Montana Kaimin, October 31, 2018

Students of the University of Montana, Missoula

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**Edited by Margie E. Burke**

**Difficulty: Medium**

**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.

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 3  6  4  7  1  9  5  8  2
 7  8  1  4  9  3  2  6  5
 2  3  7  8  9  5  1  4  6
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### Answers to Last Week’s Crossword:

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Elections ain’t broke, they don’t need fixin’

One of the first things we all master on campus is how to avoid eye contact with MontPIRG volunteers. Whether by pretending to look at our phones while walking into the UC or giving the Griz statue as wide a berth as possible, the endless calls of “Are you registered to vote at your current address?” just have to be avoided sometimes.

But however annoying it can be to get constantly pestered by petitioners with clipboards, they’re usually out there for a good reason: because it’s really hard to get young people to give enough of a shit to vote, especially in midterm elections. On average, less than a quarter of eligible voters age 18 to 24 actually cast ballots in the 2014 election, which is, like, really bad.

Get out the vote organizations like MontPIRG and Forward Montana make themselves omnipresent on campus, ready to register a bleary-eyed student voter at a moment’s notice because they know the only way to get our generation to do anything is to make it as easy as possible. But they don’t just register voters, they also help people like us (who are too lazy), and rural and disabled people (who have better reasons), to get their ballots counted by collecting and turning in early and absentee ballots through a process known as “ballot harvesting.”

If you have to work on election day, or can’t make it to your polling place, or just don’t want to have to figure out how to buy stamps for your mail-in ballot, giving your ballot to a third-party group like MontPIRG to turn in can be the easiest way for a lot of people to vote. And for many Montanans, especially rural, elderly and disabled Montanans, it’s the only way they can vote.

A legislative referendum on this year’s ballot, called LR-129, wants to ban this practice. The referendum, authored by Republican state senator, and owner of the world’s creepiest smile, Al Olszewski, is rooted in the same bullshit bad-faith argument Republicans have been making for years: that election security is under threat by the specter of organized voter fraud, and we need to put preventative measures in place.

It is nearly impossible to overstate the extent to which organized voter fraud does not exist in the United States or in Montana. It’s a lot like a straight answer from a UM administration official, you can dig all you want, but the chances are next to zero you’ll find anything.

LR-129 is a pointless exercise in making it more difficult for a lot of Montanans to vote, students included. A vote NO on LR-129 is a vote that keeps participation in our elections as easy as possible, which is something our generation should be able to get behind.
Fixing a broken political system for dummies

Voter turnout in the United States is abysmal.

In the 2016 general election, overall voter turnout was just under 60 percent. Even fewer young people voted, with only 50 percent of eligible millennials exercising their right to vote. These numbers were lower for racial minorities and lower income voters, with about 40 percent casting a ballot.

There are many understandable reasons people don’t vote. Sometimes they don’t know how or can’t register, they can’t afford the day off work, or they don’t have transportation to their polling place. But often, they just do not care.

If only a minority of the population votes, then that minority group becomes the only one with their interests represented. Baby boomers vote in much larger numbers per capita than young people, and guess who receives far more government benefits than anyone else?

Many theories have been formed and literature written about why Americans don’t vote, but instead of torturing you with a bunch of dry data, I have come up with my own simple solution to the problem!

In a perfect world, voting would be mandatory and required by law.

Now, I know what you’re thinking, and no, there would be no elections police kicking down your door in early November to drag you off in cuffs, forcing you to be participate in the democratic process. To make this work, a lot of the barriers that prevent people from voting today would need to be eliminated.

First, voter registration would be made available online to all people, and would not contain legal barriers like voter ID laws and other insidious voter suppression techniques.

Second, absentee ballots would be made an option in all 50 states. A lot of people don’t have a way to get to the polls, and having a ballot sent to your door a month before the election makes voting more accessible. Absentee ballots are also much harder to tamper with than online voting.

Third, national elections would be turned into holidays in which every single person gets the day off — and gets paid — to go and vote.

Fourth, penalties for failing to vote would be overwhelmingly minor. Fines would be small, 5 dollars at most. A consistent failure to vote would result in the loss of that right for the next election, with it being given back immediately.

And conversely, repeated success in showing up to vote would result in small bumps to your voting stipend.

Fifth, like jury duty, a legal avenue to abstain from voting would exist. Of course, one would have to physically go to the local courthouse and fill out annoying paperwork and pay a fee.

In countries like Australia, Singapore, Luxembourg, and Peru, voting is required, and unsurprisingly, voter turnout is higher, and people in those countries generally feel more represented.

There is room for medication in mental health

The last time I attempted suicide was during a manic episode when I was 18 years old. In the past five years, I’ve realized this suicide attempt probably wouldn’t have happened if I had been medicated.

I’ve been on and off a pharma party’s amount of medication for the last decade, and it’s honestly been a bit disheartening to have nothing work for an extended period of time. Nothing in mental health treatment is “one size fits all,” and usually it takes a bit of trial and error to find what works for you. This is especially true for medication.

It’s easy to get discouraged when something isn’t working. When I started writing this column, I was hopeful that the new combination of medication I was on would be beneficial in the long term. As someone with bipolar disorder, it’s difficult to find the right mix to help with keeping my moods stabilized. When one half of my Medication Combination™ was increased (the antidepressant half, specifically), things quickly began to devolve. For a few long and anxiety-inducing days, everything became overwhelming. Sleep became more elusive. My speech was too quick. I couldn’t stay still.

In short, I was starting to feel manic again.

I was quickly taken off my antidepressants, and things started to normalize again. Of course, that means my normal depression came back as well, but I felt less out of control than before. Still, though, I was disappointed. I’ve experienced situations like this throughout my life, and there are times when this shit starts to feel hopeless.

As I said, nothing in mental health is going to be a universal treatment, and I have ample reason to be disappointed in my experience with being medicated. There’s a part of me that wants the medication to “fix” me, normalize me. But that’s not how medication works, and that’s not how people seeking help through medication should feel. There’s no “normal” to get to, no part of anyone that’s broken. Just feeling better, more stable. Medication might be able to get you there.

Medication has its pros and cons, just like any other form of treatment. It can be great and helpful and all that you ever could have asked for, but it might not always be like that. None of this mental health stuff is easy, and it’s probably never going to be. But it can be better, and fighting through the hard shit like medications that don’t work well all the time is how you get there.

A few years ago, I wouldn’t have been able to recognize an oncoming manic episode. A few weeks ago, I was able to stop one before it got worse. With or without medication that is working correctly, that right there is progress.
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Summer abroad costs could rise

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Study abroad programs offered in the now-terminated winter session might move to other sessions, but it could cost students more.

Previously, students who did not have the time or the money to spend an entire semester or year abroad could go on faculty-led study abroad programs during the winter session. Rachel Dierken, the education abroad coordinator, said there are many reasons why a short, faculty-led abroad program is attractive to students.

“Students who haven’t traveled before prefer to travel with peers,” Dierken said. “Students are also looking for programs with a specific content or focus.”

Classics professor Matthew Semanoff led a study abroad program to Greece over winter sessions, which had to be approved by the University three times. After the winter session at UM was cut, he had to reevaluate how the program could continue.

In January 2013, Semanoff took his first group of students to Greece. He said it was important for students to experience the sites in person, rather than only by reading about them. Each trip had 15 to 20 students, and the majority were students outside of the classics program.

“Students in majors that are really high credit loads often can’t miss a whole semester without going away from their original academic plan,” Semanoff said. “You could still go in January and get three credits in that short period. Otherwise, it can be difficult to get that kind of international experience.”

Semanoff said he is looking at ways to continue the study abroad program to Greece. One option is to move the program to the end of fall or spring semester, after students take a one-credit class. Another option is to keep the length of the program, but move it to summer.

Marja Unkuri-Chaudhry, the director of the Global Engagement Office, said several programs that had taken place during winter session have been moved to the summer. But moving these programs to the summer can be difficult for some.

“One consideration is the cost, because that can be more expensive over the summer because it is the tourist season,” Chaudhry said.

“IT’S OK TO NOT BE OK.”

Enrollment is down, anxiety is up

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More students at UM are seeking help for anxiety. According to mental health counselors and students alike, that’s a good thing.

“College counseling centers across the nation are seeing an increase in the number of people who are seeking help,” Mike Frost, Curry Health Center director of counseling, said. “It’s becoming more common, and this is true for us as well.”

A quarter of UM students received professional help for anxiety from 2016 to 2018, but only 17.1 percent of students sought help from 2012 to 2014, according to the 2018 American College Health Association biennial assessment.

“Anxiety in and of itself is not a bad experience,” Frost said. “A lot of people use anxiety as a motivator. Procrastination is the classic example of that. As the deadline approaches, their anxiety goes up, and their brain functions at a higher level.”

Oscar Grey, a grad student at UM with a bachelor’s in psychology, pointed to the evolutionary significance of anxiety.

“It’s probably the reason our ancestors survived,” Grey said. “But you can’t let the fear of that saber-toothed cat keep you from coming out of the cave.”

About 30 percent of students said anxiety impacted their academic performance in the 2018 NCHA assessment. According to Frost, anxiety becomes a clinical issue once it persists for two to four weeks. When facing a new challenge, feelings of excitement turn to panic.

That panic creates a hellish environment for students, Frost said. It comes in increased heart rates, shallow breathing, and numbness or shaking hands. Dizzying states of hypersensitivity lead to a total crash, he added. Many people who suffer from anxiety disorders go out of their way to avoid stressful activities altogether, Frost said.

Grey, who spent his entire life dealing with anxiety before receiving treatment from Curry Health Center, said anxiety can be helpful or hurtful. At 46, he scheduled his first appointment for counseling.

“School was the best thing that ever happened to me, and I didn’t want anxiety to ruin it,” he said.

It’s up to medical professionals to properly diagnose and address anxiety once a student recognizes there’s a problem, a process that Frost likens to “nailing jelly to the wall.”

The staff at Curry operates at maximum capacity, booking appointments two weeks out. Student fees fund the center and declining enrollment has led to cutting 20 staff members over the past seven years, according to Frost. But Frost says that will not stop a student from receiving treatment when it’s needed.

Grey arranged for an emergency appointment in 2014 after having panic attacks in class. He said within 48 hours, he met with a counselor, a psychiatrist and a doctor.

“All you can ever do is talk to somebody,” he said for those still combating anxiety. Grey said he hasn’t had a panic attack since 2014.

Jamelet Echeverry-Laursen, a 19-year-old pre-nursing major, talked to someone about her anxiety before coming to UM. During her freshman year at UM, a panic attack caused her to faint while speaking in front of her class. For her, the difference between a healthy bit of nerves and a crippling anxiety disorder was clear.

“It was kind of like as if someone cut off my leg. That’s the way I would start panicking,” she said.

The stigma surrounding mental health kept her from going to Curry for help initially. She now uses social media to remove that stigma for others.

Echeverry-Laursen still suffers from occasional panic attacks. She had one recently when she sat with her sister who got a piercing. But a combination of medication and therapy have given her tools for coping with anxiety.

“You never get over things, you just get through them. You’ll never be cured, but you’ll always get better,” she said. “It’s ok to not be ok.”
Dead Heads and Moms Are Students, Too

Classroom life as a nontraditional student

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From new wave to whammy-bar abuse, the iconic music of the ‘80s gave the world Def Leppard, Michael Jackson, Queen and many other timeless classics. Bill Griffin, now 49, couldn’t resist hazy concert halls as an 18-year-old freshman at Berkeley in the late ‘80s. His goal of attending 100 Grateful Dead concerts outweighed his desire to go to class and, after four years of study, he dropped out.

Now, 31 years later, his black Fender sweatshirt is the only obvious remnant of his rock-and-roll past. Little bits of silver highlight his otherwise dark hair, light wrinkles and oval, wire-rimmed glasses make him stand out as a nontraditional student. It’s been 10 years since Griffin took a class and he’s starting full time at UM this semester.

Though students ranging from 18 to 25 make up the majority of UM attendees, 299 students over the age of 50 are hitting the books this fall, according to the University Data Office. That number has stayed fairly consistent in the last three years with 291 students over 50 in fall 2016, and 300 in 2017. The oldest student currently enrolled at UM is 80 years old.

“It can be intimidating,” Griffin said. “You are going to stand out to your professors and the other students because you’re older. And my brain just doesn’t work as well as it did 30 years ago. I think it’s just slowing down a little bit.”

But being an older student isn’t without its advantages. Many nontraditional students say their life experience gives them an edge over the youngsters at UM.

Jody Marmaro, 54, started working toward a masters in education and a teaching license this fall. She earned a degree in geology from UM 30 years ago and she was married the Friday of finals week. Her first daughter was born nine months and one week later. Marmaro had five kids in six years and homeschooled all of them.

Homeschooling all of her children and teaching other kids at co-ops throughout her life solidified Marmaro’s passion for teaching. She’s entering the master’s program with 30 years of experience and some other unusual advantages.

“It’s a little bit different when you’re my age,” Marmaro said. “Because they look at you like mom, they act differently. There are certain patterns that play out in a classroom that I’ve already seen, and I know how to handle, that new students that haven’t had the experience aren’t going to be prepared for.”

But the perspective she’s developed with ample life experience has led to arguments between her and her peers in the classroom. Especially when it comes to scientific principles.

“Over the last 30 years I’ve seen scientific principles somewhat change as we get new information,” Marmaro said. “There are social norms that come into play in science. There are things they’re allowed to look at now that they weren’t allowed to look at before. I have a perspective that scientists aren’t always right. They aren’t absolute. They’re people, they make mistakes, they’re subject to the whims of society at large. That can cause some arguments in the classroom.”

Marmaro isn’t the only nontraditional student that has seen major changes in the classroom. Marnie Craig, 57, has found professors to be condescending at times, especially when the classroom implements certain technology.

Craig has already experienced a great deal in her life. She has been a flight attendant and traveled the world, she has her own business, she won a publishing deal in a writing competition and spends multiple hours a week working on her book. She applied to UM to study journalism and has plans to become a freelance reporter.

“The hard part is everything is geared toward a young person,” Craig said. “The whole program is geared toward launching young people into life, and, well, I’ve already launched.”

In her three years as a nontraditional student at UM, no one has ever asked her what it’s like to be a nontraditional student, she said. Her age is the elephant in the room, and she wishes professors and advisers would acknowledge it.

“Nontraditional students are a minority, and their life path and goals don’t always fit into the construct of undergraduate academic programs,” Craig said. “Having a professor or advisor ask what it is like would, at the very least, help students like myself feel acknowledged for our differences and challenges.”
DARTH VAPOR

Electronic Cigarettes Added to Tobacco-Free Policy

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The University of Montana now includes electronic cigarettes in its tobacco-free policy, adding vapes to its ban on cigarettes, chew and hookah use anywhere on campus.

The addition comes seven years after the University implemented the “Tobacco-Free UM” policy, and numerous studies have determined that e-cigs both raise health concerns and are not proven to be an effective way to quit cigarettes.

“Until now, we just didn’t know enough about electronic cigarettes to make a decision,” said Linda Green, the wellness director at Curry Health Center.

According to the American College Health Association’s biennial survey of UM, electronic cigarette use among students increased from 2016 to 2018, while fewer smoked cigarettes and chewed tobacco.

Although Green, who oversees UM’s efforts to help students quit tobacco, sees the benefit of fewer students smoking, she also says there is no science supporting electronic cigarettes as a healthy substitute.

The nicotine content in some products are double or triple that of the average cigarette leaving e-cig users more likely to become addicted, and health journals are producing reports on the effects of vaporizing e-cig juice. Green cited a June 2018 report connecting the vapor produced by electronic cigarettes with damage to the lungs’ ability to fight diseases.

Lung damage is not the only health concern for Green when it comes to using electronic cigarettes. In 2014, an e-cig exploded inside someone’s purse and forced the Missoula County Courthouse to evacuate.

A portion of the ACHA’s survey asked students if they supported adding electronic cigarettes to UM’s tobacco-free policy, with close to 70 percent saying they did. A similar survey conducted by Green’s office throughout the 2017 school year yielded similar results.

“We wouldn’t have made the decision without the students,” Green said.

Christian Smith, a 22-year-old at UM, said he started using electronic cigarettes to quit his pack-and-a-half per day habit.

“I’m going to be a business major. It’s very unprofessional to show up for a meeting smelling like cigarettes. So, I wanted to get that smell off me,” Smith said.

Although he’s been asked multiple times to move off campus after lighting up a cigarette, he said nobody has told him not to vape on campus, or complained about the blueberry-flavored plumes from his vaporizer. Still, standing with his vape in hand at the smoker’s outpost in front of the Lommasson Center on Arthur, he plans to adhere to the new policy.

Green says a surprising number of students who have never smoked a cigarette are coming to her office for advice on quitting electronic cigarettes. She encourages any student interested in quitting smoking or vaping to visit her office at Curry Health Center any time.

“Our concern is the health of students,” Green said, “both smokers and nonsmokers.”

Christian Smith, 22, a University of Montana student, puffs a cloud of vapor from his mouth on campus in front of the parking garage near the library Oct. 15, 2018. PHOTO QUINN CORCORAN
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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE SQUIRREL KIND

STORY HELENA DORE
GRAPHICS JACKIE EVANS-SHAW
Deep within the recesses of University of Montana dumpsters, dangling atop oak tree branches, creatures lurk. Up to three pounds and two feet long, these bulging-eyed, furry fiends can be seen scurrying around UM’s campus, swishing their bushy tails and baring their yellow buck teeth at students.

Andrea Dobbins, 22, a UM senior and a journalism major, is among those who’ve been traumatized. “I’ve developed a rational fear of these goddamn squirrels,” Dobbins said. “I hate squirrels.”

This may seem harsh, but when one considers that Dobbins’ face was once inches away from what 18-year-old UM student Vince Tarallo Jr. described as “black eyes like a doll’s eyes,” it’s easier to understand where she’s coming from.

While Dobbins was living in Knowles Hall her freshman year, she would often leave her window open because she liked the cool temperatures. But one night, she suddenly awoke to a “pheft pheft” and a scratching feeling.

Alarmed, Dobbins opened her eyes, looked down, and locked eyes with a fat campus squirrel perched on her stomach.

“I screamed,” said Dobbins, and her roommate rushed to her aid. She grabbed their rainbow broom and swung it at the squirrel. She hit it, and it rushed out of the room. It ran away and Dobbins investigated, finding the entry point: a chewed-through screen.

Dobbins thought her squirrel troubles were over; but she was wrong. There was something squirrelly going on in Knowles Hall.

Every night, Dobbins said, the same squirrel would wait outside her window, ready for any opportunity to enter the room. Evidently, knocking the squirrel around with a broom wasn’t enough to deter the adamant creature. Even though she tried covering the screen with her grandma’s quilt, the squirrel kept chewing through it.

“I had to have them fix the screen three times,” Dobbins said.

Dobbins said she thinks the reason the squirrel was so determined to enter her dorm was because the people who previously lived there were probably feeding it. “Students leave food on the windowsills all the time,” she said.

As it turns out, the non-native eastern fox squirrels that populate Missoula are known for their daring food-seeking maneuvers and aggressive behavior.

Wildlife biology major Allison Riggs said she and others in her ecology lab are in the process of collecting data on UM’s campus squirrel populations. The group is investigating how rural and urban squirrel populations compare, with data collection to be completed in early November.

It is still unclear how many squirrels live on campus, but considering all the student handouts and nut-bearing deciduous trees, what squirrel wouldn’t want to live here? Students regularly spot squirrels rummaging through dumpsters and scaling the walls with abnormally large food items.

The eastern fox squirrel is the largest tree squirrel in the Northern Hemisphere, thriving near the deciduous trees often planted in city parks and on college campuses. Collecting and stashing nuts and seeds from oak, maple, elm and cottonwood trees into holes, these natural-born hoarders are just a little bit nuts.

According to a Montana Outdoors Magazine article published in 2011, these squirrels can be pretty destructive. They are notorious for raiding bird feeders, attics, sheds and garages, and sometimes even feast on insects, bird eggs and hatchlings.

Throughout Missoula and much of Montana, eastern fox squirrels often chew on wires, causing an impressive number of power outages. A Northwestern Energy report document released in March identified squirrels as Montana’s fourth leading cause of power outages in 2017.

According to a Montana Kaimin investigation (conducted, in part, via a table set up on the Oval with squirrel memes and free doughnuts), accounts from students suggest the eastern fox squirrels at UM have an elevated sense of fearlessness because of easy access to food.

Here are some of the best squirrel horror stories told during the investigation:
EDEN PASTORA GETS BITTEN

“One of those cocksuckers bit me once,” said 51-year-old Eden Pastora, a long-time frequenter of the UM campus. Pastora said he used to feed the squirrels often, but one day in the early 1990s, he was feeding a squirrel some M&M’s and the squirrel bit his fingers. Pastora shook it off, drop-kicked it and went to the Curry Health Center to get the bite treated.

Bites like these happen, but they’re rarely reported. According to Curry Health Center Director Rick Curtis, medical staff on campus have treated students for squirrel bites two times since 2010. Both occurred when the student was attempting to feed a squirrel.

Feeding the squirrels causes them to be more aggressive, Curtis said. “It is amazing, but there is actually a medical code (W53.21) called ‘Bitten by Squirrel.’”

Curtis added that there are no cases of rabies from campus squirrels, and that people often forget that they are wildlife. “I think there might be a lesson here … Don’t feed the squirrels!” he said.

ELLA DOHRMANN WENT FOR A WALK

Nineteen-year-old sophomore Ella Dohrmann was walking around Jeannette Rankin Hall when a girl in front of her started to approach a squirrel. Instead of running away, the squirrel held its ground, letting the girl get close.

“The squirrel bit her finger,” Dohrmann said.

The girl screamed and threw her hand up in horror, but the feisty creature did not let go. She shook off the attached squirrel and it “flew off into the air and ran away,” Dohrmann said.

ANDI ARMSTRONG SAT ON THE OVAL

Thirty-six-year-old Andi Armstrong, the assistant director of operations and marketing for campus recreation, also claimed she once witnessed a squirrel bite a student. When Armstrong was a student at UM, she said two of her friends were sitting and chatting on the Oval when all of a sudden, a squirrel ran up, bit one of her friends’ hands and stole her friend’s cookie.

Armstrong also noted that she and a friend once saw a distressed squirrel frantically running around the the road near some apartments just off campus with a yogurt container on its head. Her friend bravely approached the terrified creature and removed the container.

“He probably saved the squirrel’s life,” Armstrong said. “He was pretty scared to do it.”

She also watched a squirrel fall 30 feet onto the ground. “It must have been fighting… I didn’t know they were that resilient.”

Armstrong shared groundbreaking footage with the Montana Kaimin of a campus squirrel eating an entire taco. In the short 3-second cellphone video, the squirrel, perched on the edge of a trash can, can easily be seen nibbling aggressively at the taco.

JENNA SCHABACKER FOUND A TAIL, CARRIED COOKIES

“Don’t back down,” was the only suggestion UM graduate Jenna Schabacker, 29, could give to incoming freshman encountering the campus squirrels for the first time. A true veteran of campus squirrel incidents, Schabacker has the experience to back up her advice.

In the early fall of her freshman year, Schabacker was walking between the forestry building and Stone Hall when a squirrel ran down a tree and scurried along the busy sidewalk. A man on a bike with skinny tires started riding toward it.

Just as it was looking like the cyclist and squirrel would collide, it darted to the side. The cyclist, unable to stop in time, severed the squirrel’s tail from its body. The shocked squirrel ran up a tree to nurse its wound.

The cyclist seemed shaken as he slowed down, looked over his shoulder at the tail and then biked away. “I definitely think squirrels live through losing their tails,” Schabacker said. “I’ve seen squirrel tails since then on the ground.”

Schabacker even showed a photo she took a week before of a severed squirrel tail in the road.

Schabacker recounted another harrowing experience from her freshman year where a squirrel leapt up at a bag of cookies she was carrying near Knowles Hall.

“I had gotten back to campus early from winter break, right when the squirrels are most hungry,” said Schabacker. “It was one of those sunny, cold days and I was carrying a shoebox filled with peanut butter cookies. When I was about to enter the door to Knowles, a rough-looking squirrel lounging on the cinder block wall leapt off and ran directly toward my feet as if he were going to run up my leg,” she said. Then, the squirrel jumped up at the box of cookies.

“I swung my bag at the squirrel,” Schabacker said. “I was in defense mode.”

The squirrel jumped away, but then came back for Schabacker. She ran into Knowles Hall to escape.

“Now I kind of wish I had given a cookie or something, but at the time I was pretty freaked out,” she said. “They’re surprisingly unafraid of people.”

Though eastern fox squirrels become extra bold when food is scarce, there are oth-
er factors that contribute to their aggressive behavior. In a study conducted at Iowa State University in 1975, Richard John McCloskey correlated greater population density among eastern fox squirrels with increased aggressive behavior between squirrels.

**CAMDYN HITCHCOCK PLANNED HER FUNERAL**

Eighteen-year-old Camdyn Hitchcock said she was once walking to a class in the Payne Family Native American Center when she witnessed a feud between two squirrels in the tree above her.

“Oh no, I’m planning my funeral already,” Hitchcock thought as they clawed furiously at one another.

One of the squirrels eventually shoved the other out of the tree, and it fell to the ground near Hitchcock.

“It was fat and it was coming to attack me,” she said.

**BEN HEWITT TOOK A NAP**

Ben Hewitt, 22, said that during his sophomore year, he often hung out behind the Liberal Arts Building to do homework. One afternoon, he was eating lunch there and fell asleep. After dozing for a while, he suddenly awoke and realized he was almost late to class. Hewitt quickly closed up his bag and ran.

When he sat down at his desk, his bag started moving. “I instantly thought of an alien in a Ridley Scott movie,” Hewitt said. “My friend noticed it, too.”

Shocked, Hewitt opened the bag slightly and started to reach in before the loud chittering started.

“I think there’s a squirrel in my bag!” Hewitt responded when a professor asked what was going on.

The professor let Hewitt take the bag outside. When he opened it and his lunchbox inside, he discovered not one, not two, but three squirrels. “It was an insulated lunchbox with food,” Hewitt explained.

**TREVOR MITCHELL FOUND PIZZA SQUIRREL, AND OTHER TALES**

Last year, Trevor Mitchell, 19, was walking out of Don Anderson Hall when he witnessed a glorious sight. “I saw a fucking squirrel the size of my hand carrying a slice of pizza up a tree,” he said.

Nineteen-year-old Peris Ochsner said during orientation, his tour guide mentioned he was once sitting on a bench when a squirrel took food right out of his hand.

Eighteen-year-old Rae Frisbie said that she once saw a squirrel chase after a lady with a doughnut in her hand.

“‘A squirrel once stole a Pop-Tart from my friend,’” said Kat Cowley, a women’s gender and sexuality studies major and a senator for the Associated Students of the University of Montana. “She never fully recovered.”

Twenty-year-old Haley Von-Goedert said a guest speaker who once visited her class mentioned he and his friends used to go around campus catching squirrels and releasing them into the boys’ locker room. When people asked about it, he and his friends would say they were part of the forestry department and that they were capturing squirrels for “scientific purposes.”

University Relations Communication Manager Cary Shimek said a former faculty member who has now passed away used to let squirrels into her office in Brantly Hall to feed them. This faculty member, who people nicknamed “Snow White” and “the squirrel whisperer,” loved the squirrels, said Shimek.

One day, after leaving bits of food in her office, she came back to discover it was trashed. A group of squirrels had broken in, taken the food, thrashed her papers and peed all over.

Hated by some, beloved by many, the squirrels on campus are undoubtedly a controversial cast of characters. Experts aren’t sure exactly when eastern fox squirrels were originally introduced to Missoula.

In a Montana Outdoors Magazine article published in 2011, retired wildlife biology professor Kerry Foresman said a physician from the Midwest who enjoyed them released some onto his property in Missoula sometime in the 1960s. The squirrels reproduced quickly, pushing out native red squirrels into the forests surrounding Missoula. Now the two species live in separate spheres. Red squirrels are relegated to the sparsely populated pine forests surrounding Missoula’s urban center, while the eastern fox squirrels thrive near the deciduous trees and garbage bins scattered throughout campus and the city.

The tale of one non-native species overwhelming a native one is a familiar one. But some on campus still have a soft spot for the eastern fox squirrels’ hilarious antics. Allison Riggs created a Facebook page called Squirrel Watchers of Missoula for people to post funny pictures, and 20-year-old Travis Hawkins, among others, expressed their fondness for the squirrels.

“I actually really enjoy watching the squirrels,” Hawkins said. “I’d be sad if they weren’t here.”
Wigs, pleather and gore prove to be more than just costume accessories for the creative people in Missoula who go all out for Halloween. For them, Halloween is not just a holiday. It’s a state of mind. They see this night as an opportunity to understand and express themselves, make social or political statements and embrace the beauty in darkness.

For some, it’s the spookiness of fall they admire, from the jack-o’-lanterns that light the neighborhoods to the moon peeking through ominous clouds and bare trees. Shelbie White, a 22-year-old senior at the University of Montana, said she loves the spirituality of All Hallow’s Eve, when “the realm between the two worlds is thinned.”

She shares her Halloween obsession with her dad, who turns his front yard into a graveyard each year with tombstones for each family member detailing their cause of death. White, who has a degree in culinary arts, has a tombstone that reads: “Whisked to death.”

White decorates her apartment each year and fits in as many scary movies and cider nights as she can. She loves touring different haunted houses with friends and gets a thrill from watching them scare easy. She likes to make her costumes fun and not hyper sexualized. This year she is dressing up as Beetlejuice, the title character of one of her favorite Halloween flicks.

For University of Montana students Mickey Haldi, 23, and Hazel Videon, 22, constructing costumes for Halloween is a hallmark of their friendship. The two met in Missoula in 2015 while living together in a feminist collective. That year they won a costume contest at a local house show venue called the Hockey House. They were “victims of the patriarchy,” which included adding blood to showgirl costumes.

One costume usually doesn’t cut it for these two, so they have multiple costumes for multiple festivities. This year they have three coordinated outfits: one is “Twin Peaks” themed, another is inspired by “The X-Files” and the third is based on the iconic “denim wedding,” Britney Spears’ and Justin Timberlake’s all-jean gown and tuxedo outfits they coordinated for the American Music Awards in 2001.

For the latter, they cut jeans up and pieced them back together.

“The costumes are so extra, with sequins and fucking glitter and rhinestones,” said Haldi. They try to be resourceful, digging through thrift stores for the perfect pieces. They said their crafty constructing is its own art form.

“We are both artists, so it’s fun figuring out how to work together cohesively,” said Videon. Haldi gravitates toward using conventionally ugly materials and child-like craft items and doesn’t subscribe to the separation that society puts between craft and art. They regard their costume-making process as performance art that makes political statements.

“It’s based in things we concern ourselves with on a daily basis,” Haldi said. “We constantly have conversations about different intersectional topics,” Haldi said.

Haldi and Videon said they don’t need a holiday to go all-out and make costumes for fun events. In fact, they are known to host their own themed parties, from masquerades to carnivals, encouraging everyone to consider the dress code. “You can be as crazy and fucking weird as you want to be any day of the year, and you should be able to feel confident,” Haldi said.
Government spying and Japanese death cults

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OF MONTREAL

The last time of Montreal came to Missoula in 2017, lead singer Kevin Barnes pranced around in a pink wig, orchestrating a colorful spectacle that spilled over the Top Hat stage. Performers in American flags and Russian-red spandex suits made out. A giant plush vagina and an abominable snowman even made an appearance. Barnes’ maximalist psychedelic pop pulls from prog rock, disco and electronic dance music, evolving all over the place since he founded the group in 1996. The band’s sound has bopped through the emotional crises of Barnes’ psyche, experimenting with identity and nihilism over 23 different records.

Only extraterrestrials could possibly know what he will have in store for the group’s return after releasing “White Is Relic/Imrealis Mood” this year. The overwhelming and apocalyptic album lives somewhere between the Trump era and ’80s club culture. Barnes was inspired by DJ Screw, who is known for slowing down elements of a song. Patience is a virtue on the track “Writing The Circles/Orgone Tropics,” and the “sliced-and-slowed” DJ Screw effect gives it a sickly and sedated quality. The record has a short, paranoid attention span. In “Plateau Phase/No Careerism No Corruption” Barnes sings, “If we put our ear to the ceiling, we can hear the government breathing. If we put our ear to the ceiling, we can hear the government breathing. If we put our ear to the ceiling, we can hear the government breathing. If we put our ear to the ceiling, we can hear the government breathing.

“Sophie Calle Private Game/Every Person Is A Pussy, Every Pussy Is A Star!” is a medley of psych-jazz and electronic. Its instrumental breaks resemble incomplete thoughts, spinning off into different tempos, instruments and sounds. The record sometimes feels like a bad trip or a conspiracy theory with wacky synth effects and spaced out vocals about gentrification, body dysmorphia, and the record sometimes feels like a bad trip or a conspiracist’s nightmare. Barnes’ maximalist psychedelic pop pulls from prog rock, disco and electronic dance music, evolving all over the place since he founded the group in 1996. The band’s sound has bopped through the emotional crises of Barnes’ psyche, experimenting with identity and nihilism over 23 different records.

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Of Montreal plays Saturday, Nov. 3, at the Top Hat at 8:30 p.m. Reptiliacs opens.

Spirited Award plays Friday, Nov. 2, at 7:30 p.m. at Zootown Brew. Koby and FIIULS also performing.

Four student organizations join to celebrate UM’s first Family Culture Night

SPIRIT AWARD

Elijah Fisher, a first-year graduate theater student representing the University of Montana Black Student Union, performs a poem as part of UM’s first Family Culture Night on Oct. 26, 2018. PHOTO REED Klass

LJ DAWSON
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@ljdawson0

Spirit Award is bringing its vexing psych-pop back to Missoula with a shoegaze grit, delving into dark subjects with its lyrics. Daniel Lyon, Chris Moore and Terence Ankeny formed the band in Seattle in 2014. The band’s sophomore album, “Muted Crowd,” is produced by Trevor Spencer, who has worked with Father John Misty and Fleet Foxes. During the recording process, the group took inspiration from Seattle and each other, swapping instruments to produce raw sounds and innovative ideas. Spirit Award’s lyrics are centered around death, anxiety and pain, casting a dark shadow on its dream pop and evoking a powerful moodiness. “Witching Hour” depicts Lyon’s paranormal experiences in an old house in Seattle, “Dark Night of the Soul” has enchanted, almost medieval sounding synths. “Supreme Truth” is about Aum Shinrikyo, a Japanese death cult. Light, dueling guitar melodies tease one another with gravelly vocals wavering between: “Trust in me, I’ll give you a reason. Drink the blood, come into the sanctum. Supreme in the light of the sun, but it’s never going to be enough.” Spirit Award’s otherworldly songs are full of strung out vocals, staticky guitar reverb and anxiety racing in the beat of its drums.

Four student organizations hosted a Family Culture Night at the Payne Family Native American Center on Oct. 26 as part of inauguration and Family Weekend.

The event was the first time the Black Student Union, the Pacific Islanders Club, Kyi-Yo’ (the Native American Student Association), and the American Indian Business Leaders hosted a joint event to celebrate and educate the vast expanse of cultures and backgrounds at UM.

On a predominantly white campus and in a mostly white state, the event marked the start of an important tradition at UM to make space and claim pride in cultures that have been historically ignored.

The Payne Center was packed with families and students, some even overflowing up the stairs. The event was opened by a prayer song, followed by four singers and drummers accompanying 15 Native American students as they performed traditional dances. Their intricate footwork and twirling regalia mesmerized the UM community members and families.

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When trying to avoid a walk home after a night on the town, an app-based taxi service like Uber or Lyft is usually your most convenient. Once you’ve opened up your phone, they’re only a tap away. But that ease of access means drivers carry all sorts of passengers, some weirder than others.

Forty-three-year-old Montana native Marcia, who asked the Kaimin to withhold her last name, became an Uber driver in May 2017 and a Lyft driver that September. She started driving when her husband was out of work and the family needed to make ends meet.

Marcia said each day differs in terms of how many rides she receives. There is no regular schedule, and there is a notable decline in riders when college students come back to school because most of them drive. She says her pay is cut by a third, due to an influx of students. But Marcia loves being an Uber and Lyft driver for reasons beyond the cash.

“You meet people from all over the world, and this has helped me get out of my shell,” she said.

Marcia said one of her most memorable rides was one she gave a group of exchange students from England and Ireland. As she drove them to a bar, the Irish students sang her “drunken Irish pub songs.” However, Marcia admitted that you have to “become a mom or a dad” to be an Uber and Lyft driver. This often means assisting inebriated people back to their homes.

“I said, ‘Hmm no, I don’t appreciate this.’ But within minutes, he was making inappropriate comments again. As they got closer to his house, the man reached his hand over from the passenger side and set it in her lap.

Silvonen reacted immediately. “What are you doing with your hand? This is my bubble, you do not enter my bubble,” she said. After that encounter, Silvonen bought a stun gun.

Experiences can be different for male drivers. A driver who requested anonymity said he once had a rowdy group of frat boys get into his car.

As he drove them to their destination, the guys got political, yelling, “Build the wall!” and “Drain the swamp!” Then he heard the boys laughing and whispering, he turned around and saw they were drawing swastikas on the windows. He remained silent until the ride’s end, when he told them all they received a negative passenger review. One rider is now banned from using the app in the future.

Despite these experiences, many drivers say driving is a great way to spend time. Sometimes driving for Uber and Lyft can provide a better environment than other jobs can.

“I’ve gained some really great friends,” Silvonen said. “I get more gratitude just talking to people on a daily basis.”
**SPORTS CALENDAR NOV. 1-7**

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<tr>
<th>PLAYING</th>
<th>DATE</th>
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<td>Women's Soccer at Weber State</td>
<td>Friday 11/2</td>
<td>ALL DAY</td>
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<td>Big Sky Conference Tournament</td>
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<td>Friday 11/2</td>
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<td>Saturday 11/3</td>
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<td>Cedar City, Utah</td>
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<td>Women's Volleyball vs Southern Utah</td>
<td>Saturday 11/3</td>
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<td>Women's Soccer at Weber State</td>
<td>Sunday 11/4</td>
<td>ALL DAY</td>
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<td>Big Sky Conference Tournament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women's Basketball at Gonzaga</td>
<td>Wednesday 11/7</td>
<td>7 p.m.</td>
<td>Spokane, Washington</td>
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Griz quarterback Dalton Sneed runs from Aggie defensive players late in the third quarter of the Griz loss to UC Davis Oct. 27, 2018 in Washington-Grizzly Stadium. *PHOTOS DANIEL DUENSING*
Approaching the end: Redshirt possibilities for Griz football

After three consecutive losses, the Grizzlies’ chances of making it to the playoffs are thinning out. But for athletes, more is at stake than just winning the remaining games of the season.

Montana has three games left in conference play. This means multiple football players can still count 2018 as their redshirt year.

NCAA Division I football athletes can play in four games and retain redshirt status. That means these players can gain experience on the field without burning one of their four years of eligibility. Prior to this season, playing in one game meant using one of those.

This rule changed over the summer alongside other revisions to NCAA policies. Usually redshirt seasons are taken in a player’s freshman season to help make the adjustment to collegiate athletics easier. But this new rule also makes it easier for older athletes who haven’t used their redshirt year to take it in later seasons. Being on the field for one play counts as playing in a football game when determining redshirt status.

Head coach Bobby Hauck said he isn’t concerned about preserving redshirt status for his athletes. He said Griz football’s priority is winning games this year, not planning for 2019 and beyond.

“We’re just going to play them,” Hauck said. “At the end of the season, if they haven’t played four games, then they’ll redshirt.”

There are 34 eligible Griz football athletes who can still take a redshirt this season. Twenty-eight of these players, or about 80 percent, are freshmen. Almost every true freshman on the team is still eligible. Only two Griz football players do not have redshirt status determined for this year.

The majority of Griz football players have already used their redshirt year. Because of this, 61 players are not eligible, despite the fact many of them have played in fewer than four games this season.

Here are some Griz players to watch for the rest of this season as redshirt status is determined:

Gabe Sulser, a freshman wide receiver, is no longer eligible for redshirt. He was a multi-sport star at Billings Senior High School, but a hamstring injury this spring stunted his start to the season. Since recovering, Sulser has played in five games.

Adam Wilson, Montana’s kickoff specialist, is also no longer eligible for redshirt. He’s the Grizzlies’ backup kicker and punter, but typically only takes the field for kickoffs.

Jeremy Calhoun, a senior running back, could still take his redshirt season. He was suspended for an assault charge earlier this fall and injuries have cut into his season. It’s unlikely that Calhoun will take his redshirt because he’s seen significant playing time in the last few games.

Sean Anderson, a freshman offensive tackle, is also eligible for redshirt. Since there are a limited number of experienced players on the offensive line, Anderson is among the underclassmen who’ve contributed when Montana lacked depth.

ELIGIBLE

Jeremiah Calhoun #8
Year: Senior
Position: Running Back
Games played: 3
Height: 6’0” Weight: 210
Hometown: Long Beach, California
Featured stat: 1,727 career rushing yards

Sean Anderson #75
Year: Freshman
Position: Offensive Tackle
Games played: 2
Height: 6’7” Weight: 318
Hometown: Litchfield Park, Arizona
Featured stat: Backup left tackle in every game this season

BREAKDOWN

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<tr>
<th>70</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Redshirting</td>
<td>Redshirting</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NOT ELIGIBLE

Gabe Sulser #7
Year: Freshman
Position: Wide Receiver
Games played: 5
Height: 5’9” Weight: 191
Hometown: Billings, Montana
Featured stat: Averaging 20 yards per touch

Adam Wilson #61
Year: Junior
Position: Kickoff Specialist, Punter, Kicker
Games played: 8
Height: 6’0” Weight: 181
Hometown: San Diego, California
Featured stat: Opponent starting field position second-best in conference

CASSIDY ALEXANDER, HENRY CHISHOLM
@cass_dizzle
@henrychisholm

COURTESY PHOTOS GOGRIZ.COM
Dressing rooms bustled with activity backstage at The Wilma last weekend. More than a dozen people rushed in and out, applying creepy makeup and wearing revealing costumes, almost all of which involved fishnet tights.

“The Rocky Horror Picture Show” was back for its seventh run in Missoula, with shows scheduled for Oct. 26 and 27. The cult-classic musical focuses on a couple, Janet Weiss and Brad Majors, who get lost in a storm and end up at the home of a mad “transvestite-from-Transylvania” scientist. The scientist, Dr. Frank N. Furter, unveils his newest creation, Rocky Horror.
Did you know Midterms are more important than Presidential elections?

80,000 officials will be elected into office this year, including the entire House of Representatives, 1/3 of the Senate, and 36 Governors.

VOTE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6

Not registered? No problem, in Montana, you can register on Election Day and then vote. Get all the information you need at i.vote.org/MontanaEDR

Problems voting? Call the Election Protection Hotline at (866) OUR-VOTE • (866) 687-8683