

THE MSU

exponent

January 14, 2021

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FIND OUT BOZEMAN'S BEST...

FIRST
DATE
SPOT

TOWN
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LATE
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BITE

AND MANY MORE... PG. 8

THE MSU exponent

Volume 115, Issue 13

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FLASHBULB

Fashion designed by Native American artists Cedar Bulltail, Grace Bulltail, Della Big Hair Stump and Carrie Moran McCleary adorns mannequins at the Emerson Center for the Arts and Culture. The "We are still here and this is our story" exhibit is intended to bring awareness to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP) crisis.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARRER



HEARD ON THE WEB

From @paulnicklen:

“I'm cute and I know it.”



INSTAGRAM OF THE WEEK

From @montanastateuniversity:

“Welcome back, 'Cats! Wishing you a great start to the spring semester.
#MontanaState”

SIGNIFICANT FIGURES



In 2019, the annual revenue for the company was \$20.15 billion dollars



A 2016 study determined that 51% of subscribers that were surveyed considered the sharing of Netflix passwords among people to be a sign of a serious relationship

Netflix subscribers can stream content in more than 190 countries



23% of Netflix subscribers stream daily

Someone streamed "Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted" 352 times on Netflix in 2017



COMPILED BY GABE BARNARD • DESIGN BY VERONIKA TURNER

NEWS

Putting a price on COVID-19

BY KYLEE RUX

As another semester begins amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Montana Board of Regents approved additional COVID-19 funding for MUS (Montana University System) campuses. During a virtual meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 7, board members approved the allocation of federal and state COVID-19 funding, bringing \$42 million to the university system.

MSU will receive the most funding of any university campus, with \$16 million allocated. Of this \$16 million, \$74,085 must be used directly for Federal Pell Grant students learning exclusively online, and approximately \$5 million must be allocated for emergency student grants. The remaining \$10 million may be used for technology upgrades regarding remote learning and institutional aid. The University of Montana will be given the second highest amount of funding with \$12.5 million and the third highest amount will go to MSU Billings with \$4 million.

Since the last approved spending plan in September, MUS was awarded coronavirus relief funds from the CARES Act, which was provided by the federal government and allocated at the state level by former Gov. Steve Bullock. Since universities only had until Dec. 31 to spend this money, \$10 million was spent upgrading key card access on-campus buildings, \$350,000 was designated for mental health support and \$800,000 was dedicated to COVID-19 testing on campuses.

Amid the news of vaccines being distributed this spring, there will be updated guidelines for MUS campuses. Changes include an increase in mental health resources and added support for students who become physically ill. Similar to the fall semester, MSU is continuing to test symptomatic individuals and is now also providing COVID-19 tests to asymptomatic students who live on campus.

Brock Tessman, head of the Healthy Montana University System task force, said, "As much as we would like to be able to test every student, our resources are

limited, particularly our human staffing resources. Targeting students living in residence halls is the best use of these tests."

Asymptomatic testing for students will be available for the first two weeks of classes and will be located at the Student Testing Center by Bobcat Stadium. The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has authorized the use of rapid test kits across campuses, providing accurate results in 15 to 30 minutes.

"We're incredibly grateful to our university medical staff for taking this on," MSU President Waded Cruzado said. "They have had our student's best interests in their hearts through this whole pandemic, and they continue to amaze me with their commitment." For more information on how funding is being distributed throughout the Montana University System, visit <https://www.mus.edu/board/meetings/2021/january/192-104-R0121.pdf>.

Springing into a new semester

BY PHOEBE ZEA

For students new to campus this spring semester or those just looking for something fun to do outside their heavy academic schedules, MSU Debut offers many activities and events to welcome students back to Bozeman. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, all events have been modified to comply with local health orders to mitigate the spread of the virus.

On the first day of classes, Monday, Jan. 11, students headed to the Centennial Mall located at the center of campus to grab french toast sticks and coffee provided by the Office of Student Engagement. There were multiple tents serving food and distributing Clean Cat Kits from 8- 10 a.m. to welcome students back to campus.

Since social distancing guidelines have made it hard to host a movie night for students, Grab 'N Go bags were available for pickup from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 13, at the Office of Student Engagement. The bags included everything you need to have a fun movie night at home.

To finish out the first week of classes, there will be a virtual trivia game on Friday, Jan. 15. "Mandalorian' Themed Virtual Trivia!" will begin at noon and close by

9 p.m. Be sure to follow @MSU_PACE and @MSUOSE on Instagram to stay updated on the virtual event.

During the second week of the semester, there will be SINGO! —a traditional bingo game using songs instead of numbers. SINGO! will be hosted in SUB ballroom D where snacks will be provided. The event capacity maxes out at 25 people due to social distancing and other health policies, so be sure to show up early to secure a spot in the game. Later in the week on Tuesday and Thursday, Jan. 19 and 21, the Office of Student Engagement and Outdoor Recreation will be hosting Outdoor Rec Clinics at 3:30 p.m. at the Outdoor Rec Building, located at 1401 West Lincoln Street, next to Roskie. The clinics will have multiple focuses. Some will teach avalanche safety, some teach you to XC ski, and others teach you to use the climbing wall or ice skate.

Numerous Outdoor Rec Clinics and Ice Rink nights will be hosted throughout January and February as well. Visit <http://www.montana.edu/msudebut/> for a full list of events and information. Whether you're a new or returning student, taking part in MSU Debut events ensures an exciting, inclusive spring semester here at MSU.



MSU Debut tents line the sidewalks on campus offering coffee, french toast and warm smiles to students starting their spring semester.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARRER

Governor Gianforte unveils COVID-19 response

BY BRADEN URION

In his first press conference as newly-elected governor, Greg Gianforte announced his administration's plan for approaching the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccine distribution. During his speech, he emphasized two key changes in Montana's COVID-19 policy.

Joined by Maj. Gen. Matthew Quinn, head of the administration's COVID-19 response team, Gov. Gianforte emphasized that confronting the virus is his "top priority as governor." As of Sunday, Jan. 10, there have been 86,324 confirmed cases and 1,056 COVID-19 related deaths in Montana.

According to the State of Montana Newsroom, Gov. Gianforte indicated his main priorities as, "protecting the most vulnerable, promoting incentives and personal responsibility over mandates and making directives clear and easier to understand."

The first policy adjustment under the new state administration is a revision of the COVID-19 vaccination plan. The new plan still prioritizes those most vulnerable to the virus. After frontline health care workers receive the vaccine, next in line will be Montanans 70 years of age and older, those with severe, underlying medical conditions and Native Americans. According to a report published by the Department of Human Health on July 24, 2020, Native Americans, who account for 7% of Montana's population, represented 17% of COVID-19 reported cases and 32% of COVID-19 related deaths.

"We need to provide the vaccine to those that want it," Gov. Gianforte said. "We cannot have vaccines sitting on a shelf. That's why I have tasked DPHHS and [Major] General Quinn to begin the process of revising the vaccine distribution plan to prioritize the most vulnerable. I have directed the team to make this change effective immediately."

Gov. Gianforte's second change is his decision to begin working toward repealing the statewide mask mandate. For him to do this, he stated two conditions must be met: "After we have increased



Masked shoppers traverse the intersection of Willson and Main St.
PHOTO BY GABE BARNARD

vaccine distribution and after I have legislation on my desk that protects businesses, schools, places of worship and nonprofit organizations that follow guidelines from lawsuits, then we will rescind the current statewide mask mandate," the governor stated in a press conference.

Gov. Gianforte's statements affirm his promise to protect businesses and schools from lawsuits. To qualify for this protection, they must make a good faith effort to try and prevent the spread of coronavirus and follow clear public health guidelines.

Gianforte explained his decision to amend the state's COVID-19 policy by saying, "To combat the virus, I believe providing incentives and promoting personal responsibility are more effective than imposing impractical mandates."



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SPORTS

BASKETBALL

Bobcat hoops is back

BY JAXSON BISHOP



Bobcat basketball has returned after a year that has seen sports seasons canceled or postponed at both collegiate and professional levels around the globe. The start of the basketball season marks a beginning to the end of this pandemic, offering a sense of normalcy in an otherwise trying time.

The men's and women's teams opened Big Sky Conference play on Thursday, Jan. 7, with both teams facing off against the University of Northern Colorado Bears. Both Bobcat squads ended up on the winning side. The men's team was led by point guard Xavier Bishop, a transfer from the University of Missouri Kansas City. Bishop led the team with 28 points, tied for a career-high, and had seven rebounds.

Coming into conference play, the Cats were 3-3 with a notable 91-78 win against the University of Nevada Las Vegas Running Rebels, a member of the Mountain West Conference. The Cat's other wins came against Yellowstone Christian College and Montana Western.

In the other match-up of the day, the Bobcat women were led to victory by sophomore sensation Darian White, who led the team with 16 points and two steals. The Cats were lifted to victory after a high-scoring third quarter and a stout defensive effort, holding the Bears to a mere 28% field goal percentage.

A rematch for both squads occurred on Saturday, Jan. 9. Men's coach Danny Sprinkle's team won in overtime because of an offensive explosion in the second half led by senior Amin Adamu, who scored a team-high 36 points. Entering the second half, the Bobcats were down 29-40 but rallied to out-score their opponents 39-28 and force overtime. The Cats ended up on top after 45 minutes of play, winning 76-75. This series marks the first time the Cats have swept Northern Colorado since 2007. These two wins put the Cats at 2-0 in conference play.

The Bobcat women fell to the Bears at Worthington Arena on Saturday, Jan. 9, losing 57-49. The Bears were lights out behind the arc, registering an impressive 61.5% three-point percentage. The Cats rallied to make things close entering the fourth quarter, trailing by a mere four points, but the Bears were able to hold off the Cats until the final horn went off. The Lady Cats are now 1-1 in conference play.

Entering the season, there is a sense that Bobcat men's basketball is on the upswing with Danny Sprinkle entering his second season at the helm of the program. The Lady Cats are in a rebuilding year after graduating five seniors from the 2019-2020 Big Sky Championship team.

In a media poll released before the start of the season, the men's basketball team was picked

to finish fourth behind (1) Eastern Washington, (2) Montana and (3) Northern Colorado. Trisha Binford's team was picked to finish fourth in the Big Sky regular season behind (1) Idaho, (2) Idaho State and (3) Northern Arizona.

Both teams will face off against the Portland State Vikings on Thursday, Jan. 14. The women will tip things off at 8:00 p.m. in Portland and the men will play at 6:00 p.m. at Worthington Arena. Both games can be watched on Pluto TV or at <https://bigskyconf.com/sports/2015/11/19/WatchBigSky.aspx>.



TOP LEFT Sophomore guard Darian White attempts a layup under pressure during the Cats' game against the University of Northern Colorado on Saturday, Jan. 9.

BOTTOM RIGHT Junior forward Gabby Mocchi fends off Northern Colorado players.

PHOTOS BY GABE BARNARD

Keljin Blevins becomes first MSU alum to play in the NBA

BY BEAU BAXTER

Keljin Blevins, an MSU alumnus, appeared in his first NBA game of the regular season on Wednesday, Dec. 23 as a wing for the Portland Trail Blazers. Though he only played for a total of four minutes against the Utah Jazz, Blevins became the first Bobcat to ever play in an NBA regular-season game.

After transferring from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2016-17, Blevins spent his first season at MSU as a redshirt. He played his first full season for the Bobcats in the 2017-18 season, starting as a forward for all 31 games that season.

After finishing his senior year in 2019 just shy of 900 minutes on the court, with 365 points for the season and a degree in business, Blevins spent the summer at the Trail Blazers' training camp. The team waived Blevins, moving him to their G League affiliates, the Northern Arizona Suns.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic bringing the 2019-20 season to an abrupt close, Blevins managed an impressive enough season to get called back up to the big leagues.

In November 2020, the Trail Blazers signed Blevins under a two-way contract, stipulating that he would continue to play for the Suns while getting some playtime in the NBA alongside his cousin and Trail Blazers star point guard, Damian Lillard. Lillard is also a former standout in the Big Sky Conference and played for the Weber State Wildcats from 2008-11.

Since his NBA debut, Blevins has appeared in another three games for the Blazers. Most recently, he helped them to an impressive 135 - 117 win against the Minnesota Timberwolves on Thursday, Jan. 7.

The Trail Blazers currently sit just behind Utah for the lead in the Northwest standings with five wins and four losses. Portland will face off against the

Indiana Pacers on Thursday, Jan. 14 and the Atlanta Hawks on Saturday, Jan. 16.



MSU alum Keljin Blevins, forward, boxes out Portland State opponents during a men's basketball game.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PORTLAND STATE ATHLETICS

NHL takes to the ice

BY MEREDITH TEUBER

For hockey fans, 2021 is about to get even more exciting. Back in December, the National Hockey League approved a 56-game schedule, rather than the typical 82-game schedule, for the 2020-21 season, with the first faceoff of the season on Wednesday, Jan. 13. The normal sixteen-team playoff begins on Saturday, May 8, when the Stanley Cup will be lifted again before the start of the NHL draft in mid-July.

With or without fans, this season is shaping up to be an interesting one to watch.

While the new season is officially underway, many things will remain similar to the 2019-20 season, as

COVID-19 remains a public health issue. While there is yet to be confirmation from the NHL, it is safe to assume that the league may be similar to the NFL when considering fan attendance. Each team and arena can likely make their own decision regarding fan attendance, local ordinances permitting.

The Dallas Stars were one of the first teams to announce they will allow fans at the arena, as consistent with local guidelines and social distancing measures. However, as of Saturday, Jan. 8, the Dallas Stars were the first team to announce multiple confirmed cases of COVID-19, putting the early games of the season in jeopardy. The NHL is hopeful that the season will continue with little to no issues and continues discussing the prospect of a closed Canadian border. "The League and the Players also sought to minimize team travel as much as possible by shifting to exclusively interdivisional play," the NHL and the NHLPA announced.

With or without fans, this season is shaping up to be an interesting one to watch. A condensed season and interdivisional play means even more competition and higher stakes when rivals meet once again. Fans are also

in for a special treat as retro jerseys are back with inspiration drawn from classic jerseys that hold significance for each team. This announcement makes history as it will be the first time all 31 teams are producing an alternate jersey. For those who are interested in purchasing a retro team jersey, they can be found on the NHL Shop website.

Once the Stanley Cup wraps up, the approved 32nd NHL team known as The Seattle Kraken will begin shaping their team on Wednesday, July 21. Following that is the 59th NHL entry draft, which will occur July 23-24 after the announcement that the draft will be delayed due to the ongoing pandemic. This season is building up to be something like no other with rivalry games adding even more tension and retro jerseys taking center ice. Stay tuned to this 2020-21 season to see if the Colorado Avalanche will stay true to their projected Stanley Cup win.

OUTDOORS

How to get outside this winter

BY BEAU BAXTER

With COVID-19 cases surging across the country and cold temperatures pushing people indoors, finding new ways to get outside and away from the crowded gym is more important than ever.

While many MSU students usually find themselves up at Bridger Bowl for a casual after-class run, the resort has implemented a new reservation system to help prevent COVID-19 spread on the mountain. Reservations can be made up to four days in advance (as long as they're made after 2 p.m.). Reservations are limited and given on a first-come, first-served basis, but cancellations often provide last-minute opportunities.

Though the plethora of backcountry skiing areas around Bozeman offer sparser crowds and more casual access, the dangers of backcountry touring have already been proven. The Gallatin National Forest Avalanche Center (GNFAC) has already received 24 reports of avalanches since October, including one on Friday, Jan. 8 near Cooke City that caught and injured a skier who required a helicopter evacuation.

Class information on backcountry travel (including snowmobiling, ice climbing and snowshoeing) and avalanche awareness can be found online at mtavalanche.com/education.

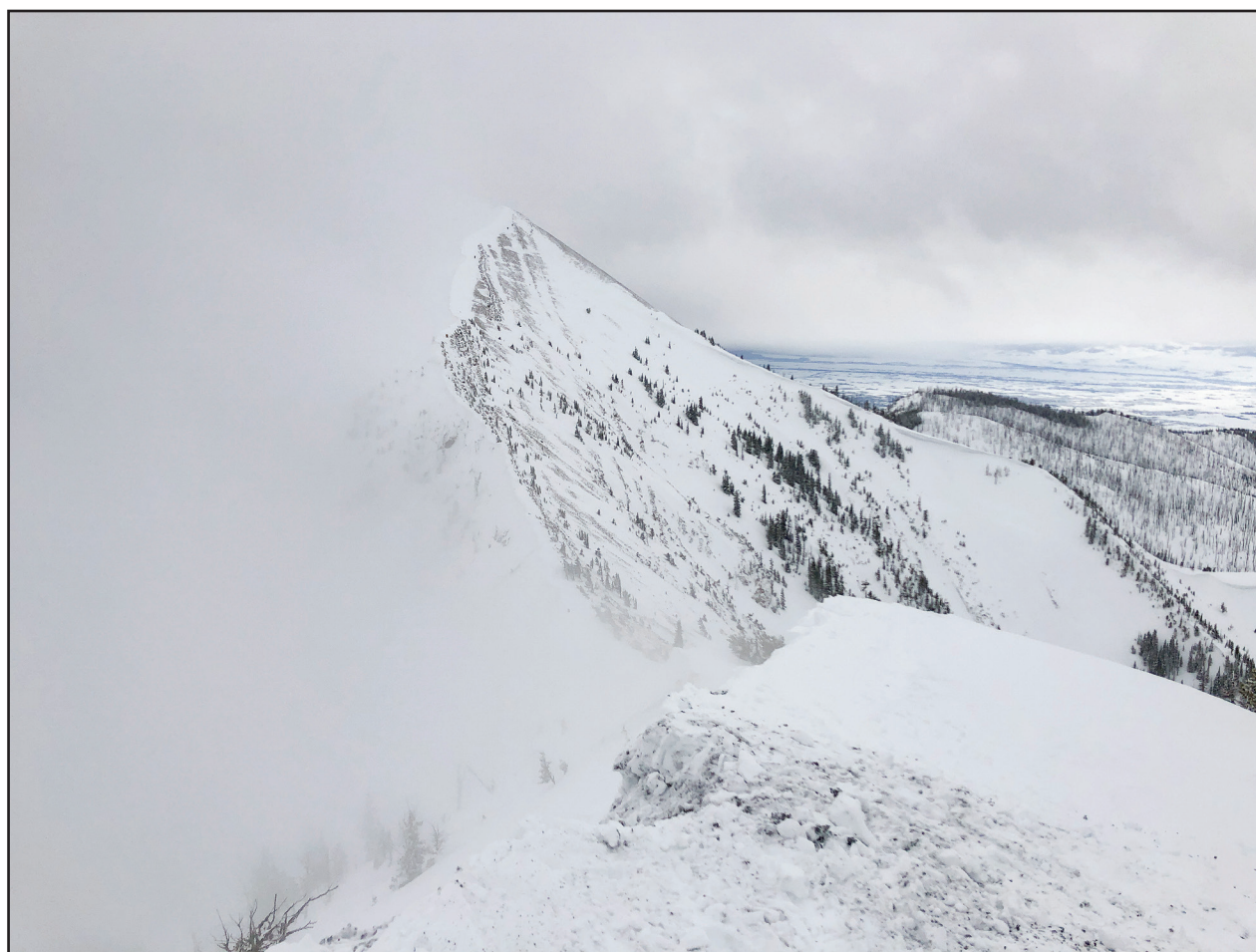
For those looking for an easier option, the Outdoor Recreation Program (ORP) offers free two-hour rentals for cross country ski gear (skis, boots and poles) for the Lambert Field nordic track next door. Cross country gear can also be checked out for two-day periods for only \$15.

The Bridger Ski Foundation (BSF) grooms over 70 kilometers of nordic trails in the Bozeman area. While passes to these community trails are complimentary, users are highly encouraged to buy passes and donate to the BSF to keep the trails well maintained. More information can be found at bridgerskifoundation.org/trails.

On warmer days, sunny climbing areas like Allenspur (offering sport climbing just south of Livingston) and Whiskey Gulch bouldering (near Whitehall) can provide shockingly pleasant

conditions for mid-winter Montana. However, the closest spot for winter climbing sits at the Winterwall along the scenic Madison river between Four Corners and Norris. Climbing gear can be rented through the ORP or purchased for a fair price at Second Wind Sports.

Even with the promise of a vaccine just around the corner, it's critical to stay diligent and conscious of how something as simple as recreation or exercise can harm the community. But given how many people need a healthy way to relieve stress in the current state of affairs, exercise and recreation may be needed now more than ever. So, as brutal and cold as Montana winters are, finding a way to get out and get active might just be the best thing for not just personal health but also the health of the community.



Snow billows off Saddle Peak, backcountry terrain just outside the boundary of Bridger Bowl.

PHOTO BY GABE BARNARD



THE *EXPONENT'S* READER'S CHOICE AWARDS

By Grace Larsen and The Readers

THE 2020 AWARD WINNER...

For Best Late Night Bite:

TACO MONTES

For Best College Bar:

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For Best Upscale Restaurant:

MONTANA ALE WORKS

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For Best First Date Location:

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For Best Shop on Main St.:

CACTUS RECORDS

For Best Burger:

MONTANA ALE WORKS

For Best Coffee:

INTERNATIONAL COFFEE TRADERS

For Best Pizza:

BRIDGER BREWING

For Best Town Park / Green Space:

PEETS HILL

For Best Local Brewery:

BRIDGER BREWING

For Best View of Bozeman:

COLLEGE 'M' TRAIL

OPINION

A Pivotal Moment for the Republican Party

BY EMMA MORGAN

On Wednesday, Jan. 6, President Donald Trump violated his oath to protect and defend the Constitution by fomenting an insurrection against Congress. This event broke the Republican party into two camps: those who believe in the Republican party as a whole and those who believe solely in Trump's leadership. As Trump leaves office in the wake of this terrible event, the Republican party needs to come together and rebuild its identity.

Many pragmatic Republicans have stayed quiet through Trump's administration. With their silence, they have allowed him to spread disinformation and condone violence.

Months prior to the 2020 election, Trump instigated doubts over the electoral process. An ABC News article titled "A step-by-step look at Trump's falsehoods on mail-in voting: Analysis" explains how Trump repeatedly, "in front of millions during the prime-time debate...posited a doomsday scenario with wide-scale fraud, because of the expected increase in mail-in voting amid the coronavirus pandemic."

During his four years as president, Trump has also been lenient toward white supremacist organizations. After a demonstration in August of 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia by neo-Nazis and KKK members, Trump claimed there were "some very fine people on both sides," according to *The Atlantic's* "Trump Defends White-Nationalist Protesters: 'Some Very Fine People on Both Sides.'" Trump is also known to pressure government officials to get his way. A tape released on Monday, Jan. 4, documents Trump pressuring Georgia's Republican Secretary of State, Brad Raffensperger, to overturn the election. "I just want to find 11,780 votes," he said in the tapes.

Finally, Trump endorsed the recent attack on Capitol Hill.

In one of his first Tweets after the event, Trump celebrated the attackers by saying:

"These are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election victory is so unceremoniously & viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly & unfairly treated for so long. Go home with love & in peace. Remember this day forever!"

With these actions and endorsements of terror, Trump and his radical followers have separated themselves from the Grand Old Party (GOP). Now, the Republican party decides who it is and what it will be.

According to the *Washington Post* and other news sources, 147 Republicans in Congress voted against the certification of President-elect Joe Biden's electoral victory. That is roughly 27% of the Republicans who had been crouching in safe rooms with gas masks just hours before the vote. However, there are other Republicans who have stood up to say "enough is enough."

According to PBS, Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT) said the actions of the mob were "due to a selfish man's injured pride and the outrage of his supporters whom he has deliberately misinformed for the past two months." Sen.

Romney has a history of speaking out against the president, but this time he was not alone. AP News published that, "Trump appears to have lost some of his strongest allies, including Sen. Lindsey Graham, (R-SC). Two Cabinet members and at least a half dozen aides have resigned. A handful of congressional Republicans are openly considering whether to join a renewed push for impeachment."

Distance from Trump is not the only action the Republican Party should take. Now is the time to reclaim the Republican Party. It is time to support policies based on political beliefs instead of fear. It is time to treat our nation as people rather than parties.

I am not calling for Republicans to be Democrats. I am calling for Republicans to step away from Trump's cult of personality and rebuild the GOP. Leaders should seek inspiration from the likes of Sen. Mitt Romney and the late Sen. John McCain who have demonstrated strong Republican ideals and acted upon them with compassion, empathy, and bipartisanship in the interests of a great nation, not just the betterment of a party.

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Travel in the Time of COVID-19

BY ALYSSA TOMPKINS

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, travel companies have worked hard to make modes of transportation safer for everyone. For example, Amtrak, a commercial train travel company, is doing what many other companies are doing: more deep cleaning, allowing fewer passengers and mandating face coverings during all travel. But just because things are somewhat safer doesn't mean it's ethical to use the services.

Think about it: COVID-19 spreads through airborne transmission. Being in one vehicle of transport for hours, even with masks, while you're surrounded by other people is not an entirely safe bet. I don't know about anyone else, but breathing everyone else's airplane air through my mask isn't ideal. Sure, there's still social distancing with commercial travel, but that only gets you so far.

Family is very important, yes, but keeping your family healthy and alive is even more important.

Airplanes are considered the safest mode of transportation besides isolated trips in a car. According to the *MIT Medical Journal*, airplanes are one of the hardest places to catch any virus, not just SARS-CoV-2, because of the levels of air circulation required in commercial planes. But the Center for Disease Control (CDC) warns that even with this air circulation, air travel is only slightly safe if there is the proper level of social distancing among passengers in the plane. When you buy your ticket you can't do anything but hope that the airline is doing its due diligence and only letting a limited number of passengers onto the plane. Is hope a strong enough thing to get you into an airplane, despite what the CDC warns? No, not for me.

Arriving somewhere is an entirely different con-

cern. You could be bringing the disease back to a town it once ravaged and is in the process of healing. Or, even worse, you could be bringing the disease to a place that had protection rules in place you didn't even know about. You could absentmindedly walk into a shop that had special hours for the elderly and endanger those most susceptible.

For me, influencers are the scariest when it comes to travel. Influencers across the country have been taking trips to the Bahamas and doing meetups in L.A. Most influencers claim they're traveling for business opportunities. To me, that's not good enough. It's fine to use TikTok financially to your advantage and help your family out during the pandemic, but it's not appropriate to take trips for fun.

However, Noah Beck, a famous TikTokker, talks about travel, specifically his trip to the Bahamas, in a different light. According to Insider.com, Beck claims the trip was taken for mental health

reasons. Statements such as "it is what it is" and "you need some time to kind of disconnect for a little" can only get you so far. If your mental health is so bad that you need to endanger other people at will, I think travel is not

going to cure you. Therapy is a thing, people. Use it.

Now comes the hardest part: traveling home to family. I understand wanting to be home with family. I'm in a long-distance relationship as well, and not seeing them or even my mom is really hard. I am fortunate enough to be able to drive home to my family in only a matter of about two hours, but that doesn't make it a good idea. Even if I'm alone in my car, I can still bring sickness back to my town without me knowing it.

According to the CDC, traveling is still a way that COVID-19 can be spread quickly through communities that may have been either unaffected or in recovery from the virus. COVID-19 is especially scary when it comes to asymptomatic carriers, or those who can transmit the virus despite not showing symptoms, who have the virus but show

no symptoms but can still spread COVID-19.

Even if you feel perfectly fine, the CDC warns you are still putting others in danger whether you know it or not.

Listen, you might think it's worth it to travel home, but it's honestly not. Family is very important, yes, but keeping your family healthy and alive is even more important. If you really need to go home, please quarantine for two weeks. Don't forget to quarantine on your way home too.

So many lives have been lost in this pandemic already. Be sure to not add your family or someone else's names to the list just because you wanted to go home or on a fun trip.

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HERE]

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If you are interested in applying to be a photographer or designer, please email Grace Larsen at ExponentEditor@montana.edu or apply online at www.msuexponent.com/apply

CULTURE

How it feels to hear “Welcome Back”

BY RILEY FERRE

A new semester has arrived, and students have finally made it back to campus. Students have never experienced a winter break quite like this, and the transition back to school will present individuals with new challenges, new feelings and possibly even new inspiration. Navigating the seemingly never-ending pandemic, switching back into “school mode” after six weeks off and moving into dorms full of people in similar situations all provide new obstacles.

It’s easy to get caught up in the overwhelming feelings that many are experiencing during these times. How do I write a paper again? How am I going to go back to surviving on dining hall food? What if COVID-19 starts shutting classes down and I am forced to quarantine? It’s important to realize that these feelings are entirely valid and demand to be felt. It’s also important to realize that performing this transition with the mindset of “one step at a time,” will help make the impossible seem possible. As cheesy as the phrase, “we’re all in this together,” may seem, it’s backed with a lot of truth at this particular stage. We need to support one another and allow others to struggle, grow and learn from these difficult times.

All of the attention on the pandemic combined with the newness of the situation may also overshadow the excitement normally attached to the start of the semester. A new semester means yet another opportunity to expand our knowledge and learn from mentors and peers brimming with information. It also provides a way to form and strengthen friendships that could

last a lifetime. I’ve only spent one semester on campus so far and already know that I have created friendships that will last. I have met people that have pushed me to be better, and I feel extremely confident that these social interactions will be a part of my experience at MSU that will never escape my memory.

College is stressful, and it doesn’t make it easier that most aspects of life don’t feel permanent at the moment. But turning on “student and work mode” during the first few weeks of 2021 presents us all with the unique opportunity to learn lessons and become stronger in ways that were unavailable in the past. This current transition is scary but is, in some ways, magical. We get to learn more and are lucky to be able to do that in a live classroom. We get to live with our friends and be there for one another. We get to use this pandemic and these struggles for personal and societal benefit.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 SPRING & FALL PURE GOLD RECIPIENTS

Don Aamold • Jody Bartz
Peter Buchanan • Cahle Clampitt
Elizabeth Donald • Catherine Ebelke
Leesha Ford • Katlyn Gillen
Marc Giullian • Adrian Sanchez-Gonzalez
Teresa Greenwood • Ann Klass
Kirk Lubick • Karen Maroney
Sam McColley • Darla Tyler-McSherry
Darin Metcalfe • Joseph Morrison
Jennifer Moser • Ana Murphy
Ehsan Salam • Sally Sanchez
Chad Spangler

**Your commitment and contributions to
our university are an inspiration.**



www.montana.edu/puregold

An RA in the age of COVID-19

BY MEGHAN AMRHEIN

Being an MSU Resident Advisor (RA) has never been a piece of cake, but a school year such as this one was the icing on top. With restrictions on how events can be run and strict rules in place surrounding COVID-19 in the dorms, helping students connect to their peers has proven more difficult than imagined for many RAs. Now, as they start planning welcome back events for a spring semester like no other, the difficulties of COVID-19 are sinking in yet again.

“it can be scary to approach someone you don’t know well, but they could be struggling as much as you.”

—MSU Resident Advisor

The overwhelming struggle for RAs this year has been finding creative ways to help students form relationships in their dorms. Most of this is due to a lack of large floor and campus-wide events where students typically meet their peers. One RA mentioned that even RAs are struggling with reaching out to their residents. “A lack of more in-person and social events definitely makes resident relationships hard to form,” they said when asked about the hardest part of this year. That was the common response across the board.

Another resident advisor gave a similar answer and said that the hardest part has been the lack of open doors and common spaces. “Normally, everyone keeps their doors open, stops in the hallway to have conversations and catch up, and hang out in the lounges. This year... not so much,” they said. With lounges blocked off and common spaces reduced, it’s become hard to run into other students and strike up a conversation.

For those struggling to make connections this semester, the RAs have some advice. One said that knocking on someone’s door is always a good way to branch out and that, “it can be scary to approach someone you don’t know well, but they could be struggling as much as you.” Another added that you can also “join in on as many of the new RHA online events as possible” to meet some new faces. Even though there aren’t as many in-person events this year, online events can still be just as fun and helpful in making new friends.

If you’re living in the dorms this semester, don’t be afraid to go to the few in-person events that the dorms are hosting, as well as the online events. You can also talk to your RA about events that the Residence Hall Association is hosting around campus. Get out there and get involved.



The sun casts an orange glow on the Johnstone Center, one of the residence halls being used as housing for COVID-19 positive students at Montana State University.

PHOTO BY DANE WILLIAMS



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MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

JANUARY 14-20

Want your event featured here? Email event info to us at ExponentEntertainment@montana.edu one week in advance.

CALENDAR

THU 14 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION DISCUSSION WITH AWC Webex Call @ 6 p.m.
Join the Association of Women in Computing to discuss diversity and inclusion. Everyone is welcome, but make sure to RSVP at <https://montanastate.campuslabs.com/engage/event/6645599> or contact AWC.

BOBCAT MEN'S BASKETBALL Pluto TV @ 6 p.m.
The Bobcats face off against the Portland State Vikings at Worthington Arena. This two-game series marks the first home series of conference play.

FRI 15 MLK JR'S BIRTHDAY: CELEBRATION OF BLACKNESS Webex Call @ 11:30 a.m - 4 p.m
This year's MLK events will be conducted through a virtual day of panels and discussions with MSU campus leaders. The celebration will begin with an acknowledgment of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday and will continue with student panels revolving around student athletes, healthcare, and an interactive African names presentation.

MANDALORIAN TRIVIA Webex @ 12 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Star Wars and trivia fans alike will love this Mandalorian-themed trivia event hosted by MSU Program Activities Campus Events (PACE) and MSU Office of Student Engagement. The event runs all day, and winners will earn prizes. Visit @MSUPACE or @MSUOSE on Instagram for event links.

SAT 16 WINTER RUN CLUB Bozeman Running Club Storefront @ 10 a.m.
Join Bozeman Running Club every Saturday for a morning run open to all skill levels. Distance and routes will vary each week. Masks are required, and only 25 people are allowed every week, so sign up early. Give them a call at (406) 587-1135 or stop into BRC for more information or to sign up.

BOBCAT MEN'S BASKETBALL SWX Montana @ Noon
Game two of the Bobcat v. Viking series tips off at Worthington Arena. Catch the action live and support the Bobcat Men's Basketball Team.

BOBCAT WOMEN'S BASKETBALL Pluto TV @ 1 p.m.
The defending Big Sky Champions will face off against the PSU Vikings in game two in Portland. Tune in and cheer on the Lady Cats to victory.

MON 18 MARTIN LUTHER KING J.R. Day Marga Hoseaus No Classes, Offices Closed
Enjoy your three-day weekend Bobcats. Remember to wear your mask.

SINGO SUB Ballroom D @ 7 p.m.
Calling all music and bingo lovers. Join us for a fun evening of SINGO, which is just like traditional bingo but with songs instead of numbers. Snacks will be provided, and there's a very limited amount of space, so make sure to RSVP.

TRIVIA NIGHT Bozeman Taproom @ 7 p.m.
Head on over to Bozeman Taproom to test your trivia knowledge and win prizes.

TUES 19 BEACON PARK CLINICS Outdoor Rec Building @ 3:30 p.m. and 5 p.m.
Join the Outdoor Recreation program for their 1.5 hour beacon park clinics. Learn how to properly and safely use avalanche safety gear, including beacons, probes and shovels. All skill levels are welcome and encouraged to join.

WED 20 SUPER SMASH BROS GAME NIGHT El Camino Bar @6:30 p.m.
Super Smash Bros Ultimate will be available on separate socially-distanced TVs from 6:30-10 p.m. The arcade cabinets and projector will also be available to play, and El Camino's full menu is available until 9:30 p.m.

A COVID-19 Christmas

BY ROSE VEJVODA

When thinking of the Christmas season, thoughts of shopping downtown for my family, catching up with friends over coffee and surrounding myself with the people I love come to mind. This year was different. As MSU students made the trip back to their various homes for the holidays, COVID-19 numbers continued to soar nationwide, and everyone was urged to stay home and stay safe.

This break, the pandemic held us captive in our homes and urged us to stay inside and away from large groups. This resulted in one of the biggest bummers, which was having to stay away from friends from back home after being away all semester. COVID-19 also made it harder to get into the Christmas spirit because there was no caroling, no Christmas parades and not nearly enough baked goods from elderly neighbors.

Although we were urged to stay home during this time, making winter break less than ideal, there were also plenty of perks. We got to spend lots of time with our families, and I know all of our parents were excited to have us home, raiding the pantry and leaving a trail of dirty dishes around the house. Our pets were also pleased, and took advantage of our presence by demanding lots of walks and treats.

COVID-19 also gave us all more time to binge-watch the “Mandalorian” and FaceTime our friends to talk about how cute “Baby Yoda” is, or re-watch the entire “Lord of the Rings” series.

Luckily, COVID-19 didn’t keep us completely inside, and many outdoor activities were still calling us. A much-needed break from studying allowed us to spend our time hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, ice skating and so much more.

As our break has come to an end, I think it is important to remember all of the good things that it brought, although the complications of COVID-19 were surely felt. Hopefully, winter break helped all students gain some momentum for another great semester at MSU.



A face mask hangs from a Christmas tree by an ear loop.

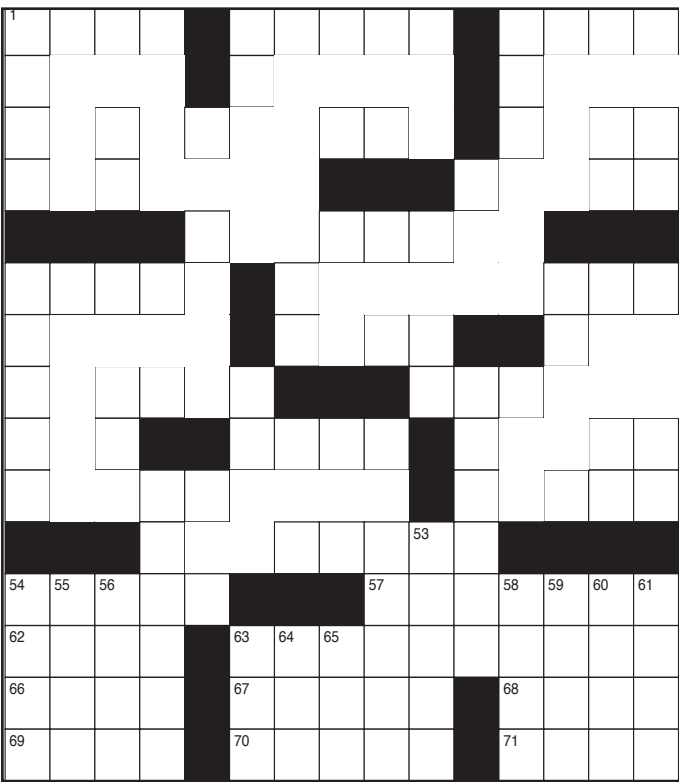
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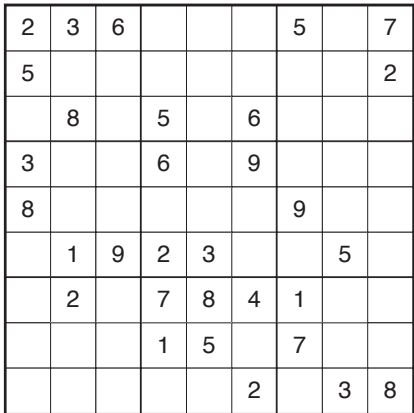
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| Blind | Fleece | Parka | Storms |
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| Crippled | Hairier | Poses | |
| Curdles | Indiscreet | Postcard | |
| Deluded | Initials | Quite | |
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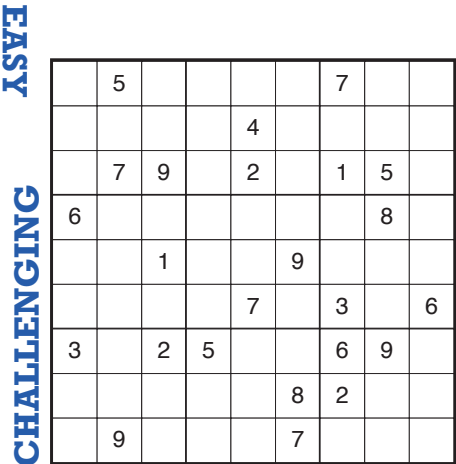
- Across**
- Creep
 - Early computer name
 - Holiday lead-ins
 - Castle protection
 - 'It's ___ deal'
 - Mother of Helen of Troy
 - In
 - Wild party
 - Asia's ___ Sea
 - Ridicules
 - Frying pans
 - Conflict
 - Elba denizen of 1814-15
 - Coat flap
 - Grating
 - Harry Potter's friend Weasley
 - Orderly displays
 - Sped
 - "___ Got a Secret"
 - Logical beginning?
 - Muscat-er?
 - Bob Marley's movement
 - Longtime "center square" Paul
 - Napolean's downfall
 - Margaret Mead topic
 - Ancestry
 - Freshwater game fish
 - Bulk up
 - Mine, in Marseilles
 - Come apart
 - Didi of "Grease"
 - Bowed
 - Signs of collusion
 - Lone of Hollywood

- Down**
- Apple computer
 - Crescent City moniker
 - Food units, for short
 - Letters before ://www
 - Have ___ to the ground
 - AM time
 - Int'l lawyers grp.
 - Band's engagement
 - Epoch
 - Kay Thompson brat
 - Conjugation target
 - Verge
 - "Jane ___" (Jane's Addiction ditty)
 - To a great degree
 - Crystallize
 - National woman's org.
 - Print resolution (abbr.)
 - City in Poland
 - Huxtable mom
 - Prepupal phase
 - "Avant"'s opposite
 - Dead ___ Scrolls
 - "The Road to Wealth" author Suze
 - Incessantly
 - Privately financed film
 - Process flour
 - Tea type
 - "Pie-___" (Ralph's horse on "The Sopranos")
 - South Korean Pres. Kim ___ Jung
 - Go astray
 - Car issue
 - Rinky-dink
 - Battery type
 - Hog dialogue
 - Wound covering
 - Alas kin
 - Subatomic particle
 - Series enders, for short
 - "Now I get it!"
 - Millennials' group, for short
 - Feminine ending
 - Compass point betw. S and SSW
 - Cycle start
 - Animated chihuahua

CODE: GX63K95T



CODE: V685SH



CODE: I645GY

Things to hang on a coat rack:

- Mercury loops
Fruit loops
Your nose ring
Gabe's left handed scissors
A fedora made of old Exponent prints
Pitbull CD
Your pet ferret
Mayonnaise
Your dignity
Mom's spaghetti™
Your Hydroflask™
Flaming Hot Cheetos™
Tin foil
My collection of Starbucks receipts
A discarded tuft of Butters the corgi's fur
The holiest swiss cheese you can find
Dog booties
A comma, up high
Steam
Hoarded Clean 'Cat Kits
The North Dome stabbing weapon
Your Etch-a-Sketch™ Mona Lisa Painting
Federally illegal but state legal weed

- A boombox
A crackling-wick candle
Your bicycle
Ramen noodles
Tongs

Tall Tales & TIDBITS

The water turns blue if you pee in the pool.

CODE: Z087IW