

# MONTANA KAIMIN BREWING CONFLICT



With a new Starbucks set to open on campus, some students are now questioning the impact of their opinion at UM.



6 ASTRONOMICAL GRANT

COVER DESIGN BY FIONA DAVIA

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY HENRY DOELLINGER

12 NEW YEAR OLD Hobbies

Story by Bee Reiswig | Photos by Jackson Mailey

14 CO ED ON CAMPUS

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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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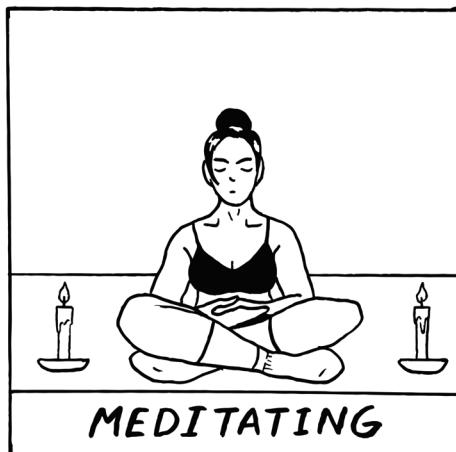
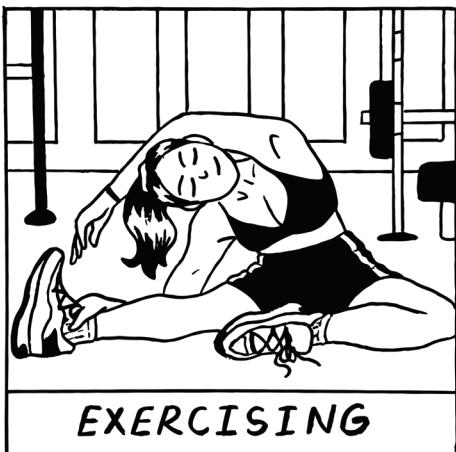


## POLITICAL CARTOON



MANIFEST DESTINY CONTINUED

## KAIMIN KOMICS: SE 3 EP 8



# Is UM sacrificing social spaces for sales?

Starbucks, one of the biggest coffee companies in the world, is moving into the vacant space previously occupied by Rise & Rooted in the University of Montana's Lomasson Center.

Rise & Rooted, which closed in 2024 when the Lodge Dining Center opened, was a premier third place at UM. It was a favorite spot of students, where people could go there to hang out, grab a coffee, request music with Rockbot, study, eat or play games. There were also fun special events like watch parties, karaoke and game nights, which gave R&R a great atmosphere.

UM needs to curate and prioritize more multipurpose third places, not corporate, profit-first places like Starbucks.

Author Ray Oldenburg coined the term "third place" in his book "The Great Good Place," and contrasted it against home and work, or first and second places, respectively. According to Oldenburg, all third places must be informal and neutral, where strangers are welcome and different people are treated the same.

While Rise & Rooted's signature food options, pizza and pasta, were integrated into the Lodge Dining Center, you can't just go into the Lodge to hang out and experience the atmosphere. You have to pay to get in — a significant barrier to something becoming a third place.

Third places are important because they are what build community, connections and friendships. In college, that can mean trying new activities and socializing with different types of people, which can help you grow as a person. Having abundant opportunities to socialize and try new things is why many people look back on their time in college as some of the best of their lives.

There are other third places on campus — the Fitness and Recreation Center, the University Center, the Oval in the summer and various study spots in buildings around campus. But none of these places have the same mixed-use capabilities of Rise & Rooted, where different subsections of the student body would cross paths every day.

The Oval as a social hangout is only an option for a few weeks at the beginning of the fall semester and the end of the spring semester, when the weather is warm enough for the lawn chairs and hammock stands. At these times, people can be seen enjoying the grass playing Frisbee, hackysack or Spikeball, or simply lounging in the sun.

The gym requires a Griz Card with tuition paid to get in, which prevents it from being a true third place. And unless they're playing intramural sports, most people in the gym aren't there to socialize — they've got their headphones on and are focused on their own workout.

The best variety and opportunities for socialization are at the University Center, which includes the commons outside the food court, the Student Life Center, the Gaming Den and the Branch Center. There's also the new Makerspace, which is a great development, especially with its workshops and crafting events.

When UM makes decisions about venues on campus in the future, it shouldn't just think about attracting prospective students. It needs to keep social spaces in mind as a priority for students that are already here. It should focus on creating places students actually want to spend their time, which will ultimately make campus a more comfortable place for everyone.

In the meantime, we don't know what the Starbucks will look like. Maybe it will be a hectic, grab-and-go place for students when they're in a hurry before class. Or maybe it will be a place to gather and spend time with friends at any time of day. Let's hope it's the latter.

- Mariah Henry, copy chief

**Like it? Hate it? Let us know.**

Email us your opinions at [elle.daniel@umontana.edu](mailto:elle.daniel@umontana.edu)

## SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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Edited by Margie E. Burke

### HOW TO SOLVE:

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

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

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

# Winter work



Janet Simms, left, and Kelly Chadwick, who volunteer with the Montana Native Botanic Garden, laugh while they tend to the University's plants on Jan. 18.

TORI KUEHL | MONTANA KAIMIN

# In local news...

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### RED CROSS IN NEED OF HELP, SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Montana Red Cross is looking for volunteers after a span of floods and power outages across the state.

The organization hopes to build up their local volunteer numbers so disaster response can come from within the towns where an emergency might occur.

"Our disaster response efforts are really in need right now," Montana American Red Cross Executive Director Hannah Zuraff told NBC Montana. "We need local volunteers to come and help meet that need by getting trained and sheltering, helping their neighbors, getting prepared for disasters like flooding or the power outages that just happened in northwestern Montana."

In addition to needing volunteers the Red Cross is looking for more blood donors as well, with January marking national blood donor month.

To encourage donations, they are offering a chance to win a trip to the Super Bowl for Americans who give blood before Jan. 25.

### BISON GRAZING LEASES REVOKED BY BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

The Department of the Interior revoked seven grazing permits on Friday used by American Prairie to feed its herd of bison.

The permits were initially granted to assist in rewilding efforts for Montana prairies but have been controversial among ranchers and government officials, according to Montana Free Press.

The Montana Stockgrowers Association celebrated the decision as a victory for the Montana livestock industry.

"MSGAG is thrilled to see this decision by the BLM to restore grazing allotments back to their intended usage for production livestock grazing," Montana Stockgrowers Association President Lesley Robinson said in a press release

on Jan. 16. "MSGAG is proud to defend sound, lawful land management. This decision is an incredible win for public lands grazers, ranching families and rural communities across the West."

Conservation nonprofit American Prairie expressed concern about what the decision means for public lands. The organization had been using the leases to graze bison in Phillips County for around three years.

"This decision is not grounded in new impacts or new information — it appears to be completely arbitrary and is unfair," wrote Ali Fox, American Prairie CEO, in an email statement. "When federal agencies begin changing how the rules are applied after the process is complete, it undermines confidence in the system for everyone who relies on public lands."

### FISH WILDLIFE AND PARKS OFFERS REWARD FOR INFORMATION ABOUT GRIZZLY SHOOTER

Fish Wildlife and Parks and wildlife advocacy nonprofits are now offering up to \$15,000 for information related to a grizzly bear sow which was shot and killed in late October near the Montana Idaho border.

Biologists learned of the bear's death on Oct. 28 after her radio collar sent a mortality signal according to Montana Free Press. Due to grizzlies federal protections, it is illegal for the public to harm them under anything but exceptional circumstances. As of yet there has been no indication that the bear was killed in self defense.

"This was a tragic, completely preventable loss, and the consequences to grizzly recovery are enormous," said Kristine Akland, the Center for Biological Diversity's Northern Rockies director. "In a population this small and fragile, every female is critical to survival. Losing even one can tip the balance toward the decline of the entire population. We're increasing the reward because the person responsible for killing this bear needs to be held accountable."



### Kaimin Cast will be back soon!

It's a new year and a new semester, which means the Kaimin is back in print and so is the Kaimin Cast.

Due to staffing shortages, we won't have a new Kaimin Cast episode out for you to listen to this week. We'll be up and running with all new podcast episodes soon, so keep an eye out and we'll be sure to let you know as soon as the Kaimin Cast is back.

In the meantime, you can find all of our previous Kaimin Cast episodes on our website at [montanakaimin.com](http://montanakaimin.com), including our "Confessions of a college town: Pie Hole" and "Joining the herd: Building connection through anonymity."

This semester, we're hoping to bring you audio coverage not just of the University of Montana's quirkiest side hustles and roommate horror stories, but breaking news as it unfolds across campus. Got a tip? Send us an email at [elle.daniel@umconnect.umt.edu](mailto:elle.daniel@umconnect.umt.edu).

*-Elle Daniel, editor-in-chief*

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### GREENLAND TENSIONS GROW FOLLOWING NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AWARD

President Donald Trump told Norwegian prime minister Jonas Gahr Store on Jan. 18 that he no longer feels an obligation to think purely of peace when it comes to controlling Greenland according to the New York Times.

"Dear Jonas: Considering your Country decided not to give me the Nobel Peace Prize for having stopped 8 Wars PLUS, I no longer feel an obligation to think purely of Peace, although it will always be predominant," Trump wrote to Store.

The message was a response to a text from Store earlier that day proposing a call to discuss his position on Greenland, Gaza and Ukraine.

### LAS VEGAS SPHERE PLANS EXPANSION VENUE IN MARYLAND

The Las Vegas sphere, which has served as a unique venue and popular tourist attraction in Nevada, is planning to open a similar structure in National Harbor, Maryland. This new sphere will be a smaller version of the Vegas original and is expected to cost around \$200 million according to Fox News.

It will seat 6,000 people, compared to the larger models 18,600 and is expected to generate 4,750 jobs for the surrounding area. It is expected to open in 2030.

### 1,500 SOLDIERS PREPARED FOR POSSIBLE MINNESOTA DEPLOYMENT

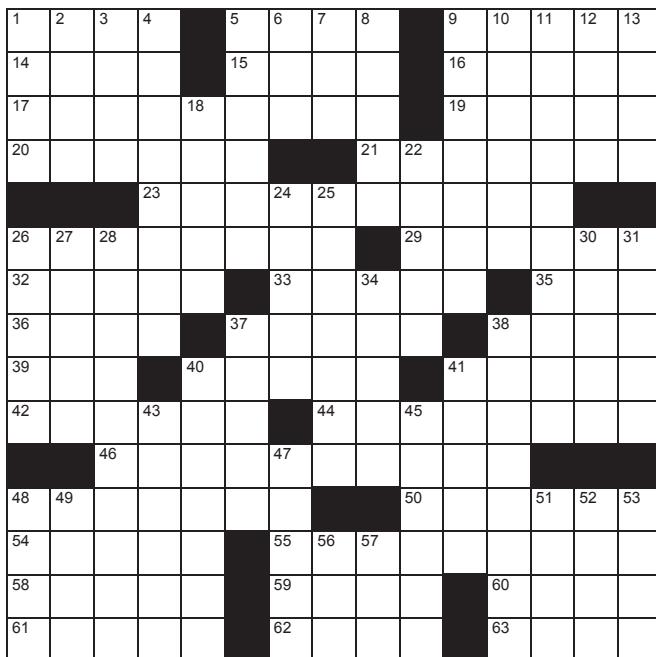
1,500 soldiers have been ordered to stand by for a potential deployment to Minnesota, according to CNN.

The pentagon's orders don't necessarily spell an imminent deployment but they are focused on being "prepared for any decision the President may or may not make," the Whitehouse Stated. As such two Alaska based Airborne Battalions have been given prepare-to-deploy orders in the North Star State according to a U.S. defense official.

The Minnesota National Guard is "staged and ready to respond," Minnesota National Guard spokesperson Army Maj. Andrea Tsuchiya said in a statement to CNN.

## The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke



### ACROSS

- 1 Fabric shop roll
- 5 Baby bird sound
- 9 "This is the worst!"
- 14 Early Ron Howard role
- 15 Eclectic online digest
- 16 Platter player, briefly
- 17 Austerity
- 19 Like some colonies
- 20 "Cannon" star William
- 21 2018 Keira Knightley film
- 23 Format, as a disk
- 26 Had an impact on
- 29 Makes happen
- 32 Fencing move
- 33 Equestrian
- 35 South, in France
- 36 Files litigation
- 37 Not a kid anymore
- 38 Bygone time
- 39 Suffix with Peking
- 40 Dinnerware piece
- 41 Kevin who played Hercules
- 42 Under control
- 44 David Blaine specialty
- 46 Cruella de Vil portrayer
- 48 Rid of impurity
- 50 Hasselblad, e.g.
- 54 Hamilton or Hunt
- 55 Philanderer
- 58 Do some tailoring

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- 59 Live anagram
- 60 Airport conveyance
- 61 Like some tree trunks
- 62 Set price
- 63 "I'm all \_\_\_"
- DOWN**
- 1 Pear type
- 2 Vision: Prefix
- 3 Mortgage
- 4 Boston and Bull
- 5 News channel guest
- 6 Summer, in Paris
- 7 Annapolis grad.
- 8 Peach, in Rome
- 9 Makeup kit item
- 10 Breathe with effort
- 11 Big name in child education
- 12 Med. school class
- 13 Florida State player, familiarly
- 18 Wilson of Heart Hunting" school

### Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

# Horoscope

## Try something new-o-scope

KAIRI LISING | ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR

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What's your new year's resolution? Fret not, gentle reader, I have that all figured out for you. It's important to start the year off right with a good mindset to take on whatever the world gives you this year. Your resolution: Try something new! In 2026, we're leaving no stone unturned and no bridge uncrossed. So what should you try this year?

**AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18):** It's time for a fashion makeover, Aquarius! You're tired of dressing like everyone else. It's time to stand out. Gone are the days of hiding behind hoodies and blue jeans. Try a new aesthetic. When you look good, you feel good.

**PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20):**

You've been locked in your room since 2020 and it's time to finally leave the cave. Seriously Pisces, touch some grass! Nothing better than spending time in nature on a hike, going to hot springs, skiing or even just taking a step outside to look at the stars. Some fresh air will do you good.

**ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19):**

You've daydreamed of writing a true chronicle of your favorite franchise for so long. This is your year. Write that fanfiction. You've been holding yourself back from truly sharing your story for fear of embarrassment.

Well, who gives a fuck? Life is hard and short. Write more gay porn. It could be the next Heated Rivalry.

**TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20):** You've been fantasizing about that one person for so long and what have you done about it? Nothing! Come on, Taurus, they're never gonna know how you feel unless you tell them. Here's a motto I live by: Life is cruel, let love destroy you.

**GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20):** I know you hate doing it, Gemini, but call your family more! They can be a lot, but at the end of the day they love you. Don't let time pass you by. Sometimes it's too late to talk to our loved ones. Take that time now.

**CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22):** It's time to breathe, Cancer. You've been busy for so long and you gotta know, it's okay to take a break. For the love of God, would it kill you to take a deep breath every once and a while? Try taking time for yourself. Foreign concept, I know. But

trust me, spending time this year with yourself will pay you back tenfold.

**LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22):** Break out of your shell, Leo! You've been stifling yourself for so long. In 2026, it's your year to be authentically yourself and authentically cringe. Don't do things for others' approval. Do things that you love, even if they are a little cringe. Laugh loud, make mistakes and be free! You'll thank me later.

**VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22):** Loosen up a little, wouldya? You've spent all your time on this earth uptight and bogged down by what everyone else thinks, so why not try something totally new? Fuck it, go skinny dipping. Nothing like being bare in a body of water. Try it legally though! We want to end the year off not in jail.

**LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22):**

You've always wanted to pick one up, but you've lacked the resolve to keep going in past years. BUT this year is your year, Libra. You're gonna finally pick up an instrument. You can practically taste it now. A jam

session with you and your aesthetically dressed friends, blending melodies and crafting tunes.

**SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21):** You wish you had more pictures to look back on all those good times. Well, you're living in the good times right now, so start

documenting! Don't be afraid to ask for more pictures and let more pictures be taken of you. You'll look back at these photos and not think about insecurities but of how much fun you were having.

**SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21):** It's time to

expand your horizons, Sag. You're an adult now and that means you gotta eat like one. No, ramen and microwave meals are not a colorful palate. Try a new food! It doesn't have to be anything fancy, just something to break up the endless cycle of Taco Bell and Lean Cuisine.

**CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19):** Make a new friend, Capricorn! A lot of times it can be easy to shut ourselves away and get used to the routine life throws at us. Well, disrupt it! Talk to someone rando on the street, strike up a convo with your barista or chat with who you sit next to in class. You'll never know, you might make a lifelong friend.



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

## New program plans to bring telescopes to 124 libraries in Montana

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SpectrUM recently gained a \$250,000 grant from NASA to place telescopes in the fall of this year in libraries across the state of Montana.

Students and families alike will be able to borrow a telescope from their local library for a week to stargaze and enjoy looking at the night sky. The telescopes will be available at every college library, so UM students and members of the community can now look at the stars without having to pay fees.

Nicholos Wethington, the associate director of library telescope programs, applied for the grant in Sep. 2024. His application was approved, with the two year project being started in July of last year. The grant is for \$250,000 and was done through NASA to place telescopes in libraries. "We will place telescopes in 124 libraries across the state," said Wethington. These libraries will include all college campus libraries, but also public libraries around the state. The project is called, "Big Sky, Bigger Dreams: Telescopes for Montana Libraries."

Wethington first got the idea for the program back in 2008. "I was a part of Astronomy clubs in Iowa, and I heard about the telescopes in the New Hampshire library systems that the New Hampshire Astronomical Society had set up," said Wethington. That program is still active to this day and continues to place and keep the telescopes in good condition in New Hampshire.

However, the program didn't start until years later. "When I moved out to Missoula, in like 2013, I joined the astronomy club and I was like, 'What about if we got telescopes in libraries?'" said Wethington. "To my surprise, the club members said that was a good idea."

After the club was on board, Wethington reached out to the Missoula Public Library. Wethington said the process went smoothly. "Everybody was on board from the get go, which was really exciting," he said. Despite that, there were some bumps with the telescopes themselves.

Wethington said he had to modify the telescope in the Missoula Public Library. "I had to do stuff like put these stickers here, change things with the finder, put in this zoom eye piece, make modifications so that people didn't change stuff with the mirror and I also had to print this little manual." However, this issue is currently being resolved through a different agency.

The International Library Telescope

Program has placed over a thousand telescopes in libraries worldwide and noted the same issue. These problems have caused them to work with the manufacturer of the telescopes so that in the future they will be ready to use as soon as they get to the library. This allows for the goals of the programs to be achieved faster.

"The intent is to ensure that patrons, kids, families, people who don't know a lot about telescopes, can have a positive experience with one," said Wethington. There is also a personal level to the program as Wethington hopes to inspire people. He said, "For me to feel successful, I think it's more just like they're inspired to look up, learn more."

This view is also shared by astronomy students at the University of Montana. Ethan Andersch, an astronomy major at UM, said, "Taking an astronomy class and being able to look at stuff through a telescope helped spur my growth into becoming an astronomy major."

The program has already placed some telescopes, but the majority have not been set up. "We have them on order and then I'll be distributing a good chunk of them in April of this year, and hope to get them into most, if not all, of the libraries by the fall," said Wethington. The program has support from the libraries as well.

Slaven Lee, the library director for the Missoula Public Library said, "Nick's program represents just one more way that MPL helps amplify people's access to innovative and fun resources like telescopes to enhance learning, creativity and STEM skills." Although, there are other goals of the program as well.

"My hope is that libraries will get telescopes, they'll be excited to use them, and then they will reach out to somebody who knows about astronomy, whether it's a local astronomy club or the Montana Space Grant Consortium, and say, 'We wanna do a little mini star party, can you send some folks that are knowledgeable about the stars to show patrons how to use a telescope?'" said Wethington. This is to help build a connection in the community and foster even more interest in the stars and space itself.

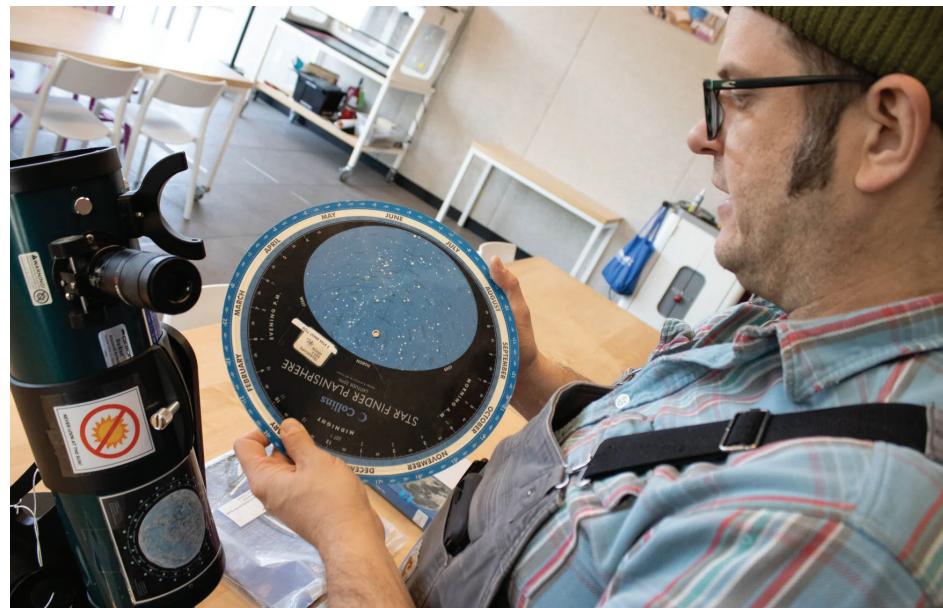
"The outreach piece is another desire, and I have a few mechanisms set up to help that be successful," said Wethington. This outreach includes talking to the libraries about events that can happen to generate more interest in the telescopes.

"I want to get telescopes out, and have them get that experience with them first, and then be able to say like, 'Wow, this is really cool, we are going to do a moon observing night,' and that generates

excitement for patrons to check it out," said Wethington. The ultimate goal of the program is to give people a good experience.

"I bought a really complicated telescope and had a disappointing experience, and was kind of like, 'I don't know if astronomy is the thing for me,' and got shied away from it for a few years," Wethington said. He highlights his experience with telescopes in the past.

This program will allow people to have a good experience with a telescope and find a brand new interest, or deepen their own interest. "If I had this experience, I would have known what I wanted to do when I got up here," Andersch said. He highlights that this program would have helped him before he came to college, and he isn't the only one with that sentiment. "I wish I had something like this in high school," Wethington said.



Nicholos Wethington, associate director of library telescope programs, demonstrates how to use a star finder at Missoula Public Library's spectrUM Discovery Area on Jan. 16. **WESTON FUDGE | MONTANA KAIMIN**



Nicholos Wethington, associate director of library telescope programs, points to a sticker he added to a telescope in Missoula Public Library's spectrUM Discovery Area on Jan. 16. **WESTON FUDGE | MONTANA KAIMIN**

# Curry Health Center accepts insurance in the new year

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The Curry Health Center began accepting outside health insurance for services rather than just the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) on Jan. 1, making healthcare more accessible to students.

Previously, students who wanted to get healthcare had to pay over \$2,000 per semester for SHIP or find a provider off campus that would accept their insurance. Now, they can use insurance from a parent or guardian's plan, employer plan or a private insurance plan on campus.

"Students weren't coming here because Curry didn't take insurance," Amy Capolupo, the Dean of Students and Associate Vice President of Wellbeing said. "We want to be accessible to students who want to use their insurance and not have to get a walkout statement."

According to Capolupo, a walkout statement is a kind of receipt that details the cost and kinds of services one receives at a healthcare facility that is then submitted to insurance companies to be covered.

Students no longer have to worry about submitting these because the CHC will handle the insurance coverage themselves.

Coverage will now be dependent on the student's provider, but there are many services students can expect access to.

"If you want more than one wellness check visit in a year, insurance maybe wouldn't cover that, but coughs, colds, STI checks, those are going to be covered typically," Capolupo said.

To be able to use their insurance plans, students could just walk in and present their insurance cards, but there's another option available.

When it comes to insurance information, Liv Wilson, the marketing and communications manager for the CHC, said they're "really encouraging students to upload it themselves" to the patient portal before they come in to "make the check in process smoother."

"There's a tutorial on our website and our social media showing how, step by step, you can upload your insurance information to the patient portal," Liv Wilson said.

The patient portal requires students to enter information like names and birthdates as well as photos of the front and back of their insurance cards.



Ann Campbell, left, a patient support specialist at Curry Health Center, helps transfer student Bodei Barteld schedule an appointment and add insurance to his account Jan. 14. **WESTON FUDGE | MONTANA KAIMIN**

The student response has been generally positive so far, according to Capolupo and Wilson, student opinion has been important to them during this shift.

Capolupo and Wilson attended an ASUM senate meeting on Sept. 24, 2025, to announce the insurance change and ask for student feedback, according to ASUM President Buddy Wilson.

"I think it's a big step in the right direction," Buddy Wilson said. "You can still pay out of pocket if that's the more affordable option, but if you have insurance and that makes it more affordable, you can take that route too."

Buddy Wilson said his dad was in the military so his insurance is TRICARE, which is now accepted by Curry. He said that a lot of places don't accept TRICARE, so it's nice that Curry does.

Teddy Harman, a freshman psychology major, is also glad for the change.

"I had to pick up my prescriptions a couple times from there and it was always so much more expensive and a pain to get.

I think accepting insurance will be more accessible and convenient," Harman said.

Some services at Curry, like dental and counseling, have yet to accept insurance.

According to the Curry Health Center's website, dental does not accept insurance, but they charge student accounts and will help students submit insurance claims to be reimbursed.

Dental care can also be covered by Medicaid with no need to submit a claim, an option that's currently unavailable for the rest of Curry's services.

Counseling costs are also charged to student accounts, but the first appointment is free. Students can schedule up to six appointments per semester.

Costs for dental and counseling appointments are heavily subsidized, according to Capolupo. A counseling appointment costs \$20 and a routine teeth cleaning costs \$59, which is much cheaper than out-of-pocket expenses at most other healthcare places.

The health center is working to continue furthering the accessibility of their services. Capolupo said that if they notice 10 students with an insurance plan that isn't currently accepted, they'll try to contract that provider. She also said that ideally, all Curry Health Center services will accept Medicaid in the Fall.

"We're just sort of working out the glitches this semester," Capolupo said.

As Curry adjusts, Capolupo says they'd like patience from students with the billing process.

"Some of our initial bills are going to take time, so if you don't get a bill for 30 days, don't panic, because it's coming," Capolupo said. "Have a little bit of patience with getting the insurance claims processed."

That said, the Curry Health Center is available to help students who are confused about insurance or need help.

"If you've got questions, we'll certainly look into it," Capolupo said.

# BREWING CONFLICT

**Story by Bee Reiswig | Photos by Jackson Mailey**



**With a new Starbucks set to open on campus, some students are now questioning the impact of their opinion at UM.**

**A**t first, Madelyn Blackhart thought a Starbucks opening at the University of Montana was a joke. The news was surprising, but it was true. Sitting in the dining hall with a friend, it took her a moment to process. Blackhart's main thought was that "it just doesn't make sense."

After the announcement came resistance by the student body including a student organized petition and a protest. More than 700 students signed the petition, around six percent of the student population. It was almost three times the amount of students needed for the Associated Students of the University of Montana to draft a resolution.

The student government drafted a resolution opposing Starbucks in December, citing a preference for local businesses instead of national chains. However, the administration confirmed that the contract is finalized and cannot be changed. The global coffee company will officially have a place on campus.

The Starbucks will open in the former Rise & Rooted location, a pizza place, espresso bar and lounge in the Lomasson Center that closed when The Lodge began operations in 2024. According to Dave Kuntz, director of strategic communications, UM's Starbucks will be open by the start of the next academic year at the latest.

The corporation's arrival on campus is notable for the University of Montana, as all of the permanent dining options on campus are currently local businesses — something of which many students take pride. Current franchises such as Chick-

fil-A and Pizza Hut are only on campus for sports events.

Administrators hope a permanent global chain at UM will help with recruitment, bring community members in and give students another place to hang out on campus. Despite some pushback, the University looks forward to the new partnership.

"That's part of making tough decisions as University leaders," said Kuntz, a third generation graduate of UM. "One of the things that I noticed, through the luxury of hindsight and time and getting older, is students who sacrifice today will be to the benefit of students tomorrow."

But many students worry that a corporation takes away from the community and small-business focus of Missoula.

## TAKEN BY SURPRISE

Blackhart has worked for The Market as a barista since the start of last semester after working with campus dining's catering as a freshman. She said she wasn't impressed by the news of a campus Starbucks. There are seven Starbucks locations in Missoula, including one in the Albertson's, a 10-minute walk from UM.



Sophomore and barista Madelyn Blackhart stands behind the counter of the UC Market on Jan. 16.

"It feels like the only reason to have it is just to say we have it," Blackhart said. "Especially when there's great coffee [at] multiple places just a block off campus."

Missoula has at least 16 different local coffee shops, including Break Espresso, Funk It Coffee and Thrift and Granite Mill Coffee. A Liquid Planet lies just across the street from the University of Montana and another cafe, Tandem Bakery, is only a few minutes' walk away.

Blackhart, a 19-year-old sophomore studying psychology, worked at the Pacific Northwest coffee chain Wake Up Call over the summer. Though her experience was intense, she decided to put her skills to use at the University.

She was eating dinner at The Lodge with a friend when the conversation surrounding a new Starbucks on campus came up. She didn't believe it at first. Once she realized that her friend was serious, Blackhart was shocked.

She was also a little worried about the competition that may stem from Starbucks having a wider variety of drinks. Though The Market offers a great deal more than just coffee — sourced from the local Black Coffee Roasting Company — they don't have blenders. Students can't get something like a Carmel Ribbon Crunch Frappuccino at The Market. Mostly, Blackhart didn't understand the decision.

"Even with some of our places in the food court, even there that's Missoula-specific food places like Calypso, Nautical Bowls and Gary's Burgers," Blackhart said. "Starbucks just feels so out of place."



Madelyn Blackhart steams a matcha mix at the UC Market on Jan. 16.

## SO, WHAT'S THE TEA?

A corporate addition to campus has been in the works since 2019.

A student life master plan made that year, which focused on making UM more inviting to new recruits, included student feedback about wanting familiar national brands. That response was confirmed by a 2022 Food Court Student Survey in which Starbucks was the second most-requested restaurant, according to Director of Campus Dining Richard Huffman.

Once The Lodge officially opened, Campus Dining began looking for a national coffee franchise. The contract with Starbucks was signed in June 2025, with the University of Montana paying 7% of the net sales. The UM location will be completely staffed and run by Campus Dining and will receive the entirety of the revenue.

Students will be entitled to the same "salaries, benefits and protections" as other campus workers, according to Huffman. The UM Starbucks site will accept UMoney and Bear Bucks, however it will not accept meal swipes.

"Not everyone is against Starbucks," Huffman wrote in an email to the Kaimin. "National chains and buying local are not mutually exclusive."

The iconic green mermaid that will soon adorn the main walkway into the University of Montana's campus has had her fair share of controversy since her inception. Starbucks was founded in 1971 at the Seattle Pike Place Market. The company was boycotted in 2012 after an executive announced the company's support of same-sex marriage.

In 2015, Starbucks was widely mocked for its "Race Together" campaign in which baristas were encouraged to spark discussions about race by writing the phrase on coffee cups.

According to Reuters, the National Labor Relations Board forced the company to re-open 23 stores in 2023 that were allegedly closed in order to prevent a nationwide unionization campaign. That same year, a boycott was called as Starbucks sued Starbucks Workers United for copyright infringement following a pro-Palestinian post by the union. Starbucks lost \$11 billion in the two weeks after the boycott began, according to The Boston Globe.

The end of 2025 saw a labor strike by Starbucks Workers United, calling for a boycott by customers in support of complaints about pay, scheduling and union busting. Forbes reported that the company would be closing 1% of its U.S. locations by the end of 2025 due to financial reasons. According to Starbucks' "Store Counts: by Market," there were 18,311 U.S. locations by the end of the fiscal year, down from 18,734 the previous quarter.

The latest Starbucks-related controversy, at least in Missoula, is that the University will be bringing the national chain to the Lomasson Center where the Rise & Rooted used to be. Kuntz explained that The Lodge needed more employees than the Food Zoo. Rise & Rooted closed in order to maintain enough staff for The Lodge.

Students were upset at the loss of space. Hailey Paris, a 21-year-old psychology and communications senior from Spokane, Washington, worked at Rise & Rooted for two years prior to its closure. Though she felt that the new dining center is an improvement, Paris was disappointed at the loss of a place to socialize, study and work.

"There was something really special about having a small, student-run business. Obviously it was really difficult for the student community to kind of grieve that," Paris said. "Now, having to be forced to readjust to something more corporate and large scale, I think takes away from a lot of spirit that came from a student-run establishment."

Paris didn't feel as though her voice was taken into account. "The student body is going to be the ones that are putting their money into this, paying for coffees, food, everything," Paris said. "If [the administration] want to go ahead with it, that's obviously their decision, but even making mention to what is being brought up by concerned students would be important and maybe even change or alleviate some of the concerns and criticisms."

Though the student body is one of the intended markets for the incoming Starbucks, the University also hopes that the Missoula community will make use of the coffee shop, especially those in neighborhoods near UM, according to Dave Kuntz.

Paris said it still feels as though the administration isn't responding to students' opinions — not about Rise & Rooted closing, and not about the Starbucks that will be replacing it.

## FINDING A VOICE

Maddie Grebb found out about the new addition to campus when another student, Jake Jarrett, brought it up in a Climate Response Club meeting. As the president, the 22-year-old sustainability science and practice senior from Pennsylvania bounced ideas off of the club to figure out what actions to take next. The club debated just sharing the information, but ultimately landed on a petition since it felt that students were passionate about the subject.

A paper copy made its way around the University for two weeks at the end of fall semester. In that time, it garnered more than 300 signatures. The online version received almost 400.

"Missoula and the University of Montana attract so many students because of its community-centered atmosphere, and bringing in a corporate chain does not align with [those] values," Grebb said. "As the Climate Response Club, we inherently don't stand with corporations that sacrifice people to go for profit. And also



Liquid Planet barista Lucy Taylor prepares a drink with caramel drizzle on top on Jan. 16.



The new Starbucks will be located in the Emma B. Lomasson Center, photographed on Jan. 19.

sacrificing the environment by choosing something that's at a national, global, corporate scale as opposed to local."

The Climate Response Club was unable to get a response from Seth Bodnar. However, they were able to speak to someone in his office after their protest outside the University Hall.

"In a perfect world, we wouldn't have a president signing to have large corporate chains coming into our University without student consultation, but what's done is done," Grebb said. "Jake and I want to speak with more people about how we can improve the student consultation process."

While aware of the large corporations at football games, Grebb explained that she is not a fan of the fact that Pizza Hut and Chick-fil-a take part in sports games either, and felt that the Rise and Rooted should have been kept running. Despite the 2022 student survey, Grebb stated that she is still opposed to Starbucks coming to campus.

Although the Starbucks deal with UM is finalized, an ASUM member brought a resolution forward in December opposing the new coffee shop. None of the five speakers at the final ASUM meeting of the fall semester were in support of the new Starbucks, according to Vice President Maya Anderson.

"Some senators knew about it [the Starbucks,] but hearing about it from different people delivering public comment was pretty impactful," Anderson said. "A lot of what Starbucks represents as a large corporation seems at odds with a lot of the values that UM has presented themselves to stand for, so I think a lot of students have picked up on that contradiction and are shining a spotlight on the University for that."

Anderson worked as a student political action director last year in coordination with ASUM. This year, as vice president, many of her responsibilities regard senators and their committee work.

But before she began her career in the civic world, Anderson was a barista at the University of Montana for three years.

Outside of her role in ASUM, she has been disappointed with the announcement of a Starbucks on campus.

"I had always prized that work on the connections that I made with the students specifically and our community relations," Anderson said. "I'm a little concerned about the potential competition between The Market and Starbucks and how that will play out."

Though UM has other corporate contacts, currently Chick-fil-A and Pizza Hut are only present at Washington-Griz Stadium during football games. Pizza Hut is also in the Adams Center during basketball and volleyball games. Anderson felt as though that changed the impact those corporations have on campus. She acknowledged that UM may want to draw more people in for those events.

"There is a pretty big difference between the corporations or the brands that are invited to come in for our football games and which brands are permanently set up on campus, especially at such a core junction of our campus," Anderson said.

## MAKING SACRIFICES

Dave Kuntz said he was not surprised by the student response to the incoming Starbucks.

"We always expect our students to raise their concerns and voice their opinions on issues, whether it's something here, super local to campus, or something on a global stage," Kuntz said. "We just hope that for students who are active in this debate on both sides, it actually ends up being a good learning opportunity that hopefully prepares them for a better experience in the workforce, too."

Though he understood that it would upset some students, Kuntz also explained that sometimes hard decisions must be made now for a better University in the future.

"For UM Dining, it solved both those problems. That space [Rise and Rooted] was reopened, it can be a space where you don't have to have a meal plan to go in the middle of the day and get a cup of coffee," Kuntz said. "And also met the needs of this 2022 survey where students had identified where they wanted [recognized brands]."

According to Kuntz, the 2022 student survey demonstrated that chains polled better than local businesses. Additionally, the University of Montana hoped that a recognizable chain would bring in more students in the future. Kuntz recognized that bringing a Starbucks to campus is a way UM can compete with schools like Montana State University and Boise State University.

"We're also banking a little bit on having a recognizable national brand in walkable distance for the people who live

on University and Gerald, and Connell and Daly. So it provides a sort of revenue or connection to the University there," Kuntz said.

The Lomasson doesn't have much at the moment. The most notable part of the building is UM's Business Center and Human Resources. Though the University has plans to tear it down, according to Kuntz, it may take a while.

The Starbucks will be set up soon and the Lomasson Building will be used as a floating space for departments as updates happen across campus.

Until the University feels that there is no need for a free area, the building will stay as it is. After that, Kuntz said the region may be turned into a green space that students can utilize closer to the dorms.

As a whole, the University wants to make the area near the dorms more resident-friendly, according to Kuntz. Starbucks is a part of that goal, to have another area in which students can sit and get a cup of coffee.

## WHERE ELSE TO GO?

Abigail Binder, a 22-year-old forestry fourth year from Florence, is a student manager at The Market. She's been there for three years. She signed the petition that was put up at her place of work last fall, since she opposed the potential loss in revenue for small businesses. She and some of her coworkers are concerned that smaller businesses like Recess and Biz



Members of UM's Climate Response Club, including Maddie Grebb, center left, and Jake Jarrett, center right, pose in front of Main Hall during a protest on Dec. 10, 2022.  
CONTRIBUTED | MADDIE GREBB

Buzz, campus dining coffee shops, may struggle with the competition.

Regardless, there have been discussions about students moving over to the Starbucks on campus, and Binder is considering it.

"I can kind of play Devil's advocate," Binder said. "It does bring attention to UM for bringing out-of-state students, but it does take away from our local ideologies."

Binder is mostly concerned about the pay — whether or not she would get a raise or if students would be paid less there. If she can get paid more in order to help with paying rent, Binder is willing to make the shift.

"I think people can be open to it, it's just sad the loss of local opportunities that could have been used," Binder said.

Seamus Edgar, a physics student in his third year from East Helena, said his favorite Missoula coffee comes from Liquid Planet, where "they've never gotten [him] wrong." Other than that, Edgar likes to frequent Florence Coffee Company, since it also has locations in his hometown.

He also liked Think Tank, the coffee shop located near the chemistry building, which closed in May. According to Huffman, the location closed due to improper infrastructure, proximity to other locations and troubles with heating.

Edgar was under the impression that Think Tank was a busy place, and didn't understand why it closed. Now, with the addition of a Starbucks, he said he felt let down.

"I was like, 'There's no way they're taking something like Starbucks and putting it on campus,'" Edgar said. "But once it settled in a bit more, the more I was like, 'No, they probably would do that. That's really not cool.'"

Hannah Thornton would agree. The 22-year-old English senior from Southern California made a personal commitment in 2023 not to drink Starbucks anymore.

"At that time I wasn't living in the United States, and my biggest concern was not being able to find a pumpkin spice latte," Thornton said, speaking of her time as an au pair in Spain. "It's a personal commitment to me, and so I love highlighting local coffee shops and I personally always think that the coffee is better."

Her decision was sparked in part by the fact she disagreed with Starbucks' reaction to the pro-Palestinian tweet made by its union. The company initiated a lawsuit for copyright infringement after Starbucks Workers United made and deleted a pro-Palestinian post. Starbucks was concerned that social media users were mistaking the company for the union. Thornton said supporting local businesses in ways that go back to the community are also important to her.

Chris Lafely, owner, founder and pastry chef at Morning Birds Bakery, agrees.



Liquid Planet makes their own coffee beans locally, shown on the right, as barista Lucy Taylor prepares to make a drink on Jan. 16.

"[Starbucks'] intent is to use the students as consumers, not necessarily to serve them," Lafely said in an email to the Kaimin. "It would be hypocritical of me to say that a local provider would not be interested in capitalizing upon the students, but at least the revenue generated would stay mostly in state, and the needs of the students would be attended to more readily."

Though Thornton theorized that the Starbucks will be used, she also said she expects many students will avoid it altogether.

"There are a lot of corporations that are very, very hard to avoid, but I feel like coffee is one of these ones that it's very easy to support local," Thornton said. "In fact, I find it preferable and more enjoyable too."

Thornton's favorite spots in Missoula are Butterfly Herbs, Tandem Bakery and Vera Donuts.

Eris Moore is another fan of Tandem. The 22-year-old senior in neuroscience from Great Falls is upset at how little he felt heard by the administration.

"How tone deaf is this University administration to decide that what would be best for this campus is a Starbucks?" Moore said. "It feels like there's nothing that we can do because they've already made up their mind."

Moore felt especially disappointed by the fact that the University already has multiple coffee shops on campus in addition to the two that are within blocks of UM. He felt that the decision to include a corporation on campus was detrimental not only to the University of Montana, but to Missoula as a whole. Beyond that, Moore is staunchly against Starbucks as a business model.

"I support unions. I support union workers. I support local coffee shops. I support local employers. I support local business," Moore said. "And Starbucks fundamentally does not support the same things I do. We are not aligned in our beliefs."

Lucy Taylor works at the Liquid Planet, a local Missoulian chain, just across the street from Jesse Hall. Her place of work is less than a five minute walk away

from the Lommasson. Luckily, Taylor is relatively optimistic about the new addition to campus.

"I can see this as being another reason for students [to come to UM]," Taylor said. "I'm hoping that [students] find a good balance."

After all, Taylor explained that Liquid Planet has built a good community over the years. People come not only for the coffee or for the food, but for "the banter back and forth with some of the baristas." Her only concern is that new students might not get that opportunity, since Starbucks is so much more familiar to those not from Missoula.

"As a community member more than a student now," Taylor said. "I'm a little worried as to how it will change with the younger generation who have a little less sense of community."

Despite the petition, the new Starbucks is set to open. Until then, whether the franchise will be a benefit to campus or a harm to local coffee shops remains to be seen.

# New Year's resolutions bring packed gyms

SABRINA PHILIP | ARTS REPORTER  
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The rock climbing wall, busy weight room and the smell of sweat and cleaning solution are all defining elements of the University of Montana Fitness and Recreation Center. The visitor profile includes students, Alumni and faculty, a community that often increases after the new year due to New Year's resolutions.

"You see a huge spike right after the new year, when everybody comes back, when they've been eating ham and cookies," said Steve Thompson, the director of campus recreation at the University of Montana. "Then it'll last probably into February, and then workloads, and the reality of midterms and all those kinds of things set in, and again, you see a similar kind of pattern going toward the end of the semester."

Having worked at UM for the past 13 years, Thompson said the recreation center is a place that has always been popular. While there was a bigger student population when he first arrived at the University, Thompson said there has been "consistent usage patterns over the course of all the years that I've been here."

Thompson confirmed a spike in attendees at the recreation center at the start of the spring semester, which correlates with the start of the

new year. Yet, he said this spike quickly goes down as school progresses for students.

"Toward the end of the semester, end of the fall, we'll have between 250 and 400 people in here a day," Thompson said. "When, say, next week happens, like next Tuesday, we will have well over a thousand people in here through the course of the day. Easily a thousand people, and it will probably stay that way for the next two or three weeks, until workloads and stuff like that start hitting."

With this spike in numbers comes an increase in equipment use and machine use on a daily basis. Depending on the number of visitors at the recreation center, this can cause delays and changes to the normal routine of regular gymgoers.

Thompson said while there is a noticeable increase in the first few weeks of the spring semester, complaints are not a common problem he has.

"Very, very, very rarely have I ever heard, like, 'Where are all these people coming from?' because the folks that work out here regularly understand what's about to happen, and they also understand the cyclical nature of it," Thompson said. "They understand that these people that they're gonna be fighting with for equipment, they're gonna be going away probably. A lot of them are gonna be

disappearing here in the next few weeks, so they know it'll kind of go back to normal."

Jazzy Choka, a freshman from Brighton, Colorado, attends the gym three to four times a week. She said that while she understands the want of regular gymgoers like herself to use machines as they normally do, she is not frustrated by the increase in visitors during this time of year.

"I think that everyone wants to be able to get to their machine, but I love seeing people at the gym," Choka said. "That's a great goal. I hope it's for healthy reasons, but I'm always open to having people in here."

Choka said her goal in working out is to live longer and to relieve her chronic back issues.

Kayli Julius, the wellbeing director at the Curry Health Center, agreed the benefits of making a goal to move your body help not only physically, but mentally.

"There are endless benefits of moving your body, and I think from just a holistic standpoint starting out, the more you move your body, there's a direct correlation to improved mental health," Julius said. "So we all feel better after we move. It improves confidence, and can kind of be a launching pad for just a better, more productive day."

Julius said one of the most important parts of a fitness journey, such as one associated

with a New Year's resolution, is to have patience with yourself. She said results take time to see and feel, and it is important to modify a routine if something is not working.

"I think breaking a resolution doesn't mean you're not going to achieve your goal," Julius said. "In order to successfully make a change, you're going to always fail. What in your system or what in your process didn't work, and how can you change that so that you can continue to show up for yourself? Failure is inevitable in all things, we just need to figure out a way to come back."

Choka echoed Julius' advice in reaffirming the patience needed in motivating yourself to attend the gym. She shared both advice for newcomers and regulars, both of which revolve around patience and kindness to yourself and others.

"For new people at the gym, I think my main piece of advice would be don't overdo it if you give yourself too much to chew," Choka said. "You're not gonna come back, you're gonna burn out, you know, keep going because it's really helpful for your health."

Choka said that everyone coming to the gym was once a beginner, too.

"I think a lot of people feel that way," she said.

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# Who's sweeping the Oscars?

BLUE ROGALSKI | ARTS REPORTER

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With award season upon us and the Oscars right around the corner, cinephiles are anxious at the possibility of seeing Jessie Buckley's heartbreakingly wails in "Hamnet" or the genre-bending "Sinners" score to receive awards on stage on the night of the Oscars. With votes for nominations finalized on Jan. 16, actors are scrambling to gain publicity and make every second count in swaying the Academy in their favor.

This Oscars season is quite different in terms of awards because, as of this year, Academy voters are not required to watch all nominated films in order to vote. This could potentially sway the results and give viewers more insight into what factors go into deciding the awards.

We've witnessed such last-minute publicity stunts as Bong Joon Ho hosting a special screening of "Marty Supreme" with director Josh Safdie the day before nominations are finalized, squeezing every ounce of marketing they can get, hoping to get the film nominated for an Oscar just under the wire.

As award season moves onward, a thread seems to be developing among voters that could potentially give viewers more insight into what to expect for the Academy Awards.

While prior awards do not necessarily determine who will win or be nominated for an Oscar, and are generally a very shaky indicator with poor correlation, it is worth noting that overall exposure is heavily boosted by the awards prior to the Oscars.

"One Battle After Another," (94% on Rotten Tomatoes) directed by Paul Thomas Anderson and "Sinners," (97% on Rotten Tomatoes) directed by Ryan Coogler have both received awards throughout the season.

At the Golden Globes, "One Battle After Another" took home a total of four awards, including Best Director and Best Motion Picture for a musical or comedy. "One Battle After Another" follows a deadbeat revolutionary and his teenage daughter living in paranoia. "Sinners," set in 1932, follows twin brothers that move back to their hometown in Jim Crow era Mississippi, only to face vampiric terror.



The Roxy Theater sign advertises newly released films that are in the running for the 2026 Oscars on Jan. 14.

14. TORI KUEHL | MONTANA KAIMIN

While "Sinners" was also highly awarded, including both a Critic's Choice Award and Golden Globe for best original score, the film does contain horror elements. The Academy Awards have long been notorious for their distaste and neglect of the horror genre over the years, leaving "Sinners" to feel somewhat doomed in the fight for best picture. Such highly acclaimed films as "The Shining" and "Hereditary" failed to be awarded an Oscar.

"I know that it's definitely going to either be 'Sinners' or 'One Battle After Another,'" Salome Daniels, a Roxy theater patron, said. "I hope it's 'Sinners.' Everyone's saying since 'Sinners' is a horror movie, it won't win. I hope it does, though, because it didn't sweep at the Globes, but 'One Battle After Another' did. I hope that Ryan Coogler at least wins best director."

Daniels said that the last movie that won Best Picture with a Black director and ensemble cast was "Moonlight" in 2017, nearly a decade ago. "'One Battle After Another' won a lot at the Globes and I hope that 'Sinners' takes its place at the Oscars. I really loved 'One Battle,' but I think it was a political movie that kind of took a neutral stance," Daniels said. "It didn't really say 'we are on this side or that side,' to an extent, because it was satirical at moments."

Daniels said that her prediction for Best Actor was Wagner Moura in "The Secret Agent" (98% on Rotten Tomatoes), where a teacher of technology flees in order to escape his chaotic past. "He's in two really big deal movies this year, so I think he's definitely a contender." She said that stars like Timothee Chalamet and Jesse Plemons were also obvious picks for the award given their consistent performances and notable roles this year.

For actresses, she said that she felt that Jessie Buckley and Emma Stone really stood out in that category. "Emma Stone won last year, so I think it's someone else's turn," she said.

Happypumpkin18 on Letterboxd, a popular movie review app, also endorsed Emma Stone's role in "Bugonia," stating in a review "This has the best ending I've ever seen in a movie. Yorgos truly never misses, and Emma Stone, wow." "Bugonia" tells the story of a CEO of a major company kidnapped by two conspiracy theorists on the basis that she is an alien.

When "Hamnet" (86% on Rotten Tomatoes) hit the theaters, it was largely dismissed as "Oscar bait," for everything from the star-studded cast, with Jessie Buckley and Paul Mescal, to the historical fiction genre itself. Granted, a fictional period piece based on the personal life of Shake-

speare and its influence on his plays does seem like the exact kind of movie that was made to win Oscars. It hasn't been as well recognized and highly acclaimed as some of its counterparts, such as "One Battle After Another," but it did win best picture at the Golden Globes,

The big four mentioned above ("Marty Supreme," "Sinners," "One Battle After Another" and "Hamnet") seem like obvious nominations for best picture, given their high acclaim relative to other films that came out this year and popularity and relevance to popular culture currently. "Marty Supreme's" marketing stunts caused massive waves online, such as the "Marty Supreme" branded jacket becoming a declaration of adoration for the film and a fashion statement on its own. Both stars of the film, Timothee Chalamet and Odessa A'zion have been seen wearing it to increase the buzz surrounding the film itself.

"Sinners" had a similar impact on social media, sparking trends referencing the film, specifically on TikTok, where the poster pretends to be lured outside, similar to a scene in the film. The film notably won the Golden Globe award for cinematic and box office achievement. This award is given to movies that usually have a large public impact, largely requiring the film to be highly grossing in the box office and to have been seen in theaters by the most people. "Sinners" was very high grossing, but did not make the most amount of money overall. In 2024, "Barbie" won the same award for its intense cultural impact at the time of its release.

Despite the sheer volume of film material that came out this year, few films stand out as widely praised.

"I haven't seen enough movies of the new year," Daniels said. "But my guess for best picture nominations would be 'One Battle After Another,' 'Sinners,' 'Bugonia,' 'Sentimental Value,' maybe 'Wicked,' 'Marty Supreme,' 'Secret Agent,' 'It was just an accident' and 'Hamnet,' for sure."

Daniels said that she thought a movie's accolades in the Golden Globes awards could actually deter its success in the Oscars. "I don't know if 'Sorry, Baby' is going to make it because it was in the Globes," she said.

# Ultimate frisbee teams combine

ABIGAIL STENKAMP | SPORTS REPORTER

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At the University of Montana, it's typical of club and athletic teams to be divided by gender, but Smokejump and Pillowfight, the frisbee team's located on campus, have decided to break the norm and combine the two teams.

"It's a really unique environment. As well as, it is a great outlet to meet new and interesting people," said Abby Brown, a senior Native American studies student and women's ultimate frisbee team president.

After gaining more female members, the women's team broke off and was established in 2013. The women's team wanted the name to represent all its fun and sisterhood.

"We just thought it would be funny to be called Pillowfight and make it seem kinda silly but then come out and be super intense" Kari Shelkey, the women's coach and past Pillowfight player, said.

The teams started having separate practices. They continued to stay involved with one another's programs. It wasn't until recent years that coaches, captains, and some players began intentionally planning practices that were built to have both teams involved.

During mixed practices, both teams prioritized comfortability and creating a friendship between their players.

"With ultimate frisbee we really focus on getting our rookies comfortable with people on each team," Brown said. "During those practices, we go through drills that aren't the hardest for frisbee but focus on building chemistry and relationships, not so much skill."

Brown spoke about how these types of practices help develop the connection between each other's teams. This community translates on the field and impacts the players' social life off the field.

William Mottram, a senior marketing student from Portland and one of Smokejump's captains said, "Some of my greatest friends are on Pillowfight. My life would be completely different if we didn't intermingle. So, in that way I'm super thankful that we have mixed practices."

Not only do mixed practices increase companionship, but it also benefits both teams' physical ability and technical aspects of the game. On the men's side,



Members of the 2025 women's Frisbee team practice contested throws during their first practice of the season in Schreiber Gym on Jan. 19.

WILL LADYMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN

it's learning to be more intentional and increase accuracy of throws, because women tend to be shorter and cover less distance between strides, thus they have a smaller throwing window.

"Frisbee is a non-contact sport," Mottram said. "We really emphasize body control and being safe when you're jumping up in the air."

The women's team benefits from not only having more numbers on the field, but the pace of play is increased.

"When the women play with the men it is really exciting getting to see those top players just kinda ball out, and they will beat up on most men out of the field," Lynch said.

Oliver Jepson, a men's team captain and senior aquatic life biology student at UM, said, "Ultimate is a big community, that's why I think so many people love to play. A big part of that community is playing

mixed. Unfortunately in college we are separated by gender, but we love practicing with our [women's] team."

"Sometimes college guys can come off a little bit intimidating," Brown said, "but when you're in such a close proximity and just playing a nice, fun game with them it's really easy to get to know each other."

There is a well established group of competitors who continue to have fun and play ultimate after their time in college is complete. Missoula's ultimate community is a mixed team.

Lynch said, "In Missoula especially when you get done with college you are almost always playing co-ed and that is super unique. The size of participants that we have based on how small our population is, is considered rare."

The college teams at UM are a huge building block for this community. With this comes an extensive alumni presence.

Both the men and women's team utilize this distinctive opportunity.

"The alumni help so much with funds and really getting our rookies into the sport. With our team anyone can join at any time so some years our vets aren't as experienced as others," Brown said. "When tournaments are in town, alumni will host other college's women, so they have a place to stay the night. It's a very inviting and family-like community."

Jepson said, "Typically two or three times a semester, usually before a tournament we send out a call to all the Missoula ultimate community, and they'll come in and beat us."

Splinters is a mixed indoor tournament coming up in February that some UM players will be competing in. This tournament is a little different than a traditional frisbee tournament due to it consisting of a smaller field and five

people per team as opposed to the seven players during a typical tournament. These parameters assist in making players work together as one cohesive team.

"It's so much fun because it's indoor so it's not super competitive frisbee but it's very much so community building," Brown said. "It's really easy to get to know each other and it kinda like pushes you to hang out and have fun."

Despite the men's team being in a rebuilding phase and the women's team still looking for additional players, they have remained high-spirited and committed to their love for the sport. This attitude is reflected at tournaments in the form of a "Spirit of the Game" prize.

Lynch said, "If that tournament has a spirit prize, we are always in the running, if they don't win it. They almost always win, when it is available, though."

"We are super welcoming," Mottram said. "We always encourage people to come out and if you see us on the oval, please come over and throw with us. We are always out there, and we just love seeing these random people who are walking in between classes and come throw. You guys make our day."



Linus Reaver reaches up to catch a high pass during warmups at the first Frisbee practice of the year on Jan. 15.  
WILL LADYMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN



Tyler Fritz smiles during a warmup toss and catch with his partner, Linus Reaver, on Jan. 15. **WILL LADYMAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**

## SPORTS BRIEFS

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### BREAKING RECORDS

The University of Montana's track and field team travelled to Spokane to start the new year. With this trip, the Griz were able to put its team on top and break three school records.

Tara Ohlwiler and Karsen Beitz both extended their own school records in the women's 60m and the men's 200m.

Callie Wilson ran the women's 200m for the first time in her collegiate career and broke a school record that stood for 18 years.

Head coach Doug Fraley contributes this success to how hard the team worked over the winter break.

"We had a great portion of our team get work done during the break. You can't come back and have these types of performances unless you've been putting the work in while you were away," Fraley said to UM Athletics. "I think that's the thing that I'm most proud of is our team's work ethic through the break."

### BOBCATS TAKE THE WIN

On Saturday, the Griz basketball teams travelled to Bozeman for the first of two games with the Bobcats.

Both teams had high hopes for the rivalry game, but were met with a loss at the final whistle.

The Lady Griz were dominated by the Bobcats in a 82-44 loss, moving the Lady Griz overall record to 3-13 and 0-5 in Big Sky Conference play.

The team gave up 32 turnovers, compared to Montana State's 14, and only took 41 shots throughout the game.

This was the Lady Griz's third consecutive game without senior point guard Mack Konig after being out with a suspected injury.

"You play any game without your primary ball handler and it hurts. You play this game without your primary ball handler and it's pretty daunting," Lady Griz head coach, Nate Harris, said.

The men's team lost 76-67 against the Bobcats, a team that they were able to take the sweep against last season. The Griz also handed the Cats its first regular season win against UM since 2023.

The Griz dropped to 9-9 all season and 3-2 in the Big Sky Conference. The Griz led the Bobcats in both field goal percentage, 43% to 41%, and in free throw percentage, 93% to 77%.

However, the team was unable to keep its turnovers under control.

"These games come down to performances," Griz head coach, **Travis DeCuir**, said. "You can't beat a team when you turn the ball over 15 times. We gave them way too many offensive opportunities. We were playing well enough early in the first half to build a really good lead, we just gave the ball away too many times."

President's Lecture Series Presents

An Evening With Sean Sherman, The Sioux Chef

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3  
University Center Ballroom  
and Livestream

Free and Open to the Public

ASL Interpretation will be provided for this event



UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA CAMPUS DINING



# 'Say Gay Plays' return to UM

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ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY KAIRI LISING

An audience waited in a nearly-packed theater as the lights dimmed and a hush fell over the crowd. The second annual "Say Gay Plays" were about to begin at the University of Montana's Montana Theatre on Jan. 17.

Voyage Theater Company created "Say Gay Plays" in response to Florida's "Don't Say Gay" legislation that was passed in 2022, which restricted discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity in public schools.

According to Michael Legg, the artistic director of Montana Repertory Theatre, Voyage Theater approached him two years ago in the hopes of creating a partnership for the "Say Gay Plays" to be performed in Missoula. One stipulation is that the partnership must be done in support of an LGBTQ+ community center, Legg said, so the plays support the local Western Montana LGBTQ+ Center in Missoula.

"They really wanted to have a way where, not only can we say gay, but we can tell stories, and make sure we're telling queer stories to stand up to that kind of legislation and oppression," Legg said.

The partnership also extends across several other theater groups in town, including Room 131 Productions, MissCast Productions and Griz Downstage.

The audience saw a variety of stories, some exploring queer joy, others ending with harsh realities. "Montana" by Emily Feldman followed two women who met and fell in love at a work conference. They took turns addressing the audience about their nervousness.

"Our F\*cking Play" by Esho Rasko is about a high school drama department whose next production gets shut down by the school board for its LGBTQ+ theme.

Griz Downstage is led by second-year director Julianne Jensen, an acting major from Great Falls.

"When I was growing up, there was no queer theater. Queer theater in Great Falls was not really a thing that could be imagined," Jensen said. "There is a general sense of community that is really, really incredible in this kind of situation because we don't have enough of that."

In Missoula, the "Say Gay Plays" are performed entirely by volunteers. Joseph Kellogg, a volunteer with MissCast Productions, expressed his gratitude for the support towards the production.

"It's nice to know there is a community for this," Kellogg said.

The response to the plays has been positive, Legg said, and they hope to continue the annual "Say Gay Plays" partnership with the Western Montana LGBTQ+ Center.



Left to right, Morgan Davis, Sophie Sproull, Jean Verlain and Octavio Jimenez look on as Andrew Buchholz acts as their dungeon master during the "Say Gay Plays" at Montana Theatre on Jan. 17.



Josh, left, played by Gabe Malek looks at his script while Alex, played by Michael Uzzi, scowls in his direction at the Montana Theatre on Jan. 17.



Good Mike, left, played by Daniel Crary, embraces Bad Mike, played by Joseph Kellogg during the "Say Gay Plays" at the Montana Theatre Jan. 17.