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Montana Kaimin, March 26, 2010

Students of The University of Montana, Missoula

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Montana Kaimin
UM's Independent Campus Newspaper Since 1898 Volume CXII Issue 84 Friday, March 26, 2010

City councilman learning the ropes

Justyn Field
Montana Kaimin

His signature red beard framing his jaw line, Missoula's newest city councilman broke into an easy smile.

Roy Houseman, the 29-year-old first-year councilman, had just finished playing pick-up basketball at the Adams Center, something that has become a weekly tradition since he started taking classes at the University for the first time in seven years. The relaxation that comes with the weekly reprieve from studying for his master's in Public Administration or attending city council meetings is important for Houseman, who said he finds himself in a radically different place in life than he'd ever planned.

The Great Falls native graduated from the University of Montana in 2003 with bachelor's degrees in English and psychology. His initial plan to teach English in another country evaporated when he decided that he loved Missoula too much to leave, so he got a job with a local youth home. In 2005, he began working at Smurfit-Stone as a paper-machine operator. Houseman also became active in the mill's industrial union, United Steelworkers Local 885. His dedication to the union's efforts ultimately led him to become president of the chapter in 2007.

But in 2009, Houseman faced a new challenge. He was asked to run as the representative for Missoula's Ward 2, a district that includes North Reserve and Grant Creek, against incumbent John Hendrickson. Houseman agreed and filed the necessary paperwork shortly before the deadline. Door-to-door campaigning combined with savvy Twitter use and back-



Graduate student Roy Houseman prepares a class project Thursday evening in the Education building with fellow students from his Seminars and Management class. Houseman, also a Missoula City Council member, decided to come back to school and pursue his master's degree in Public Administration.

Ali Vandergon/Montana Kaimin

It's pretty easy to get up some mornings and want to take the dog out for a walk and get lost for a little while. But you get down and you get back into it. The most rewarding thing right now is that being in school full-time has given me the opportunity to learn more about council than I would have if I had full-time work.

-Roy Houseman, UM student and first-year councilman

ing by Mayor John Engen earned Houseman the election. As January and the beginning of his four-year term approached, Houseman was eager to start his new job as a Missoula councilman.

Then the whirlwind struck.

Houseman, who had been laid off from Smurfit-Stone in November 2008, watched as the mill

closed its doors. He helped negotiate a severance package from the plant for the laid-off employees, including himself. He started his City Council position on Jan. 4, and on Jan. 14, stepped down as union president. Suddenly, his world was filled with uncertainty. He and his wife, Andrea Houseman, who works as a production

assistant, reworked their mortgage as he tried to sift through the events.

"We had four or five major life changes in a period of about 30 days," Houseman said. "It was probably one of the more trying times, personally. My wife and I had a couple arguments 'cause it was just like, 'What are you doing?"

Quit changing on me every week!' You know? And I don't blame her. She's been solid as a rock."

Houseman found out rather quickly that his job as councilman wasn't going to be a simple task, as he was barraged by phone calls after a perceived political misstep.

See HOUSEMAN, page 4

State buildings to go dark for Earth Hour

Heidi Groover
Montana Kaimin

The Montana Governor's Residence and Capitol building in Helena will go dark Saturday night for Earth Hour 2010, a global effort to turn off nonessential lights to express support for action on climate change, but the University of Montana will have to leave some lights on.

Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer has committed to slowing climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, and participating in this cause is a way of showing that commitment, said Schweitzer's communications director, Sarah Elliott.

"Everyone has a responsibility to make our communities and planet better by curbing climate

change," Schweitzer said in a press release on the Earth Hour Web site. "By participating in Earth Hour, we are showing our commitment to that cause. We are confident that our participation will help the world take notice and work toward a solution on climate change."

UM can't turn off all the lights in public areas like stairways, hallways and lobbies because of fire codes, but it is encouraging students to turn off their lights for Earth Hour, said Rita Tucker, associate director of Residence Life.

The World Wildlife Fund started Earth Hour three years ago. The annual event encourages individuals, organizations, businesses and governments to turn off their lights for one hour on a specific

night to show solidarity in calling for climate change action. This year, Earth Hour will be Saturday from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. local time.

According to the global Earth Hour Web site, 80 million Americans and 318 U.S. cities, including landmarks like the Empire State Building, Golden Gate Bridge and Seattle's Space Needle, participated in 2009. Around the world, 4,100 cities in 87 countries participated. The Great Pyramid of Giza, the Acropolis in Athens, the Sydney Opera House and other global landmarks went dark. So far, 26 state governments, 114 buildings and landmarks and millions of individuals in the United States have agreed to participate in Earth Hour 2010, according to the site.

heidi.groover@umontana.edu

UM to hold open forums on four-day school week

Kimball Bennion
Montana Kaimin

The possibility of the University of Montana switching to a four-day workweek will be up for public discussion today in the University Center Theater.

The controversial money-saving measure has been rolling around in administrative discussions this year as UM prepares for a projected budget shortfall after one-time stimulus funds from the federal government run out in 2012. UM is expected to lose \$3.6 million when that funding stops and was urged by the Board of Regents, which oversees higher education in Montana, to submit

proposals on how to soften the blow. The four-day week idea had floated around until last October, when UM's Strategic Planning and Budget Committee left it out of its list of 29 final proposals.

The issue was resurrected, however, when President George Dennison suggested it in his convocation address in January, in which he spoke about UM's coming budget woes.

In addition to the loss of the stimulus funding, UM is facing a 5 percent decrease in next year's budget as requested by Gov. Brian Schweitzer's office.

See WORKWEEK, page 8

Caught in the Act



Kaelyn Kelly and Willi Brooks

Spring fever side effect

Editor's note: Kaelyn Kelly and Willi Brooks take turns writing this column, which is published on Fridays. This is Willi's week to write.

I love watching the seasons change in Montana. It's finally the Friday that kicks off spring break and the warm weather is (kind of) here. The trees are budding, the birds are singing and we college students are getting spring fever.

As you bring out the bike and bust out the barbecue, spring sex is on the brain instinctively. Girls walk by in their summer clothes, as Mick Jagger says, and guys grow out their mustaches in hopes of attracting a mate. You can see the signs of spring everywhere. But there is something that could quickly paint your spring break black.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, about 25 percent of people are carriers of Staphylococcus. Most of the time the bacteria doesn't cause any problems.

But here's the scary part: A few forms of staph are so evolved that some cases can't be treated with the usual antibiotics prescribed for staph infections — specifically, a bacteria called Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA.

MRSA, or, more importantly, a form called community-associated MRSA, is a flesh-eating bacteria. The Mayo Clinic reports that "MRSA generally starts as small red bumps that resemble pimples, boils or spider bites. These can quickly turn into deep, painful abscesses that require surgical draining." The Mayo Clinic goes on to say that, in severe cases, "the bacteria remain confined to the skin, but can also penetrate into the body, causing potentially life-threatening infections."

So where does one contract this sort of ailment? MRSA is mainly transmitted by contact and acquired in close quarters like hospitals or dorms. It is most commonly

picked up through open wounds. But it can also be transmitted through intimate contact, even though it's not necessarily considered an STD. It's mostly carried in people's skin.

So how do you know if someone is a carrier? Well, for starters, if someone has had a staph infection before, they are more than likely a carrier. Mayo says "older adults and people with weakened immune systems are at most risk." It goes on to say, "More recently, community-associated MRSA has occurred among otherwise healthy people in the wider community."

Keep in mind, not all staph is MRSA.

But even though you're likely safe from the bacteria, there's a reason why I'm writing about all of this. It's because of a personal experience that really got me interested in the subject.

Some time ago, a close friend of mine fell ill and had to make a visit to Curry Health Center. The friend was told it was a common cold, given some aspirin after seeing a doctor, and discharged. Four days later, the friend fell sick again and went back to Curry, this time to be diagnosed with staph. But, luckily, my friend took the prescribed antibiotics and, in the end, returned to a natural healthy state.

Staph is a risk college students face, however distant it may seem. So as you go about your Spring Break and engage in the promiscuous practices we all know and love, keep yourself clean. Ask the person you are getting intimate with if they are clean, too. Even in a one-night stand situation, you shouldn't be afraid to ask, because you've probably already asked them to have careless sex. And if you find you could be infected, don't be afraid to find help.

Willi Brooks is a senior studying broadcast journalism.

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Top 5 Most-Read Stories on MontanaKaimin.com This Week

1. Guest Column: A Vermonter discovers Montana foods
2. UM students arrested in state capitol sit-in protest
3. Politicking Time Bomb: States' rights movement will affect future elections
4. March fly hatches mark the first chance for fly fishing
5. Caught in the Act: Guy candy, not storylines

BIG UPS & Backhands

Whoooooh!!! Spring Break 2010 y'all!!! **BU&BH** has some wicked rad plans for next week. We're planning on expanding our horizons and jetting off to China. We don't really have much of a plan after that. We'll probably get set up in a nice hostel, open our laptop and see what we find on Google.

Phew! What a week. First off, **Big Effing Deal Ups** to the health care bill for passing. Although now that the bill is the law of the land, we're a little disappointed at how slow the death panel has been in contacting us and asking how soon we'd like to bury our grandma. Just goes to show how slow those government bureaucrats are at getting things done.

Almighty **Backhands** to the Pope for knowing a lot more than originally thought about a child sex abuse scandal in Germany decades ago and for still allowing the offending priest to keep practicing. Listen guys, no one's going to accuse you of overreacting if you defrock a pedophile priest. You've kind of raised the overreaction bar pretty high, after all. Just ask Galileo.

The best part of waking up is **Big Ups** for your jingle. Specifically, the jingle from Missoula band What Rhymes With Oranges, which made it into the semifinals for a nationwide Folgers jingle competition. We're super happy for you guys and encourage you to enter another contest we're sponsoring. It searches for a different song to replace the Folgers jingle that's been running a loop in our head for two days.

Free **Backhands** with terrible production value to YouTube for inexplicably shutting down for what seemed like forever yesterday. For a couple of grueling hours, we were forced to actually do some work instead of get our fix of startled kittens and plaintive tweens. We'll never get those hours of our life back, YouTube. We hope you're happy.

Hey, turns out that China is ██████████ Google here. Which is totally ██████████. We think it's time that China get its ██████████ out of its ██████████ and finally ██████████ to the ██████████ ██████████ of ██████████ that only the ██████████. What a bunch of ██████████. *We in no way question the People's Republic of China and its honorable dissemination of virtue for the good of the People and the progress of the Nation.*

HEARD AROUND CAMPUS

"Your face looks a lot different in the daylight. I have only seen it in the dark lately."

-heard outside Don Anderson Hall

"What's up, G? So here's the dealio: I'm heading into class right now."

-heard outside the UC

"Are you a dementor? Because you just took my breath away."

-heard in the Kaimin office

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Hullabaloo 2 aims to raise awareness about autism

Shanda Bradshaw
Montana Kaimin

Leah Grantham wants people to know that having autism is nothing like how it's portrayed in the movies.

She doesn't have savant-like abilities to count cards like the character in "Rain Man," but she does have a lot of other things to offer the community.

Grantham, who's pursuing an Asian studies major with a minor in Japanese, has high-functioning autism, which means that her signs and symptoms are less severe than with other forms of the disorder.

"I think the media has a warped and dishonest image about what autism is," Grantham said. "They show no positive sides."

She said her experience has been nothing but positive.

"Autism is a big part of who I am," Grantham said. "It's a little like being in a bubble. I have certain quirks that might seem odd to others, but they're perfectly normal to me."

Grantham, who is a member of the University of Montana's Neuro Networking Club, will be helping to host the Spring Hullabaloo 2, an autism awareness event April 3 in the UC Ballroom from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

"We want people to know that we have a lot to give back to Missoula," Grantham said. "And we hope to recruit people to learn

more about autism and learn more about people with autism, like me."

Treva Bittinger, who organized the Neuro Networking Club and is also helping host the event, said she likes the idea that it is essentially people with autism putting on an event for autism.

She shares the same hope as Grantham, and said she wants students at the University to get to know other students with autism.

Bittinger knows firsthand the importance of socializing and making friends for those who have autism because of her autistic son, Ben.

"There needs to be more understanding and acceptance," Bittinger said.

Bittinger said she especially saw this need when she and her family moved to Missoula. She said that when she noticed Ben was having a hard time socializing and making friends, she decided to form the Neuro Networking Club.

The Neuro Networking Club is an ASUM-sponsored group that is a social club for adults with autism and their friends and family.

"Now Ben looks forward to the Neuro Networking Club every month," Bittinger said. "He's made a lot of lasting friends."

Allison Pak, a member of the club, said it has played a big part in helping her cope with autism.

"This is a great support

group that focuses on all of our strengths," Pak said. "And all of the things that make us different from neurotypicals become irrelevant and we just are who we are. That's a great feeling."

Pak, who is studying geography at the University, remains unofficially diagnosed because, though she was evaluated for autism as a child, it was dismissed because she can interact and communicate fairly well with other people and didn't show any developmental delays.

Pak said these variations in diagnosis are yet another reason why raising awareness is important. She said she grew up knowing she was different.

"I have a difficult time relating to people and forming friendships," she said. "I am still trying to learn how to keep a conversation going. Small talk is not my specialty and really talking in general is a chore."

Pak also has hypersensitive hearing and sense of smell and has a hard time relaxing her muscles.

"Even though these things are constant challenges and have greatly impacted my ability to keep up with those around me, I have found ways to cope with them for the most part by finding alternative solutions," she said.

One of those alternative solutions is the Neuro Networking Club. The club pledges to

"Promote and share with pride the beauty of neurodiversity, help the community at large see autism as a positive, endearing trait and advocate for a more accepting, diverse world."

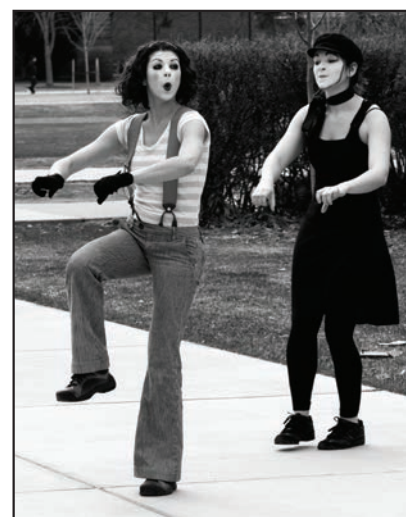
This is the second year that the Neuro Networking Club will be hosting the Spring Hullabaloo.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will feature a performance by a UM mime troupe and appearances by PLUK the chicken and UM mascot Monte. Local organizations, including PLAY (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters), PLUK (Parents Let's Unite for Kids) and the Child Development Center, will provide autism information and resources at the event.

This year's Spring Hullabaloo is also a fundraiser for Zane Goicovich, a 4-year-old Missoula boy with autism who needs brain surgery to alleviate his epilepsy.

Pak said this is another example of the Neuro Networking Club giving back to the community while raising awareness about autism.

"There are a lot of people who will tease, torment and abuse people with autism because they don't understand what autism is," Pak said. "And then there are people who treat it like a disease and want



Ben Coulter/Montana Kaimin
Rebecca Sporman (left) and Sarah Doyle perform a mime routine near the Oval on Thursday afternoon while handing out flyers for the Spring Hullabaloo 2. The event is hosted by the Neuro Networking Club to raise awareness about autism and will take place on Saturday, April 3.

to label all of us as defective and in need of immediate curing — or they completely dismiss it as non-existent."

She said the club wants people to see the good side of autism and that is where raising awareness comes in.

"Hopefully, by putting information out there, people will start to see the individuals instead of just the autism and they won't be so quick to judge," Pak said. "My opinion is that we need to cure ignorance, not autism."

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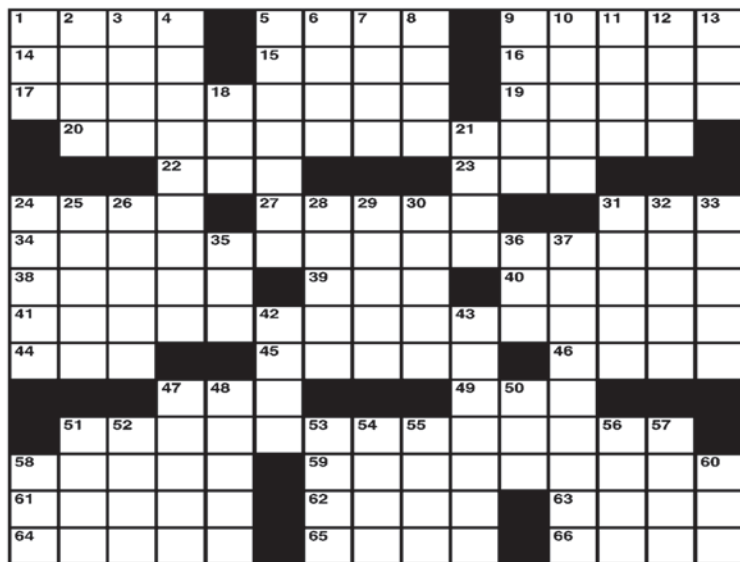
FOR RELEASE MARCH 26, 2010

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

ACROSS

- 1 Sugar substitute?
- 5 Flirtation
- 9 Travel needs, perhaps
- 14 End of an estimate
- 15 Rival rival
- 16 ___ coffee
- 17 Hobart resident
- 19 Lip-smacking
- 20 Barbecue area without chairs?
- 22 Certain mil. member
- 23 Gray head?
- 24 Cereal ingredient
- 27 Stallone role
- 31 Plant activity: Abbr.
- 34 Relative value used in a scientific workplace?
- 38 Lost a lap?
- 39 Padre's hermana
- 40 Snacking (on) to excess
- 41 Small apartment for a comical septet?
- 44 Before, in verse
- 45 Backspace, often
- 46 "O, gie me the ___ that has acres o' charms": Burns
- 47 Word-word link
- 49 Pres. between JAG and GC
- 51 Exponential measurement, and in a way, what's demonstrated in how answers were formed in 20-, 34- and 41-Across?
- 58 Bread
- 59 Like clones
- 61 What an X may indicate
- 62 Supply, as paper to a copier
- 63 One of Pittsburgh's Three Rivers
- 64 California baseballer
- 65 Signs



By Gary Steinmehl 3/26/10

- 66 Chuck ___, only coach to win four Super Bowls

DOWN

- 1 Pointillism unit
- 2 Periods of interest
- 3 ___ mgr.
- 4 Prominent facial feature
- 5 Ill-fated opener of myth
- 6 Et ___: and others
- 7 Bridge
- 8 Berlin number
- 9 Curriculum ___
- 10 Fit to be tied
- 11 Spanish ayes
- 12 Reference words
- 13 Unassuming
- 18 Mandela's gp.
- 21 Gamer's maneuver
- 24 Apathetic
- 25 Harder to dig up
- 26 Upstairs
- 28 Fragrant oil
- 29 Kelly of "One Tree Hill"
- 30 Wire fasteners
- 31 Highest peak on Crete: Abbr.
- 32 "Done!"

Thursday's Puzzle Solved



(c)2010 Tribune Media Services, Inc. 3/26/10

- 33 "We Got the Beat" singers
- 35 TV Chihuahua
- 36 Baloney
- 37 Excessive flattery
- 42 Uno minus uno
- 43 They can ruin diets
- 47 Pen resident
- 48 Illusionary genre
- 50 Back on the water
- 51 Famous Amos
- 52 Joyful group dance
- 53 Coffeehouse connection
- 54 1950s British prime minister
- 55 Offend the olfactory
- 56 Empty hall effect
- 57 Pointed fastener
- 58 Unit of RAM
- 60 Texter's tehee

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The University of Montana

Medical marijuana banned on campus

Mike Gerrity
Montana Kaimin

Medical marijuana patients are not allowed to possess or use their prescribed medication on University of Montana property, according to the Office of Public Safety and UM Legal Counsel.

This is not a new policy, though the Associated Press and local news outlets reported it yesterday.

Jim Lemcke, director of the Office of Public Safety, said UM is required by a federal mandate to prohibit the use or possession of

marijuana on campus, regardless of whether or not a student has a prescription for it.

"This is not a change," Lemcke said.

Lemcke said Public Safety has run into these issues before with students living in University housing. Last fall, a student who was prescribed medical marijuana was discovered growing the legal amount of six marijuana plants in his apartment in the University Villages. Lemcke said the student was asked to remove the plants

from University housing, though he was still within his legal rights to possess the plants.

"(Students) get a card and then they think they're good to go, but they are still subject to the student conduct code," Lemcke said.

David Aronofsky of UM Legal Counsel said students who don't comply with the mandate can be written up for student conduct code violation, but can't be prosecuted criminally in Montana as long as they are keeping in line with the state law.

But the federal mandate, as dictated by the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, requires that institutions of higher education adhere to prohibiting the possession and use of marijuana in order to receive federal funding.

"The state law can't override it. This has to be changed by Congress," Aronofsky said.

Aronofsky said he believes the Obama administration has shown signs of acting on progressive attitudes lately with the passage of the health care reform bill this week,

and if it continues to be that way, the marijuana debate could soon reach a national platform.

"If a medical case for marijuana use can be made in 13 states, it can be made nationally," he said.

But whether or not that would happen anytime soon he would not begin to speculate.

"We understand and are sensitive to the population that needs medical marijuana as a legitimate medication," Aronofsky said. "It's not that we have a problem with it, but the Feds do."

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Biting beast, baseless bandit, beer bounty

Mike Gerrity
Montana Kaimin

Saturday, March 20, 9:09 p.m.

After finding beer cans littered all over the "M" trail, a man reported it to the University of Montana's Office of Public Safety. The man said he also found a receipt from where the beer was purchased near the empty cans.

Saturday, March 20, 11:10 p.m.

The smell of pot drew Public Safety officers to Aber Hall on a noxious odor complaint, where a female was cited for possession of dangerous drugs.

Monday, March 22, 1:24 p.m.

A woman reported that her parking permit was stolen from her car near Aber Hall.

"The vehicle owner was getting parking tickets and found that her parking pass was missing," said

Monday, March 22, 8:27 p.m.

A little black dog that was chained to a railing near Knowles Hall was reportedly biting people.

Police Blotter

Office of Public Safety director Jim Lemcke.

The alleged thief and the woman are apparently acquainted with one another. The situation is being handled as a student conduct issue and the suspect is paying for the parking tickets.

Tuesday, March 23, 10:35 p.m.

After a white Chevy Cavalier pulled up to a green Dodge truck near the Gallagher Business Building, the driver stopped, grabbed a tool bag and began working on the green truck before driving off with it. A caller was suspicious

and suspected the truck was stolen. Lemcke said the report was unfounded.

Wednesday, March 24, 6 p.m.

A car parked outside of Elrod Hall had one of its fenders kicked in. Lemcke said whoever did it left a dent.

"There was a witness and the investigation continues," he said.

Cited:

Sarah Bender, 18, possession of dangerous drugs
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HOUSEMAN

From page 1

Early into his term, he voted for Lyn Hellegaard instead of Democrat Stacy Rye to be a representative on the Transportation Policy and Coordinating Committee.

"Just because I'm voting with a bloc sometimes doesn't mean I'm not independent of that bloc," Houseman said. "It just means that we agree on a lot of the same ideals and concepts ... Right off the bat I tried to set a tone, and it ended up being a lot of phone calls going, 'What are you doing? We elected you to be supportive of progressive causes in Missoula and you're

totally stomping on them!'" Houseman said. "And I'm going 'No, that wasn't my intention at all, work with me here people.'"

The biggest shock in January, though, was Houseman's sudden re-enrollment at UM as a graduate student. Part of Houseman's severance package from Smurfit-Stone included trade adjustment assistance that allowed him to send in an application for school money.

"I turned it in on Thursday and they said, 'This looks great; you're going to be approved. We'd like you to register for classes — they start Monday.'" Houseman said. Class began in late January, and Houseman used February to find

his rhythm, balancing class work, council responsibilities and personal time.

Houseman now spends most mornings studying and taking occasional breaks to walk his Chesapeake Bay Retriever, Solomon. He shares lunch with Andrea during her work break, spends afternoons running errands and dedicates evenings to council work.

His classes — all political science courses — mesh well with his work on the city council, where he's settled into learning as much as he can before leaping into projects. Houseman said his fellow council members have been a big help as he gets familiar with his duties.

UM to test emergency notification system over spring break

Mike Gerrity
Montana Kaimin

The University of Montana will conduct a test of its Mass Emergency Communication System next week.

The test, which was developed in a combined effort between the Office of Public Safety and the Information Technology Office, will occur some time Thursday morning.

Text messages and e-mails will be sent to students who have signed up for the alerts and also to wireless LED signs placed in entryways throughout campus, said Jim Lemcke, director of the

Office of Public Safety.

"We don't want to interfere with classes, so we try to do this during off times," Lemcke said.

The system is designed to alert students of emergencies immediately affecting their safety on campus, such as fires, hazardous weather or violent criminal activity, like a shooting.

Students can sign up to receive emergency text messages through CyberBear. If they have signed up and do not receive a test message on Thursday, Lemcke said, students should check CyberBear to see if their information is accurate.

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Because his work isn't done in regular shifts, Houseman said his biggest struggle is keeping self-motivated during his flexible schedule.

"It's pretty easy to get up some mornings and want to take the dog out for a walk and get lost for a little while," Houseman said. "But you get down and you get back into it. The most rewarding thing right now is that being in school full-time has given me the opportunity to learn more about council than I would have if I had full-time work."

Andrea said she thinks her husband's new schedule beats the one he had at his old Smurfit-Stone job.

"It's better than swing-shifts," she said.

Now that Houseman has settled into his new roles, things are back to normal at home, too.

"I've seen some really positive things in his personality," Andrea said. "He really loves school and tries his best. Council has been good, too."

While he has hard work ahead of him as classes move toward finals and city council figures out how to deal with a budget crunch, Houseman is content now that he's settled into the learning path that has encompassed his life.

His smile gives it away.

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APRIL 13

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TAG PRESENTS SILVER LAKE



Ben Coulter/Montana Kaimin

UM's rugby men and women hit the road over spring break

Troy Warzocha
Montana Kaimin

While most students will use spring break to catch up on sleep or catch up with friends, the University of Montana Jesters rugby team will be catching knees and elbows as it hits the road for a domestic tour.

Next week's tour will take the Jesters to Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, where they will play local rugby clubs over a span of 10 days.

According to team president Matt Johnson, the tour is an opportunity to get out of Montana for a while and play some different opponents.

"You get all your guys, load into cars and play against guys you normally wouldn't during the regular season," Johnson said.

Rugby teams tend to go on tours often and usually alternate between traveling domestically and internationally. The Jesters try to do a domestic tour every two or three springs and an international tour every other year, Johnson said.

Last summer, the Jesters planned to go on another international tour, but scheduling issues forced the club to shelve the idea. Their last international tour took place on the Caribbean island of Trinidad and Tobago.

Going on tour can help a club in multiple ways and Johnson is excited to see how the Jesters come out of spring break.

"(The tour) helps us in two ways," Johnson said. "One, it helps build experience

against clubs we wouldn't normally play against and it helps us see different types of rugby. I think it's going to help a lot just in terms of experience."

Going on long car rides with a bunch of guys also builds camaraderie, Johnson said.

Tours generally are not funded by anyone other than the team. Therefore, most of the cost is paid for directly out the players' personal finances.

However, not every player has the money to foot the bill for 10 days of travel. For those students, Missoula's strong rugby following steps in to help the team secure the funds necessary to make the trip. Many former players will invite players over to their homes to do chores and earn a couple bucks, Johnson said.

"We kind of have a support network that helps people out," Johnson said.

The tour comes at a good time for the Jesters, as they are coming off their first victory of the season in Helena.

After opening the spring season with a loss to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, the Jesters traveled to Montana's capital city and beat the All-Blues Rugby Football Club solidly last weekend.

"Against Helena we had a lot of success and we're looking to build off of that," Johnson said.

The Jesters won't be the only rugby club to trek out of state over the break in search of adversaries. The Betterside Women's Rugby Football Club will take a trip west on

ABOVE: Spencer Veysey passes the ball while team president Matt Johnson (right) watches at Dornblaser Field on Thursday afternoon in preparation for the team's tour across the southwest during spring break.

RIGHT: Brittani Oliver runs through a tackle at a March 13 game at Dornblaser Field against the University of Idaho Black Widows. The Betterside lost the match 17-14.



Eric Oravsky/Montana Kaimin

I-90 to participate in Fool's Fest in Spokane, Wash., on April 3.

Betterside wants to play at least three matches on its trip to Washington, said team veteran Mackenzie Flahive-Foro.

While the Jesters have the luxury of competing against many local clubs in western Montana, traveling across state lines is pretty common for the ladies of the Betterside, considering that they are the only organized women's rugby club in Montana.

"There used to be teams in Kalispell and Bozeman, but they kind of stopped," Flahive-Foro said.

Because of the lack of clubs in Montana, the Betterside plays almost all of its matches against clubs from Idaho and Washington. In fact, the Betterside has to play each opponent three or four times a year because there are so few women's clubs in the area.

Unlike its male counterpart, the Betterside's ability to go on tour is hindered by the lack of teams and players.

"(Betterside has) toured before, but it

takes a lot of planning," Flahive-Foro said. "It's harder to get a lot of people committed."

Despite having trouble finding teams to play against, the ladies of the Betterside relish their role as Montana's only women's rugby club and invite any woman who is interested in rugby to play with them.

"(Being the only Montana club) is a good title to hold," Flahive-Foro said. "I think we represent it very well."

The team is mostly made up of UM students, but there are a handful of women who come from other parts of the state as well.

After an impressive performance at Maggotfest last spring, the club picked up where it left off with a strong showing at the Widow's Fest in Moscow, Idaho, last weekend, getting third place at the tournament.

"Last year we ended up at Maggotfest and won all our games," Flahive-Foro said. "We always strive for that because a lot of good teams and select sides come to Maggotfest."

Tennis embarks on spring break marathon



Eric Oravsky/Montana Kaimin

Freshman Heather Davidson returns a backhand volley during practice. The women's tennis team is preparing for a string of tough matches over spring break.

Tyson Alger
Montana Kaimin

Spring break is an oxymoron for the Montana Grizzly tennis teams. Both the women and men will spend the break on the road, with the men traveling to California for four games and the women also heading south for a massive six-game road trip.

The women (4-1 BSC, 5-7 overall) start out on Friday, when they take on Gonzaga in Spokane, Wash., before traveling to Sacramento, Calif., to face Big Sky Conference top-seed Sacramento State. Then they will play San Jose State and UC Davis for the next two days. After a two-day break, the women will conclude their trip with matches against Seattle

University and conference foe Eastern Washington.

The long trip will be a grind for the Grizzlies, but head coach Steve Ascher said the challenge of the trip isn't the fatigue from six games in eight days.

"We're playing a lot of matches, but the reality is our conditioning and the way we work during practice makes it so it's not a huge deal," Ascher said. "I always look at it as practice should be harder and more physical than the matches."

Instead, Ascher said, the challenge for the team will be acclimating to playing outside.

With warm weather in California, all of the Grizzly games will be held outside. Montana hasn't played games outdoors yet this

season, but for the last several weeks the team has practiced on the outdoor courts on campus.

"The last three weeks we've been playing outside, so the transition shouldn't be a problem," Ascher said. "The courts will be slower than indoor ones. Strategy will play a bigger role."

Freshman Constance Alexander said the Grizzlies are ready to step up their game on the outdoor courts.

"I think us practicing out here will help us a lot," she said. "Outside, there are a bunch of factors like wind and temperature. You can get a lot more tired if it's hot out."

With four of the six games over the break against non-confer-

ence opponents, Montana could use those games to tinker with form and technique to prepare for outdoor conference matches, but Ascher said every game will be played with victory in mind.

"Every time you step out on the court, it's to compete, and your goal is to try and win," Ascher said. "Whether that's conference or non-conference, it doesn't matter to us."

The men's break doesn't include as many matches as the women's, but that doesn't mean it's any less rigorous.

The Griz men will take their perfect conference record (2-0 BSC, 4-3 overall) down south to face Santa Clara, Sacramento State, UC Davis and St. Mary's over the break.

Santa Clara will set the tone for the trip, as the Broncos are ranked 53rd in the country and tout a 10-4 record.

Things won't get any easier for

the men when they face Big Sky Conference opponent Sacramento State. The Hornets enter the match against Montana with a 9-7 record, and were pre-season Big Sky favorites.

Sacramento State had a surprise earlier in the season when Northern Arizona upset the Hornets in their conference opener. The Grizzlies defeated Northern Arizona earlier this season.

Things will hopefully ease up for Montana after Sacramento State, as its next two opponents, UC Davis and St. Mary's, bring losing records to face the Griz.

When school opens back up for Montana students, the tennis programs will still have the pedal on the floor.

The men continue their stretch of games on Monday, April 5, against BSC opponent Weber State, while the women have a few days off before taking on Washington State the following weekend.

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Slight chance of showers doesn't dispel sandal wearers



Photo illustration by Greg Lindstrom/Montana Kaimin

Summer shoes are hitting the shelves as Missoula stores start to display their warm-weather fashions.

Erin Cole
Montana Kaimin

Springtime marks the reemergence of the quintessential Missoula shoe: the sandal. While March weather is known for throwing temper tantrums, this doesn't stop University of Montana students from breaking out their beloved footwear at the first hint of sunshine.

English major Molly McConnell chose to wear a pair of Teva sandals on Monday, despite warnings of afternoon precipitation.

"I was in class, so it didn't bother me," the senior said of the freak snowstorm that had passed through campus earlier that day.

McConnell admits she isn't always so lucky when she chooses to wear sandals in the early spring.

"I had to ride my bike home in a storm last week, but it doesn't stop me from wearing them," she said. "I go home and put on slippers."

Some students play psychological tricks on themselves when the weather doesn't cooperate with their chosen footwear.

"I try and pretend it's warm out," UM student Anna Vanuga said.

Vanuga, a freshman in environmental studies, said she runs to her next class if she gets caught on campus wearing her favorite Rainbow sandals during a storm.

"My feet don't really get that cold," she said.

Brandon McNeel, who works at the Montana Bootlegger shoe store located in Southgate Mall, said the store received its first shipment of sandals earlier in the month.

"People start coming in and asking for them in January," he said.

McNeel, a recent UM graduate, said that while the store carries a variety of brands, Chaco sandals far outsell the others.

Chacos, distinguished by their crisscrossing straps, can cost double the price of other brands, but last longer, McNeel said.

"They're pretty durable," he said.

McNeel wears his sandals year-round, albeit with a catch: During winter months, he only wears them indoors.

"I bring my sandals to the store and wear them here because they're comfortable," he said.

Some students never take a holiday from their favorite footwear.

Matt Ogle, a UM student and employee at Hide and Sole, a shoe store on Higgins Avenue, wears his Chaco sandals year-round, inside and out.

"Except for two weeks in December when the weather was really bad, I always wear them," he said.

Ogle, a senior who studies management information systems, says he catches grief for his year-round habit.

"I get it every day, not so much on campus but in the store," he said. "Elderly people are especially outspoken about my

bare feet."

Ogle says that although the store stocks sandals all year, demand for them picks up in the spring.

"Most people (buying sandals) in the winter are going somewhere on vacation," he said.

Keen and Chaco sandals are the most popular brands at Hide and Sole, Ogle said.

"They're better for you," he said, "because they let your feet breathe. People wear them until they're dead."

Neyooxet Greymorning, professor of anthropology and Native American studies at UM, believes the sandals-in-the-winter fad is a recent development.

"It's kind of strange," he said. "I first noticed it three or four years ago when I saw an increase in students wearing sandals all year round."

"At the time, I wondered if they couldn't afford shoes. Now they're wearing \$30 flip-flops and sandals that cost \$60."

Greymorning recently started wearing sandals in colder months and noticed an improvement in his blood circulation. He said he had been wearing sandals throughout the month, but wasn't at the moment because the weather forecast predicted rain.

"I didn't want to come to class with wet feet," he said.

Greymorning has noticed some students do not wear any footwear at all.

"I had a girl in class five or six years ago who went barefoot all year," he said. "She strode through snow banks in her bare feet."

He says the only time he heard that her feet got cold was when she had to push her car out of a snow bank.

Kristina Gunderson's bare feet padded against the Oval concrete in the sunshine on Tuesday afternoon.

"I haven't been wearing shoes for the last week and a half," the freshman wildlife biology major said.

Gunderson said she doesn't check the weather forecast before heading out sans footwear, but has noticed a difference in her feet.

"They're getting tougher," she said.

Gunderson said she ventures

barefoot into University buildings.

"I went to the Food Zoo the other day, where I know bare feet are not allowed, but nobody noticed," she said.

Other students are not on board with the all-season sandal trend, in part because they say their extremities are more sensitive.

Shannon Schreiner, a pre-med senior, said she only wears sandals when she's assured of warm weather.

"My feet get cold really easily," she said, pointing down at the socks and Dansko clogs she was wearing.

It's likely that a variety of footwear will be worn in the coming weeks, but those planning to go barefoot or in sandals should note that the National Weather Service forecast for Missoula shows chances of snow and rain showers for the rest of this school week and into spring break.

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Crystal Cabaret



Eric Oravsky/Montana Kaimin

John Knisple addresses the audience while performing "Bad Romance" by Lady Gaga during the Montana Actors' Theatre's live cabaret in the Crystal Theatre Thursday night. The cabaret, which has been running since Wednesday, will perform through Saturday starting at 8 p.m. every night with a matinee on Sunday at 2 p.m. On April Fool's Day, the group will perform again to raise money for Haiti before going on to Helena on April 2 and 3.

WORKWEEK

From page 1

A study group has been exploring the four-day workweek issue for the past three weeks, said Bob Duringer, vice president for administration and finance at UM. The group is led by Rosi Keller, associate vice president for administration and finance, and Chris Comer, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The group also includes representatives for students, faculty and staff.

The group meets every Friday

and is currently gathering information from other organizations across the country that have also implemented a four-day week to save money. Though the group is expected to submit a final recommendation by May, Duringer said no decisions have been made yet.

"We're still very much in the preliminary phase," Duringer said.

Today's forum will be the first of three before the group gives its recommendation to Dennison. According to Duringer, the primary purpose of these meetings will be

to gather opinions.

"This is very much an open question," Duringer said.

Duringer also suggested that anything is possible at this point, and said that even suggesting that the issue isn't set in stone yet would be too generous.

"It's not even set in sand," he said.

Today's meeting begins at 11 a.m. in the UC Theater and will run until noon. The next two will be held April 8 on the main campus and April 9 on the College of Technology campus.

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Professor, John F. Kennedy School
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"The People Factor: Strengthening America by Investing in Public Service"

(Stan Kimmitt Lecture on Public Service and supported by a grant in Public Policy and Leadership from The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center of The University of Montana)

With the Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, Professor Bilmes co-authored *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*. This book became a national and international best-seller. In the lecture, she will discuss her latest book, *The People Factor: Strengthening America by Investing in Public Service*, co-written with Scott W. Gould.

Mon., 5 April 2010 • 8 P.M. • UC Ballroom

Though funded in part by a congressionally appropriated grant, the opinions expressed by the speaker do not necessarily represent the policy of the federal government.

Kaimin Arts

Homemade music



Justin Franz/Montana Kaimin

UM student Wesley Harmon sits in his bus playing with one of his homemade bass guitars. The small blue-and-white bus doubles as his home during the school year.

UM student makes carbon fiber didgeridoos and guitars

Justin Franz
Montana Kaimin

Wesley Harmon lives in a bus, but that isn't the only thing that makes the University of Montana student interesting.

Harmon makes didgeridoos and bass guitars by hand. Making things from scratch is something in his genes, he said.

"Well, my family has been building shit for a long time," he said. "It's kind of something we did. I have no idea why, just why the hell not?"

In fact, Harmon said, his grandfather built a sailboat in his backyard in Colorado, then took his family sailing around the Caribbean.

It was that same creative spirit that had Harmon in Florida a few years ago, building jet skis with his uncle. There, Harmon saw the possibilities of using various materials and started building didgeridoos out of carbon fiber.

Harmon has played the instrument since he was in the second grade and always appreciated music and art. Making his own art seemed like a good fit, he said,

and it was something that could be used, too.

"To me, the coolest thing about this is that I can play it, not just look at it," he said.

After making a few of the unique Australian instruments, Harmon started selling them. One place he sold his instruments was Electronic Sound and Percussion in Missoula, according to Checkers Barker, one of the store's owners.

"We've sold a number of them," he said. "I think they're pretty cool looking."

But Harmon isn't a one-trick pony, and soon after discovering the possibility of what he could do with the carbon fiber material, he wondered about expanding his collection. It was about the same time he started to play the bass guitar and, by looking at the design of his instrument, he decided he could build the molds to make more in his uncle's shop.

Harmon said he spent hours working on the molds and then started making different bass guitar bodies to put on pre-bought necks. To make the guitar body,

he placed carbon fabric inside and added epoxy to solidify the mold.

This process, however, requires more space than his bus can offer; he must make the bodies exclusively in Florida, where he has the means to do it.

"It's been super experimental," he said, which is to be expected when creating something truly unique. But to him, it's a surprise that no one has done this before.

"As progressive as the music industry is, the technology hasn't changed since the 1960s," he said, adding that many guitars are still made of wood. "The stuff you can do now well exceeds what has already been done ... you can get very different sounds out of different methods."

Because of his distinct product, Harmon has considered selling his guitars, like the didgeridoos, and hopes to put one up at Electronic Sound and Percussion soon. After that, he would like to make even more of them and work on the design. But that is all up to a couple of factors.

"It's all just a matter of time and time is such a finicky little

bastard," he said.

If he had more of it, he would like to go into business making them; at the moment, all he has is his company logo. But what he really needs is more space, as he

said it is impossible to make the bass guitars inside his small, blue-and-white bus.

See **HOMEMADE**, page 11

“To me, the coolest thing about this is that I can play it, not just look at it.”

—Wesley Harmon, artist



Justin Franz/Montana Kaimin

Harmon makes the bass guitars from carbon fabric, a unique process that few people actually do, according to Harmon.

Kaimin Arts Reviews

Kaimin Arts Staff
Montana Kaimin

'The Bounty Hunter' should be taken in

Here's what I think went on in the mind of Andy Tennant, the director of "The Bounty Hunter":

Well, this story is rather trite: A guy is kicked off the force and he's a renegade. Hmm, Colin Farrell maybe? No, he's too outdated. Who's the "bad boy" of the month?

Oh, how about Gerard Butler? Ahh, and a smart, but beautiful, reporter who was with him but they got divorced ... Jennifer

Aniston, she was good in "The Breakup." There, with all this eye candy on the screen, no will notice that the story line is dull and the plot doesn't connect.

Hey, Andy. I noticed. I walked out of the theater and all I could think was that it was a good thing I didn't have homework that night.

I'll agree, Butler is a fine piece of man candy and Aniston has a better body at 41 than I do at 21, but even they couldn't hide the unoriginal plot line and stale story.

Milo Boyd (Butler) is an ex-

cop-turned-bounty hunter after he drinks himself out of his job following his divorce. He is then given a chance to hunt down his ex-wife and take her to jail when she misses a court appearance.

Nicole Hurly (Aniston) is a reporter who misses court to get more information for a story and then tries to run from Boyd to follow the story of a suicide that leads back to the NYPD.

The plot is too complicated to be told in the time allowed, and it's just a bad story that didn't live up to the hype.

-Jessica Stugelmayer
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'Up in the Air' soars into stores
While we're gone for spring break, a recent movie will hit the store shelves on DVD.

"Up in the Air," starring George Clooney, follows the life of Ryan Bingham, whose job is to travel across the country and fire people. Because of this, Clooney's character is isolated from his friends and family.

It's one of those movies that stays with you after the credits roll. It made me realize that a life away from the people I love is one that I wouldn't want, or like.

I think that if a movie leaves

you this thought-stricken, then something must have been done right. The acting is spot on, with Zach Galifianakis, Sam Elliott and J.K. Simmons all making appearances that were hilarious and, at times, awkwardly serious. Either way, it worked.

If you're doing nothing over break, this movie is worth a watch.

-Justin Franz
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Fine Arts seniors exhibit several types of artwork

Tori Norskog
Montana Kaimin

A plethora of art techniques will be on exhibit the week after spring break in the UC Art Gallery and the Gallery of Visual Arts as the senior class of the School of Fine Arts presents its annual senior thesis class exhibition.

Beginning April 8, the 16 seniors will take part in an exhibition that will serve as the culmination of their work while at the University of Montana. They take the senior thesis class the semester before earning their Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in order to learn about all the elements involved in

the exhibition process.

Various types of art will be on display at the exhibit, including drawing, sculpture, printmaking, photography, ceramics, painting and installation.

Cathryn Mallory, director of the Gallery of Visual arts and professor of the senior thesis class, said one of the exciting parts of this year's exhibition is the number of installations on display. Mallory described the installations as transformation of the existing space in the gallery to create a completely different environment for displaying the work.

This year, there will be three

installations. One of them will be for senior Cait Finley, whose focus is in ceramics, but also works with mixed media. Her installation will be a "Wonder Cabinet" filled with several pieces that focus on the molecular composition of everyday objects.

"The objects I'm making and showing are actual things that already exist," Finley said. "I'm showing how men use that element."

One such element Finley is displaying is Tantalum. She found this particular element interesting because it only has two practical uses: for skull plates and to make

capacitors in electronic equipment.

Finley worked on this project all semester and said one of her favorite parts of creating this exhibit has been the research that has gone into it.

"I'll be working on it up until the second the show opens," Finley said.

Also exhibiting is Josiah Dedekam, a senior whose emphasis is metal sculpture, but has also dabbled in other media such as photography and painting. Dedekam said he settled with sculpture because of the difficulty crafting three-dimensional art.

"I feel like I need to overcome the challenge," Dedekam said. "And it's fun."

He said his education has shown him how to communicate ideas in new ways.

"Being exposed to different mediums has broadened my palate for applying concepts," Dedekam said.

Dedekam will be exhibiting a work called "Armature," which is comprised of more than 1,000 individual pieces. It references astronomy and the relationship between dark and ordinary matter. He said he has been conceptualizing this piece for two years and it has taken him several attempts, but the piece he's exhibiting will house everything he was trying to capture.

Also creating a 3-D exhibition is Katie Hilmer, whose focus is

photography. Her exhibition is a collection of photos she took of garage sale items left on the curb or in alleys.

Other artists being exhibited are Jacilyn Albert, Katherine Jo Cain, Robert R. D'Almeida, Kathleen Donaldson, Deegan Fox, Rebecca Hoffman, Jessi Inkley, Nellie B. Lutz, Chad Mallow, Sarah Monk, Amber Prouty, Mara Vinton and Jake Weaver.

The exhibitions will be on display at the Gallery of Visual Arts in the Social Sciences building and the UC Gallery. On April 8, there will be an opening reception at the UC Gallery from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and an opening reception at the Gallery of Visual arts from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. The exhibition will stay open at the Gallery of Visual Arts until April 22, and at the UC Gallery until April 23.

"There is a wide variety of media and concepts," Mallory said. "It's an event for the University and community with something for everyone."

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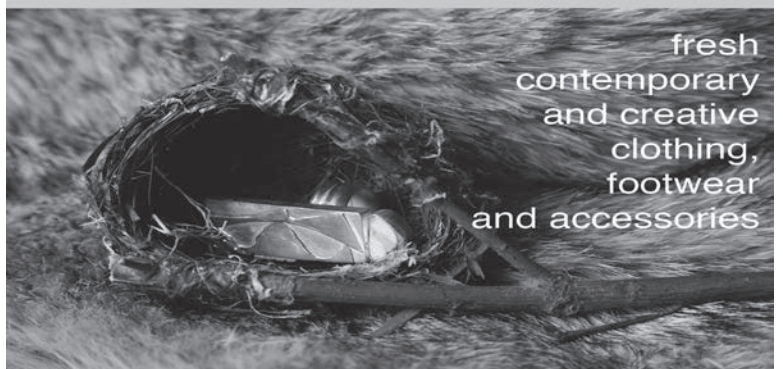
SOLUTION TO THURSDAY'S PUZZLE

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Jessica Stugelmayer
Montana Kaimin

Spring flowers will not be the only pop of color in downtown Missoula as temperatures rise.

A resolution passed in the City Council in August 2009 lowered the application fee for public works of art from \$753 to \$100, which made creating public art feasible for local artists Jess Abell and Kip Herring. Both Herring and Abell expect to begin their murals as soon as the weather permits.

Abell brought the issue of application costs before the City Council last summer when she realized the cost for the application was double what she would spend creating the art.

"It priced people out of being able to do these sort of things," she said.

Abell's project is tentatively located on the southeast corner of Worden's Market and will be reviewed by the Public Art Committee April 14. If it meets the qualifications, she can begin painting.

Abell said the design is rather simple.

"Nothing that will stir up controversy," she said.

In an e-mail, Abell described the concept as a "clean, graphic arts-styled design, influenced by contemporary art, styles and street art."

The mural will be three-dimensional, with bird sculptures hanging from the awning of Worden's Market and seeming to emerge from the wall. Viewers cannot see the entire mural as they approach, but Abell said it will unfold as they get closer.

"It's something surprising to people walking up," Abell said.

Abell hopes the reduction in the price will encourage many more artists to bring their artwork



Murals in Missoula now feasible for local artists

Ben Coulter/Montana Kaimin

Local artist Jess Abell holds a design sketch for the artwork she hopes to construct on the southeast corner of Worden's Market at 451 N. Higgins Ave. The project will fill the empty wall with a combination of sheet metal cut-outs and exterior and auto paints from under the building's awning to the edge of the sidewalk. Abell estimates the project will take a week and looks forward to warmer weather so she can begin.

to buildings in Missoula. She said it is not only good for the city, it's good for the artists and the businesses in the community.

"A lot of the downtown culture thrives off the art in our community," Abell said.

Herring's mural was approved in November 2009, and his design will find a home on the corner of Brooks Street and Higgins Avenue. It's up to the weather as to when Herring will begin working on his mural.

"You can't paint murals in the winter," said Ana Aronofsky from the Office of Planning and Grants.

Aronofsky originally brought the price problem to Abell's attention. She said it began to deter artists from pursuing ideas for public art when they learned how much they would have to shell out to just to apply.

Aronofsky said requests are so rare that these two that were submitted seemed like a huge increase from the one requested in the three

years prior.

"I thought there would be more," said Aronofsky.

She said this could be because of both the weather and the fact that many people don't know there is a process to have public art approved.

She said she expects the number of applications the office receives to increase as the weather warms up. Aronofsky said the complete process from application to hearing takes about 30 to 40 days.

She said the most common place for public artwork is commercial buildings that have a wall or a façade that artists and owners think would be a good canvas.

As to where she would like to see art done, she said that is a question for the public, but she added that there are a lot of places that could use some "cleaning up" downtown.

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HOMEMADE From page 9

While the bus doesn't provide the amount of space necessary to build, it does give him the mobility he desires.

Harmon said he's never stayed in a house for very long and has spent more time moving than he has staying in one place. So it certainly wasn't a surprise when he started working last summer on an old, abandoned bus his employer had left by the wayside in Polson.

Spending a few weeks crawling about the vehicle, he and his father were able to get the old Ford road-ready.

"I scraped the shit together and took off," he said.

His first stop was West Virginia last August, for a kayaking and river festival along the Gulley River. Then he moved to Washington, D.C., before heading south to Florida. In Florida, he was able to continue working on his guitar molds before heading back west for the holidays, making it to a relative's

house in Colorado just moments before the clock struck midnight on Christmas Eve. Then he made his way north back to Missoula for his first semester at UM.

Upon returning to Missoula, he decided he was going to continue living in the bus. And even though it's not a real house, it seems like home now, he said.

"I've been in the same place for six months, it's almost a record now," he said.

But where he'll be six months from now is anyone's guess —

even he doesn't know.

"I like learning stuff, but I really like making stuff," he said, adding that with a business degree he got in a two-year program in high school, he would love to produce more of his unique homemade instruments.

"This whole project is on hiatus until I'm out of school," he said.

Yet even this isn't a sure thing, he said, and when asked what else he might like to do later on in life, he responded quite abruptly.

"That's a damn good question."
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Gorillaz heed the call for cartoon message

There was a time when cartoon characters spoke of deeper truths than they do now — truths, for instance, concerning man's connection with nature, both in the figurative and ecological sense.

Programs like "Captain Planet" and "David the Gnome" served a higher purpose than merely keeping sugared-up kids transfixed on the TV screen before and/or after school. They enlightened children about the importance of environmental stewardship and warned of the consequences should nature be suppressed by the mechanical (and evil) industrialized world.

Nowadays, it seems as though cartoons are more concerned about keeping viewers in a safe, consumeristic ennui than they are about raising awareness of the constantly battered rainforests and naturalistic habitats razed to the ground in the name of profits.

But some animated charac-

ters could no longer remain silent in the face of eco-turmoil. Their names are 2D, Murdoc Niccals, Russel Hobbs and Noodle, collectively known as Gorillaz.

Since their 2001 self-titled release, the Gorillaz have not only single-handedly resurrected the failing cartoon-rock genre (whose previous headliners, such as Josie and the Pussycats, The Archies and The California Raisins, have long since disbanded), but have even been named the "World's Most Successful Virtual Band" by the Guinness Book of World Records. In fact, the Gorillaz have already outsold the entire catalogue of popular Britpop group Blur (the main band for 2D's human side, Damon Albarn).

With smash hits like "Clint Eastwood," "Dare" and "Feel Good Inc.," Gorillaz has effectively transcended the novelty of merely being a cartoon band and

established itself as a legitimate, (somewhat) serious outfit.

On their third album, "Plastic Beach," 2D and company return from their almost five-year hiatus of suspended de-animation to offer us a glimpse of what should happen lest we forget our duties as protectors of the naturalistic environment, and the consequences that would arise should we continue to neglect our planet's well-being.

Essentially, everything would become plasticized: the trees, the land and life itself.

Though this theme continues in a similar vein to that of cartoon eco-legends Planet and Gnome before them, but perhaps in a more pessimistic and fatalistic light, it doesn't run throughout the entire album. This motif is especially apparent on tracks like "Pirate Jet," "Rhinestone Eyes" and, my personal favorite, "On Melancholy

Miller Time

By Steve Miller



Hill." But on others like "Sweepstakes" and "Stylo," the album's first single, the message becomes a little harder to discern.

While it lacks the narrative focus of past great concept albums like Radiohead's "Kid A" and Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" (though, to be fair, most albums fall short of that mark), it's hard to discredit, or dislike, "Plastic Beach." Although they may be a group of fictional avatars, there's a level of atmospheric depth to the work as a whole, which suggests that a good deal of thought went into crafting the album. But, as with their previous efforts, "Plastic Beach" still exudes the kind of zaniness that only a cartoon band can get away with (see: "Superfast Jellyfish").

To give the band further credit, Gorillaz recruits the likes of Lou Reed ("Some Kind of Nature"), the Clash's Mick Jones and Paul

Simonon ("Plastic Beach"), Snoop Dogg ("Welcome to the World of the Plastic Beach") and even the National Orchestra for Arabic Music ("White Flag") to help them present their bleak vision of the possible future.

As a whole, "Plastic Beach" flows smoothly and never really hits any rough patches. On the other side of that, there aren't really any stellar standouts, nor any follow-ups to "Clint Eastwood" or "Feel Good Inc." But in a time of rehashed and repackaged pop music, it's telling that a group of animated characters can construct an album without recycling their material.

That's a message more cartoon characters should preach, and all real bands should heed.



3 1/4 out of 4 stars

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