

MONTANA KAIMIN

“Every artist is an advocate”

**Music students fight for
building renovations**

**Story by
Mariah Thomas**



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Volume 123
Issue No. 21,
February 24, 2021



Cover Photo
Claire Shinner



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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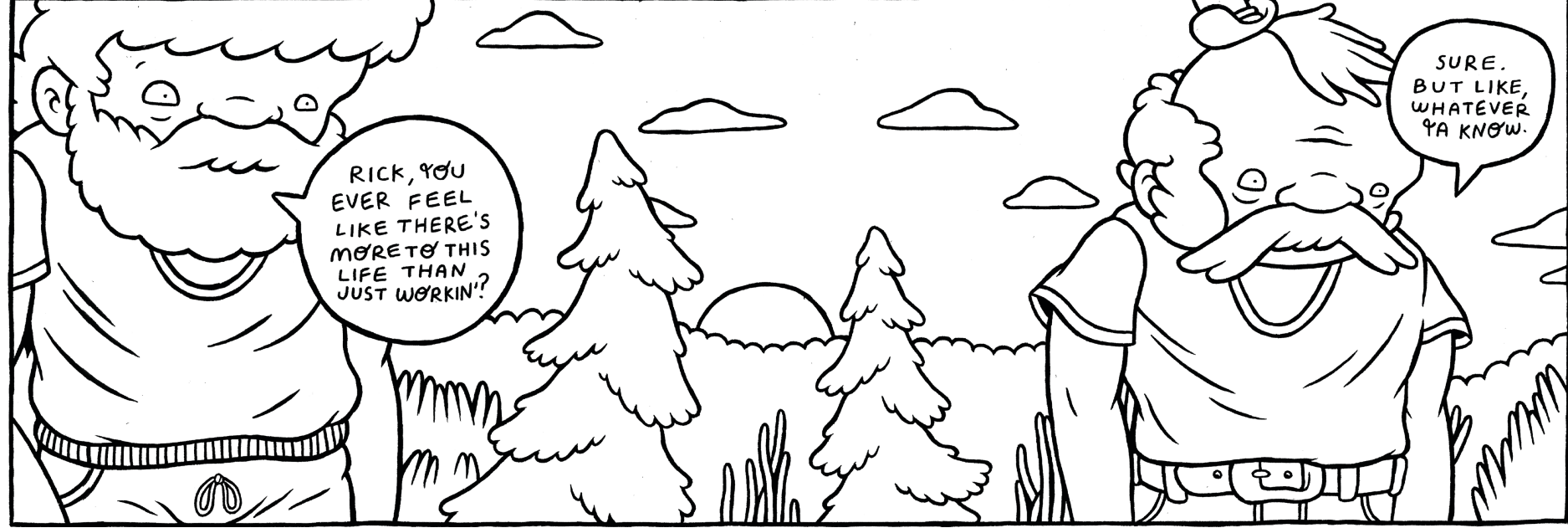
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KAIMIN COMIC



COOPER MALIN| MONTANA KAIMIN

If the arts are really a priority, let’s treat them like one

Our cover story this week takes a look at the efforts of students in the School of Music to raise funding for desperately needed building renovations. After feeling frustrated by a lack of University support on issues that have needed to be addressed for years, music students have taken their pleas to the legislature, lobbying for funding distribution through law.

But this scenario is just a microcosm of a phenomenon we’ve recognized at UM — a trend of the University prioritizing STEM over the arts, which worries us.

As the University continues its decade-long decline in enrollment and dips under 10,000 students for the first time in 30 years, it’s clear something needs to change. At some point, UM stopped catering to its niche: being the only public university in Montana to offer certain arts degrees like dance, journalism and creative writing.

Yes, it’s true, STEM programs at UM are worth celebrating and promoting. Nearly half (42%) of UM undergraduates major

or minor in the College of Humanities and Sciences. The University was ranked among the top 10 “Best Universities Solving the Coronavirus Pandemic,” boasts a fully-accredited biochemistry program and continually earns significant grants in the sciences; from chemistry to geosciences to environmental studies.

And while the University is not outright ignoring the arts — UM lobbied in Helena this year for renovations to Rankin Hall and construction of the UM Museum for Art and Culture — University officials continue to insist arts programs are a priority without necessarily backing that up with action.

We’re just saying, if students have to resort to lobbying at the legislature because the president of their own University won’t respond to emails searching for a commitment to prioritize desperately needed renovations, that indicates to us that maybe those programs aren’t getting enough attention from the administration.

“It’s really clear that, even when it was

a priority this year — even when it’s literally written as a priority — it’s not a priority for this University or the state,” said Noah Durnell, one of our sources in this week’s cover story. And the feeling displays a lack of trust or support in the University from our students.

There is obviously no easy solution to the enrollment crisis. But by leaning into its role in Montana, UM can better serve in-state students looking for a bona fide liberal arts experience.

Develop an arts program pipeline like nursing students have in Montana, where undergraduates receiving their bachelor’s in the arts anywhere in the state gain automatic entrance into UM’s master’s programs — or inversely, to attract undergraduate students, create a similar deal with the many other arts master’s programs across the state. Create a liberal arts scholarship fund for first-year students to encourage attendance for Montana high schoolers (as in-state students are a key missing demographic for

UM). Invest in the dance, creative writing, theater and drama programs with the knowledge that, as the few — if not only — programs of their kind in the state, the return will be worthwhile.

UM could learn from its School of Music, which holds individual recruitment events and competitions around the state to result in a stable enrollment. By investing in these programs, we are telling every student that their program matters, regardless of the discipline.

Maybe then, the University can renew its trust with students.

“I really hope that our president and our administration can prove me wrong,” Durnell said. “That they actually do really care about the arts and that they think this is as dire of an issue as students do.”

Like it? Hate it? Wish we were dead? email us your opinions at editor@montanakaimin.com

Feature photo: Kombucha workshop



Julia Anderson, a UM student and leader of Wednesday’s 1000 New Gardens kombucha workshop, pours black tea mixed with sugar into a mason jar of SCOBY (Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria & Yeast). The concoction ferments for 7-10 days to become kombucha. “It will taste more vinegary the longer you let it ferment,” Anderson said. 1000 New Gardens hosted the workshop outside the Payne Family Native American Center on Wednesday. LIAM MCCOLLUM| MONTANA KAIMIN

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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Edited by Margie E. Burke

HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answers to Last Week’s Sudoku:

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

Briefs: No study abroad, guns on campus and avalanche safety

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UM study abroad canceled through July

Study abroad travel through the University of Montana is restricted through July 31, Associate Director of Global Engagement Marja Unkuri-Chaudhry stated in an email sent to some University faculty and staff. She stated that the decision was made after considering several factors, including national travel advisories, emerging COVID-19 variants and difficulty with vaccine rollout. "University of Montana recognizes the importance of life-changing international experiences and the vaccine provides hope that the university community can soon take advantage of these opportunities again," Unkuri-Chaudhry stated in the email. The UM International Travel Review Committee will regroup in May to make decisions for UM-sponsored travel beyond July. Faculty and staff, and potentially some graduate students, can apply for exceptions. But no exceptions will be made for undergraduate students.

Concealed carry bill signed into law

House Bill 102, which allows permitless concealed carry across most of the state, in-

cluding on college and university campuses, was signed into law Feb. 18 by Gov. Greg Gianforte. Changes in concealed carry laws across most of the state went into effect immediately, except on campuses where they will go into effect on June 1. Once the law is in effect on campuses, the Montana University System will not be able to prohibit concealed carry on campuses, with some exceptions. Exceptions include events where alcohol is being served and at athletic or entertainment events. Guns will only be allowed in dorm rooms if all roommates have given their permission. "Any significant prohibition upon the possession of firearms at or on the various campuses of the Montana university system calls into question the rights that the people have reserved to protect themselves from government interference," the law states. Officials said Mount Jumbo showed signs of an unstable snowpack late last week after a drone survey was conducted on Feb.

Mount Jumbo avalanche potential

17 and 18. Though warming temperatures throughout the weekend likely reduced the hazard, it's still critical to respect closures on the mountain during the winter. Most of the mountain is closed during the snowy season to protect wildlife, though the U.S. West road and L trail remain open. An avalanche on Mount Jumbo triggered by a trespassing snowboarder in 2014 killed one person, injured two others and destroyed a few buildings. President's Lecture Series kick-off Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, clinical psychologist, bestselling author and president emerita of Atlanta's Spelman College, will present the first 2021 President's Lecture, according to a UM News release. Tatum will give "A Virtual Conversation on Race and Racism" over Zoom at noon next Wednesday. She is the author of the books "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" and Other Conversations About Race" and "Can We Talk About Race? and Other Conversations in an Era of School Resegregation." President of Blackfeet Community College Dr. Karla Bird will moderate

the lecture. "Dr. Tatum is a sought-after speaker whose expertise on racial identity development, race and education deserves our attention," Kelly Webster, UM President Seth Bodnar's chief of staff, said to UM News. COVID-19 and vaccines Missoula County was still in the first tier of Phase 1B of vaccine distribution as of Monday. Anyone over 70 years old and people of color can receive the vaccine at this stage. Vaccine clinic information will be posted on the county's website, though appointments often fill up fast. "Due to the national COVID-19 vaccine shortage, appointments are incredibly limited at this time," the website states. Call (406) 258-INFO (4636) and choose option three for more vaccine info. As of Monday, Missoula County: Administered more than 25,000 total doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Completed almost 9,000 second doses, which fully immunized recipients. Had 141 active cases of the virus Montana: Administered more than 161,000 total doses of the vaccine. Completed more than 68,000 second doses. Had more than 2,000 active cases.

Blotter: Doing donuts, evading scams and a disrobing trespasser

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Between Feb. 11 and 17, UMPD reported eight crimes on and around campus. Disorderly conduct was the most common crime, followed closely by theft.

THURSDAY 02/11: ANOTHER ROGUE PURSE...

A purse thief struck Thursday morning in parking Lot Y by the Grizzly pool. A woman was dropping off her kids at daycare and her purse was stolen from her car during the nine minutes she was gone. UMPD officers found her purse in a nearby trash can, but all the items had been taken. There are no suspects yet.

SATURDAY 02/13: ...AND A ROGUE BACKPACK

A green backpack was taken from the University Center common area by the market. A student left it there from Thursday morning to Saturday morning, but found it was gone when he returned to get it. His laptop and other school supplies were in the backpack. Keep track of your personal items, folks!

MONDAY 02/15: NOT TODAY SCAMMER

A student received an email for a job application he thought was from the University of Montana. Unfortunately, it was just another email scam. The student filled out the paperwork and someone called him requesting personal and banking information, but he hung up and blocked the number. Finally, someone recognized a scam before it was too

late. "Pay really close attention to your email to the complete header," Lt. Brad Giffin said. TUESDAY 02/16: BANNED FROM CLAPP While UM has its fair share of trespassers, one is now permanently banned from University property. The offender was found Tuesday evening in the Clapp Building disrobing on the third floor. Custodians called UMPD to have him removed and he was charged with disorderly conduct and trespassing. This was not the first time officers have dealt with this individual, so he was issued a permanent trespass notice. WEDNESDAY 02/17: FORT MISSOULA DONUTS Here is a stereotypical white male from Montana adventure for you: driving a side-

by-side through University property while aimlessly throwing alcohol bottles. UMPD and Missoula police officers were dispatched to Fort Missoula grounds Wednesday afternoon when two men were reportedly driving a UTV and doing donuts in the grass. They were also flipping people off and throwing around empty alcohol containers. The pair was not stopped or identified, and the incident was reported as disorderly conduct and criminal mischief. CRIME BLOTTER OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20						21				22				
			23		24				25					
26	27	28				29	30							
31					32	33					34	35	36	
37				38	39				40	41				
42				43	44				45	46				
		47	48						49	50				
51	52						53							
54						55	56		57		58	59	60	
61					62				63					
64					65					66				
67					68					69				

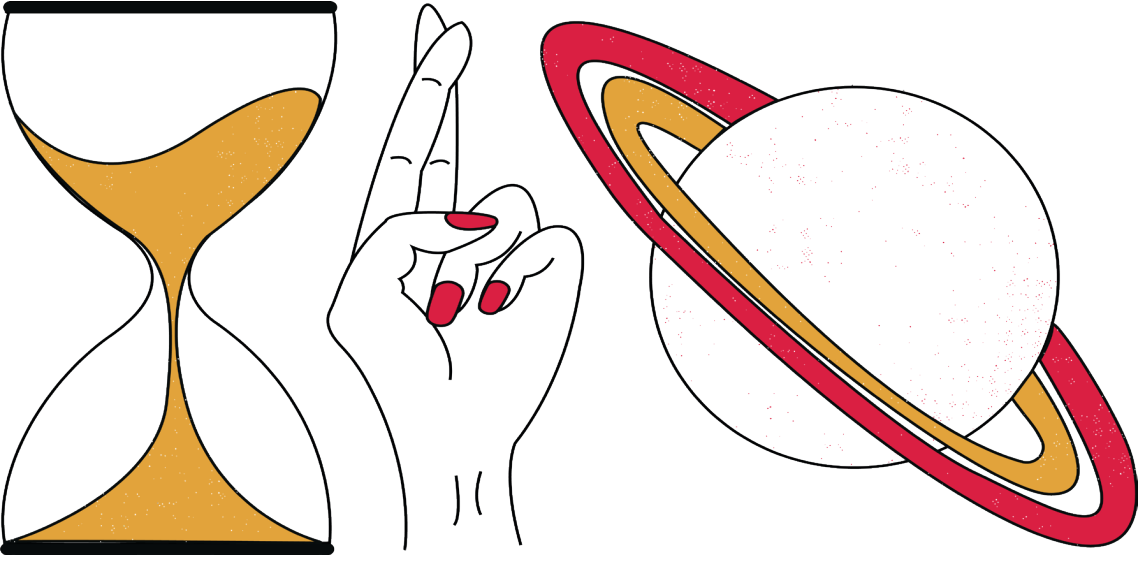
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- ACROSS
- 1 Gift tag word
 - 5 Kickstarts, in a way
 - 10 Quote, as a source
 - 14 "Tomb Raider" heroine Croft
 - 15 Be ready for
 - 16 Black stone
 - 17 On the cutting edge
 - 19 Actor's aim
 - 20 Prove untrue
 - 21 Colorful salad ingredient
 - 23 Lcky buildup
 - 25 Newspaper supplement
 - 26 High-___ (edgy)
 - 29 Slow gallop
 - 31 Animal's den
 - 32 Raspy
 - 34 TV movie network
 - 37 Musical eightsome
 - 39 Band's booking
 - 40 Actress Wilson of "Pitch Perfect"
 - 42 ___ constrictor
 - 43 Tilling tool
 - 46 Aquarium growth
 - 47 Type of voyage
 - 49 Pants measurement
 - 51 Be plentiful
 - 53 "Don't bet ___!"
 - 54 Crooked copies
 - 57 Bantu language
 - 61 Curved molding
 - 62 Imagined
 - 64 Arm bone
 - 65 Like many cliffs
 - 66 Cognizant of
- DOWN
- 1 "Spare tire" stuff
 - 2 Great review
 - 3 Kind of thermometer
 - 4 Salon service
 - 5 Do a checkout chore
 - 6 Oscar or Tony
 - 7 Part of TLC
 - 8 Captain hanged for piracy
 - 9 Underwear of yore
 - 10 Autopsy subject
 - 11 Like some tumors
 - 12 President before Polk
 - 13 Make an effort
 - 18 Coastal bird
 - 22 Computer key
 - 24 "That's terrible!"
 - 26 Oscar Madison, e.g.
 - 67 Most born in August
 - 68 Remorseful
 - 69 Card game start
 - 27 Kind of salad
 - 28 "West Side Story" Oscar winner
 - 29 Type of terrier
 - 30 Jason's ship
 - 33 Grimm beast
 - 35 Prefix with phone
 - 36 Chowder tidbit
 - 38 Yours, in old days
 - 41 "Unforgiven" director
 - 44 Formal speech
 - 45 Take the pot
 - 48 Stable-owner of Greek myth
 - 50 Unless, in law
 - 51 Run ___ of (violate)
 - 52 Scottish goblin
 - 53 Basket willow
 - 55 Wild about
 - 56 "Veer" anagram
 - 58 Writer Rice
 - 59 Letter after epsilon
 - 60 Revered one
 - 63 007, for one

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:

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

An archetypal crystal gazing



ALEX MILLER

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To quote Carl "CJ" Johnson of "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas" fame — "Ah shit, here we go again." Generally we roll with a theme in this cozy corner of the Kaimin. But gosh darnit, it's high time we did a classic, thematically-bereft horoscope. But don't worry, everyone (especially Scorpios) will be made fun of. PISCES (FEB. 19–MARCH 20): Fun fact: Albert Einstein was a Pisces. But so is Justin Bieber. So there are some serious levels of duality going on for you guys. It's either develop the theory of relativity or write "Yummy." There's a scientific joke about distance here, but you guys are pretty much just weird. ARIES (MARCH 21–APRIL 19): You're a blunt instrument, Aries. If a friend were to fuck up, big or small, you would let them know in grand detail. You're honest and never passive-aggressive, which is cool. But sometimes we need little white lies to feel better about our existence, you rude, flaming sheep. TAURUS (APRIL 20–MAY 20): Admit it, you like the pleasure derived from the finer things in life. It's fine. No, really, don't feel guilty about spending \$17 on a silicone spherical ice cube tray because you want your old-fashioned to have some extra pizzazz. GEMINI (MAY 21–JUNE 20): The past? What-ifs? You don't even KNOW what those are, Gemini. It's all about forward momentum for you. You fell up the stairs once in eighth grade and your crush saw, but you don't remember that, do you? CANCER (JUNE 21–JULY 22): Imagine a super-loyal and forgiving crustacean scuttling about on the ocean floor. That's you. Minus, of course, the clacking claws and hunger for tiny sea life. But you care, and will stick it out through thick and thin for a friend. That's pretty neat.

OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

LEO (JULY 23–AUG. 22): You put yourself first so much, Leo, that when you hold the door open for someone, it's actually for you. Is it self-centeredness? Arrogance? The answer is unclear, but you will for sure let us know. VIRGO (AUG. 23–SEP. 22): Are you shy, or just an introvert? Sure, those cold walls melt when we get to know you (which is fine because Leos are too aggressively forward), but it would be nice to know when the real you comes out to play. LIBRA (SEP. 23–OCT. 22): The big picture is your modus operandi, Libra. You live it, eat it and breathe it. You will go to any lengths to strike the balance between work and life to make sure your big picture is complete. Just don't pay attention to your dwindling account balance while you do it. SCORPIO (OCT. 23–NOV. 21): Scorpios are like teddy bears with razor sharp spines protruding from their fluffy exterior. There will be blood, discomfort and anger, but by God, when you make it past the Scorpio gauntlet, they're pretty cool. And assholes, too. SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22–DEC. 22): Sag, you're exceptionally gifted at putting yourself in other peoples' shoes. You can relate. You feel. But you'll never be able to put yourself in Shaq's shoes, because they are very large. CAPRICORN (DEC. 23–JAN. 19): Boundaries and rules, Cap, that's your shit. There is a high possibility that when you see a fence, a sense of excitement grows within you. And thinking outside of the box? Fuhged-daboutit. Boxes are love, boxes are life. AQUARIUS (JAN. 20–FEB. 18): You grow and evolve like a tree blasted with radiation. You're never the same person you were yesterday, Aquarius. Which is great for you. But what if we really liked you from three weeks ago? The wild version that brought tiny bottles of liquor to the office to share because sometimes you gotta drink to think?

Legislation aims to bolster campus first amendment rights

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House Bill 218, introduced Jan. 21 in the Montana Legislature, aims to ban free speech zones on university campuses throughout the state, in an effort to ensure students’ First Amendment rights.

Anthony Johnstone, a professor at UM’s law school who teaches a course on the Montana Constitution, said HB 218 reiterates First Amendment protections that are already on campus. However, he said there is a problem with free speech zones because they imply the existence of non-free speech zones on college campuses. Since college campuses are generally considered public forums open to free expression, the idea of non-free speech zones is inherently problematic.

UM doesn’t currently have a designated free speech zone. While its policy on free speech encourages tolerance of all ideas, the campus had previously established such zones, including the area between the University Center and Mansfield Library, the bricks around the Grizzly statue, and the amphitheater at the base of the M Trail.

HB 218, sponsored by Missoula Rep. Mike Hopkins, a Republican, addresses this issue by prohibiting Montana universities from designating free speech zones in order to provide protection of free speech everywhere on campus.

The bill’s language as of Feb. 19 states, “...the Montana Legislature views the exercise of First Amendment rights on the public postsecondary institutions’ campuses in Montana as a critical component of the education experience for students and requires that each public post-secondary institution in Montana ensures free, robust, and uninhibited debate and deliberations by students whether on or off campus.”

The bill does clarify that universities can set time, place and manner restrictions on expression, but states that these restrictions “must be narrowly tailored to serve a significant institutional interest.” Time, place and manner restrictions don’t put any prevention on speech itself, but rather, ensure speech is occurring in an appropriate way. For example, UM would have some regulation over a loud protest occurring late at night on the Oval because it would antagonize students living on campus.

Anastasia Chiperi, a sophomore management and information systems student who describes herself as a middle-of-the-road conservative, spoke positively about HB 218



A former free speech zone in the area between the University Center and the Mansfield Library. Previous free speech zone on campus have included the bricks around the Griz statue and the amphitheater at the base of the M Trail. **CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

and what it means for students at UM.

“I do think a bill that establishes that freedom of speech is going to be allowed all over campus, and not reserved to a small area, will definitely help people feel at least more comfortable in expressing their views,” Chiperi said.

Montana’s state Legislature passed a similar bill in 2019. House Bill 735, also sponsored by Hopkins, aimed to ban these free speech zones, and the bill received bipartisan support in 2019.

However, former Gov. Steve Bullock vetoed HB 735, writing in a statement that “House Bill 735 is a solution in search of a problem.” Bullock cited the assurances of University leadership that campus policies already protect free speech and freedom of assembly.

Dylan Klapmeier, the communications director for the Montana House of Representatives majority said that, despite that bill being vetoed, there were still concerns from First Amendment advocacy groups regarding campus free speech zones.

“Representative Hopkins brought these groups together in the interim to build a bill that would address their concerns,” Klapmeier said.

Klapmeier emphasized that one of the bill’s main purposes is to ensure that diverse

viewpoints are free to be shared on college campuses.

Chiperi said, personally, she has never had difficulty speaking her thoughts on issues she is passionate about. But she said she has had experiences with fellow students speaking negatively about Republicans.

For Chiperi, this bill may not have an effect on the way she acts as a student, but she thinks it has the potential to significantly impact future issues of free speech on campus.

“It’s not that students’ day-to-day lives will change drastically, but it’s kind of a security blanket so that students know that their voices are going to be heard and they don’t have to worry about that being taken away from them,” Chiperi said.

Klapmeier said if the bill passes, it will require university administrators to put out new guidance, but that the impact on most campuses won’t be large.

Klapmeier added that HB 218, similar to 2019’s HB 735, is already receiving bipartisan support from groups that are both traditionally left-leaning — like the ACLU of Montana — and right-leaning.

Laurel Hesse, a representative from the ACLU of Montana, testified in favor of HB 218 at its first hearing in the House Judiciary committee on Jan. 27.

“Giving school administrators broad power to censor speech and confine political expression to designated areas threatens everyone’s right to express themselves on college campuses,” Hesse said.

She added that HB 218 is a step in the right direction to ensuring students’ First Amendment rights.

Klapmeier said if the bill passes the hope is it will be inclusive of groups whose voices haven’t been heard as much in the past, as well as bringing speakers to campus from more diverse points of view.

Chiperi also said groups on campus that have felt more backlash with free speech would likely feel more protected with the passage of HB 218.

Johnstone added that if the bill passes, its impact may be limited. He said the policy reflects First Amendment protections that are already in place, as well as having a potential issue with separation of powers between the Legislature and University System. However, Johnstone did say this bill could provide guidance from the Legislature as some campuses in the state revise their free speech policies.

HB 218 passed the House of Representatives in a vote of 96-3 on Feb. 19. Next, it will go to the Senate.

Fauci looks to the future in Mansfield Lecture

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Dr. Anthony Fauci said the best way to counter vaccine hesitancy is with respect and a step-by-step explanation of why it’s safe as he answered questions from a Montana audience on the future of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and chief medical adviser to President Joe Biden, spoke virtually to over 5,000 people last Wednesday in “A Conversation with Dr. Anthony Fauci” for the annual Mansfield Lecture.

Fauci acknowledged the historic nature of the pandemic that has killed over 2.3 million people worldwide before he discussed its future.

“I don’t think anyone could have imagined that things would have been this bad for over a year,” he said. “We’re making a lot of progress now, but we have been through a very, very extraordinary and historic experience that isn’t over yet.”

Fauci highlighted the development of a vaccine in less than a year, an achievement he previously would not have believed possible.

“If anyone would have told any one of us with experience in vaccinology, ‘Could this have been possible?’ We would have said ‘Absolutely not,’” he said.

Fauci credited the decade-long biomedical research for the quick vaccine development. He said development of a vaccine began five days after the sequence of the novel coronavirus was published in a public database in January 2020.

Robert Saldin, the director of the Mansfield Center’s Ethics and Public Affairs Program, said the lecture was unique because it was an extended discussion with Dr. Fauci with questions specific to Montana.

“What we wanted to do with this was get him to speak to some of the unique issues that we face with this pandemic in Montana and that he doesn’t typically get asked about,” he said.

One of these issues is the vaccine hesitancy seen in rural and Indigenous communities.

Kaylee Kronsperger, a human biological sciences major, said she has seen firsthand the vaccine hesitancy in her hometown of Eureka, Montana, where some are skeptical to give their kids even routine vaccinations.

“How do you recommend healthcare professionals convey the importance of this vaccine when people still refuse to do things like wear masks or socially distance?” she



Dr. Anthony Fauci answers an audience member’s question on Zoom during his 2021 Mansfield Lecture. Fauci spoke virtually to a crowd of over 5,000 people last Wednesday in “A Conversation with Dr. Fauci.” **JACOB OWENS | MONTANA KAIMIN**

asked.

Fauci said there’s no easy answer, but combatting vaccine skepticism starts with respect.

“You’ve got to go step-by-step and counter the reasons for the skepticism, while at the same time not criticizing people for their skepticism, but respecting their skepticism, and hopefully you’ll win over at least a portion of the people who have hesitancy about vaccinations,” he said.

Shelly Fyant, the chairwoman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, asked a similar question about vaccine hesitancy among tribal members who have been systematically mistreated by the federal government.

Fauci said the skepticism makes sense because of the federal government’s poor track record with its treatment of Indigenous people, but any unethical considerations with the vaccine would be “impossible” due to the independent review boards apart from the federal government and pharmaceutical companies.

He also said it would be troubling to see Indigenous people not get vaccinated because of the disproportionate effects the virus has had on Indigenous people and other minority groups.

Fauci said if people with vaccine hesitancy can be convinced to get vaccinated, there’s a good chance the United States could reach a vaccination rate of 70-85% and herd immunity by mid-to-late fall, though masks will likely stick around longer. He said this could usher in some normality, the extent of which is dependent on a number of factors, including variants of the virus.

Fauci also discussed people dealing with long-term effects of COVID-19.

Lisa Beard spoke about the long-term effects her son, seventh grader Hudson, has had since he tested positive for COVID-19 in mid-November. Beard, an emergency room nurse, said her son is in constant pain with symptoms including dizziness, migraines, enlarged arteries and weakness on the left side of his body similar to the effects of a stroke.

“No other doctors can help me, can you help

me?” Hudson asked.

Fauci said it’s unclear how Hudson’s symptoms will change over the next few months or year, but he’s hopeful the long term effects of the syndrome will correct themselves.

Fauci said Hudson’s case displays a common misconception that children are immune to the serious effects of COVID-19. He said post-acute COVID-19 syndrome (PACS) is more common in adults, but it can be seen in children like Hudson too.

Dr. Greg Holzman, the state medical officer, asked Fauci about how the number of public health officials in government can be increased after the recent reductions seen nationwide.

Fauci said public service in health and science needs to be sold better with a focus on the potential far-ranging impact one’s work can have in a field that still excites him.

“I get up and do what I have to do every day, and I’ve been doing it for a very long time, so if it could be sustained for that long period of time it’s at least worth young people taking a look at,” he said.

“Every artist is an advocate”

Music students fight for building renovations

Story by
Mariah Thomas

LIAM MCCOLLUM | MONTANA KAIMIN

Walking into the basement of the UM School of Music is walking into a cacophony of tones, with pianos, clarinets and trumpets reverberating throughout the hallway.

The magic created by the music, though, fades with tales of students forced to practice in the freight elevator due to a lack of practice space, and images of holes in the floors and walls of practice rooms. The music, audible between one practice room and the next, suggests a need for improved soundproofing.

The music building at UM has not received any major renovations since it was built nearly 70 years ago. Built in 1953 to accommodate 100 students, the School of Music now serves nearly 200. And with capacity issues joining a longer list of renovation needs, the School of Music faces a new problem: The risk of losing its national accreditation.

The last time UM’s School of Music passed accreditation, it was on the condition that significant issues facing the facilities be addressed. Nearly 10 years later, these problems remain unfixed. With a clock ticking on reaccreditation in 2022, and legislation enabling the school to raise money having stalled, students have stepped in to fight for their school.

Enter Noah Durnell: A senior music performance student, an ASUM senator and the president of the Student Music Union.

Durnell, a lifelong Griz fan, chose to come to the UM School of Music after auditioning with the oboe and earning a full tuition waiver for his musical potential. However, despite his longtime allegiance to UM, Durnell’s first impression of the music building was that it was “dismal.”

“That was one of the first times I questioned whether or not I would actually study here,” Durnell said, recalling a high school-age visit for a music camp. “Because I wasn’t sure if I could study in a building like this for four years. I’m still unsure of it as a senior.”

His doubts were stoked by the building’s poor condition at the time, which is even worse in 2021. The elevator doors don’t open on their own, many lockers, even with locks, can be opened by yanking hard enough, and the main rehearsal space doubles as storage. Durnell also described problems with theft and disability access during his time at UM.

Now, after four years of studying that boosted his confidence in the program with his peers and faculty, Durnell has become an advocate for the music school.



At the center of Durnell’s attention are the physical problems that need to be addressed for the building to be safe and useful for the students, and necessary for the school to maintain its accreditation.



Noah Durnell, senior music performance student, ASUM senator and president of the Student Music Union, pulls on the broken frame of a row of lockers in the University of Montana music building. Durnell said that some lockers open even if there is a lock attached, and students have had their instruments stolen because of this. Along with 45 other students, Durnell lobbied the Montana state legislature to include \$1.5 million in funding in House Bill 5 to fund necessary renovations, but the language was not included in the bill. “I think what will make us shine as a program across the nation is if we get a building that reflects the quality of our program,” Durnell said. **LIAM MCCOLLUM | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Accreditation comes from the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), which, according to its website, views accreditation as a pledge to “seek optimal learning conditions for music students and develop the strength and quality of music in higher education by assisting institutional members and their faculties to do their best work.”

The importance of accreditation, according to the director of the School of Music James Randall, communicates that a school is preparing students for a professional future. Durnell added that UM’s school of music is well-known in the Northwest, and offers a competitive price. But without accreditation, he fears the school may lose its competitive standing.

The last time UM’s school of music was reaccredited, in 2012, NASM’s evaluators listed major concerns. Among these were disability access, building capacity and safety. Safety concerns included spaces not meeting fire codes and rehearsal spaces placing ensemble members at risk due to loud noise, which requires hearing protection.

They agreed to extend the music school’s accreditation only after assurances that their concerns would be a priority for the University. The music school’s next accreditation is set for 2022.

But NASM’s renovations list has yet to be completed, and the 2022 deadline is fast approaching.

The current state legislative session has been a last resort to secure the funding necessary for the renovations to take place. Despite the University’s claims that music building renovations would be a legislative priority for the University, concerned students felt compelled to take action to improve the odds that the funding for renovations was obtained.

Durnell focused his attention on House Bill 5, legislation that would allow the School of Music to raise \$6 million from donors for building renovations. The state is responsible for the operation of buildings at the University, according to Dave Kuntz, UM’s director of strategic communications, so the money has to come through the Montana Legislature. Because of this, UM

is required to seek approval from the state before improvements to the music building can be made.

But donors need to specify where their money goes, so money raised may not be directed to the concerns listed by NASM for the School of Music’s accreditation.

Durnell’s goal was for HB 5 to include a \$1.5 million supplement, supplied by the state, to address safety and accreditation concerns. So, he created a political action committee within the Student Music Union — advocacy he never expected he would find himself doing when he started studying at UM.

“I knew a lot more was going to need to be done to get the money on the bill,” Durnell said.

The political action committee Durnell formed included around 50 students. He said the goal was to include student voices in the legislative process. In the end, 45 students sent in written testimony advocating for the inclusion of the \$1.5 million from the state. Durnell also testified at the state legislature on Feb. 3.

Randall, the director of the music program, said he appreciated the leadership role Durnell and other students took.

“A lot of our students are music education majors,” Randall said. “This is the same type of arts advocacy that they will be practicing in their careers, and it’s something we try to model in the music department.”

Laurie Baefsky, the new dean of the College of Arts and Media at UM, echoed Randall’s sentiments. She said one of her first experiences as the dean was attending one of Durnell’s group meetings, and that the professionalism of the students was impressive.

“In one word, it’s stunning,” Baefsky said of the student advocacy Durnell’s team led.

Despite their efforts, the \$1.5 million Durnell and other music students lobbied for was not included in HB 5, nor was it included more recently in the amended language of the bill.

Durnell said that since the funds were not included in the bill’s amended language, it is unlikely that the School of Music will receive that money to specifically address the accreditors’ concerns. The legislation still allows the music school to fundraise \$6 million, but even if successful, those efforts may not come in time to address the concerns that threaten the school’s accreditation.



Kuntz, the director of strategic communications at UM, said the University is prioritizing the renovations necessary for the music school to be reaccredited, including soundproofing the practice rooms and increasing accessibility to ensure student safety.

But Durnell and some of his fellow students at the School of Music are not confident in senior administration giving sufficient priority to the renovations necessary for the music school to be reaccredited next year.

Allison High, a third-year double major in music education and flute performance, said that it was concerning to her that students needed to take action to get funding.

“The bottom line is that they didn’t even put us on the bill and we had to fight to be included, which is odd considering that we were supposed to be UM’s top funding priority,” High said.

Durnell said he thinks this issue — the urgent need for renovation — has been downplayed by the University for a long time.

“It’s really clear that, even when it was a priority this year — even when it’s literally written as a priority — it’s not a priority for this University or the state, and they showed that through their actions,” Durnell said. “I really hope that our president and our administration can prove me wrong, that they actually do really care about the arts



University of Montana junior Kennedy Payne plays her clarinet in the UM music school freight elevator February 16, 2021. "When there's nowhere else to practice in the building, I know a lot of people who practice in here," Payne said. Over 200 students are enrolled in the School of Music, which was originally built to house only 100. The building has not received any major renovations since it was built in 1953 and risks losing accreditation. **LIAM MCCOLLUM | MONTANA KAIMIN**

and that they think this is as dire of an issue as students do."

Durnell said he has personally reached out to UM President Seth Bodnar, but has not received a response to his concerns.

He said students are relying on the University even more now that the prospect of money coming from the Legislature has disintegrated.

In an emailed statement to the Kaimin, President Bodnar said that he has been pushing to secure funds for renovations to the music building.

"While we would have liked to receive more funding from the state this session, campus leadership is committed to finding a path to the full funding needed to renovate the music building," Bodnar stated.

He added that he understands the im-

"I really hope that our president and our administration can prove me wrong, that they actually do really care about the arts and that they think this is as dire of an issue as students do."

- Noah Durnell

portance of upgrading and soundproofing practice rooms in the music building, as well as improving accessibility.

"Music education at UM is not only a hallmark feature of the University, but also

a service to the state of Montana," Bodnar stated. He said that the renovations will ensure that the music building remains "a hub for creativity in western Montana."

Kuntz said he understands student

concerns, and that renovations to the music building are a top priority for UM. He said the University only pushed for a few things infrastructure-wise at the legislature this year, and the funding for the music building was near the top of the list. Other projects the University advocated for in the same category — under which the projects will have the authority to raise money from donors with the passage of HB 5 — are renovations and repairs to Rankin Hall and construction of the UM Museum for Art and Culture.

And with the hiring of Baefsky — who has a Doctorate of Musical Arts in flute performance — as the new Dean of the College of Arts and Media, Kuntz said music students should be assured of their priority to UM.

Kuntz credited the efforts of the music



Posters from past UM Jazz Festivals hosted at the School of Music hang in the entryway of the building. **CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

students to ensure funding, saying that otherwise the \$6 million may not have been put on HB 5 by the state Legislature.

"UM is a launch point for leaders in our state, and I have no doubt that Noah [Durnell] is part of the next generation of Montana's leaders, along with the rest of the students who spoke up," Kuntz said.



Despite the state Legislature's lack of response to advocacy efforts, Durnell, High, Baefsky and Randall all expressed optimism for the future of UM's music school.

"The future is bright, but it'd be even brighter with renovations," High said.

Randall said, despite the concerns, he thinks it is likely that the School of Music will be reaccredited in 2022. Despite concerns with the facility, Randall said, the faculty and program itself are strong.

Randall pointed to a first phase of music building renovations breaking ground this summer as another reason for hope. These renovations will come from private donations, according to Baefsky. According to an email from President Bodnar, the money invested in this first phase of renovations

totals \$2.3 million. This first phase will cover two rehearsal spaces and upgrade ventilation in the music building, which Randall said is even more of a priority with COVID-19.

UM's School of Music has also continued outreach to prospective students, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. High and Durnell, too, said prospective students are in the music building frequently for camps and outreach programs.

"I feel that the value added to the University of Montana by music and arts education is significant," Randall said.

He added that he feels that the School of Music is supported at UM, and said it has maintained a good standard of student retention, despite a decrease in enrollment last semester with COVID-19.

A bright spot, in Baefsky's estimation, is what she said is a 100% job-placement rate for music education students at UM. She added that her vision for the future of UM's School of Music is to expand and embed music education in Montana.

"We are the arm creating music education across the state," Baefsky said.

Durnell said the program has strengths in recruitment and renowned faculty like

Dr. Johan Eriksson and Dr. Christopher Kirkpatrick, who form a group called "Duo Nyans" and recently toured Sweden and Taiwan. Eriksson is also a Yamaha Performing Artist, along with fellow faculty member Dr. Jennifer Gookin Cavanaugh, which is a worldwide recognition of talent.

Durnell said as long as the School of Music doesn't experience large budget cuts and is able to address accreditation concerns, he sees the future of UM's music program as promising.

"I think what will make us shine as a program across the nation is if we get a building that reflects the quality of our program," Durnell said.

As for his advocacy, Durnell said he hopes to leave a legacy that others will carry on.

"I really hope that in my time at UM, I have inspired other music students to go above and beyond their music career and also participate in these higher advocacy fields," Durnell said. He said it is student advocacy that will push University administration to make the changes necessary to the music building.

"Every artist is an advocate," Durnell said.

1953
Music building built



2019
First lobbying efforts for renovations, didn't go through at state Legislature

We are here:
2021

Current legislative session, House Bill 5 will give University authority to collect \$6 million for renovations if passed.

However, it will be through donors, who choose where their money goes. Doesn't guarantee necessary renovations for reaccreditation



2022

Music school is up for reaccreditation. If renovations from 2012 are not in place or underway, the music school is at risk of losing accreditation

2012
Last accreditation from National Association of Schools of Music, only given with University assurance that renovations would be made



October 2020
Noah Durnell starts political action committee in Student Music Union to include renovations in the 2021 legislative session



Summer 2021
Music school will be receiving the first phase of renovations, including 2 rehearsal spaces and updated ventilation in the music building



MCKENNA JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

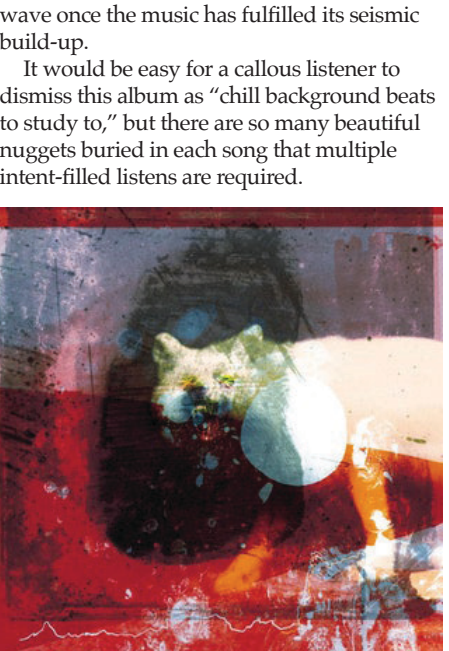
Speak softly and carry a big vibe

ALEX MILLER
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Some bands weave entire universes through their music. Mogwai, a Scottish post-rock quartet, build a beautiful, kaleidoscopic galaxy in their latest offering “As The Love Continues.” The 25-year-old band speaks in color and emotion with their music, creating a soothing, sometimes haunting, musical habitat over the span of 11 tracks. “As The Love Continues” is the band’s 10th album. The latest sonic effort from Mogwai is, par for the course, mostly instrumentals. Composed of Stuart Braithwaite (guitar, vox), Barry Burns (guitar, everything else), Dominic Aitchison (bass) and Martin Bulloch (drums), Mogwai has had little line-up change over its 25 years of existence. And despite each member having a James Bond supervillain name, the music is nowhere near evil. The whole album is like an expansive,

miles-long portrait of positivity incarnate, kept secret from the world in a giant underground cavern filled with piercing display lights. There’s so much color that it can, at times, be overwhelming. But then come moments of restraint and a pure spaced-out atmosphere that helps to bind the whole thing together. “Here We, Here We, Here We Go Forever,” encapsulates this soft-to-frenetic dynamic. The second track opens with a drum machine, sounding like it was taken straight from John Frusciante’s solo material. But then big guitars washed out in reverb drop in like welcome friends, setting a melodic rhythm that moves like a wave crashing and receding. There are some serious battleship-length tracks on the record, with the opener “To The Bin My Friend, Tonight We Vacate Earth,” clocking in at over five minutes, and the closer — and the longest tune — “It’s What I Want To Do Mum” taking up nearly eight minutes. Both of these juggernauts are classic Mogwai: Soft-to-loud with glacial guitar lines and cheery synths, backed up by Bulloch’s ethereal

drums. But despite the length of these tracks and others, they never quite veer into dullness. The only real dud of the record (and dud is a stretch, because it is still a fun tune) is the Smashing Pumpkins-flavored “Ceiling Granny.” Opening with a riff that Billy Corgan definitely wrote once, the track is the hardest rocker of the album. But it sounds like nothing terribly new. To Mogwai’s credit, the worst song here is still fantastic, just not ground-breaking. Vocals, though rare for Mogwai, are delivered by “As The Love Continues”’ lead single, “Richie Sacramento.” The song, an ode to lost friends, has such beautifully written lyrics that it makes the ears want more of Braithwaite’s voice and pen. His gentle, hushed (and only mildly Scottish) voice sparsely shares his pain, but is effective enough to paint a pure picture of loss. And really, that is what this whole album is about. A sparse glimpse of emotion that comes together fully developed, crashing like a tidal



CONTRIBUTED

‘Firefly Lane’ is a soap opera out of its time

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It would appear that Netflix is digging up a time capsule of early 2000s soap operas with its new original series “Firefly Lane.” Unfortunately, this show lacks the familiar comforts of “Friday Night Lights” or “Gilmore Girls” that let viewers overlook the melodramatic mess of a plot. Based on the 2013 novel by Kristin Hannah, “Firefly Lane” follows the lives of Tully Hart (Katherine Heigl) and Kate Mularkey (Sarah Chalke), who form an intensely close friendship late into their careers as journalists. The series jumps between the ‘70s, ‘80s and the early ‘00s — bouncing to-and-fro amongst impactful moments in their lives — when Tully and Kate are middle schoolers, college grads and middle-aged adults. Child actors play as the teenage Tully and Kate. The other shifts are marked by wig changes and aging makeup, showing deepening smile lines and channels where tears have glided down from the drama of their lives. These time-jumps compound inconsistency in tone and emotion. The heartwarming and

comedic tones of “Firefly Lane” often lack cohesion with the more pivotal, serious moments. In one episode, the series shows Kate’s husband Johnny (Ben Lawson) working as a war correspondent in Afghanistan before the scene shifts to a teenage Kate ruining her brand-new white jeans. The series’ uneven pace goes hand-in-hand with this lack of synchronization. “Firefly Lane” is supposed to play out as a mystery, with each piece of Tully and Kate’s history clicking into place. But the disjointed timeline makes defining moments feel rushed. Each episode is intended to build up to a climax. Instead, they are filled with cringe-worthy karaoke dates and dramatic arguments that are too soapy to be taken seriously. Even the death of a major character, revealed in the season finale, fails to pack an emotional punch. The efforts to address bigger societal issues also feel half-assed. Rather than focusing on one issue, “Firefly Lane” bites off more than it can chew. Each episode is stuffed with references to topics like addiction, sexism, miscarriages and homophobia. Yet the series’

treatment of these problems remains shallow. Even a deep felt loss later into the season feels like just another dramatic trope added to spice up the plot. Hollywood rarely, if ever, gets journalists right. With multiple office affairs and hokey depictions of war journalism, “Firefly Lane” clearly used this profession as a device to deepen the origins of Tully’s trauma. Rarely does her actual work make an impact. The strength in this show lies in Tully and Kate’s friendship. Tully fits the familiar archetype of an outgoing, brazen “bad girl,” while Kate is the typical shy, clumsy nerd. But their love for each other feels genuine, and the series does a commendable job at showing the progression of their friendship as teens. Even the contrast of their personalities provides a somewhat nuanced storyline for Tully’s narcissistic and self-destructive behavior. “Firefly Lane’s” attempts to tackle serious issues still fall into the soapy Hallmark Channels and Lifetimes of network television. It might be appealing and binge-worthy to middle-aged soccer moms. But for anyone else, this show is nothing new or special.



CONTRIBUTED

UM students’ eco-friendly chalk bag company startup

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UM students Nate Barton and Carly Dahms sit huddled in the corner near the heater of Barton’s basement, dripping with sweat. “It gets hot, it gets really hot,” Dahms said, laughing. They have spent the last 35 minutes creating another chalk bag for the company they co-founded, Beta Sprayer. “We were watching this climbing movie and the guys climbing in Yosemite had super dope shirts with matching chalk bags and we were like ‘shit, why don’t we make climbing bags out of shirts?’ because there are a bunch of cool designs on shirts,” said Barton. Dahms and Barton started making climbing bags out of their basement to satiate three goals they had: To become more eco-friendly, to practice their sewing skills and to supply their skills for the sport they love.

Dahms and Barton aren’t like the typical Silicon Valley types associated with startup businesses. Dahms majors in environmental studies and economics while Barton is a biology major. According to the World Economic Forum, the fashion production industry is responsible for 10% of the world’s annual carbon emissions and is the second-highest consumer of the world’s water supply. Dahms said they wanted to give new life and purpose to used clothing that people would not normally buy. They get their material from local thrift shops or old clothing they have that they think deserves a second life. “We aren’t doing this to save the planet, but the reality is there is a lot of cool fabric out there that goes to waste,” Barton said. Creating Beta Sprayer, they said, was also a way to showcase their sewing skills to create a local product that climbers in Missoula and at UM can use. Over winter break, the seedling idea grew into a reality. “At home, my mom has a sewing machine — and with COVID-19, over winter break there was a lot of free time, so I just learned how to sew and it



University of Montana students Carly Dahms, left, and Nate Barton sit in their basement workshop where they make eco-friendly climbing chalk bags on Friday. Dahms and Barton started Beta Sprayer, their first ever company, over winter break in order to use their sewing skills to make a sustainable product for rock climbers around Missoula. **ANTONIO IBARRA | MONTANA KAIMIN**

progressed from there,” Barton said. When asked how many customers they had, both laughed. “How many people have visited the website though,” laughed Dahms looking over at Barton. “We’re talking to climbing gyms and trying to sell them to people we don’t know,” Barton joked. The duo can count the number of customers they’ve had with their fingers. Right now, it’s mostly word-of-mouth and their social media presence that is bringing in clients. But they are working toward bigger goals. Jake Lamb, a junior at UM, is one of the first customers of Beta Sprayer. He

have climbed with before,” Lamb said. It takes about 25 to 35 minutes to produce each bag, and each sells for around \$30. The typical big climbing brands such as Black Diamond bags go for around \$23, and the ORGANIC brand bag goes for \$25. When Dahms and Barton first started, they were just messing around with fabric laying around the house. They hope in the near future to make custom bags. The duo is proud of their products and hope to help people in Missoula keep their environmental impact low, and to shop local. Dahm’s and Barton’s bags can be found at betasprayer.com

‘Tis the ski-son: Cross-country skiing booms at UM golf course

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With Missoula producing over 30 inches (and counting) of snow this month, the University of Montana’s golf course is seeing an increased amount of traffic on its grounds — though it isn’t golfers. Instead, it’s groups of nordic skiers.

The Missoula Nordic Ski Club has teamed up with the UM golf course to provide groomed cross-country ski trails at a central location in Missoula. The result? An unexpected boom in cross country skiers.

William Dauenhauer, a junior at UM, said he’s been skiing on the UM golf course as a way to cross-train for the cross country season.

“It’s really awesome. I live like a block away from the golf course, so I can literally ski over to it, which is sweet,” Dauenhauer said. “I think it’s great to work out and it’s a great way to get outside and

try skiing. It’s hard to buy skis right now because everyone is trying to buy some.”

The UM golf course is one of more than 13 ski trails listed on the Missoula Nordic Ski Club’s website.

“I only recently got into nordic skiing,” Dauenhauer said. “A few years ago I did the classic skiing. This is the first year I’ve ever tried skate (cross country) skiing.”

He said his favorite part about the golf course is that there are different signs with different rules to keep the trails clean, like allowing dogs only on certain trails to keep the tracks clear.

Henry Reich, the president of the Missoula Nordic Ski Club, said this is the first year since he’s been president that the club decided to groom the UM golf course.

“Grooming the golf course has been on and off the radar for a number of years,” Reich said. “We were constantly going back and forth with it, because the

question is, ‘Are we going to actually have enough snow in town for it to be worth it?’”

Reich said that the reason the cross-country ski club board chose to groom the course was because of COVID-19.

“We saw what was happening in the summer with the increased use of trails and hiking and the crazy amount of people outdoor recreating,” Reich said. “In past years we didn’t decide to groom because it’s a lot of work and moving equipment to make it happen, but this year we figured it’s worth the risk, given everything going on.”

The funding for grooming comes from grants and membership donations. The trail itself is around three miles long.

With the increased amount of snowfall, Reich said the ski club is working hard to keep the trails groomed so that people can keep skiing and participating in outdoor

recreation across Missoula instead of having to go to gyms or stay indoors.

“We want people to have the opportunity to get outside to stay healthy, sane, and to be able to do that in a safe, socially distanced fashion,” Reich said.

Reich said the risk seems to be well worth it, given that there has been an up to 40% increase from last year in memberships.


“When I look at the trails, they’re busier than we’ve ever seen them, even though we have more trails open than we have had in the past,” he said.


Abigail Gans, a UM student, said that she is happy to see Missoula’s increase in cross-country skiing interest.

“I love how convenient it is to ski here,” Gans said. “There are so many people, it’s awesome.”




University of Montana student Abigail Gans cross-country skis at the UM golf course on Feb. 17. Gans is one of many skiers who have flocked to the newly groomed cross-country ski trails at the course. The Missoula Nordic Ski Club has teamed up with the UM golf course to work on the trails. **MATTHEW TRYAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**





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UM softball still looking for last season’s spark

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After not playing for 11 months due to the pandemic, the UM softball team is trying to pick up where it left off in 2020, near the top of the Big Sky Conference rankings.

“Getting back out on the field and trying to continue to figure out who we are as a 2021 Griz softball team is kind of our mission right now,” said head coach Melanie Meuchel.

In 2020, the Griz started off 12-12 — a program record. UM beat No. 23 ranked Arkansas for its first ever ranked win. The Griz also beat Michigan State and narrowly lost to No. 18 ranked Texas Tech.

This year, the Griz have won two games, against Grand Canyon and Dixie State, and lost eight, including losses at the Dixie State Classic in Utah to BYU, Utah Valley, Nevada and Utah State; along with losses in the opening weekend’s Grand Canyon Kickoff Classic against

Oregon (twice), Weber State, and Grand Canyon.

Meuchel says that weekend one was about finding the team’s feel, a job more difficult this year than in years past.

“When you’re used to playing something at least nine months of the year, you have a pretty good feel when you only take a month off,” said Meuchel.

But this isn’t the same team as last year, having lost four seniors and gained five freshmen.

Among the seniors who left in 2020 was pitcher Michaela Hood, who’s 2.13 ERA was second lowest in the conference. She pitched in the game that gave Montana its first ever win over a ranked opponent, a 5-0 shutout over Arkansas. She holds program records in wins, games started, strikeouts and shutouts.

Riley Stockton, a freshman catcher from Spanaway, Washington, has already made her mark on the team after playing in two games in the Dixie State Classic. She recorded two hits and a home run in a loss against Utah State, and a hit in her only at-bat in a win against Dixie State. She’s currently hitting .600.

This year’s senior class has stepped up to fill in the gap left by its predecessors. Infielder Cami Sellers has recorded 13 hits in nine games, two of them being home runs (both against Grand Canyon).

Infielder Maygen McGrath scored her fourth home run of the season on Sunday against Dixie State. Catcher Jessica McAlister recorded a grand slam in the win against Grand Canyon.

“The sheer fact of feeling it from the heart, seeing it in the emotion of how excited and how in love with the game she was — it brought the realization of softball back,” Meuchel said.

The team will head to El Paso, Texas, for the UTEP Orange and Blue Classic on March 5th. They’ll face UTEP twice, along with Arizona State and the University of the Incarnate Word.

UM will not play at home until it takes on Seattle University on March 18.



University of Montana Griz softball pitchers Tristin Achenbach and Ashley Ward practice with snow covering half of the field on Feb. 25, 2020. **LIAM MCCOLLUM | MONTANA KAIMIN**

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Students gather for broomball on the Oval

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With brooms, a ball, helmets, and face-masks, University of Montana students bundled up and gathered at the Oval ice rink to play in a broomball tournament last Thursday.

The tournament was organized by UM's Campus Recreation as a way to organize the campus community together in a COVID-safe environment for rounds of broomball.

Waddling up and down the ice rink with nothing but the shoes on their feet,

the six teams: Broom Busters, Queen Frostines, Genu Kickurbottom, Wapikiya Dr. Home for Goals, The Fab 5, and TJPJ went head-to-head in a series of matchups.

Teams were made up of four players and each needed a man and a woman on the ice during two rounds of gameplay. Each game consisted of two 10-minute periods with a two-minute halftime.



ABOVE: Patrick Memoli, left, from the Broom Busters and Henry Hagood, right, of the Queen Frostines prepare for a showdown as referee Aly Tekippe sets the ball down on the ice rink. Campus Recreation invited UM students and alumni to register teams of four players for the tournament. Brooms and balls were provided by the University and players brought their preferred helmets and face masks.

LEFT: University of Montana student Aly Tekippe surveys the rink during UM's Broomball Tournament at the Oval ice rink. Tekippe served as one of two referees for the tournament.

BELOW: University of Montana student Lilly Simko of the Broom Busters prepares to clear the ball from her team's side of the court at the Oval ice rink.

