nite – a pretty genius idea, considering people here love to give back and love their micro-brews.

This Wednesday, a sign boasting this week's charity in big letters encouraged passersby to stop and have a drink.

If Kettlehouse's "Brick and Mortar" porter – with a modest 10.5 percent alcohol content – weren't enough, the chance to drink for the Watershed Education Network was.

Jay Roof, the taproom manager, paced back and forth behind the bar as the place filled up. Although he had a hard time hearing even himself, he

said the night wasn't about him. It was about WEN and the table they had set up near the door.

"It's a great night to come relax, drink the great fresh Kettlehouse beer," he said. "Everyone can have some fun and Community U-Nite is a great networking tool, and connections are made whether they are new or old."

Josh Gubits, field director of WEN, said he loves Community U-Nite. "This is the second time we've been able to do this. Last fall we raised a couple hundred dollars and also awareness of Watershed in our neighborhood creeks," he said while sipping a pint. "It's a great night for nonprofits to get information to the public, and to drink good beer."

Even on the job, Gubits found time to sip a Cold Smoke and chat with the people it seemed he'd known for years. All over the bar, chatter about "the wife" and "the job" floated through the carbonated air as WEN's piggy bank filled up.

A sip of Double Haul's IPA – a beer for bearded fishermen who like beer so bitter they can almost chew the barley – and another couple quarters

is dropped into WEN's fund. Smooth operators who like their beer to taste like dessert topped off their Lake Missoula Ambers to raise WEN's ticker.

It seemed everyone at the Kettlehouse had a favorite beer.

Josh Fleming, a Missoula native, sells software and said his favorite is "of course, Cold Smoke." He didn't know about Community U-Nite walking in, but he thinks it's a clever idea.

Betsy Hands, running for House District 99, said she loves Cold Smoke as well. "This is my district, and it's a fantastic way for nonprofits to build and for our neighborhood to come together in a cool historic building. We can build our quality of life this way," she said.

Roof said Missoula is the kind of city where fishermen, politicians and computer nerds can be found in the same bar and simultaneously fight for the same cause.

"Kettlehouse builds a community with the locals, and it's a chance to enjoy quality beers in a safe environment," Roof said.

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## 1 IN 10 LAPTOPS IS STOLEN

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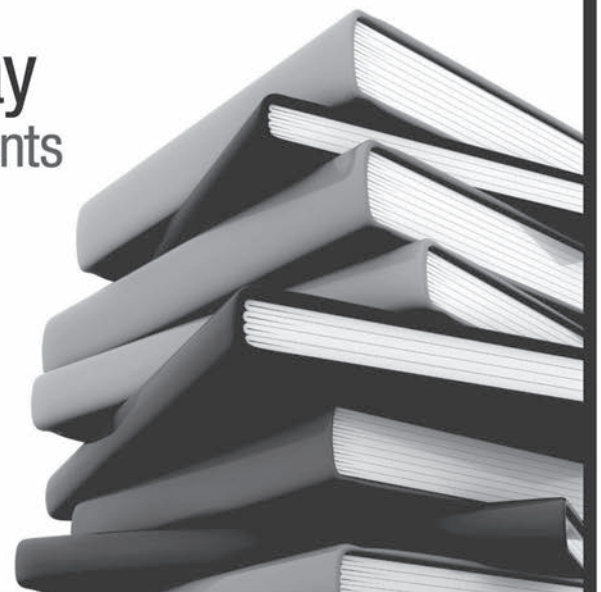
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**1910**  
**From page 5**

viewed from a distance. Wings of shocking orange flames flick up from this rolling mass of smoke. You can hear it consuming the forest. The trees, when they're aflame, crackle like fried bacon and squeal like water pressed tightly into vapor. An ominous awe seduces your gaze into the eye of the flames, and what reaches your ears is a roaring comprehension that death is racing at you.

The Northern Pacific tracks ran roughly along what is now Interstate Highway 90. The great fire raced up behind the refugee train as it stopped in Taft, Saltese, De Borgia and St. Regis, attaching cars and collecting occupants where it could and blowing straight through towns when it had to.

Rocking along the tracks, the refugee train was no comfortable ride. The boxcars were packed with people hunched on floorboards — exhausted and filthy, some of them half clothed. Patients still rehabbing from callow surgeries or aged invalids determination engraved across their faces were consoled and cared for by nuns and nurses.

Eleven-year-old twins Dorothy and Dorris Baldwin stood among the darkened mass of boxcar refugees. Their mother was a cook in one of the railroad camps outside Wallace and did not return before the town was burned. The hysteria of the moment overtook their grandmother, who went to retrieve her purse from their little house. The twins watched her struggle to catch the departing train as fire swept up behind her.

Aristocrats and vagrants, bankers and ranchers, dignitaries and drunkards alike ferried together upon this train. Some

clung close to their dog or cat. One woman suddenly slipped into labor. Her contractions arrived at shorter and shorter intervals as the train neared Missoula.

**Welcome to Missoula**

Conductor Brown pulled into the depot, hauling in a sallow load. An estimated 500 occupants in varying states of distress stared out from the boxcars. A.J. Breitenstein stepped up to meet the exhausted refugees as they descended from the boxcars, giving directions according to what ailed them. He had prepared the Masonic temple to accept the most fatigued into their quarters. Doctors, nurses and nuns from St. Patrick's Hospital stood by to treat the injured.

The fraternal orders, Sons of Herman and the Eagles, gathered alongside Breitenstein, as well as the Salvation Army and members of the lumbermen and railroad unions.

Others hung around the depot entrance, just waiting to see what would arrive.

Dirty-faced families dropped from the train, haphazardly dressed or wearing barely anything at all. Those who had held their sorrow in over the mind-numbing journey broke into tears. Some searched the pools of people, hoping to find loved ones they had been separated from in the rush.

Missoulians came to their side. Men carried the sick and injured to ambulances and carriages as the women served coffee and sandwiches on the lawn outside the depot to those in favorable conditions.

Two young men gleefully kissed the depot floor and strolled off down the road into town, singing and prospecting parlors for a glass of beer. One young misfit, arriving with no family, took off with an unkindly sort of character, never to be seen again.

**Second night**

As ash rained down from the clouds, spectators standing on Higgins and Main gazed westward and raised a fuss about what appeared to be flames brightly lit along the mountain ridge. An old man, blowing on a pipe, chided them for their nervous racket, saying it was only the setting sun. The nervous spectators were duly offended and embarrassed, but in the end, he was right. Missoula was safe.

Crooks and hobos were said to be roaming the area, and Mayor Andrew Logan enlisted an emergency team of policemen to patrol the outskirts of town. The mayor also restricted anyone from watering their lawns past 6 p.m. under penalty of fines and arrest. Volunteer crews cleared trash from empty lots to lessen fire danger within the city.

By nightfall on Aug. 22, A.J. Breitenstein held \$3,500 from contributions that had poured in from around the area. In the end, he would raise over \$5,000.

"We can furnish food and transportation to all of the needy who wish to return home," said Secretary Breitenstein to the Missoulian as refugees grew anxious to return and rebuild their communities. "They will be provided with clothing if they need it to travel, and also an amount of money sufficient for their need while making the trip, and until they can meet relatives or friends."

**Relief trains**

When fire burns as hot and as intense as the Big Burn, the fury often ends as soon as it began. After a few days, reports from the the Missoulian and news at the Forest Service offices began reporting the situation was contained within the Coeur d'Alene district.

The Great Fire of 1910 changed the

mindset of forest firefighters. Experts, often ex-military, were consulted, and a comprehensive strategy of attacking fires akin to warfare was adopted. Lookout systems and trails were built to detect and squash fire starts as soon as they occurred.

The tactics of fire prevention that were adopted have resulted in a larger fuel buildup within the forests than was present before 1910. Prescription burning and mechanical removal of timber is used to reduce the fuel buildup. "Science is actually teaching us more about what fire does and how often it's needed, and what are the benefits and drawbacks of using fire and tools to restore watersheds," said Rose Davis, spokesperson for the Northern Region and a Type I wildland firefighter.

Davis said that the country has seen larger, hotter and longer lasting fires over the past 15 years. She said there is a renewed emphasis on thinning the forests and prescribed fires. "Nature's going to play its course. If we get a fire in a hot, dry area and it gets a wind event, it's going to grow substantially."

John Hamilton, fire scientist for the Lolo National Forest, says the biggest difference between 1910 and 2010 is the human infrastructure in place. The "chain of command" and modes of communication, transportation systems and firefighting tools have all advanced as a direct result of the Great Burn.

"I'm not sure if you would ever get anything exactly like 1910 again," Hamilton said. "You could have severe fire seasons, no doubt, but I don't know if the conditions will ever repeat themselves where you can get another 1910, in my mind."

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