

MONTANA KAIMIN



IN
CREATIVE
COMPANY



STORY BY BEE REISWIG
PHOTOS BY JACKSON MAILEY

How three students at the University of Montana manage work, school and art

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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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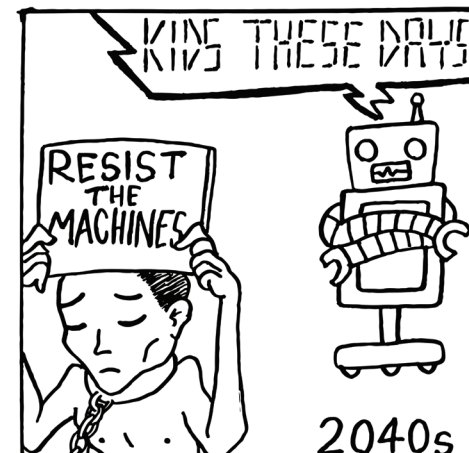
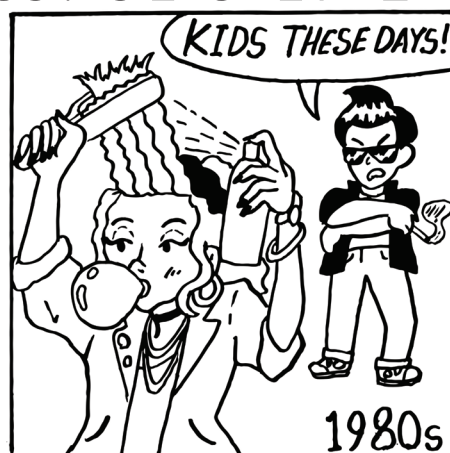
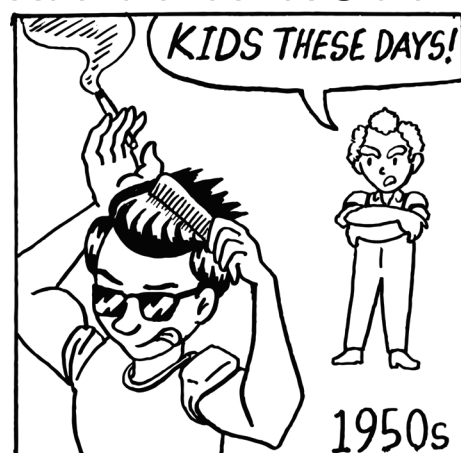
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KAIMIN KOMICS: SE 3 EP 2



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POLITICAL CARTOON



Don't let fear steal your life

It's all too easy to get sucked into the negative news cycles and go down the drain in the details — especially now, when graphic footage is just a Google search away.

Whether we want to see it or not, violence lands on our screens. There have never been more reminders that the world is full of danger.

In the past several weeks, a shooter opened fire through the windows of a Minnesota church, killing two children. On Sept. 10, political activist Charlie Kirk was shot and killed while speaking at an event at Utah Valley University. Later that same day, another shooting occurred at a high school in Denver, injuring two teenagers. In the midst of all the violence, we also recognized the 24th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, a stark reminder of the very real toll of extremist violence.

But fear for our personal safety doesn't just stop at mass shootings or terroristic threats. For many, that fear includes being assaulted, both physically and sexually. Sometimes,

even a walk across campus in the dark can be utterly terrifying.

When the world doesn't feel safe, the motivation to go out can vanish like an extinguished candle flame. But living in fear isn't living, it's surviving.

We shouldn't shut ourselves off from all of the great memories and the wonderful experiences waiting for us. We shouldn't have to miss out on school, concerts or political events. Here are a few tips we can all use to feel more safe in our day-to-day life.

The University of Montana offers its own personal safety program called GrizWalk, run through UMPD. From dusk to dawn, if you find yourself in a spot where you feel unsafe, or maybe just need someone you can trust to walk you from class to your dorm in the dark, you can call GrizWalk and a student team or a UMPD police officer will escort you to your destination. You can reach GrizWalk at (406) 243-2777.

Additionally, if you find yourself in an unsafe situation, find the blue light emergency posts around campus to call for help.

The University also has a web page dedicated to its emergency preparedness plans, from bomb threats to severe weather to active shooters on campus.

According to Walden University, having plans and protocols in place can help reduce the psychological toll of fear of events, and if something does happen, can also help recovery afterwards. It never hurts to be prepared, for yourself and for others.

Whether you're alone or out with friends, it can't hurt to have something on you for personal safety. While pepper spray, also known as mace, is legal in Montana, carrying anything more than two ounces can result in legal consequences if used. Many self-defense weapons including knives and stun guns are also allowed in Montana, but each has specific restrictions, so make sure to do your research if you're going to carry one.

If keeping a knife, a taser or pepper spray on your keychain isn't your style, there are plenty of companies who specialize in alternative self-defense tools. She's Birdie, a company founded by two sisters out of Berkley, California, sells multiple types of alarms. The Birdie 3.0 allows the user to pull a ring to trigger a bright flashing light and a loud siren akin to a fire alarm.

If anxiety is impacting your ability to go to class or enjoy your day, consider visiting Curry Health Center's counseling team. It has walk-in crisis appointments during the week, and you can make an appointment in person, over the phone or online.

Ultimately, the best solutions are the ones still out of reach, such as stricter gun regulations and teaching people not to sexually assault others, instead of the other way around. But while we take the steps to make these solutions a reality and work toward improving public safety, we can't hide.

Like it? Hate it? Let us know.
Email us your opinions at
elle.daniel@umontana.edu

Pool abroad



International students from Tohoku University in Japan spend their free time in the University Center Gaming Den playing rounds of pool on Sept. 15. Tohoku University offers abroad experiences in Montana for its surrounding natural elements and has worked with the University of Montana for 8 years.

LEO SPERRY | MONTANA KAIMIN

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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Edited by Margie E. Burke

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:

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

In local news...

SABRINA PHILIP | NEWS REPORTER
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NEW HIP STRIP PARKING DISTRICT COMING SOON

Last Tuesday, the Missoula Parking Commission approved new parking surrounding the Hip Strip area.

The desire for change followed a recent parking study done in 2023, which recommended better parking throughout the city due to future growth and demand. Proposed by Waypointe Holmes LP, the plan includes a multipurpose building with housing and retail, according to KPAX.

"There is a need to address the competing interest in that area," Parking Services Director Jodi Pilgrim said to KPAX. "We are aware that management would shift demand patterns. Expansion to the larger area would allow us to manage that shift proactively."

The new extended area in the Hip Strip would connect two areas managed by the parking commission, which includes downtown and the University district. According to Pilgrim, the new expansion would allow enforcement officers to move more efficiently between the two areas.

"Cars and free parking aren't what make the Hip Strip great," Missoula resident Lindsey Nugent said to KPAX. "It's the people who are walking into businesses. I'd rather there not be a ton of free, subsidized parking."

If the plan is approved by the City Council, new parking enforcement is set to begin in early 2026.

Chimney Corner Hair Styling

Located across from Campus
540 Daly Ave Ste B, Missoula

Available for walk-ins

Tuesdays-Thursdays
1-5pm

& Appointments

Tuesday-Thursday
10am-1pm

Friday-Saturday
10am-5pm

MISSOULA AWARDED FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING

Missoula was recently awarded a bronze designation from the National Charging Smart Program for its new electric vehicle program, which supports the city's increased presence of electric vehicles.

According to Devin Flicicchia, the associate transportation planner for the city of Missoula and the Missoula Metropolitan Planning Organization, the goal is to make obtaining charging devices for households and parking more accessible.

"It shows that we followed all the best practices relating to a community working to support charging infrastructure. We're the first community in Montana to have that 'Charging Smart' designation, which is really exciting," Flicicchia said to NonStop Local.

The city's new electric vehicle infrastructure plan includes rules, applications and zoning guidelines to support the growing presence of the vehicles. "If someone wants to install a charger in the garage, it's clear to them that they're able to do so," Flicicchia said to Nonstop Local. "If a business wants to install a charger into their parking lot, the process to get permits to do that is also very clear. But right now, it's not addressed in any way, which can be confusing."

The recent growth of electric vehicles in Montana can be seen with the new charging station at the south end of Missoula and the new Rivian service center in Belgrade.

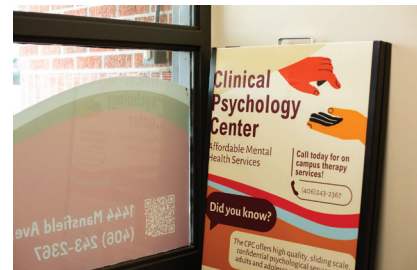
According to Shane Morinville, the general manager at Lithia Ford of Missoula, this growth was unexpected in Montana because of how rural the state is.

"[Charging stations] have been getting quite a lot of use already, even without trying to advertise it," Morinville said.

Justin Dillavou, the general sales manager, said this is due to a statewide effort to encourage more rural areas in Montana to adopt lower-level chargers to increase accessibility.



The Ozempic Era: Body image in the age of GLP-1s



The UM Clinical Psychology Center is home to the school's Eating Disorders Training Clinic.

HENRY DOELLINGER | MONTANA KAIMIN

The use of Ozempic has exploded in recent years, as celebrities and professional athletes continue to endorse it on social media as a practical and easily accessible weight loss drug. Ozempic, initially prescribed as a drug to treat diabetes, became popular after doctors discovered its side effect of weight loss.

Dr. Caitlin Martin-Wagar, the director of the University of Montana Eating Disorder Training Clinic, said that with the increased advertisement of weight loss drugs like Ozempic and other GLP-1s, people consuming these ads are at an increased risk of developing mental health issues surrounding their body image, and even potentially an eating disorder.

"We do know that negative body image is a risk factor for wanting to take things like Ozempic. We also know that for people with histories of eating disorders, we're really concerned as a field about the idea of how readily accessible and tempting it is to take a medication that can produce weight loss for people who so desperately want weight loss," Martin-Wagar said.



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



Heat and pollution

Fifty-five heat waves over the past quarter century would not have happened without human-caused climate change, according to a study published by Nature, an international journal publishing peer-reviewed research.

According to the study, planet-warming emissions from 180 major cement, oil and gas producers contributed significantly to all of the heat events considered in the study. It examined a set of 213 heat waves from 2000 to 2023.

Polluters examined include publicly traded and state-owned companies, as well as where fossil fuel production data was available at the national level. Collectively, these producers are responsible for 57% of all carbon dioxide that was emitted from 1850 to 2023.

-Sav Chavez

Post-grad unemployment

The latest employment numbers released by the federal government show an increase in long-term unemployment for college graduates.

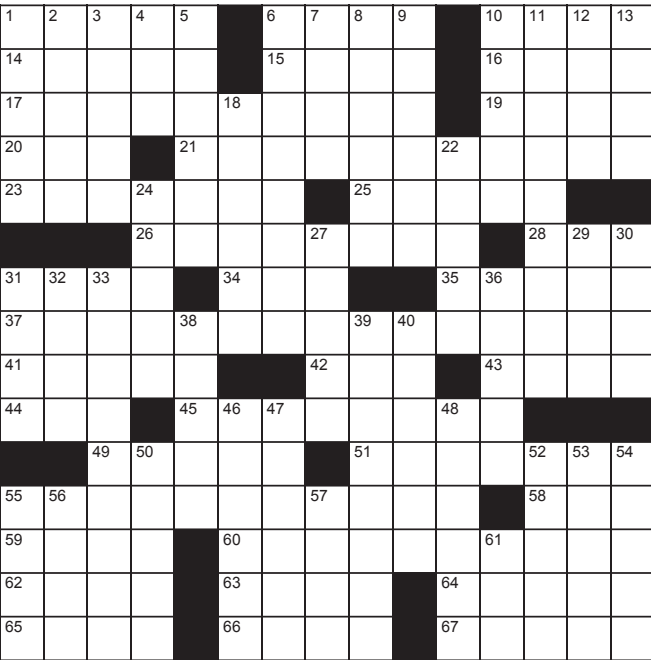
Long-term unemployment, considered as being out of work longer than six months, rose to 26% in August, the highest it's been in three years. An economist at the Federal Reserve Bank told The New York Times an increase of that level outside of a recession is "unprecedented." Economists believe the amount of college graduates out of work is partially due to more college graduates existing in the job market than previous years.

-Elle Daniel

NFL heads to Saudi Arabia

The National Football League announced a football game to be held in Saudi Arabia this spring. Former football stars, including Tom Brady and Rob Gronkowski, will play along with other football stars. The game will not be hosted by the NFL, but the organization is allowing its players to appear and play. The game will feature a three-round tournament and a halftime show.

-ED



ACROSS

- 1 Digging tool
6 Detail, for short
10 Cheese nibblers
14 Scoped out
15 Canned fish
16 Soon, in poems
17 Job seekers
19 UCLA part: Abbr.
20 Co-star of Betty and Bea
21 Delicately
23 Continuous form, e.g.
25 Rising star
26 Vaccines
28 Word with dog or dollar
31 Jimmy Kimmel, for one
34 Prefix with propyl
35 Overcharge, big time
37 Easy to swap out
41 Vice ____
42 "Annabel Lee" writer
43 Peachy follower
44 WNW's reverse
45 Like some airport purchases
49 Unaccompanied
51 Marathon participants
55 Tyrannical
58 Floral garland
59 "Excuse me..."
60 Like some fires or looks
62 Bring on board
63 San Quentin quarters
64 Burdened

- 65 Casualty
66 Tribute poems
67 Seethes

DOWN

- 1 Winter warmer
2 ____ New Guinea
3 Skier's mecca
4 Ctrl-Alt-____
5 Prolific inventor
6 Plymouth Colony leader
7 Bits of wordplay
8 Bait the hook
9 Type of oil
10 Pale purple
11 River float, at times
12 Mattress spring
13 Covet
18 Boston cager
22 Word with mental or mirror
24 Sisters of Greek myth
27 Lathered up
29 Flirtatious stare
30 Hammerhead part
31 Queen's place
32 Singles
33 Party decorations
36 Like some furniture
38 Hazardous gas
39 Bare-bones
40 Verb acting as a noun
46 World Heritage Site org.
47 Swarmed
48 Marx collaborator
50 Bar fruits
52 Skip a syllable
53 Avoid cancellation
54 Indications
55 "Matilda" author
56 Buckeye state
57 SAG member's gig
61 Stool pigeon

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

Bread-o-scope

KAIRI LISING | ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

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Let's stop the fighting and instead come together for the best thing since sliced bread. And what's that? Bread, pre-sliced, of course. We were put here on Earth to invent beautiful, perfect and incredible things such as bread. So what does your yeasty carb say about you?

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): Out of all the signs, you're the most financially stable. You may not be an actual bread per se, but you're definitely getting that bread. **LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22):** "Sharing is caring" is your motto. And what better way to share than with breadsticks for the table? Not only are you giving and kind, but you're also versatile. Dip a breadstick in marinara, ranch or butter (if you're nasty) and it always delivers. You're a beautiful banging bodied breadstick, Libra.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): You like to get your hands dirty, and if something bubbles up? That's alright with you, Scorpio. Like focaccia, you're just fucking good. When you walk into a party, shit's about to go down. People can't keep their hands off of you.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21): Basic is classic. Basic is reliable.

Nothing wrong with basic white bread. You have your niches that you always deliver on, like grilled cheeses and feeding ducks. I swear this is a compliment.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19): You're home for a lot of people, Capricorn. Comforting and warm, just like a homemade cornbread that your mom makes. Fair warning: You can be dry sometimes. Just pair it with some of your honey sweet talking, and you'll be the life of the party.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18): You're the whole grain bread of the zodiac: complex, nutty and way more satisfying than people realize. You might not always be everyone's first choice (because hey, white bread looks

easier), but those who know you know you're full of depth and fiber ... and occasionally, unexpected seeds of brilliance. **PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20):** Pisces, today the universe wants you to channel your inner rye bread — unpredictable, a little tangy and definitely not everyone's cup of tea, but 100% essential for those with sophisticated taste. People might not always get your rye bread energy, but that's their loss. You're a flavor profile that doesn't come around every day. **ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19):** Like in a damn good sandwich from Calypso, you're a beautifully crusty, airy ciabatta. Toasted or untoasted, you're a crowd pleaser. Not only that, but you're a person of action. When has a ciabatta done you wrong? Never.

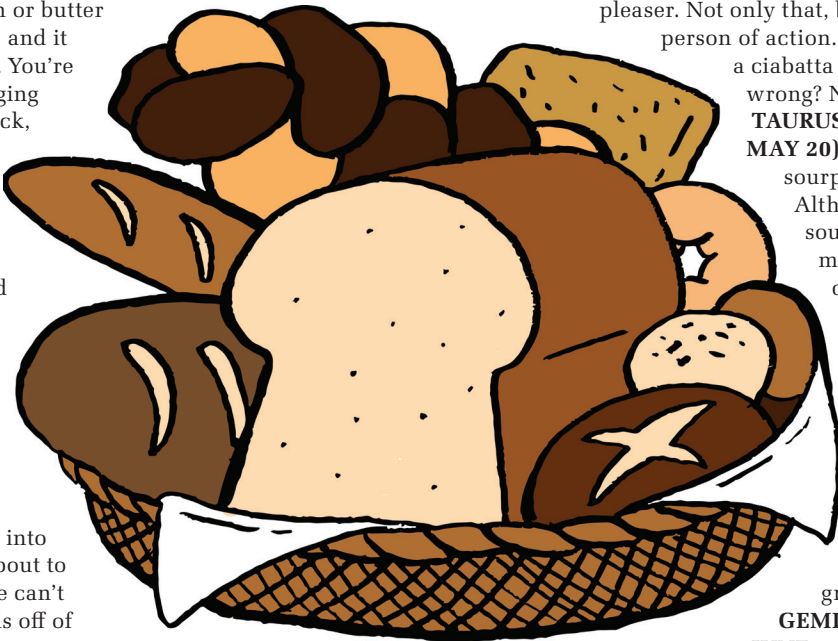
TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): Don't be a sourpuss, Taurus. Although what sourdough is made of is a bit of a mystery, you always come out on top. Some people might not like your sour attitude, but I think that's what makes you great.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): The stars say you're just like pita, Gemini. You're always full of surprises.

Sweet, savory, spicy? No matter what you've got in store, we're pleasantly surprised. Although you might be a little plain on your own, you're great at adapting to new additions.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): Soft, sweet and maybe a little nutty. Better yet, bananas. Congratulations Cancer, you're banana bread. You might always be on an emotional rollercoaster, but that doesn't mean we don't love you!

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): Leo, let's cut to the chase. Everyone wants a slice of your sexy ass. You're garlic bread. Familiar, tasty and delightful. I gotta ask, just a crumb? Please! I'm starving.



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

UM provides a program for student information

BLUE ROGALSKI | NEWS REPORTER
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Last week, the University of Montana launched The Sentinel, a new communication program hoping to streamline how students get their information and to deter confusion.

The Sentinel will feature important information including deadlines, resources and events.

According to Claudine Cellier, director of internal communications, the goal is to create a single source of trusted information in order to prevent students from mistaking messages from the school as spam.

According to Cellier and her project partner, Devin Carpenter, director of new student success, the hub was launched to students via email, where a link took them to a login page. There, students can pick what information they would like to receive from The Sentinel. Options for news include financial aid and scholarships, career support, student life and other topics aimed to help students during their time at the University.

The frequency of emails can be chosen by each student, determining whether they get newsletter emails daily, weekly or monthly. This varies based on what preferences a student has chosen for their interests.

Students will have access to an online portal with updates on selected topics and information from University resources including the Curry Health Center, the Office for Student Success and Campus Dining.

The original email was sent out to all students except first-year students, who will have access once enrollment numbers are finalized. Cellier and Carpenter began working on the project over the summer. "The project and concepts of it are fairly new," Cellier said.

Of the thousands of students, a few hundred have taken initiative and signed up for the newsletter. "We are not expecting everyone to join at first," Cellier said. The communications team is planning on launching a campaign to encourage students to join the platform over the entirety of this academic year.

Carpenter gave a presentation with an AmeriCorps student this summer at a CampusESP convention in Philadelphia for the work he had done for effective family communications. CampusESP is the startup technology used in order to communicate with parents. At the convention, Carpenter caught wind that

it was adding a new feature to communicate with students.

Carpenter signed the University up to be one of the first schools to pilot this new branch. "We are currently one of five schools using this technology in order to communicate with students," Carpenter said. While UM is in the first cohort of schools to use this kind of communication, CampusESP plans to work out the kinks and change elements of design as reports come in.

"UM hasn't had a very steady student newsletter for a few years. As a result, [communication] is a bit disorganized," Cellier said. "We want to put all important information to students in one place."

For Cellier, setting up the portal was the main priority, as it is the same model used for parent and family communications.

"We have been using [the portal] to engage families and parents, so we're replicating that for students."

While this new informational hub is beginning its launch, the Communications Department at the University is also conducting a "broad audit of all separate communications going out to students," according to Cellier, as the second part of their year-long plan. They are performing an in-depth assessment of student communications in general, Cellier stated in an email.

In addition, they are hoping to support students year-round through the platform, offering accessible resources for issues like seasonal depression in the winter months. It will also focus on any topics that may affect students based on the time of year.

"We are working hard to put together information that is relevant to students," Cellier said. They plan to lump messages together based on preference and determine which students find particular information important.

The hub is meant to extend from just events to financial communications and anything related to being a student at University of Montana, according to Cellier, such as notifying students when to fill out the FAFSA and when to pay student bills, which can currently be found on GrizPortal or the UM app.

"The name was chosen to reference old yearbooks, the idea being that The Sentinel is watching out for you, as well as referencing [Mount] Sentinel. We hope this will be a trusted source of news for all students," Cellier said.

Sophomore education major, Ella Swanson, said she doesn't believe the platform will be commonly used by students. "If it was tips for campus life, I would probably delete it immediately," Swanson said.

She said if issues of importance were sent out, such as registration deadlines and financial information, she would find the platform useful. However, she did not want to have to sift through unnecessary information.

"I personally would probably automatically delete it unless it was a deadline for registration or paying your bill," Swanson said.

Swanson said the Sentinel might be a good resource to check if important University details are accurate.

"I could research a deadline for something a million times and if someone could tell me differently, I'd change my mind," she said.

Nora Prophater, a freshman student from the Seattle area, said "I feel like that would be good to learn more about what's going on on campus and would be a good resource for all the students."

Prophater said she would use it for events and keeping up with what is going on on campus.

Students can sign up for The Sentinel through the email sent by UM Communications at any time to receive emails for aid in recreation, including help on how to buy tickets for football games.



SUNRISE Saloon

1101 STRAND
728-1559

Missoula's only
Country
Western Saloon!

9/19 & 9/20 Hunter Stiles Music @9:30PM!

9/24 Bingo @7PM!

9/26 & 9/27 Dakota Poorman @9:30PM!

Every Sunday, Tuesday & Thursday: Karaoke @8:30PM!

Native American tuition waiver changes remain unclear to student body

AIDAN GRAHAM | NEWS REPORTER

Aidan.Graham@umontana.edu

The Montana University System changed its Native American tuition waiver, amending its one-fourth blood quantum qualification for enrolled students.

Prior to the amendment, students were required to be affiliated with a state- or federally-recognized tribe within the boundaries of Montana, qualify for financial aid and have one-fourth Native blood degree to receive the tuition waiver.

The Montana University System cited concerns proposed by House Rep. Tyson T. Runningwolf, D-Glacier, over the “outdated blood quantum” law and expanding enrollment for Native students in Montana. While the University System has attempted to be transparent, information remains murky for students and faculty.

According to data from the Montana University System, over 2,600 Native students were enrolled in the system in 2023. The most recent student data, last recorded in 2021, states that over 1,200 students attended university on the tuition waiver.

The waiver, which went into effect in 2003, covers a majority of tuition for Native students who qualify.

“It is crucial to recognize that the waiver does not merely support education; it upholds the cultural identity and right to community for Native students residing here,” said Jonaye Doney, an enrolled member of the Gros Ventre tribe.

At the beginning of September, Doney created a petition opposing changes to the waiver. The petition received over 248 signatures, citing concerns over the changes’ effects on enrollment for Montana Native Americans not affiliated with a tribe within the state’s boundaries.

While the waiver is designed to apply to students enrolled in or affiliated with tribes inside the Montana boundaries, each individual higher education system has broad discretion for these rules when discussing blood quantum for out-of-state tribes.

The University of Montana has allowed students affiliated with federally recognized U.S. and Canadian tribes by blood quantum to apply for the waiver in the past, allowing enrollment opportunities for students from out-of-state tribes, Canadian tribes or

students who are Montana residents but enrolled or affiliated with an out-of-state tribe.

The one-fourth rule is a subset of a set of laws known formally as “blood quantum,” termed by colonial White settlers in the early 19th century as a way to classify Native Americans and limit citizenship. According to the Native Governance Center, blood quantum is now primarily to recognize eligibility for programs, benefits and citizenship by 70% of tribes in the United States.

“Changing the eligibility would lead to educational inequities and further disenfranchise Native populations, contradicting efforts toward reconciliation and inclusivity,” Doney stated on the petitions website.

Runningwolf proposed House Bill 282, a bill that would amend the waiver, removing the one-fourth blood quantum qualification. According to the bill, this amendment would expand native enrollment and allow greater opportunity for future enrollment.

Federally- and state-recognized tribes in the United States are allowed to determine their own requirements for citizenship under tribal sovereignty, with one-third of federally recognized tribes carrying a focus on linear descent and relation rather than quantity of “Native blood.” As blood degree decreases, many Native citizens may lose access to opportunities if blood quantum remains a qualification.

“Descendancy has become the solution to the blood quantum countdown to tribal extinction,” the Montana Indian Caucus stated in a letter to the House Education Committee.

The amendments from HB 282 became policy on July 1, with plans to go into effect for admissions in 2026, according to the Montana University System. They assure these changes will only affect newly enrolled students.

While many students have shown avid concern, the University System has assured that students currently enrolled will not have their waivers affected.

“Nothing at all should change for anyone currently in the system,” said Galen Hollenbaugh, deputy spokesperson in the Montana University System.

Additionally, the MUS has stated the waiver changes will boost enrollment opportunities for Native students in Montana.

University of Montana faculty are working to understand the ramifications on enrollment, while many students remain primarily

Tuition Waiver
-Enrolled tribal member
~~*-1/4 Blood quantum*~~
-Demonstrates financial need

BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

uninformed. “I have not had any students inquire about the tuition waiver changes,” said Karla Bird, tribal outlook specialist at the University of Montana. “And unfortunately, I do not have a good understanding of the proposed changes.” Bird said she hopes to meet with the commissioner of higher education to discuss the changes.

Additionally, a lack of transparency has created concern among the student body over how these changes may affect their peers.

“I know there’s a petition going around that was started by one of the students,” said Willow Kip, a post-bachelor student and an enrolled member of the Shoshone-Bannock and Blackfeet tribes. “Honestly, if that’s the way they changed it, it will exclude Native American students who aren’t affiliated with only Montana tribes. So, I think the way they changed it doesn’t sound like it’s very proactive in that because it only limits it to Montana descendants.” Kip currently attends the University

of Montana on the Native American tuition waiver.

Director of Indian and Minority Achievement at the Montana University Center, Angela McClean, assured students that the American Indian and Minority Achievement Counsel, made up of faculty from universities across the nation, weighed in on these changes and continues to on a regular basis.

“We are always focusing on ways to expand and focus on growing enrollment retention, completion and graduation rates across the Montana University System,” McClean said.

Even with the University System taking steps toward transparency, many students and faculty remain concerned about what these changes hold for future enrollment.

“Anytime there is a good solution there is an unintended consequence,” said Emily Ferguson-Stager, director of student life at the University of Montana. However, the MUS remains avid that its main goal is to increase enrollment opportunities for Native students.

IN CREATIVE COMPANY

How three University of Montana students pursue their passion while keeping up in class

Story by Bee Reiswig
Photos by Jackson Mailey

Creativity bursts out of people as much and as often as it can. Sometimes it comes out in the simplest of ways, someone's voice echoing through the Jesse Hall showers or a gum wrapper being folded into a shiny silver heart to kill time during class.

Other times, creativity turns into something on a larger scale. Students at the University of Montana have found ways to turn art into a trade, something they can make into an occupation.

From a marketing major working to succeed in her major as well as with her business to a self-taught nail artist fitting in appointments around her homework, UM students find a rainbow of opportunities to express themselves.

According to Eric Guzik, an assistant clinical professor of management in the business school, it's a small pool of students who work as entrepreneurs and it's an even smaller number who work on artistic pursuits.

Any student at UM is able to take entrepreneurial classes. They are also welcome to apply to the John Ruffatto Startup Challenge, a workshop and competition for potential new entrepreneurs at UM. Guzik would love to see more liberal arts students in en-



UM junior Ella Rowland displaying and flipping through some of her art in her notebook on Sept. 8.

trepreneurial classes and competitions.

"We often think of entrepreneurship as being technical or kind of innovation based, but it doesn't have to be," Guzik said. "You're combining creative thinking with creating value in the economy or society."

But creativity isn't always an infinite well, and there isn't an unlimited amount of time in which to invent. For every artist on campus, finding the balance is a unique challenge.

LOVE OF THE CRAFT

Today, it's an online store and a booth at many local markets.

But two years ago, Signe Sandstrom met Jenna Schulz in their shared dance class. The 21-year-old Native Hawaiian from Aurora, Colorado, became friends with Schulz, whose family is from an island off of Fiji called Rotuma, and found they shared an affinity for creating.

At first, they wanted to make flower hair clips just for fun. Then, they thought they could sell them. The idea for hula accessories later evolved into jewelry making and then changed to prints and clothing.

One might find Sandstrom tucked away in a corner of Funk It Coffee and Thrift, in a booth at

Butterfly Herbs or soaking up the sun in a park. With her long dark hair draped over her shoulder, she draws design ideas for Pasifika Pua, her and Schulz's Pacific Islander small business that works to represent both of their Pasifika cultures.

Many of their shirts feature flowers from the region. Birds of paradise, hibiscuses and kalos decorate the front of their baby tees and tank tops. Their jewelry is simple and elegant. Pearl earrings ranging in colors from green to red to gold are available, as well as a Pikake bracelet. The beaded accessory features a warm-toned sandalwood with

white flower-shaped beads, which symbolize love, according to the website Hawaiiiverse.

Much of their work is sold online. Prices range from around \$8 for one of their prints to \$45 for their red pearl earrings.

Running Pasifika Pua tends to take up about 10 hours of Sandstrom's week, between the business' day-to-day operations, like designing or contacting other links in the chain of production and weekly meetings with Schulz. The two take turns with different responsibilities, depending on what their schedules look like. Sandstrom also works part-time at Florence Coffee, around 25 hours a week.

On top of her 15-credit semester as a junior in marketing at UM, Sandstrom said it can be a bit too much sometimes.

"I'm not going to lie, there was a semester where I was not focusing on my school. And the business was very much a crutch for me," Sandstrom said. "I kind of let my grades slip."

Now, she chooses online classes, which she said feel like less of a time commitment, since they can fit more easily into her schedule.

"In an ideal world, this is all I would be doing," Sandstrom said. "It's definitely feasible to continue through school. I just have to be aware of where my energy is going every single day."

Recently, Sandstrom went on a trip to Bozeman, Montana, and stopped by the Museum of the Rockies. She wanted to draw on her own time, but found that sketching dinosaurs was not her strong suit.

"I'm trying to get more into being creative for the sake of being creative and not just for business stuff," Sandstrom said. "It's so easy to channel everything into that so [it's harder] having hobbies, but it is different when you're doing

work and school and stuff like that."

Most days, Sandstrom's energy goes toward Pasifika Pua. Sometimes decisions around a culture-based business can be difficult. Whether or not to share specific traditions or designs can be a struggle. According to Sandstrom, they are careful not to share any of their hula dancing online in order not to overstep cultural boundaries.

Though Sandstrom said they started Pasifika Pua on a "whim," as the business has grown, she is trying to make the process more intentional. They plan which seasonal local markets they go to and have curated an earthy aesthetic for their Instagram and their website. The two began to hire out for printing and digitizing. That way, they can make items at larger scales instead of hand-printing each and every piece of clothing.

Time is money, as the saying goes, and Sandstrom is putting in all the time she can.

"I do it because I like it, not because it makes me money," Sand-

strom said. "Because to be honest, I'm not making money. In the summers you definitely can, but it really is like how much you put in is how much you get."

Though Sandstrom said Pasifika Pua is more or less self-sustainable, she hasn't decided yet what she wants her life to look like. Her business could be her main source of income, or it could be one of many projects she hopes to start. Art is a part of her life, and she likes to surround herself with it.

"We're like curators," Sandstrom said. "I wouldn't say I'm like a musician or like a writer or anything like that. But I have the idea of how I want to put everything together to make an experience."

IN THE DETAILS

In a corner of the Delta Gamma sorority house dining room, a quiet buzzing announces Lauren Ashley is starting on another client's nails. She's got a small table with a few chairs set up with a UV light on top and cotton balls



CONTRIBUTED ARTWORK | SIGNE SANDSTROM

and tinfoil tucked underneath. She and her client chat about what design they should do and whether or not her nails look good underneath the old set.

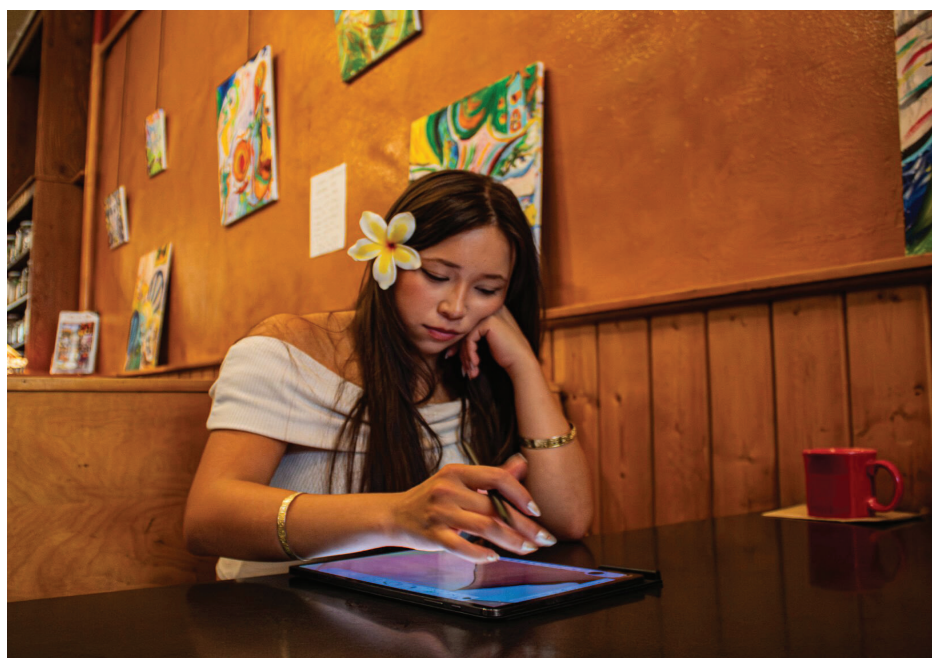
When she started back in 2021, using a basic gel kit that her mom bought her, Ashley just worked on her own nails. As she improved, she started learning techniques and strategies. She graduated to doing her friend's nails in the spring of 2024 and then those of her friends' friends.

When she started as a freshman at the University last year, Ashley's mom convinced her to turn her hobby into a small business. It's grown over time, and now Ashley is able to take on more clients than ever, even with her class schedule. One week, she had 19 appointments.

"It's something I really enjoy doing, so it's not like a job to me," Ashley said. "Any extra spare time just gets filled with nails."

For Ashley, clients fit in around her business classes. She chose the major in order to help her with her current entrepreneurial jobs and potential future prospects in business.

She is also considering adding an art minor to her degree, since she has long enjoyed drawing and



Signe Sandstrom, UM junior and co-owner of Pasifika Pua, works on one of her designs at Butterfly Herbs in Missoula on Sept. 7. Sandstrom enjoys working on her designs in coffee shops around Missoula.

painting. Her favorite mediums are charcoal and gouache. She often uses them to replicate scenes from her favorite movies, like “The Hunger Games,” the Harry Potter series and “Criminal Minds.”

“[Doing nails] definitely gives me less time to be able to do [traditional art], but I’m still being creative,” Ashley said. “And as long as I’m still creating art ... that’s all that matters to me.”

Running a business alongside school-work isn’t new to Ashley. In high school, around 2022, she and her sister started a cookie business called Just Crumbs Left in her hometown of Fruitland, Idaho. She continues to work making cookies during breaks from school.

Balancing her work and school commitments with being in a sorority can come as a challenge.

“It definitely does get overwhelming thinking about everything I have to do, because sometimes I do put homework on the back burner,” Ashley said. “Right now, I think it works for me and it’s really great that I can decide that for myself.”

In the future, maybe she could keep both businesses as side hustles while she works full-time for another company. Maybe one of them could grow enough to become a main hustle instead. Ideally, both of them could.

For now, Ashley is content to do nails and focus on her degree.

“I don’t do it for the money,” Ashley said. “I’m thankful enough not to have to work while doing nails, but I do enjoy the creative aspect of it and making other people feel good about their nails.”

She can be found on Instagram by the username [nailswithlauren.a](#).

SURROUNDED BY ART

Ella Rowland’s room is covered in art, both her own and others’.

There are crocheted pillows on her bed, charcoal drawings on her wall, and notebooks and paintings scattered across every surface. The sun shining through a window adds to the life that springs from every corner.

She’s been an artist ever since she can remember. Her mom, who almost went to

art school herself, has pictures of Rowland painting at an easel as a child. Now, Rowland is a junior pursuing an art degree with three separate artistic side hustles: illustrating for the Montana Free Press, working for a local gallery and helping disabled adults make art. And she still finds time to do things just for her.

In her own practice, Rowland likes to paint with gouache and watercolor. For school, depending on which classes she’s taking at the time, oil paint is more her speed. This semester, she’ll try a few new mediums, like ceramics and printmaking.

For the Montana Free Press, a statewide nonprofit news organization, she makes



UM sophomore and nail artist Lauren Ashley, left, paints a nail design for UM Junior Jazmyne Lafromboise, right, at the UM Delta Gamma Sorority house on Sept. 7.

digital art. It needed illustrations for its town-specific newsletters a little more than a year ago. To emphasize Missoula, Rowland drew the classic red X statue, the M and the Clark Fork River with a bridge over it.

The paper liked her work. From there, she has drawn stickers with those same landmarks for the Montana Free Press, helped illustrate the newspaper’s environmental magazine, Mountain Journal and added party hats to photographs of animals for the

magazine’s eighth “birthday” campaign. The publication comes to her with specific projects and she is able to choose them according to her schedule.

“People say, ‘Oh, the starving artist. How are you going to make money?’ I get that question a lot,” Rowland said. “I’m like, ‘Well, I already have three incomes based on my love for art.’ And so, I’m really not too worried about going into the world. But that does require people in the world to appreciate art and artists.”

It’s part of Rowland’s effort to have art weave through every aspect of her life. She talks about it quietly, but with eyes shining with passion behind large glasses.

“I’ve always wanted to include art in my career,” Rowland said. “I’ve never really wanted to do anything else. And even as I’m interested in other subjects, I want my art to kind of come along with that.”

One way that she is building experience in the art world is through Radius Gallery. With an emphasis on ceramics and Indigenous art, the gallery is in downtown Missoula.

“When they hired me, I was thrilled,” Rowland said. “And this was kind of a dream job. I’ve been wanting to work there since I moved to Missoula for college.”

She’s worked as the social media manager since the beginning of the summer. Previously doing the same job for the Davidson Honors College gave her a useful background for the role. She creates videos, posts, features artists and promotes the gallery.

It has also been an opportunity to shadow professionals in the art world. Rowland has been able to meet artists, gallery owners and clients. At the moment, she is helping Radius plan its holiday show. During the school year, she works about seven hours a week.

Outside of her other two jobs and homework, Rowland works once a week at Opportunity Resources Inc., a support service for adults with disabilities. She spends her eight-hour shift cleaning up the art room and doing what she calls “three-armed ceramics.” Rowland has both of her hands on the wheel, while the student is able to

add water and help shape the clay with their hand.

“It really aligned with one of my goals of helping make art more accessible for everyone because I do think it’s such an important thing in my own life and I want everyone to have access to it,” Rowland said.

Medical and scientific illustration is one of the ways in which she hopes to make the world more accessible. It’s Rowland’s dream to have her own art practice alongside illustrating. That way she can enjoy art both as a fun thing and as a more organized part of her life.

This semester, though, her busy schedule has made it harder to find time to paint just for herself.

“I don’t imagine I will have much time for personal projects this semester,” Rowland said. “But I think each of those classes [printmaking and ceramics] allows me to use my own creativity and bring in the inspiration that I would normally use for my own art. So I’m not too worried that I’ll be losing out on time, I think it’ll just be a little more structured.”

Rowland said she typically has less energy and time to create for herself during the school year. Even at the beginning of last summer, it was hard to find inspiration to make art. But Rowland doesn’t wait for inspiration to find her. She works for it. She spends time outdoors, using watercolors by the river or painting from photos she has taken from hikes.

“I try to really have my own practice of making art just for myself and having that be more exploratory and less stressful, more about just creating than the final product,” Rowland said. “I try to keep those ideas true when I’m working for school, but also there is a little more pressure on the final product ... I want to present my best work so that I can get feedback to move on from there.”

Art is how Rowland wants to fill her life. From her room decor to her career, each piece of her life is touched by creativity. And she’ll keep working to keep it that way.

Top: UM junior Ella Rowland skims through some of the art in her notebook on Sept. 8.

Bottom: Rowland draws one of the designs she’s working on in her room.



Undergraduate fills gallery with trauma-focused art

BEE REISWIG | ARTS REPORTER
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Strong brush strokes. People painted in technicolor. Vibrant self-portraits. Bright, beautiful art pops against the muted backgrounds of the University Center. The frame is always filled, each seemingly random object in the foreground detailed and interesting.

Some have the thinner lines of a paint pen scribbled as a part of the subject. Others have handprints and fingerprints. All of the pieces are part of Myth Deck's solo exhibition, "Is it Fun to Hold My World in Your Hands?"

"I am very loud in all of my self-expression, and I really want to reflect that in my art," said Deck, a 20-year-old undergraduate art major at the University of Montana. The exhibition is currently

displayed in the University Center Art Gallery.

Deck, who uses they/them pronouns, grew up in Floweree, Montana, three hours from Missoula. Since moving for college, Deck has felt more free to express themselves outside of "small-town Montana." Their hair is black and vibrant green, and their black lipstick is perfectly outlined and filled. Not a smudge or fade to be seen. Silver jewelry accents an all-black outfit that is suited for the 70-degree weather.

For Deck, it's not that art came into their life at a certain point. It's just always been there.

Their first memory is of the one-room schoolhouse where they attended elementary school. Deck taped five printer pages together, making a super-canvas where they drew a self portrait as a ballerina in a castle.

"I just remember that so clearly," Deck said. "I think it's so interesting that that's one of my first memories. I think that really reflects what art has always meant to me."

Despite that, it wasn't a simple choice for Deck to pick art as their major. The choice was between art, art education, dance and dance education. In the end, due to their struggle with their chronic blood circulation disorder, Post Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome, they chose art. It ended up being the right decision.

"Myth started out with some really good skills in rendering and was doing, kind of, common themes and then all of a sudden in the second term, Myth started taking off with these wild colors and just this incredible amount of stuff that they put in their paintings," said Kevin Bell, professor

of painting and drawing at the University of Montana.

Deck took their very first painting class with Bell. Prior to that, they had mostly worked with drawing. Working in color was new to them and something that ended up becoming a staple of their work.

They've stuck with Bell ever since. They appreciate the fact that Bell encourages personal expression and artistic intent alongside technique.

The effects of trauma on worldview and introspection are some of the goals of Deck's art. Growing up, they had often been excluded or bullied without noticing. They were so used to negative interactions that that was a part of their everyday life.

When they came to Missoula, Deck realized what it felt like to have people care about them and want to be around them.

Through making all the pieces displayed at the UC, they were able to dig into those suppressed emotions a little deeper. Deck wasn't intentionally curating an exhibition, but when Bell suggested that they had enough work to do so, Deck took initiative. According to Bell, he was impressed that as an undergraduate, Deck was able to fill that larger space.

"The work fills the space beautifully. It feels vibrant, alive and full in there," Bell said. "It takes kind of the ordinary everyday and kind of goes to a transcendent space with them and kind of captures the unseen energy that exists around everything and everybody."

For Deck, it has been an "overwhelmingly positive" experience. The opening of the exhibition brought their family from Floweree and a crowd that had plenty of kind words to say. According to Deck, people have complimented the "world" formed by the exhibit and the intimate view of the artist's life. Their family cried. It left Deck feeling grateful and excited that their art was accomplishing what they wanted it to, especially with such a vulnerable topic.

"It makes me feel like I found my way of expressing, because I've always struggled a lot with words," Deck said. "To find that art succeeds in that is just really relieving, because it means there's nothing wrong with me. I'm just like a little different in how I express things."



Myth Deck's exhibition "Is It Fun to Hold My World In Your Hands?" in the UC Art Gallery on Sept. 15. HENRY DOELLINGER | MONTANA KAIMIN

Folk band gives roots to UM students

SYDNEY MOATE | ARTS REPORTER

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On the University of Montana Oval, the lively, lilting sounds of an ensemble band carries across campus.

Students study to the twang of a banjo, the thrum of a guitar and the deep shuddering of a cello. Little do they know the band providing them with a late summer soundtrack is actually a class offered at UM.

Standing in a circle, the band sings, "Get along home Cindy, get along home. Get along home Cindy, Cindy, I'll marry you someday."

Musical minds at the University of Montana have found a home in the Roots Ensemble. Offered as both a class and a club, the band fosters a community for UM students while teaching history and skills of American folk music.

The ensemble's name, "Roots", refers to the roots of American music: pop, hip hop, rap, blues, jazz and other modern music genres.

"All the genres that have emerged in the last hundred years are all coming from the same roots of American folk music," professor Maggie Gammons said.

Gammons, who teaches the class, said the Roots class and student group are truly welcoming to all. It's ideal if newcomers know how to play an instrument, but they will teach new students or they can be a part of the group in other ways, including singing and dancing. The students play songs by ear and no sheet music is involved.

The class meets twice a week and the club meets once a week. Many students retake the class each semester to attend three practices a week. The club's president, Aiden Agostinelli, said Gammons mixes up the content each semester for students retaking the class by teaching the historic background of music and introducing an album of the week.

The class is currently taught by Gammons. Originally from Butte, she grew up playing the fiddle. She got into folk music in high school and studied classical violin under Margaret Baldrige at the music department at UM. Gammons graduated with a degree in environmental studies and has worked in organic vegetable farming.

Gammons felt classical violin has not paired well with her career in farming, but "Farming, fiddle and folk music are a great combo," she said.

Agostinelli, from Missoula, is a 20-year-old junior majoring in physics and astronomy. He started with the band in December 2024, his freshman year. This is his fourth semester with the band.

Agostinelli played classical music growing up. He said by the end of high school he was



Emily Milligan leads the UM Roots Ensemble club through a practice in the grass of the Oval on Sept. 12. **DIEGO HERNANDEZ | MONTANA KAIMIN**

sick of classical and felt like he was being treated like an instrument. He had a friend who said Roots takes the rigidity out of music.

"There's no power hierarchy," he said. "You just come as you are."

He didn't play guitar before joining Roots, but feels the supportive environment of the band helped him learn it faster than a classical music environment would have. He now sings and plays guitar in the Roots Ensemble.

Agostinelli said the band is a supportive environment, not a competitive one. People can solo if they like, but here is no pressure to be at a specific skill level with your instrument. He estimated the club is currently at 30 members at various levels of involvement.

The band practices outside whenever they can. "This music has always been played in an open setting. It's fun to play barefoot on the Oval," Agostinelli said.

Emily Milligan, the club treasurer, described Roots as a place to learn new music, jam out and build off of each other.

"Roots is one of the things that did the most to break out of my shell when I got to college," said Milligan, a 19-year-old from Reed Point, Montana.

She joined in the fall of 2024 and now plays guitar and sings. This is her third semester taking the class.

Now a junior majoring in media arts with a focus on film, Milligan said she picked up the guitar from her dad, and has been playing for two years.

The class meets every Tuesday and Thursday from noon to 1 p.m., and the club meets on Fridays at 5 p.m. Now introducing traditional Irish and Canadian music, Agostinelli said, "We cast a wide net for what roots music means. We create a space on campus where old school music traditions are taught."

In addition to practicing, the Roots Ensemble plays shows around campus and Missoula throughout the semester at request. Roots plays garden parties, University events, private parties, jams, square dances and events at the Davidson Honors College. It always has a final performance, which has been at Free Cycles in the last few years. This September it played for the Missoula Urban Demonstration Project's garden party and will perform again at The Lodge for s'mores night on Oct. 2.



Friday
October 3rd
5pm-8pm

Prizes, wine, treats,
and a raffle basket.



210 North Higgins
Ave Suite 200



Saturday
October 4th
11am-2pm



Fact n Fiction
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Join us for a signing of **SNAPPING BACK:**
Its Never to Late to Be What You Might
Have Been
by Patti Carlisi!

UM football celebrates its 30th

DILLON RICHARDSON | SPORTS REPORTER

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It all started when the University of Montana Alumni Association announced the theme of this year's homecoming: "Party Like It's 1995."

That year calls back to the Griz football team's victory at the 1995 national championship game, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.

The theme incorporates a few key features of the '95 championship team, such as the old copper and gold coloring that UM wore from 1968 until 1995.

Another piece of the theme is the retro slobbering bear logo, even though it wasn't used by UM during the championship season.

After the theme was announced, the UM athletic department decided to join in on the throwback theme.

Eric Taber, director of communications for the UM football team, referenced changes such as press credentials and mailings to fans utilizing the throwback theme rather than traditional UM colors, as well as a new retro merchandise line.

Taber thinks the celebrations are a great thing for UM to be doing.

"That team and that group of people have just been so important and so instrumental to the success of Montana football," he said. "You can't celebrate that group of people too much."

With the celebrations going on, some have speculated that UM will wear copper uniforms for a game this year for the first time since 2018.

"We're always looking for some kind of way to have fun with uniforms," Taber said with a smile. "But we don't tip our hats on uniforms too much."

While the University is marketing toward the fan experience, these

celebrations have allowed players to connect as well.

Last Friday, an event honoring the late UM football coach Don Read and the "Decade of Dominance" was put on in the Adams Center by the brand-new Grizzly Football Players Association.

Brian Toone, who played on the '95 championship team and is now the CEO of Jewelry Design Center, was the main organizer of the event, which started as a reunion for the team, but eventually turned into a fundraiser that gave over \$50,000 to UM football.



UM ATHLETICS | CONTRIBUTED

anniversary of '95 championship

"We wanted to get together, we wanted a reunion, but we also wanted to do something bigger and better than ourselves," Toone said. "Every one of our reunions we have looked back and missed opportunities to thank the old coaches, to thank players that were a huge part of our playing career, but graduated before the '95 championship."

Toone said those involved needed to be recognized because of what they did for the team and for UM in general.

"What those players and that coach and that coaching staff were able to do was create a frenzy around football," he said. "The only reason we are able to watch Shania Twain or Pearl Jam in this stadium is because of all those guys that helped build that program that put butts in seats and now all of the sudden we have this amazing thing."

He added that when Read passed away in January 2024, the team didn't get a proper memorial, so this event was the perfect time to do it.

"This program is going to memorialize all of the highlight tapes and everything else," Toone said. "But mixed in with coach Read-isms and different things he would say and different people's experiences that they got."



UM ATHLETICS | CONTRIBUTED

All of the money that was raised from the event will be donated to UM football in Read's name.

The Grizzly Football Players Association, a nonprofit group meant to help connect former players and coaches, also came out of the event.

"Anybody that was a former player or coach of the University of Montana can join," Toone said. "What we're trying to build is something that can tie everyone together and make it easy to contact them."

Toone said something like the association has been attempted before, but never fully came to fruition until now. Toone credited the memorial event with finally bringing the idea together.

"I wasn't going to build an infrastructure for just this event, but to go beyond us, this Grizzly Football Players Association is going to go on long after we're gone," he said.

While Toone's event is separate from the University, he still thinks UM's celebration is great.

"I love the copper and gold," he said. "We won a championship in copper, gold and silver."

**"Now I bleed both colors,"
Toone said.**

Toone was one of the players who got to play in both maroon and copper. He said when he found out that UM was changing to maroon, he was mad, but has now grown to appreciate it.

"Now I bleed both colors," he said.

Another member of the '95 championship team is current UM Offensive Coordinator Brent Pease, who was the quarterback coach for the Griz 30 years ago. Pease is the only former player or coach from the '95 team currently on the 2025 staff.

Pease said in the 30 years since the championship, a lot has changed at UM.

"Winning and the expectations and the standards around this place have changed,"



UM ATHLETICS | CONTRIBUTED

he said. "Coach Read started it and built it to a pretty high level pretty soon. Then it's totally accelerated and inclined since then."

Pease said he thinks UM bringing copper back is a fun way to celebrate.

"I played in copper, so I'm good with it," he said. "When you think back on the originality of when we were playing in it at that time, I think it's kind of unique that way."

He said even though the copper is great, the most important thing is to reconnect with members of past teams.

"I think that the thing that we got to do more of is just trying to get more people that have played for coach Read," he said. "It's just hard to get in touch with that many people."

Another person who experienced both copper and maroon is lifelong fan Brint Wahlberg, member of the Griz Fan podcast. Wahlberg, 45, was born and raised in

Missoula, and is now a real estate agent. He said he remembered the color change, and didn't really know what to think of it at the time.

"As a teenager, it didn't make a ton of sense to me," Wahlberg said.

He said he remembers asking his dad why UM changed the colors and his dad telling him "because copper doesn't look good with your blue jeans," something that Wahlberg now finds funny. "In hindsight, that's such a Montana thing to say," Wahlberg said.

Wahlberg said what UM is doing this year is great. "I'm loving it, we all like nostalgic things, so it brings back nostalgia for people like me, and probably plenty of people older than me too," he said.

He added he would really like to see the Griz play a game in the copper throwback jerseys this year.

Wahlberg also said he thinks the celebration not only remembers the 1995 season, but also the decade of Griz dominance from 1986-95.

"Washington-Grizzly [Stadium] gets built in '86, Grizzly football doesn't have a losing season, does not lose to Montana State, and it ends with a national championship," Wahlberg said. "Being able to celebrate those guys in the colors and styles they had on the field makes it all the more fun."

He said the theme is on par with trends he's seeing around the nation.

"There kind of seems to be this revitalization of more vintage style in college sports right now," he said. "I love that the UM has old colors and old logos that they can lean into."

He said he has really loved all the merchandise UM has put out in the vintage style.

"I love what they're doing," he said. "People like me own so much Griz crap and now I own more. Because I'm not passing, I bought a copper jersey, I bought a copper hoodie. I've got to."

He said the style and the whole celebration in general seems to be incredibly popular for others too.

"People seem to be responding to it pretty well," he said. "I haven't heard a lot of people that are upset by this. They're loving it."

Blackhawks and coffee

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The morning dew sat like a layer of film over the grass of the University of Montana Oval as the blades of a helicopter broke the quiet air.

It was a scene out of a movie: a U.S. Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter descends from the sky down onto the oval. The humming rotors slow to a stop. The landing on the center of campus was part of a military reunion event held at UM on Sept. 13.

Veterans, community members and Montana National Guard personnel surrounded the olive-green aircraft, socializing and reconnecting. Kids were invited to climb through the helicopter's open side doors, greeted by soldiers, smiling as they shuffled into the seats in the cockpit.

The helicopter landing was just one attraction of the three-day military reunion. Earlier, UM hosted a veterans' social at Red's Bar and a walk at memorial row, laden with flowers to commemorate 9/11.

In April, UM was ranked No. 1 on the Military Friendly Schools list. UM president and former Green Beret, Seth Bodnar, said in a press release the University seeks to expand on the veteran presence on campus through activities like these.

"For veterans that are getting older, maybe more distant from their time in uniform, events like this bring back the bond we share as service members," said Samuel Pascal Redfern, the CEO of the Montana Veterans Association Foundation. "UM has a strong history with alumni veterans, and with Seth Bodnar as a leader, we hope that the University can host more great events like this one."

The Foundation is one of a couple of organizations in the state that provide resources to Montana veterans. Recently, according to Redfern, the organization has been conducting a study that looks into the number of veterans in the state. Redfern said while official stats show between 85,000 and 90,000 veterans, he would not be surprised if there were closer to 110,000.

"That means that one out of 10 Montanans is a veteran, and if we start counting family members, then most of the

state is connected one way or another," Redfern said.

Redfern enlisted in 2001 after the events of 9/11 and served in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He said while joining was one of the best decisions of his life, there was still a cost. Redfern said recently there has been a push to move the event to November, but ice and harsh conditions would exclude veterans with injuries.

The weekend's events gave an opportunity for Missoulians to engage with the armed forces.

"It's really cool to see that the community will not only take an interest in coming out, but will also show their appreciation for those who served," said Denton Rone, a member of the Montana Army National Guard and one of the soldiers working at the event. "Our goal out here is to not only provide people with community, but to help answer the next generation's question if the military is right for them."



ABOVE: A US Army medical Blackhawk helicopter sits on UM's oval during a veterans appreciation day event on Sept. 13. The helicopter sat on the grass for over four hours, letting families view and enter the helicopter.

RIGHT: US Army soldiers help groups of children and families into the cargo seats of the Blackhawk helicopter.



ABOVE: The UM Grateful Nation Memorial scattered with flowers after a honoring of the fallen event held on Sept. 11.

