

MONTANA KAIMIN

THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

UM fentanyl vaccine research could save thousands of lives, but the future of human trials is uncertain
Story by Vivien Felker | Photos by Ava Rosvold



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Cover photo by Ava Rosvold

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Kiosk



The Montana Kaimin is a weekly, independent student newspaper at the University of Montana. The Kaimin office and the University of Montana are located on land originally inhabited by the Salish People. Kaimin is a derivative of a Salish language word, "Qe'ymin," that is pronounced kay-MEEN and means "book," "message" or "paper that brings news."

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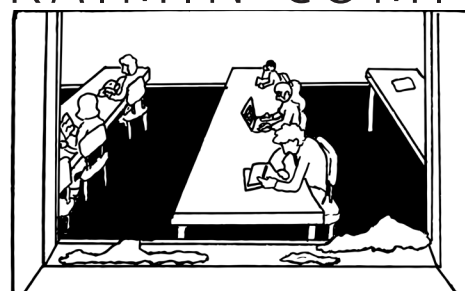
Winter Hours

IN PLACE DEC 11 - JAN 15

M/W/F 10:30 - 3:00
T/TH 4:00 - 6:00

WITH SOME HOLIDAY CLOSURES

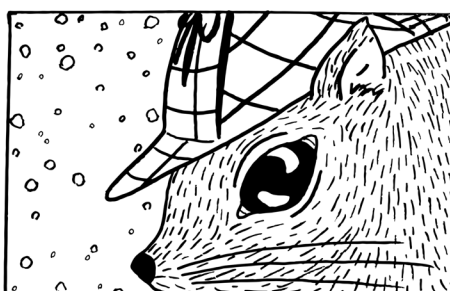
KAIMIN COMIC: SE 1 EP 7



THE STUDENTS ARE ALL
HUDDLED INSIDE, STUDYING
FOR FINAL EXAMINATIONS.



SOON, EVERYONE WILL GO
HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS.
THE CAMPUS WILL TURN
QUIET... TOO QUIET.



THERE ARE NO VACATIONS
FOR THE CRIMINAL MIND.
AS LONG AS THERE ARE
MYSTERIES TO SOLVE...



I WILL ALWAYS BE HERE.
*DETECTIVE SQUIRREL WILL
RETURN NEXT YEAR WITH
ALL NEW ADVENTURES! ★

BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

BARRETT

Montana vs Furman is the best game I'll ever watch

As Montana football prepares to face Furman in the FCS Playoffs, the memories of being a young Griz fan are flooding back to me. Missoula hasn't just been my home, it's been a refuge for my family. My grandmother is from Butte and is the daughter of Lebanese immigrant parents. After transferring from Montana Technological University to the University of Montana, she found a place that she loves and a school with a football team she'll always root for.

Now, she is a 76-year-old season ticket holder, going to games and cheering on her favorite Grizzlies. If you ask her today, she'll say that quarterback Clifton McDowell is pretty great. And, ever since I was a kid, I've also been enveloped in the allure of Grizzly Athletics.

I remember the weekends waking up and watching the Grizzlies play with my family. Tickets were hard to come by, but on the rare occasion that I got to go, it was electric. Washington-Grizzly Stadium shook with the roars of fans and I was one of them. But I was a 53-day-old baby when the Griz reached the greatest heights an FCS team can achieve: winning the national championship.

The Grizzlies beat Furman University 13-6 in the FCS National Championship game on Dec. 21, 2001, just under two months after I was born. My grandparents watched this game, and a team that brought them so much joy, won it all on a national stage.

Now, they'll get the opportunity to watch a rematch, and I'll watch a new version of something I never got the chance to see. Sure, it isn't the national title game, but it is one step toward a dream every football team and its fanbase chase each year. And for me, it comes at the perfect time.

I will graduate in the spring with a degree in journalism from my hometown institution. Even when I wanted to leave this place after high school, I came back and it was the best decision I could've made. I also get to watch the Grizzlies play at its peak.

I've covered some great moments over the past three years as a sports reporter. From Montana's upset in Idaho earlier this year to College Gameday in Bozeman, I've had the privilege to watch everything a young Griz fan could want. Now, I get to see a game with more meaning to me than any of the dozens I've been to, so far.

This upcoming game isn't just a rematch for two FCS powers. It's the culmination of a journey from Griz fan to a sports reporter covering the team his family idolized.

Montana hasn't been in this position in years. It has a chance to knock off Furman at home, something that's never been done in program history. It will have a chance to make the FCS semifinals for the first time since 2011, and even the national championship for the first time since 2009.

This all comes after a 2022 season when Montana lost three straight games and the Brawl of the Wild on a national stage. It was a team that lost multiple starters, one of whom was NFL practice squad linebacker Patrick O'Connell. This team's expectations were mixed. Now, after losing to Northern Arizona University in week one of conference play, the Grizzlies have cruised to victories on the back of a stout defense and revived offense led by McDowell.

It's been over a decade since this team has had the momentum and home field advantage to make another trip back to the championship.

It feels odd that a game with a team coming to Missoula from Greenville, South Carolina, feels more important than any national title game or playoff win that the Grizzlies could accrue.

The Paladins will come into town and play Montana for only the second time in the school's history. It has a chance to upset or go home in a dramatic fashion. But, for those around in 2001, it will be a chance to look back and reminisce on the glory days of Montana football.

For me and my family, it's a reminder of good times. Even in the drudgery of work and school, I'll get a chance to feel just like a kid again. This Friday will take my grandparents back to the highest peak a Griz fan could feel. It'll let me witness what they once had the privilege of watching 22 years ago.

Furman vs Montana doesn't need a positive result for the Griz for me. It's already the best game I'll get to cover. So thanks, Furman, for being good enough to come to Missoula. And thanks, Montana, for letting this kid live out a dream.

- Max Dupras, Sports Editor

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emily.tschetter@umontana.edu

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

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HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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



Baby baller

Gabby Moody, wife of Griz Basketball guard Aanen Moody, holds a spoon up to bring baby Kai Moody to the finish line in a baby race competition across the Robin Selvig Court during the Griz matchup against San Jose State on Dec. 2. **CHRIS LODMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Judge blocks TikTok ban, Montana advancing in FCS playoffs, Montana's outdoor economy grows

JUDGE TEMPORARILY BLOCKS MONTANA TIKTOK BAN, UNIVERSITY BAN STILL IN PLACE

A Montana district court judge temporarily blocked Montana's statewide TikTok ban on Nov. 30, saying it limits "constitutionally protected First Amendment speech," just over a month before it was set to go into effect at the beginning of 2024.

Montana became the first state in the nation to pass a complete ban of the app in May, citing the possibility of user data being shared with the Chinese government, since the app is owned by a Chinese company called ByteDance, and the "dangerous trends" users post could have negative influence on children. U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy said the state failed to be specific enough so it didn't overreach constitutional rights, and instead targeted TikTok for an unproven tie to a "foreign adversary."

The bill would have fined any app store allowing Montanans to download and use the app, along with TikTok itself, \$10,000 for every day the access continued. Molloy's block is only temporary, as a trial reviewing whether the ban is constitutional is not scheduled yet.

"The current record leaves little doubt that Montana's legislature and attorney general were more interested in targeting China's ostensible role in TikTok than with protecting Montana consumers," Molloy wrote in his opinion.

The Commissioner of Higher Education, Clayton Christensen, issued a directive for the Montana University System in January ordering a TikTok ban on all University-owned devices and Wi-Fi networks. Ali Bovingdon, chief legal counsel for the Montana University System, told the Kaimin the judge's block doesn't prevent the University System from having "reasonable regulations for government-owned devices," so the University's ban will remain in place.

"This is a developing situation, so the University will do what's best for students as it continues to develop," UM spokesperson Dave Kuntz said.
(Emily Tschetter)

MONTANA FOOTBALL DESTROYS DELAWARE 49-19, SETS UP QUARTERFINAL MATCH AGAINST FURMAN

Montana took down the Delaware Blue Hens 49-19 on Dec. 2 at the Washington-Grizzly Stadium in the second round of the FCS Playoffs with some dynamic offense and defense.

The Grizzlies faced off against its East

Coast opponent in a rematch that hasn't happened in 30 years after the pair's first and only meeting in 1993. That year, the Blue Hens visited and upset Montana 49-48 in the playoffs.

This year, Montana's offense sought vengeance in Saturday's game, scoring immediately and often in the first half with 35 points and some efficient rushing.

The Delaware defense struggled and the offense only managed 12 points in the first half.

Montana rolled with two scores in the second half to a victory with quarterback Clifton McDowell passing for 186 yards, two touchdowns and one interception while rushing for 51 yards and a touchdown. Running back Nick Ostmo led the rushing with 64 yards and one touchdown.

This game ended a three-decade losing streak against the Blue Hens and set the Griz up for its quarterfinal match against the Furman University Paladins on Dec. 8 in Missoula.

The last time Montana faced Furman was in the 2001 FCS National Championship game when the Grizzlies won 13-6.

It was Montana's second national title and its only one in the 21st century. Montana's only touchdown in that game came from Griz Hall of Fame running back Yohance Humphrey.

The last time Montana made the quarterfinals was in 2021 when it lost to the James Madison University Dukes — during JMU's last year playing in the FCS — 28-6.

If Montana wins, it will face either South Dakota or North Dakota State to reach the title game.

The last time Montana advanced to the semifinal was in 2011, during head coach Bobby Hauck's last season in his first stint at Montana, when it lost 31-28 to Sam Houston State, and the last time the Griz appeared in a title game was in 2009 when it lost to Villanova 23-21.

(Max Dupras)

MONTANA'S OUTDOOR ECONOMY RANKED THIRD-HIGHEST IN U.S., GROWS 14% IN A YEAR

From 2021 to 2022, Montana's outdoor economy grew 14% and became the third largest in the United States in terms of a successful economy linked to the outdoor recreation job industry, according to a recent report from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Montana outdoor job industries, including hunting, boating, fishing, snow activities and RVing, generated roughly \$2.9 billion in 2022, according to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research. Outdoor recreation also accounted for 4.3% of Montana's gross domestic product between 2021 and 2022. Neighboring states, including Idaho and North Dakota, have outdoor recreation GDPs of 3.1% and 1.8%, respectively. In 2021, outdoor recreation in Montana generated \$2.5 billion.

Melissa Weddell, director of the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana, said the growth "showcases the vibrant outdoor recreation industry and the economic prospects that come with embracing and investing in the outdoors," according to a University of Montana press release.

The outdoor recreation economy in Montana currently supports 29,453 jobs, approximately 5.6% of all employees in Montana. Nationwide, five million recreational jobs have generated around \$1 trillion each year.
(Chloe Olsgaard)

POLICE BLOTTER

ANDY TALLMAN
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Between game day, break-ins and bathroom incidents, it's been a week of passing, pissing and dissing. As we cap off our final issue of the semester, we leave you one last recap of the 12 shenanigans UMPD responded to from Nov. 20 to Nov. 30.

WEDNESDAY 11/29 - PISS POLTERGEIST

The ghostbusters over at UMPD received a report that, on both Nov. 27 and 28, someone urinated all over the walls and toilets of an Elrod bathroom. They don't know who. They don't know why. All they know is one thing: There's something afoot in that bathroom, and it makes people want to piss everywhere. Maybe it's in the water?

THURSDAY 11/30 - THE PARDEE NEVER STOPS

At around 1 a.m. in Pardee Court, an intoxicated University employee was stompin' and hollerin' in their apartment loud enough to wake up the neighbors. They were cited for disorderly conduct... and then again two hours later when UMPD came back the book 'em and they resisted arrest.

THURSDAY 11/30 - JUST LOOKIN' AROUND

At around 11:30 a.m., UMPD received a report about someone breaking into a vacant Cinnabar Court apartment at 3 a.m. There was no clue to the entry point aside from an open window. Nothing was stolen, but the bathroom door was damaged from being kicked in. My guess? Someone just really had to go. Desperate times, desperate measures. Maybe it was the Elrod pisser, looking for a new venue.

SATURDAY 12/2 - A ROWDY GAME

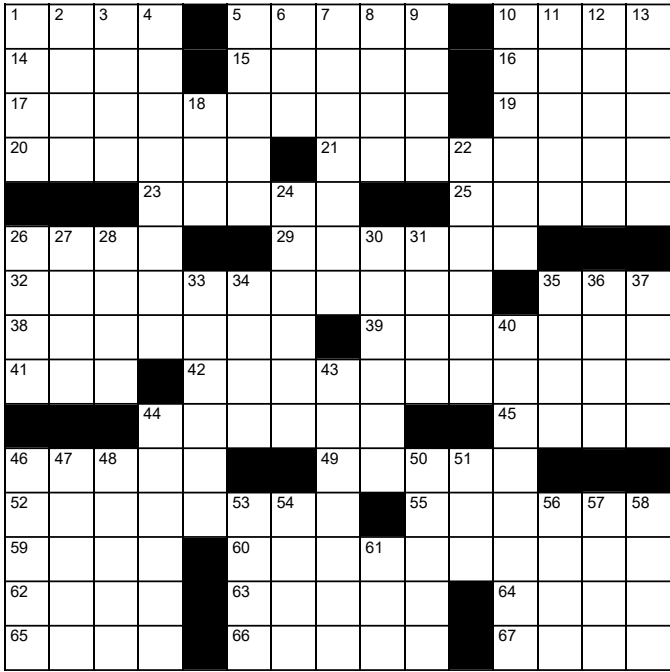
UMPD had a busier game day than usual this week, which UMPD police chief Brad Giffin attributed to people turning to alcohol because of the cold. UMPD responded to 18 total calls, including five lost and found reports and one call about a missing child who was returned to their father. It towed three vehicles and did a K-9 sweep of the stadium before the event with a sniffer dog. Five of the calls were for disorderly conduct, and at one fight, UMPD handed out two citations for disorderly conduct and one for simple assault because someone assaulted a security staff member who sustained minor injuries. UMPD got three medical assistance calls all related to alcohol.

Can't get enough? Start listening.

Tune into the last episode of the semester to hear one immigrant's story of navigating U.S. academia.



New episodes out every other Monday. Scan for the latest.



ACROSS

- 1 Type of bonding
5 Martini base
10 Gravy holder
14 Xerox competi-
tor, once
15 Ear-related
16 Writer Quindlen
17 Steinbeck's
"The Winter of
Our ____"
19 Organ knob
20 Like some jokes
or jobs
21 Military lockup
23 Takes a breather
25 Social outcast
26 "Thunderstruck"
band
29 Beginning
32 Socrates, for one
35 Non-____ (food
label)
38 More than a few
39 Trappings of
royalty
41 Poetic
contraction
42 "Spellbound"
actor
44 Type of voyage
45 Potpie
ingredients
46 Frequently
49 Himalayan nation
52 Horse
maneuvering
55 Make possible
59 Dinghy pair
60 "Rio" singers
62 Court order?
63 Shower feature
64 Mortar ingredient
65 Downhill racer

- 66 Hero pilot played
by Hanks
67 Storm centers

DOWN

- 1 Skirt length
2 Comparable (to)
3 Tax write-off
4 Completely
surround
5 Windmill parts
6 Umpire's call
7 Prepare for a
formal
8 German philoso-
pher Immanuel
9 Type of sax
10 Cager's target
11 Like draft beer
12 Positive pole
13 Slender candle
18 Laudatory lines
22 Ordained ones
24 Hand-____
leather
26 Church nook
27 "Silkwood" star

- 28 Shabby joint
30 Royal seat
31 Fortune teller
33 Eyes and ears
34 Hindu garment
35 Singing group
36 Flaky rock
37 Hardwood trees
40 Audience's
approval
43 Military bigwig
44 Bungled, with
"up"
46 Signs of spoilage
47 Weak
48 Short-winded
50 Piggy-bank item
51 Come-go link
53 Says in a post-
script
54 Wise one
56 Donkey's call
57 Diane of 2020's
"Let Him Go"
58 Culminates
61 Feel poorly

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Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

Holiday Disaster-o-scope

HALEY YARBOROUGH
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Finals season is upon us, and as we crawl toward the finish line of this hellish semester, we all have the sweet release of winter vacation on our minds. But, as we all know, the holidays are not nearly as joyful as Hallmark movies portray. Drunk aunts, burning ham, the Elf on the Shelf suddenly gaining consciousness – holiday season is usually a recipe for disaster. So, as you prepare for yet another week of chaos, look to the stars and find what disaster defines your yearly holiday shit-trip.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21): Your mom kissed Santa Claus and she liked it. That's right. While your old ass snuck down to take a peek at your presents, you caught Mom and jolly old Saint Nicholas swapping spit. He does like milk and cookies, and your mom is a ho, ho, ho.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19): St. Nick squeezed his cheeks down the chimney, but you forgot to put the fire out. That smell you wake up to on Christmas morning? That's not sizzling bacon, it's sizzling Santa.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20-FEB 18): Maybe Christmas does not come from a store, but means something a bit more. Or, that's what your parents tell you when a certain hairy green goblin "steals" all your gifts on Christmas Eve.

Holiday spirit? Love and family? FUCK THAT. You want your Lego Death Star set, and you want it NOW.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): You thought you'd try deep-frying the ham this year. Unfortunately, you drastically miscalculated the ham-to-oil ratio and dumped a 10-pound pig into a small vat of boiling oil. You lost some hair follicles, but at least you'll show up on a YouTube compilation of holiday fails.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): You really should not have eaten that undercooked tamale on Christmas Eve. Now, you and other unfortunate family members are spewing stinky gifts from both ends.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): You like sparkle and pizzazz, but your desire to be the brightest house on the block

has backfired. One moment you're decorating your house with Christmas lights, the next you're being carted to the hospital for a broken back. Dad is proud, and hey, you don't look half-bad in a back brace.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): Every holiday, Aunt Martha and Uncle Joe spew political hatred over the Christmas ham. And every year, you avoid their arguments the same way you avoided the horrors of your parents' divorce: Just Dance. Sure, the tensions are high, but your dance moves are slaying and those "Hips Don't Lie."

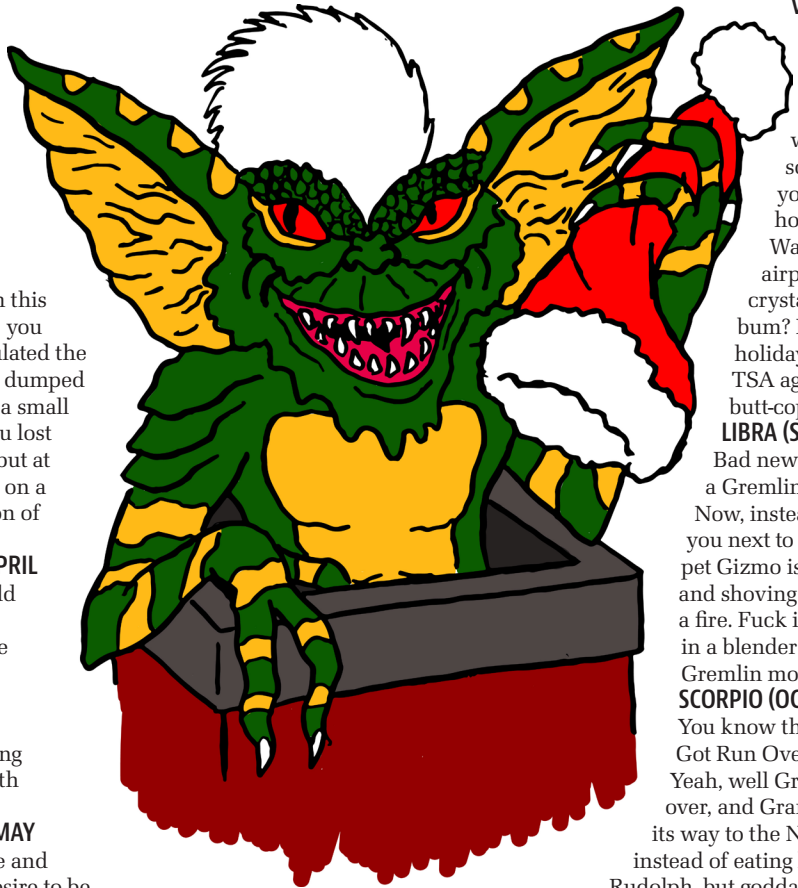
CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): Mom left you home alone on Christmas again. You think you're prepared after watching all six "Home Alone" movies. Turns out that guerrilla warfare strategy is total bullshit. A few broken ornaments and ice can't stop a home invader... or their GLOCK.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): It's all fun, games and drinking 'til your feral hamster crawls into your stocking on Christmas Eve. We get it, you've been bad this year. But do you really deserve this? Even a stocking full of coal is better than unveiling a mummified Nibbles next to your Christmas breakfast.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): Thank God you got your asshole bleached. We get it, you wanted to give something special to your bone-bro for the holiday. But really? Walking through airport security with crystals shoved up your bum? Nothing screams holiday cheer quite like a TSA agent probing your butt-cophagus.

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22): Bad news, Libra, you fed a Gremlin after midnight. Now, instead of cuddling you next to a fire, your new pet Gizmo is choking elves and shoving Santa's ass into a fire. Fuck it, time to put it in a blender and make some Gremlin morning mimosas.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): You know that song "Grandma Got Run Over by A Reindeer"? Yeah, well Grandma did get run over, and Grandpa shot one on its way to the North Pole. Now, instead of eating ham, you're eating Rudolph, but goddamn does revenge



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN taste good.

University security uses drones to watch crowds from sky

HAVEN SAGER

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Fans filled up on beer as players warmed up on the field, preparing for the Brawl of the Wild at the University of Montana on Nov. 18. But on the roof of the Champions Center, above the Washington-Grizzly Stadium, four students and a former Air Force pilot gathered around a drone refusing to fly. The cold seeped into their bones, but they had a job to do: monitor the crowd from above.

Brian Zacherl sat calmly under the white tent, watching the growing crowd from a second drone in the sky with nothing but a computer screen and an Xbox controller.

According to Zacherl, founder of the drone business CrowdCover, drone surveillance mainly provides a livestream from the drone directly to the police chief and other first responders' phones, so "if there is any kind of incident, they have the ability to see what's happening at that incident."

Zacherl uses two tether-system drones when asked to work at a venue like UM's football stadium. These drones have a long cord attached to them to supply a battery, which can last up to 24 hours without landing to repower. They are big, enterprise-level military drones ranging in price from about \$50,000 to \$150,000 and can only be purchased from the government.

"Really, they fly themselves," Zacherl said. "It takes the human out of the loop because you're trying to fly something in third person."

The demand for this kind of drone surveillance has grown for events like concerts, Major League Baseball games and college football games over the years, Zacherl said. UM has been investing in Zacherl's drone service for many years to keep people safe during football games. Since most of these events involve large amounts of alcohol, having eyes in the sky can deter dangers that are unnoticeable from the ground, including alcohol poisoning, drug overdoses, fights and even active shooters.

Zacherl's team at UM largely consists of University students trained and certified to fly drones and work through the Autonomous Aerial Systems Office, otherwise known as the "drone office." Jon Cordova, a student who works with Zacherl, has monitored wildfires in the Bitterroot Valley and in the Rattlesnake with the Program in Ecological Agriculture and Society Farm to detect weeds and identify plants. He's also had experience around drone security in Afghanistan when he was an active Marine in 2012.

"It gives people that are not in the immediate area an actual view of the situation instead of relying on word from someone who is talking over the radio," Cordova said. "If there is an incident where someone is being disorderly like swinging on a cop or accusing the police of abusing them, we are able to record all of that."

Even though drones have benefits, Cordova said negatives can arise when using any kind of technology. There is always the possibility of drone malfunction, which could potentially hurt someone, he said.

"They're machines and machines are prone to failure sometimes," Cordova said. "Sometimes the drones don't recognize where it's at and they'll do what we call 'toilet bowl swinging' because it's on a string and you're not entirely sure if this thing is gonna crash or not."

Zacherl was exposed to drones during his 26 years in the military where he started off as a Marine and shifted into becoming an Air Force pilot. In 2019, Zacherl and other military personnel kickstarted their company after jumping through what he described as "a bunch of small, moving, fiery hoops" that came with purchasing high-tech drones from the government.

"It is interesting or funny for me to see the way different crowds behave," Zacherl said.

He shared the story of surveying a Kenny Chesney concert in Bozeman where older women in the crowd started causing trouble.

"They would just down as much booze [as possible] and fight other women for men and we were just like 'wow,'" Zacherl said. "Maybe it's because it's Kenny Chesney that so many women got fired up, but we did not expect that."

When it comes to air security, the University has its bases covered, but as far as normal security cameras on campus, there are still some holes to be filled. UM Police Chief Brad Giffin said the University's police department is not in control of the University's campus security cameras. Each building purchases its security equipment and is in charge of its security. These camera systems can range from \$500 to \$1,500 per camera depending on features and if they are indoor or outdoor models.

Since each building is in control of its security, there are five different software applications the University uses across campus which makes accessing surveillance difficult for UMPD when they need it. UMPD recently put together a committee as part of the Campus Preparedness and Response Group to try to standardize video surveillance across campus, to make sure everyone is purchasing the same equipment so it can



The CrowdCover team brings a tethered drone in for landing on top of the Champion Center while fans clear out of the Washington-Grizzly Stadium after the Brawl of the Wild football game on Nov. 18.

CHRIS LODMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN

be fed into UMPD.

"Technology is moving forward so fast," Giffin said. "That's why we decided to put this committee together so that we could concentrate on one type of camera that would work well into the future."

One problem with buildings being in control of their own security is the parking lots go unmonitored, which makes some students uneasy. Hannah Beurer, a 19-year-old pharmacy student from Great Falls, Montana, said the lack of security is something she thinks about when arriving on campus.

"I don't feel safe in campus parking lots," Beurer said. "I'm a teenage girl by myself and knowing that there are no cameras and that scary things have happened, it puts me on edge."

Since UM doesn't use facial recognition software, security cameras in parking lots aren't as helpful as one would think, Giffin said, especially when lots are poorly lit. Surveillance in lots is something being considered, but for now, the University is putting \$4 million into upgrading campus lighting.

There are a lot of dark spots on campus, Giffin explained, which can invite criminal activity, so ridding the campus of poorly lit areas would hopefully make students feel safer and deter others from committing crime.

"People don't like to be seen," Giffin said. "So I think that lighting project, once it gets up and running, is going to be instrumental in reducing crimes."

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UM attempts to move on after marching band controversy

CORBIN VANDERBY
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At this year's Brawl of the Wild, the decades-long tradition of the Montana State University marching band uniting with the Grizzly Marching Band and playing together came undone when Bozeman's band was not invited to the game in favor of selling their seats to season ticket holders, leaving many students and community members upset. But this was only the first upset in more controversies to come.

On Nov. 18 at 1:40 a.m., the day of the game, Kevin Griggs, director of the Grizzly Marching Band received an email he would later call a "disgusting insult to the band," in an email obtained by the Kaimin in a FOIA request, that would leave fans of the band upset.

The email sent by Nic Hallisey, associate athletics director at UM, told Griggs the band's playing time would be shortened in favor of pre-recorded music "in order to maximize noise." The band ended up not playing after any downs while the Griz football team was on defense, and didn't play the Grizzly fight song after the final touchdown.

Following the game, a private message Griggs sent to the marching band identified Hallisey as the one behind the decision. The message leaked on social media, going viral and leading to irate fans, a petition and a problem on UM's hands.

In the email, Hallisey apologized for how late the information was sent out, citing constant staff meetings through the week and said, "I'll do my best to find other opportunities to give you guys time."

Griggs replied at 8:27 a.m. later that day with an email, stating he didn't agree with it and didn't believe Kent Haslam, the athletics director, would either. Griggs copied James Smart, director of the School of Music, and Jennifer Cavanaugh, co-interim dean of the College of Arts and Media, in his reply and called the timing of the email unprofessional.

Hallisey sent another email shortly after, again apologizing for the timing of the email, saying the decision came from multiple members of the athletics department, excluding Haslam.

After Griggs' email was leaked, it quickly went viral on social media, even getting a response from former Montana Attorney General Tim Fox, who called it an attempt to "muzzle the band." A petition with over 8,000 signatures calling for better treatment of the band was made following the

leaked message gone viral. Although many signed, it's not going to change any operating procedures at UM, according to UM spokesperson Dave Kuntz.

Some fans even reached out personally to Hallisey. Dominik Weber, a geoscience major at UM, called out Hallisey in an email the Kaimin was CC'd on for replacing the band with "Cotton Eye Joe" as they said it has "problematic undertones and perpetuates racial stereotypes." Weber then demanded a reversal of the decision and an apology to the band and community.

Despite all the feedback, Kuntz said last-minute changes, which are under the jurisdiction of athletics, are commonplace and often unavoidable.

"The decision that was made by the athletic department at that late hour was totally within their authority," Kuntz said.

According to members of the marching band Zain Bravo and drum majors Elle Vandzura and Ben DeBar, band members only learned of the changes to the schedule right before the game, but they were not told why so they could keep a positive, professional attitude.

"As a group and as a whole, I think we're accustomed to making change and moving through change," Bravo, a music education major, said.

Marching band members said they appreciated the support from the online community but were upset Griggs' email got out, believing the issue was out of their hands.

"It's definitely something that should have stayed an internal message, but it got out as things tend to do," Debar said. "We just have to deal with it now."

On Monday, Nov. 20, two days after the Brawl of the Wild, Haslam took to X, formerly known as Twitter, in a public statement, calling the marching band "a valued and important part of the game day experience," but defended the decision made in the name of engaging the crowd. Haslam said the reason Griggs was notified so late was due to how busy the marketing department was while planning four basketball games, two volleyball games and the Brawl of the Wild that week.

The Griz-Cat game always comes to Missoula every other year, but Kuntz said UM does not know the exact date until a year in advance, and changes can happen at any time leading up to it. Haslam claimed in the statement that UM Athletics apologized for the timing of Hallisey's email, but the statement did not mention an apology for the decision itself. The post received



University of Montana Alumni Band joins the Grizzly Marching Band during the Homecoming game at halftime on Sept. 30. **CHRIS LODMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**

"I think fans in attendance, students in attendance, people who are going to be in that stadium aren't going to notice any difference." - Dave Kuntz, UM spokesperson

75,000 views and 65 comments, with many criticizing it for defending poor communication and the limiting of the band.

The next day, Griggs released a statement on Facebook apologizing for the backlash Hallisey received following the leak of the email and urged the community to be positive and not personally attack anybody. On Wednesday, Nov. 22, the official University of Montana Instagram account posted a video of Griggs and Haslam together, expressing appreciation for the marching band and saying they will continue to support the Griz.

According to Kuntz, all of the statements released, including the video, were "driven from the ground up," meaning they were Haslam and Griggs' ideas, but were supported by the University.

"I certainly encouraged the video," Kuntz said

As far as disciplinary actions taken for either marching band or athletics, Kuntz declined to disclose, citing employee privacy rights. But various meetings were held between marching band and athletics to discuss what could have gone better and plans for future games.

According to both Hallisey and Kuntz,

play time for the marching band will go largely unchanged for games going forward, still playing during pregame, halftime and postgame, as well as the fight song after touchdowns. However, UM athletics still reserves the right to make any last-minute changes they deem beneficial.

At the first playoff game of the season against the University of Delaware last Saturday, the band had its usual full playing time, including after defensive downs and the final touchdown.

"I think fans in attendance, students in attendance, people who are going to be in that stadium aren't going to notice any difference," Kuntz said. "When those differences are made, when those tweaks are made, from a consumer standpoint, it largely goes unnoticed."

Kuntz said going forward there will be an "increased emphasis on dialogue and communication" between the marching band and athletics, but there will be no actual changes in meeting or communication processes. Kuntz described the situation as a learning opportunity for everyone at the University to ensure things don't "bubble up to the point where it poses any reputational risk to the University."



THE PRICE OF PROGRESS

**UM fentanyl vaccine research would save
of lives, but the future of human trials is uncertain**
Story by Vivien Felker | Photos by Ava Rosvold

A researcher holds a vial before conducting a test in a University of Montana lab on Nov. 16.



WHEN SOPHIE BOWER transferred from Montana State University to the University of Montana to study wildlife biology, she had already lost a friend to a fentanyl overdose. During her time at UM, she lost another.

She met one of them growing up in Colorado, and the other when she lived in Bozeman. Though she was in different places when she lost them, Bower said their deaths, in 2021 and 2022, drove her to check in on all of her friends, especially the ones she hadn't spoken to in a while.

"They were both very different instances, with one accidental exposure to fentanyl and one purposeful," Bower said. "It's so tough to think about people wanting or needing to take drugs to cope with and handle their lives. And even tougher to think that their lives were taken and could've been prevented."

Now graduated from UM, her alma mater is working on innovative research on a vaccine that could prevent fentanyl overdoses. It wasn't there for her friends, but it could save more people's lives, she said.

Research at the University of Montana is largely focused on the prevention of fentanyl overdoses. The UM Center for Translational Medicine received \$33.4 million from the National Institutes of Health to take fentanyl and heroin vaccines through phase one of human clinical trials.

The vaccines will work to prevent overdoses by taking the "high" out of fentanyl and heroin. The research has the potential to save thousands of lives and curb the number of people who are negatively affected by the drug epidemic, such as friends and family members of those lost to overdoses.

And it comes at a crucial time – according to provisional Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data, about 73,000 people died from fentanyl overdoses in the United States in 2022.

But with a struggle between harm reduction and drug abstinence policies, and no guaranteed funding for phases two and three of clinical trials, whether this vaccine makes it into the hands of the people who need it is still uncertain.

How it works

Montana has a public health need for a vaccine to help fight the fentanyl crisis.

In October 2017, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services determined a public health emergency exists as a result of the opioid crisis. In March 2022, the

Blackfeet Nation of Montana declared a state of emergency after it experienced 17 opioid overdoses on the reservation in the span of a week, four of which resulted in death.

Though there is no UM-specific data on opioid use or overdoses, state health department data states Missoula County 911 responders fielded 88 calls involving opioid overdoses from January to September this year.

Preliminary testing shows the vaccine UM is researching can effectively prevent fentanyl from reaching the brain.

First, it blocks fentanyl from reaching opioid receptors, primarily found in the parts of the brain that control pain and emotions. A substance mimicking fentanyl in the vaccine attaches to fentanyl when it enters the body, preventing it from crossing the blood-brain barrier.

Without being able to cross into the brain, it does not affect the user, making overdose impossible. Signs of an overdose include when a person's breathing is slowed or stopped among others.

UM is piloting the vaccine because the University already conducts research on other vaccines, including one for tuberculosis, which UM received \$12.3 million to develop this year.

In both cases, UM contributes the adjuvants to the vaccines, substances that boost their effectiveness. For fentanyl and heroin vaccines, the University is partnering with the University of Washington, Columbia University and others to develop the vaccines and get them through human trials, which Jay Evans, head of UM's Center for Translational Medicine, anticipates could take about two to five years.

Additionally, Evans co-founded a biotechnology company based in Missoula. The company, Inimmune, purchased the licensing rights to the vaccine from the University. This means it is allowed to commercialize the vaccine while the University keeps the patent on its contribution. The University will be paid a royalty on all sales of the vaccine. Evans would not say what that rate might be.

The preliminary testing was promising, enough to show the Food and Drug Administration the drug is ready to be tested for its effectiveness in humans. In the spring of 2024, the vaccine will begin phase one of clinical trials using people, who will either be injected with the vaccine or a placebo. The CDC estimates general phase one vaccine trials usually involve 20-100 participants.

The first participants to receive the vaccine will be given a low dosage. The dosage will then gradually be increased through

different dose amounts to ensure the safety of the vaccine.

These trials will take place at Columbia University in New York City, and Evans estimated it could take months to recruit active fentanyl users to participate.

According to the CDC, during phase two of typical vaccine clinical trials, the number of study participants should increase into the hundreds. During phase three, the trial could require thousands of participants.

Without funds

Even though there is a clear public health need for a vaccine to curb overdoses, UM hasn't secured funding for phases two and three of clinical trials yet. UM earned a \$33.4 million contract from the National Institutes of Health to advance the vaccine through phase one of clinical trials, but UM hasn't found the money to keep going beyond that yet.

Evans said this is partly because the people who would be candidates for the vaccine, which mainly includes addicts in rehabilitation programs, likely falls short of the amount of doses that would need to be sold to make back the money spent on the research. This isn't attractive to investors who look to make their money back, plus a profit.

Ideal candidates for the study will be active users who are entering rehab and seeking treatment. According to a study published in the Irish Medical Journal, 91% of addicts who go through rehab relapse in the first two years. The study followed 109 active drug users in Dublin.

If a participant relapses in the human trials, they record it in a journal and write down whether or not the drug had the same effect the user is used to. If the vaccine works as intended, the user will not feel any effect from taking fentanyl.

The exact cost of phases two and three of clinical trials is unknown. Evans estimated phase two could cost anywhere between \$40 million and \$60 million. Phase three has an even larger range of \$200 million to \$600 million.

But there is a high likelihood participants drop out because active drug users can be hard to track, Evans said. Tracking the behaviors of those who remain in the study could take an unknown amount of time, and additional time requires additional money.

The ultimate cost of the trials depends on how smoothly the trial runs. Evans believes there may be some adverse consequences, "not because of the vaccine, but because of the patient population that is being targeted."

If a participant were to overdose and die, the Food and Drug Administration could potentially put the study on hold for months to ensure the vaccine is not what caused the death.

"It's all about safety. If the FDA feels the adverse events within the clinical trial are greater than outside your clinical trial, they may put it on hold," Evans said.

But the hope is such a scenario never occurs, Evans said, and his team can show the FDA relatively quickly how the drug works. They can prove this if the study population experiences fewer overdoses because they're no longer susceptible to the effects of fentanyl. He also hopes fewer overdoses may entice more people to participate in the study and make it go faster, which could mean the study runs on the lower end of the estimated cost range.

Regardless of funding questions, Evans said he isn't worried about the vaccine's future yet.

"I believe that once we show successful results from phase one, the money will become available for phase two and phase three," Evans said.

There are different sources the money could come from. The trials could continue to be funded by the government. If the Department of Defense purchases the vaccine, it could be given to soldiers in areas where chemical warfare is a concern. The government may also choose to fund the drug to give to people who are at risk of accidental exposure, such as drug enforcement agents and police officers.

The project could also be picked up by private investors. On Nov. 20, Evans went to New York to meet with potential investors and companies. He said spreading the word about the vaccine is his team's main strategy for securing funding, because many people don't know it is possible to make a vaccine to fight addiction.

"We're trying to find out what the best path is to move forward," Evans said.

The University supports this research by bearing the brunt of the indirect costs, known as facilities and administration costs. According to Scott Whittenburg, vice president of research and scholarships, this includes overhead costs to keep the facilities running, as well as administrative personnel in his office. UM then charges the federal government for these costs, and is reimbursed.

In 2022, Whittenburg said the University generated about \$20 million in facilities and administration reimbursements, and roughly 40% of the money was distributed back to various departments and projects on campus.

Although Evans' group also works on vaccine programs for diseases such as monkeypox, Whittenburg said the University is putting an emphasis on the fentanyl vaccine because of the public health need in Montana. He said because the group is already working on related vaccines, it gives

the University an advantage.

"That's a strength that we have that also comes at a very opportune time for something that's an issue for the state," Whittenburg said.

Harm reduction on campus

In addition to this work, some see the University taking on a different tone than in the past by backing this harm reduction.

The group Students for Sensible Drug Policy struggled with what it saw as slow University action when it tried to implement a medical amnesty policy on campus, which has now existed at UM since 2021.

Under this policy, students on UM property who call for help for themselves or others in the event of a drug incident will not get in trouble with the University. There are a few exemptions for where this policy applies, giving UM the discretion to decide if the policy applies in more "serious situations" such as in cases of assault or drug manufacturing. It also notes the University can choose to discipline a student who repeatedly uses the policy "for the purpose of avoiding disciplinary action by the University."

The group wrote a resolution with the student government in fall of 2020 calling for a medical amnesty policy to be written into the Student Conduct of Code. According to the resolution, more than 250 universities across the country, including MSU, had a similar policy at the time. In fact, most states, including Montana, have a medical amnesty or "good Samaritan" policy written into law, meaning a campus policy would only be an extension of amnesty into student conduct processes.

In other words, Montana students in an emergency situation, like alcohol poisoning, could be exempt from minor in possession charges. For some, the resolution to officially adopt medical amnesty as a University-specific policy was more to reassure students in times of crisis.

The resolution passed the student government unanimously on Sept. 23, 2020, and was sent to the Office of Community Standards, which is responsible for making changes to the Student Code of Conduct. The student government has no power to set conduct code policies.

By January of 2021, the policy had not been added into the code. In an email addressed to the Office of Community Standards as a whole, the student group urged a faster implementation.

Nine days after the group sent the email, the students followed up and threatened to involve the media, organize protests and start a social media campaign to urge University action. According to current president of the group, Michael Layeux, the policy was added by UM later that day.

But that wasn't the end of the conflict. In early April 2021, UM Legal asked the group



A lab technician reaches under a ventilated hood at a University of Montana lab, where UM researchers work on the fentanyl and heroin vaccines, on Nov. 16.

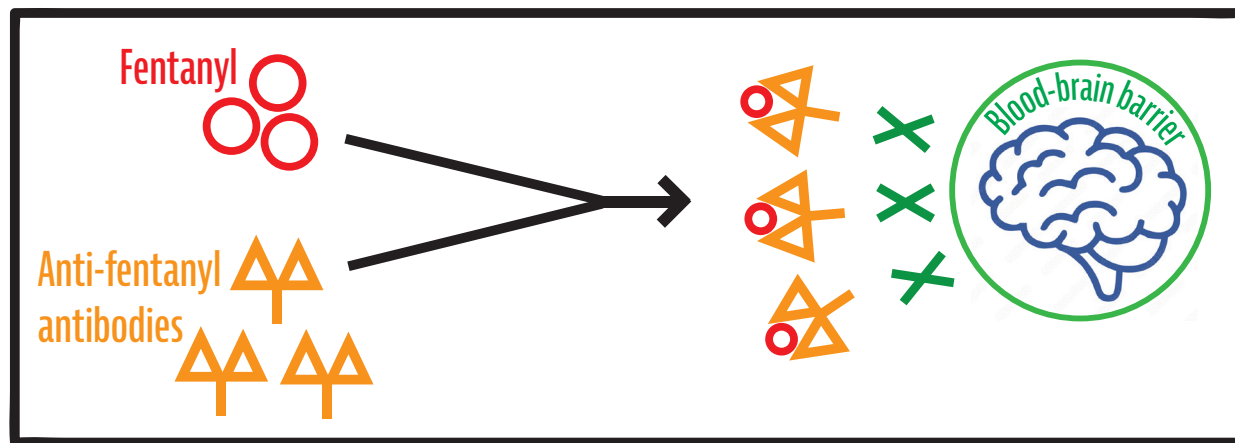
"91% of addicts will relapse in the two years following rehabilitative treatment."

- The Irish Medical Journal



The graphic above shows how the fentanyl vaccine works in the brain. The fentanyl antibodies in the vaccine attach to the fentanyl to keep it from crossing the blood-brain barrier, preventing the drug from taking effect.

MACKENNA GLEAVE | MONTANA KAIMIN



to stop distributing fentanyl test strips and “safe snorting” kits.

According to emails provided by Layeux, UM Legal cited concerns because while harm reduction groups could legally distribute fentanyl test strips at the time, test strips and safe snorting kits still fell under “drug paraphernalia” in Montana law, which is not allowed on campus.

The issue was eventually rectified when the student group signed a memorandum of understanding with Open Aid Alliance and the University stating the Alliance, with the University’s permission, would sponsor the student group’s distribution on campus. Test strips were entirely wiped from Montana’s legal paraphernalia classification in May of 2023, so the agreement is defunct.

In an interview with the Kaimin last fall, regarding the death of a student on campus in which drugs were involved, UM Police Department Chief Brad Giffin said UMPD does not support the idea of harm reduction messaging.

“I don’t think you can put out a message to say that you should do illegal drugs safely, because there’s no safe way to do that,” Giffin said in 2022. “We wouldn’t ever want to encourage someone to ingest an unlawful substance and have that message come from the police department.”

Since the end of 2022, Giffin said UMPD officers have been certified to use Narcan, a medicine used to reverse an overdose, and each officer carries two doses of it. Giffin said officers have yet to use Narcan in any instance on campus.

Giffin said anyone properly trained can get access to Narcan, and the University is in the talks about how to provide quicker access to it. Giffin is in favor of this approach, but said he did have some hangups about putting young people still in school in the position of being responsible for medical emergencies.

UM spokesperson Dave Kuntz said last fall the University would look into pushing more drug safety messaging, but no major changes have taken place. There is no drug safety messaging in UM’s orientation materials,

aside from a list of campus services, a link to the Student Conduct of Code containing UM’s medical amnesty policy and a general plea to look out for one another on campus.

For those left behind

Bower said the vaccine sounds interesting and like a good idea, although she wishes there were a better solution for accidental fentanyl exposures like her friend experienced. She said she feels people will not seek out the vaccine unless they have an addiction, and even then, it’s uncertain those suffering addiction will seek it out. She’s unsure what her friends would have done if given the option.

For those who do seek out the vaccine, cost may be a factor. Evans could not provide an exact number of what the vaccine will cost once it is on the market, sometime around the year 2030. He said he does know that it has to be affordable “or else people won’t take it.”

He said it likely won’t be priced much differently than current COVID-19 vaccine pricing, meaning the vaccine will land somewhere in the realm of hundreds of dollars as opposed to thousands.

How long the vaccine lasts will be studied in phases one and two of clinical trials. Evans estimated it will last two to four years, and said boosters should be available.

As the vaccine research pushes ahead, Bower is spending time traveling around Asia, doing yoga and enjoying life free from college. She graduated from UM with a degree in wildlife biology last spring. She tries to remember the best parts of her friends, but she wishes they could have had more options. Although her life looks different now than when her friends were still alive, she said she won’t soon forget them.

“Both of these boys had the most beautiful smiles and laughs that I will never forget,” Bower said.

Additional reporting by Andy Tallman



Jay Evans, the director of the University of Montana’s Center for Translational Medicine, stands in a lab on the University of Montana on Oct. 27.

UM alumni and faculty explore addiction through theatre

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Wet brain syndrome, a form of dementia that primarily affects long-term alcoholics, prevents a person from communicating effectively. This and other forms of addiction are explored in excerpts from plays and self-written pieces in No Joke Theater's newest production.

"BROKEN TOYS: Tales of Recovery and Transition" involves University of Montana alumni, faculty, students and individuals who went through drug courts to tell stories of addiction, transitions and recovery or lack thereof. Drug courts are specialized court docket programs that help offenders who have alcohol and other drug dependency problems.

Leah Joki, program director of No Joke Theater and a UM alumna who earned a master's degree in acting, started her theatrical journey working in the California prison systems in the mid-80s.

"I kind of ended up in it on accident. Someone had said, 'You should audition

for this new program,'" Joki said. "We became the first group going out and teaching improvisational theater in juvenile prisons."

As the years went by, Joki's prison system work expanded and she traveled all across California to teach incarcerated individuals. Then, practically overnight, funding was cut. An art program that once had \$25 million now only had one million.

"Everything was gone, our program was gone, so that prompted me to move back to Montana," Joki said.

She started up the arts program again here in Montana, calling it No Joke Theater. The theater continues to operate, sharing stories of incarcerated individuals or those dealing with addiction with the goal of starting a conversation.

Mark Plonsky, an adjunct associate professor of theatre at UM, wants to share these stories more than anything.

"The most important aspect of this project has been getting to know our community collaborators, sharing their insights, and striving to understand their particular

struggles and their victories," Plonsky said. "Their insights, their stories, their experiences, and their willingness to share them through the work has been the foundation for the way we developed this product."

The show is collaborative, relying on the input of those affected and what they believe is truthful to their experience.

"We've read a lot of material and then voted," Joki said. "The people in the recovery community and the people in the Drug Court voted."

The show is a combination of excerpts from scripts and original pieces. One of those original pieces is Plonsky's, called "Stories We Tell Ourselves."

"It deals with some of the collateral damage in the lives of those around addicted individuals and the recovery that comes of looking into your past and acknowledging the truth and fiction of these stories we tell ourselves," Plonsky said.

Another piece, taken from "Wet Brain" by John J. Caswell Jr., deals with what a family goes through when their patriarch's mind and addiction are all-consuming. The

play explores wet brain syndrome and how it not only affects the victim but everyone around them.

"This piece will be memorable, mostly because not a lot of people know about it," Joki said.

Through the program, Joki employs actors from prerelease and the drug courts to help them receive community service hours while also fueling them artistically in their recovery.

"This is a great place for them to get their hours and still be focusing on their recovery because that's everything we're doing is talking about that," Joki said.

As the theater grows, Joki wants to explore more issues of the prison system, including issues revolving around racism. "I hope that this will continue without me," Joki said.

You can see "BROKEN TOYS: Tales of Recovery and Transition" on Dec. 7 and 8 at 7:30 p.m. in UM's Masquer Theatre. Admission is free.



Royce McIntosh, center, and the cast rehearse "BROKEN TOYS: Tales of Recovery and Transition" at First United Methodist Church with fellow cast members on Dec. 1. McIntosh is the writer of the scene being rehearsed.

AVA ROSVOLD | MONTANA KAIMIN

2023 recap: Kate's top four releases

KATE WIDMER

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The 2020s are proving to be a musical renaissance of sorts. As genre becomes more and more blurred and artistic sensibilities are continually being pushed to the forefront, we're witnessing the release of some of the most unique music ever made. With that in mind, my top four releases from this year are all ones that I listen to religiously and ones that I feel will be referenced in the coming decades as major influences on their respective scenes and music as we know it.

#4: 'Only Constant' by GEL (Favorite Song: 'The Way Out')

Hardcore (a combination of punk and metal) is and always has been for the freaks, but no band in recent memory embodies that with the same flair as GEL. The New Jersey band's debut album, "Only Constant," (released in March 2023) is a callback to classic hardcore's sonic hallmarks, but with intentional modern twists, such as a lo-fi interlude in the middle of the album that calls out hypocrisy in the hardcore scene. Hardcore may be based in hurt and anger, but GEL takes those emotions and backs them with a strong sense of self-confidence and fun, which makes "Only Constant" 16 minutes of some of the most put-a-smile-on-your-face hardcore you'll ever hear.

#3: 'Drought' by Guitar Fight from Fooly Cooly (Favorite Song: 'Pyramid')

With a name taken from a cult-classic anime, Guitar Fight from Fooly Cooly (GFX3C if you're fancy) makes twinkly guitar-based songs and backs them with punk's grit. The band released "Drought" in January 2023 after a three-year hiatus, but the time taken to develop it was well worth it. "Drought" is four songs of intricate, aggressive instrumentation and relentless lyrics and sees the band at its sonic peak. The technical care the band put into the EP is obvious, from the instantly recognizable guitar tone, to the meticulous drums, and to the careful mix that lets all parts of the song shine at just the right moments, making "Drought" amazing for both fans of hard-hitting music and production nerds alike.

#2: 'Rat Saw God' by Wednesday (Favorite Song: changes constantly, but I'd start with 'Got Shocked')

First and foremost, Wednesday (an Asheville, North Carolina, band that's primarily the project of frontwoman Karly Hartzman) are genre-benders. The band combines alt-country's lyrical and melodic sensibilities with 90's alt-rock's penchant for gripping, distorted instrumentation, which Hartzman layers under anecdotal lyrics about her life in the South. The result is deeply effective, undeniably hypnotic songs, and March 2023's "Rat Saw God" sees the band having honed that to perfection.

Wednesday knows just when to push and pull — "Rat Saw God" is pretty evenly split between outright bangers ("Chosen to Deserve" and "Bath County"), slower, more poetic songs ("Formula One" and "What's So Funny") and gut-wrenching sonic experiences that turn your whole insides out ("Bull Believer" and "Turkey Vultures"). Unabashedly personal and full of so much heart, "Rat Saw God" has something for everyone to find solace in.

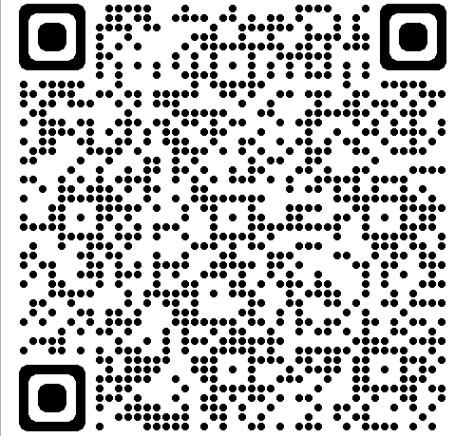
#1: 'Girl with Fish' by feeble little horse (Favorite Song: 'Paces')

Feeble little horse is a band from Pittsburgh, PA, that makes noisy, pop-ish music. The band's June 2023 sophomore album "Girl with Fish" is a multi-layered sonic work of art made up of songs that are carefully crafted, incredibly poetic and so much fun to listen to. The band accomplishes this through a combination of sheer artistic talent and a few rules: firstly, feeble little horse is fiercely do-it-yourself. The band writes, records and mixes music themselves, which, in this band's case, leads to strictly art-minded music. Second, the band cuts anything that isn't necessary, a concept that's especially prevalent in the mixes (where you can hear virtually every sound that's being made) and in the length of the songs ("Steamroller" is the only song on "Girl with Fish" that's over three minutes long). Basically, everything this band does is short and sweet, so as to not lose the tracks' original intentions.

That commitment to artistry is also found in feeble little horse's lyrics. Frontwoman Lydia Slocum's words come to the

forefront in "Girl with Fish," with lines such as "your smiles like / lines in the concrete," and "all my kisses and hugs / are burning a hole in my pocket" that hit just the right emotional pinpoints within each song, and are made additionally striking by her gentle vocal delivery.

I know I just made feeble little horse sound almost authoritarian, but ultimately, "Girl with Fish" was made by good friends who had tons of fun making it, which makes the album sound like that's how it was made. Having that sense of friendship woven throughout the album (combined with those guidelines) led to a work that's both completely unpretentious and loads of fun, while still keeping its artistic sensibilities. What else could you want out of a favorite album?



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Espenmiller-McGraw is shining as starter for Lady Griz basketball

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Fifth-year guard Maggie Espenmiller-McGraw has been shining on the Lady Griz basketball team since arriving through the transfer portal at the beginning of the year.

Espenmiller-McGraw is a transfer from Iowa State University and has brought a new versatile offensive element to the Lady Griz. Head coach Brian Holsinger has enjoyed not just the basketball intelligence she brings, but the presence she has brought to the locker room.

She has primarily played the shooting guard position during her collegiate career. During her time at Iowa State, she played on three teams that advanced to the NCAA Tournament. Her junior-year trip to the NCAA Tournament ended when the Cyclones lost to Creighton in the Sweet 16.

Iowa is known for its coverage of women's basketball and a major factor in Espenmiller-McGraw's decision to transfer to the University of Montana was its shared love

for the sport.

"It's been a pretty seamless transition," she said. "My coaches and my teammates have all been wonderful and have made me feel included since day one."

For the last two years, she has battled through injuries, including multiple stress fractures on both her shins and in her feet, but hasn't allowed that to stop her from playing the sport she's loved since junior high.

"The biggest reason I committed here was coach Brian," she said. "He's a people person, and he is really big on his relationships with his players and has instilled that love of basketball back into me."

Holsinger saw what made her one of the top reserves at Iowa State when he reached out through the transfer portal. Holsinger said she is one of the brightest players on the team and a joyful personality on and off the court.

"She's brought a ton of joy to our team, she's very fun to be around and she's brought a lot of experience and fun to our team," Holsinger said.

"The biggest reason I committed here was coach Brian." -Maggie Espenmiller-McGraw

One of the overlooked aspects of any team is the off-court relationships that eventually meld into chemistry on the court. Holsinger views Espenmiller-McGraw as that spark that can create a bridge between basketball and life.

She said that every senior has her way of mentoring the next starting lineup for the Lady Griz, but she chooses to share her stories and knowledge of the game to the players who are sitting where she was just four years ago.

Holsinger has been grateful for the transfers over the years, but getting an experienced fifth-year senior is a special opportunity for any school.

Espenmiller-McGraw has chosen to

spend her final year of eligibility in a place unknown to her and with a team unfamiliar with her personality and play style, but the team has not taken her skill sets for granted.

The Lady Griz have an overall record of 2-2 on the 2023 season so far, with losses only to Gonzaga and Washington State.

The Lady Griz will play the undefeated Colorado State University Rams on Dec. 9 at 7 p.m. in Dahlberg Arena.

Editor's Note: By the time of this article's publishing, the Lady Griz will have played Loyola Marymount University. This record is reflective of the games played before facing the Lions on Dec. 6 in Missoula.

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Giordan Williams bounces back from injury and embraces new opportunities

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Belief is a word that has defined basketball player Giordan Williams' stint at the University of Montana.

The redshirt senior from Santa Clara University in California was injured for a full year before he entered the transfer portal. But the UM coaching staff believed in Williams, the same way he did in himself, leading to his commitment to UM.

The coaches shared the belief that Williams could return from the injury stronger than ever. And Williams kept the belief that "God had a plan" for him.

The 6'5" guard has averaged 20 minutes a night thanks to his physical game and intelligent positioning, and his point totals have steadily increased.

"They believed in me even when other schools didn't," Williams said. "The way that Travis did, especially off injury, it's just a blessing. It's a blessing to be able to adapt to a new community that's very welcoming and have the teammates and the coaching staff to just believe in the whole process. Everybody's all in and that's kind of the main goal. Everybody has to be able to put another [championship] banner up there."

Williams spent four years in Santa Clara, where he saw sporadic playing time despite showing steady improvements. During the last game of his junior season, Williams tore his ACL and was sidelined for the next season.

"After my injury, the game kind of sped up and there were things that I had to grow through that I didn't have to go through before, which is also just another sign of adversity that God threw my way," Williams said.

With newfound toughness, Williams entered the transfer portal after his senior year and shortly after visiting Missoula, committed to UM.

"I think the biggest thing for guys like him is they're looking for fairness and for an opportunity to contribute," head basketball coach Travis DeCuire said. "I think he was looking for a program of coaches that he could trust, but also that would be focused on helping him continue to grow as a man and as a player."

While the transition on the court has come with some challenges, Williams' adjustment off the court has been far smoother. His teammates and the people of Missoula have already endeared themselves to him and blended well with his personality.



Redshirt senior Giordan Williams poses after the Grizzlies Basketball game with San Jose State University. The Griz won the match 75-58.

CHRIS LODMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN

"The community's been great," Williams said. "They're very welcoming, the people are very kind and generous and that's the kind of person I am. So, to be able to receive that love back from Missoula's community is amazing, especially being from California," Williams said.

Williams' play on the court has also improved. His point totals have steadily increased with 18 of Williams' 25 points coming in the last three games.

"His toughness competitively and also physically is huge for us, especially on the perimeter," DeCuire said. "We haven't had that in a while, a physical guy that goes for rebounds and just isn't afraid of contact."

It's been a while since we had that at the guard or wing position. It's been a big boost for us."

While physicality and rebounds are still a large part of Williams' game, he strives to support his teammates the same way they have motivated him.

"I kind of just bring in the energy and motivate guys, show them the way to go, the experiences that I've gone through and the adversity that I've gone through," Williams said. "I try to pave the way for them, so they won't have to make those mistakes. I'm just happy my brothers are there for each other and are able to handle that adversity together"

On the academic side of things, Williams is currently pursuing a Masters of business with the hopes of going into entrepreneurship. Although he doesn't know exactly what the future holds, he has sought his family's advice on the matter.

"I have a quote that my family always told me: 'Do it for your last name, not your first,'" Williams said. "That's kind of what I want to do with my last name, to continue to build a legacy and just go from there."

Griz men's basketball will play at home against the Montana Tech Orediggers on Friday before heading on the road for a rematch with the San Jose State University Spartans on Dec. 17.

Former Parade of Lights rebranded for 2023

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY CHRIS LODMAN
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Every hour during the parade, gallons of hot chocolate warmed the hands of Missoulians wandering Higgins Avenue while observing dazzling lights from floats and listening to carols on Saturday. The event, formerly known as the “Parade of Lights,” is now “Holidays on Higgins,” rebranded for its 21st year with more changes than just the name.

According to Linda McCarthy, executive director of the Missoula Downtown Association, this year’s event has had better community engagement than in previous years, with roughly 40 artists and close to 30 sponsors and parade entries. She recalled the difference during the height of COVID-19 in 2020 when attendees viewed the floats from their cars lined up on Campus Drive, causing a traffic jam.

This year, the event covered two more blocks down Higgins Ave. than last year, including a dedicated “Makers Market” with vendors and local crafts for holiday shoppers. Around 25 businesses offered activities for kids throughout the day.

Boy Scout Troop 1960 helped keep families and attendees warm with eight burn-barrels. “We get them all stocked up [with firewood] and make sure nobody falls in,” Jim McLean, committee chair of the troop, said.

This year’s event was also the first under the new mayor, Andrea Davis, making her appearance by welcoming Santa and Mrs. Claus, followed by the lighting of the tree near the four X’s. The evening wrapped up around 7 p.m., amid a downpour of snow.



From left to right, Garry Gillett, Jarom Hein and Garry’s son, Kyle, make up the band Tuba Santa. The band belted out some festive tunes for those in attendance.



FAR LEFT: Santa and DJ Coach Shane count down the seconds before the tree lighting.

LEFT: Martin Viereckl holds his son, Robin, on his shoulders while passing by the floats at the Holidays on Higgins event.

ABOVE: Shailyn Harrington, left, and Cayden Cooke hang out inside Break Espresso during Holidays on Higgins on Dec. 2. Cooke is enrolled at the University of Montana and studies parks and recreation.