

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

Montana Kaimin, 1898-present

Associated Students of the University of
Montana (ASUM)

2-10-2021

Montana Kaimin, February 10, 2021

Students of the University of Montana, Missoula

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/studentnewspaper>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Students of the University of Montana, Missoula, "Montana Kaimin, February 10, 2021" (2021). *Montana Kaimin, 1898-present*. 9662.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/studentnewspaper/9662>

This Newspaper is brought to you for free and open access by the Associated Students of the University of Montana (ASUM) at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Montana Kaimin, 1898-present by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

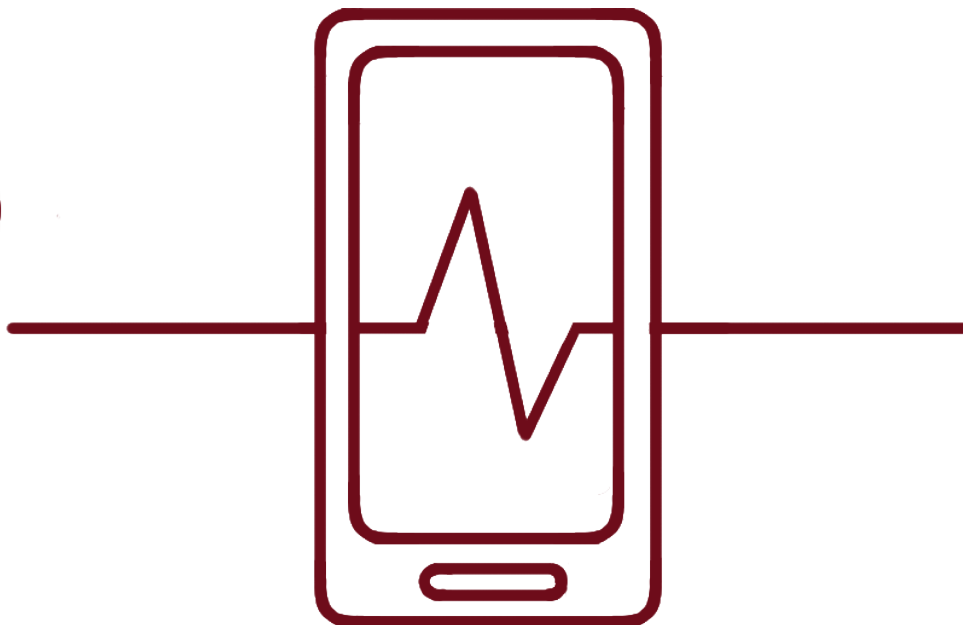
MONTANA KAIMIN

*D*ating in the pandemic

Love in the time of corona

Story by Clarise Larson

Design by MaKayla O'Neil



News

*No more
plastic bags*

Page 6

Review

*Foo fighters keep
it consistent*

Page 12

Sports

*Griz basketball
splits*

Page 14



*Volume 123
Issue No. 19,
February 10, 2021*

Kiosk

Cover Design
MaKayla O'Neil



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."

EDITORIAL STAFF

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Erin Sargent

BUSINESS MANAGER
Cassandra Williams

SPORTS EDITOR
Jack Marshall

NEWS EDITOR
Mazana Boerboom

ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR
Alex Miller

FEATURES EDITOR
Addie Slanger

MULTIMEDIA EDITOR
Claire Shinner

DESIGN EDITOR
Griffen Smith

DIGITAL EDITOR/COPY CHIEF
Andrea Halland

NEWSROOM STAFF

NEWS REPORTERS
Jacob Owens
Mariah Thomas
Grace Carr
Allie Wagner

SPORTS REPORTERS
John Orzechowski

ARTS & CULTURE REPORTERS
Clarise Larson
Meghan Jonas
Haley Yarborough

MULTIMEDIA STAFF
Liam McCollum
Matt Tryan
Zach Meyer
Antonio Ibarra
Sarah Mosquera
Lukas Prinos
Kennedy Delap

COPY EDITORS
Zandria DuPuis
Alicia McAlpine
Luke Nicholson

DESIGNERS
Isabella Musgrove
McKenna Johnson
MaKayla O'Neil
Olivia Swant-Johnson

CARTOONIST
Cooper Malin

OFFICE ASSISTANTS
Christine Compton
Maura Lynch

ADVISERS
Geoff McGhee
Jason Begay

FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



For comments, corrections or letters to the editor, contact
editor@montanakaimin.com
or call (406) 243-4310.

For advertising opportunities, contact
ads@montanakaimin.com or
call (406) 243-6541.

ASUM Legal Services
provides
reduced-cost
legal services
to UM
Students

Book an appointment today!
asumlegal@mso.umt.edu

KAIMIN COMIC



COOPER MALIN | MONTANA KAIMIN

A stepping-stone toward ‘personal responsibility’

There is an apparent air of irony floating in from Helena: “Big government bad, big government will save economy.”

But it’s all about personal responsibility, right?

The newly patched-up Senate Bill 65—or the “COVID-19 Liability Bill”—that has made its way to Gov. Greg Gianforte’s desk would prohibit any forms of legal action against businesses revolving around the coronavirus. This bill is like a prequel: The real storyline is the imminent removal of the statewide mask mandate.

And just like many prequels, the bill isn’t necessarily horrible—it’s just not that great.

There have been a handful of lawsuits in Montana leveled against businesses throughout the pandemic; ranging from the foursome of restaurants in Kalispell, to a few against nursing homes in the state. The nursing home lawsuits, specifically against the Whitefish Care and Rehabilitation Center, are directly linked to the COVID-19 related deaths of

residents from what the lawsuits claim to be caused by negligent care.

It is not up to this editorial to decide the legality of this suit, but SB 65 could potentially make this case—and cases like it—moot, leaving these families in pain and without answers.

But the stepping-stone aspect of this bill is undeniable. The statewide mask mandate enacted by former Gov. Steve Bullock could be gone. Soon, or at least according to Gianforte’s mask mandate rollback checklist. A bill like SB 65 protecting businesses from COVID-19 liability is a major box about to be checked off on that list.

In his State of the State address on Jan. 28, Gianforte remarked at how large of a step forward toward “personal responsibility” SB 65 is.

“I look forward to getting SB 65 to my desk so we can take that critical step toward getting Montana safely open for business, moving towards incentives and personal

responsibility and away from impractical government mandates,” Gianforte said in the address.

So the hill to die on has been established: Masks vs. personal responsibility. Masks act like hand sanitizer for your face, personal responsibility is the tire fire that spreads COVID-19 with wanton, reckless abandon.

Mask mandates have worked. According to a study conducted by MIT in August: Had there been a nationwide mask mandate in April, deaths would have been 40% lower in June. In a report released by the CDC Feb. 5, using data gathered from March to Oct. 2020, hospitalization rates from COVID-19 decreased by over 5% when mask mandates were implemented.

But guess what, gang? There is now an even more contagious variant of COVID-19 from the U.K. that is tearing its way through the U.S. And it is most prevalent in Florida, a state with little to no restrictions in place regarding mask usage.

The suggested solution: Two masks. What now, Greg?

It is unfortunate how extremely politicized a simple precautionary step has become, but here we are. Coronavirus spreads primarily through droplets released through breathing, masks stop those droplets. Personal responsibility is taking out the trash, not putting another person’s life into the hands of people who can’t take out the trash, but will be damned if they have to wear a mask.

– Alex Miller
Arts & Culture / Opinion editor

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

Feature Photo: First Friday



Viewers take in Zootown Community Art Center’s First Friday art gallery in on Feb. 5. Patricia Thornton, the gallery director, said First Fridays before COVID-19 “were like gangbusters,” bringing in over 1,000 viewers compared to only 30 now. **KENNEDY DELAP | MONTANA KAIMIN**

SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Medium

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

Copyright 2021 by The Puzzle Syndicate

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:

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

Briefs: Gun legislation passes, Indigenous Peoples' Day and entrepreneurship

HB 102 goes to Gianforte's desk

House Bill 102, legislation revising Montana gun laws, passed through both houses of the Montana legislature last week. The controversial bill would bar universities from prohibiting concealed-carry on college campuses. It will now head to Gov. Greg Gianforte's desk for a final signature before being implemented into law.

"The House legislation is excited that 102 has passed through the legislature so quickly. It was a priority for the House Republicans," said Dylan Klapmeier, communications director for the House. When asked if the party foresaw any pushback from campuses or the public, Klapmeier said he did not. "It's just going to take the public a while to understand what it does or doesn't do," he said. "I don't think it's going to have major impacts on college campuses. They still do have the ability to regulate firearms, they just can't outright prohibit them." (Addie Slanger)

Missoula COVID-19 and vaccination updates

Missoula County was still in the first tier of Phase 1B of COVID-19 vaccinations as of Monday. This tier includes everyone over 70-years-old and any Native American or other person

of color over 16, including some UM students. Vaccination efforts are moving forward swiftly, as the county has administered another 6,000 doses from Feb. 1-8, bringing the total to over 16,000. Those with second doses make up almost 4,500 of those. Montana as a whole has administered over 140,000 doses, as of Monday.

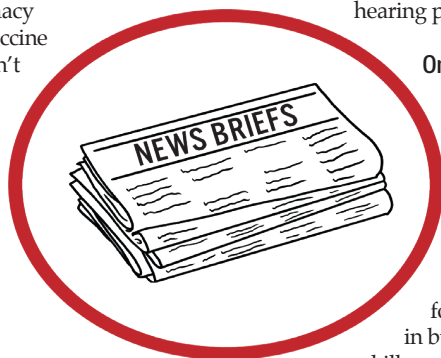
Last week, UM pharmacy students helped run a vaccine clinic for people who don't have healthcare providers. Dave Kuntz, UM's director of strategic communication, said there are plans for another clinic once UM and the county get more vaccines.

(Mazana Boerboom)

SB 146 aims to change Columbus Day

A bill introduced Jan. 25 aims to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples' Day. Senate Bill 146, which is sponsored by Sen. Shane Morigeau (D), is not the first attempt at a change of the controversial holiday's name. Morigeau, then a representative for House District 95, introduced House Bill 219 in the

2019 legislative session. The previous bill made it through the House, but was killed by a 5-3 vote in the Senate Administration Committee. The Bullock administration supported Morigeau's initial bill, testifying on its behalf. Currently, SB 146 is awaiting a hearing scheduled for Wednesday. The Kaimin will be following this bill as it moves through the hearing process. (Alex Miller)



Online classes encourage female entrepreneurship

The University of Montana is launching three late-enrollment Pursue Your Passion classes this semester for women interested in business and leadership skills, according to a UM News release. The class is open to the public and not only women, though its aim is to help Montana women find their own personal and professional goals and give them the skills to achieve them. A 2020 survey from a past Pursue Your Passion course showed 60% of students felt more likely to apply for a leadership position, and nearly 50% felt more comfortable with their networking and brand skills.

The three classes are: "Build Your Brand and Network," running Feb. 22 to April 30, "Business Basics I," running March 15 to April 30, and "Business Basics II," running March 10 to June 18. To enroll in a class, visit www.umt.edu/passion. (MB)

Former high school student sues over discrimination

A former Seeley-Swan High School student has filed a lawsuit against the school for repeated discrimination claims. The student, Owen Mercado, and his mother filed the 127-page lawsuit against the school on Jan. 21 for its participation in and tolerance of discrimination based on Mercado's race, national origin, gender and disability during the 2018-2019 school year. He's seeking hundreds of thousands of dollars in damages. The complaint included claims of continuous harassment both online—through a meme page specific to the high school—and in school by his peers and teachers. The complaint also included claims of students using both racist and sexual slurs against him, stealing his personal property and vandalizing his car with a sexual slur. Later, Mercado filed for subpoenas, after evidence was deleted from a meme page. Missoula County School District's response to the complaint is due by Friday. (MB)

Blotter: Antlers, antiques and an unwanted smooch

GRACE CARR

grace.carr@umontana.edu

Between Jan. 28 and Feb. 3, UMPD reported six crimes on and around campus. Theft was the most common crime this week. UMPD also released two public safety notices on Feb. 2, warning University of Montana staff and students of phone and email scams designed to steal banking information. Your bank info is not your snap username at that party you shouldn't be at, stop handing it out.

THURSDAY 01/28: JUST A BAD JOKE?

What may have started as an ill-thought-out joke ended in a criminal mischief citation when a set of antlers was taken from a vehicle in parking lot H of Pantzer Hall Thursday morning. A person stole the property and took it to his friends' house to show off the prize. But the jokester's friend immediately called to report the antler theft, and the property was returned to its rightful owner. The person involved was referred for conduct and cited for criminal mis-

4 February 10, 2021 montanakaimin.com

chief instead of theft because intent to steal and keep the property could not be proven.

FRIDAY 01/29: PICTURE HEIST

Four historical pictures were swiped from a locked carpenters' room in the basement of Knowles Hall. The frames are worth \$100 total, but the value of the pictures themselves is unknown. A UMPD detective is currently speaking with suspects, who could be charged with burglary.

TUESDAY 02/02: RIPE FOR THE PICKING

A woman reported that the side glass of her vehicle had been broken at the U Lot by the M trail. Her purse was also taken from inside the vehicle, which may make it difficult to pay for damages. "We do encourage people that when they're leaving their cars locked, if they have anything of value, to put it in the trunk or somewhere that it can't be seen," UMPD Lt. Brad Giffin said. No suspects have been identified.

WEDNESDAY 02/03: IS IT LEGAL? CONT...

Officers responded to the Sisson Apartments when another electric lettuce complaint was made. UMPD made contact with the baked resident who admitted to the act. While smoking some leafy greens is no longer a state crime, the specifics are slightly more complicated because it is still a federal crime. "Universities are considered Title IV institutions that receive federal funding," Giffin said. "To continue to receive federal funding, they have to abide by the federal statutes." So as of now, students caught are referred for a policy violation, but not a law violation. Yeah, we're confused too.

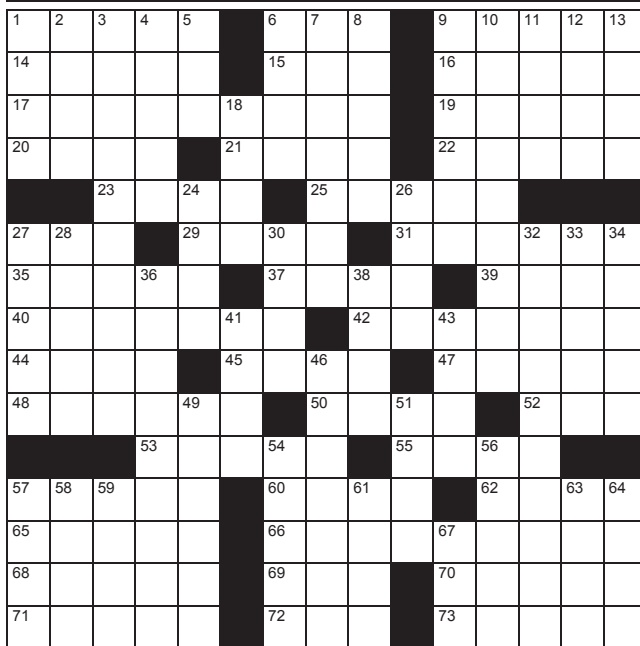
WEDNESDAY 02/03: A KISS FOR THE ROAD

An unsuspecting bus driver received an unwanted form of affection when a passenger gave her a smooch on the cheek. The passenger rode the bus until the end of its route at the Missoula College. He approached the driver to speak with her, but masks do not make

conversing easy. As the driver leaned forward to hear him better, the man took his opportunity to grab her face and kiss her on the cheek through the mask before making his getaway. The man has not been identified but the incident was reported as a simple assault.



OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN



Copyright 2021 by The Puzzle Syndicate

ACROSS

- 1 Longtime "Unsolved Mysteries" host
- 6 "For ___ a jolly ___"
- 9 Cowgirl Dale
- 14 Filthy money
- 15 Polish off
- 16 Beauty parlor
- 17 Undercover
- 19 Greek philosopher
- 20 Litter cry
- 21 Kind of agreement
- 22 Extend, in a way
- 23 Pare anagram
- 25 Set in motion
- 27 Brake part
- 29 Genuine
- 31 Swear (to)
- 35 It might be airtight
- 37 Ground grain
- 39 Mark of a ruler
- 40 Shed function
- 42 Clog clearer
- 44 Playing with a full deck
- 45 Play opener
- 47 Paris river
- 48 Artificial
- 50 Linchpin's place
- 52 Prefix with born or found
- 53 Highway headache
- 55 Internet browser
- 57 Get clean
- 60 Prime-time hour
- 62 Chevron competitor
- 65 Bitter-tasting
- 66 Mason's milieu
- 68 Literary device

- 69 Make a scene?
- 70 Dwelling place
- 71 Wall shelf
- 72 Faux ___
- 73 Like some numerals

DOWN

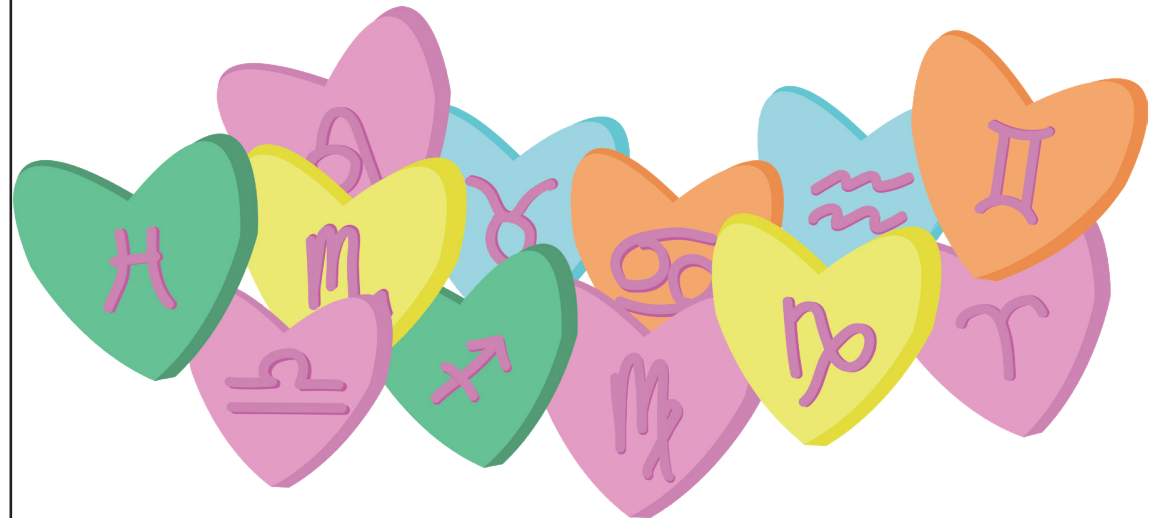
- 1 Meager
- 2 Fiddle with a fiddle
- 3 Oktoberfest instruments
- 4 "A Beautiful Mind" star
- 5 Beer barrel
- 6 Next in line?
- 7 Fit for consumption
- 8 Lifted, in a way
- 9 ___ de corps
- 10 Card for a sweetie
- 11 Shepard in space
- 12 Staff member?
- 13 Winter blanket
- 18 Forget it!
- 24 Puccini piece
- 26 Brazenness

- 27 Out of fashion
- 28 Place to exchange rings
- 30 Congregation's cry
- 32 Scotty's domain on "Star Trek"
- 33 Public spat
- 34 Lost on purpose
- 36 Kind of exercises
- 38 Topmost point
- 41 Steady look
- 43 No longer mint
- 46 Type of pudding
- 49 Staple of hippie fashion
- 51 Give the eye
- 54 Open, as a bottle
- 56 Greta of old films
- 57 Bondsman's money
- 58 Something to build on
- 59 Walked (on)
- 61 Pub snacks
- 63 Musical finale
- 64 Sign of foreboding
- 67 Roof stuff

Answers to Last Week's Crossword:



The courtship of the signs



OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

ALEX MILLER

michael6.miller@umontana.edu

Can you smell it? Love—and the coronavirus—is in the air. One definitely feels better than the other, but these days it's hard to spark a flame with your next ex from six feet away. No need to fear, though—we're here to help you in your socially distanced courting efforts this upcoming Valentine's Day.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20–FEB. 18): Some try their hardest to be unique, but you, Aquarius, are just naturally different (for better or worse). So in trying to score a date you'd naturally do something a little off-kilter, like suggesting hazmat suits on a first date to frolic through Stocks. Safety first.

PISCES (FEB. 19–MARCH 20): Two fish, two hearts. Your love is deeper than the Mariana Trench, Pisces, and it shows in how you look for a partner. Just maaaaybe hold off on discussing wedding plans after two messages on Bumble. We know you found the one, just slow it down.

ARIES (MARCH 21–APRIL 19): Aries, you fiery ram, you. You're a trailblazer in every meaning of the word. That's right, you did message first on LinkedIn to ask that guy that wants to be an architect if he can build the life of your dreams with you. No one would even think to do that, except you.

TAURUS (APRIL 20–MAY 20): Why you so classy, Taurus? First date walk in the park? Hell no. You'd book a reservation at a joint with those tiny little candles on the table and low lighting. You'd order that cucumber water and wax poetic about your financial portfolio as your date drifts away.

GEMINI (MAY 21–JUNE 20): Like a true double-sided coin, Gem, you would present yourself in two ways. The Tinder version, which is crisp, clean and has a

well-written bio and immaculate pics. And then the real you, which is slamming boxes of Franzia talking shit about "Bachelor" contestants. Your date is just along for the ride.

CANCER (JUNE 21–JULY 22): You're kind of a psychic, Cancer. You can see all the bullshit your date-turned-future lover will get you into. But fuck it, dive on in.

LEO (JULY 23–AUG. 22): You've probably got some fish on your Tinder profile. Most likely a poorly written bio too. But in person, man, you're the best. Socially-distanced online dating must be hard for you, Leo. How will everyone know how great you are if they just stop reading your messages?

VIRGO (AUG. 23–SEP. 22): Virgo, you just get shit done. From courting to scheduling dates, you just manage the hell out of your life. But then the tequila happens. And that's how you and Braxton ended up in Vegas at the Little White Wedding Chapel.

LIBRA (SEP. 23–OCT. 22): As the master of balance, Libra, how does one maintain safe coronavirus practices and actively date? Asking for a friend. Millions of lonely, single friends.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23–NOV. 21): No.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22–DEC. 22): Unconventional you are, Sag. In defying the norms of the new way to date, you have opted to get a megaphone and communicate outside of your crush's home. Normal? No. Off the beaten path? Yes.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 23–JAN. 19): When you set your mind to something, Cappy, by God do you achieve it. So go ahead, you can still believe that you will meet Dr. McDreamy from "Grey's Anatomy" and you two will start a totally normal life together.

UM Campus Dining backs ASUM effort to ban plastic bags

JACOB OWENS

jacob.owens@umontana.edu

UM Campus Dining facilities will begin phasing out the use of plastic bags next fall as part of a larger campus initiative.

Byron Drake, the interim director of Campus Dining, sponsored the Associated Students of the University of Montana resolution passed on Jan. 27. The resolution, SB 53, aims to start a campus-wide phase out of plastic bags beginning with Campus Dining.

"We're not the first ones out there to have a ban on plastic bags on campus," Drake said. "There's actually quite a few institutions that are doing that, but we feel like if that's something that the students support, we think it's a good idea."

The resolution's co-authors, ASUM Senator Adrianna Medina and Vice President James Flanagan, reached out to Drake a few days before the resolution passed; but the idea of a plastic bag ban was born years earlier.

Flanagan ran for office on a sustainability platform with ASUM President Taylor Gregory last spring. He first heard of the idea for a plastic bag ban in 2018 when he sat in on a Sustainability Committee meeting chaired by former ASUM Senator Morgan Corkish.

Corkish said the committee gathered research in 2018 that would later support the case for UM to implement the ban.

"When the year started we all thought, 'Oh, we can get this done in a year, it would be easy,' and then, you know, you start talking to people and realizing how slow things move," she said. "So when I left there, I knew we had built a pretty solid case that someone could then take to the higher-ups."

The resolution references other universities that have implemented similar bans, including the University of Oregon and North Carolina State.

The next step for Flanagan and Medina, the current chair of the Sustainability and Zero Waste Committees, is to start implementing the ban with these higher-ups.

Medina said she's attending the ongoing Winter Plastic Free Action Camp run by the Post-Landfill Action Network to learn



how to develop a successful rollout.

The ASUM resolution suggests charging customers for a plastic bag or giving discounts to those who bring a reusable one.

Drake said Campus Dining hasn't decided how it will encourage the phase out, but it starts with educating customers on the shift in the following months.

"We don't want to do anything that messes with them, but at the same time we also take the idea of a ban on plastic bags

provide 2,000 reusable bags for \$2,500, but he hopes to find a local vendor with a better bulk rate that they could continue business with.

Despite the initial cost, Flanagan said the sustainability aspects of reusable bags and long term savings are unmatched by plastic bags.

"With a plastic bag ban, we are getting rid of a revolving sort of useless cost for [Campus] Dining and other UM stores," he said.

Drake said while plastic bags are relatively cheap to buy in bulk, the ban could eliminate that fee entirely. Though, he added that reusable bags would need to be used repeatedly to reduce the carbon footprint from their production.

He said the compostable plastic bags found at establishments, such as Rise+Rooted, can break down in a landfill within four years and were recommended by scientists roughly a decade ago.

Eva Rocke, UM's sustainability coordinator, didn't help create the resolution, but she said she's always supportive of reducing plastic.

"Plastic in general—whether it's in the clothing we wear, or the packaging for the food we buy or plastic bags—plastics are designed to be waste ultimately," she said.

Rocke said the resolution's incentivized and phased approach will help its successful implementation.

She said two ways to make it stronger are eliminating the word "ban" because of its negative connotations, and making the UM Bookstore a focal point in the initiative.

Medina said they have not reached out to the bookstore yet because of the initial focus on Campus Dining, but the goal is for the entire phase out to be complete within a year and a half.

She said a successful implementation of a plastic bag ban at UM would display the power of student-led initiatives and could help with retention rates.

"If this gets implemented, this kind of shows that students are able to run this campus in a way that they want to, in a way they want to see this campus in the future," Medina said.

OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

really seriously," Drake said. "We think it's a good direction to go, but how do we get there?"

Flanagan said a key to the ban's implementation is ensuring there's infrastructure in place, such as the reusable bags distributed at freshman orientation each year. He and Medina are looking at funding options for an initial purchase of a few thousand reusable bags to help create an initial supply.

Flanagan said one possible vendor could

Montana tribal leaders discuss elevated pandemic impacts on Natives

HALEY YARBOROUGH

haley.yarborough@umontana.edu

COVID-19 continues to devastate tribal communities across Montana, despite tribal leaders' early implementation of pandemic safety protocols that often surpassed state and federal restrictions.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Native Americans are killed by COVID-19 at nearly twice the rate of white people. And in Montana, Native Americans are 11 times more likely to die from the virus than white residents, according to a Montana Office of Epidemiology and Scientific Support study.

A panel of Montana tribal leaders addressed the role of systemic inequalities in COVID-19's impact on Indigenous communities in UM's second lecture in a series of Mansfield Dialogues on Wednesday, Feb. 3.

Cora Neumann, a public health expert and the founder of "We Are Montana," mediated the discussion with questions about vaccine rollout, mental health and systemic issues undermining the COVID-19 response.

"Indigenous leaders have stayed ahead of the curve," Neumann said. "The loss in these communities is not for the loss of leadership."

Shelly Fyant, a chairwoman of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, featured on the panel to discuss her response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fyant helped form a unified command system with Lake County, which enacted social distancing measures at the beginning of the pandemic.

"I realized early on that 'Wow, we're a sovereign nation, we need to do this, we need to take action,'" Fyant said.

Fyant helped tackle community spread from out-of-state visitors by only issuing recreation permits to local Flathead reservation residents. Fyant said revenue

increased by \$200,000 over the previous years, despite the crackdown on tourism.

But Fyant clarified that the health and safety of residents is more important than the economy.

Underlying health conditions play a major role in the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Indigenous communities. While vaccine rollout is a top priority, Fyant said she also hopes to see more food sovereignty to support Indigenous people's health, and to reconnect with Native culture.

"I think it's really important that we try to get back to those Indigenous roots," Fyant said.

Kaci Walette, a chairwoman of the Fort Peck tribes, also discussed Indigenous health. Poverty, high rates of substance abuse, limited healthcare and crowded households all elevate mental health risk for reservation residents.

Montana has the highest suicide rate in the country. In a typical year, Native American youth die by suicide at nearly twice the rate of their white peers, according to the CDC. With COVID-19 driving people into isolation, Walette said she worries Native youth suicides will spike.

"We've been trying to address this suicide pandemic before COVID even hit," Walette said.

During a pandemic, this feat is particularly difficult. Walette said since schools opened, 29% of Fort Peck's COVID-19 cases are 14 to 20-year-olds, while 62% of COVID-19 related deaths are 55 and older.

She said Fort Peck continues to make efforts to mitigate mental health issues with small, socially distanced community and telehealth events.

"Suddenly everyone is a public health leader," Neumann said. "From a parent to a teacher to a shop owner. Everyone who joins the effort to protect the wider community really is a healthcare hero."

ASUM forms its first student lobbying coalitions

MARIAH THOMAS

mariah.thomas@umontana.edu

For the first time, the Associated Students of the University of Montana has developed lobbying coalitions aimed at helping interested students gain lobbying experience at the state legislature.

ASUM's Student Political Action Director Maggie Bornstein said the coalitions will be focused on legislation that aligns with ASUM's five legislative priorities: higher education funding, protecting student renters, expanding mental health services, protecting students from discriminatory legislation and reproductive rights.

Bornstein said students are typically an underrepresented group at the legislature, and their voices often go unheard.

"Even the voice of a few students just shows the tip of an iceberg," Bornstein said.

Bornstein said she plans for the coalitions to focus on some bills already coming through the legislature, including House Bill 259, which would restrict inclusionary zoning. Bornstein said inclusionary zoning could tackle Missoula's affordable housing deficits and has been posed as a solution before.

"As it stands, Missoula does not have inclusionary zoning, but such an ordinance needs to stay on the table," Bornstein stated in an email.

The coalitions will also be focusing on anti-abortion and anti-transgender bills coming through the legislature. Bornstein plans for them to engage with upcoming bills regarding University funding and long-term Montana University System renovations and building plans. She said she plans for the coalitions to start their work this week.

Bornstein said students who join the coalitions will have opportunities for professional development by planning events during the semester. For the first event, planned for this week, she said students will participate in a letter writing campaign with guest speakers teaching about writing letters to the editor.

The coalitions will be open to interested students as long as the legislature is in session, Bornstein said.

"I'm hoping to give back and give skills to those students in these coalitions," Bornstein said.

Bornstein said anyone interested in a coalition can email her directly at asum.spa@mso.umt.edu.



OLIVIA SWANT-JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

*D*ating in the pandemic



*Story by Clarise Larson
Design by MaKayla O'Neil*



SARAH MOSQUERA | MONTANA KAIMIN

A reporter's search for love in the time of corona

My sex life right now is about equivalent to that of the Pope.

Not that I'm saying what it sounds like I'm saying. It's just — I could use a good cuddle. Or someone to talk to. Everyone hears those stories about people falling in love during their college years, and I guess I always assumed I'd have one of my own to tell.

And then the fucking pandemic hit. Now, most nights I play "Call of Duty: Zombies" while sipping on wine with my two roommates, who are happily in love. I have transformed from being a third wheel into a non-sexual partner in their relationship. It's weird.

So I decided that for the sake of their relationship, and the fact that Valentine's Day is coming up, I was going to get myself a damn date.

I wanted a real date, or as real as I could get right now (six feet apart and in a COVID-19 safe environment). The problem is, I go to all my classes virtually. It's hard to feel sexual tension between me and my classmates through the screen. Trust me, I've tried.

Life over this past year has been turned upside down since the pandemic hit, and love and romance have not escaped COVID-19's wake. Nationwide, people have reported feeling more lonely than ever. Dating apps like Tinder and Bumble have seen record numbers join since March of 2020. Humans aren't meant to be alone for this long, but in a time when solitude generally means safety, love and romance have been forced to adapt.

I wanted to see if I could adapt as well, and find myself a hot date during a pandemic. My solution was something I never thought I would do: download an app designed to create sexual tension through a screen.

Tinder, bitches.



Some background about myself: I don't have any social media at all. Like, not even LinkedIn. I like to think of myself as old-fashioned, so I have never tried online dating. I told myself I'd only get Tinder if I was absolutely desperate. I'll let you make your own assumptions about my emotional state right now.

There seems to be this weird stigma that online dating isn't real, but nothing feels real right now with the pandemic. So, fuck it! I ate the forbidden fruit. Looking at the Tinder icon on my phone made me feel weird. Like, was I really about to do this? Two glasses of wine later: Hell yes, I was.

Thankfully, my roommate claimed to be an "expert" on using Tinder, so I gave him the job of making me look like the best version of myself. I was going for the "outdoorsy-but-also-down-to-earth" look, if you catch my drift. I also capitalized on the fact that my roommate had a dog, which I've heard is a big hit on Tinder.

I chose pictures of me climbing, mixed with pictures of my roommate's dog and a few portraits.

Before I knew it, my account was live and the first person appeared. I didn't know how the swiping worked, so I wasted all of my super likes with the first couple of people on accident. Not off to a great start.

Between nervous screaming and small breakdowns generating questions of moral ambiguity, I got my first match: Alex. A few seconds later, another one. And another.

Not going to lie, I was feeling like a damn queen. Did I see multiple exes whilst on the app? Bet your ass I did.







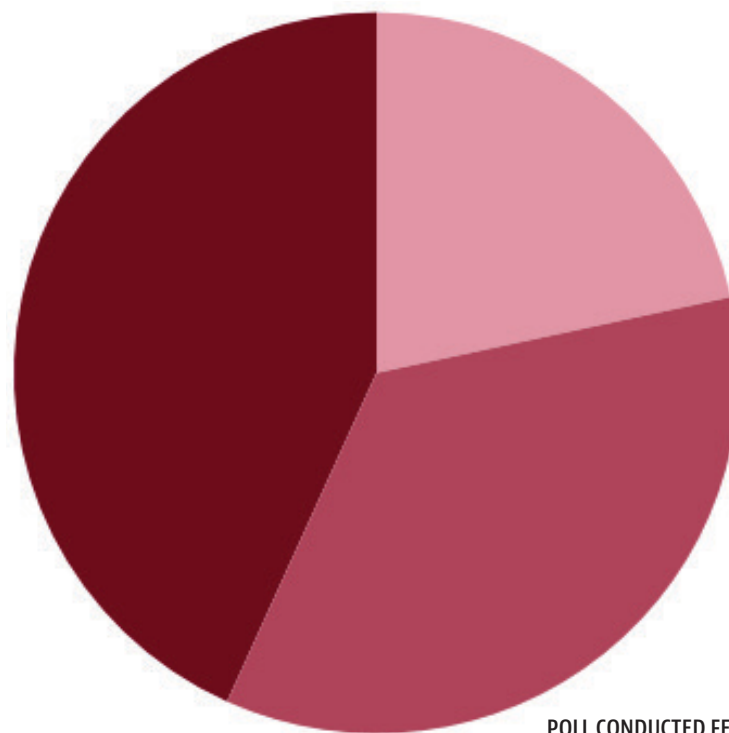
In the midst of all the excitement, though, I decided to take a breather and put my phone down. I wanted to hear what the experts had to say about love in the pandemic.

Mark Dadmun—a mental health counselor at Curry Health Center—said that, regardless of intentions, finding connection during the pandemic is important for mental health.

"We are social beings, so it is important

How have you been dating during COVID-19?

-  Social media baby! Sliding into those DMs
-  Making eyes at your cute barista
-  Dating apps: The tried and true method
-  No dating, I'm taking time to work on myself



POLL CONDUCTED FEB. 7 ON THE MONTANA KAIMIN INSTAGRAM

to cultivate meaningful relationships," Dadmun said. "I think that friendships can absolutely be very meaningful relationships, it doesn't have to be dating or intimate relationships, just as long as people are having those meaningful connections."

According to Dadmun, dating is possible, even now. And if done safely, it can be a very healthy experience. Dating safely and responsibly during COVID-19 can give people more time to get to know each other and slow down the process. It helps build trust. The pandemic's impact, while isolating and frustrating, still has its silver

linings. Many who are dating right now are letting the process be gradual—out of necessity—and there can be a lot of benefits to that.

"The decrease in social options has made it more difficult for people to connect," Dadmun said. "I have seen success, but people just have to be intentional about how and where they are going to connect, because there are ways to do it and do it safely."

For the relationships that started before the pandemic, Dadmun explained that each will respond to the pandemic differently.

"I've seen the pandemic certainly strain relationships, sometimes to the point of breaking up, while some relationships have really flourished," he said. "There have certainly been a lot of breakups, but at the same time, a lot of people have felt a deeper connection."

Dadmun has seen people grow emotionally by themselves. Being alone doesn't always need to be seen as sad, he said.

"It's a spectrum. Some people it's been very hard, and some people feel they have grown more in the pandemic than they have at other times. For some people, this has been a time of growth, some have done some significant self-exploration."

If people have a hard time being isolated, a good thing to do is to try and trust that the situation is temporary, despite how it may feel, Dadmun said. He emphasized the importance of reaching out in times of loneliness. "We have therapists who want to help."

The pandemic can be a great time to deepen connections in existing relationships as well, Dadmun said. During times like this, people can actually feel more connected. If the pandemic is making someone feel extremely isolated, there is help on campus, he continued.

"You are going to keep forming relationships. You know, it's important to be patient because it is a process. It takes time to form a connection, but people absolutely do over time."



Waiting for responses from potential dates, my patience was tested to the max. During the first two days on the app, there wasn't a second I wasn't cradling my phone, awaiting the sound of that magical ding.

Then: A seductive "hey ;)" from a boy named Bryce. He seemed cute, and I asked him out for a socially distanced date. Simple as that.

To my surprise, he wanted the same thing. Or at least, I thought he did.

Though I had my date set up, I kept going back on the app. I convinced myself it was purely for educational purposes, but I kept matching with people. I had about 10 conversations going at one time—all of them extremely innocent. I felt I was just texting a bunch of friends, not people who potentially wanted to sleep with me.

Though, I won't be sleeping with anyone anytime soon—not as long as the pandemic is still chugging along.



Bryce and I set the date. We exchanged numbers and were texting for a few days, which I thought was fun.

And then I got the text: He bailed.

Did I question my existence? Yes. Did I cry? Hell no. The bad bitch in me is strong, and I wasn't about to let some internet boy make me sad.

I decided to play some sad boi music, looking out my window pretending I was Bella Swan to make myself feel better.

That's when I happened to see my upstairs neighbor, Wyatt, walk past outside.

Though I have never actually had a conversation with him, he seemed nice and cute, and I'm nice and cute, so that's enough in common for me.

I was not going to accept failure on my part, dammit. I wanted a date, no matter how I got it. Also, it was kind of comforting knowing that he was a real person and seemingly nice guy—not just a profile picture on a screen.

I texted his roommate, got his number and asked the man out. To my surprise, he was down. Actually, he even said he was excited. I couldn't believe it was that easy, but I wasn't about to question it.

Since this would be my first actual date in lord-only-knows-how-long, I went all-out. Outside our apartment complex, I set out my \$10 coffee table because after measuring it, it was approximately 6 feet wide. We sat outside in folding chairs with the tasteful sounds of French café music playing from my roommate's speaker and cars speeding down Higgins. I even cooked real food—none of that ramen shit.

The date itself was like any other first date: Awkward, but fun. We had a lovely time talking about how weird it is to be on a date, our classes and how strange the situation was.

It was pretty comical sitting outside our apartment, knowing that our roommates were watching us through the window. Neither of us could hold eye contact because we were so nervous, but that made a great conversation about how many social skills we have lost thus far into the pandemic.





SARAH MOSQUERA | MONTANA KAIMIN

It was nice knowing that neither of us had been on a date in a long time. He liked my pasta, and I liked his jacket. His favorite color is blue, and so is mine. We didn't move from our respective lawn chairs, but I felt closer to him by the end of the date.

The whole thing only lasted an hour, partly because it was getting cold, but also because I could not stop blabbing and I felt bad for the guy. He was sweet and kind the whole time, even finishing his entire plate of pasta I made. It wasn't that

good, so I appreciated his kind gesture.

There wasn't a question as to whether or not we were going to hug at the end of the date, like I've done so many times before the pandemic. We both knew the risk that entailed.

It feels good to have someone interested in you, and to be able to see them in person. Tinder is great, don't get me wrong, but I guess some things never change. He lives right above me and all I needed to find was the courage to ask him out. I'll blame the coronavirus.



As social creatures, we are hardwired to connect with others socially, said Nora Uhrich, a Clinical Psychology Doctoral Student at UM.

"Having positive social connections are harder during the pandemic, but so important for anxiety, depression, even immunity. Social connection is just a positive feedback loop," Uhrich said.

It doesn't matter the kind of connection, whether it's online or socially distanced, just that it's happening. Social connections with other people—friends, family members, co-workers, romantic relationships—are important not only for our mental health, but our physical well-being too. Relationships that are healthy can buffer our stress levels, and we know the pandemic is causing a lot of stress, Uhrich said.

When it comes to dating, don't be hard on yourself, she continued.

"I think it's important to normalize the global stress and anxiety this pandemic has caused. No one is [unaffected], and acknowledging this is affecting the world. Practicing self-compassion right now can be powerful during the pandemic. Seeking counseling can be great as well," she said.

Dating during the pandemic has been fun for me, but it's weird not being able to feel that physical connection. Uhrich said that can be a good thing.

"We can think about the values that we have in our personal and general life. We can ask ourselves what we are looking for in a potential partner. It's very possible to have fun and do that safely," Uhrich said.

"Let's just put it out there: It's more laborious than it was before, but it's definitely possible. It might be harder, but it also might be a unique opportunity to bond with someone," Uhrich said. "I think that we have this opportunity to be unique and creative and figure out what one wants in a relationship and dating."

I wondered how my fellow UM students had been handling love and romance at this time. I strolled around the Oval, asking students the same question: Have you been dating during the pandemic?

"I didn't even date before the pandemic," Maggie said.

"Um, kind of," Carly said, laughing.

"No," Kelton said.

"Nope," Emily said, simply.

"I dated two people. I went on dates with each of them," Abby said.



After the date, I can't say I found true love. Rather, speaking for both Wyatt and myself, we each found a new friend more than anything else. Feeling isolated sucks, and this silly journey for love landed me with a much more philosophical conclusion than I ever expected.

It's okay to be alone. It's okay to date. Whatever people choose to do, know that it's valid. What is going on in the world is insane, and self-forgiveness is everything. Not finding someone on Tinder is okay, but I guess some things never change. All I had to do was walk up a flight of stairs to find someone who is kind and gave me a big smile during our date.

I might be old-fashioned and just in need of some courage, but I'm just one silly perspective among many. Tinder was fun, and I intend to keep at it throughout the pandemic.

In the past week, I probably smiled more at my phone and talked to more people than I ever have.

More than anything, it just feels good to have conversations with people who aren't my mom or my roommates.

Regardless of where it is, finding connection during the pandemic is everything. I may not have found the love of my life on this dumb journey to find a Valentine, but I sure didn't stop smiling while I was doing it.

And that my friends, is what it's all about.

Tinder is great, don't get me wrong, but I guess some things never change. He lives right above me and all I needed to find was the courage to ask him out.

'Fate: The Winx Saga' is not as magical as advertised

HALEY YARBOROUGH

haley.yarborough@umontana.edu

"Fate: The Winx Saga" is a fantasy retelling of "Mean Girls," except less funny, more dramatic and clichéd enough to rival any typical teen melodrama.

An adaptation of the Iginio Straffi Italian cartoon "Winx Club," the Netflix series replaces the childish fun we grew up with as kids with a dark storyline full of sex, drinking and pining teenagers.

"Fate: The Winx Saga" follows Bloom (Abigail Cowen), a spunky and pretty Californian who enrolls at the prestigious fairy school, Alfea, after discovering her powers. In the Winx universe, fairies rule a place called the Otherworld and attend schools like Alfea. Each fairy controls a particular element, and in Bloom's case, it's fire. Bloom's fairy friends—water fairy Aisha (Precios Mustapha), earth fairy Terra (Eliot Salt) and mind fairy Musa (Elisha Applebaum)—all know how to control their powers, unlike Bloom.

But Bloom conveniently arrives at a time of crisis, when creatures called Burned Ones

are prowling in the forest outside of Alfea. Using fire magic, Bloom kills more than a few of the creatures without batting an eyelash.

And this is where the issues begin.

Bloom is the ultimate "Mary Sue" character. For those who haven't scoured the internet for fanfiction, a "Mary Sue" is a typical female protagonist who is an idealized extension of the creator. She is usually exceptionally talented, possesses rare abilities and lacks realistic character flaws. Bloom is the epitome of this. She is witty and beautiful with a tragic backstory involving the loss of her parents and unusual fire powers that she harnesses with ease.

This role is not exclusive to a singular character. "Fate: The Winx Saga" has its fill of tropes. There's the Regina George of Alfea, Stella (Hannah van der Westhuysen), who still appears one-dimensional despite being "misunderstood." Sky (Danny Griffin)—Bloom's love interest, and formerly Stella's boyfriend—is the tall golden boy flirt who sees Bloom all alone, swooping in to be her knight in shining armor.

Musa and Terra have more nuanced storylines, but that doesn't mitigate the show's

lack of diversity. The 2004 Nickelodeon cartoon "Winx Club" did better at diversifying its cast than this modern melodrama. Musa and Terra, who were portrayed as East Asian and Latina in the cartoon, are whitewashed versions of the characters in the live-action production.

There's also the exhausted archetype of the supportive Black friend, which Aisha embodies. Bloom's recklessness is often mitigated by Aisha's level-headedness (fire and water).

The relationships in this series are half-baked. Everything is about Bloom. Her opinions transcend others' concerns, to the point where every character is talking at each other, not with each other. It's like a bunch of brick walls talking to one another.

"Fate: The Winx Saga" has its merits. The writing is serviceable and the actors do a commendable job with the material they were given. Even though Bloom remains a relatively clichéd character, Abigail Cowen portrays her in an awkward-yet-conflicted performance that makes "Fate: The Winx Saga" more watchable.

With fairies playing beer pong, partying and engaging in more than magic in the

woods, it's easy to see why the show is appealing. But this storyline is tiresome. Rather than offering a fresh, creative adaptation of the cartoon, "Fate: The Winx Saga" falls into typical teenage tropes that not even magic can fix.



CONTRIBUTED

For locked-in Foo Fighters, consistency is key

ALEX MILLER

micheal6.miller@umontana.edu

Author's Note: I have a Foo Fighters-inspired tattoo, but I promise to say whether or not this album is good or bad.

Like a well-built highway, the Foo Fighters are always straight and to the point.

With their 10th studio album "Medicine at Midnight," Dave Grohl and Co. have added another consistent effort to their catalogue. But if you're looking for reinvention, take the next exit.

The Foo Fighters are one of those bands that do one thing and do it well: Sound like the Foo Fighters. And for some, that sound is like a comforting old leather jacket. The classic-rock-meets-punk vibes that can detour into acoustic ballads, they're staples of the band. And on this record, they're all here.

The nine-track effort sees the return of producer Greg Kurstin, most known for his work with The Bird and the Bee and

Adele (he co-wrote "Hello"—this man makes hits, people). The sound of the record is tighter and more to the point than their first go-round with Kurstin on "Concrete and Gold," which might come with a longer working relationship.

And that sonic tightness is up-front and center on the opener "Making a Fire." The '70s rock-flavored track comes fully loaded with "nana-na-nas" and an arena-sized riff from guitarist Chris Shiflett. Grohl's 14-year-old daughter, Violet, contributed backing vocals as well. But still nothing too adventurous for the Foos.

The only real adventure on the album—and arguably the worst outing—is the title track "Medicine at Midnight." It's got a pinch of '70s Bowie, a dash of Rolling Stones in their disco days and a blues solo akin to Pink Floyd's David Gilmour. Two of those three things work great on their own (disco Rolling Stones sucked), but thrown together it's a haphazard, identity-less mess.

For the drummers in the room, it sounds like the Foos' main man behind

the kit, Taylor Hawkins, is having the time of his life on this record. Barn burners like "Holding Poison," "Cloud Spitter" and "Love Dies Young" sound as if Hawkins is a caged animal, pounding his drums trying to burst from confinement.

The standout of the record is most certainly "No Son of Mine." The song is another blending of bands that inspired the Foos, with a meaty chug opening the tune a-la-Metallica, and a verse straight from Motörhead's playbook.

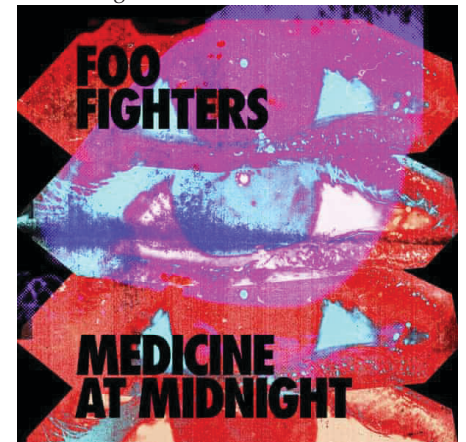
The band manages to take those outside parts, put them through their Foo computer, and create a song that thrashes.

But the thing about most of these songs is that they're neither incredible nor boring. They're a collection of above average Foo Fighters material. "Waiting on a War," is an example of a classic Foo jam. It's an acoustic ballad that slowly builds into an explosive closing. Another re-treading of the soft-to-loud dynamic that they do so well, but again, nothing new.

In such a strange clusterfuck of a year, it is nice to have some consistency. The

Foo Fighters, like Tom Brady, do what they know and stick to their arena-sized, Grohl-powered guns. Time and again they have managed to put out albums that will dominate radio airwaves and commercials.

Let's hope next time around they try something new.



CONTRIBUTED

MAM builds on small-town connections for annual art auction

MEGHAN JONAS

meghan.jonas@umontana.edu

An auction is like a sporting event—the electricity in the atmosphere is palpable, with pieces featured that could cost as much as February’s rent.

But in a digital world, anything is possible.

The Missoula Art Museum’s annual art auction, also known as “MAM’s Big Night,” is taking place entirely online on Feb. 12 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The event, which also features raffle items, meal deals and an exclusive digital album highlighting songs from local musicians, has grown into more than just an art auction.

Carey Powers, marketing and communications coordinator at the museum, said that the necessary decision to move the event online was made back in October.

“It’s hard to emotionally move away from the electricity that comes from being at a live auction,” Powers said.

But moving the event online comes with the added bonus of free admission for participants, allowing people who aren’t art collectors or the uber-wealthy to experience something they may have never had the opportunity to see.

The auction is the museum’s biggest fundraiser of the year, and the event has been a Missoula mainstay since 1975. After the recession in 2009, the museum had to adapt, pinching pennies and putting its money where it mattered most—back into the community. Powers, who joined staff at the museum a year and a half ago, says that the auction has always had to grow and change with the times.

“At its heart, [the auction] is a time for the public and the museum to come together and support contemporary art and artists,” Powers said.

All of the 125 artists who submitted their art for the auction were accepted, Powers said, citing the difficulty of the past year as a driving factor. Of the artists, 25 were brand new.

At least three of the artists are graduates of the University of Montana: Jasmine Beul (BFA, 2017), Jesse Blumenthal (MFA, 2019) and Amanda Jaffe (MFA, 1978) are all featured in the auction.

While many of the artists are located outside of Montana, the businesses



The Missoula Art Museum is hosting its annual auction. Bidding is open online until 8:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 12. There are artists from all around the West and some from Virginia, Louisiana and New York. “This is our first time taking the whole event online, but we’re very excited about it,” said Missoula Art Museum Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Carey Powers. **ZACH MEYER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

sponsoring the event are all in-state. Sponsors include local arts organizations such as the Montana Repertory Theater, Missoula Broadcasting Company and multiple art galleries, including the Radius and Relic galleries.

The museum is also partnered with the Montana Area Music Association to compile the exclusive album, “Getting Thru: A Compilation.”

The album features songs from popular local artists, including Bombshell Nightlight, Shakewell, the String Orchestra of the Rockies, Cory Fay and Brit Arnesen. The compilation is available to stream on Bandcamp and the digital download is available to purchase for \$50.

Local restaurants—Biga Pizza, James Bar, Marianna Forrest Catering, Rumour and Sushi Hana—have exclusive discounts and menu options to pair with MAM’s Big Night, including 20% discounts or a three-course meal.

And while some of the options may still be outside a college student’s budget, splitting a pizza, jumbo salad, tiramisu and a bottle of wine from Biga with roommates sounds close to a college kid’s dream.

“Top to bottom, this event is based in the strength and resiliency of the different aspects of Missoula,” Powers said. “And no donation is too small.”

JOURNALISM JOB INVESTIGATIVE TV REPORTER



Inside Edition is looking for a story coordinator for its New York-based, award-winning investigative team. Entry level position with opportunity for advancement. Journalism degree required.

Study journalism and get a great job. Come see us in DAH 201 or umt.edu/journalism



Griz basketball splits road series at Portland State

JACK MARSHALL

jack.marshall@umontana.edu

When UM freshman guard Robby Beasley III caught the ball with just over a second left in UM's game against Portland State on Feb. 4, Montana was down three points. As the scoreboard lit up red and time ran out, Beasley's 3-point shot found the bottom of the net. Tie game.

"As soon as [the shot] came off I was like, 'All right that looks like it's going in,'" Beasley said in a postgame interview with UM play-by-play broadcaster Riley Corcoran.

Beasley's heroic shot helped UM soar to a 70-64 overtime win against Portland State. Two days later, UM couldn't keep its magic alive and lost at the hands of Portland State, 61-56. The two-game split gave UM a season record of 8-9, with a 4-6 record in the Big Sky Conference.

In UM's first game against Portland State, Beasley and fellow freshman guard Brandon Whitney led the scoring with 14 points each.

Just minutes into the second half, the Griz trailed by eight points thanks to 24

turnovers, season high.

With 30 seconds left in the game, UM still lagged by three points. After some dramatic defensive plays by both UM and Portland State, Beasley hit his clutch 3-pointer to extend the game. The Griz outscored the Vikings 16-10 in overtime to take the first game.

"Everything that could happen, happened," said UM head coach Travis DeCuire. "But we won, and that's what is amazing about it."

On Feb. 6, the two teams squared off again in Portland. After leading by seven in the first half, UM allowed Portland State to regain the lead early in the second half.

After Portland State took control in the second round of play, the Vikings never allowed UM to come back to the ballgame, winning by five points.

For one stretch in the second half, the Griz didn't score for over six minutes. UM had fewer rebounds—23—than in any other game this season.

UM made 14 of its first 23 shot attempts in the game and then only converted on four of its final fourteen attempts.



University of Montana guard Robby Beasley III guards a Portland State University player during the game on Feb. 4. CONTRIBUTED

Despite the loss, sophomore forward Derrick Carter-Hollinger shined for UM, scoring 14 points and pulling down four rebounds. Senior forward Michael Steadman added 13 points.

Out of UM's six conference losses, all of them have been by six points or fewer. The Griz have lost seven games while playing

away from home, winning only three. Montana will be 0-5 when it plays on Saturday.

Montana has split its last four Big Sky Conference series, losing the second game of the series three times.

UM's next games will be against Weber State on Feb. 11 and 13 at home. Weber State has a record of 11-4 this season.

UM volleyball adapts to wearing masks in game

JACK MARSHALL

jack.marshall@umontana.edu

With the return of the postponed Big Sky Conference volleyball season this spring, the UM volleyball team has already had to adjust to the COVID-19 safety protocols requiring on-court masks.

"It's hard to play with masks on and cheer at the same time, so we rely a lot on our bench—and they're doing an amazing job of keeping the intensity," said Amethyst Harper, a sophomore outside hitter.

In UM's back-to-back home games against Weber State, Griz players wore matching maroon masks throughout the match. The benches were also distanced and sanitized during timeouts.

In the fall, UM players wore neck gaiters rather than masks during practice. This spring, Harper said that the volleyball team has switched to masks.

"We do practice with masks on now, so it's kind of difficult to get used to. I'm definitely not still used to it," she said. "But we're

getting there."

Harper also said that during games, players will sometimes pull their masks down for a brief period of time to catch their breath. While the ball is in play, the masks stay on.

Harper hasn't been slowed down by masks at all this season, racking up 51 kills through UM's first four matches. She is the only UM player who had double-digit successful spikes in every one of those matches.

So far the UM volleyball team is 1-4 with a 1-1 record at home.

In UM's most recent games against Southern Utah on Feb. 7 and Feb. 8 the Griz lost both matches.

In the match on Feb. 7, UM fell 3-1 to Southern Utah while in the match on Feb. 8, the Griz also lost 3-1. Harper had 10 digs in the second match against SUU.

"There was pressure in every set really," said UM head coach Allison Lawrence. "I feel that we executed really well under pressure."

The Griz will play 16 games this season before they depart to the Big Sky Conference tournament in Greeley, Colorado on March 31.



University of Montana outside hitter Amethyst Harper jumps up to hit the ball in game against Weber State on Feb. 1. KENNEDY DELAP | MONTANA KAIMIN

Ali Monroe is back on the field

MADISON STONE

madisonstone@umontana.edu

Ali Monroe walks through the dark tunnel that leads to the turf field of the Washington-Grizzly Stadium. She tightens up the laces on her cleats and begins her stretches before practice.

Monroe has been playing soccer since she was four years old. She is now a holding midfielder for the University of Montana women's soccer team. However, she hasn't been seen on the field since September of 2019, when she was sidelined by two injuries that were potentially career ending and the pandemic.

The first time Monroe had been injured was in September of 2016, when she tore her ACL and her meniscus on her left leg. This time, in 2019, it was her right leg.

In a game against the University of California Berkeley, she heard a very distinct, hollow popping sound from her knee, one she had heard before.

"I was just more heartbroken than anything else, because I just knew what that meant," Monroe said.

She was recruited to the University of Montana's soccer team her junior year of high school, and moved from Edmunds, Washington to Missoula in 2018. Her first year at UM, the team walked away as champions of the Big Sky Tournament.

As a freshman, Monroe was on the field every minute of UM's run in the tournament. She was voted UM soccer's newcomer of the year.

When she got injured, she knew she would have to undergo surgery and spend at least nine months recovering, just like the first time. However, the second recovery was a lot harder for her.

After the doctors went in and fixed the torn ACL and meniscus, she was in the healing process when the University went into lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"This past fall was actually pretty difficult of course, everything that was going on with COVID and not being on campus. A whole plate of stuff," Monroe said.

She was not ready to be done with soccer, but she knew how long the recovery process took and the effects soccer had on her body. As much as she loved the sport and competing, she also wanted to make sure she didn't have bad arthritis by the time she was



CONTRIBUTED | GOGRIZ.COM

40 years old.

Monroe continued to go to practice, even after her injury. Even if she wasn't feeling great after a hard treatment day, going to practice and being with her team brought happiness.

"Ultimately, at the end of the day I think everyone is just there for one another, and I think that is where we've had a lot of success and we know the value of working together," Monroe said.

This is what she loves about soccer, especially the team-family dynamic and the chance to celebrate successes together.

She says that she also has support from her family, especially from her mother and sister, who have also torn their ACLs, and know the recovery process.

"I never doubted my ability to get back to the field, it was just what I would do if it

happens again," Monroe said. "Which is not necessarily the right mindset to have, but it is a thought that is hard to ignore."

Just when Monroe was nearly healed from her injury in 2019, in June of 2020 she felt that familiar pain in her right knee.

"I think in my mind, it was that all the soreness and pain was from the re-tear, so once that was fixed, I should be fine," she said.

An MRI scan confirmed that her meniscus had re-torn and she would have to undergo a third surgery to fix it. The doctor told her recovery could take up to 10 weeks.

After taking a year dedicated to the recovery of her knee, with many ups and downs, Monroe played her first scrimmage in September of 2020.

Even after the surgery, she was still feeling some pain and soreness around her knee,

but she says UM's winter break helped her recover.

"Because we had a long break, it was really helpful. Just letting my body heal a bit more and recover and still building up muscle," she said.

Monroe has not stepped foot on the field for the UM soccer team in a game since she tore her ACL in 2019.

The UM soccer team has just begun its practices for the Spring 2021 season.

"Honestly, just being on the field again is just so exciting," Monroe said. "Just being out there, running around, competing with one another, it feels so incredible to be back and I'm just more excited for what is to come."

UM's season is expected to kick off on March 7 at home against Montana State University-Billings.

Gallery | Losing streak snapped

Lady Griz bounce back, break three game losing streak in rout of Vikings

JOHN ORZECZOWSKI

john.orzeczowski.umontana.edu

On Saturday, the University of Montana women's team cruised to a 76-63 win over Portland State, two days after losing by only one point to the PSU.

"Like every team that goes through the year, you have your challenges and adversity, and Thursday was really hard," head coach Mike Petrino said.

Redshirt sophomore forward Carmen Gfeller, UM's leading scorer, led the way with 19 points, making 75% of her shots. Redshirt junior forward Abby Anderson added 12 points to go along with her eight rebounds and seven assists.

As a team, the Lady Griz shot 51% from the field. UM kept its fouls low, out-rebounded and out-assisted the Vikings.

Junior forward Hannah Thurmon, who averages around five points per game, hit five triples to score a season high 15. Ju-

nior forward Kylie Frohlich, who led UM in scoring in its first game against Portland State, made six of her seven shot attempts to score 12 points off the bench.

"I'm proud of the depth we showed today," Petrino said.

While the Lady Griz maintained a small lead through the first two quarters, going up 20-16 at the end of the first and leading 38-30 at the half, UM blew the game open in the third quarter thanks to nine points from Thurmon and seven points from

Gfeller bringing the score up to 62-41. UM was able to take its foot off the gas in the fourth and still win by 13.

The Lady Griz broke a three-game losing streak and became 8-7 on the season.

The Lady Griz will travel to Ogden to take on the 0-13 Weber State Wildcats on Feb. 12 and Feb. 14. Aside from the split series against Montana State, it'll be the first away series since UM visited Northern Arizona on Feb. 14 and 16.



University of Montana forward Kylie Frohlich pushes past two Portland State University players toward the hoop. Frohlich scored the fourth highest for the Griz with 12 points.

CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN



University of Montana forward Carmen Gfeller high-fives her teammates after scoring for the Griz during the game. Gfeller led the Griz in scoring with 19 points overall.

CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN



University of Montana guard Jordyn Schweyen, left, and forward Abby Anderson, right, jump up as the ball falls through the hoop during the first half of the game.

CLAIRE SHINNER | MONTANA KAIMIN