MONTANA KAIMIN

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Story by Jack Snow

Cover Photo by Henry Doellinger

Photos by Embry Ericson

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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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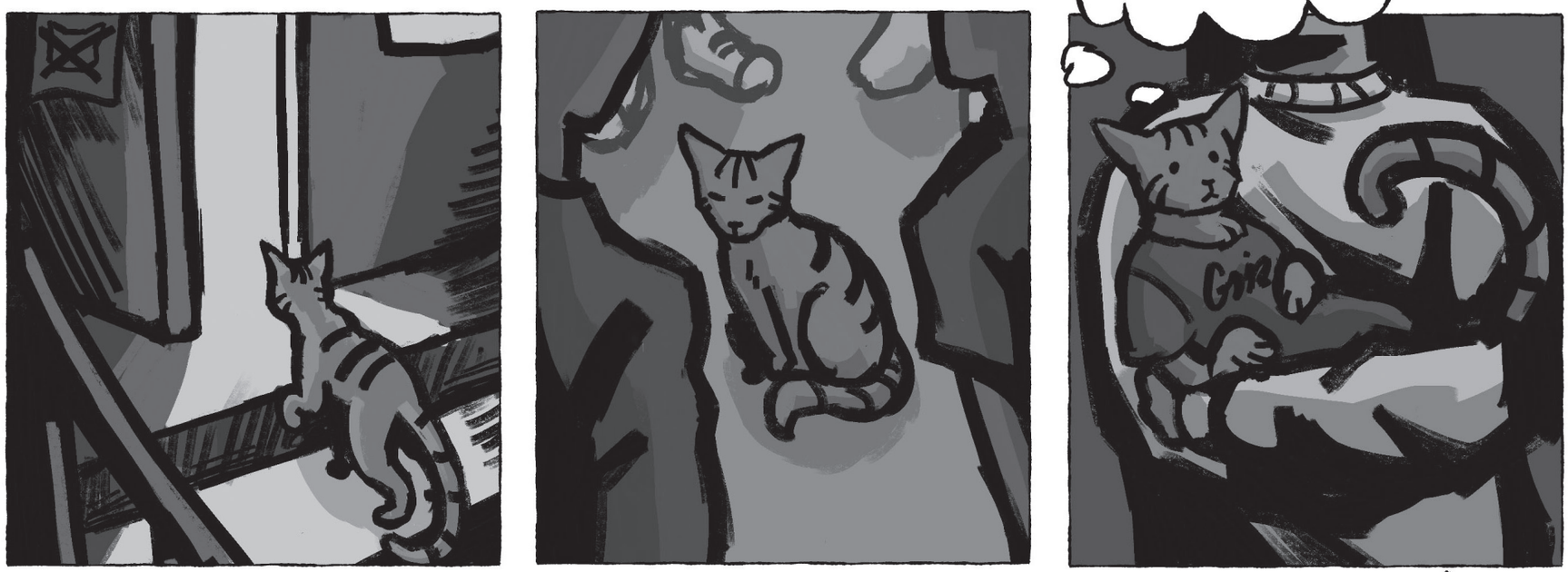
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ADVISERS
Jason Begay
Bronwen Dickey

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KAIMIN KOMICS: #11 ADVENTURES OF A DORM CAT



ALYSSA JO MURNION | CARTOONIST

After the pivotal midterm elections, how do we find common ground?

Now that we have seen the tsunami of social media posts on the Democratic sweep, it's the best time to remind ourselves that we should all be on the same side.

I don't mean that we need to agree on everything, but we should be able to talk about our perspectives without being called a racist or brainwashed. We should be focused on one thing: What changes need to be implemented to best support the collective?

The two party system, which has itself become more of a spectrum, is dividing the American people to a point that feels like it has no return. It has become less about opinions on political issues and more of a handstamp that allows those around us to attack each other's morals.

Growing up in a predominantly Republican area in Alaska, I saw how politics would split up friend groups and families, even my own. During the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020, my parents and I found ourselves holding different perspectives on the movement. For months, I thought my mother and I would never stop fighting.

Any time the movement was brought up it would turn into a screaming match. I began feeling the strain of holding different political views within the walls of my house. Home became a battleground that never fully healed from the events that happened there, so much so that I had promised myself to never go into a job that was surrounded by politics. Obviously, that did not work out.

We should not be scared to disagree. With the flip of the House and the Senate, the focus should not be on retaliatory politics and what would help Democrats, but should be focused on what needs to happen in order to better American lives. When you take a step back, yes sides may disagree on topics like abortion and immigration, but we all are struggling to buy groceries. Republicans and Democrats alike are facing extremely high gas prices. Buying a home is not an option for those of us just stepping out of college.

Congress should be focused on finding ways to lower the cost of living and make resources accessible for more Americans rather than pointing fingers at each other while citizens nationwide struggle to get by.

NPR reporter Frank Langfitt took a deeper look at this seemingly strong divisiveness when it comes to politics and found that it is less about being divided by politics and more about fear of conflict. He found that politicians are prone to painting opposing parties as extreme to fire up their voters, and social media only adds fuel to that fire.

"Once you look beneath Republican and Democratic labels you can see a lot of variation within the parties and a lot of overlap. This kind of messy political middle is larger than those groups on the ideological right and the ideological left," Jocelyn Kiley, political researcher for Pew, said to Langfitt.

We waste too much breath bickering about things that should not be in politics and do not discuss the bigger issues at hand. We are too worried about the label of one's political party and not what they personally believe.

We need to be able to disagree in order to move toward change. We need to have those conversations that may be uncomfortable to reach a compromise that betters everyone, not just one party.

The American Psychological Association says we should find areas we agree on, but also accept that we may not change each other's minds. It is OK to disagree with someone you care about on politics, but it is important to be open and kind.

We need to broaden our perspectives when it comes to politics. If we keep going in the direction we are in, our country will continue to feel like my home in 2020 — a political battle ground where no one wins.

- Sav Chavez, features editor
Like it? Hate it? Let us know.
Email us your opinions at henry.doellinger@umontana.edu

SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Medium

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

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HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

Squaring off



Cody Beierle, left, and Ricky Henderson compete in bare knuckle boxing during the Fusion Fight Night event in Dahlberg Arena on Nov. 6. The event included 10 fights ranging from boxing to mixed martial arts and was a part of the Fusion Fight League's Montana tour. **EMBRY ERICSON | MONTANA KAIMIN**

In local news...

CORBIN VANDERBY | NEWS REPORTER
corbin.vanderby@umontana.edu

AI COMPANY SUES MISSOULA OVER DATA CENTER RESTRICTIONS

CubCloud AI has sued the city of Missoula over its zoning change that prevents data center development within city limits.

The Missoula-based company operates high-performance servers offering custom AI development and recently applied to bring Tesla's cybercab self-driving taxi service to town. Now it's looking to expand, but argues that Missoula's zoning ban on data centers, enacted after one was proposed in Bonner in March, prevents this without compelling government interest under Montana's Right to Compute Act.

The act, passed in 2025, is the first of its kind in the nation, tying rights to technology to constitutional rights to property and freedom of expression. This means the development of data centers can only be restricted if a governing body proves a compelling interest like public health and safety.

CubCloud AI sued on Nov. 4, represented by the Arizona-based Goldwater Institute, a public policy research center dedicated to protecting free market principles.

"The city's new ordinance targets data centers because it considers them the wrong type of business," the Goldwater Institute's Dave Roland said in a press release. "The fact that the ordinance's blanket restrictions sweep in CubCloud shows they are not narrowly tailored toward protecting the public from excessive noise, light, pollution, etc., as the Right to Compute Act requires."

In August, the Kaimin asked Missoula County Commissioner Josh Slotnick about potential legal pushback on the zoning restrictions under the Right to Compute Act.

"We're not afraid of lawsuits. We get sued all the time. But this is, in my mind, very traditional zoning," Slotnick said. "Let's make sure we account for air and water and noise and vibration and financial impacts, like we would treat any new industry in the same way in terms of being concerned about public welfare."

As of Monday, Missoula City Attorney Ryan Sudbury told Montana Free Press that the lawsuit had not been served and he hadn't been aware of it. But he assured that the Right to Compute Act was discussed when the zoning was enacted.

"Nobody knows what the law is intended to do or what it means," Sudbury said to Montana Free Press. "It has not been tested in court ... If we get served, we will defend the city's action."

MONTANA STATE REPRESENTATIVE PLEADS GUILTY TO DUI

A state representative from Lame Deer pleaded guilty to driving under the influence in June after being found drunk in a car at a Colstrip gas station.

Democrat Rep. Jade Sooktis was found to have a blood alcohol level of .234%, nearly three times the legal limit, when police arrested her outside a Town Pump on April 30. In May, she pleaded not guilty to aggravated driving under the influence, which carries a more severe punishment than a normal DUI.

But in a June plea agreement in Colstrip City Court, the prosecutors agreed to a standard DUI charge in exchange for Sooktis changing her plea to guilty. The city also dropped another charge for being in possession of marijuana while driving.

The judge sentenced Sooktis to one year of probation, a $600 fine and she must take a chemical dependency course while being barred from all drinking and drugs. Sooktis represents House District 41, which includes most of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and parts of the Crow Reservation.

On Nov. 3, she ran unopposed and was reelected to her seat with 1,654 votes.

"I'm holding myself accountable and have made steps forward to doing that," Sooktis said in a text message to the Missoulian. "I made a mistake and am paying gravely. I have taken steps to improve my health and future and handle this misuse charge accordingly."



CONTRIBUTED | GOOD BONES PROJECT

This week on the Kaimin Cast...

In 2023, a pregnant Missoula woman, Nefataree Bartell, hitched a ride 15 miles northeast to a remote area down Gold Creek road and walked out into the forest during a blizzard searching for a cabin.

She never returned, and left her family with many questions. Why did she go? Why did she leave her phone? Why did they find her dog healthy five days later?

Months later, her remains were found with no indication of crime or animal involvement, and no answers about what led to her death.

"She hated the cold. She did not go out like that. Not willingly," said Donna Orsborn, the grandmother of Nefataree's oldest son.

Advanced audio student and UM graduate Bayliss Flynn retraced Nefataree's steps and searched for answers to the many questions her case created.

Check out this week's episode of the Good Bones series, "Her last walk: Closure for a case, not a family," by heading to our website at montanakaimin.com, or wherever you find your podcasts.

- Grace Golbach, audio editor

New Kaimin Cast episode out this week. Stay tuned. Scan for the latest



STEPHEN MILLER TAKES CHIEF OF STAFF ROLE FOLLOWING MIDTERMS

President Donald Trump appointed Stephen Miller, a former homeland security adviser, to chief of staff last Friday, replacing Susie Wiles.

Miller has advised Trump on multiple policies over his term, including immigration, the United States' bid for Greenland and the removal of diversity, equity and inclusion from public universities.

The move has been criticized widely by Democrats and even drawn the ire of some Republicans.

"Stephen Miller is a dangerous xenophobe and reckless extremist who has American blood on his hands," House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries wrote on social media, calling for him to be fired immediately.

Republican Rep. Marlin Stutzman from Indiana even took to CNN, calling the appointment a "mistake."

Miller worked his first day Monday and said he was "honored beyond words" to take the position.

"The mission now is more clear than ever: Fight with all of our soul to support our President and defend this magnificent Republic," he wrote on X.

NVIDIA INVESTIGATES CEO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SUSPECTED CHINESE SPY

Nvidia has launched an investigation against its Chief Executive Officer Jensen Huang after United States intelligence revealed a relationship with a suspected Chinese spy.

After surveilling Huang's intimate relationship with a business executive, it was revealed that she was feeding information back to Beijing. According to The New York Times, a memo given to policymakers last Spring alleged that the executive, who goes by Alice Huang, was a spy for China's Ministry of State Security recruited to gather information on Nvidia's CEO.

Nvidia is a California-based company that creates computer graphics chips as well as being on the cutting edge of developing AI computing systems, a fact that has made Nvidia a close partner with the Trump administration's push for the new technology.

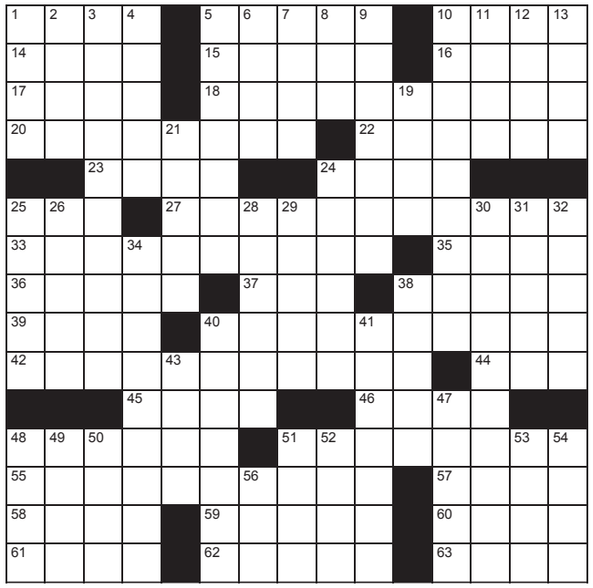
"I was unfaithful to my wife," Huang said in a message to the company. "My actions hurt her and our children. There is no excuse for what I did. I am deeply sorry."

As the investigation led by board members plays out, Huang will continue to lead the company.

Nvidia's board said to The New York Times that it had "no reason to believe that either national security or Nvidia secrets were compromised," but that "the board's inquiry will examine all available information." It said Huang "fully supports the review and has committed to cooperating with it."

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke



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ACROSS

1 Leveling device
5 Touches down
10 Soak up the sun
14 Top-notch
15 Type of acid
16 NY canal
17 ___ Hari
18 All the words you know
20 Do some cardio, e.g.
22 Certain payoffs
23 Puppeteer pioneer Tony
24 Shopper's aid
25 To the rear
27 Tendency
33 Like summer heat, maybe
35 ROFL relative
36 Some wedding guests
37 NYC to RI direction
38 Pragmatic believer
39 Rating unit
40 Not real-world
42 "The Queen" Oscar winner
44 Combustion residue
45 Back-to-school mo.
46 Widespread
48 Back-talker
51 Sports no-no's
55 Unintentional
57 Farm young
58 Tandoori bread
59 Pasta topper
60 Prefix with China
61 Bumper blemish
62 Church council
63 Rush order?

DOWN

1 "Likewise"
2 Bigfoot photo, e.g.
3 Type of flu
4 Ben Stiller's mom Anne
5 "Girlfriend" singer Avril
6 "Famous" cookie maker
7 Congenial
8 Genetic letters
9 In tears
10 Puts down
11 Kuwaiti, e.g.
12 Paddock papa
13 Things on rings
19 Celestial bear
21 Raters, briefly
24 Kind of equation
25 Put to shame
26 Marching band instrument
28 Charging need
29 Eyelid cosmetic
30 Knockoffs
31 Welcome desert sight
32 Gunslinger's mark
34 Freaking out
38 Iraqi money
40 Dazzle
41 Brought down
43 Urgent want
47 Actress Vergara
48 Ocean liner?
49 Berry in some smoothies
50 Read a bar code
51 Flabbergast
52 Mexican fare
53 Bit of baby talk
54 Sow chow
56 Vote of dissent

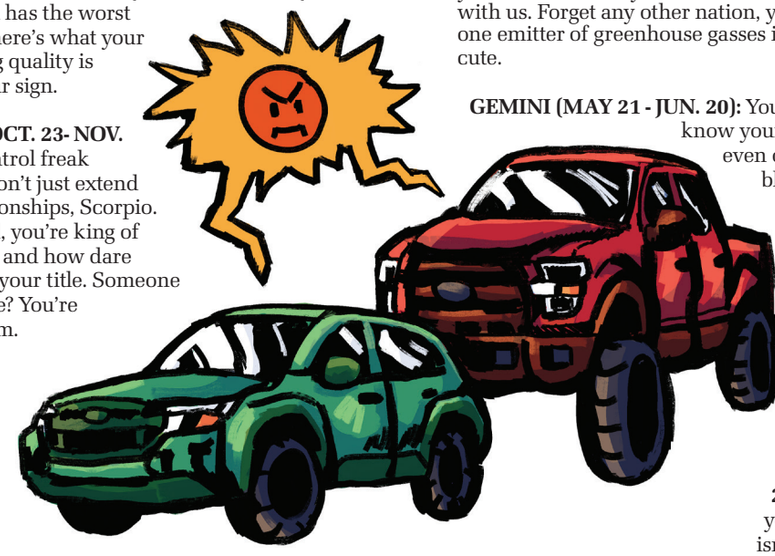
Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

Road rage-o-scope

AIDAN GRAHAM | ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR
aidan.graham@umontana.edu

Ah, America! A land paved with 4.2 million miles of hot asphalt and 26-lane highways giving each and every citizen the ability to pilot their own personal chariot whenever they damn well please. However, if the American experiment has taught us anything, it's that just because everyone is given the right to be behind the wheel, it doesn't mean everyone should. Every town in the U.S. claims it has the worst drivers, but here's what your worst driving quality is based on your sign.



ALYSSA JO MURNION | CARTOONIST

SCORPIO (OCT. 23- NOV. 21): Your control freak tendencies don't just extend to your relationships, Scorpio. In your mind, you're king of the highway, and how dare anyone defy your title. Someone tries to merge? You're blocking them. Someone tries to pass you? You're speeding up. You might be the worst offender of all the signs, your driving is downright malicious.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 - DEC. 21): Being called a speed demon isn't the compliment you think it is, Sagittarius. Impatience is in your nature and your brain is go-go-go to the point being on the road with you is like being a side-character in a Grand Theft Auto game. Hit the brakes sometimes, you'll reach your destination eventually.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22- JAN. 19): I understand wanting to feel safe, but c'mon, you didn't need to bring an entire tank to the highway. Your giant SUV may be a perfect suit of armor, but being a ton of bricks flying at 70 miles per hour makes you a bigger hazard to everyone else on the road.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20. - FEB. 18): Your dream is a self-driving car, but unfortunately for you and for us, that's not the future we live in. Whether it be changing your music, enjoying a meal or answering that text "just real fast," your multitasking skills do not apply on the road.

PISCES (FEB. 19 - MAR. 20): Pisces, your generosity is really pissing us off. It doesn't matter how tight traffic is, you just always have to back things up and let that person merge. It's noble, sure, but that doesn't cut it when I'm explaining to my boss why I was late for work.

ARIES (MAR. 21 - APR. 19): Aries, you love to speed as much as anyone, but more than anything you love your one lane. Never passing, you just love being on our asses. However, I'm telling ya, one of these days someone's gonna have the nerve to brake check and teach you a lesson.

TAURUS (APR. 20 - MAY 20): That shit might fly with your blue-collar buddies, but that big black fart cloud you released from your 2010 Ford F-350 doesn't fly with us. Forget any other nation, you're the number one emitter of greenhouse gasses in the world. It's not cute.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN. 20): You can't let anyone know your next move, Gemini, even on the road. Your blinker has been untouched for months. Whether at a stoplight or diving off the fast lane, you're always keeping the road exciting. Trust us, we don't mean that in a good way.

CANCER (JUN. 21- JUL. 22): Cancer, your bad driving trait isn't easy to pin down, as it's fueled by everyone else's. You can't stand even the slightest provocation on the road. Whether it's getting cut off or someone taking a little too long at the light, the instant that switch flips a volley of curses and middle-fingers from your driver's side window. Easy to say, you'd fit better in Manhattan than anywhere else.

LEO (JUL. 23 - AUG. 22): Oh you just have to be heard, don't you Leo, and you're here to make it everyone else's problem. Your horn is your pride and joy, that sweet drum you can hit anytime something on the road doesn't go your way. While you love to use it to publicly shame others driving, the hearing loss from constantly laying on it isn't doing you any favors.

VIRGO (AUG. 23 - SEP. 22): You're attentive and detail oriented — frankly, Virgo, we've got nothing on you. People love being your passenger princess and never feel the need to grab the handle in your car. No wonder your insurance is so low.

LIBRA (SEP. 23 - OCT. 22): You're a safe driver alright — too safe. To you, the speed limit is a suggestion, but one that means "go at least five below." Every turn you make, you just have to come to a complete stop. We're not trying to tailgate you, but it wouldn't hurt to speed up just a bit!

Students react to art school name change

JOCELYN HOOD | NEWS REPORTER
jocelyn.hood@umontana.edu



University of Montana graduate student Jean Marshall helps set a piece of fabric as a part of the Soft Monuments project on Nov. 4. Marshall believes the school's name change was unnecessary. **PARKER HOWERY | MONTANA KAIMIN**

The School of Art and Game Design changed names from the School of Visual and Media Arts this year, and some art students have complaints.

According to Steven Krutek, the school's director, the School of Visual and Media Arts had been the name since 2019. In addition to the new name, Krutek said graduate students will be seeing other changes. The graduate critique and pedagogy courses are no longer separated between art students and game design students, creating more interaction between the disciplines. Fine arts graduate students are also expected to present to tenured faculty at the midway point of their degree, but game design graduate students haven't had that requirement because their creation process is different. That may change with the new integration, but Krutek said they are not sure if or how the requirements could differ.

This is also not the first time the school has changed its name, Krutek said.

"There's been a lot of metamorphosis with the name as we change our identity, but I think that's important," Krutek said. "I think we should be changing as a school and what we offer."

Michael Cassens, a professor of game design and interactive media, said the purpose of the new name being the School of Art and Game Design is to draw more attention to the University of Montana's game design program.

"With better clarity and visibility, we're hopeful that those who might be interested in game design would find us more easily because it is a program that is unique in the area," Cassens said. "It's the only one in the state of Montana, and it is something that we're really proud of."

UM has 62 undergraduate, eight graduate and six certificate game design students, Cassens said. According to the UM website, the School of Art and Game Design teaches over 1,000 students total each year.

Jean Marshall, a 25-year-old graduate art student from Spokane, Washington, said she thinks the name change was unnecessary. She said that game design is art, but it's strange to highlight it in the name of the school.

"What if we were the School of Art and Sculpture, the School of Art and Raku Firing? Why do we have this new name? And when I'm graduating, do I want to be associated with game design?" Marshall said.

Shea Sidner, a 22-year-old senior from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, said she doesn't mind the new name, but wishes that the collaboration with game design led to more access to technology for art students.

"I find it frustrating that we're making this shift more towards technology-focused when we don't even have art scanners," Sidner said.

The students can pay to use scanners in the Mansfield Library to digitize their artwork when staff is available, however, Sidner said they aren't good quality.

"The pixels aren't art grade, and it messes up your color and resolution, and then you don't get as quality scans of your art," Sidner said. "If you aren't, in this day and age, digitalizing your art constantly, you're falling behind."

Marshall said she doesn't like the combined critique class, because art and game design students don't know how to critique each other.

"It's hard to get feedback from a game design student, and it's weird to give feedback to a game design student," Marshall said.

Ashley Rezvani, an assistant professor of game design and interactive media, said that game design students interacting with other art students is exciting.

"That sort of interdisciplinary exchange is only going to add to their education and never detract from it," Rezvani said.

Krutek, the director of the school, also said that the degrees themselves could change in the future. Currently, the School of Art and Game Design undergraduate students can earn specific degrees like a Bachelor of Fine Arts in media arts, but in the future, that could change to a BFA in art with a concentration in media arts.

"We haven't put forth the changes formally with the Office of Commissioner of Higher Education," Krutek said. "The diploma will be the same for everybody who started up until this fall, and it might not even be implemented by next fall."

Elsie Spomer, a 23-year-old graduate art student from Powell, Wyoming, said she hopes the process of combining arts more with game design will smooth out soon.

"If the program continues to struggle to get this integration happening, there could be some faults when it comes to maintaining a really solid program, especially for graduates," Spomer said. "This might be greedy or selfish, but I don't want to graduate from a program that is struggling and [have] all of my references come from a program that's struggling."

Canvas extension uses AI to help over 2 million students plan and organize

NICO KITOS | NEWS REPORTER
nico.kitos@umontana.edu

A Canvas extension that began as a dashboard decorator now plans assignments, transcribes lectures and reads grades for more than two million students.

BetterCampus was launched in 2020 as a tool to embellish the dashboards that had become students' classrooms in the midst of a quarantine. Now, students from over 6,000 high schools, middle schools and universities use the extension to organize assignments, track their grade point average, transcribe lectures and access artificial intelligence study tools, according to its website.

Addison Friedman, a criminology and forensic biological anthropology major at the University of Montana, said she uses the extension every day. She discovered BetterCampus on TikTok in September.

As a Davidson Honors College student with an intense course load and a part-time job, it's important to her to keep her schoolwork organized so she doesn't miss due dates.

"I downloaded it because I wanted to make my dashboard prettier," she said. "I quickly realized how many other functions it offers, which are now the whole reason I keep it downloaded."

Friedman uses the free version and says she gets enough out of its features and doesn't plan on paying for a premium membership. She said she finds BetterCampus makes it easier to see what she needs to get done and when. She noted that she wished she could have the extension on her iPad in addition to her MacBook, but it isn't available as an app on mobile devices.

"Sometimes I forget that not everyone's Canvas is cute like mine," Friedman said. "I would recommend it to other students who care about organization stuff like that, but it's definitely not necessary."

Co-founder George Mills was a student during the pandemic. Stuck at home, he spent countless hours staring at his Canvas dashboard. That's when he had the idea to tweak the things he didn't like about Canvas. He added a dark mode and different themes. He launched the small Chrome extension online, and students found it.

Today that project is BetterCampus, formerly BetterCanvas, a startup that originated in Maryland and is now based in New York. The extension still lets students decorate their learning management system, but it also offers a wide variety of personalized tools designed to help with learning and organization. To do that, the company says it reads students' courses, assignments and grades.

Jake Silver, the company's CEO and co-founder, was running a separate education startup when he first heard about BetterCampus. One of his clients mentioned an extension that other students were raving about. He downloaded it and found the project had a lot of potential.

"I met George online and told him 'George, I think we could take this into a bigger direction,'" Silver said. "'Let's do all the [learning management systems.] Let's do all the browsers. Let's start to build study features and turn this into something that's really impactful.'"

BetterCampus is free to download, but offers a "Pro" version for $119 per year or $19 per month. The free version includes theming, to-do lists, AI notes and study tools, while the paid subscription includes unlimited theming, study tools, subtasks, work times and calendar sync.

The extension is not affiliated with Instructure, the company behind Canvas. Silver said the two companies have a "fun" relationship. He said he has met Instructure's CEO and that the startup had to change its name from the original "BetterCanvas" because of copyright concerns with Canvas.

Not all schools are eager to welcome it. In early September 2025, the Sequoia Union High School District in California blocked the extension after an update caused problems with Canvas quizzes, according to the Menlo-Atherton High School newspaper, the M-A Chronicle. This sparked students to protest to get it back with petitions and social media accounts, but ultimately the restriction remained in place.

Still, Silver said he hopes that in five years schools will buy it for students top-down, a reversal of how it originally spread. Silver is 26 years old, and said the company's goal is staying connected to students as it ages. He wants to keep hiring students to keep their voices at the center of the company's mission.

"Our special sauce is we're gonna listen to students," he said.

On the BetterCampus Reddit page, some students have reported that the extension can mess with certain Canvas features like timed quizzes and assignment uploads. Others say the extension caused browser lag or screen freezing.

Theron Sorom, a University of Oregon business student and member of the BetterCampus Discord, said he was struggling to keep track of his assignments and due dates, so he was looking for a "simple, free solution to that problem."

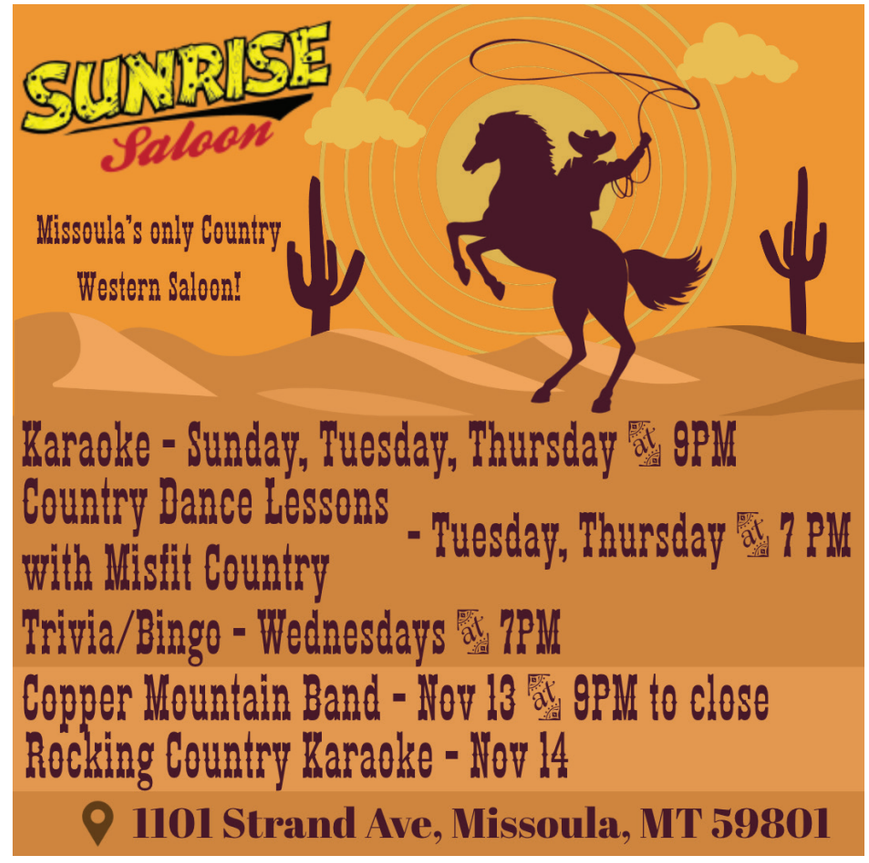
He discovered BetterCampus last year as a freshman and now uses it mainly for the completion wheel, which lets you know how many of your assignments you've completed and the to-do list for upcoming assignments.

On the Discord, there is a feature-request tab that Sorom used to ask the BetterCampus team to edit the to-do list because it was squishing his dashboard together. He got a response within two hours from Silver with the update.

"It's cool that the changes were made at all, better yet so quickly," Sorom said. "I like that my feedback is being heard and implemented."

Sorom said he's not someone who cares much about what his dashboard looks like as far as theming goes, but appreciates the other features that help him stay on top of his work.

"It's been a helpful tool," Sorom said. "There is no reason I wouldn't have BetterCampus."



THE WEAPONS OF GOD



A book on Carol Bellin's desk in the Natural Science Building titled "Nuclear Abolition" on Nov. 2.

Inside the battle to disarm Montana's nuclear weapons and the argument to keep them

STORY BY JACK SNOW
PHOTOS BY EMBRY ERICSON

Carol Bellin still remembers the nukes. She remembers the silos that housed them beneath the dry earth of Montana's prairies. She remembers the dust clouds made by airmen and their vehicles as they rumbled down dirt roads to guard them with rifles in hand four decades ago. She remembers the soft chirping of birds on cool summer nights as she prayed over the silos, praying for the nuclear missiles stored within to never take flight.

Now the silos are guarded by new airmen with new guns, but Bellin still prays. She prays in silence, as most Quakers do; that's why she can hear the birds — the little birds chirping at the weapons of unfathomable destruction.

Bellin first found herself among the birds and missiles in 1984, when she spent a summer near Conrad, a small town north of Great Falls, protesting Montana's nuclear weapons. She camped outside of a launch facility, or silo, with a group of other protesters. Every morning and night she kept a wordless vigil over the weapon inside.

It was a Minuteman III, an intercontinental ballistic missile with the ability to deliver its nuclear warhead up to 8,000 miles away in less than half an hour. Today, there are 150 active silos for nuclear missiles of its class in Montana, a third of the arsenal in the entire United States.

Protestors call them "immoral." The military calls them "the bedrock of U.S. national security." Each one has the capability to detonate an explosion 20 to 30 times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which are estimated to have collectively killed more than 200,000 people in 1945. Their power is near divine, perhaps infernal — or maybe both.

"I've lived my whole life with this terrible threat and the moral injury of knowing that my country dropped a bomb that incinerated all forms of life," Bellin said.

Today, 42 years later, nuclear missile silos still dot Montana's landscape and people like Bellin are still fighting to get rid of them. The weapons are cemented in the United States' legacy, although they have always been controversial. While supporters say they are a vital tool for defending the country and its allies, others say the devastation they are capable of weighs too heavily on its citizens.



Carol Bellin sits for a portrait in the Natural Sciences Building on Nov. 2.



Bellin speaks to Soviets in Minsk, Belarus, during a trip across Europe in a 1983 photograph.

Bellin, a 73-year-old cancer survivor, has dedicated her life to this goal, and has been arrested more than a dozen times for her trouble, although you likely wouldn't know by looking at her.

She's a woman of soft features and quick speech, with silver-streaked hair and a vanity plate on her car that reads "NONUKES." She works long hours at election offices, even though chemotherapy has sapped much of her energy and caused neuropathy in her legs.

It's been a while since she's seen the inside of a jail cell, and these days she's a political science student at the University of Montana, where she leads the school's Students for Nuclear Disarmament group. The group is preparing to send a delegation to a United Nations conference in New York, set to begin on Nov. 30. The conference marks five years since the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which outlaws the possession and use of nukes, became international law.

In contrast, the U.S. government has started refurbishing its nuclear weapons, and investing in a new missile, the Sentinel, to replace the aging Minuteman III of the '70s.

Last year, the Sentinel Program started surveying former Montana silos for potential reuse. In 2025, the first Minuteman III had been decommissioned for the switch as well.

Bellin would rather see them decommissioned for another reason, but it may be an uphill battle considering how hard America worked to attain them in the first place.

ECHOES OF THE PAST

Any weapon with the power to level cities and boil lakes also has the power to shape the minds and politics of the people who control it. But for all the debate surrounding their future, it's easy to forget that nukes have only been used in actual warfare twice.

The decision to drop nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 put the American military in a class of one. To this day the U.S. is the only country that has ever detonated nuclear warheads with the intent to kill. That decision is still a deeply controversial one, according to UM history adjunct professor and former Marine aviator James Compton. Between the initial blasts and the aftershocks, it killed more than 200,000 people, most of whom were civilians. It also helped secure the Allied victory in a war that had, by that point, killed tens of millions.

Sometimes an arrow in the quiver is worth more than one in the air, though. Compton teaches classes on the Cold War and said that the threat of nuclear war fundamentally changes how countries communicate and fight.

"Just a couple of missiles or bombs get through, and you're dealing with unacceptable losses," he said. "That's the mindset that starts to take hold in the 1950s."

President Dwight Eisenhower invested heavily in America's nuclear program as a result, even downsizing the traditional military to focus on it. The military's "new look" was meant to deter conflict with the Soviet Union and other enemies.

Results have been mixed, but it's Compton's opinion that the mere existence of nuclear weapons has lessened the frequency and scope of traditional wars. He's more familiar with the matter than most, because he's seen the aftermath firsthand.

Compton lived just 35 miles south of Hiroshima for five years while in the Marine Corps.

"It's a surreal experience to go to Hiroshima and stand right next to the A-Bomb Dome," he said. The dome was the only structure left standing near the center of the bomb's explosion, and now serves as a peace memorial.

At the end of World War II, the U.S. used planes to get nuclear weapons to Japan. Today, the country, like many nations, is well within the 8,000 mile range of American missiles.

However, the missiles are not so easily transported, and the government needed a static place to keep them.

A GRIM EQUATION

Montana's sparse population made it a prime choice. Only Alaska and Wyoming have fewer residents per square mile, according to the most recent U.S. census numbers.

America's most powerful weapons are also some of its biggest targets, and putting them in a large state with very few people could minimize the collateral damage if the arsenal were to be attacked. It's a grim equation, but one that led to the housing of many of America's nuclear weapons at Malmstrom Air Force Base in central Montana, near Great Falls, away from the cities, and the people.

But not all of them.

People like Eden Kitts, a UM history student who lived roughly 100 miles from Malmstrom, don't take kindly to the presence of nukes.

"Growing up in central Montana, that's just something that you're very aware of because you're always driving by these missile silos," they said. "It's just an anxious atmosphere to live in."

Much like Bellin, Kitts is horrified by the prospect of nuclear war and by the fact that Montana is used to house so many missiles. They joined the University's Students for Nuclear Disarmament group because they view it as a local issue as well as a global one. Most of the people they've talked to on behalf of the organization seem to agree.

"Nobody likes the idea of having things around that make you a target," Compton said. "The question is: If not us, then who?"

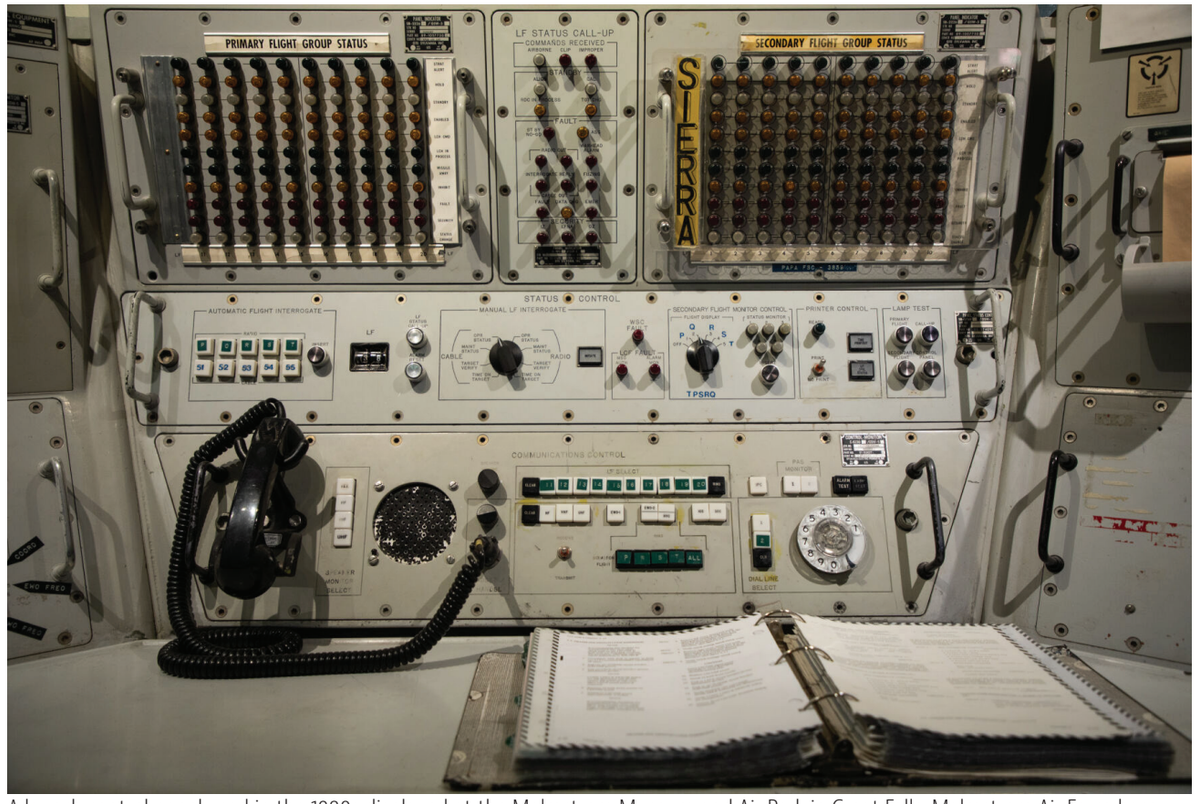
Who, and where?

Malmstrom Air Force Base is a strategically ideal location for nuclear missiles in many ways. The singular "base" is a bit of a misnomer, as there is a separate facility for housing every missile in Malmstrom's arsenal. The launch facilities are spread out almost 14,000 square miles in a way that would make it incredibly difficult to destroy them all with a single nuclear attack.

The Air Force acquired most of the land for its silos in the '60s, when the government purchased property from ranchers and other landowners, or had the option to seize it through eminent domain if residents refused to sell.

At the time, many U.S. citizens supported almost any effort to help with the Cold War, according to Troy Hallsell, Malmstrom's 341st Missile Wing historian.

Public tensions heated up and cooled down over the next few decades, but in 1979 things began to change more drastically. Anti-nuclear sentiments grew, and the people of Great Falls started holding annual Easter protests outside the base.



A launch control panel used in the 1980s displayed at the Malmstrom Museum and Air Park in Great Falls. Malmstrom Air Force base maintains a third of the nation's nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles. **HENRY DOELLINGER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Those protests lasted until the mid '90s, when the Soviet Union dissolved, and the nuclear threat seemed to have decreased. The missiles stayed, though.

"Malmstrom Air Force Base ultimately kept its intercontinental missile mission," Hallsell said. "Largely because the infrastructure here would be the best among all of the other [intercontinental ballistic missile] wings."

Now, the base is one of only three sites in the U.S. that still carries the missiles, with bases in neighboring North Dakota and Wyoming accounting for the rest. Some wish to make that number zero.

THE WAR TO END ALL WARS

Bellin sees it as foolish to maintain the missiles. She was born in 1953 and grew up during the height of the Cold War. Raised in rural Maryland, she became well acquainted with the cramped confines of the underground shelter she piled into with her classmates during bomb drills. By the time she was 8 years old, she was already familiar with gas masks and the pictures of exploded ordnance that she found in her parents' library.

When America began drafting young men to fight in Vietnam, Bellin dedicated herself to fighting for peace.

She walked all across Europe in a marching protest of nuclear weapons, befriending other activists on the way. She did the same thing in the United States, but stopped short in Montana after finding the peace camp outside of Conrad.

Bellin fell in love with Montana, and her mission gained a new focus: Get the missiles out of the state.

More than four decades later, she's still working on it. The missile she protested near Conrad was decommissioned in 2007, and Montana has reduced its missile count from 200 to 150. But for her, it's not enough.

UM communications senior Desmond Pruneda is also worried about the weapons' impacts. He's another active member of the University's nuclear disarmament group, and he dreams of a world free of nukes.

"It's a big goal, especially for the future generations of the planet," he said.

Pruneda, who is from the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation, hopes those generations don't have to worry about nuclear war, or the fallout that comes with it. Fort Belknap is less than 200 miles away from Malmstrom Air Force Base, and he hopes to bring his perspective to the upcoming U.N. conference.

"It's a huge opportunity to represent a good cause, especially during this time in the world where war and awful things are going on," Pruneda said. "I think it's good to stand for something toward peace and the unity of humanity."

The University's chapter of Students for Nuclear Disarmament requested a municipal resolution from Missoula City Council on Sept. 21 that would express support for decommissioning nuclear weapons. Missoula City Council president Mike Nugent said that he hadn't heard of any council members taking the initiative up.

The proposed draft of the resolution urges both local and federal governments to "step back from the brink of nuclear devastation and consider redirecting our tax dollars to more pressing human needs."

Aside from concerns about peace, money is one of the group's biggest concerns.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the United States spends about $95 billion every year to "operate, sustain and modernize nuclear forces." Bellin would like to see that money go to education, health services and housing instead.

If passed, the resolution would have Missoula join 86 other U.S. cities, counties and states in supporting the policies of Back from the Brink, an American-based coalition that calls on local and national governments to

rid the world of atomic bombs. Cities such as Baltimore, Los Angeles and Minneapolis have all passed similar resolutions, but Missoula's would be the first in Montana, according to the group.

"It's a symbolic message to our federal government that we would like our federal government to reconsider spending," Bellin said.

Despite the success of disarmament resolutions elsewhere, it may be telling that no Montana city has previously passed one.

The battle for nuclear disarmament extends well beyond the Montana borders, however. The broader U.S. has plenty of organizations dedicated to the cause. Sean Meyer, the co-founder and senior strategic advisor of Back from the Brink, was born during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and has championed disarmament for decades.

"The cold hard reality is that in this moment, you and I and everyone else on this planet are living under an existence where, within an hour, most of the people on the planet could be dead," he said.

Meyer lives in Shutesbury, Massachusetts, but is all too familiar with Montana's nuclear weapons. He's well versed in the arguments to keep them as well. In Meyer's eyes, the idea that nukes stop war is ridiculous. He used Russia's war with Ukraine as a recent example where U.S. missiles clearly didn't prevent the fighting.

"That system of deterrence is not only morally bankrupt, but from the security perspective it doesn't hold water," he said.

A number of countries seem to agree with Meyer and Bellin, 75 of them to be precise. That's the number of states worldwide that are listed as parties on the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The United States, unsurprisingly, is not one of them.

The treaty bans the development, possession and use of nuclear weapons, and has 26 other countries as signatories in addition to its listed parties. It became international law almost five years ago, but hasn't stopped the U.S. from keeping its deterrent up and running.

30 MINUTES OR LESS

Malmstrom Airforce Base sits on the very outskirts of Great Falls, a grey mass of fences, checkpoints and obstacle-ridden roads that prevent anyone from going anywhere too abruptly.

It's not the strict, soulless fortress movies sometimes portray, though. Airmen crack jokes in the visitor center and talk plans for jiu-jitsu practice when the day is over.

> "NOBODY LIKES THE IDEA OF HAVING THINGS AROUND THAT MAKE YOU A TARGET," COMPTON SAID. "THE QUESTION IS: IF NOT US THEN WHO?"

The base differs from others in both its mission and its culture, according to Malmstrom Museum Director Robert Turnbow. He's spent 11 years as director, but served in the Air Force as a master sergeant before that.

One of the most notable differences between Malmstrom and other bases is that it never sleeps. Other air strips will occasionally close down, and military aircraft have various levels of alertness, but the nuclear silos are either on alert or they're not, with no in-between. The U.S. maintains a minimum of about 400 missiles on alert at all times.

They can be seen from the highways around the base. Just off the road, surrounded by chain-link fences and tall, dry grass, 110-ton doors seal the missiles in their pits.

Every silo is operated by a pair of missileers who work in 24-hour shifts and are always prepared for a launch order. If a launch order does come, the missileers can input targeting information and security codes to send a Minuteman III rocketing into the air with its nuclear payload. The entire launch process can be completed in under a minute once the order is received.

A true nuclear launch is a last resort of national security, and such an order is only possible with the support of the national command authority, made up of both the President and the Secretary of Defense.

Turnbow explained that, as part of missileer's drills, they sometimes receive launch orders without knowing whether they are real or fake until halfway through the process.

It's a high-stress environment that can foster a gallows sense of humor. Personnel at a launch facility in South Dakota once painted a blast door with a Domino's pizza box, a Minuteman II missile and the slogan: "World-wide delivery in 30 minutes or less or your next one is free."

Some might find their mission distasteful, but the military deems it to be of one of extreme importance.

For better or worse, mankind cannot unmake the bomb in the same way that the bomb can unmake mankind.

Writer John Hersey reported extensively on the aftermath of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and published a book named for the city. After interviewing many of the bomb's survivors, he found that remarkably few people remembered hearing an explosion. In fact, few people remembered hearing anything from the detonation, which he famously described as "a noiseless flash."

Maybe the bomb made a sound too great and terrible to understand. Maybe it truly was silent to the humans and animals who listened to it from below. Maybe it sounded like the birds. The little birds chirping at the weapons of God.



Bellin walks away from her car on Nov. 2. Her license plate reads "NONUKES."

The price of the past: Missoula's dispute over a Native American war shirt

NAYLA SCHMIED | ARTS REPORTER
nayla.schmied@umontana.edu

A growing Missoula coalition is calling for the repatriation of a purported sacred Lakota Sioux war shirt from Missoula's Origin Gallery, which removed the item from its window display in early October after facing criticism from community members. It is currently still listed for sale at $35,000 on Origin Gallery's website.

The shirt appears to be the same item that was listed in a 1997 Sotheby's catalogue feature and valued at $12,000 to $18,000. The Sotheby's listing describes it as a "Plains Beaded and Fringed Hide War Shirt" with open sides and sinew sewn primarily in two shades of blue adorned with green and yellow glass beads. In a post promoting Origin Gallery's listing, Western Art Collector magazine dated the shirt to circa 1875. William and Matthew Davis, founders of Origin Gallery and Davis Brothers Auction House, put it on display after opening the gallery in August, but removed it on Oct. 4 due to an Instagram post by a Missoula local named Nora Rector.

Since then, the shirt has become the center of discussion.

"Two white men, who own Origin, are auctioning off a stolen Lakota Sioux war garment," Rector wrote in the post. "Not even being preserved correctly, openly displayed in a west-facing window."

The gallery drew the shutters to its physical business, while still operating online and through the Davis Brothers Auction House.

"War shirts carry a lot of power," Dylan Running Crane, a local musician who is part of Missoula's Small Business Ethics Coalition and a citizen of the Blackfeet Nation, wrote in an Instagram message to The Missoulian. "They were made and given to warriors who showed bravery in battle and weren't given to many people." The coalition has since called for the shirt's repatriation to the Lakota community through an online petition, but chose not to comment for this story, citing advice from the group's legal adviser.

Repatriation is the process by which sacred and cultural items, Indigenous ancestral remains and their burial belongings are returned to their lineal descendants and original Nations, according to the Association on American Indian Affairs.

Origin Gallery has yet to publicly disclose the shirt's heritage. It also sent cease-and-desist letters to both Rector and the Small Business Ethics Coalition and threatened legal action if they continued to make unsupported statements about the business publicly.

The Small Business Ethics Coalition said in an Oct. 7 press release that it has sent Origin Gallery two separate letters requesting the shirt's repatriation prior to the issue blowing up online.



Origin Gallery, a high-end art venue showcasing western art, closed its physical space after controversy arose over a Lakota Sioux war shirt for sale.
BRAYDEN VALLOW | MONTANA KAIMIN

The first was sent on Aug. 27, followed by a second letter on Sept. 28, which was signed by 50 community members.

Origin Gallery suggested Rector's employer to review their employment after she posted her criticism on Instagram.

In their press release, the Small Business Ethics Coalition acknowledged that it did not know who the current owner of the war shirt is, just that it's being sold through Origin Gallery. It emphasized that it is calling the sale of a sacred artifact from non-native hands unethical, not specifically Origin Gallery or its partners.

Origin Gallery was contacted multiple times by the Kaimin, but declined to comment.

Kekek Stark, a Davis-Johnston Professor of Law at the University of Montana, discussed the potential legal repercussions of this case. Stark has run the Indian law program at the University for seven years.

"Cease and desist letters can scare you enough to be quiet," Stark said. The letters aren't formal actions themselves. To pursue harassment or defamation charges, the gallery would have to prove the coalition knowingly disseminated false and damaging information.

As for the Small Business Ethics Coalition's repatriation cause, it can likely only be achieved through the power of community, according to Stark. NAGPRA, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, established in November 1990, only applies to federally funded organizations and other institutions like museums, universities or local governments.

There are seven federally recognized Lakota tribes: six in the United States and one in Canada. Steve Vance, tribal historic preservation officer of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, responded to an email about the repatriation of the garment.

"There are several tribes that construct shirts in this manner and share certain society type functions," Vance wrote. "In Lakota (Sioux), decorated shirts were for 'Shirt Wearers,' Leaders, Medicine People, for individuals who have earned the title."

The shirt's characteristics represent achievements and status, similar to military ranks. To identify a shirt, the shape, sleeves, bib, yoke, fringes and type of beads must be observed. They depict different seasons or generations, according to Vance.

"The design of the shirt pictured is that of pre-reservation, but could also represent the reservation era," Vance wrote.

Vance wrote that a lot of Lakota regalia has the word "war" before it, like "war bonnet" or "war shirt," are actually ceremonial, which is why garments like this should be returned.

"I don't think it would be appropriate to sell the Pope's robe or hat, a nun's dress, or a priest's robe or George Washington's uniform," Vance wrote.

Devan Skelton, a 33-year-old parks, tourism and recreation management and forestry double major at the University of Montana, signed the coalition's petition after she saw the issue circulating on Facebook. Skelton grew up in Montana on the Flathead Indian Reservation by Polson. She has Native American ancestry on her mother's side from the Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and on her father's side from the Blackfeet Nation.

"It made me sad that people feel entitled to those cultural pieces that don't share that culture," Skelton said. She thinks Missoula, as a college town on historically Native land, should move toward a less colonial mindset.

"I think, morally, they do need to return it to its rightful place," Skelton said. Even if a war shirt like this were used for educational purposes in a gallery, Skelton said it should be returned to Native communities.

"A key part of everything is giving them their voice to tell their stories and their history," she said. Skelton hopes this case sends a message to the community about what is appropriate to sell or showcase in a gallery.

"To me, it would have to be that the gallery outright owns the object in order for them to give it back to a tribe," said Aaron Brien, 43, Crow tribal historic preservation officer. Because the Davis brothers also own Davis Brothers Auction House, some of their pieces are consigned by collectors, estates and institutions.

One thing that comes with a cultural item is a chain of custody, which shows how it was obtained, said Brien. It's a document that provides an item's provenance and context that gives it authenticity.

Brien reviews federal projects that could impact cultural resources at the Crow Agency in Montana. He considers himself a practitioner of Crow ceremonialism and the Crow way of life and an advocate for the preservation of Native people and their cultures.

"You make a stronger case for something if you can say it was wrongfully taken," Brien said. But this is a gray area, because coercion is hard to prove. In the 18th and 19th centuries, poverty was high on the reservations.

"People are buying and selling objects on reservations, partly just to pay for food and for a living," Brien said. In the case of this war shirt, Brien did not want to speak for another tribe, but he said that every item, to every tribe, is like a puzzle piece to be put back into the culture of a fractionated people.

Brien said he does not like art galleries getting credit for returning objects, because they created the environment for this system to continue. "It still perpetuates this bad system of dehumanizing people."

"I think repatriation in its nature is kind of a negative endeavor," Brien said. "For us to get to the point in which an object



A screenshot of Origin Gallery's website shows the Lakota Sioux beaded hide war shirt that is currently for sale for $35,000.
CONTRIBUTED

is being returned, so many wrongs had to happen before that."

He emphasized that the word "successful" is not the correct verbiage for repatriation.

"To me it's exactly like finding a missing person dead," Brien said. "It brought closure to something, but I wouldn't use the term successful."

Sometimes private stores, like pawn shops, will also sell fake Native American items, which can be just as harmful as selling the real thing, Brien feels, because it is still exploitation and misrepresentation of Native culture.

"You would think we're past the dehumanization of people, but we're not," Brien said.

Michael "Bad Hand" Terry is a citizen of the Seminole Nation, who devoted his life to learning about 18th and 19th century Plains Indian culture. He is a historian, stuntman, replica-maker and artist who gives lectures across the country and wrote the book "Daily Life in a Plains Indian Village." He currently lives in Oregon and Montana, depending on the season.

Bad Hand believes the shirt might not be Lakota. "It's probably Hidatsa," he said. The Hidatsa tribe is one of the three affiliated tribes at Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota. Bad Hand's knowledge of Plains Native American culture comes from historic studies. He grew up in Florida, but moved to Wyoming as a teenager where he met people from the Smithsonian and other notable museums who taught him how to research.

"There's no gray area for the people that actually study in it," Bad Hand said about his historic knowledge. He spent decades studying photographs, museum collections, historical documentation and material constructions.

"That's pretty much just a mass-produced shirt," Bad Hand said, based on what he could see. According to him, the Hidatsa produced many items for the commercial market in the early 20th century, which Bad Hand believes this shirt to be a part of. At the very earliest, the shirt dates back to the 1890s. "There's a chance that no Indian ever even wore that thing."

"You can tell how old it is by the way the shirt is cut," Bad Hand said. "It's like a white man's coat with beadwork and fringe on it." The earlier shirts looked different because they followed the animal's natural shape. According to Bad Hand, as the reservation period progressed, they started cutting the shirts linearly like "a white man's coat." Material culture items like this shirt should not be repatriated if nobody knows which tribe they belong to, Bad Hand said.

"A lot of items were given or traded or sold outright by Indians to non-Indians," Bad Hand said. It is hard to know if people were taken advantage of or if an item was a friendly trade between Native Americans and white people. In Native American culture, gift giving is how you show respect for somebody. "In the old days, and today still, a lot of the items were sacred, but everything wasn't sacred."

Nevertheless, many in the Missoula community feel strongly on the issue. Tristan Theriot, 18, a counseling major at the University of Montana, walked by Origin Gallery with three friends and spat on its empty glass displays.

"It's disrespectful to Native American culture to commodify something that means a lot to people," Theriot said. Though he is not Native, he said he can relate to others and stick up for them.

"They're cowards, they just took it out of view after they got confronted," added one of Theriot's friends, Kingston Scoles, 18, a bass player for the Dirty Brothers Band in Missoula. They saw the issue circulating on social media and decided to sign the petition.

Whether this shirt's origins will ever be pulled from behind the foggy curtain remains unclear, but the local uproar has shown no signs of ebbing yet. The shirt is still for sale on Origin Gallery's website for $35,000, and the Small Business Ethics Coalition petition's signature count keeps rising, with 1,422 as of Nov. 8.

THIS WEEK

NIAMH O'FARRELL | ARTS & CULTURE REPOTER
niamh.ofarrell@umontana.edu

SPECIAL EVENTS

Tango Dancing — *Montana Moonlight Studios*, 11/13, 6-9 p.m., $10

Ever wanted to get your tango on on a Friday night? Well, now you can at the informal tango practice dance party at Montana Moonlight Studios. No experience needed.

Yoga and Chai — *Free Cycles,* 11/12 and 11/20, 9-10 a.m., suggested donation of $5-10

Grab your favorite mug and the yoga mat in the corner of your room gathering dust and head on down to Free Cycles for an hour of yoga, hot chai and a chance to socialize with your community.

MUSIC

The Last Revel: Folk/Bluegrass — *The Wilma,* 11/13, 7 p.m., prices range from $33-36

The Last Revel, a Minneapolis-based band, will be tearing it up at The Wilma on Friday. If bluegrass is your idea of a good time, this might be the band for you.

Karaoke: The Jack Saloon — 11/13, 7 p.m., all ages

Feel free to sing your heart out at The Jack Saloon for karaoke on select Fridays. Full bar and food, no cover needed.

ON CAMPUS

A Christmas Carol — *Montana Theatre at the PARTV Center,* 11/12-15 and 11/19-22, 7 p.m., $12 online, $15 at the door

Think it's Thanksgiving? Well you're wrong, it's Christmas time and time for A Christmas Carol to return to the Montana Theatre. Grab your tickets online or at the door for an evening weekend show or Sunday matinee.

Brawl of the Bands — *University Center,* 11/14, 12 p.m.

An alternative tailgating event has arisen. You can listen to 4-5 local bands and get the chance to vote on your favorite band. The winning band will receive donated prizes from Missoula small businesses.

WEEKLY ROTATORS

Butterfly Release — *Missoula Butterfly House,* Tuesdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.

Get a chance to see the butterflies take flight up close by going to the Missoula Butterfly House for the five-day-per-week butterfly release.

Overheard on Campus

OCTOBER 25 - NOVEMBER 1

Beware, University of Montana! The Kaimin has its ears open for all your controversial takes, your crazy confessions and your obscene statements to capture for all readers to see. The printing press is hot and ready to publish all. Let those silly and sexual statements sail free!

"I don't think I want him to bend me over and fuck me, also should we share some melons?"

Comment: That's right, keep it woke and casual. - Nayla Schmied, arts reporter

"He killed her entire family…"

Comment: I hope you're spoiling our food in the dining hall with a recount of The Punisher, because if this is real my tomato soup starts looking an awful lot like a bloody mess. - Nayla Schmied

"You look like you know Brian!"

Comment: Who doesn't know Brian? - River Blazejewski, arts reporter

"I'm wildlife bio so I'm just wasting my time."

Comment: I thought the University loved the sciences? - Aidan Graham, arts and culture editor

"Ughhhhhhhhhhhhhhh," stated an unknown female student while nearly crashing her electric scooter.

Comment: Maybe an unsolicited opinion, but one everyone's been thinking: If you can't drive your scooter without committing vehicular manslaughter on several students, maybe you shouldn't have one!
- Aidan Graham

"I accept her for being a bitch,"

Comment: That's a true friend right there
- Aidan Graham

"Does Curry offer euthanasia?"

Comment: They don't offer eyecare, they don't offer euthanasia, what the hell are my tuition dollars paying for? - Aidan Graham

"Perverts! And I'm not saying that's what I am, but what I am starts with a 'P' because I'm always pushing 'P.'"

No comment: The Montana Kaimin Arts and Culture section

Griz football prepares for home games ahead of Brawl of the Wild

JULIAN CLEMMER | SPORTS REPORTER
julian.clemmer@umontana.edu



Griz running back Eli Gillman holds the game ball after surpassing former Eastern Washington wide receiver Cooper Kupp's Big Sky Conference all-time touchdown record during a game against Portland State University on Nov. 7. **EMBRY ERICSON | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Before the Grizzlies face off against the Montana State University Bobcats on Nov. 21, the team has a home game stretch to prepare and improve the team's standings.

On Saturday, the Grizzlies won against No. 11 Portland State with a score of 57-24. The Grizzlies will be playing Idaho State on Nov. 14, No. 7 in Big Sky Conference play.

"We have to do a good job offensively and defensively on first and third down," Grizzlies head coach Bobby Kennedy said ahead of the team's win over Portland State. "We're looking to go full steam ahead."

The game against Idaho State will be an important game, as a win would go a long way to keep the Grizzlies in the top 16 playoff seeds. UM is currently the 12 seed.

Before the start of the home stretch and the game against Portland State, the team was practicing to get ready for the final stretch of the season.

"The offense as a whole has been working on continuing to come out with the same energy," said tight end and communication studies major Titus Rohrer. "Compared to the beginning of the season and now, I think we found a good groove."

Despite colder temperatures, the team has still been practicing outside with a few more layers on, continually working to improve.

"We're trying to perfect our craft every single game, every single day in practice," said linebacker and business management major Peyton Wing. "We just want for the last three regular season games to just keep competing and pushing that needle."

The Grizzlies will have the home field advantage against Idaho State. "Obviously it's great being at Washington-Grizzly [stadium]," Kennedy said. "Any time you can play at home it's a great deal."

So far in the season, the Grizzlies have done better at home than away, winning five out of the six home games in the season compared to the 2-2 win-lose ratio when playing away.

The Griz have used home game streaks greatly to its advantage. In the first three games of the season, the Grizzlies beat Southern Utah, Drake and Utah Tech universities in three back-to-back home games.

After the first three games, the Grizzlies traded game locations between home and away until this most recent two-game home stay before the Cat-Griz game. "It's good to be at home," Kennedy said. "You don't have to travel and you don't have to sit on the bus for all those hours."

Naturally, Washington-Grizzly Stadium is the field that Grizzly players will have played on the most, which allows the team to use the quirks and unique intricacies that vary in the stadium to their advantage.

"I think being at Washington-Grizzly Stadium is a huge advantage towards us," Wing said. "It gets teams that false start and helps our defense a lot. The north end zone is huge."

The Grizzlies will not only have access to the familiar facilities and the field they practice on for their game against Idaho State, but will have the backing from Grizzly fans.

"We have good fans, they're loud, they're supportive," Kennedy said.

While it is hard to say what exactly the energy of the crowd does materially to influence the game, players are adamant it helps them. "It makes the whole team play better," Rohrer said. "It brings an energy we can't bring ourselves."

The knowledge of fan support is a significant factor for some Griz players. "It's a great feeling knowing you got that support behind you," Wing said. "They love the Griz and we want to perform for them every single game and every single time we step on the field."

While the Grizzlies have performed better statistically at home, the team has won a pair of away games and they play hard no matter where they are. "I wouldn't say I play better or worse, I try to bring it the same way," Titus said. "But I definitely enjoy playing here better, home games are definitely the best."

While the game against Idaho State will be at home, it is not a guaranteed victory.



Griz running back Eli Gillman runs toward the end zone as his teammates cheer him on at the Griz game against the Portland State Vikings on Nov. 7 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium.
MARS JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

Idaho State has only one more loss than the Griz.

In away games, Idaho has managed to win more this season than it has home games, with an away record of 3-1.

The Grizzlies are currently 7-3 for overall season play and 5-2 in Big Sky Conference play, behind the Bobcats' 9-1 overall and 6-1 conference play.

In addition, the Bobcats are currently the Big Sky Conference leaders while the Grizzlies are in third. If the Grizzlies take a winning record in the home game stretch and in the Brawl of the Wild, it will go a long way to improving the season and playoff standings.

Softball goes undefeated in fall season

MARIN ANDERSON | SPORTS REPORTER
marin.anderson@umontana.edu

The University of Montana softball team ended its fall exhibition schedule with a 8-0 record, raising expectations and excitement for the 2027 season.

The Grizzlies, who were the unanimous last pick in the January 2026 coaches' poll, and went 22-32 overall in the spring season, took the recent victories during four double-headers at the Grizzly Softball Field in October.

Head coach Stef Ewing already knew the girls were going to have a phenomenal start to the fall season after the exhilarating end of last season, where they reached the semifinals during the Big Sky Conference Championship.

"I knew that we were going to have a high powered offense this year. We certainly showed that in our fall games," Ewing said. "They believe when they step out on the field, it doesn't matter what uniform is playing against them, they just have to go out and play their brand of softball and that they can compete."

Ewing knows the importance of playing good defense and controlling their hitting within the batter's box in order to dominate the Big Sky Conference.

"They really enjoy coming to the ballpark every day to get better and doing the little things that we're asking them to do," Ewing said. "This group has a goal to win the Big Sky Conference. But we don't come here and say that's our goal, we say that's our job. That's what we're here to do."

Although they had a dominant start to their season, there still is work to do and skills to improve on, according to Ewing

"You don't win a Big Sky Championship in the fall," she said. "But this fall was able to show these girls, when we asked them to do things and they do it, they're like, 'Holy cow, this is working,' and I think that's really exciting for them."

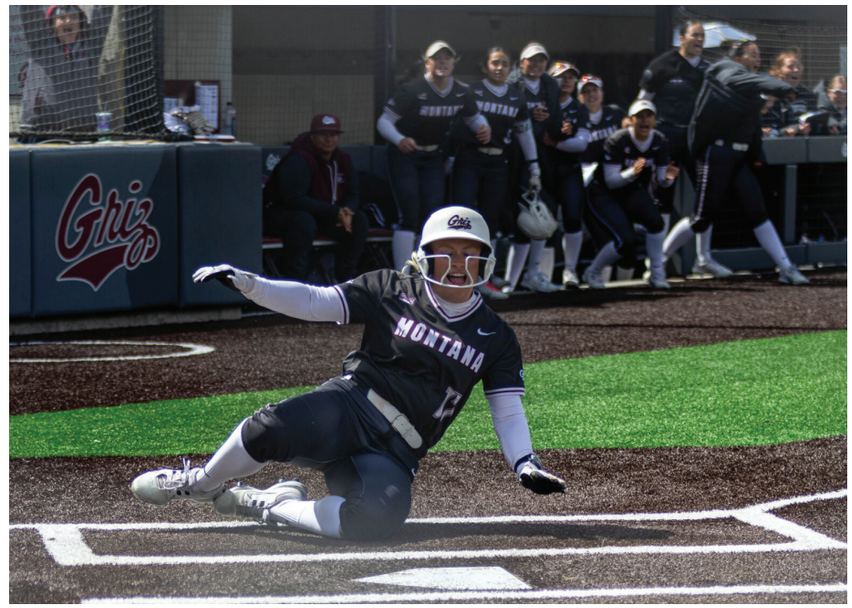
With two years of coaching experience under her belt, Ewing has had the opportunity to grow alongside the now junior class, as they were freshmen when she started out.

Outfielder Mackenzie Bekofsky, one of a few juniors on the team, is grateful she is on her UM softball journey with Ewing. According to Bekofsky, it has been an honor for her and the other juniors to evolve as people and players with Ewing.

"It's really easy to be happy for our team successes," Bekofsky said. "We all respect Stef so much as a coach and she respects us, so any success we have is her success as well."

The same amount of love they have for Ewing, she has for them. They have shown leadership to freshmen, sophomores and transfers that have helped improve the game and mentality for the Griz.

"The junior class were freshmen when I got here and so, having them and [Madison Tarrant] as upper classmen has really helped to integrate lowerclassmen and get them all going and rowing in the same direction," Ewing said.



Sophomore Hailey Boer slides in for a run against Idaho State in the team's last regular season game on April 26. Griz softball just finished its 2026 fall season with a 8-0 record. JACKSON MAILEY | MONTANA KAIMIN

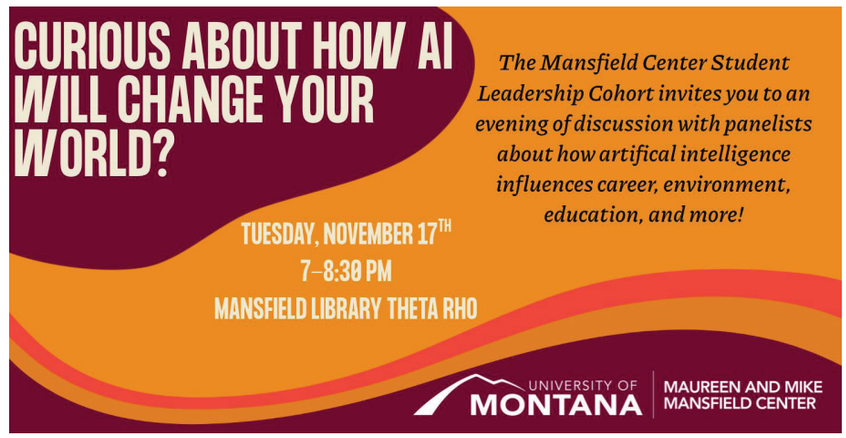
In order to compete to their full potential, Bekofsky and the rest of the team have new access to a nutritionist and trainers that care for them every step of the way. It is extremely important that they stay ready and healthy for the season, as injuries are the biggest challenge the softball program faces, according to Ewing.

"We have 55 to 60 games in a season, so it's hard to give your 100% that you could have given in February to March, so we're taking it as a marathon, not a sprint, and making sure everyone's healthy, stays healthy and has no injuries," Bekofsky said. "We're doing a nutrition challenge, where we try to get the most points with our meals. We send our meals to our nutritionist and she gives us points, see who has more colors, more fruits and carbs."

The Griz are frequently on the road. On weekends when they leave Thursday at 5 a.m. and return Sunday at midnight, these simple challenges and exercising go a long way.

Through staying hot for the season and keeping up stretching, the Griz are preparing to compete, reach for Big Sky first place and to prove those who doubt wrong.

"People can doubt all they want, but the group that's in this dugout, they don't have any doubt, and that's all that matters," Ewing said. "We don't care what people write about us. We can be picked to finish first in the conference or picked to finish last again. And guess what? We're just going to go play."



SPORTS BRIEFS

HANNAH BENITEZ | SPORTS EDITOR
hannah.benitez@umontana.edu

RECORD BREAKING WIN AT WA-GRIZ

The University of Montana Grizzlies secured its 250th win at Washington Grizzly Stadium after defeating the Portland State University Vikings 57-24.

The Griz have now moved up to the fifth place spot in the Big Sky Conference and up to 12th in the Football Championship Subdivision Coaches' Poll from its previous 13th spot.

Fans saw a highlight reel moments after Eli Gillman rushed for 196 yards and four touchdowns to break the Big Sky record for most total career touchdowns. Gillman finished the day with 78 career touchdowns, beating NFL All-Pro and two-time Super Bowl champion Cooper Kupp's record.

A touching moment occurred after the officials called a timeout so Grizzlies head coach Bobby Kennedy could present the game ball to Gillman as chants of "Eli Gillman" rang out through the stadium.

The team also had a big day after it put up 644 yards in total and the defense limited the Vikings to only 357 total yards despite it having 12 more offensive plays than the Grizzlies.

UM found high effectiveness on third downs, converting 10 of 12 opportunities, and in the air with 281 throwing yards from quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat, the fifth-most yards in a single game in program history.

The game also showcased two first career touchdowns for Montana players Chase Cook, who hauled in a one yard touchdown reception from Ah Yat and Cody Schweikert, who broke away from the defense for a 35-yard rushing touchdown.

Despite the joyous day for the Grizzlies, wide receiver Monte Gillman, Eli Gillman's younger brother, caught a punt return and ran it down the field for a touchdown. However, disappointment was heard from spectators after it was called back for a penalty.

"It was special. What [Eli Gillman] did today was special. When you look at what the offensive line has helped him do, our quarterback and the guys on the offense, I was really proud of them all," Kennedy said.

SEASON FINALE ENDS IN HEARTBREAK

The University of Montana soccer team lost its final match of the season to the Portland State University Vikings, with a score of 1-0.

Former Grizzly Kendel Johnson, scored her first goal of the season for the Vikings in the 34th minute after receiving a pass from Aliayha Saldana.

The Grizzlies conclude the season with a record of 3-13-1 and finish last in the Big Sky Conference. Meanwhile, Portland State finished 4-13-1 and 9th. The Big Sky Soccer Championship will be held at UM on Nov. 11, 13 and 15.

Show up and throw down

BRAYDEN VALLOW | PHOTOGRAPHER
brayden.Vallow@umontana.edu

On a cold Wednesday night, when only streetlamps light the empty foggy roads, you may hear the faint bass from a speaker under the Beartracks Bridge. If you look closer, a pair of dancers throw down shimmies and "star walks" to rap music while no one is watching.

University of Montana junior Scar "SKR" Miyashita-Jaime, 20, and senior Aiden "Morph" Kelly, 22, created Hip Hop Missoula, a club for anyone interested in hip-hop culture, music, and, most of all, dancing in ciphers. "All it takes is a bounce," Miyashita-Jaime said.

Ciphers are freestyle dance circles, usually having a sound system or MC, master of ceremonies, present to direct and keep the vibe up.

"The perfect world for ciphers is a handful of people dancing and a bunch just hanging out," Kelly said.

Dancers can then step in and dance on the floor with their own unique style until the next dancer decides to enter. There is no pause for new dancers to enter the cipher. "Just show up and throw down," Kelly said.

Miyashita-Jaime and Kelly's favorite style is animation. Miyashita-Jaime said animation focuses on storytelling. Kelly believes the dancer's body should look like it's skipping frames, like stop motion.

"Think about a classic cartoon, like Mickey Mouse driving a boat bouncing around, now just imagine you are the character," Kelly said.

Kelly, from Helena, didn't get exposure to prominent hip-hop dancing. "My sister was a really incredible modern dancer, but even growing up around it I never felt like I had a place in it," Kelly said. After taking Introduction to Hip Hop Dance at UM, Kelly found his calling. "Freestyle gives so much to me; it allows me to loudly and confidently be myself and I want to inject more of that into the world," Kelly said.

Miyashita-Jaime took a love for dance at a young age.

"I did ballet and I hated it," Miyashita-Jaime said. They later became drawn to freestyle.

Hip Hop Missoula will take to the streets every Wednesday night for open ciphers and use the Zootown Dance Collective space near the Southgate Mall as it moves into the winter.

"There's a bounce within everybody. It's a heartbeat, you know?" Kelly said.



ABOVE: Scar "SKR" Miyashita-Jaime doing a handstand spin or "star walk" on Nov. 5. "Freestyling doesn't have moves, it has concepts. Feeling how you want to move," Miyashita-Jaime said.

RIGHT: Aiden "Morph" Kelly dancing under the Caras Park bridge. "I love picturing a little ball of energy [when dancing] and then throwing it around like it's a real ball," Kelly said.

BELOW: Dance name "SKR" plays "Look Like My Mama" by AZ Chike and Tyler, the Creator. "'Rapper's Delight' is my favorite track. My father has it on vinyl. It went straight into my body," SKR said.



