

MONTANA KAIMIN

WELCOME

TO GUN

COUNTRY

Where a ranching culture,
suicide rates and an urban campus
blur the meaning of safety

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Cover Photo
Photographer



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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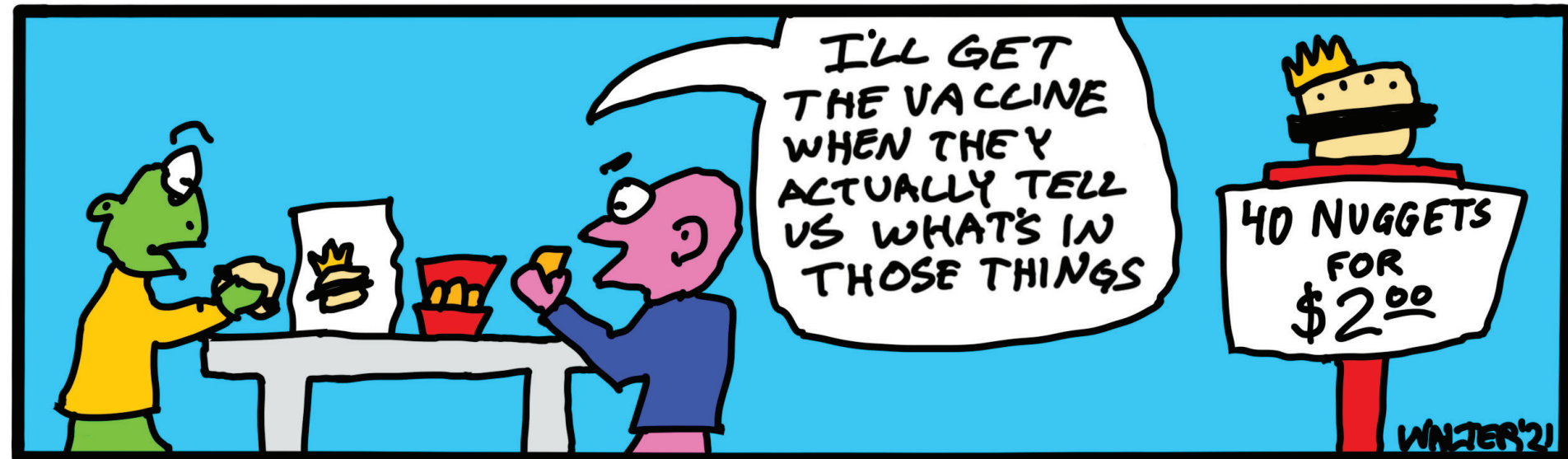
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THE GARAGE: SE 1 EP 5



WALTER MEDCRAFT | MONTANA KAIMIN

Enrollment is up, but there's still work to be done

Though we at the Kaimin are unafraid to criticize the University of Montana for its actions when the situation calls for it, at the end of the day, our reporters and editors are still UM students with pride in our school. And this week marks a rather monumental success for the University: Our enrollment is up for the first time in a decade.

In our years at UM, we've watched enrollment steadily fall until it dropped below 10,000 students for the first time in 30 years last semester. We reported on the downward trend, analyzing the issues that led to this enrollment crisis. And it was disheartening.

But in the wake of an energizing homecoming weekend, and a monumental win by the Griz, we get to celebrate another win

— we climbed back over that 10,000 mark, with 10,106 students this semester. It's a good week to be a Griz.

And we're with President Seth Bodnar when he says this success was a joint effort by the students, staff, faculty and alumni who've made this school better and kept it afloat. Pat yourself on the back, you helped us get here.

But this win is not the end of the work that still needs to be done. We're still nearly 6,000 students short of where we were at in 2011. And this 3% increase does not mean the systemic issues behind those lost students have been fixed.

On Monday, a Daily Montanan story shared the stories of UM law students who said they were discouraged from reporting

sexual assault, this suppression of women mirrored in a lawsuit alleging UM's discrimination against women.

And on Monday night, Classics students protested possible cuts to their program, a trend that's wracked the College of Humanities and Sciences, by writing latin words around the Oval and on the steps to Jeanette Rankin Hall. The largest words translated to "respect us" or "fear us."

These downfalls cannot be ignored. UM needs to be transparent and responsive to its students when they point out problems, especially problems this big.

Where are the department-specific enrollment numbers? Will we lose any more programs? Will UM respond to the mounting

claims of suppression from its female students, faculty and administrators alike?

As much as we're happy to see the deteriorating dorms renovated and plans for a state-of-the-art Food Zoo, those promises are not enough to keep students content. We want to have diverse class options in our majors. We want to feel safe on our campus. We want to be heard.

So, UM leadership, if you want this enrollment increase to be a continuing trend, we urge you to listen to the students you're trying so hard to appeal to.

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

Feature Photo:
Painting with a punch



A participant throws a paint-filled balloon at a canvas on the Oval during the university's Self Care Fair on Sept. 24. The Student Involvement Network helped organize the fair as a way to provide students and the community with tips on how to destress and broaden what people think of as self care. "Every once in a while, people need to get messy and throw a balloon at nails," Calerasmus Tornson, the director of student life activities said. **KENNEDY DELAP | MONTANA KAIMIN**

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Medium

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

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:

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

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The Flathead Beacon is looking for a reporter/staff writer.

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THE KAIMIN CAST

Briefs: Law school allegations, COVID-19 surge and Missoula Women's March

LAW STUDENT ALLEGATIONS OF FEMALE SUPPRESSION

More than a dozen current and former students in the University of Montana Alexander Blewett III School of Law reported a lack of support for female students from their school's leadership...

The story claims the law school's dean Paul Kirgis and associate dean of students Sally Weaver discouraged some female students from reporting sexual harassment and assault to the Title IX office...

But some of the people the Daily Montanan spoke with said not only were they unsure how to go about reporting to Title IX, they felt unsafe in classes and feared the dean would retaliate by not signing off on their character and fitness, a requirement for the American Bar Association admission.

One of Missoula's mayoral candidates, Jacob Elder, is at the center of some of the claims of sexual assault. Elder is a law student at UM and was a redshirt for the Griz football team in 2011.

U-M hired a private California firm, Grand River Solutions, to investigate potential Title IX policy violations, and look into Elder, Weaver and Kirgis. Though the story said the investigation concluded this summer, the findings are private.

Elder maintains claims to innocence, even saying in an Instagram post in May that the

claims are meant to destroy his political career and he did nothing wrong.

"They said they would protect our Grizzlies," one of the anonymous women said in the story. "They would love our Grizzlies. And then they did the total opposite. And I just want to know: Which Grizzlies are they talking about? To me, it only seems like it's men, it's athletes, it's the football team. It's not me." (Mazana Boerboom)

COVID-19 UPDATE

The Missoula City-County Health Department reported four new UM-affiliated COVID-19 cases last week, bringing the University's total active case number to 80 as the region continues to grapple with a record-breaking spike of the virus.

Active cases in Missoula County rose to 1,560 cases Monday. There were 52 hospitalizations, with 13 non-county residents filling hospital beds. Statewide, there are more than 10,000 active COVID-19 cases. The New York Times reported Montana has some of the most uncontrolled levels of the virus nationwide.

"We want to ask people to limit their social circles right now," Missoula County Public Information Officer Hayley Devlin said. "Especially young people, the 20-29 age group are the most common age group to get COVID-19."

The 20-29 age group is also the least vaccinated. University officials said they have no estimate on the percent of UM students, staff and faculty vaccinated.

Devlin said the County's contact tracing department is also backed up due to a high number of COVID-19 close contacts. While positive cases will get a call within 24 hours of a test, their close contacts could wait four to five days for a call from the health department. (Griffen Smith)

COVID RESPONSE TEAM RELEASES GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

In an email to students on Monday, the COVID Response Team released guidelines for students and employees who test positive for COVID-19 or who have been identified as a close contact.

According to the email, students who test positive should reach out to their instructor and arrange a plan for absence, including making up missed work, getting lecture notes or joining class via remote options, provided such options are available. The email urged students living off campus to isolate at home if they're positive, and said those living in the dorms would be moved to isolation and provided meals from UM Dining. Employees are urged to isolate themselves if they contract the virus and let their supervisors know they will miss work.

As far as close contacts, only those who are identified by the Missoula City-County Health Department or who have developed symptoms can seek a test, according to the email. Curry Health Center is only testing symptomatic students.

Fully vaccinated close contacts, who have been contacted by the health department, can

seek a test a few days after exposure if they're not experiencing symptoms, but are not required to quarantine, according to the email.

Unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students, who are health-department-verified close contacts, will likely be told to quarantine for 14 days, but could be released if they test negative after seven days.

The response team also urged students to update their contact information on Cyberbear and respond to calls from the health department, which will be numbers beginning 406-830-XXXX and 406-550-XXXX. (MB)

WOMEN'S MARCH

The Missoula Women's March is set to be held at the Missoula County courthouse on Saturday, Oct. 2 at 11 a.m., one of many marches taking place around the country as a response to a controversial abortion bill in Texas. Missoula's event is being organized by the UM's Women's Resource Center.

Texas Senate Bill 8 would outlaw abortions once a fetus has a detectable heartbeat. The bill only provides exceptions for medical emergencies, but does not have exceptions in cases of incest or rape.

Mia McKinney, the Missoula march's organizer and the student director of UM's Women's Resource Center, encouraged students to come to the event.

"UM students should attend to make their voices heard about the anti-choice laws in our state and country," McKinney said.

Students interested in attending the Missoula women's march on Saturday can RSVP online. (Mariah Thomas)

Blotter: Public urination, unleashed pets and loud parties

GRACE CARR

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Between Sept. 16 and 22, the University of Montana Police Department reported 10 crimes on and around campus. Theft was knocked down to second place on the criminal podium, with disorderly conduct being the most common crime this week.

FRIDAY 9/17: GOODBYE GLOVE BOX

Lot H suffered from a case of stolen vehicular goods Sept. 17, the fourth reported motor vehicle theft this month. The thief stole several items including a purse and multiple credit cards. The student said she locked her car, but the door was ajar when she returned. Nothing is safe on a campus of students who can barely afford ramen.

FRIDAY 9/17: NO LEASH, NO WALKS

Campus is a common spot for Missoulians and students alike to walk their pets and enjoy the last bits of summer sunshine. Yet when owners allow their animals to roam unsecured, casual walks get complicated. In the evening on Sept. 17 near Bannack court, two people were arguing after one owner took their pet off its leash. Officers arrived and warned both involved, logging the incident as disorderly conduct and a verbal disturbance.

FRIDAY 9/17: BIKE THEFT WITH A TWIST

Yes, it is another bike theft report, but this one has a little extra spice to it. A custodian's bike tires and other parts were swiped from the breezeway in the Clapp Building in the early evening of Sept. 17. The custodian watched the theft in-progress and attempted to catch the culprit. Unfortunately, another bike thief got away, roaming free and unidentified.

FRIDAY 9/17: NOISY NIGHTS

It got rowdy on a weekend night in the Craighead Apartments, and neighbors of the party were anything but pleased. Officers

responded to a noise complaint in one apartment and warned the residents to keep it down. The group barely made it to 11:30 p.m. before UMPD arrived. Fellow late night party hosts are bowing their heads in silence to the killed vibes.

SUNDAY 9/19: NOT A PUBLIC RESTROOM...

According to Merriam-Webster's Dictionary, a public restroom is "a room or suite of rooms in a public space providing toilets and lavatories." Outside in a residential area is not included in that definition, but one well-hydrated traveler did not seem to care. Officers cited a man for urinating in public near Emigrant Court and logged the crime as disorderly conduct. Call it lazy or impatient, but the man had to go.



The Weekly Crossword by Margie E. Burke

Grid for the crossword puzzle with numbers 1 through 67 indicating starting points for words.

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- ACROSS: 1 Karate blow, 5 "Roots," e.g., 9 Carrots' partner, 13 Part of BYOB, 14 Give a nudge to, 15 Leader of the pack, 17 Start to freeze?, 18 Yarn spinner, 19 Out in the sticks, 20 Periodical seller, 23 Roadwork marker, 24 Prayer's end, 25 Oscar hopeful, 27 Place for a pint, 29 Type of guess, 32 Like some muscles, 34 Birth-related, 38 With skill, 39 Legendary Bette, 41 Mosaic piece, 42 Assurance, 44 Revolutionary War figure, 46 Lacking a melody, 48 Draw to a close, 49 Party provisioner, 52 It may be checkered, 54 ___ and above, 55 Kind of parade, 60 Pole-lowering dance, 62 Slot feeder, 63 Ridesharing service, 64 Become narrower, 65 "Hamlet" has five, 66 Plumber's job, 67 Junction point, 68 ___ the Great (boy detective), 69 Bingo relative.

Answers to Last Week's Crossword grid showing words like THRU, AVER, STRAW, ROOK, NAME, NEIGH, ELSA, STUN, ENNUJ, SEESAW, LAVENDER, GENERALIZE, SPA, GROU, DESPOT, TERSE, METE, SITE, ENDORSE, RODENTS, ACED, POSY, RESET, MENACE, TODAY, TRY, WELLINEVER, PARALLEL, CERISE, ABATE, ALGA, APES, ULCER, SEND, SEEP, LEERY, TRUE, EDDY.

The horny-scope



OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

CLARISE LARSON

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AnOHeR hOroScOpe aBoUt sEX? YES SIR! Welcome to the Kaimin Sutra, the place you go to get the HARD news :) Having sex is fun, right? BUT! We want to give you some tools to get even more freaky with it, or at least tell you how you like to get laid — while also learning about your astrological roots! <3 Remember: Stay safe and babies are expensive.

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22): You love symmetry and want to have a balanced life — well, try this one one for size: the wheelbarrow. It's like that little game you played when you were a kid, but the only thing keeping you from falling over is the dick inside of you. <3

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): You may be vegan, but your position is the classic "butter turner." So, basically, you sit on your partner while they are mid somersault, just like how they taught you in sex ed.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 22): You're extra and want to be special. Even the people at Adam and Eve gave you a concerned look when all you bought was a sex swing and penis wall mount.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23-JAN. 19): The inverted crab. No context is needed. Just make sure you wipe your search history...

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18): Aquarius...aqua...water. Honey, when you are giving that sloppy topky, everyone is in the splash zone. BEWARE! You bouta get soaked ;)

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): You're the cowgirl, but you have bad knees so you can only do it for approximately 15 seconds before it's back to good ol' missionary. #grandma

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): Your astrological symbol is the ram, so basically, it's none other than a matter of time before you fulfill your destiny: Pegging your significant other. That's right, in the butt.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): Mmmm. "Sexual Healing" by Marvin Gaye is playing in the background. Your succulents line the Lewis and Clark Village window frame. It's time for the Superman. Warning: Your abs are going to hurt for days after this one.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): bOnJoUr, you may have a gluten allergy, but you are about to eat some baguettes. OUi OUi it's time for the Eiffel Tower. Yep, three is a party and, hopefully, that's enough to satiate your need to stay busy.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): *Yuh* As Ariana Grande once said "34+35." Even though our QUEEN Ari might be a Gemini, she herself told us personally that she wrote this for you in mind. Her words. Don't quote us tho.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): POV: You love doing doggy-style, but you're also a little self-conscious of your ~butthole.~ It's okay because you're having a good time and that's all that matters.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): You like to live life how god intended it to be lived. Thus, you default to the tried and true position: missionary. But because the only thing your parents ever gave you was trust issues, you will do everything to avoid eye contact. #doNOTlook

Self Care Fair highlights mental health struggles at UM

JACOB OWENS

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UM students released their stress in a colorful splatter Wednesday afternoon at the University's first Self Care Fair of the year.

The fair intended to give people mental health resources on campus and handed out everything from sugar scrubs to essential oils to pamphlets on mental disorders. White canvases were dashed in a collage of colors from paint-filled stress-relief balloons.

The at-times sparsely attended event was meant to raise awareness for a struggle faced by more than a handful of students: mental health. Three weeks into the semester, the Curry Health Center has seen a 35% increase in requests for counseling compared to last fall, according to Tracee Anderson, the interim director of counseling services at the Curry Health Center.

Anderson said the increase is because of a few factors, like more students returning to campus, having both in-person and virtual counseling available and effects of the pandemic. She said the top four diagnoses are anxiety, stress and situational problems, academic concerns and depression.

The data indicates a trend that UM student Tori Matteson can attest to. The freshman from Butte attended the fair and said she doesn't think students practice enough self care in general.

"I think everybody's just so focused on, 'Oh my gosh, I'm spending so much money like I need to do well in these classes,'" she said.

Reese Phillips, a sophomore at UM who also attended last year's Self Care Fair, said it's good the fair is occurring before winter, when he predicts COVID-19 shutdowns will occur again.

"I definitely think there's a problem with self-care, especially with COVID too, and everything kind of getting shut down," he said. "Not many kids have the opportunity to have that self-care opportunity, but I guess with these they kind of do now a little bit."

Anderson said the backgrounds students bring to college with them, such as financial struggles or identity issues, can make self care hard.

"So can I say that people aren't practicing self care? No, I think people try, I really do, and I think students really care ... and at the same time [background issues] can kind of deplete people," she said.

Anderson said the basics of self-care are not always easy, especially for students at UM.

"One of the things I've seen is that people feel real guilty that they're not doing a good enough job taking care of themselves, and the reality is that it's really hard to do all those basic things," she said.

Phillips said self care for him is playing the piano and getting coffee every morning, along with eating healthy.

For Tia Zaremski, another freshman at UM, self care is taking a break to watch television in her dorm. Zaremski said events like the Self Care Fair give students a moment to relax, which is indicative of a generational shift.

"I think as time progresses, we're getting

better as a generation to take that moment, but it's definitely something that always needs improving," she said.

Anderson said she's excited to see people giving mental health more attention than it was given 40 years ago. She admires people who speak up about their struggles.

"I think it gives people an opportunity to really find solutions to live a life that they can feel more satisfied with," she said. "It's not talking about things, it's not acknowledging what the struggles are and not seeking help that can lead people to really live a life that doesn't feel good for themselves."

The first counseling session at Curry Health Center is free and subsequent sessions are \$25.



Cal Erasmus Tronson, right, director of the student life activity board, and Emily Ferguson-Steger, director of student life engagement, fill balloons with paint for the Self Care Fair on Sept. 23 as a student prepares to throw a paint balloon. "Self care is something that is overlooked, I think, by almost all of us that have attended college because there is so many other priorities in our day," Ferguson-Steger said.

KENNEDY DELAP | MONTANA KAIMIN



"I think every once in a while people need to get messy and throw a balloon at nails," Cal Erasmus Tronson said while filling up a balloon with children's paint for students to throw at a canvas.

KENNEDY DELAP | MONTANA KAIMIN



Hannah Ryan, an office assistant for Curry's Wellness Team, talks to a student about the various resources and services Curry Health Center offers for University of Montana students who are struggling with anxiety and stress.

UM reports first enrollment increase since 2011

GRIFFEN SMITH

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Since fall 2020, total enrollment at the University of Montana increased 3%, spurred on by a large freshman class and a higher student retention rate, according to UM census numbers obtained by the Kaimin Monday.

The total number of undergraduate students now stands at 5,980, an increase of almost 200 students from a year ago. The University has not seen a year-over-year increase in enrollment since 2011, when there were 15,669 undergraduates at the Mountain Campus. Since then, UM lost nearly 40% of its students.

UM's total population clocks in at 10,106. In-state students dropped almost a percent overall since last year, while out-of-state students increased by 2%. Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) students, who come from western U.S. states, rose by a dramatic 36% to make up more than 1,000 students at UM.

"We have done a lot of hard work to increase student recruitment. That hard work paid off," UM President Seth Bodnar said in a phone call with the Kaimin Monday. "There's a lot of positive news overall."

Bodnar said the new freshman class, though somewhat boosted by students who took a gap year during the pandemic, still pulled in more students than the 2019 freshman class. The retention rate — the percentage of students who stay at the University after a year — increased to 75%, a 7% boost since it started to climb in 2018.

Missoula College students saw a 7% increase to 1,243 students. Graduate students increased 2%. The law school saw a slight decrease of 0.8% in the last year.

The state's other flagship school, Montana State University, reported its largest freshman class to date, the MSU news service reported on Friday. Nearly 3,900 new students moved to Bozeman this fall, giving MSU a total underclassmen count of 14,668, a 3% increase of students compared to the start of last year.

UM's previous enrollment drop has caused budget cuts across most campus colleges, with the University's largest, the College of Humanities and Sciences, facing a \$2.6 million budget cut in May 2021. There are no department-specific numbers released with the larger enrollment numbers.

The total number of new UM freshmen is 1,276, an increase from 982 a year ago. While



MCKENNA JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

an increased number of students from the western states made up much of the class, Bodnar said in-state students rose 7% among first-time freshmen.

"We have fought for in-state tuition rates to stay low, which makes WUE applicants want to come to UM," Bodnar said, citing that WUE students pay 150% of UM's resident tuition rate.

Bodnar also attributed the increase of students to an increased focus on student support, specifically campus infrastructure projects. UM finished renovating Pantzer Hall in 2020 and has started plans to create a new dining hall and renovate Knowles Hall, although some of the projects faced setbacks due to logistics issues.

"It's a team effort," Bodnar said. "The reason enrollment is up is really everyone. Students, staff, faculty and alumni have made UM a better place to go to school. It's a shared achievement."

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WELCOME TO GUN COUNTRY

Where a ranching culture, suicides rate and an urban campus blur the meaning of safety

Story by Clarise Larson
Photos by Olivia Swant-Johnson



Wylie Galt, fourth-generation rancher and Republican state Speaker of the House, stands on his property in White Sulphur Springs. Galt, who wears an Apple watch and no cowboy hat, and whose property is home to nine wind turbines, challenges other stereotypes that could be assumed about him as well. "I have a real libertarian streak," he says, pointing out that he doesn't vote along party lines. "I voted for HB 102 and I voted to make weed legal."

GALT Ranch, an hour outside of Helena near a tiny town called Martinsdale, would take a cop coming from the nearest police station about 40 minutes to reach if something went awry.

That's why having guns on his land is essential for the safety of himself, his employees and the livestock, said Wylie Galt, Montana's speaker of the house, a Republican and a fourth-generation rancher in Montana.

Galt spends most of his working days out

in the field with his 600 head of cattle. Collectively, the Galt family owns more than 100,000 acres of ranching land in Montana. Born and raised on this property, Galt's boots and trucks have always been caked with dirt, but his belt buckle still shines.

Pulled over in his black Ford pickup, Galt walked to the edge of the road and looked over a group of dark brown, pregnant cows huddled together eating the grass at their feet. Past the group, miles of tan, rugged land stretched until running into the base of the Crazy Mountains.

Galt stood and admired the view. During the longest part of the ranching season, when Galt spends a minimum of 12 hours

working with his cows, he's got a pistol on his hip.

Hopping back into his pickup, he drove the handful of miles into Martinsdale, where he owns a bar with his family. He often comes into town to check up on his business.

"If I'm out working and something breaks down and I have to go to town, it's like I don't want to worry about 'Oh crap, I forgot my pistol on my belt,'" Galt said.

But the bar and ranch aren't the only metaphorical hats Galt wears. His part-time job is in Helena, about 90 days every other year, when he helps push bills through the legislative session. In January, Galt, along

with 67 other Republican representatives, voted "yea" to House Bill 102, which would allow both open and concealed carry of firearms on the Montana University System's campuses. The bill passed both the House and Senate on party lines. A lawsuit filed by the Montana Board of Regents has delayed the bill's enactment.

If the law is allowed to go into effect, it would be the least restrictive gun legislation in the country: It allows concealed carry without a permit. A handful of other states allow campus concealed carry with a permit. But only Utah matches HB 102 in explicitly requiring guns be allowed on every college campus. That Utah legislation,

and most other gun-friendly campuses, still mandate that gun carriers have a concealed carry permit.

Guns have long had a central role in Montana's ranching, farming and hunting culture. And today, ranches and farms account for 62% of Montana's land, according to a report by the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Understanding how those who own the majority of the state's land view this controversial piece of legislation is important to unlocking the reason bills like HB 102 pass here, but not in other places. Some ranchers, like Galt, see guns as tools of their trade, necessary to ensure the safety of their families, workers and livestock.

Others, like Ralph Thisted and his granddaughter Ada Smith, or Montana's farmer in the Senate, Jon Tester, see a different side to guns — one where responsibility matters and guns are not a tool to use lightly.

And still others, like Ryan Busse, a former firearms executive, have seen a much darker side to firearms.

In Montana, there are multiple narratives when it comes to guns. And HB 102 has brought this debate to the forefront of Montanans' minds.

The intended effects of HB 102 are simple. The unintended implications are unknown. But the culture of Montana that fostered the bill is one both students and ranchers — each possessing differing views and experiences with firearms — share.

— M_K — A WAY OF LIFE

If you wanted to find Thisted in the 1990s, he'd be on his ranch in Ninemile Valley, where a den of wolves made his land their home. The wolves had traveled down from Canada, and they should have been shot dead before the first calf cried. But that's not who Thisted was.

He was a rancher who had a love for animals and a curiosity for life, said Thisted's granddaughter Smith. So when he found wolves on his land, he was welcoming and curious when wildlife biologists at the University of Montana wanted to study them.

"The 'guns-a-blazin' cowboy culture' in popular media not only misrepresents the diversity of ranchers we have in Montana today, but it also glorifies the violence of colonialism, which has had ongoing repercussions for Indigenous people, the land and society as a whole."

-Ada Smith

Smith is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at UM exploring how ranchers plan for and respond to drought and other climate-related events in Montana.

She grew up spending summers on her grandpa's ranch, watching him steward land because of his love for the beautiful place he lived and worked. Smith's grandpa hunted wild game because he felt too much of a connection to the animals on his ranch to eat them. She watched him care for all life on his land, not just the animals he raised.

But time kept moving forward from the parts of her childhood spent in the hills of Ninemile Valley. Smith's grandpa died in 2017, and she isn't a kid anymore. When she studies on campus, she is well aware that HB 102 could bring a type of ranch culture to the Oval.

In Ninemile Valley, Thisted hoped he would never have to use his rifle unless it was life or death in the country, Smith said.

Reflecting on her grandpa's relationship with firearms, Smith said she saw a difference between carrying a gun for hunting or ranching and bringing it into a social setting. Rifles are tools for getting food and as a very last-resort type of protection from wildlife.

It was only recently Smith chose to hunt herself, and even then, she only uses her gun to put food on the table.

Smith said she thinks sometimes guns can be associated with macho and domineering types of behavior and that connotation misrepresents a majority of gun owners.

"They're kind of like trucks, or other status symbols, or an extension of your manliness," Smith said. "And that was the opposite of who my grandpa was. He was such a quiet, humble guy who didn't even seem to need to prove anything to anybody."

Smith doesn't agree with HB 102. She said she hopes not all gun owners and ranchers get blamed for the potential negative consequences of this bill.

"The 'guns-a-blazin' cowboy culture' in popular media not only misrepresents the diversity of ranchers we have in Montana today, but it also glorifies the violence of colonialism, which has had ongoing repercussions for Indigenous people, the land and society as a whole," Smith said.



Ada Smith comes from a legacy of Montana ranching she hopes to help sustain. Smith is pursuing her Ph.D. at the University exploring how ranchers plan for and respond to drought and other climate-related events in Montana.

— Mk —

INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS

Off the dirt road to Galt's ranch, cows lifted their heads as a vehicle passed the low-traffic lane. Barns full of tools and old vehicles led to his house. Galt stood at the door entrance, wearing white socks, a flannel, a shiny buckle and his notorious stern face.

Galt said he feels gun owners in the ranching community don't need people at the federal level telling them how to do things. He argued ranching families like his have been out in the fields for a century, know how to take care of the land and know how to live in this area safely.

"If you leave us alone, we know what to do," Galt said.

Galt said almost all his vehicles are equipped with a gun for convenient use on the ranch. Plus, there's that pistol on his hip.

When looking at the gun laws already in place before HB 102, Galt said not much has changed besides being able to "throw a coat on." He's referring to the bill's new allowance for the concealed carry of firearms. For ranchers like Galt who carry firearms regularly, he said the bill will make certain they don't break the law inadvertently by forgetting they're carrying.

"It makes us feel a lot safer that we are not going to be breaking a rule by throwing a coat on," Galt said.

Galt said ranchers in Montana view guns as tools and are properly trained on how to use them.

On UM's campus, the need for protection against wildlife is typically zero-to-none, with the exception of the occasional black bear on the loose. Though campus is certainly not the wilderness of a ranch, Galt said he still believes guns should be allowed.

"I think we did put a sideboard that they have to be trained, they have to know what they're doing," Galt said. "And there are a lot of fears and worries that people can have that I think a gun would make a lot more people comfortable with."

As a student at Montana State University in the early 2000s, Galt admitted he always had a firearm in his truck parked on campus, despite the laws prohibiting them. He said he had his rifle in case he hit a deer on the way home or wanted to go hunting.

Current campus policy, which was on



Ranches and farms account for 62% of Montana's land. With each individual cow requiring between 25 and 60 acres of range, Galt says Montanans have ranches to thank for the state's wide open spaces.

"We're instilled at a very young age how to handle, how to treat safely and to not play with (guns)."

-Rep. Wylie Galt

the books when Galt went to MSU, says students can store guns in a gun locker on campus or in their vehicle, as long as the car is locked and the gun unloaded. Even under this policy, campuses in the state have still experienced gun violence.

According to an L.A. Times article from 1990, prior to Galt's time at MSU, students James Clevenger and Brian Boeder were shot and killed in their dorm room by fellow MSU student Brett Byers. The murderer was under the influence and crashed his car before the homicides occurred.

Within the same week of MSU's shooting, the New York Times reported two students at Carroll College were victims of gun violence. A man who was thought to be drunk entered the college's cafeteria, shooting and killing an employee, Sharon Hance, and wounding another employee.

Darrel Randall Stahl, the shooter at Carroll College, had no affiliation with the campus, and the murder was thought to be random. He was also believed to be an unemployed ranch hand.

Despite the state's history with gun violence on campuses, Galt said he thinks HB 102 will show the vast majority of gun owners in Montana will be responsible with

expanded carrying privileges.

For Galt himself, the responsibility that comes along with guns is something he understands well.

"We were taught at a young age: you get a BB gun first, prove that you are safe, then you upgrade to a .22, which then you get to go shoot the varmints. We're instilled at a very young age how to handle, how to treat safely and to not play with them," Galt said about his personal upbringing.

As a politician, Galt said it is his duty to uphold the rights of Montana citizens, and he sees HB 102 as a way to do this.

"Something I've noticed in my political career is that rights are not stolen overnight," Galt said. "It's a slow erosion. At some point, you have to stick the flag in the ground somewhere. It's either, do you keep moving it back or do you sit there and defend it?"

Galt said he believes safe gun owners should be allowed to have the individual freedoms in the constitution. He added everyone has the right to bear arms, even on a university campus.

— Mk —

LOOKING BOTH WAYS

But across Montana, there is another narrative of gun safety and use.

According to the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, 60% of suicides in the state are completed with firearms. And 72% of youth suicides in the state are completed with guns.

Ryan Busse wrote a book called "Gunfight: My Battle Against the Industry That Radicalized America." He's also a former vice president of sales for the firearms manufacturing company Kimber America, and is an avid hunter and proud gun owner. Busse grew up on a ranch with "a shotgun in one hand and a rifle in the other," but recognized guns have a dark side. He said HB 102 is irresponsible and dangerous for students and instructors on Montana campuses.

"All rights need to be balanced with equal amounts of responsibility to freedoms, and it's my opinion that forcing colleges to allow firearms on campus is not responsible," Busse said.

According to the bill, the Board of Regents, or any unit within the University system, cannot regulate, restrict the possession, transportation, or storage of a firearm on university property by a person who owns a firearm under state or federal law and meets the minimum safety and training requirements.

Busse said he believes HB 102 was a way for Republican legislators to capitalize on Montana's Nov. 2020 red wave, as the state elected its first Republican governor in 16 years.

"This is a Republican Legislature that has been waiting decades to do things just to be provocative," Busse said. "In the past 18 months, loaded and open carrying high-capacity AR-15s have been showing up in places and in ways that should frighten every citizen in Montana."

In addition to his outspoken opposition against HB 102, Busse has a personal story to tell of the negative impact of firearms. Busse's father lost his best friend to a gun-related injury, and Busse said he knows firsthand what gun violence can look like. He said he's seen a shift in the political climate of guns in Montana. It is no longer about safety.

Busse said while attending events related to the gun climate in Montana over the years, he's seen hundreds of people hold-

ing loaded AR-15s in Montana streets.

"These are simply tools of intimidation. There is no way that is responsible for firearm behavior," Busse said.

U.S. Sen. Tester, the only farmer in Congress, agreed guns are tools that come with great responsibility.

While Tester is part of the U.S. Senate, representing Montanans on a national stage rather than as part of the state legislature that produced HB 102, he still had opinions about the bill.

He told the Kaimin he thinks this bill is just a "solution looking for a problem" and doesn't understand the logical reasoning behind it.

"A gun is a damn valuable tool out there if used correctly, but you've got to know what it does. I just don't know the thought process [behind HB 102] other than they could [pass the bill]," Tester said. "We had a Democratic governor for the past 16 years, and part of that time we

"A gun is a damn valuable tool out there if used correctly, but you've got to know what it does. I just don't know the thought process [behind HB 102] other than they could [pass the bill]."

-Sen. Jon Tester



Galt says within the ranching community, most of the distrust of the government comes from a history of conflict with the Forest Service. "If you leave us alone, we know what to do," Galt said. For him, HB 102 is less a statement of where guns should be and more about protecting Montanans from the erosion of gun rights.

had Democratic majorities in the legislature. I don't think [former Gov. Steve] Bullock would have signed that bill, for safety reasons, but [Gov. Greg] Gianforte did."

Tester said he hopes people continue to feel safe sending their kids to college in Montana, and that he didn't think HB 102 detracted from that. But, he said, he thinks there might be a possibility it could. Tester said he encourages students to take a look at the bill. If they like it, support it. If they don't, say something.

"Once you pull that trigger and that animal hits the ground, it's dead," Tester said. "There is no bringing it back. Life is really special, so I hope whoever has a gun on campus understands that it is not the wild west. It's not fun and games — it's a hell of a responsibility."

‘Montero’ unmasks the man behind the memes

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After his record-smashing success in “Old Town Road,” Lil Nas X could have easily ridden off into the sunset and basked in the success of his popular, country-filled single. But Lil Nas X can’t be written off as a one-hit wonder.

And he certainly can’t be put in a box. The 22-year-old gay pop star does what he wants, and if his debut album “MONTERO” is a testament to anything, it’s that he’s not afraid to show it. A 15-track album featuring a posse of trade-name pop stars, “Montero” is a bold and honest glimpse at the man behind the glam (and the memes).

Lil Nas X’s album opens with “MONTERO (Call Me By Your Name),” a title track named after his birth name — Montero Lamar Hill. But this song isn’t about him; it’s about his lover. Drawing a parallel to the protagonist who called his lover by his own name in the gay icon film “Call Me By Your Name,” Lil Nas X refers to his mystery man as “Montero.” Backed by two entrancing chords and a memorable chorus, the track is shamelessly lustful, but also deeply personal. In other words, it’s addictive, and the music video will have your eyes glued to the screen.

A visual spectacle of Lil Nas X being seduced by a snake (played by himself, casually), descending a stripper pole to hell and lap dancing the devil, “MONTERO” unapologetically uses biblical references to forge Lil Nas X’s sexually-driven narrative. It’s the running theme line for most of Lil Nas X’s album, which is full of clapbacks at critics and conservatives.

Nas X boasts his defiance the most in the triumphant “INDUSTRY BABY,” where he reminds fans “long ago on the road/I got what you’re looking for.” The melody is tight and the tone is arrogant, but Lil Nas X can back up his cockiness with smart lyrics, supported by Kentucky rapper Jack Harlow. He also doesn’t pull his punches. With verses like “I don’t fuck bitches, I’m queer,” Lil Nas X both works to normalize homosexuality in the rap industry and fully embraces his queer status as a popstar.

As an artist who constantly shatters sexual and racial hierarchies in pop, it’s unsurprising that Lil Nas X also blurs the lines between genres. “MONTERO” is a mixed bag of pop, rap, ‘80s rock and R&B. A few of his songs are absolute headbangers, backed by ‘80s rock bombast, trap beats and hardcore riffs on flamenco guitars. The defiant track “DEAD RIGHT NOW” is one of the most



CONTRIBUTED

memorable mixes, boasting gospel “hallelujahs,” synth strings, Doja Cat and a tasteful helping of pilates references.

Even if this album is bursting with heart, it’s not perfect. Lil Nas X can carry a pop song, but sometimes his efforts end up a little half-baked. Without the music video, “THAT’S WHAT I WANT” reverses to the mainstay, pop clichés. His lyrics aren’t always engaging,

even if they pack a heavy punch, and his vocal abilities still remain slightly unknown.

But that’s fine, because his songs still address the more relatable aspects of his journey. “MONTERO” is successful because it bridges that gap between Lil Nas X and Montero Hill, producing an album that makes every crazy and chaotic moment personal.

‘Cry Macho’ will make you cry from boredom

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This past week, Clint Eastwood dragged his rattly bones in front of the camera for his 65th film role — yes, 65th. Eastwood directs and stars in the new Warner Bros. film “Cry Macho,” based on the 1975 novel by N. Richard Nash, and it is the perfect movie for putting babies to sleep or throwing on to entertain your dog while you go to the grocery store.

“Cry Macho” provides just about everything you would expect from a film by one of Hollywood’s oldest actors/directors that you probably thought was dead: extended sequences of barren desert, an overabundance of cowboy hats and the sexual advances of a woman less than half the age of the lead male. It’s like the ‘50s all over again.

The story begins with the character Mike, played by a 91-year-old corpse-like Eastwood. In an early scene filled with characters talking to each other like they’re babies, we learn Mike

was once a great rodeo star, but his life was derailed when his wife and daughter died in a car wreck.

Since then, he has struggled with addiction to drugs and alcohol and seems to have lost all interest in his work and lost his job. All of this happens in approximately four lines of dialogue.

Moments later, his ex-boss hires him to drive to Mexico to retrieve his son, who lives with his mother south of the border. Mike agrees, and the “real” plot of the film begins.

Unfortunately, the “real” plot straight up sucks. Eastwood’s character and the son of his boss, played by newcomer Eduardo Minett (unclear on whether he realizes he’s in a movie or not), are on the run, but we don’t really learn why. Despite a seemingly high-stakes situation, the pair spend a lot of time just hanging out. They return to the same cantina again and again for a sizable chunk of the film, despite knowing they’re in danger.

The only people who can muster any enjoyment from this piece are the same geezers who

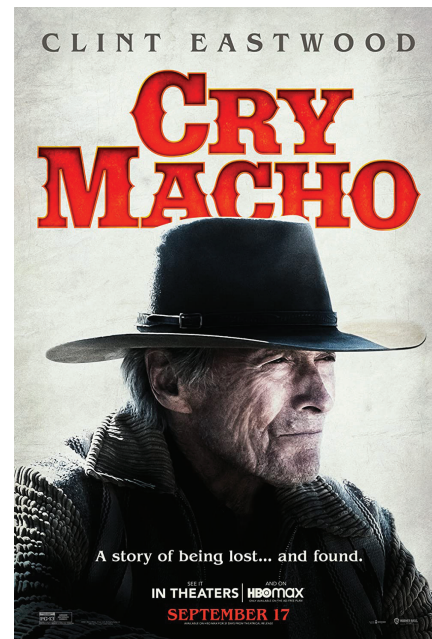
have been following Eastwood since his acting career started, shortly after the Fall from Eden.

In his millenium in the film industry, he has become one of its most recognizable stars, with a massive portfolio. “Cry Macho” is the 39th feature-length film he’s directed. Of those 39, he’s starred in over 20.

Talk about an ego, but when you’ve been in the business long enough to see the rise and fall of empires, that’s something you can get away with.

But, as anyone who was able to maintain their attention beyond the 15-minute mark will tell you, “Cry Macho” will not be a part of Eastwood’s legacy. Tired performances, shoddy direction and plain bad writing will erase this movie from the public’s consciousness before most people even hear about it.

“Cry Macho” is now playing in theaters and streaming on HBO Max. Diehard Eastwood fans may be able to look past its many flaws, so long as they can suspend their disbelief that Mike isn’t an escaped extra from “The Walking Dead.”



CONTRIBUTED

Get a sneak ‘beak’ of this avian art exhibition

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Paintings, photos and taxidermied birds come together at UM’s Performing Arts Radio/Television building’s featured art exhibition, *Avis Marvelous*, which portrays the intimate life of birds through art in the 19th century.

UM’s Museum of Art and Culture is set up to help artist Lee Silliman demonstrate avian life in the 19th century with prints from Silliman’s collection mixed with biological specimens from UM’s Zoological Museum.

“*Avis Marvelous* presents the ways artists and scientists analyzed, documented and celebrated avian life in the 19th century,” museum director H. Rafael Chacón said. “It explores the various strategies employed by artists and scholars of the natural sciences.”

The displays from both the museum and Silliman’s collection are separated into four sections in the exhibition based on what type of bird is featured.

“The show is divided into sections that address nesting, woodland birds, water and desert birds and raptors,” Chacón said.

The specimens from the Phillip Wright Zoological Museum were collected by scientists and amateurs from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Chacón hopes this exhibition will give the public an opportunity to see science and art come together and display the uniqueness of birds in an easy to understand way.

Chacón said by using art as the medium to display these birds, it is a more sustainable way to represent birds in the “natural” setting rather than harvesting birds, eggs and nests for research.

Despite being unsustainable, the study of birds is still said to have been one of the most popular areas of research in the 19th century, as it had a large following. This still holds true today, Chacón said.

“Missoula is a community that takes great interest in bird life and that is also true across the nation,” Chacón said.



CONTRIBUTED



Unknown, *Townsend's oystercatcher*, print. AVIS MARVELOUS | CONTRIBUTED

This exhibition is

an opportunity for bird lovers and art lovers to come together and enjoy avian life and artwork from a well-known artist and photographer.

“I enjoy the rapport between the artist and scientist, particularly as they both attempt to give the viewer a sense of the creature in its own environment,” Chacón said.

Much of Silliman’s artwork covering the topic of western wildlife has been displayed in exhibitions like *Avis Marvelous* in museums across six different western states.

“Lee Silliman is an avid collector of historic prints about the American West,” Chacón said. “He curated exhibitions from his own collections.”

“*Avis Marvelous: Ornithology in 19th Century Art and Science*” opens on Friday, Sept. 24, and runs through Jan. 8, 2022, in the Paxson Gallery of UM’s Performing Arts and Radio/Television Center.



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Meet Camellia Xu: A budding UM soccer star

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Montana goalie Camellia Xu is no longer a secret weapon. Since coming to Missoula from her hometown of Port Moody, British Columbia, Canada, Xu has been publicized, winning Big Sky Conference Defensive Player of the Week three times.

"It's humbling. I'm really glad to be in the position that I'm in," Xu said. "The most coverage I got (in Canada) was actually because I was coming here."

She has shut out six teams in Montana's 10 games, racking up 40 total saves in the process.

But her ego hasn't increased the way her saves have. It seems impossible to mention the team without bringing her up, but it's also impossible to talk to Xu without her deflecting the attention onto the team as a whole.

"My phone gets notifications and sometimes it's surprising, like I didn't even know this person was writing this thing about me," she said with a brief chuckle and a shrug.

Although she was a late entry for recruiting, she came in at the top. Montana head coach Chris Citowicki said that she was previously recruited to a different school and was pretty much verbally committed there.

Xu sent out some last-minute emails, one of which was to the Montana coach. Citowicki forwarded Xu's email to J. Landham, UM's goalies coach.

"He starts screaming from across the hall and saying, 'We have to get this kid!'" Citowicki said.

When Xu first joined the UM soccer team, she was a backup to the most successful Montana goalie of all time, Claire Howard. Howard broke the Big Sky Conference record for career shutouts and was named the Big Sky Conference goalkeeper of the year after the 2021 spring season.

Following in the footsteps of Claire Howard could be intimidating, but Xu doesn't see herself as challenging Howard's legacy — it simply inspires her to make her own.

"Soccer is a big deal here, especially in the last three years," Xu said. "How many teams have been to the national tournament that many times and had this much success?"

Xu's lack of hubris doesn't mean she isn't proud. She's extremely proud of the other players on her team and talks about the Grizzlies like one cohesive unit. She attributes the victories to everyone, not just her prodigious defense.

In a game against Long Beach State on Sept. 16, Xu faced 26 different shots and set



Montana goalie Camellia Xu is a rising star in Griz soccer. Xu, a British Columbia, Canada, native, has won the Big Sky Conference Defensive Player of the Week twice. **KENNEDY DELAP | UM ATHLETICS**

up Montana's winning goal with a booming goal kick.

"The only other team to shut out Long Beach was UCLA and they're ranked third in the nation right now," Xu said. "It's just incredible to see Montana up there with them."

Her down-to-earth meekness doesn't end at the sidelines. She carries it everywhere. Her Instagram is equal parts sport and recreation with modest photos bearing 3-4 word punny captions. For example, diving for a save in Missoula or showing off a small river catch in Tarkio: "Hooked on Montana." No attention-grabbing hashtags.

Xu has found herself at home in UM's

starting 11 after a brief goalkeeper competition at the beginning of the year, but that doesn't mean she is fully accustomed to the United States. Driving her car in the U.S. is the biggest change from Canada for her.

"We don't have center turn lanes," Xu, who finds herself the target of many impatient horn blasts, said. "People are very aggressive here."

As a foreign student, she has to work around some limitations. "I get kicked out 30 days after graduation. I'll probably stick around for 28 days and then leave respectfully," Xu said.

The Montana soccer team's record is 6-4,

but it still has a full slate of conference games to go.

"I've never played a conference season before. I'm really excited to get to know, on a competition level, the other teams in our conference because ultimately those are the teams that you will play over and over," Xu said.

In UM's first conference game against Northern Arizona, which finished second in the 2021 spring season, Xu got another shutout and the Griz won 1-0.

UM's next game will be against Sacramento State at home on Oct. 1.

Griz men's cross-country team takes the dub on its home turf

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The University of Montana golf course was filled to the brim with anyone but golfers on Friday, Sept. 24th. Instead, crowds of spectators sprinted across the green in sandals and boots with cameras in hand to catch a picture of the eight teams of male and female cross-country runners as they zoomed by.

The Montana men's cross-country team took the win at its home turf Montana Open cross-country meet. The UM women notched fourth place.

The Montana Open featured a three-loop, 7-kilometer distance men's race along with a two-loop 5-kilometer race for the women.

"Running On Empty" by Jackson Browne rang in the background as the Griz men caught the last warm-ups of short sprints and high jumps. The announcer gave the one-minute warning; the music stopped and the crowd went quiet.

With 30 seconds left until the start, shouts of "Go Griz" emerged from a small crowd of students. When the gun went off, a musical rumble of feet sounded as competitors ran shoulder-to-shoulder down the flagged course.

Within the first loop, the Griz established a four-pack of their top runners near the front of the race. The leader at the time — who remained the leader the entire race — was Montana State University junior Cooper West.

The course was relatively flat, except for one dreadful, uphill portion in the second loop of the course. By the time the competitors got to the hill, the Griz runners had faded and spread throughout the top ten.

The hill was first conquered by two Bobcats, West and Owen Smith, running within meters of each other. Soon after, the first UM runner to reach the top was freshman Jordan Hansen.

In the final loop, UM held its ground and kept to the front of the race. Hansen ran through the finish line as the lead for the Griz with a fifth place finish overall, followed seconds behind by junior Truman Cohen with a sixth place finish.

Senior runner for the Griz Benjamin Vanderbosch said the team performed

well despite missing its top two runners this race, Joel Mendez and AJ Eckmann, because of injury and COVID-19.

Vanderbosch said he had a good race even though the hill was tough. He was happy they changed the course, because in past races on the golf course, they had to run the hill twice.

"It was a good time and a solid day, we got a really good team this year," Vanderbosch said.

Soon after the last men's runner crossed the finish line, the 20-minute warning sounded for the women's 5K.

The race took off in a quick funnel of women as each elbowed for her spot on the course. The women's race was much more spread out than the men's, making it difficult for the sweat-dripping spectators to catch everyone at the same spot.

The Griz women kept close to the top at the beginning of the race, but spread out by the time they hit the second loop. UM junior Beatrix Frissell, who is currently unattached to the Griz but trains with the team, rocked dark shades and a plain black singlet.

With a third-place finish, Frissell looked calm and collected as she worked her way back down the course to cheer on the women she practiced with. Runners sprinted down the silver-flagged chute held up by parents and fans.

Post-race, the Lady Griz team could be found panting and lying starfished on the grass in a spread-out Grizzly blob.

UM junior Bridget Boyle took the official first spot finish for the Griz with a time of 18 minutes and 17 seconds.

"Oh man, it hurt, to be expected, but it was so much fun," Boyle said with a laugh.

Molly Sherman, a UM freshman, was 13 seconds from her personal best time for a 5-kilometer race.

"That's pretty damn good," she said.

"It was so good, I set a massive personal best," UM junior Leah Gath said, smiling through tears as she fought to catch her breath after the race.

This time last year, Gath wasn't able to run because she broke her pelvis.

"I never thought I'd get here," Gath said as Sherman and Boyle pulled her in for a sweaty and tearful group hug.



University of Montana junior and Griz men's cross-country runner Truman Cowan keeps a steady pace at the Montana Open Cross Country meet at the UM Golf Course Sept. 24. UM Griz men's cross-country team took the win at the Montana Open meet while the women's team took fourth-place. **MATTHEW TRYAN | MONTANA KAIMIN**

Homecoming returns to UM with the Heart of a Grizzly

TYE BROWN

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Homecoming fever returned to Missoula on Friday, Sept. 24, and the UM community promised to revive its vibrant former glory ahead of the kick-off pep rally on the Oval.

The event awakened something in the student body, and the community at large.

Ahead of the rally, a mass of students, alumni, and Missoula residents decked out in maroon and silver flooded to campus to witness their beloved homecoming traditions: the lighting of the M, speeches from President Seth Bodnar and head football coach Bobby Hauck, performances by the UM Grizzly Marching Band and Spirit Squad and a fireworks display.

The tolling of the bells in Main Hall, playing the Grizzly fight song, signaled the beginning of the ceremony. President Bodnar took the podium to address the crowd.

"It is so great to see the UM family reunited," he said. "Griz Nation had to go

into hibernation for a little bit during the pandemic. But the grizzly bear has woken back up."

Riley Corcoran, the University of Montana play-by-play announcer — introduced as the "Voice of the Griz" — commented on the size of the gathering. Attendance was greater than he expected.

"This is far and away the best turnout I've seen in quite a while," he said.

People were packed shoulder-to-shoulder along the luminaria-lit brick paths, and school spirit pulsed through them as Bobby Hauck, surrounded by his players, hyped up the next day's game against the Cal Poly Mustangs.

Attention turned to Mount Sentinel, where the iconic M was outlined in lights carried up the switchbacks by students, and finally to a fireworks show that enlivened the sky above campus.

This year's theme, Heart of a Grizzly, was reflected in the varied speeches and performances.

In the warm nighttime air, that heartbeat pumped in the crowd.



Members of the University of Montana Spirit Squad perform cheer routines in the middle of the Oval during homecoming pep rally celebrations. LUKAS PRINOS | MONTANA KAIMIN



Members of the Spirit Squad walk down the center of the Oval toward Main Hall as UM students celebrate homecoming week.

LUKAS PRINOS | MONTANA KAIMIN



Fireworks explode over the heads of onlookers at the Oval as homecoming pep rally celebrations come to a close on Sept. 24. Celebrations took place before Montana's football game against the Cal Poly Mustangs on Sept. 25 at Washington-Grizzly Stadium. LUKAS PRINOS | MONTANA KAIMIN



Members of the University of Montana choirs sing from the steps of Main Hall. LUKAS PRINOS | MONTANA KAIMIN