

MONTANA KAIMIN

A CASE FOR RIVERS

With historic low fish populations and increasing river temperatures, a look at what fly fishing means for Missoulians

STORY BY CLAYTON MURPHY | PHOTOS BY MARC ANTHONY MARTINEZ



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Cover photo by Marc Anthony Martinez

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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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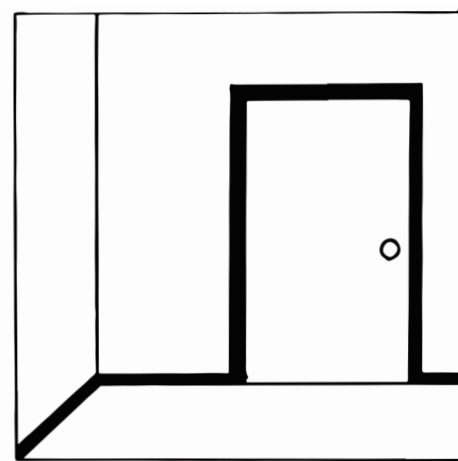
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KAIMIN KOMICS: SE 2 EP 1



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

BARRETT

UM, do yourself a favor and prioritize financial aid and scholarships

Last Friday, students at the University of Montana received an email from Vice President for Student Success Leslie Webb.

“Dear students,” it read, “we want to express how much we value each one of you. Your success and well-being are our top priorities, and we are committed to providing you with the best possible support.”

What would follow, however, was contradictory, as the email went on to explain that processing for financial aid is behind, meaning scholarships, loans and other aid has not been placed on some students’ tuition bills, which were due on Aug. 26.

According to UM Spokesperson Dave Kuntz, the delays stem from last spring’s Free Application for Federal Student Aid, FAFSA. Obviously, this is anxiety-inducing for any student, and especially for first-year students, who might not know exactly how much they should be paying for what they are going to receive at the University. It is nearly impossible to begin budgeting your school year finances while staring down the barrel of a massive tuition bill, with no specifics on what it might cost you in the end.

It’s also salt in the wound. UM raised tuition this year by nearly 11%, from \$3,859 a semester for full-time, in-state students last academic year to \$4,276 this academic year. For out-of-staters, it raised more than 13.5%, from \$14,817 to \$16,835. Now more than ever, students need financial aid. Especially if UM doesn’t want them to freak out when they see a tuition bill that surpasses \$20,000.

Time and time again, the Montana Kaimin has reported on the importance of financial aid to “student success.” In March 2023, when FAFSA processing slowed due to short staffing, students expressed their reliance on it in Kaimin stories.

“The only reason I’m able to be in school right now is because I am receiving federal financial aid,” UM student Hannah Hornyak said in an article published at the time. The following week, in an episode of the newspaper’s podcast, the Kaimin Cast, then-freshman Riley Werk said miscommunications from the financial aid office were “scary,” as she relied on various scholarships and the Montana American Indian Tuition Waiver in order to pay for school.

She’s among a large chunk of students who rely on the Financial Aid Office to navigate the maze of tuition costs. According to a study released by the National Center for Education Statistics, 72% of undergraduates received some kind of financial aid during the 2019 to 2020 year. For UM’s spring 2024 enrollment, that would mean 4,052 undergraduates relied

on financial aid to afford school.

The Kaimin has reported numerous times about the importance of attracting out-of-state students in order to bring in more money that UM, in the face of higher expenses, budget cuts and mandated pay raises, is in dire need of. But slowing down on scholarships and aid is a sure way to turn off students, especially those coming from out-of-state.

But instead of offering better opportunities to out-of-state students, UM tightened the benefits of the Western Undergraduate Exchange Program — an important recruitment scholarship that offers drastically decreased tuition to students from the West Pacific Region, including Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Wyoming, among others. Students now need a 3.95 GPA to receive WUE’s full award, which offers non-resident students 150% of in-state tuition rates. For this year’s tuition bill, with fees, that would mean paying \$6,414.

In 2021, before changes were made, students only needed a 3.0 GPA. In 2021, UM awarded over 1,000 WUE scholarships, according to previous Kaimin reporting. But last year, it awarded only 751.

We know the University is struggling to make ends meet. The increased tuition and last year’s proposed Academic Affairs Playbook, which used data to look at UM programs to make decisions about what to keep and what to cut, tells us all we need to know.

But if UM really wants to make more money, and get out of the hole it has been in for the last decade since enrollment started decreasing in 2011, it needs to prioritize incentives and the offices that give those to students.

The University can boost some of its other aid programs, including Grizzly Promise, a tuition waiver program that launched two years ago for families making less than \$50,000 annually. But if the office that makes sure these tuition supplements make it on the bill isn’t running smoothly, then students are going to be put disheartened from attending no matter what.

It’s the beginning of a new semester, and the Kaimin implores the University to step up with its best foot forward and fix some of the basic issues we’ve been seeing for years.

To placate students in the meantime, the University decided not to charge late fees until the end of the business day on Tuesday, Sept. 3. But if financial aid continues to fall behind as it historically has, the University might need to back up that deadline once again.

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Email us your opinions at
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SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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:

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

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Events for the week of Aug. 29 to Sept. 4

Thursday
Montana Shakespeare in the Parks — Hamlet | The Oval | 6 p.m.

Saturday
Griz Football vs. Missouri St. | Washington-Grizzly Stadium | 7 p.m.

Sunday
Griz Soccer vs. Indiana University - Perdue Univeristy Indianapolis | South Campus Stadium | 1 p.m.

Monday
Labor Day — No classes, offices closed

Tuesday
Griz Volleyball exhibition vs. Carroll College | Dahlberg Arena | 6 p.m.

Briefs & Blotter

MSU won't pay students for COVID closures; Montana fires update; MSU President to retire

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MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY WILL NOT PAY STUDENTS FOR ONLINE TRANSITION DURING COVID-19

On Aug. 5, the Montana Supreme Court ruled that Montana State University does not need to pay back students any tuition or other fees for its closure of in-person education due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MSU student Anthony Cordero sued the school in 2021 with the claim that he had a verbal "express contract," meaning the terms and conditions are laid out verbally, promising him access to in-person resources such as labs and the library. The University broke this contract, he argued, when it shut down in-person schooling. According to the Daily Montanan, Cordero used marketing materials in his case showing students making friends and doing other activities on campus.

The District Court found there was no express contract between Cordero and the University, and ruled in MSU's favor. The Montana Supreme Court stated there was an express contract but still agreed with the District Court's ruling because MSU never promised to keep campus open in emergencies, nor to remain fully in-person.

"We cannot fathom upholding a prorated refund of tuition and fees for MSU being forced to close due to inclement weather that prohibits classes, which frequently occurs due to Montana winters," the order said. "Here, Cordero was never deprived of classes, which were still conducted, albeit online."

According to the Daily Montanan, Adrian Miller, the lawyer representing Cordero, said he was upset with the ruling.

"It is disappointing that the Supreme Court does not believe MSU had an obligation to provide even a prorated refund for services and facilities that were unavailable during its COVID campus closure," Miller said in an email. "We respect the Supreme Court's decision, but students deserve better from the University."

MONTANA FIRE ROUND-UP

Ravalli County Sheriff Steve Holton ordered an evacuation due to the Sharrott Creek fire near Stevensville on Aug. 24, around 40 miles south of Missoula. The evacuation covered Kootenai Creek, west of the intersection of Timber Trail, and near the west side of Sharrott Hill Loop. According to the U.S. Forest Service, the Sharrott Creek fire was started by lightning strikes in the Bitterroot National Forest and was ignited less than five miles from downtown Stevensville.

The Miller Peak Fire, first reported on July 14, is located seven miles southeast of

Missoula and has burned 2,724 acres as of Aug. 25. Although the perimeter is completely contained, area and road closures are still in effect, according to the U.S. Forest Service dashboard.

The Remington fire, another wildfire raging in Montana, started on Aug. 22 in northeast Wyoming before reaching southeast Montana and is currently the largest wildfire in Montana, burning a total of 184,127 acres. As of Aug. 25, the fire is still being fought by wildland firefighters and is only 35% contained.

According to the Western Fire Chiefs Association, 2017 saw the most fires in Montana with a total of 71,499 burning over 10 million acres. As of this week, there are currently 74 active fires, totaling to 1,739 acres this year.

PRESIDENT OF MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

Waded Cruzado, president of MSU, announced her retirement, effective June 2025, in a letter posted on the University's website. Cruzado began as MSU's 12th president in 2010, making this last year her 15th running the University.

In the letter, Cruzado thanked the students and University for helping and believing in her goal of bettering the state of public

higher education. According to the Daily Montanan, Commissioner Clayton Christian praised Cruzado's career in a statement released by MSU.

"She is an exceptional leader and advocate who cares with her whole heart about the students, faculty, staff, fans and alumni who make up a university community," Christian said. "Exceptional leaders leave an organization better than they found it, and President Cruzado has done that to a historic degree. Thanks to her, Montana State University sits strong and well prepared to embark on its next chapter."

This year, Cruzado's salary and other compensation will pay her \$576,300, making her the highest paid public official in Montana, according to the Daily Montanan. In comparison, President of the University of Montana Seth Bodnar is being paid the same base salary but will receive a total of \$419,436 due to less additional compensation. Bodnar is the 19th president of UM.

Cruzado's departure also comes amidst several federal investigations of MSU regarding complaints of discrimination against LGBTQ+ students. After the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights opened up a first investigation, it promptly led to five more civil rights investigations into discrimination based on race, sex and national origin.

POLICE BLOTTER

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Welcome back to week one of the police blotter. You guys had all summer to get drunk, fight and do all the other weird stuff you get caught doing every week, but apparently almost everyone got together and decided to give the University of Montana Police Department a break. I'm sure they'll need it with all of the concerts, sports games and undoubted debauchery coming up.

THURSDAY, AUG. 1 – A CLASSIC CRIME

What better way to welcome students back than with a UM classic: bike theft. At 8:30 a.m., a thief broke the lock off of a bike at a rack outside of the Emma B. Lomasson Center and rode off with it into the sunrise. No suspects were found. Quick tip for the freshies who just landed: if you want to keep your bike, buy a metal U-lock for it — they're like 20 bucks online. Then, even if it's stolen, UMPD knows to question anybody found with a battery powered angle grinder.

MONDAY, AUG. 5 – SISTERLY SQUABBLE

At around 4 p.m., UMPD received a call of disorderly conduct at Jardine Court in the University Villages and arrived to see two sisters loudly arguing outside causing a scene. The caller decided not to press criminal charges, but still had the police record the incident. So, if you're reading this, next time just wait for Thanksgiving when it's completely legal to scream your head off at your siblings while you watch your extended family do the same.

SUNDAY, AUG. 11 – SWEATY SQUATTERS

At 11 a.m., UMPD found a group of happy campers enjoying the sweat lodge, an Indigenous ceremonial hut located west of UM campus. When told to scram, the trespassers were reportedly very apologetic and cooperated with officers who warned them not to come back. No damage was found at the scene and the case was closed. Who knew you couldn't just pitch a tent wherever you feel like in the middle of Missoula and have a free camping trip with the boys? This town makes me sick.

SUNDAY, AUG. 18 – MORE FAMILY FIGHTING

There must be something in the air of Missoula that brings family love to its knees, because at Bannack Court in the University Villages, UMPD found two family members fighting. However, this time the fight had escalated to physical assault. The case is still open and has been sent over to a detective for investigation. If you ever feel the Missoula vibes are making you want to physically hurt someone, don't. Worst case you'll catch a charge, and best case you're still an asshole.

Can't get enough? Start listening.

This week, hear Bayliss Flynn talk about the new Lodge Dining Center and how the Food Zoo is history. But with ballooning budgets, staff shortages and high expectations, it could prove difficult in satisfying students hungry for change.

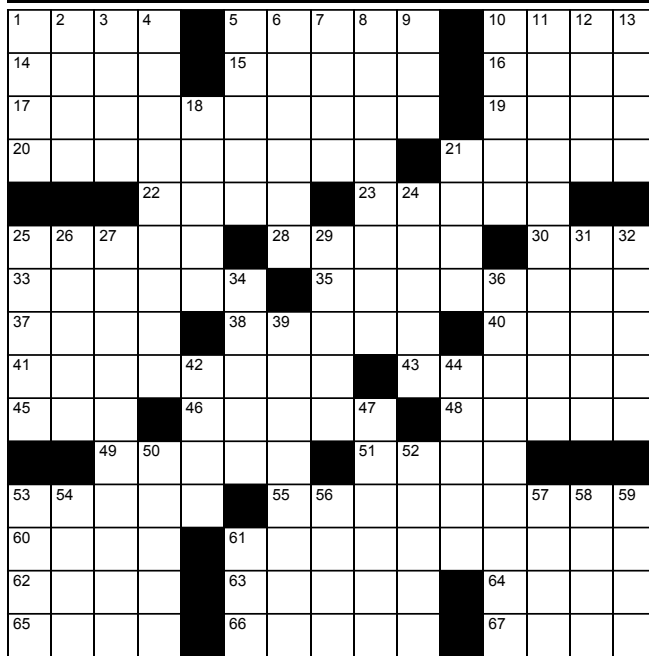
"This place — it feels like a real dining hall instead of just a high school cafeteria," Josh Methot said.



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

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke



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ACROSS

- 1 Pet lovers' org.
5 Photographer's request
10 Whole lot
14 Grad student's grilling
15 Moulin Rouge city
16 Fed. watchdog
17 Setting for the 2005 film, "Waiting"
19 Costner flick "___ Range"
20 Hay fever medicine
21 Finger-wagger's word
22 Parks on a bus
23 Home follower
25 Prickly bush
28 Hercules type
30 Boring routine
33 Golf spots
35 Battlefield worry
37 Comics canine
38 Dry, in a way
40 Skiing mecca
41 Cockpit reading
43 Folded food
45 1950 film noir classic
46 Greyhound, e.g.
48 Melancholy verse
49 Bake in a shallow dish
51 N.Y. summer times
53 Bit of info
55 Know-how
60 Knock about
61 Shasta's home
62 Passionate about

- 63 Subway entrance
64 Takes out
65 Use a spyglass
66 Cut, as ties
67 Big name in applesauce

DOWN

- 1 Put out
2 Type of school
3 Carry's partner
4 Superheroes often have them
5 Cowboy gear
6 Grammy-winning Carey
7 Persia, today
8 Football official
9 Not an exact fig.
10 Hullabaloo
11 Casual canvas shoe
12 "Pardon me"
13 Glazier's sheet
18 Love to pieces
21 E-mail command
24 Dance that "takes two"
25 Vast
26 10:1, e.g.
27 Type of commerce
29 Fail to say
31 Clear a cribbage board
32 Quick to get ticked
34 State under oath
36 Turbulent situation
39 Bring back, say
42 Stiffly formal
44 Urban area, for short
47 Stack again
50 Comic's specialty
52 Yield
53 Plumbing problem
54 Crackerjack
56 Caesar's 44
57 Skinny
58 Strain, as flour
59 Toward sunrise
61 HTML go-with

Answers to Previous Crossword:



Olympic-scope

KEELY PROEBSTEL

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Ah, the Olympics, the quadrennial global bonding exercise we all know and love. For nearly 20 days, the world watches, enraptured, and shares in all the tears, the joy and the memes. Oh dear God, the memes. With 2024 the most internet-captivating Olympics ever, we've got a bevy of superhuman goofs to collectively chuckle at. But one pressing question remains: What Paris 2024 meme are you?

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): You've got main character energy, Virgo. You demand perfection, you're going to deliver it, and you're going to look good doing it. You show up prepared to a degree others might perceive as intimidating. Maybe gold medalist South Korean shooter Kim Ye-ji will lend you her sick cyberpunk glasses so you only have to look at the haters with one eye?

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22): To quote some brilliant X — I mean Twitter — I mean X user, "not all heroes wear ... much at all." You aren't winning "best dressed" anytime soon, Libra, but you're the hero we needed this Olympics. You're ready to jump into action at a moment's notice, just like the iconic lifeguard dubbed "Bob the Cap Catcher." Maybe losing a swimming cap isn't a life-or-death emergency, but with your sense of compassion and justice, who cares? You're in.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): Metal and Drag? In my Olympic opening ceremony? Forget those pearl-clutchers, Scorpio. You're here for a good time, not a long time. You're the epitome of extra — a possessor of revolutionary ideas and the ambition to get them done. And you'll get them done while looking cool as fuck. You're high art, Scorp, and not everyone is going to get or appreciate it.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21): You're burdened with glorious, immeasurable ... skills, Sag. French pole vaulter, Anthony Ammirati, embodies the Sagittarius vibe. He may have lost the battle of Olympic pole vaulting, but he won the war of internet popularity. That's the kind of energy you're bringing, but remember to keep all limbs and appendages clear of the bar (and keep an eye on your DMs).

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19): The world is ugly crying and it's all your fault, Cap. Or, really, the fault of your horoscope buddy, Céline Dion, because, honestly, who was expecting that plot twist? You're an icon, one who can both fight through the pain and serve the world with a glitzy spectacle at the same time.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18): We're all about lifting others up in 2024.

In an Olympics so focused on solo stars, you're more aligned with team efforts. Specifically, the team effort between Simone

Biles and Jordan Chiles to highlight Brazilian gymnast Rebecca Andrade's win. You're the kind of person who's willing to take a back seat for someone you admire to shine. Basically, you're a good friend, Aquarius.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): Why do Olympians bite medals? Why does anyone do anything, Pisces? Much like your namesake, you're just going to go with the flow. So yeah, if there's a couple of trustworthy people doing something, you're probably going to follow suit, just like Chinese gymnast Zhou Yaqin. We can only hope you're also equally adorable.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): Show up and perform. That's you, Aries. You don't need any fancy lenses or medically recommended hearing protection. You're a badass, and you know it, much like Turkish sport shooter Yusuf Dikeç. You don't need someone to tell you that you're cool. You've got the silver medal and enough internet clout to prove it. Just don't support Elon, okay, Aries? That's kinda weird.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): Chronically chill, down-to-earth and prone to munchies. Am I talking about you, Taurus, or am I talking about America's gangster grandpa? Whoever suggested Snoop Dogg for Olympic coverage must've been smoking something, but hey, it all worked out! That's just the bull vibe: half-baked ideas with wildly entertaining results.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): You're a sleeper agent, Gem. You breeze through life, waiting for the moment you're summoned, and then you really shine. Just like U.S. pommel horse hero Stephen Nedorosick, who spent most of the Olympics hanging out until the moment he whipped off his glasses and netted his team a medal. The point is, you're unexpected ... in a good way, much like Clark Kent turning into gymnastics Superman.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): You might seem tough, but your heart is ooey and gooey like a chocolate muffin. You're the chilliest life of the party, and your name is in everyone's mouth. No doubt you've got people obsessing over you, just like Norwegian swimmer Henrik Christiansen. (But probably not him, unless ...?) You go, Cancer!

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): Much like Aussie b-girl Raygun, you're big on stealing the spotlight. You're innovative and ambitious and maybe a little bit too

confident. But you're also sensitive, Leo, and prone to taking criticism harshly. In the spotlight, that criticism's going to find you. Maybe keep that in mind the next time you feel compelled to throw in some kangaroo hops? And by the way, it's totally not your fault that breaking isn't coming back to the next Olympics.



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

Available parking spaces dip

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The challenge of finding accessible parking on campus has become worse this year as the University of Montana lost nearly 300 parking spaces to the construction of a new residence hall. Parking administrators managed to replace most of the spots, but will not be able to cover all of them.

With the goal to relieve the pain of parking on campus, Director of Parking Bill Donovan and behind the scene players, including Knife River Contracting, banded together to create four new parking lots on campus to curate an experience he said he hopes will be less stressful for students.

In an attempt to accommodate the spaces lost, the University tore the courtyard between the Miller, Pantzer and Duniway residence halls apart and the tennis courts outside of the University Center to make room for new parking lots. The spaces still do not completely replace the lost spots though, with 78 unreplaced.

UM also broke ground for the new residential hall in parking lot H, behind Pantzer Hall, on Aug. 13, shutting down the south end of the parking lot. The construction is estimated to continue until Fall 2027.

The new parking lots around campus cost a total of \$2 million. The Board of Regents also approved a 5% increase to the cost of all parking passes for the 2024 to 2025 year.

"The increase in permit prices is to help offset the rising costs of maintaining our parking operations," Donovan said.

These parking operations include personnel costs, maintaining equipment, vehicles, fuel, utilities and extra money to purchase new technology as needed, according to Donovan.

Donovan explained UM chose to build the new parking lots in the spot chosen as it did not have other locations available to build on without decreasing the University's green space.

"The new lots are a good thing to help offset the loss. It is not a one-for-one replacement," Donovan said. "It could have been worse."

Wildlife biology major, Charlie Dressely-Johnson said she has anxieties about the new parking look. Her nerves stem from the issues she experienced during the past two years of her college parking experience.

"Parking was already very scarce," Dressely-Johnson said. "The Pantzer parking lot was one of the bigger parking amenities on campus that was offered to commuter students."

Dressely-Johnson said she would spend an average of 30 to 40 minutes searching for parking

before going to class. With the loss of 78 spaces on campus, she is worried about being able to find parking at all.

"I don't have a lot of faith in the facilities for the population of the school," she said.

Dressely-Johnson, a junior, said she considered other options to avoid parking on campus. She said she feels the University's ability to oversell parking passes, at 30% over capacity, makes it more difficult to find parking.

"I have considered using Park and Ride or a carpool pass," she said. "I think 30% over capacity is too much. It should be 10% or under."

Donovan explained the reason behind the overselling of spaces is because not all pass holders are on campus at the same time.

Since UM has not reached 100% capacity in the past two years, the cap has not been a worry. If 110% of parking passes were sold, students would receive a low pass alert, and once 130% of parking passes were sold, students would be added to a waitlist, according to Donovan.

The University offers a total of 4,452 parking spaces, including specialty spaces like handicap, quick-stop and reserve. In Fall 2023, UM sold a total of 3,063 parking passes and only 2,482 passes in Spring 2024.

When the UM Parking Portal made parking passes available for purchase, some freshmen were not able to buy one. One of those students was incoming freshman Miguel Venegas-Peckham, an 18-year-old cybersecurity major from Manhattan, Montana. Having not been in this area of Montana, Venegas-Peckham felt anxious about the possible inability to purchase a pass.

"Not having access to purchase a parking pass until under a week before moving in was a bit stressful," he said.

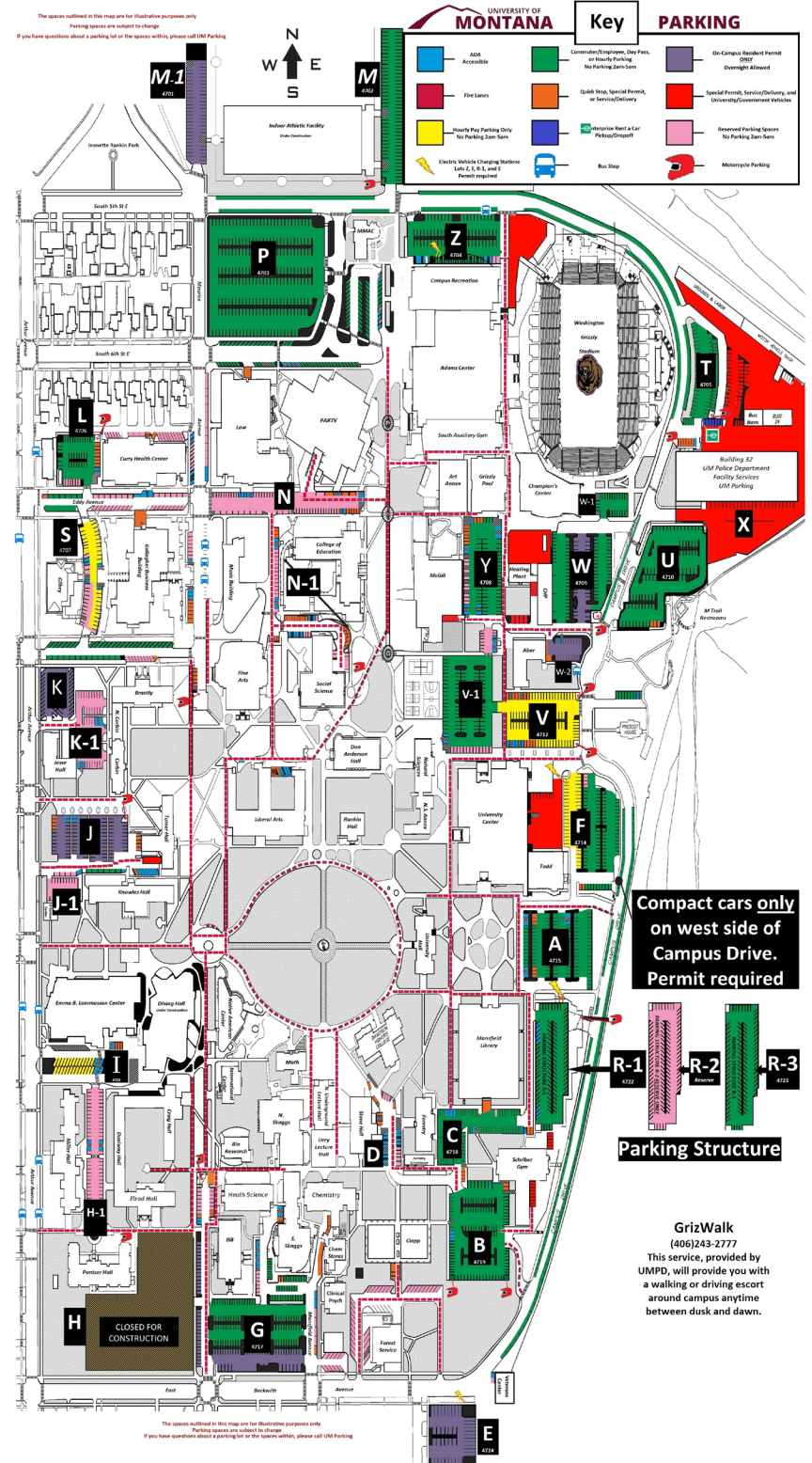
UM Parking received many messages regarding the issue with purchasing passes and worked hard to resolve the problem, according to Donovan.

"With our parking portal, some of the coding and configuration in there had to be updated. It took longer than we had anticipated," Donovan said.

The parking portal is now up and running with no reported issues.

"The University wants to make sure that the parking experience students have is a good experience," Donovan said.

Further down the line, UM hopes to build a parking garage to help alleviate parking struggles on campus. As of now, there is no timeline for when a proposal will be pitched to the Board of Regents for approval.



UM quietly cuts education professor and director

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With just under three weeks left before the first day of the semester, University of Montana English education majors received an email from their advisers forcing them to re-work their schedules.

The email, sent on Aug. 8, was sent to students taking Professor Jeff Ross' required English education courses in the fall and said it was canceled, but provided no reason why. Ren Shepherd, a theater education and English education double major taking Ross' course, "Creative drama in the English class," said they were frustrated at the vague and late communication.

"I just wish that they would be a little more transparent with what's going on," Shepherd said. "I think that's the most frustrating thing, where you're like, 'Well is my program being cut or do we really just not have the professor?' I think also, it's a little late in the game to make me change my entire schedule."

According to Eric Reimer, interim chair of the English teaching department, Ross' contract had expired mid-summer and administration decided not to renew it. Without Ross, who also directed the English Teaching program at UM, undergraduate students are left to find replacement courses and Reimer said the Master of English Teaching is no longer accepting new students. Reimer said the program hasn't been officially cut yet, because it hasn't gone through the proper processes, but he believes UM seeks to terminate it in the future.

Dave Kuntz, spokesperson for the University, said he has received no indication from administration that the master's program will be cut.

Reimer said students still currently in the program are upset about not having Ross as their director but will still be able to finish their degrees with replacement courses that fulfill the same requirements.

Shepherd said they chose theater education as a major because of their passion for working with kids and dreams to be a high school theater teacher. Theater education majors are also required to take up another minor or major for extra, post-graduation employment opportunities, which no other education majors are required to do. Shepherd added English education as their second degree.

To make money to pay for school and master their craft, Shepherd works at a local daycare and substitute teaches.

"I would love to be a high school theater teacher or English teacher as well," Shepherd

said. "I want to work with kids. I can't imagine a life where I'm not working with kids."

Reimer said the decision not to renew Ross' contract had nothing to do with his performance, but more with the lack of financial resources and staffing.

"The teaching program has been under scrutiny for a while," Reimer said. "With constant budget problems and recent fixations on data and national trends, there's always questions."

Last spring, UM launched an annual program evaluation process named the Academic Affairs Playbook. The playbook uses both numerical data as well as staff interviews about a program to make decisions on how that program should be handled in the future.

In the quantitative analysis released last spring, UM ranked all 71 undergraduate programs on the measure of enrollment and graduation rates. The English major as a whole ranked 10 out of 71 undergraduate programs. The elementary education degree ranked in the top five, but the early childhood education degree came in at 50 of 71. Data for just the English teaching concentration was not released.

According to Education Week, the number of education degree graduates from 2008 to 2009 compared to 2018 to 2019 has dropped by almost 30%.

Reimer reiterated both students and faculty were disheartened to learn about Ross not returning.

"He was doing everything right, an excellent teacher and an excellent director," Reimer said. "Our first reaction was heartbreak."

Sarah Hibbard, also a theater and English education double major, said when she received the email, she was deeply upset and immediately messaged a group chat, which included many English education majors, to learn what happened. There, she learned of the news.

"Jeff Ross was a fantastic professor, and I loved him. I know that everyone really loved him," Hibbard said. "That was why it was a really crazy shock that he wasn't coming back."

When the Montana Kaimin reached out to Ross for an interview he replied in an email stating, "I'm sorry to hear that some of our students have been negatively affected by program changes. These are talented, empathetic, accomplished students and I care about them deeply," Ross wrote. "However, from my perspective, now outside UM's excellent English Department, there really isn't a 'my side' of the story to tell."

Undergraduate students needing one of Ross' classes were offered four replacement options that would fill the same requirement.



JULIA BRANEN | MONTANA KAIMIN

The classes offered were "Diversity in Media," "Social Media and Audience," "Creatively Exploring Artificial Intelligence" and "Journalism and American Society." Shepherd said they struggled to see the relevance of the substitute classes to their major and was scared to take two of them because they were upper-division journalism classes — a subject they've never studied.

Shepherd said they were stressed about the late notice and was worried about finding a class that would be a good fit in their schedule.

"Not only do I have to replace it in a way that fits in my classes, but I now need to change my work availability," Shepherd said. "Everything in my life was dependent on this schedule being consistent, and so having such a late notice on a whole class not being available was like, 'Oh, did we not have all summer to figure this out?'"

Shepherd ended up choosing the class on artificial intelligence, but said it was only because the course was online, not interfering with their other classes or work. Hibbard was given the same replacement options as Shepherd but decided to take the social media class because she said it was the closest fit. Hibbard also said she was still disappointed because it's not the same as taking a class specifically aimed at educating future teachers.

Kuntz said administration letting professors' contracts expire is a fairly common practice.

"The largest proportion of staffing tran-

sitions is, somebody is not fired, they don't retire, there's not a resignation, it's just that the contract is not renewed," Kuntz said. "It might be related to a fiscal reason, or it might be related to, 'Hey, we have similar classes in this other department, and we're trying to make our academic load for students easier and more streamlined.'"

Shepherd said when they learned what happened with Ross' contract they were worried that UM would decide to begin cutting undergraduate education programs.

Kuntz said despite the situation with Ross, students do not need to worry about losing their program.

"Students shouldn't worry at all about the program," Kuntz said. "The state of Montana has a critical teacher shortage right now, and so there's not a circumstance in which the University would make any sort of drastic changes to that program that would limit our ability to produce high quality English teachers that can serve your regional high schools, middle schools, etc."

Although the undergraduate program may still be safe, students like Shepherd and Hibbard are upset by the loss of Ross, the master's program and the shoddy replacement courses offered.

"I feel really sad about it," Hibbard said. "I am here to take English teaching classes from an English teacher who's supposed to teach me how to be a teacher, and I really don't think there's a way to substitute for that."

A CASE FOR RIVERS

STORY BY CLAYTON MURPHY | PHOTOS BY MARC ANTHONY MARTINEZ

With historic low fish populations and increasing river temperatures, a look at what fly fishing means for Missoulians

Gage Griffen, head of UM's law school's fly fishing club, holds a fishing line in his mouth as he looks for the right bait to catch fish in the Clark Fork River.

IN THE SUMMER OF 2020, A MAN on a gurney was rushed through a hospital in Phoenix, Arizona. By the end of that night, the 23-year-old was pronounced dead from a fentanyl overdose.

He was a childhood friend of University of Montana student, Gage Griffen. Griffen was shook, and felt prompted to reevaluate his life. "I was on

my way to work — I think it was a phone call or a text," Griffen said. "I remember my boss saying, 'You're too young to have friends dying.'" Griffen, now 26, had just graduated from the University of Arizona.

"We did a lot of the same shit," Griffen said about his friend as he walked down a gravel trail toward the Clark Fork River just outside Missoula. "It was a confrontation of, 'Maybe I could die from doing

something dumb.' It made me think that this is real."

His friend's death, paired with a drug-related seizure his roommate at UA suffered two years earlier, motivated Griffen to rethink his life decisions and values. Shadowed by questions and guilt, he moved to Montana and found answers in its rivers.

"I think part of it was timing, too," he said. "Getting to a point where you're try-

ing to change your trajectory, getting back to the things you could be happier about — that was all a pretty direct consequence."

He remembered the happiness he found in fishing as a child.

"It was one of the things I was committed to getting more active in when I came up here," Griffen said. "The club and the friendships that I've made up here have all kind of come as a result of that. I've been

really lucky to have that opportunity and [to] have that access up here.”

At 10, his dad took him fly fishing for the first time in a shaky floatplane over Alaska. Griffen remembered landing on an island and feeling the sudden pressure on his line every time his fly disappeared under the water.

Griffen is among the many who have found something special in Montana’s rivers. They have provided generations with premier fishing and a sizable portion of seasonal work for Montanans. But with increasing extremes in weather and lower snowpacks, fish populations need extra support — which means less access for recreators and the need for more intentional, careful fishing. People like Griffen are worried about the future of such a personally significant hobby.

STRONG CURRENTS

Griffen held on to his desire to change and was accepted to the University of Montana School of Law in 2022. He thought of Missoula as a place that could foster exactly what he needed in his life.

“In terms of what I’m doing day-to-day up here compared to what I was doing day-to-day [at] 18 to 21, it’s like night and day. Things are good,” he said. “There’s a really strong correlation in my law school academic record from time spent outside and how I do in classes.”

While at UA, Griffen said he mostly thought about partying and socializing.

“From 18 to 21, I think I was convinced I was the most depressed person alive,” he said. “I was not a very enthusiastic student. I was a little bit of a rebellious teenager.”

On the Clark Fork River, Griffen waded out with a smile and a shrug. The cliffs and mountains of Western Montana were lit by a deep orange, late-summer sun. But the day only saw one fish — a tiny trout no bigger than his open hand.

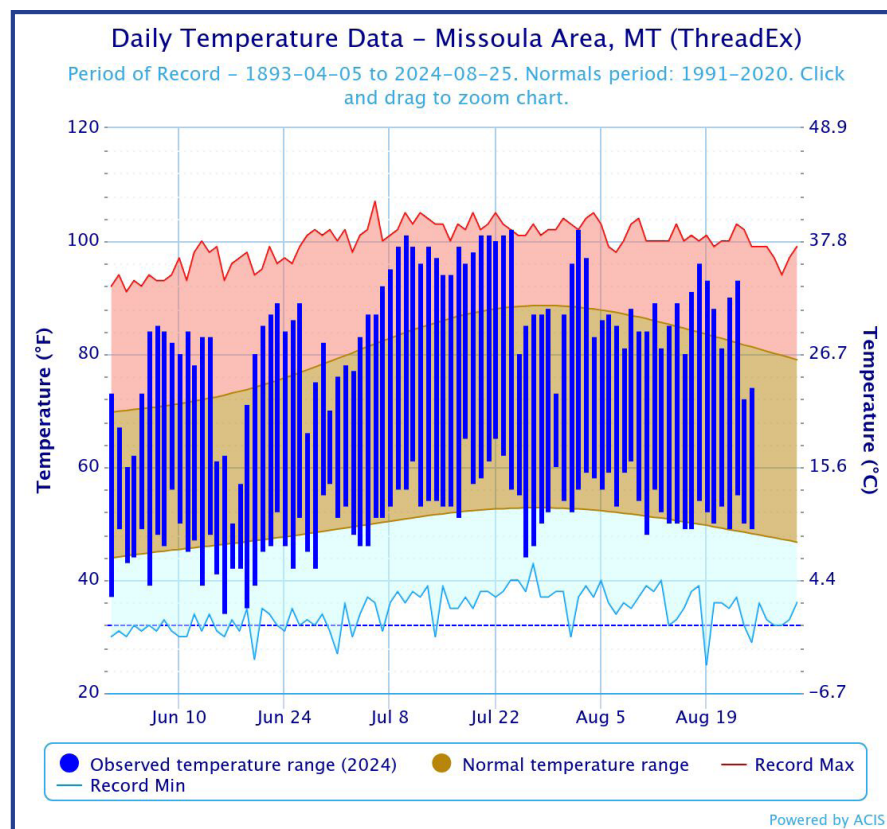
When he’s not on the river, Griffen is a third-year law student at the UM, with a degree in political science from UA. He’s also the president of the law school’s fly fishing club.

Last year, Griffen spent almost every free day he had outside.

“It got pretty ridiculous. We were just out and about constantly,” he said. “And as a consequence of that, my grades improved dramatically.”

That’s when Griffen met Henry Charpentier, president of the fly fishing club at the time. Charpentier connected the group with Trout Unlimited, a fishing conservation organization. The club became a part of their Five Rivers program, which aims to teach university students the ethos of river conservation and responsible fishing.

Charpentier graduated in 2022. Griffen



Weather data from July through August recored at the Missoula international Aiport compared to the normal temperature rang (yellow) and the record maximum (red).

CONTRIBUTED | NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

said the club started to flounder last year without a leader, so he then took over as president. This year, he hopes to keep those connections, continue the education of responsible fishing and is considering opening the club to the greater student population, not just law students.

RECORD HIGHS, RECORD LOWS

Griffen has noticed a definite decline in fishing productivity over his past two years living in Missoula as Western Montana rivers have been struggling. Increasing summer temperatures, decreasing snow-pack and other climate and human-related river damages have put severe stress on fisheries and fish populations.

A study by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks in the spring of 2023, showed the lowest fish population on record to date. The brown trout, one of the hardest trout species in Montana, suffered massive losses from causes that are yet to be confidently determined.

In 2023, the department updated its list of fishing regulations for rivers across the state, including limiting certain fish to catch-and-release only and increasing restrictions for the size of fish anglers can keep.

This summer, the state implemented

“hoot-owl” restrictions, which prohibits fishing certain rivers between 2 p.m. and 12 a.m. The regulations limit fishing to cooler hours of the day to reduce stress-related diseases and death in fish populations. Hoot-owl is implemented when water temperatures reach 73 degrees Fahrenheit for a minimum of three consecutive days.

These restrictions are still in place on the Clark Fork, Bitterroot and Madison rivers, along with three other rivers in Montana.

“We couldn’t do any fishing up in the Greenough-Ovando area, just because they had so little snow,” Griffen said. “It brings more attention to the fact that you need to have good practices and be conscientious and kind and caring to the outdoors and to the wildlife around you.”

Hoot-owl regulations are common in the summer. This year, however, the Flathead River Basin saw these restrictions put in place for the first time in history.

National Weather Service data showed a 20-day stretch this past July of higher than average temperatures, with up to a 15-degree difference and a record high of 102 degrees Fahrenheit on July 24.

A recent drought report also showed most of Western Montana suffering from “extreme” to “exceptional” drought.

According to Montana Trout Unlimited, trout face a higher mortality rate when

water temperatures reach the high 60s, and can die, even without being caught, when temperatures reach 70 degrees.

When water warms, its oxygen molecules move faster and escape easier. Colder air and water temperatures slow the movement of oxygen molecules, sustaining their availability in water.

THE PRICE OF BUSINESS

John Potter works at the Kingfisher Fly Shop in Missoula. He said increasingly strict regulations are putting a strain on business, but for good reason.

“It’s a catch-22,” Potter said. “Business does slow down, but the populations we rely on are being conserved and protected.”

Potter said his main worry is the threat of invasive fish to trout populations. Pike, perch and bass have been popping up in rivers previously untouched by the species.

“When you have really hot summers, those populations explode,” Potter said, and that pike and bass are more tolerant to higher water temperatures. “If we get a bass population reliably reproducing, that could be detrimental to business.”

These species occupy similar niches to those of certain trout, out-competing for resources and putting stress on native populations.

“The effects of the climate are especially acute with aquatic ecosystems,” Chad Bishop, director of wildlife biology at UM said. “We’re starting to see some pretty good reason to be concerned about what’s happening with our rivers themselves and the fisheries’ populations they’re supporting.”

As a response to this concern, the UM wildlife biology program recently announced a \$5 million endowment for a fisheries chair. This chair will allow for an expanded capacity for fisheries-related research, which is an increasingly valuable asset, according to Bishop.

Endowed chairs are a special position, Bishop said. They tend to attract high-profile applicants. These valued experts bring expertise and valuable connections to organizations that help bolster research.

“If you look to the future, we have a real urgent need to be doing more,” Bishop said. “This is a big deal.”

While Griffen said he understands and appreciates the reasoning for fishing regulations and conservation efforts, there is no doubt about the reliance he has built on hobbies like fishing.

“Now it has become a huge part of my identity. If for whatever reason access was immediately, and dramatically reduced, it would be devastating,” he said. “I would be looking for solutions. It’s one of the most special places in the world.”

The price of a storm: How UM will determine the cost of the July 24 derecho

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When a historic storm hit Montana on July 24, Paula Short was at a rodeo event in Darby with her kids. Through the wind and rain, Short and her family packed up their horses and hit the road, only to find the storm building right behind them.

“As we were driving, we started seeing these lightning strikes,” Short said. “Trees were torching up on the hills.”

Short, a UM alumna and the associate vice president for Campus Preparedness and Emergency Response, dropped her family off in Stevensville and drove to campus to manage the mounting emergency. Short arrived at 9 p.m. to downed trees and blocked roads. Short and her team didn’t leave until 2:30 a.m.

It wasn’t until the next morning that the damage on campus was fully visible. The storm broke equipment, battered the campus arboretum and spoiled research samples. Short, and other UM faculty, were left to figure out how to calculate the cost of lost resources and what steps they could take to prevent future storm-related losses.

Most of the damage came from straight-line winds, powerful gusts that blow down and outward in one direction across the ground. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, these winds, or downbursts, occur when rising air can no longer support water droplets in the clouds above and fall down to Earth. National Weather Service meteorologists classified the storm as a derecho, a rare weather event not typically seen on the western side of the United States.

Operations Preparedness and Response brings together a number of leaders across campus, including facility services, UM police, campus parking and environmental health and safety. Depending on the emergency or event, Short then brings in other directors and leaders for their advice.

“We start with life and public safety, and then we kind of move in concentric circles out,” Short said.

In the case of the storm, and the ensuing power outage, that meant calling up fellow

members of facility services, along with Risk Management Director Jason Sloat, as OPR needed to know which buildings on campus had access to backup power. There was also the matter of UM’s ability to feed students and campers.

UM Dining Director Richard Huffman said dining staff moved perishable food from the Food Zoo and concessions to The Lodge Dining Center, which had access to backup power. Huffman was not able to provide an estimate for total food loss costs at the time of publication, but said in an email to the Montana Kaimin that “it is a lot less than it would have been had this happened a year ago.”

According to Short, UM experienced a rolling brownout – temporarily reduced power – before losing power completely. As the power flickered on and off, the resulting power surges damaged research equipment.

Zach Scott, UM’s associate vice president of research compliance and technology transfer, said losses included a mass spectrometer, a tool used in labs to determine the mass of molecules in research samples. Scott estimated the value of the damaged spectrometer around \$75,000 to \$100,000. Other damaged equipment included a research freezer that would not turn on after the power came back on.

Repairs, Scott estimated, would cost a few thousand dollars in contrast to the \$20,000 price tag of an entirely new freezer.

These freezers, which comprised the majority of research equipment lost on campus, keep materials frozen at negative 80 degrees Fahrenheit. They’re found in many campus science buildings, as well as the Curry Health Center, where they keep prescriptions and vaccines cold. However, not every freezer was connected to backup power, and as the power went out, research materials began to thaw.

According to Scott, many lost materials were reagents, like enzymes and proteins. These reagents are purchased online,



Brent Lane cleans debris from the remains of a fallen tree next to Jeannette Rankin Hall on Aug. 26. MARC ANTHONY MARITINEZ | MONTANA KAIMIN

making it easier to calculate the loss of supplies. However, complex samples, like biological material, are more challenging to determine a value for. Because they are often collected at a specific time or place, or from a specific species, replicating those circumstances can be difficult and sometimes impossible.

These samples, including genetic mate-

rial, are no longer viable once they thaw. According to Scott, two researchers lost potentially irreplaceable samples.

“Unlike buying something from Fisher Scientific, or some of the other suppliers, it has more of an emotional element,” Scott said. “That’s their blood, sweat and tears that went into collecting these samples over, in some cases, the course of years.”

Scott said project budgets and grants are used to estimate insurance claims. By looking back at the funding used to send scientists out into the field, they can put together a suggested estimate. Scott was unable to provide the Kaimin with the value of research in time for publication.

“It really comes down to almost trying to determine how much time was spent on a given endeavor,” Scott said.

On top of the research equipment lost, many of UM’s trees took a hit from the wind. Short said 93 trees were damaged in the storm with 25 lost and 47 needing trimming and repairs. As the state arboretum, UM serves as a tree botanical garden for the U.S. Forest Service and forestry students to study. Because of this designation, Sloat said the University should receive coverage for lost and damaged trees. The cost of each tree is determined by factors including the height and age of the tree, but Short said that’s not all

that matters.

“What that doesn’t account for is the aesthetic on campus, the shade it provides and the educational value for our dendrology professor to have a particular specimen to show students,” Short said.

Sloat, tasked with assembling UM’s insurance claim, was unable to give a total estimate of the cost of damage at the time of publication. In a letter to President Joe Biden published Aug. 14, Gov. Greg Gianforte totaled the damage in Missoula County to over \$3.7 million, but wrote the number was expected to rise once estimates came in from the University. Sloat said a total evaluation will likely take several more weeks as claims continue to come in.

Gov. Gianforte announced via X, formerly known as Twitter, that President Biden signed a disaster declaration. This gives the University, and other state entities, access to government funds to cover the cost of damages.

In the future, both Scott and Short have hopes for preventable measures. According to Short, UM plans to construct a combined heat and power facility could provide redundancy in case of future outages, meaning another blackout would likely not last as long, if at all. The Kaimin reached out to Director of Facilities Paul Trumbley about the heat and power plant but did not hear back in time for publication.

For Scott, preventing future loss of research materials comes down to making infrastructure changes, like renovating the Clapp Building, which had no backup power. Other methods, like keeping an empty freezer to store samples in an emergency, are complicated. “It’s easy to say we should always do that,” Scott said. “I can tell you it’s never done, because it’s expensive and a waste of electricity. It’s clearly harmful to the environment to do that.”

In the aftermath of the storm, UM faced two challenges: picking up the pieces and then putting a price on them. For the majority of the claims, like the freezer, totalling values came easy. But for others, the value goes beyond a price tag, costing time, patience and knowledge instead.

Scott remained optimistic despite the damage. “Considering this was such a dramatic storm. I think we fared pretty well,” he said. “It was inevitable we were going to have losses.”

It’s a sentiment shared by Short. “I feel like our response was as smooth as it could be,” she said. “It’s definitely a culture of continuous improvement and continuous learning.”



Logs stacked on top of each other during clean up of fallen debris on Aug. 26. **MARC ANTHONY MARITINEZ | MONTANA KAIMIN**



Trees are fallen across Campus Drive after the storm on July 24. **CONTRIBUTED | PAULA SHORT**

Pearl Jam rocks, talks politics

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At Pearl Jam's concert on Aug. 22 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium, one theme seemed threaded in between the musicality, lyrics and beats: political action.

"Look," lead singer Eddie Vedder proclaimed early in the performance at the University of Montana, "we'd be happy to be anywhere with you all, but we are especially energized to be here for Senator Jon Tester, in this majestic stadium, on a perfect night, under the big sky."

The massive sold-out crowd erupted into cheers. But this would be far from the only mention of the current Montana senator or of the band's love for the state.

Social and political activism has long been an element of Pearl Jam's brand. The poster for their last show in Missoula, back in 2018, featured a cartoon of then-President Donald Trump's corpse and a burning White House. In 2020, they launched a campaign to inspire people to vote that included asking audiences and fans to "vote by mail," "recruit three friends" and "don't wait," according to a Rolling Stone article.

"It's about reminding people that their voice matters and their voice can make a big difference," Pearl Jam bassist Jeff Ament said to the magazine at the time.

As concertgoers took their seats for the main act, three massive screens across the stage projected a message several stories tall reading, "pledge to vote." These screens made another appearance during the performance as Vedder implored the audience to take action. The phone number distributed by an on-screen QR code was connected to Tester's re-election campaign. Tester even appeared on one of the evening's posters, getting his iconic flat top haircut done at a barber shop.

The bond between Pearl Jam and Tester comes naturally. Onstage, bassist Ament recounted his 50-year friendship with him and his influence on Ament's youth in Big Sandy, where Ament was raised, calling Tester "the fucking real deal." It's perhaps no surprise that the band dedicated their grand finale — a cover of Neil Young's "Rockin' in the Free World" — to Tester.

Other songs were dedicated, too. "Elderly Woman Behind the Counter in a Small Town" was dedicated to Big Sandy, among

other small Montana towns, while their new song "Won't Tell" was dedicated to George and Penny Ament, Jeff Ament's parents.

The setlist was an even mix of classic hits, deep cuts and new material from the album "Dark Matter," released earlier this year. Part of Pearl Jam's evergreen appeal is their consistent style. "Dark Matter" feels classic — like "Ten" ("Even Flow," "Alive," "Jeremy"). Lyrically, the songs are a mix of political tension made palpable and stories told with the band's trademark lyricism.

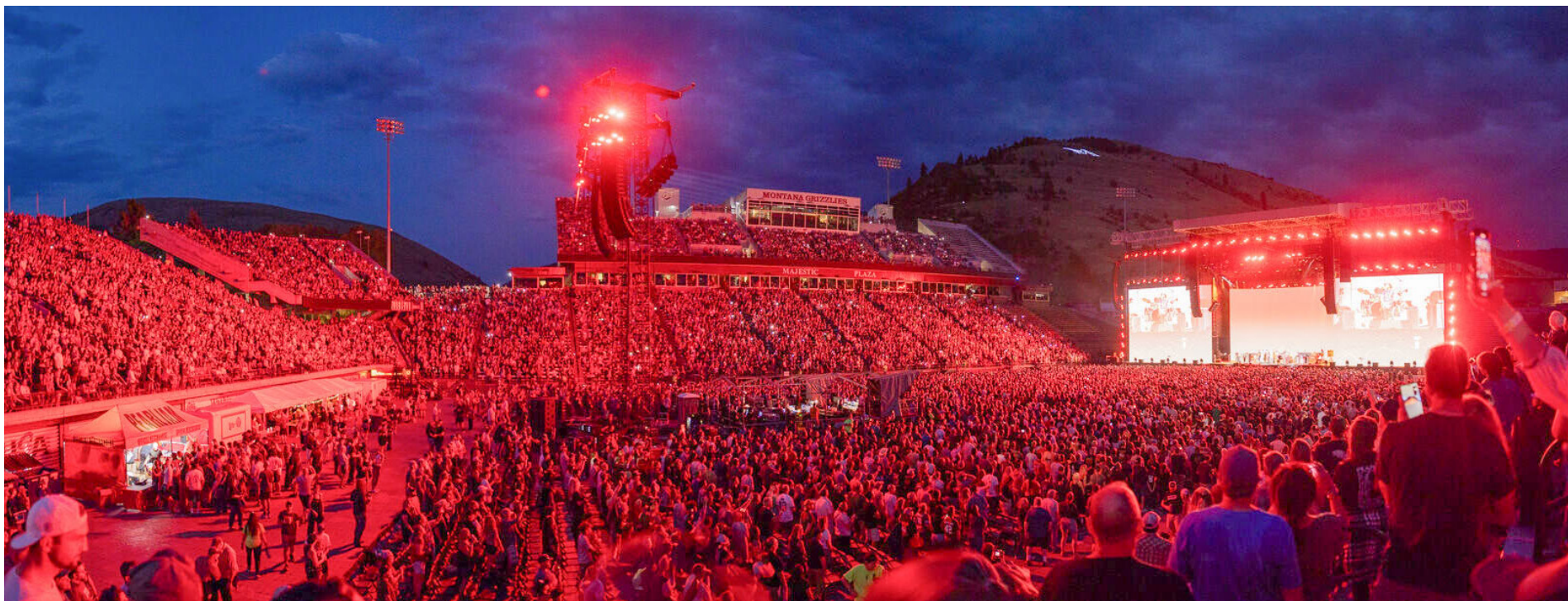
The band's affection for Missoula and Montana was demonstrated from the first song, where stadium screens displayed a video of the Clark Fork running along U.S. Highway 93 before turning into a sweeping aerial shot of the city from Mount Sentinel. Little lyric changes and references were sprinkled throughout. At one point, after asking concertgoers what parts of the state they were from, Vedder, who is from Illinois, playfully called out the "interlopers ravaging this town and hopefully giving it proper respect."

There were more surprises than just

Montana-specific nods, though. During the encore, musician Lukas Nelson joined Vedder to play "Just Breathe" — a sincere ballad about facing mortality, which Nelson's father, Willie, famously covered. Glen Hansard, one of the openers, accompanied the band for a particularly high-energy, hard-rocking rendition of "Smile."

Pearl Jam returning to Missoula felt like a cyclical natural process, like the migration of a rare bird. The last time they played at the Washington-Grizzly Stadium was six years ago; before that, it was 20 years earlier in 1998. Considering that is realizing the compounding effect of time; the crowd was a mix of people young and old, showing generations brought together by the kinship found by loving music.

There was something transcendental about watching the massive crowd at the concert — tens of thousands of people, swaying together, arms raised, belting out the chorus of "Alive" in harmony. It had a degree of symbolism that was almost cheesy. At the same time, though, the sincerity was breathtaking.



A stitched panorama shows a full crowd for Pearl Jam at the Washington-Grizzly Stadium on Thursday, Aug. 22. MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN

Suki Waterhouse's 'Memoir of a Sparklemuffin' takes listeners on a journey through love, loss and luminous melodies

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The words “memoir” and “sparklemuffin” are not words I thought I’d see bunched together in an album title, but Suki Waterhouse has done just that and I’m loving it. “Memoir of a Sparklemuffin” is Waterhouse’s second studio album and is set to be released Sept. 13, 2024. The album title is as chaotic and enticing as the singles that have been released early, which drives home the fact that Suki Waterhouse is a true and honest powerhouse.

“Supersad” is number two on the track list, but number one in my heart. The track is much more carefree than the title teases. It begins with Waterhouse in existential crisis mode, spiraling and overthinking. But as the song progresses, the drums and electric guitar gradually come to the forefront and through the chorus, listeners feel her let go.

“End of the world till I’m doing fine /

There’s no point in being supersad,” Waterhouse sings as the drums enhance the buoyant tempo of the chorus. This song is a headbanger that makes me want to flail my arms around and forget about the world around me.

In the third track, “Blackout Drunk,” Waterhouse simultaneously describes the enraging circumstances of a night out with a man, employing handclaps and bouncy harmonies to the upbeat, funky tempo. Sometimes people need to be put in their place, and Waterhouse isn’t afraid to call someone out for doing something idiotic. Rule number one: Never get on her bad side.

“Faded” has nostalgia (OG fans arise) written all over it. In this track, she reminisces about an old lover she has grown apart from over the years. It’s one of the slower singles and Waterhouse sings it in a whisper-like voice that could put me to sleep in an instant. The person she once knew has faded away. It’s a beautifully

sentimental ballad.

Whenever I listen to “My Fun,” the sixth track, I imagine myself driving on a back-country road on a hot summer day with all the windows down, screaming the lyrics. This crave-worthy summer song is easily one of my favorites of the six singles. She paints a detailed image of love in the summer coupled with percussion, which gives the song an innocent simplicity. “Building fires, jumping planes / Nothing to do and nothing to say,” Waterhouse sings in a relaxed tone. This song makes me want to be a kid in the summer again, frolicking around cheerfully with no adult responsibilities.

“Sleazy” has now become one of my favorite words thanks to Waterhouse’s brilliant writing in track 12, “OMG.” The song is dirty and grimy in all the right places. The first few notes immediately drew me into the secretive storytelling of a love that is forbidden and wrong but feels so good. She repeats the line, “My baby’s no good

for me,” while also asking for that person to take her back. She knows they’re bad for her, but she craves them.

“To Love” is the last track on the album and boy is it a good one. It’s about an invisible string that keeps tying Waterhouse back to a certain person. They may have met or exchanged a glance, but something in the universe has brought them back together to be able to experience one another’s love. Waterhouse sings about how this person has changed everything for her and reminded her that she, too, can love again and feel loved by someone. “I thought I’d never get to feel another fucking feeling / But I feel,” Waterhouse sings.

The world that Waterhouse and her team have created with these singles is something to be cherished. She is a rare and delicate gem in the ever-evolving music industry. As a Suki fan, I couldn’t be more ecstatic for the full album release.

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New indoor facility set for completion in late September

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After reinstalling the turf and several other delays, the University of Montana's new \$10.2 million indoor practice facility is temporarily open to practice without its roof. The indoor bubble and lighting features begin installation in the start of September and are expected to take roughly a month.

The 111,000 square foot, privately-funded indoor facility features a turf football field, six sprinting lanes and an area for the field components of track and field. Once complete, the facility will also include a large inflatable bubble that will encase the complex. Ground was broken for the facility in April of 2023 with an initial estimated completion date for Fall 2023. However, construction was hampered by permit delays, winter conditions and, most recently, the need to reinstall field turf.

"We had a slight delay to get started because of permitting issues from the city of Missoula, which, you know, it's completely understandable. It's a different kind of building," Kent Haslam, UM director of athletics, said. "There were some questions on occupancy, so [the] city of Missoula wanted us to make it a larger occupancy than we had originally planned."

With increased occupancy came the need for more pressure inside the dome so the facility could be safely evacuated in the event of a power outage, deflating the bubble. This necessitated adding another blower among other improvements, which further set back construction until winter.

"Once we got past that point, we figured we're already delayed anyway, there's no reason for us to work and scramble during the winter," Haslam said. "Let's wait till the spring, when it dries out, and then we'll finish it up then."

In the spring, construction resumed, and the turf field and the sprint lanes appeared to be complete in mid-July. However, while the track settled correctly on its own base, the turf field was functional, but in less-than-ideal condition, which could exacerbate injuries.

"We got the turf down and noticed that there started to be a little bit of rippling, so we decided that we had the time and wanted to get it done right," Haslam said. "We took the turf off, pulled the base out and put down a base that's got a lot more gravel to make it more solid."

The new turf and base took a month to install. By Aug. 15, the practice field was ready to be used for football, with the three to four week construction of the indoor bubble being delayed until Sept. 3. The temporary opening



CONTRIBUTED | UM ATHLETICS

of the facility coincides with Washington-Grizzly Stadium becoming unavailable while it was used as a concert venue for Pearl Jam, Tyler Childers and P!nk.

"We needed to get that [facility's] turf open so that we could go out there and practice on it," Haslam said. "We'll use it for two weeks, then we'll come off of it, they'll finish it and we'll go into it full-time."

By the time that two-week period is up, Washington-Grizzly Stadium will be open for play, including for the Griz Football team's season and home opener against Missouri State on Aug. 31. The start of football season highlights the need for the indoor facility.

Montana's preseason ranking of third in the FCS, and the favorite to win the Big Sky Conference, lends itself to a potential deep postseason run, which would see the team practicing well into December.

The facility will also be used outside of football with times reserved for other Griz NCAA teams, such as track and field and the marching band. The facility is also expected to cover much of its operation and sustainability cost through renting its space out to various local

teams and tenants when not in use by UM.

"We've already got a tremendous amount of interest, especially from youth soccer clubs and other clubs that want that indoor facility," Haslam said. "It's the only indoor space we've got in all of Western Montana that is that size, and so it will definitely be busy, and it will definitely be a revenue generator that will go back into supporting and sustaining that facility."

The dome is expected to be in use from 6 a.m. to midnight, on average, with the space rented out to the public most of the day on weekends and during the evenings. The cost to rent out a third of the field for an hour is expected to be around \$150 with prices fluctuating depending on time and popularity.

The facility is projected to be finished within its initial \$10.2 million privately-funded budget, which included some wiggle room in the event of the delays or hiccups.

The facility's expected popularity and renting cost has a few drawbacks. UM still lacks a designated practice area for club sports, and the cost to rent the facility is too high for many clubs. Its delayed construction has also led club teams to have to share their limited

practice space with NCAA teams. This is the case on Dornblaser Field, which is presently split between football and club soccer.

"Finding practice space for this upcoming fall semester has been challenging to say the least," Griz club soccer President Ava Debourg said. "As of right now, we have been given space out on Dornblaser. I am grateful to [Associate Facilities Director] Brian Fruit for working so tirelessly to find us a solution, but it still presents a few roadblocks that could hinder team success."

The soccer goals on Dornblaser, for example, won't have nets installed until September and the team is unable to use a large amount of Dornblaser's space as it is entirely reserved for football and the preservation of the grass it uses.

The completion of the dome in late September will alleviate some of these issues, although practice space for club sports will likely continue to be limited.

UM athletics plans to have an open house once the facility is fully complete in either the third or fourth week of September.

A peek into Griz sports this season

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As life returns to the University of Montana after a long, hot summer and classes begin, fall sports are in full swing. Here is a look at what each team accomplished last season and what to expect this year:

FOOTBALL

Since making it to the FCS National Championship last season, a lot has changed for the Grizzlies. Last year's quarterback Clifton McDowell transferred to McNeese State University in Louisiana, leaving the position up for grabs. The team also hired two defensive coordinators to work side-by-side for the first time in Montana history. Despite these changes, the Griz are picked in preseason polls to be repeat as Big Sky Champions. The team is currently ranked third in the nation, trailing only behind South Dakota State, who beat UM in the championship last year, and North Dakota State.

The Griz are coming off of a 13-2 season and a Big Sky Conference title, so expectations are high. After losing its quarterback to the transfer portal, Montana has to figure out who will run its offense. Freshman quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat took the most snaps after McDowell last year, and the Griz brought in redshirt junior quarterback Logan Fife, a transfer student from California State University, Fresno. Redshirt sophomore quarterback Kaden Huot played in the annual Griz spring scrimmage and is another contender for the position. The Griz are also returning a strong running back core, including Eli Gillman, Xavier Harris and Nick Ostmo.

"We're gonna try to be good running the ball and we'll try to be good throwing the ball," head coach Bobby Hauck said. "When you're balanced on offense, you've got the ability to move the ball and score points, and those are the teams that are hardest to stop for the defensive side."

The former Griz defensive coordinator, Ronnie Bradford, took a job with the Miami Dolphins after last season. To make up for the empty position, Montana hired two defensive coordinators to both call plays and work together on the sidelines. Roger

Cooper coached linebackers for the Griz, while Bobby Hauck's younger brother Tim Hauck coached safeties, so both are familiar with Montana's defense already. Last season, the Griz only gave up 17 points per game, which was crucial to its success in close contests.

Montana kicks off its season against Missouri State at 7 p.m. on Aug. 31 in Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

VOLLEYBALL

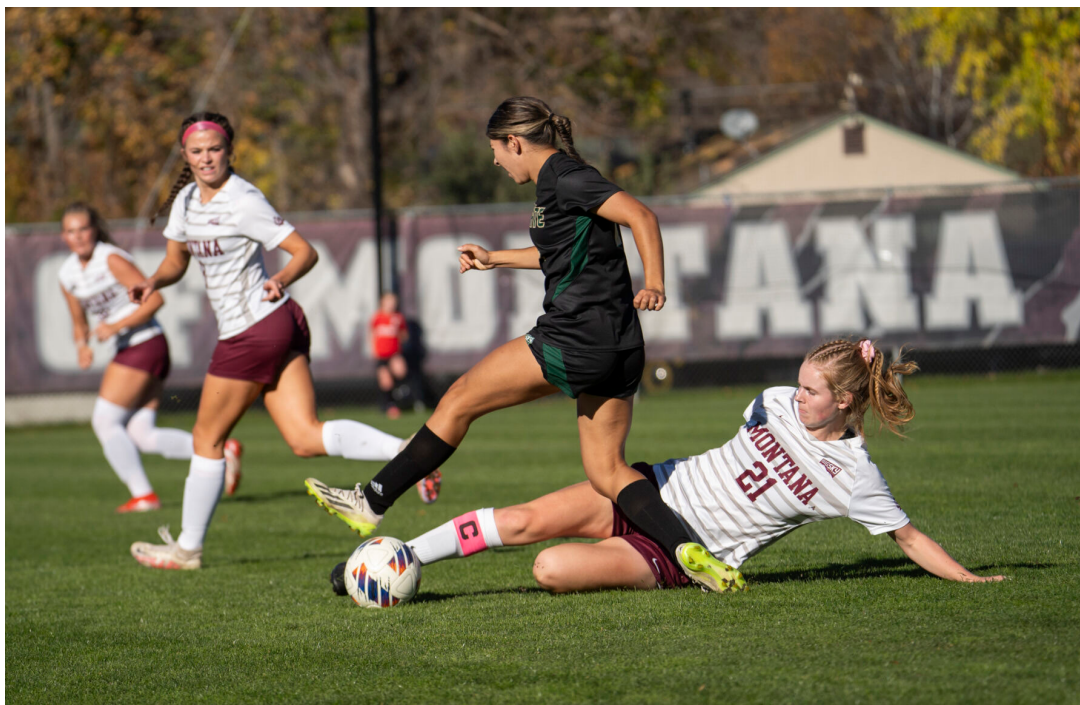
Montana went 11-18 last season and finished sixth in the Big Sky Conference. The team lost to Montana State in the Big Sky tournament. This year, however, Griz volleyball returned senior outside hitters Paige Clark, Jackie Howell and Maddie Kremer, who have been important parts of the program.

Clark is a three-time Big Sky Conference award winner, including First Team All-Big Sky. Kremer solidified herself as a starter last season and ranked second on the team in kills per set. Howell suffered an injury last season and took a medical redshirt year and is returning to Montana for her fifth year of eligibility. Prior to the injury, Howell played in every set since she transferred to Montana in 2021 from Tyler Junior College in Texas. The Griz lost long-term senior setter Carly Anderson last season, which will be an adjustment, but it also gained setter Casi Newman, a senior transfer from University of California, Davis.

Montana starts its season playing Grand Canyon University at the Grand Canyon Invitational on Aug. 30.

CROSS COUNTRY

The Grizzly men's team finished 17th and the women 20th at the NCAA Mountain Regional last season. Junior Maxwell Scott finished 61st in the men's race, which was the highest finish of the day for the Grizzlies. Redshirt Senior Jade



Junior forward Delaney Lou Schorr slides for the ball, tripping up Sacramento State forward Lexi Schroeder on Oct. 19, 2023.

CHRIS LODMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN

Hallgrimson led the women's team and finished 95th. Both teams will compete in Bozeman on Aug. 30 for the MSU Bobcat Twilight competition.

SOCCER

Montana was 13-3-3 overall last season and 7-0-1 in the Big Sky, earning it the regular season conference title. This year, the Griz were picked in preseason polls as repeat champions. So far this season, the team is 3-1. Senior Skyleigh Thompson led the team in goals last season with six and had four assists. On defense, the team returned redshirt sophomore goalie and 2023 Big Sky Freshman of the Year Ashlyn Dvorak. She has earned Big Sky defensive player of the week already this season.

The Grizzlies' next game is Aug. 29 against Fresno State.

TENNIS

The women's tennis team won the Big Sky Conference last year, beating the Bobcats in Bozeman. Doubles partners Grace Haugen and Rosie Sterk, who are

both seniors, led the team. The team lost to Portland State University in the Big Sky semifinals by a score of 4-1, with one win from Haugen in a singles match.

The Montana men's tennis team finished sixth in the Big Sky last year with a conference record of 4-4. This year's men's team is led by sophomore Tom Bittner, who earned unanimous First-Team All-Big Sky honors last season. Both teams mostly compete in the spring, but have some competitions in the fall, like the Idaho State Invitational on Sept. 5 through 8 for the women.

GOLF

Last season, the Griz women's golf team finished seventh in the Big Sky conference tournament. MSU placed fourth. Sophomore Elle Higgins helped the team toward the end of the season and tied for 16th at the Big Sky Championship, which was the highest finish on the team. The season opens on Sept. 16 at the Kelsey Chugg Invitational.

Fresh beets & beats

Photos and words by **MARLEY BARBOEISEL**
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For years, the Clark Fork River Market has flourished in the downtown area and benefited the greater Missoula community. The weekly event brings together local farmers with Missoulians in search of fresh goods, from vegetables and meats to wildflowers and kombucha. The market takes place every Saturday from the first weekend of May through the end of October.

One vendor, Longlue Moua, said his family has been selling at the market since it started nearly 20 years ago. After Moua's parents immigrated to the United States and began farming. The family's farm is located in Frenchtown, just off Mullan Road. At the market, they sell all sorts of produce, including beets, onions and various leafy greens.

Garrett Dahlke, a sophomore and sprinter for the University of Montana Men's Track and Field team, rode his bike to the market last weekend, seeking fresh ingredients for his home cooking. He said he enjoys shopping while interacting with Missoula's community. "I love the farmers' market," he said. "It's not only a place where I can get quality produce, but it is a community that cares about local food and farm fresh ingredients as I do."

But it isn't just the food Missoulians come for. Entertainment was provided by the Good Old Fashioned band for park patrons to enjoy as they bustled through their shopping. The Missoula-based band plays a mixture of bluegrass, folk, country and blues. The music could be heard from blocks away and added vibrance to the buzzing market.

The market plans on hosting musicians every Saturday for the rest of the summer, including this week, where guitar player Dave Francis is scheduled to perform. With nine weeks left to attend the Clark Fork River Market this summer, the relaxed environment can be a space for students to broaden their social circles, integrate further into the Missoula community and collect local produce and other homemade items. The market is located near Caras Park and runs from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. May through September and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in October. The last market of the season is scheduled for Oct. 26.



Longlue Moua completes a transaction with a customer at Missoula farmers' market on Saturday, Aug. 24. **MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN**



Good Old Fashioned performs for the Clark Fork River Market, as part of a live music series. **JAMES BENTON | MONTANA KAIMIN**



Students and Missoulians wander around the nearly 130 vendors at Missoula's local market on Saturday. **JAMES BENTON | MONTANA KAIMIN**