

MONTANA KAIMIN

ONE MAN'S TRASH

How one
thrifty student
combats
University of
Montana food
waste

Story by Isabella Chambers
Photos by Renna Al-Haj



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Cover photo by Renna Al-Haj

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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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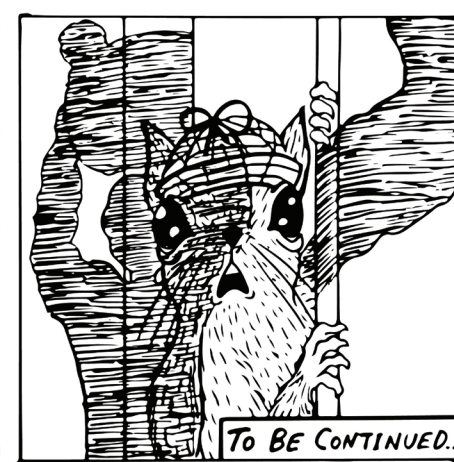
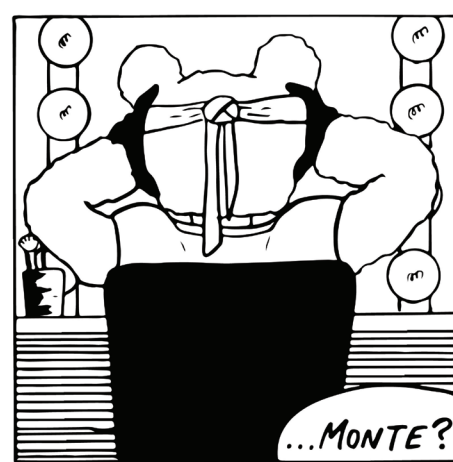
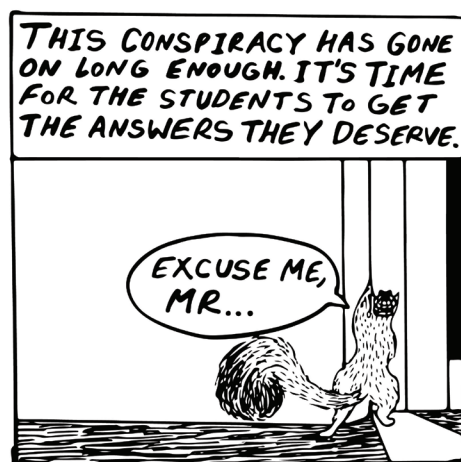
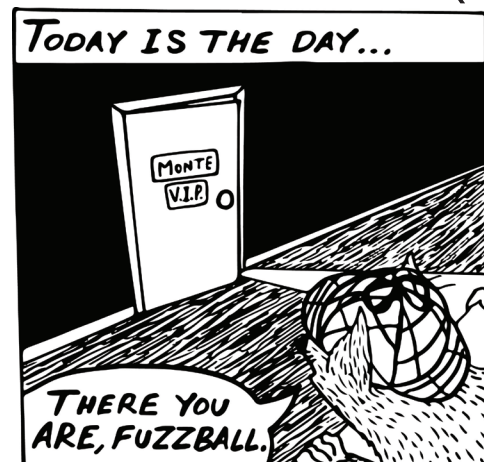
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Tune in this week to hear audio editor Clayton Murphy talk to Marley Miller, president of UM's Entertainment Management club, about UM students honing their skills in the entertainment industry one event at a time.



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

DETECTIVE SQUIRREL: SE 1 EP 13



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN *BARRETTZ*

Letter to the Editor

I want to begin this letter by giving a huge kudos to Michael Rohd for putting on an exceptional Democracy Summit. As an energetic and passionate one-man band, Rohd put together a smorgasbord of events for the University community to participate in. We are so lucky to have benefited from his efforts. I hope he does it again.

AND

I can't help but note how the summit was tarnished by the unshakable feeling that it was a facade.

It seems that University of Montana's president would like to be perceived as a champion for democracy and student civic engagement without actually doing any of the substantive work that entails. Worse, under his tenure, he has allowed the rights of UM students to erode.

To have a democracy summit on a campus that does not even give its students a holiday for election day is absurd.

A democracy summit sponsored by an administration that willfully buried the results of a student election to support a student-run advocacy group is almost comical. (This is in

reference to the ballot referendum in 2023 to allow students the option to fund MontPIRG, an initiative that earned 83% student support, which Paul Lasiter intentionally refused to present to the Board of Regents.)

Hosting a democracy summit to benefit cross-disciplinary dialogue while simultaneously looking for ways to cut classes and majors that promote critical thinking and cultural understanding is chef's kiss levels of silliness.

Before we see Seth Bodnar getting any laurels or accolades for this summit, before we highlight UM in any way as a proponent for student civic engagement and democracy, let us see some actual substantive work by this administration for its students.

Bring back election day as a holiday. Provide voter registration in all orientation packets. Fund majors and professors to give UM students a strong education. And finally, make the student voice a valued voice, give them a seat at the table and listen when they speak.

-John Rhoades

Letter to the Editor

The students of the Russian program are writing to express how deeply troubled we are with the proposed actions of the Provost's office in its discussion of downsizing University of Montana's language majors, including Russian, the only program of its kind in the state, to minor-only programs.

The consolidation of the Russian program is purportedly based on low enrollment, graduation rates or lack of relevance. We believe it best to challenge this notion using the language and goals of the Provost itself. Three values outlined in the "academic playbook" are:

"Our programs should deliver value for our students ... Enrollment is not exogenous to the curriculum, nor is it in and of itself a strategy."

"The liberal arts and a focus on career outcomes and professional education are symbiotic, not an either-or proposition. We believe that UM must inspire life-long learning and intellectual development and provide students with clear pathways to meaningful and sustained employment."

"All decisions must prioritize success."

Retiring the Russian major will likely result in a two-year language program, which is not enough time to gain fluency for professional use.

In the last three-and-a-half years, 20 external scholarship award applications were from Russian majors, while eight were from minors. Six awards were given to majors and one to a minor. This year alone, the program received a Rhodes scholarship and two Critical Language Scholarships. Russian majors are the third-highest of all UM majors in external scholarship money; minors, however, are not nationally competitive.

This proposal is unsound from multiple perspectives: educational diversity, academic accolades and global-mindedness. We urge the University to examine more closely what students value — our love for our language program is deep and we know the program is delivering us value and intellectual development, as well as a pathway to meaningful, sustained careers.

— Scout McMahon, Jack Baranski, Tatyana Rohrer and Maxwell Woodcock

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium Edited by Margie E. Burke

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

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:

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

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Academic changes delayed; abortion to be put on ballot; UM hires new health dean

PROVOST OFFICE PUSHES BACK PLAYBOOK DEADLINE

The Office of the Provost has decided to push the deadline for its academic affairs playbook plan, which looks to review and make changes to programs annually, back to next semester.

"As we began meeting with departments in late February, the conversations were illuminating," Vice Provost for Academic Affairs John DeBoer said in an email to the Kaimin. "But we quickly realized that the pace of scheduling and the need to be thorough meant that we would need to rethink our timeline."

The annual program review began with a quantitative analysis reviewing enrollment and graduation rates for every degree program offered at the University of Montana, aside from graduate programs. Programs scoring low on those criteria were then selected for qualitative analysis, which involves interviews between the Provost's office, faculty who run the program and its college's dean to try and get more information about the program.

Once that step is finished, the Provost's office will make a recommendation for the program, which could mean cutting it once all its current students graduate, downsizing it from a major to a minor or merging with another program. All these proposed changes must be presented to groups like UM's Faculty Senate and the Montana University System's Board of Regents before becoming a reality.

The playbook was first revealed to all faculty members in January and aimed to have changes ready only four months later, but the Provost's office is still in the qualitative review step, which was originally intended to wrap up by March 26.

UM spokesperson Dave Kuntz told the Kaimin earlier this semester the reason for the original May deadline was so changes could be approved and implemented by next semester.

"The biggest driver is that if nothing is done by May, then we probably have to wait all the way till next year to do this, and then we lose a whole year of productivity," Kuntz told the Kaimin at the time.

DeBoer said feedback gathered from deans, faculty and students from multiple Faculty Senate meetings, listening sessions and surveys, also contributed to pushing back the deadline, since lots of feedback criticized how short the original timeline was.

Instead, the changes proposed in the process will follow the usual curriculum and the yearly Board of Regents review process used for any big changes made within the academic year, according to DeBoer. With the deadline now in the fall, it is possible UM may not see changes until the 2025-2026 academic year. *(Corbin Vanderby)*

NEW ABORTION INITIATIVE GETS GREEN LIGHT TO PETITION

On April 5, Constitutional Initiative 128 was given the go ahead to begin collecting signatures and petitioning to be added to the voter ballot. The initiative is calling for an amendment to explicitly protect abortion rights in the Montana Constitution, according to Montana Free Press.

Montana Free Press reported the Montanans Securing Reproductive Rights group has until June 21 to collect 60,000 signatures from registered voters across 40 state house districts and submit them to county election officials.

This is one of many ballot initiatives or

amendments moving through states' legal systems across the country following the overturning of Roe v. Wade in 2022. Montana Free Press stated while Montana has and maintains legal protections for abortion access, supporters of CI-128 believe the amendment will secure the right in the Montana Constitution. *(Sav Chavez)*

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA HIRES NEW COLLEGE OF HEALTH DEAN

The University of Montana will welcome Matthew Fete as its new College of Health Dean on June 17. Fete most recently served as a professor at Chicago State University and was the dean of its College of Health Sciences and Pharmacy program.

Fete studied chemistry and biochemistry at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia and received his doctoral degree in these studies from the University of Colorado Boulder.

"We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Fete to the University of Montana community," UM Provost Adrea Lawrence said in the UM News press release.

Members on the hiring committee included many voices from the College of Health, including Vice President for Research and Creative Scholarship Scott Whittenburg, the college's Director of Finance and Operations Jen Geist-Quigley and student Senator Declan Roe, who is currently enrolled at the College of Health.

"We hope to see continued growth in the college [of health] with all the expansion happening in the college," UM Spokesperson Dave Kuntz said. "A lot of work had already been done under [Reed Humphrey, the College of Health's current dean] and will continue under new leadership."

Fete has held many positions of leadership outside of CSU, including interim chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and interim dean of the School of Pharmacy at Regis University in Colorado. Through his dedication to teaching and mentoring, Fete supported a number of students through self-authored presentations and publications, three of whom became Walmart Scholars recognized by the American Association of College of Pharmacy, according to the UM News press release.

"My family and I are thrilled to be Grizzlies! We are so grateful to have this opportunity to contribute, professionally and to the community, in a place where we can play hard in nature," Fete said in the press release. *(SC)*

POLICE BLOTTER

SAV CHAVEZ

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Just as the sun comes out to play, so does petty theft. From credit cards in bathrooms to equipment from construction zones, the urge to "borrow" and never return seems to be rising. From March 31 to April 4, the University of Montana Police Department responded to six crimes as we hopped and bopped through Easter weekend.

FRIDAY, MARCH 29 – FROLFING

UMPD had to interrupt an intense competition on the third floor of the University Center at 10:30 p.m. Students were seen throwing Frisbees off the railing by the UC Ballroom in a neck-to-neck fight to see who could throw the farthest. Though not a crime, how about we keep the outdoor activities outside? Go get some sun or something.

SUNDAY, MARCH 31 – IT LIVES

At around 3:00 in the afternoon, UMPD headed to Pioneer Court in the University Villages to check out an abandoned vehicle that had made itself at home in the parking lot for about a week. As it turns out, the car was reported stolen. The lonely vehicle has since been returned to its registered owner.

MONDAY, APRIL 1 – BORROWING... OR NOT?

Workers arrived at the construction site for the new practice field last Monday to find a few missing items, including some batteries for power tools and their chargers. Though this could have been a silly little April Fools prank, it proved unfortunate for the people just trying to get the job done. The missing parts added up to just under \$500. UMPD has no suspects. Later that day, a student in the PARTV building called UMPD after finding a man rummaging through belongings she left in the changing area. When she made herself known to the man, he quickly scampered away. After checking her bag to see if anything was missing, she discovered two of her bank cards had vanished. Though UMPD received multiple matching descriptions, the area has no video footage and the man was never found.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3 – MYSTERY TOKER

At 9:30 p.m., a tale as old as time unfolded. UMPD was called to the rooms of Pantzer Hall to scour around and find the classic culprit: A smoker in the dorms. After searching high and low, officers could not find which specific room that particular herbaceous smell was emerging from. You got away this time, but you might not be so lucky next time, stoner.

GRIZ STUDENT + SUMMER = NEEDS STORAGE

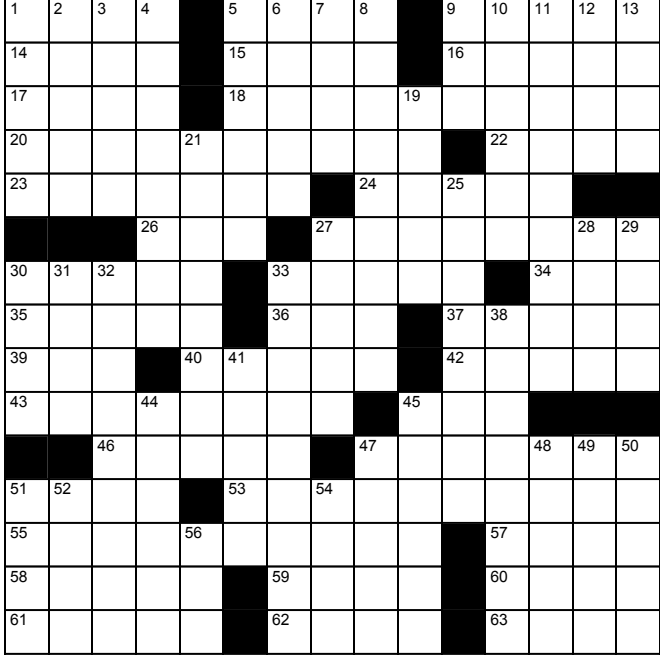


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- ACROSS**

 - 1 Motel amenity
 - 5 Starchy side, slangily
 - 9 Sharper than 90 degrees
 - 14 Giggly Muppet
 - 15 Apart from this
 - 16 Like some points
 - 17 Mideast's Gulf of ____
 - 18 Keep in office
 - 20 Heist planner, perhaps
 - 22 Grooving on
 - 23 Classroom units
 - 24 Weighty works
 - 26 Row producer
 - 27 Statue's stand
 - 30 B, on the periodic table
 - 33 Gets too much sun
 - 34 Astonishment
 - 35 Pastor's flock
 - 36 "Who ____ we kidding?"
 - 37 Where dos are done
 - 39 Needing no Rx
 - 40 Eccentric
 - 42 Paper producers
 - 43 Some lab workers
 - 45 Patriotic women's org.
 - 46 One of a 1492 trio
 - 47 Whopper topper
 - 51 Paddler's target
 - 53 Nonreader
 - 55 American in Paris, e.g.
- DOWN**

 - 1 Oyster's prize
 - 2 Nostalgic number
 - 3 Bad signs
 - 4 Horse with high odds
 - 5 Peaceful
 - 6 Answers to charges
 - 7 Secondhand
 - 8 Forward eraser
 - 9 Super Bowl side
 - 10 Two in a Dickens title
 - 11 Remove from a computer
 - 12 REI purchase
 - 13 Therefore
 - 15 San ____, Calif.
 - 19 Place to broil
 - 21 Guitar ridge
 - 23 Scatter
 - 25 Blue jay's abode
 - 27 First-timer
 - 29 Graphic ____
 - 31 San ____, Calif.
 - 33 Place to broil
 - 35 Guitar ridge
 - 37 Scatter
 - 39 Blue jay's abode
 - 41 First-timer
 - 43 Graphic ____
 - 45 San ____, Calif.
 - 47 Place to broil
 - 49 Guitar ridge
 - 51 Scatter
 - 53 Blue jay's abode
 - 55 First-timer
 - 57 Graphic ____
 - 59 San ____, Calif.
 - 61 Place to broil
 - 63 Guitar ridge
- Answers to Previous Crossword:**

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

Trolls-o-scope

LAUREN REINHART
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Last week, I wrote a review about the newest installment of the "Trolls" series, "Trolls Band Together." Long story short, a troll army on X, formerly known as Twitter, emerged from their mom's basements to accost me for my take on this mid kids' movie. Haters, I see you and hear you, but I intend to ride this colorful train all the way. So, I extend an olive branch, if you will, by looking to the stars for inspiration. That's right, bitches, it's time for the Trolls-o-scope. So whip out your best hair spray and start singing as we take a ride on this rainbow to hell.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19):

Okay, cranky pants, keep your luscious locks on straight. Don't lose your shit when there are bumps in the road. As Branch, you had a rough go as a kid. However, you bagged an absolute baddie: Queen Poppy. It's all smooth sailing from here, right? Right?!

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20):

You constantly view the world through your heart-shaped, rose-tinted glasses. They go well with your overly flamboyant outfit and personality. Queen Poppy. Just don't forget to take them off now and then. The world isn't ALL sunshine and rainbows, even in the "Trolls" universe.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20):

You just got your fake I.D., so you can't stop flashing it to everyone you see and asking them not to snitch on you to the very scary, muscular bouncer. You're Tiny Diamond, or should I say Adulty McManFace. You may look small, but your deep, baritone voice tells us you're wise beyond your years. Maybe try listening to audiobooks?

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22):

Hey Cancer, as a troll, it's easy to get stepped on, but you're not even a troll (really) and you still let people walk all over you. You guessed it, you are Veneer, a giant (literally) who does whatever your sister tells you. We're still rooting for you to stick up for yourself, even if your hairstyle is straight ass.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22):

You have been a little uptight and clingy recently, Viva. You're already extremely

stressed out over finals? Isn't that, like, a month away? Don't tell me you're already studying. On the upside, your curls look gorgeous. Did you use copious amounts of hairspray for it too?

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22):

You are so tall, stylish and sexy. But let's be honest, other than that, you don't have many other talents. Velvet, are you good at anything? Literally, what are you good at aside from bullying your brother?

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22):

You greedy bastard, Clay. You're just like Mr. Krabs if he was a troll. Where did your flair go? Now you're pinching pennies, but we know you're still a prankster at heart. We understand, ya got responsibilities, but don't forget to sing with your fellow trolls now and again.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21):

Leadership who? You are John Dory, the leader of "BroZone," the band in "Trolls Band Together." You are not afraid to make sure everyone remembers you're still in charge, even if you have been solemnly immersed in nature for the past 20 years.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21):

Sag, you secret flirt. Are you trolling us right now? As Bridget, it's unclear if your adult jokes and horny pheromones are because you're on your honeymoon or if you took the trolls' equivalent of Viagra. Either way, we support your new sexy-troll era. Keep popping that rainbow troll-ussy.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19):

Your extensive education should prove that you are fully capable of being an academic boss, even if you're very shy. You are Crimp, and you need to be more confident. Stand up for yourself, even if you look like a dried-out mop without a handle (and a big brain).

AQUARIUS (JAN 20-FEB 18):

You may be handsome with W rizz, but as Spruce, you gotta stop using that troll dingaling. Your herd of kids has gotten large enough, and let's admit it, you're one more baby away from a mid-life crisis. Maybe you should try becoming that old troll under the bridge instead.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20):

As Miss Maxine, you have the hair, the fit, and hey, you're an officiant! No troll can challenge your elite sense of style or your godmother vibes. Keep slaying, queen.

BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN



How Montana's student government went \$5k in the red

ELLE DANIEL

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By the time Maggie Bell discovered the status of the Montana Associated Students' dues account in 2023, two years of unpaid dues left it around \$5,000 in the negative. The accountant in charge at Montana State University Billings had retired. But with little to no oversight of the account, no one paid and the account slowly slipped into the red.

MAS comprises student governments from 11 Montana institutions, including UM, Montana State University in Bozeman and Montana State University Billings. MAS members also represent students at the Montana University System's Board of Regents, the governing body that oversees all public colleges in Montana.

The MAS dues account covers costs for the hiring and housing of a lobbyist during the Montana legislative session. The MAS lobbyist appeals to legislators as a voice for Montana students on bills impacting college campuses.

According to Bell, MAS treasurer and UM Student Senate President, each school pays dues on a tiered system, with some schools like UM paying more than smaller universi-

ties. Bell estimated UM and MSU each paid around \$1,500, while affiliated campuses paid closer to \$750.

Along with covering around \$9,000 to hire and house lobbyists, the account also funds Rotunda Day, hosted by MAS, where students can meet legislators, discuss politics and learn about the Montana political system.

Gwen Coon, who has been the office manager for UM's Student Senate since 2018, said discovering the negative balance took time for several reasons. Coon recalled asking student executives if the University had been billed for the dues, and the answer was consistently no. "Despite that conversation happening a couple of times, last year's MAS leadership really sort of fell short," she said.

Coon said that lack of leadership contributed to falling behind on payments. "If a student never brings us the bill, we don't know to pay it," she said. There wasn't much communication when the Billings accountant retired, Coon said, adding, "It was just a really wonky transition time." Neither Bell nor Coon could recall the name of the accountant.

According to Coon, the account still had funding in it from previous years, but after

hiring Bell as the lobbyist for the legislative session, her paychecks and funding for housing finally pushed the account into the red.

MAS planned last year to transfer the account to MSU, but after losing its student government office manager position because her contract wasn't renewed, MAS voted to move it to UM. Here, Bell said, the office manager and accountant are directly under the student government rather than UM's general business services.

"There was kind of an unspoken rule that it should be at a non-flagship institution, but that's just a lot to ask," Bell said. "That school is the one that has to send out all the invoices for dues, and it's just a little bit of extra work." Flagship universities like MSU and UM are typically the first public research institutions founded in a state, or in some cases, the most recognized or supported.

Coon and UM Student Senate Operations Manager Sara Niekamp will most likely co-manage the account once it transfers to UM, but Coon says it depends on upcoming decisions from MAS. The Kaimin reached out to Niekamp, but she declined to be interviewed.

Before the account transfers to UM, though, it needs to be zeroed out. Board of

Regents Deputy Commissioner Galen Hollenbaugh said the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education received a "one-time assistance request for closing out the [MAS] account in Billings."

Hollenbaugh said OCHE will begin discussions on the next steps after MAS provides the Montana University System staff with more information on the account's status.

Bell said the hope is to start paying regular dues once the account is transferred. "[MAS will] vote on the dues that will be charged every year moving forward," she said. "We're coupling this with a reform of MAS so that it can be more active."

Neither Coon nor Bell said they could see the gap in payments hurting MAS's ability to hire a lobbyist for the upcoming legislative session in 2025. The search for lobbyists begins in October or November with the goal of having someone hired in December. "So there's still some time, but they will have to make sure the dues get paid right away in the fall," Bell said. "Which we're trying to help set up the next set of executives for."

Bell said they're still figuring out the right conditions to make sure everyone is prepared and dues get paid. "I think they're ready," she said.



SUMMER

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Campus construction continues to accommodate growing student population

MELISSA DICKSON
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The University of Montana is putting the pedal to the metal to freshen up its look, and construction around campus seems to have no end in sight with renovations new projects in the works, including a new dorm building.

Starting in recent years with the ongoing construction of the new UM Dining Hall, the Montana Museum of Art and Culture and now-finished renovations to Knowles Hall and Aber Hall, the efforts to glow up continue.

The challenge? Funding and space. UM's campus is landlocked for room in major improvements like the new residence hall, which has been in the planning stage for over a year now, according to Jameel Chaudhry, associate director for planning, design and construction. "Hard decisions are having to be made," he said.

Amid the race for space and funds sits the effects of old age that UM is beginning to feel more and more.

The new UM Dining Hall, which began construction in 2022 and is expected to be finished by fall 2024, is just one of the major projects UM has tacked onto a growing list of infrastructure and facility needs.

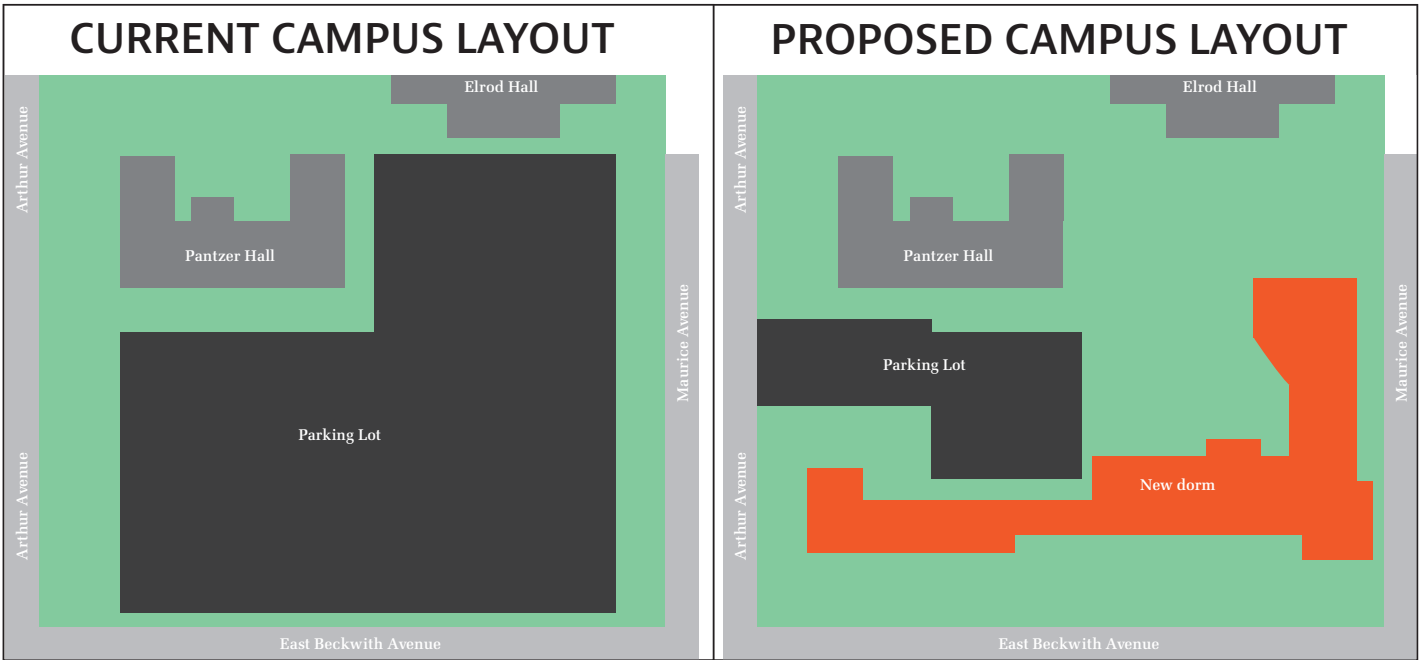
Projects like this, which aren't education related, including a new dorm, are funded by bonds the University takes out and will eventually have to repay.

The new dorm, costing around \$100-110 million, is set to go out for bid for contractors on May 1, and is expected to be done by fall 2027. UM will accept the lowest bid, as required by state law. According to Chaudhry, the new dorm symbolizes UM's decision to stop modernizing old buildings and start from the ground up with new ones.

In what will be the first fully American with Disabilities Act-compliant dorm on campus, the new dorm will feature seven stories and up to 600 beds. Jesse and Aber Hall are currently the largest residence halls at 11 stories with around 400 beds each.

"Looking strategically into the future for the next 50 to 70 years, we think we're better off building a brand new dorm. Once that one is done, take down the old dorms," Chaudhry said.

This project will change parking, given the removal of Lot H for construction,



MACKENNA GLEAVE | MONTANA KAIMIN

which could last up to three years. This could mean replacement parking in the Miller/Duniway courtyard or taking out the tennis courts to make space.

That decision of where to put replacement parking is still up in the air, but UM will begin tackling those areas this summer no matter what.

The project also comes with the demolition of older dorms, including Duniway, Craig and Elrod, which each average around 70 years old, and hold about 587 beds combined.

"It makes us conservative in terms of attracting freshmen students so that when they come and tour, they see these brand new dorms," Chaudhry said. "Then it affords us the luxury of being able to knock down some of these older buildings and put more parking or more green space in that area."

The new forestry building, already approved for planning, has yet to take any steps forward without the \$20 million needed from UM to begin construction. The state has already come up with the \$25 million for its part in the project, but there will be no moving forward until the rest is raised on UM's end.

A new combined power and heat plant has been in the works for UM's campus for along time. It began construction in 2022,

but with funding and supply chain issues, progress was pushed back until it had the resources to move forward. UM will be finished with the project this summer, according to Dave Kuntz, UM's communications director.

The Charles H. Clapp building has been stalled on renovations due to a crooked hydraulic piston in the elevator shaft discovered last month. With few local elevator contractors, the estimated completion time remains undetermined. The project was originally expected to be completed by the end of February.

The main difference between these projects is how they're funded. Different pools of money like bonds and state-requested funds for maintenance and capital are dipped into for various needs around campus, whether that means an entirely new building or fixing an older one like the University Center.

As for aging buildings around campus, Chaudhry said it's hard to prioritize one thing over another. "Who do I feed first — my firstborn child, second-born child or third-born child?" he said.

Lindsey Kroll, a 20-year-old English education major from Billings, was more attracted to the Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center than the dorms when she first came to UM.

She said since being here for a year, she's noticed things like dusty dorm vents making some people sick and uncomfortably small bathrooms in the music building, things she said UM could work on.

With aged buildings and expensive repairs, replacement could make the most sense, but according to Kroll, "I feel like they should just respect the historic buildings that are already on campus, which are used 24/7, like the music building, rather than just more places to put freshmen. So that is kind of upsetting."

But when the University falls short of tackling repairs and replacing facilities in older buildings while millions of dollars are put toward new facilities like the dorm, it usually comes down to where funding is most available, according to Chaudhry.

When student fees are paying for things like dining and dorms, there's a steady stream of revenue. On the state side, funding for operations and maintenance typically cannot carry the weight, Chaudhry said.

Infrastructure repairs come out of state funding, negotiated among state agencies every two years.

"These are tough decisions going forward. It's come to a point where we're having to take a hard look at older buildings and just say ok, is it worth keeping or not?" Chaudhry said.

ONE MA TRASH



How one thrifty student combats University of Montana food waste

ABOVE: Tucker Hood, left, hands Luca Welle, right, parsnips. The two look for vegetables in the compost bins outside a grocery store in Missoula for that night's dinner. "Between Dumpster diving and scavenging from the leftovers of events, I really don't purchase much food at all," Welle said. There are basic kitchen must-haves Welle buys from stores, but most of his food is sourced from compost and other discarded food.

TOP CENTER: Hood explains a part of what he loves about collecting discarded food. "It's like grocery shopping, but it's better because I don't have to make any choices. You just take what's there," he said.

MIDDLE CENTER: Mushrooms, bok choy, cauliflower and other vegetables Welle and Hood found during the night's compost bin dive. Welle and Hood use the ingredients they find to make a variety of meals.

BOTTOM CENTER: Welle sits down to eat a meal made primarily from the food found on his Dumpster dive that evening while gazing over a "Star Trek" puzzle.

N'S

Story by Isabella Chambers
Photos by Renna Al-Haj



Welle, right, and his roommate, Hood, became fast friends during their freshman year. "It all started with the lamps," Hood said. Forty-two lamps, to be exact. "One day outside of the trash cans near Miller Hall, I found 42 lamps. ... We put a sign on my dorm room door that said 'Luca's lamp emporium,' and I started giving them away to friends and strangers alike," Welle said. The lamps found in the Dumpster were just the start of their thrifty friendship.

THE LAST OF THE GRIZ FANS trickled out of the Adams Center. Luca Welle, a 21-year-old University of Montana student, stood on the lawn outside, patiently waiting for the crowds to clear. Once he felt the masses subside, he shuffled around the building, preparing to prowl his secret spot.

On this particular post-game night, the curly haired, poncho-draped young man wandered behind the sports arena to find a stash of valuables most passersby wouldn't even glance at. The pavement he wandered was wet from the melted snow, a stench emanating from the Dumpsters a few yards in front of him.

As usual, Welle peeked into the metal container and spotted it: a laundry basket-sized bag full of excess popcorn from the concession stands sitting on the metal floor of the Dumpster. The bag, weighing at least 10 pounds, was overflowing with buttery, yellow, only one-night-old popcorn — still perfectly good to eat, but thrown away.

Welle rescued the bag, untouched by the otherwise

questionable or completely inedible food filling the rest of the Dumpster, and threw it over his shoulder like Santa Claus. He walked back through campus, continuing on with his normal night.

Welle is a sustainability science and practice major with a minor in climate change studies. UM was the first college in the country to create a climate change minor program, making it a hotspot for young environmentalists. Welle is a born-and-raised Montanan, now known as a savior of discarded items.

In the fall of 2021, during his freshman year, Welle rescued more than 40 gold bedside lamps from a dorm Dumpster during the University's demolition of the north wing of Craig Hall.

Welle saw no reason for these perfectly good lamps to be added to the dump, but that was the start of something even bigger. His dorm room became a "thrift store" of sorts as he began to collect all kinds of thrown-out, but still-functional and useful goods like mirrors, school supplies and various bedroom decorations.

Distributing his loot among college students and donating to second-hand stores, Welle tried his best to reduce whatever unnecessary landfill items he could.



Hood and Welle make stir fry from the ingredients they found in a Dumpster. They offer the Dumpster-sourced meals to anyone who wants to give them a try. The meals change depending on the gatherings from each dive.

During his sophomore year, his ambition grew as he also focused on campus' wasted food.

He has plenty of reasons for his Dumpster diving efforts: saving money, entertainment and general moral comfort. Mainly, though, he aims to reduce waste for environmental considerations. Recently, UM student food insecurity has become more and more visible to him, further fueling his hobby.

According to a new study by the United Nations, the greenhouse gasses produced by rotting and otherwise wasted food account for around half of all global food system emissions. The global food system, from production to consumption, emits around one-third of all annual greenhouse gas emissions—some 18 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide.

Greenhouse gasses, as the climate change studies program emphasizes, are one of the primary reasons for global warming and an immense amount of environmental degradation. Welle started Dumpster diving for food products to decrease additional waste, considering its greenhouse gas emissions, but he also feels

an intense motivation to do something about what he sees as a constant, immoral misuse of excess food.

In Welle's efforts to reduce food waste, he's found an affordable and ethical way to provide food to himself and his fellow broke college peers. The food system in place today has a lot of inadequacy when it comes to equitable food distribution, he said, and he is simply doing his small part in cutting down on the system's remains.

FOOD'S NEXT STOP

In an auditorium in the education building, with a class as large as 150 students, Welle dropped his backpack and computer off at his table, then meandered through the other tables, offering popcorn to anyone interested.

"Do you want some popcorn?"
 "Oh, hell yeah!"
 "Damn, that's a lot of popcorn!"
 "Where is that from?"

Ten minutes later, dozens of people had handfuls of popcorn on their notebooks or pieces of paper, snacking on the free food as the lecture began.

"Can I have some more?" one of Welle's friends whispered, reaching for another handful.

"Of course, I obviously don't have enough for myself," Welle laughed sarcastically.

For some of these students, Welle came to realize, this was one of the few snacks they ate all day.

Once students move out of the dorms and get off the campus meal plan, which averages around \$3,414 a semester and is often paid for by loans, parents or scholarships, students are on their own to feed themselves every day.

Many, however, have financial or circumstantial barriers, like not owning a car, preventing them from easily getting to grocery stores. According to a study by Best Colleges, around 23% of college students were food insecure in 2020.

There is plenty of food on campus to go around, but access, cost, wasteful practices and institutional barriers prevent it from being consumed and shared to all students in an equitable way.

The University's dining hall, the Food Zoo, has attempted to make some improve-

ments to reduce its food waste. During Earth Week in 2008, UM Dining decided to transition from trays to plates to reduce its post-consumer waste. In one week, its waste went down from 3,148 pounds to 2,376 pounds, according to UM's report to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System. Without trays, students generally take less food, and therefore, waste decreases.

But that's still 2,376 pounds of wasted food per week.

All post-consumer food waste from the Food Zoo and from UM Catering is picked up by Missoula Compost Collection and composted at Garden City Compost. UM Dining also donates more than 20,000 pounds of leftover food that doesn't make it to students' plates to a food recovery program organized by the Missoula Food Bank. There, it repackages and distributes the food to local non-profit agencies and people in need, UM's report said.

Despite the University's improvements, it, along with much of the country, wastes an immense amount of food. All the while, people in the same community are going hungry.

OTHER HUNTERS

Matilda Milner, 21, depends almost exclusively on donated or free food for her meals. As a full-time English Literature major, Milner also works three jobs to afford rent, car insurance, phone bills, groceries and tuition.

One of her jobs is at the University's student-run radio station, KBGA, where she's the outreach coordinator.

The walls are collaged with dozens of colorful posters, album covers and musician pictures. Neon red, blue and purple lights illuminate a soundboard, a desk covered with knickknacks, other radio machinery, bookshelves of CDs and a couch where Milner lounges, working on homework.

"If the music stops, just choose a song on Spotify," she said, leaving her computer screen open as she walked out of the room. The music she queued is playing on everyone's radio tuned into 89.9 F.M. After waking up at 5 a.m. and only sharing a bowl of ramen with her partner for breakfast, Milner was hungry and headed downstairs to the UM Food Pantry to find something for lunch.

At the same time, other environmental studies students and Dumpster divers reported finding five to 10 perfectly good pies thrown away at a local pizza shop, and a student in the UC common area tossed three-quarters of an Asian noodle dish into the trash.

There are no laws in Missoula about Dumpster diving. Missoula attorney Andrew Scott said once anything is thrown



LEFT: Welle and Hood have different purposes for their Dumpster diving. “Some people Dumpster dive because they can’t afford to buy food,” Welle says. Hood answers: “That’s me.” Welle: “Some people Dumpster dive because they feel guilty when they go to the Good Food Store because there’s so much wasted food in the world.” Hood: “That’s him.” **RIGHT:** Along with a stirfry, Hood and Welle prepare a mix of mashed potatoes for dinner. The roommates combine food they gather from work, compost bins, Dumpsters and store staples to make meals.



away, it is considered abandoned property and technically up for grabs. But people may run into trespassing laws if they are on private property. UMPD Lieutenant Chris Croft said officers don’t have any problems with Dumpster diving, and they’re much more concerned with black bears digging into the bins.

And despite some UM students’ creative food-finding solutions, others are still going hungry.

Chance LeBlanc, the student coordinator of the UM Food Pantry, restocked canned tuna on the shelves.

“Have a good time at class,” they said to their work-study employee as they exited the room.

“I will!” the young woman called as she walked down the hallway. Posters explaining how to sign up for government food assistance and ones welcoming all students canvassed the front door.

LeBlanc finished the restocking and walked behind their desk to study the statistics revealing UM’s growing food-insecure student population.

The UM Food Pantry is an organization on campus aiding students in their struggle to feed themselves. Functioning similar to a grocery store, the shelves are lined with pasta, canned beans, onions, bags of bagels, pancake mix and Kraft mac & cheese, among other dry goods. The refrigerators hold milk, sometimes other dairy products, and occasionally vegetables and chicken. All items are free for students, regardless of their financial situation.

The University founded the program as a free food service to help students who

were experiencing food insecurity. What it didn’t anticipate was it becoming a staple to fulfill students’ food needs and the reason a student would be able to eat lunch that day.

A student in a blue jacket walked through the front doors. He grabbed a used plastic bag from a pile and began to pick items off the shelves.

“You ready?” LeBlanc asked when he moved toward the front counter.

“Yeah,” he said as he lifted his bag of groceries and laid it on a scale. It read four pounds.

LeBlanc jotted the number down. “Thanks so much! Have a good day.”

“You too,” the student said, exiting through the door.

Welle is glad the pantry exists, but sees it more as a Band-Aid than a full solution.

“It’s a great resource,” Welle acknowledged. “But there can always be improvement. I wish they could reuse more of the excess food that the campus produces.”

Unfortunately, LeBlanc says there are some regulations that makes it hard for the University to “redistribute” pre-made food to students at little to no cost.

But according to Eva Rocke, UM’s Sustainability Director, there is a new collaborative project between UM Catering and the UM Food Pantry to do just that. UM Catering aims to give its leftover, untouched dishes to the UM Food Pantry to be distributed into smaller, microwaveable meals for students.

LeBlanc said they believe the campus also marks its food higher than needed.

“The market and food prices on campus

should be less than normal grocery stores and gas stations, and instead they are way more,” LeBlanc said.

During weekday hours, the Food Pantry serves up to 40 people a day, while during the weekend, it’s around 20 people. Food Pantry workers repackage some excess bagels from the Market in the UC, but otherwise, most of the food on the shelves comes from individual donations or the Missoula Food Bank. Since no pay is required, the organization weighs the food people take to track need and inventory.

Last year, the total weight of food taken by students was more than 33,000 pounds. The year before, it was 26,000, and the year before that it was 16,000. The increase can be explained by the ever-increasing cost of food and housing, which has left students vulnerable and in need of assistance.

WELLE’S GRAZE

While some students struggle to afford one meal, others routinely discard many of their edible and nutritious ones.

On a Wednesday afternoon, Welle trekked across the yellow February grass of the Oval. His stomach growled as the clock tower’s hands closed in on 1 p.m.. While most students stood in line at the restaurants, he bee-lined toward the waste bins.

Welle peered, semi-casually but also confidently, into the closest trash can. It was full of food wrappers, to-go containers, food leftovers and other waste items.

“Ahhhhh,” he pulled out an opened, but still half-full, bag of oyster crackers. The plastic covering ripped and a few fell out.

“Shoot. Oh well, it’s a little snack to whet my appetite,” he laughed as he palmed and chucked the remaining morsels into his mouth. After wiping the crumbs from his bearded chin, he continued searching for more.

Moving around the corner, he headed into the second floor main common area where the majority of students sat and ate their purchased meals. Welle rummaged through the trash can near the exit, the most common spot where students drop their trash and leftovers as they end their lunch.

UM has made large strides in composting student’s leftovers. Each trash area has three bins labeled “recycling,” “compost” and “trash.” Many of the University’s take-away containers are also made with conventionally compostable materials.

Despite their efforts, the “trash” bins are still filled with food and compostable containers. Elbows deep inside a bin with his bare hands, Welle pushed aside a half-eaten apple and removed a paper bag full of fries.

In the next trash can, Welle pulled out a plastic container of an Asian noodle dish from Eson Gib, one of the UM Food Court’s restaurants. The lid was falling off but the noodles remained inside, not contaminated by the other more trash-like items. A half-eaten brownie bar, still wrapped in plastic, laid beneath it, and Welle snagged it too.

“Nice,” Welle said with a smile. He found himself a table next to the western window, soaked in the winter sun and enjoyed his free lunch.

Latiné Student Union leader breaks the ice with change and empowerment

EMILY MESSER

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Zyanne Cervantes, the Latiné Student Union president, strapped her skates tightly to her feet and jumped on the ice to help students of color learn how to skate at Glacier Ice Rink on March 30.

Diversity Ice Skating was an outreach event coordinated by Cervantes. To help with affordability, the Union assumed all the costs. This event brought all ages and ethnicities together. With little ice skating experience under her belt, Cervantes was thrilled to teach others.

"I saw this opportunity of filling that need in the community, of engagement, of doing something that they normally wouldn't or otherwise couldn't be able to afford to do," Cervantes said. "I was like, 'This would be a fun little way to fill that.'"

Cervantes is serving her final year in leadership at the LSU after starting the club during her first year at UM. Following a model of leadership she learned from her mom, she strives for representation on campus and in the state of Montana as union's president.

"[Growing] up in such a predominantly white area was really hard," Cervantes said. "My role model, naturally, was my mom." Cervante's mom retired as a Lieutenant Colonel from the Army National Guard.

Cervantes was born a second-generation American in Yuma, Arizona, a prominently Latiné community. However, her family moved to Townsend, Montana when Cervantes was 4 years old. Throughout her academic career, she said she experienced racial profiling and microaggressions, which pushed her to become the leader she is today.

Microaggression are subtle, everyday interaction that reflect and convey biases toward historically marginalized groups, according to an interview psychology expert Kevin Nadal did with NPR in 2020.

"Once the microaggressions started, it started fueling this fire in me, that this should not be happening," Cervantes said. "Why is this happening? And seeing it happen to other people as well fueled that fire and it's been driving me ever since."

Cervantes developed a passion for politics while fighting to understand her identity in a predominantly Caucasian community. She began to learn the need for representation and joined the high school debate team, later becoming the Helena Capital High School Board Representative.

"My therapist told me, you know, I can never be a skinny white woman. So I should probably stop aspiring to be one," Cervantes said. "And having had that experience, I realized, 'Okay, well, I'm definitely not the only one that's going through this.' And so, at that point, I developed this passion for change."



University of Montana senior, Zyanne Cervantes, the current president of the Latiné Student Union, strives for empowerment and change through her leadership. **EMILY MESSER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Cervantes is now competing debate at the collegiate level and leading the team as president for UM while being an assistant coach for speech and debate at Sentinel High School. Cervantes is studying political science with a minor in economics with aspirations for law school in the future.

Cervantes worked with the Associated Students of the University of Montana as a senator in 2022 to advocate for her fellow Latiné students, but resigned in the spring of 2023. A former senator alleged during a public committee meeting that Cervantes distributed drugs to

fellow members in the ASUM office, according to a previous Kaimin article. Cervantes said ASUM was a stepping stone to get where she is today. She also discussed that the fallout from those allegations "has not had an impact or effect" on her current leadership roles.

Cervantes said she has found nothing but growth at the LSU, starting as communications coordinator, then vice president and currently serving as the president of the union. During her time with the union, she has learned there is a lack of a sense of community among the Latiné students, and her goal this

year is to change that. This year, Cervantes has hosted multiple fun events such as salsa nights and, most recently, Diversity Ice Skating.

Cervantes is planning to host more events in the future for the Latiné community and was excited for the opportunity to network at the skating event. As president, she is working with the Diversity Advisory Council to continue advocating for better representation on campus.

"I'm working with the administration on different policies and looking on the Diversity Advisory Council exploring different avenues on how we accommodate our Latiné presence on campus, and our Latiné students on campus, but putting on the events has also been really fun," she said.

Cervantes has big dreams of running for political office one day, but breaking ground here at the University is her first step.

"There's definitely a need there that I'm hoping my executives can carry on next year. As far as 'How do we build community?' And 'How do we make Latinés and other minorities on campus have an undeniable presence?'" she said.

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'Bright Star' explores love, loss and womanhood in the 1920s

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"If you knew my story, you'd have a good story to tell," Alice sings in the opening number of "Bright Star," the University of Montana's School of Theatre and Dance's upcoming folk musical. Full of love, light and sorrow, the play captures what it meant to be a woman in 1920s Appalachia.

The play, written by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell, takes place through a series of flashbacks following the story of Alice Murphy. Alice falls in love with Jimmy Ray Dobbs, a local heartthrob from a powerful family. Alice gets pregnant, and Jimmy's father, the mayor of the town, takes the child and "disposes" of him. The story intermittently flashes forward to the future where Alice tries to find her lost child.

Throughout the show, we see the main character in two different periods: Alice when she is a teenager and Alice when she is older. While there are difference between the stages of her life, some traits stay constant.

"She is curious, wickedly smart and has a talent for uncovering stories," Bailey Carlson, who plays Alice Murphy, said. Carlson is a musical theater major in her final year.

However, some members of the production did not believe the script did Alice full justice. Laila Sisson, the play's stage and properties manager, did not like the musical on her initial reading.

"I'm going to be completely honest, I didn't love it," Sisson said. "I felt like we didn't talk about the main character — initially — enough. I think the show is mostly about Alice, but I think we missed a lot of that."

However, through the rehearsal process, Sisson found that the story has expanded to include a deeper look into Alice as a mother and a businesswoman.

"This is coming from my personal opinion as a woman that there is always a struggle between what society expects from you and what you expect from yourself," Sisson said. "I think something really special about Alice is that we see both her desire to be a great mom, but also the fact that she is a strong, independent businesswoman and that she can coexist and be both of those things."

Michael Beverley, director of the production, said he believes plays are a way to tell these kinds of stories through more than paper. That's what sets them apart from just reading the script.

"There is a beauty in sharing stories with each other and getting into the sort of poetic-ness of theater. I think sharing stories has the power to transform a space or to transform people," Beverley said.



Monroe Ayers, left, and Bailey Carlson, right, rehearse on April 2 for 'Bright Star,' the upcoming University of Montana School of Theatre and Dance musical. Performances at the University of Montana are set to run April 18 to April 28. **RENNAL-HAJ | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Through Beverley's directing, the actors are on stage the entire time to take part in telling Alice's story, starting as just as themselves, then donning costume pieces to change characters.

"The actors start out as just themselves. They're in the space, and then Alice shows up and is like, 'I'm going to tell you this story,' and they choose to participate in the retelling," Beverley said.

Beverley, a Master of Fine Arts directing candidate, uses a specific method to his directing called "Viewpoints," developed by Anne Bogart and Tina Landau. This technique uses the actor's physicality and connection to others to tell a story, such as through poetic gestures. Beverley is a practitioner of the relatively new technique in the theater world. He

has directed two other shows at the University using this technique: "Call of the Wild" and "The Laramie Project."

"The process has been so different from any other show I have been in," Carlson said.

"Bright Star" will take place in the University's Masquer Theatre. The space is the smallest of the University's performance spaces, which allows audiences to be immersed in an intimate experience. The actors in "Bright Star" use this fact to interact with the audience, further pulling them in.

"My belief in theater is that we should always acknowledge that the audience is there. That's what separates us from film," Beverley said.

Liudmila Karaseva, a theater and social work double-major, loves being a part of the

storytelling. As a part of the ensemble, Karaseva puts on many hats: playing a bartender in one scene and a child in another. To her, "Bright Star" is a testament to many life experiences.

"'Bright Star' is a beautiful encapsulation of the human experience of love, loss and redemption. It calls for me to remember all of the connections I have had in my life and how I want to interact with life and people moving forward. It asks me to choose to live as fully as I can," Karaseva said.

"Bright Star" will premier in the Masquer Theatre from April 18 to 21 and April 25 to 28 at 7:30 p.m., with 2:00 p.m. matinees on Sunday, April 21 and 28.

Sports | Spiking in popularity

UM's Spikeball Club's continued growth means students may soon compete in tournaments

MAXWELL JOHNSON

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Despite being a relatively new sport, few activities have become as popular in college recreation as roundnet, more commonly known as Spikeball because of the brand that helped revitalize the sport. The University of Montana is no exception to this with the Spikeball Club offering both casual recreation and serious competition against peers and in tournaments the team will likely start attending this summer.

"I think some of my greatest memories have been just playing Spikeball with my friends," club member Tyan Nordstrom said, "I have some great conversations while playing, but I'm also very competitive. I like to win, and there's nothing more satisfying than doing something cool with the ball and it actually landing on the net."

The club was founded by Jacob Amend three years ago when, after playing Spikeball throughout his high school years in Spokane, Washington, he discovered there was no club on UM's campus.

"I started the club my sophomore year just because I found that there was no club on campus and I was like, 'Hey, I love Spikeball,' and I knew a couple people that also love Spikeball. So I had some traction getting into it and then yeah, I decided to make it a thing," Amend, who is now a senior, said.

The club, which started with a core of roughly 10 members, has now grown to have 60 people rostered, although standard attendance for weekly meetups tends to vary from eight to 30 people.

"This is a great way to meet people," freshman Maddie Knodel said. "Every time that I've come, there's always different people, so you really just get to know a lot of individuals."

The group has recently grown and had enough members interested in the competitive aspect of the game to consider heading to tournaments.

"If there are people that want to compete in tournaments and feel like they're at that level, then I'm more than happy to introduce them to it," Amend said. "So this summer, I think that there's a tournament in Utah that we might go to and a tournament in Seattle which would be the most feasible one for people traveling."

Seattle or Salt Lake City's would be the first sanctioned tournaments the club has been to since the Spikeball company began sponsoring tournaments in 2013. Despite Spikeball's usually casual nature, these tournaments are anything but. At their highest level, they feature "contender tournaments," in which teams of two players must place to make it to the premier level, where they can ultimately compete for a championship.

"I played in a tournament in Seattle with



Senior Jacob Amend, left, passes the ball to teammate Tyan Nordstrom, right, during a game of Spikeball on the Oval on April 3. Amend founded the University of Montana Spikeball Club three years ago and it has 60 rostered members. **MADDIE CRANDALL | MONTANA KAIMIN**

my friend back home, and we just got smoked. And then we played one in Portland that was a co-ed tournament, and that was with premier pros, and we also got smoked," Amend said. "There's a humbling aspect to it. I thought I was really good at Spikeball, and then I played against people who actually play and it's just a different level."

To Amend's credit, his sophomore year he did manage to place eighth in a large contender tournament where the top four teams move on to the premier level. When it comes to the skill gap between pro and recreational players, several members of the club singled out the quality of serves as the biggest difference.

"If you have a better serve, you are the better team," Amend said. "That's something that I can practice on my own, and that's what I have some people in the club practice for, is just getting better at serving because that'll carry you."

Although the club is still more than open to players who simply want to take their minds off of school without diving into the nuance of the game, giving students the opportunity to play in tournaments marks a big step forward

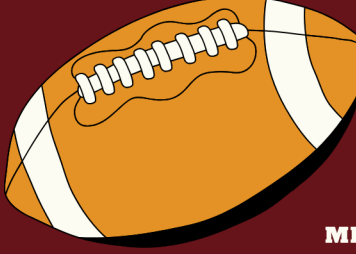
for the club and demonstrates the explosion in popularity that Spikeball has seen in recent years.

"I like how competitive and how nationally recognized it's getting. It's just a great game

and I'm happy that people are seeing it," Amend said. "I think that it's going to be in the Olympics soon, which is something to look forward to."

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Riley Peschek makes Griz softball history as one of only two freshmen ever to win the Big Sky Player of the Week

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After a lackluster 2023 season, the Griz softball team is still struggling to make gains with a 14-23 overall record. However, the team is seeing some exciting potential in University of Montana freshman Riley Peschek.

Peschek is currently in her first year on the team. She is a 19-year-old from Fox Island, Washington, majoring in business administration. Forty-two percent of the team is made up of players from Washington with two of the three freshmen this year from the state.

Peschek graduated from Gig Harbor High School in 2023 and now plays shortstop for the University of Montana Griz softball team.

She received Big Sky Player of the Week on March 11 after helping Montana go 4-2 at the Montana Softball Classic. So far, Peschek and Maygen McGrath have been the only two freshmen in program history to win Big Sky Player of the Week, with McGrath receiving the accolade in 2019.

Peschek has started in all 34 of the games the team has played and has a .351 batting average for the season. She currently leads the team in RBIs (runs batted in) with 21. Peschek, alongside Kelly Sweyer, leads the team with three home runs each so far in the season.

Peschek has been playing softball for 10 years now. During high school, she also played basketball and soccer. Going from playing travel softball and high school softball to college was a big change, but there was no doubt that she wanted to continue her softball career.

"I just wasn't ready to give it up," Peschek said. "I just couldn't imagine not playing right now."

One of the biggest changes she has noticed is the pace of the game is a lot faster. She said in high school you're just playing, but in college the game is more challenging with faster girls and better pitching.

Though she played other sports growing up, softball was always the one that stood out to Peschek. She played travel ball for the Washington LadyHawks and the Northwest Bullets before becoming a Griz.

Coming to UM wasn't a hard decision for Peschek. It wasn't too far away and she also knew some old teammates, Chloe Saxton and Presley Jantzi from the Bullets, who both ended up playing at UM.

Back home, Peschek has a 9-year-old sister, Lena, who also plays basketball, soccer and softball.

The person Peschek looks up to the most is her dad. He coached her in basketball and softball starting when she was 9 years old and even coached her high school softball team. Her dad played baseball his whole life and is now one of her biggest supporters.

"He's been at every home game so far," Peschek said.

Outside of playing softball in the summer, you will find Peschek with her family or friends outdoors. She likes to go fishing with her family whenever she has the chance to.

The move from Washington to Montana was fairly easy for Peschek because the atmosphere is pretty similar. Montana just has colder winters, which was definitely an adjustment, but an easier one than she thought it would be.

Peschek enjoys spending time with the softball team as they are all pretty close-knit. One of her favorite things about the team is the bond they all share.

Before a home game, Riley does her pregame ritual of getting a breakfast sandwich and a Pink Drink with chocolate cold foam from Starbucks to get her in game mode.

Melanie Meuchel, the head coach of the Griz softball team, described Peschek as a joy to be around. She has been the head coach of Griz softball since October 2017. Before then, she was the team's first assistant coach for three seasons. Meuchel has 20 years of coaching experience, with 19 years being at the NCAA Division I level.

Meuchel is from Missoula. Though the season started out slow with a close 5-6 loss against Weber State, Meuchel has seen an improvement with the team since and eagerly awaits the rest of the season.

Meuchel said Peschek is a great addition to the Griz softball team. Meuchel has noticed that, on the field, Peschek covers ground and makes great plays. She also provides some clutch hits and plays hard.



Freshman infielder Riley Peschek after the Grizzlies' game with the University of Providence on April 1. In March, Peschek received Big Sky Player of the Week after helping reach 4-2 for the Grizzlies at the Montana Softball Classic. **CHRIS LODMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**

"She is able to bring her personality to the field," Meuchel said. "She turns it up a notch with her focus and ability to play in the moment."

Meuchel looks forward to seeing Peschek's growth over the next three years on and off the field.

"She brings a lot of fun to the team, to the coaches, to the players and to all staff," Meuchel said.

Montana is 0-6 in conference play on the season. Its next game is April 12, when the Grizzlies take on Idaho State in a home doubleheader.

Six jobs keep UM student afloat

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY MADDIE CRANDALL
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College life comes with many challenges, but one on the forefront of many students' minds is finances. For Carli Cebulla, one job just isn't enough to keep up with the cost of living. She's balancing 16 credits and six jobs to make ends meet.

She is a head guard at the Grizzly Pool, works with a professor to grade papers, does some small jobs at the Delta Gamma sorority house where she lives, interns at Ashley Furniture, is the student president for the National Society of Leadership and Success and is a youth counselor at the Tom Roy Guidance Home.

Cebulla said that in each of her jobs, she's doing something to grow as a person in different areas of life, but that together they have shown her how to work with people. "Everyone's life is completely different and unique, but it's awesome to see everyone's unique backgrounds that come together," she said.

Cebulla hasn't always kept so busy, though. Throughout high school, she struggled with an undiagnosed sleep disorder that kept her from doing all the things she wanted to because she wasn't able to stay awake for a full day. "I got diagnosed before I came to college with a sleeping condition, so I started taking meds for that and all of the sudden I had the time and energy to do more things," she said. "So, I kind of viewed it as a way to have a high school experience in college because in high school I really didn't do anything because I physically couldn't," she said.

She was diagnosed after going for a voluntary nap study in which every two hours she would take a nap and was timed to see how long it took her to fall asleep. She was 30 seconds away from a narcolepsy diagnosis, when Cebulla fell asleep in 13 and a half minutes, 13 minutes being the marker for narcolepsy. She says that she always knew something was off, but that no one believed her. "Everyone thought I was lying when I went in, and then my technician came in at the end and he goes, 'Don't worry, there is something actually wrong with you,'" she said.

Cebulla's diagnosis has helped her know her limits. "Learning how to trust other people and trusting your own intuition has been a big thing, and I think that's honestly why I have the jobs that I do, because I was like 'This one's jumping out at me, I feel like I should apply,'" she said.

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growth. "I became a leader. I learned how to do Chems and I'm not a chemistry major at all, so that was a learning curve," she said. "I was able to apply my EMT skills in the training settings. So, somehow it all came together in a nice way." **BOTTOM LEFT:** Cebulla checks her Google Calendar at a desk in her room at the Delta Gamma sorority house where she lives and works. Cebulla is a business major with a packed schedule that includes taking 16 credits this semester and working six different jobs. She says her calendar helps her manage her time. "I usually have meetings every 30 minutes from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.," she says. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Cebulla holds out her whistle as she scans the Grizzly Pool, keeping an eye out for any swimmers who may be in distress. Between her work at the pool, her five other jobs and school, Cebulla doesn't have much downtime, which she says has put strain on her friendships. "I definitely feel like my workload has strained some of my relationships, but relationships are a two-way street," she says. "I've realized that the people I want to prioritize are the ones I'm going to, I make time for them."