

LB'S ALL-STARS

Roadrunners Ryan Schmidt and Marisa Higgins honored with All-Star game appearances ▶ Pg. 11

VEGAS, BABY, VEGAS!

Commuter staff share their observations on the night life in the city of sin ▶ Pg. 8-9



The Commuter

www.linnbenton.edu/commuter

Wednesday, March 10, 2004

Linn-Benton Community College, Albany, Oregon

Volume 35 No. 17

LB students help build homes for Oakland families

Jacob R. Smathers
The Commuter

Thirteen students and two faculty members will spend spring break building homes for low-income families in Oakland, Calif.

Among the 13 students will be Jackie Lohner, vice president-elect of the Associated Student Government. "I like helping other people. It's going to be a great experience for everyone who goes," stated Lohner. Every student who applied for the "Alternative Spring Break Experience" was accepted.

Carol Wenzel, student activities coordinator and Virgil Agnew of LBCC's Department of Developmental Studies will be the advisors attending the seven-day excursion. Wenzel stated that she hopes the project will



"I like helping other people. It's going to be a great experience for everyone who goes."

▶ Jackie Lohner

raise awareness among students about homelessness and affordable housing issues.

Traveling in a rented van, the group leaves for Oakland on Sunday, March 21. While there, they will be staying at the Lake Merrit United Methodist Church.

Dedicated to building simple and affordable homes, Habitat for Humanity was established in 1989 and currently ranks among the largest alternative spring

break programs in the country, according to habitat.org.

The first day in Oakland will be spent sight-seeing, as well as grocery shopping because students will cook their own food. On Tuesday, they will begin the project that drew them so far from home. "It's going to be a great experience not only to go, but to represent the school as well," stated Lohner.

Working alongside Habitat for Humanity, the school's representatives will be doing the finishing work on the homes, designed and built for low-income families. This work will include installing counter tops and sheet rock, painting and various other tasks.

They will be working on the houses until Friday evening, when they will prepare for the trip home, returning on March 27.

▼ Turn to "Spring break" on Page 4

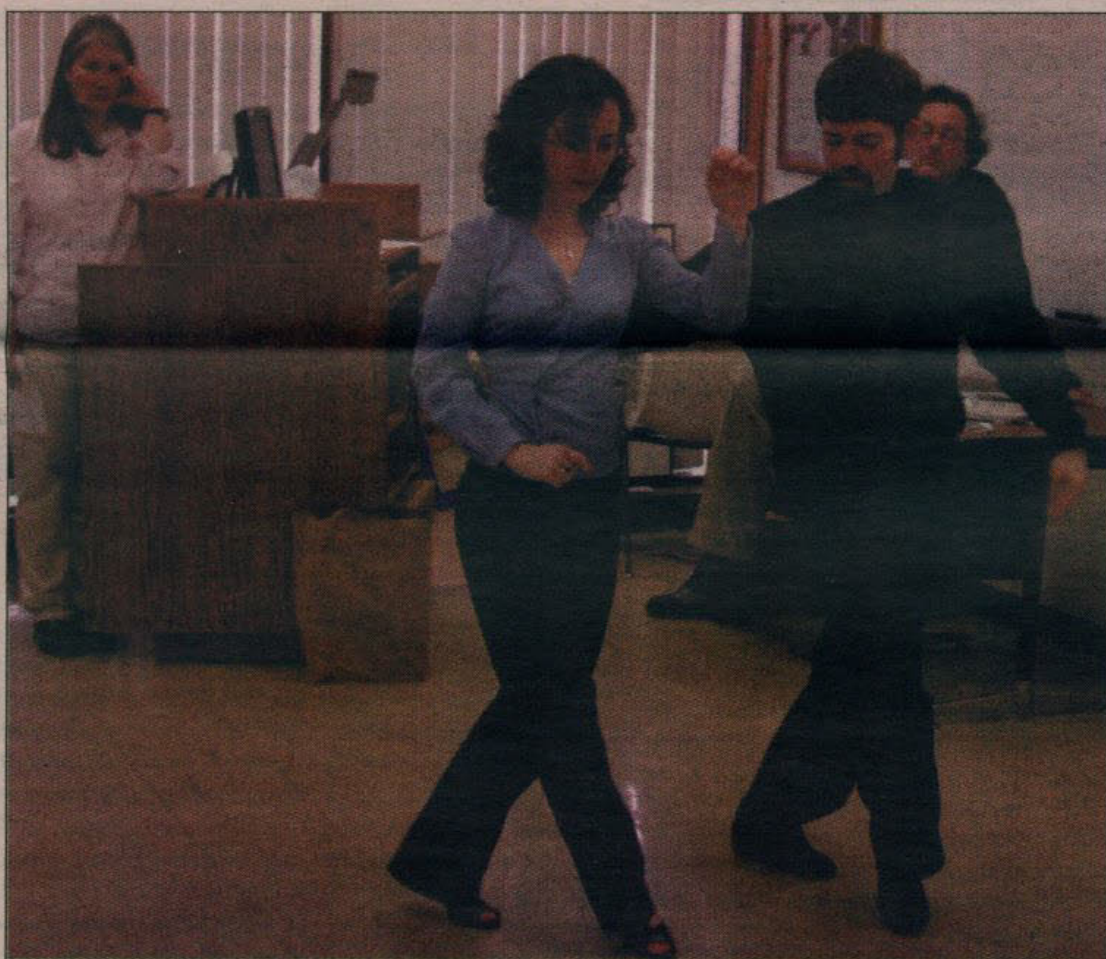


photo by Scott McClure

Tango Time

Sarah Noyes and Andrew McCollough of Eugene demonstrate the tango in Michael Weiss' Latin American History class Tuesday. Weiss (far right) has been encouraging his students to make presentations on Latin American culture.

No-cost parking sticker saves time, resources

Adam Swackhamer
The Commuter

Without a parking sticker on your car, it could take hours before you find out that you left your lights on or that someone has dinged your door.

According to Chelle Boswell, secretary to the Campus Security Office, of the 6,000 to 7,000 students attending LBCC, only 1,000 have registered their vehicles with her office. While not every student has a car, one look at LBCC's parking lots shows at least 1,000 vehicles parked around campus throughout the day.

Although getting an LBCC parking sticker is not required, Boswell noted that it allows the security office to access your class schedule and personal information, making it much easier for them to contact you.

Any time an incident occurs involving an unregistered vehicle the security office has to run a DMV check on the license

plate, a service the college has to pay for. Boswell added that the DMV check is not a fool-proof method of locating a student because on occasion they encounter a car registered to someone other than the student driving the vehicle, making a DMV check nearly useless.

Security Officer Carl Sorensen, a four-year LBCC employee, recalled one recent incident in which having registered vehicles would have saved the school, and the security office, both time and money. A vehicle rolled out of its parking spot into another car and it took about two hours from the time security arrived to the time they had contacted both drivers. Had both cars been registered with the security office, it would have taken minutes, Sorensen said.

Security officers patrol the campus 24 hours a day to make sure that any incidents are resolved quickly. Sorensen said that while on patrol he looks for

▼ Turn to "Stickers" on Page 4

Riding with the cops reveals the reality of police work

Colleen Jacks
The Commuter

A typical day for an Albany Police officer is anything but typical.

"Each day is totally event-driven," says Albany Police Officer Damon Struble, as his gaze occasionally sweeps over the screen of the onboard computer that's used to communicate between dispatch and other officers on patrol. "And nights

differ from days."

The computer works via cell phone lines and is in addition to the radio officers typically use and the cell phones that are in each car, he explains.

"In the mornings, as a rule, we're cleaning up from things that happened the night before or responding to calls from people who may be just discovering something that may have occurred, like a break-in," Struble says. "Nights, when

we respond to a call, things are usually in-progress."

Last Thursday, I had the opportunity to ride with officer Struble through the Patrol Observation Program offered by the Albany Police Department, (APD) which allows citizens to ride along with officers on duty to give them a feeling for a policeman's job.

Struble, 43, has been an Albany police officer for 12 years and before that a

deputy for Linn County. As the field supervisor for his team of eight officers, he keeps track of what's going on around town via the workstation located between the driver and passenger seats of the patrol car.

Calls on the screen are color-coded based on priority: Green, yellow and red for the most urgent calls. If he needs to type in a response, it is city policy for him

▼ Turn to "Patrol" on Page 7

WEATHER THROUGH THE WEEKEND

SOURCE: WWW.WEATHER.COM

high 63 low 38
WEDNESDAY

high 62 low 36
THURSDAY

high 59 low 33
FRIDAY

high 61 low 39
SATURDAY

high 55 low 41
SUNDAY

Opinion.....	2-3
Campus/Local News..	4-7
In Focus.....	8-9
Sports.....	10-11
National News.....	13
A & E.....	14-16

INDEX

The
Commuter

Opinion Editor: Erica Hennig
 Editor-in-Chief: Michelle Bertalot
 Telephone: 917-4451

OPINION

Send letters to The Commuter:
 Turn into Forum 222. Please sign them and
 keep them at 250 words or less

Time for change: Books on laptops

Mike Johnston
 The Commuter

Books are spendy and they are getting more expensive all the time.

It's no lie, I assure you. But, here's the part that really gets me: When teachers don't even make us use them. It has happened to me every term. I will spend \$50 or more on a book and use that book maybe once or twice during the entire class, sometimes never, but my instructor still requires that I get one.

Or how about when the publisher gives me a little package of books that includes a separate dictionary and thesaurus, as if I didn't already own both of them from the last class I took that compelled me to buy such a packet.

Not only are these little misfortunes hard on my bank account, they also weigh heavily on the environment. So much paper is wasted on these books that shouldn't be.

I think a time for a change is at hand. You've heard of the "paperless office" before. We could very well do such a thing for school.

Instead of spending a lot of money on our books that will break our backs going up the stairs, we should maybe develop an electronic book.

It could be like a laptop, only with limited functions for cost effectiveness.

In order to study for your class, you could just pop in a low-cost disk or CD with an entire textbook on it and read on a screen.

I know it would take a lot of time and effort to incorporate this into our school systems, but I think it's time we move away from the printing press and into a new era where information in school is electronic.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

'Passion' not anti-Semitic, tells gut-wrenching truth

To the Editor:

I am writing in reference to the March 3, 2004 movie review "'Passion' shocks viewers with uncalled-for violence and gore." I have never seen such an inaccurate review of a movie in my whole life. Did she actually watch the movie? Mel Gibson produced a wonderfully accurate portrayal of the last day of Jesus Christ's life.

I am a Christian. I believe that Jesus Christ was the son of God and he came to this Earth to die for my sins. He wasn't here "teaching love in troubled times" as the writer put it, he was here teaching truth. Truth that is still relevant for today. Not only is the life of Jesus historically documented, but the vicious treatment of Jews and various other groups of people by the Romans is documented as well.

As for her references to the Bible, the story that was portrayed on the screen was very biblically accurate and the Bible is very accurate. The writer stated that she did not believe it was the gospel truth. Has she ever read the gospels?

The movie was not anti-Semitic. I don't blame them for his death. What happened to Jesus is not something to be blamed on anyone.

I saw the movie. I cried through most of it. I cried when they beat him because I knew that I was responsible for that torture. Those images will be stuck forever in my memory and I thank God for that. It was heart-breaking and gut-wrenching. Do a little deeper study and you might be surprised what you find.

As for destroying the message for the writer, well the message of this movie was clear for me. My faith and my life came at a great price. A price that I am glad I did not have to pay.

Brandy Steiner

EXPRESS YOURSELF

The Commuter encourages readers to use its "Opinion" pages to express their views on campus, community, regional and national issues.

Both letters to the editor and guest columns are welcome and should be limited to 250 words.

Drop letters off at the Commuter office, Forum 222 or e-mail us at commuter@ml.linnbenton.edu



A few tips for spring breakers on their way to fabulous Las Vegas

Jacob Espinoza
 The Commuter

"The end result of all the bright lights, the comp trips, of all the champagne and free hotel suites, and all the broads and all the booze. It's all been arranged just for us to get your money. That's the truth about Las Vegas: We're the only winners. They don't stand a chance."

▶ Robert DeNiro-Casino

Las Vegas, Nevada. The city without clocks. The city that's famous for conning people out of their money and keeping them coming back for more. Las Vegas is one of the few places in the world where you can lose an entire week's pay check and keep a smile, because people don't come to Las Vegas to win. Everyone comes to Las Vegas with a set amount of money they are prepared to give to the city of sin.

Not only does the city take money from nearly every person walking down The Strip, but also they don't pay the people they hire to help rob you. In fact, they expect you to pay them. They expect you to tip everyone as soon as you step off the plane.

First off, you need transportation to your hotel. A lot of hotels will provide free transportation to and from the airport, but you better believe the driver has come with a tip jar.

If you get help taking your bags to your room after checking into the hotel room, don't think for a single

moment that the bell boy is going to leave without holding his hand out.

Once you're finally set up in your room, it's time to get out and see the sights. Unless you want to walk five miles from one side of The Strip to the other, your best bet is getting a cab. The taxis in Las Vegas are everywhere and don't plan on getting out without getting a dirty look unless you give the driver a tip.

Those who sit down for a meal before they throw away all their money better leave the waiters a tip.

The most outrageous scenarios occur in the casinos while playing games. The blackjack dealers expect an occasional tip from any player not broke after the first couple of hands.

Casino waitresses delivering watered down complimentary beverages expect a tip, too. and if you want any kind of service while playing the games, you better let them know it will be worth their while or you might as well plan on making occasional trips to the bar yourself.

To top it all off, those who manage to actually leave the casino with some chips still in their pockets are supposed to tip the cashiers.

Now I understand that the employees are all probably underpaid and I do tip. But how does the city get away with such a hustle? They open the doors, the public enters, gives money away and casinos expect us to make up for the lack of money they throw at their employees.

They say a sucker is born every minute. But in Las Vegas, at least 10 pull into town in that same time period.

The Commuter

STAFF

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www.linnbenton.edu/commuter

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Editor-in-Chief:
Michelle Bertalot

Managing Editor:
Adam Peoples

Copy/Opinion Editor:
Erica Hennig

Arts & Entertainment Editor:
Peggy Isaacs

Sports Editor:
Jacob Espinoza

Contributing Editor:
Mike Johnston
Sheena Bishop

Photo Editor:
Jeremy Hennig

Photo Assistants:
Bonnie Quinones
Scott McClure
Lewis Forquer

Advertising Manager:
Melissa Friend

Advertising Assistant:
Brent VonCannon

Online Editor:
Laurent Bonczijk

Production Coordinator:
Aaron Kiersky

Reporters:
Peggy Heidt, Mandy Clark, Colleen Jacks, Julie Johnson, Zedidiah Potts, Caleb Mickel, Adam Swackhamer, Matt Holland, Joel Meacham, Jacob Smathers, Sarina Smuland

Production Crew:
Nathan Roose, Shannon Reddicks, Daron Jackson

Advisor:
Rich Bergeman

Phone: (541) 917-4450, 4451, 4452 or 4453
Fax: (541) 917-4454

Address: 6500 S.W. Pacific Blvd., Albany, OR 97321

Opinion Editor: Erica Hennig
Editor-in-Chief: Michelle Bertalot
Telephone: 917-4451

OPINION

Send letters to The Commuter:
 Turn into Forum 222. Please sign them and
 keep them at 250 words or less

Phobias keep millions of Americans from true living

Kathy Points
 For The Commuter

Millions of Americans have some sort of anxiety disorder. They may vary from mild, specific phobias, to severe agoraphobia. People can live a full life with mild forms, but the more severe disorders change lives. They can affect work performance, relationships, activities and even going out in public. Fearing more attacks, people avoid the situations, which limits activity options.

Anxiety can cause other medical problems, such as high blood pressure and heart disease. When experiencing anxiety, a variety of symptoms like dizziness, nausea, chills, sweating, trembling, rapid heart beat, headaches, floaty feeling, fatigue, muscle aches and cramps can appear. Doctors look and test for a vast variety of medical problems and may overlook anxiety disorder as a diagnosis.

A good example would be my brother. He has been going through three years of medical tests and all kinds of medicines. Some of his symptoms are heavy breathing, pounding heart, dizziness, weakness, nausea, sweating, high blood pressure and paleness, which leads to sickness and passing out. When this happens, he fears he's having a heart attack.

His doctors have prescribed many types of medicine to treat symptoms in the hope that one would work. He has taken heart medicine, along with wearing a heart monitor. He has taken high blood pressure medicine and other prescribed medicine, from depressants to anti-depressants and many others too numerous to list. Some of the medicine makes him sicker or even causes worse side effects.

After doing this research, I've suggested that he talk to his doctor about anxiety disorder, since he hasn't been diagnosed with anything.

There are a variety of theories on the causes of anxiety disorders, but the best-supported theories are the psychological, learning, and biological theories, all

GUEST COMMENTARY

three lead to the inheritance theory.

Psychological Theory:

This theory goes back to Sigmund Freud, who stated, "Anxiety results from internal, unconscious conflicts." He believed that a person represses wishes and fantasies that make them feel uncomfortable. Freud also believed that unconscious forces, mainly from childhood, profoundly influence adult life.

Psychoanalysts still believe that fear from childhood memories or imaginations are carried over. These dangers can involve fantasies of loss, love, sexually related events, or can express guilt.

Some suggest that these memories lurk below the surface of the conscious mind, and reveal their presence in anxieties, while others believe anxieties arise when a situation stimulates feelings that a person believes to be unacceptable.

When something is associated with a conscious or unconscious memory that caused anxiety, the person acts defensively and avoids the situation, which becomes a learned behavior.

Learning Theory:

The learning theory does have some role in the development of abnormal anxiety such as, a person can learn fear through direct experience, like being bitten by a dog, or indirect, such as by being warned of a danger or witnessing the reaction of others. Behavioral theorists believe children may learn anxiety from a parent, by observing their parents' anxious response to situations, and so the child may learn to respond anxiously to situations also.

Some researchers suggest that this theory sheds light on the way agoraphobia is developed. When a panic attack takes place in public, the person may attach that for being the cause of the attack and start avoiding the situation, which is rewarded with less anxiety, and so it becomes a learned behavior.

Biological Theory:

For the survival of the human race, thousands of years ago fear (anxiety) was important, and is believed that people may be biologically prone to acquire fear of certain dangerous animals or situations such as, poisonous or disgusting looking animals like snakes, slugs, or toads.

Functional brain imaging studies have shown there is an increased blood flow and cell metabolic activity on the right side of the brain, which led them to believe that anxiety disorders may result from a chemical imbalance in the brain that interferes with how the brain processes information. More recent studies show that a key chemical (serotonin) in the brain that sends messages is low. Brain scans show that serotonin receptors are reduced by one-third in patients with anxiety disorder, especially the areas involved with controlling anxiety. Scientists are still unable to say whether the brain malfunctions are the cause or if some genetic coding is at fault. Genetics play a big role in this disorder. Studies show that it runs in families and people that inherit the gene are vulnerable to anxiety disorder. Having these genes does not mean the person will be anxious, just that they have an increased chance of developing anxiety disorder.

Phobic disorder occurs when avoidance behavior becomes so extreme that it interferes with everyday life. Specific phobia can be explained by an early traumatic event, but the majority has no obvious cause.

A common feature of all anxieties is that the brain establishes powerful and enduring new connections in situations of great emotion. A good example of this would be when a person enjoys the company of others in a pleasant atmosphere with music in the background and when that melody is heard again, the person recalls the situation along with all the pleasant feelings.

Anxiety works the same way. Any strong emotion becomes attached to events or environment. All theories seem to agree on one thing, that anxiety disorders are inherited.

McDonald's downsizes food portions to shrink waistlines

Knight Ridder

The following editorial appeared in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on Thursday, March 4:

Despite what some cynics may say, Tuesday's decision by McDonald's to phase out supersizing isn't just another empty-calorie advertising gimmick. Even dietitians and other health advocates, who by nature are skeptical of the fast-food industry, admit that this move can help in American's battle against obesity.

It was the Illinois-based McDonald's Corp. that helped launch the giant-size fast-food serving trend. In apparent response to justifiable concern about obesity, the world's largest restaurant chain said the option to Super Size drinks and fries will be inevitably phased out by 2005.

The move comes just before an award-winning documentary called "Super Size Me" is to open in movie theaters. It's a film that shows in detail the deterioration of a filmmaker's health after a month long experiment eating nothing but McDonald's food.

The McDonald's spokesman said the phaseout of Super Size servings had nothing do with the film; the "driving force here was menu simplification," he said.

Whatever the reasons, the move is a step forward. McDonald's has been under fire as the leader of an

industry that has made overeating cheap and convenient, a phenomenon that parallels the growth in obesity in America. The increase in portion sizes, including those huge tubs of butter-drenched popcorn in movie theaters, has contributed to America's collective weight problem.

Yes, we think people still need to take personal responsibility for what they eat. But attempts by McDonald's and other companies, including Kraft Foods Inc., the nation's largest food maker, to offer smaller

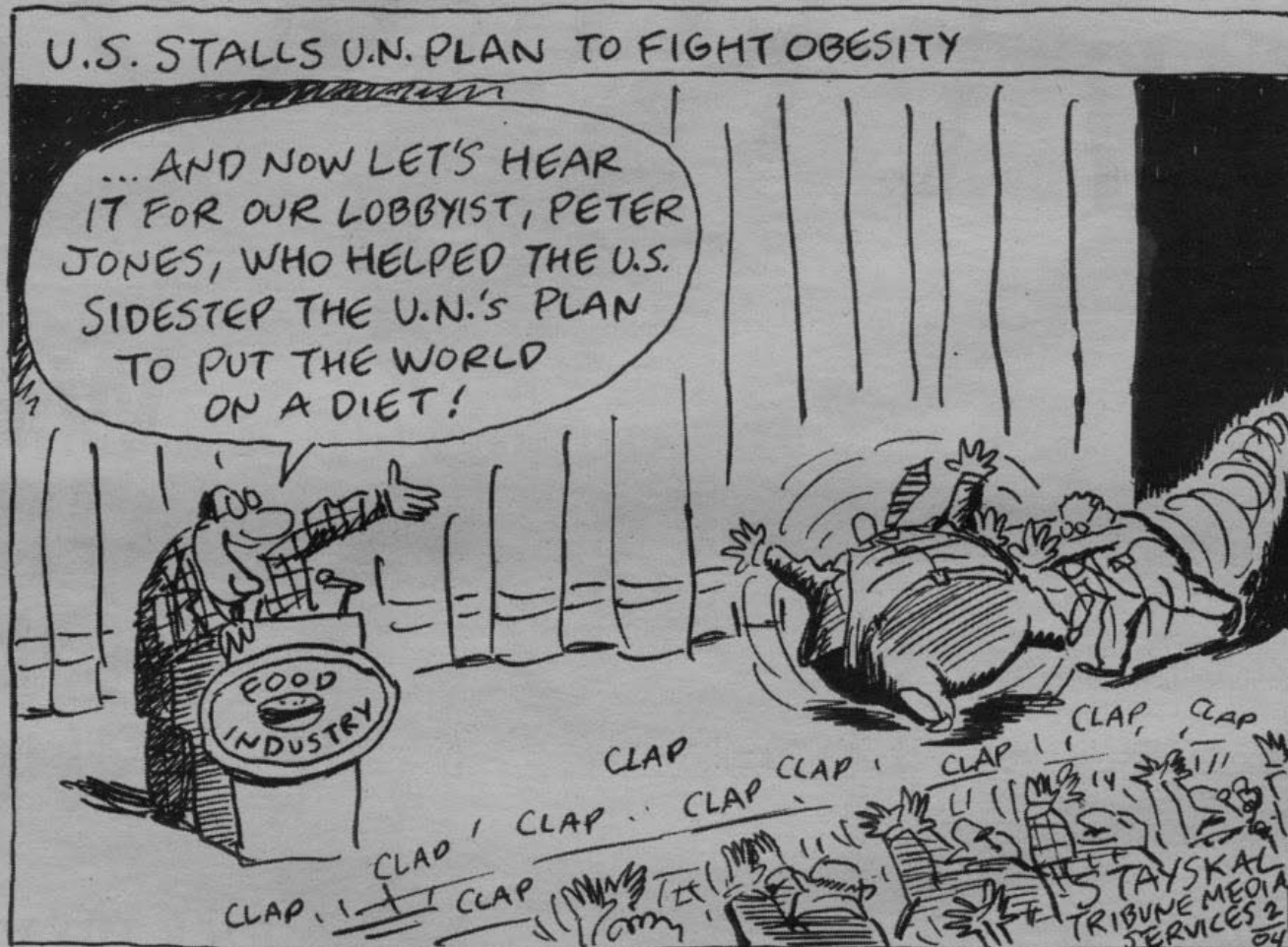
portions and more healthful alternatives can go a long way toward improving the American diet. And while we recognize that people have a choice about what they put in their bodies, only a fool would deny that the millions of dollars spent each year on advertising and promotions makes not a whit of difference in what people eat.

In some cases, it's actually cheaper to buy more fast food than less; don't tell us that's not part of a corporate strategy.

Although the decision by McDonald's was applauded by public health officials, some experts still were leery. For good reason.

While McDonald's already has made some changes, offering a line of premium salads last year, for instance, the company has yet to reduce trans fatty acids in its french fries. It pledged to do that a year ago.

But things are changing for the better. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson told us last July that when he called in representatives of the fast-food, restaurant and soft-drink industries to make his case about offering more healthful choices, they pledged to do what they could. So for the moment, we'll take the latest announcement from McDonald's officials as a sign that they're serious.



Editor-in-Chief: Michelle Bertalot
 Newsroom Desk: 917-4451
 commuter@ml.linnbenton.edu

CAMPUS NEWS

News about Linn-Benton Community College, including the administration, faculty and students on campus

CAMPUS SHORTS

Science Club makes trip to Portland

The LBCC Science Club is hosting a trip to Portland to listen to a lecture by Dr. David Orr, Professor of Environmental Studies at Oberlin College on March 12. The group will be meeting at 4:40 p.m. in front of the Activities Center.

The cost to attend the lecture is \$10, but it is recommended to bring extra money for a debriefing session over dinner.

Students who attend are eligible to receive college credit. For more information contact Melissa Kilgore in IA-232A or at (541) 917-6947.

Chemeketa CC president to speak

This Thursday at noon in the Alsea-Calapooia room the American Association of Women in Community Colleges is hosting a speech by Dr. Gretchen Schuette. She will discuss her role as the president of Chemeketa Community College, her reflection on the journey to presidency and what it's like to be a woman in her position.

Soup and roll lunch will be available for \$1.75 for members and \$2.75 for non-members.

Physics Phun Night

It's not a circus sideshow. It's Physics Phun Night at LBCC. The festivities be-

gin at 7 p.m., Saturday, March 13 in Forum 104 on LBCC's Albany campus.

The free, all ages event is open to the public. A suggested donation of two cans of food will be collected at the door. All donations will be given to the Jefferson Scio Crabtree Food Bank.

In addition to the above demonstrations, a tour of the solar system via telescope will be offered, weather permitting. All of the planets that are visible to the naked eye can be seen in the night sky starting next week. This "alignment of the planets" happens only once nearly every five years and will be visible through May. It won't happen again until 2008.

For more information contact Greg Mulder at (541) 917-4744 or visit www.wyp2005.org for more on the World Year of Physics.

Scholarship deadline

The deadline approaches for Linn and Benton county graduating high school seniors applying for scholarships.

Applications for students planning to attend LBCC in the fall are available from area high school counselors or online at www.linnbenton.edu/scholarships.

Completed applications must be returned to the high school counselors no later than March 30. Students may not send applications directly to LBCC.

Additionally, there are talent grants available through various clubs, organizations and departments.

Questions may be directed to the Financial Aid office at (541) 917-4866.

Stickers: Save school funds

▲ From page 1

obvious problems, like a running engine or a vehicle with its headlights left on, as well as smaller problems like flat tires or deflating tires. Sorensen said that whenever he can, he leaves a note on the car detailing the problem, but if it requires immediate attention the office has to run a DMV check to locate the driver.

Sorensen said he would like to see

more drivers register their vehicles since it saves school resources and makes it much easier for him to help students.

Unlike other schools, Linn-Benton's parking passes are free and never require renewal unless you buy a new car.

The registration form can be picked up at the Security Office in CC-123. The form is short and requires the driver to know their license plate number.

Spring break: An alternative

▲ From page 1

All student participants will be required to register for a one credit hour service class.

In addition to working on the houses, students must either help plan the trip or give a presentation afterward. Students will also prepare reflection activities that will help in affirming accomplishments.

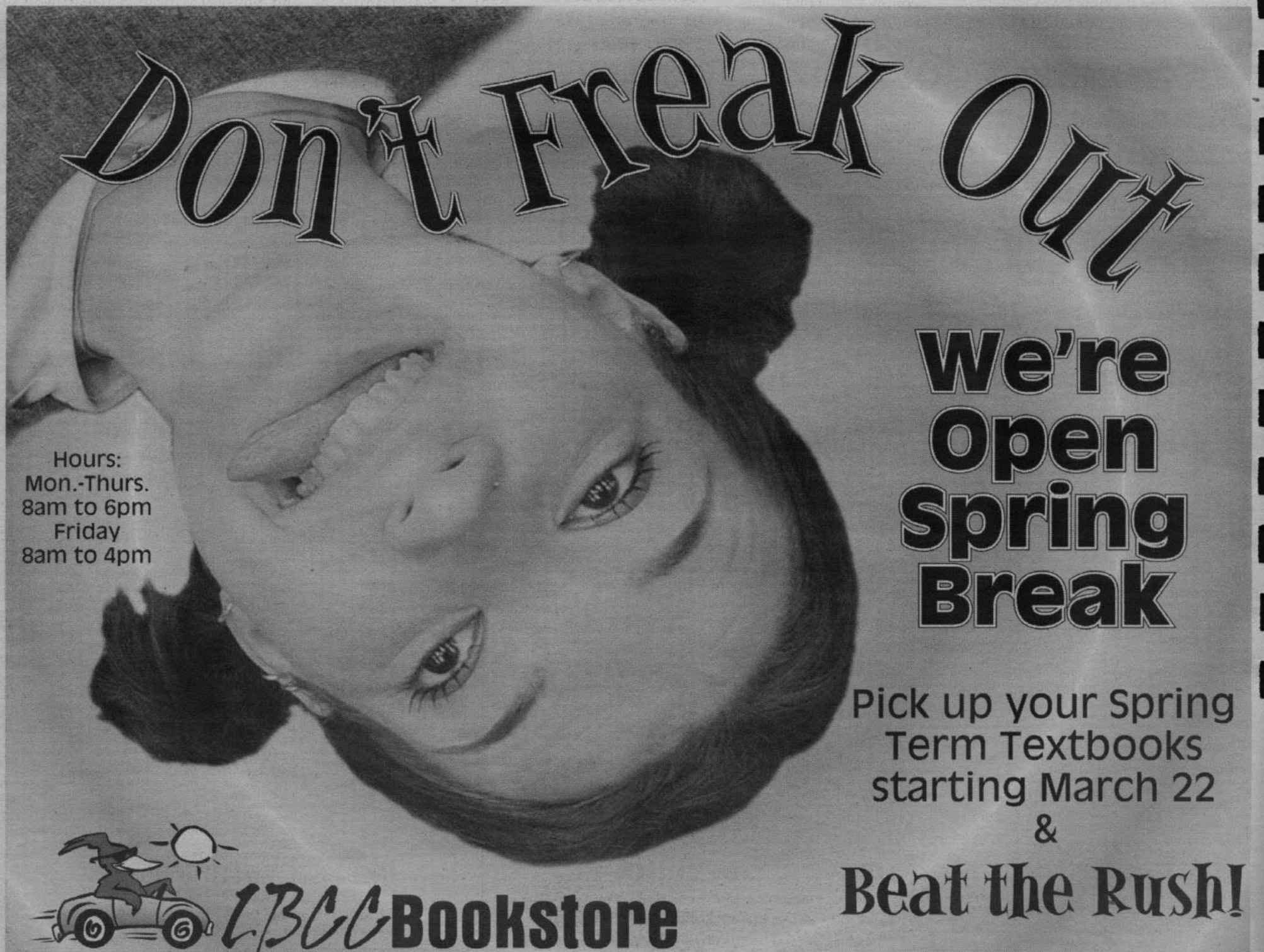
Originally estimated between \$6,000 and \$7,000, funds have come in from many different locations to make sure the week will be a success. Each of the 13

students is required to pay \$100. The LBCC foundation has offered \$3,150. The Associated Student Government and Student Activities and Programs board have each given \$1,000. Also, the Intramural Recreation Team and the programming board have each donated \$500.

Lohner added that she is really looking forward to "getting to know other people who were raised differently than I was. I grew up in small towns, so I'm looking forward to seeing the big city and the people from Oakland."

CORRECTION

The article on Phi Theta Kappa in the March 3 issue contained several errors. The Pinnacle Award was presented to the chapter as a whole, not just to President Brandi Hereford. The number of inductees at this year's first ceremony was inaccurately compared to last year's total. "The possibility to graduate with honors" is not a perk of PTK membership, rather, it gives members the opportunity to wear PTK colors at commencement. Finally, the \$35 million in scholarships comes primarily from corporate donors rather than fundraising and dues. The Commuter regrets these errors.




Don't Freak Out

Hours:
 Mon.-Thurs.
 8am to 6pm
 Friday
 8am to 4pm

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CAMPUS NEWS

News about Linn-Benton Community College, including the administration, faculty and students on campus

Commuter earns honorable mention in Las Vegas

Laurent L.N. Bonczijk
 The Commuter

The Commuter earned an honorable mention in the Newspaper of the Year competition at the 20th annual National College Newspaper Convention in Las Vegas last weekend.

The paper was judged among other community colleges from around the country.

California community college papers swept the top three spots in the judging, while The Commuter was the only Northwest paper to win an award.

The national convention featured more than 50 classes in a wide variety of journalism skills and topics, as well as four speakers, including two Pulitzer Prize winners—photographer Don Bartletti and war correspondent Chris Hedges.

Eight members of The Commuter staff attended the event: Editor Michelle Bertalot, Copy Editor Erica Hennig, Sports Editor Jacob Espinoza, Photo Editor Jeremy Hennig, Photographer Scott McClure, A&E Editor Peggy Isaacs, Online Editor Laurent Bonczijk and Advertising Manager Melissa Friend.

Students attending came mostly from western states and the Midwest, but some students repre-

sented colleges from as far away as New York and Canada.

Professional journalists and other experts led workshops on such topics as interviewing, reporting, feature writing, advertising, press law, ethics, newsroom management and page design.

In one session led by Associated Collegiate Press President Tom Rolnicki, The Commuter was one of several student papers held up as leading examples of page one design.

Small groups of students were also able to sit down with professionals to have their writing, photography and page design critiqued. Even though the criticism was pretty sharp at times, a friendly atmosphere prevailed.

Although some of the 9 a.m. classes were sparsely populated with yawning, red-eyed students, the rest of the day's sessions nearly filled the seven rooms in use. Overall attendance for the conference is estimated to have been around 700 students.

One of the main attractions of the conference for members of The Commuter staff was picking up newspapers from schools from all over the country to compare design and content. Some of those papers looked as professional as the national titles.



photo by Jeremy Hennig

Photojournalist Don Bartletti (above) talks with a student after presenting a slide show of his Pulitzer Prize-winning photo story on immigrants from Central America. Bartletti was one of four keynote speakers at the National College Newspaper Convention. Workshop presenter Rachele Kanigel (right) conducted a session on adapting print stories to online news sites.



photo by Peggy Isaacs

National Nutrition Month promotes ADA health guidelines

Mandy Clark
 The Commuter

If the saying "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb" sounds a lot like your many attempts toward a healthy diet and regular exercise—then it's time learn how to incorporate proper nutrition and physical activities into a lifetime routine.

According to the American Dietetic Association, March is National Nutrition Month.

This campaign was created in 1973 and is designed to educate people on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

The National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion states 65 percent of Americans are overweight—one in three adults. The need for nutrition education is greater than ever.

ADA suggests that eating a wide variety of foods promotes optimal nutrition. When a variety of foods are consumed people are getting essential vitamins that help the body function properly.

The food guide pyramid recommends a solid foundation for a variety of choices. The pyramid consists of the five major food groups—the dairy group and the meat/beans group provide good sources for protein, calcium, iron and zinc; the vegetable group and the fruit group provide vitamins, minerals and fiber; grains, the largest group, are good sources of fiber.

Making moderation your goal, according to ADA, is a key factor in developing a lifetime routine. It's what you eat over several days, not one meal in particular that's important.

Like many students, Ethan Hubler

says it is difficult to find healthy choices on the run, especially on campus.

"I try to eat a well-rounded diet, but if I'm in a hurry I will pick up whatever is convenient," said Hubler.

"I try to eat a well-rounded diet, but if I'm in a hurry I will pick up whatever is convenient."

▶ Ethan Hubler

Regular physical activity is another key component in maintaining a healthy weight.

According to the CDC, more than 60 percent of adults do not achieve the recommended amount of regular physical activity. Performing 30-60 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week is the recommended amount.

One way to get that exercise is through a class at LBCC. The college offers about 30 credit physical education classes and 90 non-credit classes per term.

Lacey Shelby, a student at LBCC, stated she works out regularly and has participated in some of the non-credit

physical education classes at LBCC.

"Exercise is important to me because it makes me feel good about myself," said Shelby. Regular exercise lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity and colon cancer according to CDC.

Brad Carman, instructor in the health and physical education department at LBCC, said in the late 1980s the school developed a staff wellness program designed to educate people about good health and nutrition.

Carman said that after the program was implemented there was a decrease in the amount of health-care benefits being used by the staff. This decrease may have been attributed to the wellness program.

The bottom line is nutrition and exercise is directly linked to our overall well-being. March is National Nutrition Month, but the goal is to incorporate a healthy diet and regular exercise into each day of every month.

Benton Center addition not ready for spring; class locations changed

From the Benton Center

College officials have determined that the new addition to the Benton Center in Corvallis will not be ready for full occupancy by the beginning of Spring Term, as had been hoped.

As a result, the locations for several classes listed in the Spring Term Class Schedule will

be moved to alternative locations. To confirm where classes will meet, students can check the college's web site (www.linnbenton.edu) and look for signs posted throughout the Benton Center.

According to Benton Center Director Penny York, the target date for most classes to begin meeting in their originally sched-

uled new rooms is now Monday, April 12, which is the beginning of the third week of spring term. Registration, the bookstore and other services will begin operating in their new spaces during the week of April 12, she said, and the move-in schedule will keep at least one support office open at all times to assist students and faculty.

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LOCAL NEWS

News on happenings around the county including Albany, Corvallis, Lebanon, Philomath, Sweet Home and Tangent

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

SCHOLARSHIPS

Oregon Association of Broadcasters Scholarship - application due date is March 31, 2004. Eligibility includes, 3.0 GPA or higher, full-time enrollment, and career plans to work in the broadcasting industry. More information is available in the kiosk next to Financial Aid, Tadena Hall.

Samaritan Albany General Hospital Auxiliary Scholarships - due date March 15, 2003. Must be enrolled full-time, and complete the application process, including an essay. Materials are available in the kiosk next to Financial Aid in Tadena Hall.

American Business Women's Chintimini Scholarship - Due date May 28, 2004 \$1,000 award to women who: are US Citizens, residents of Linn or Benton counties, GPA of 3.0 or better, and in a degree seeking major. Materials are available in the kiosk next to Financial Aid in Tadena Hall.

Proctor and Gamble Oral Care Scholarship. Must be a full-time, entry level student in a dental program, undergraduate dental hygiene program, dental assisting program, or dental technician program during the 2004-2005 academic year. Must have a GPA of 3.0, be of Hispanic origin (at least one parent of Hispanic descent), and show evidence of community service, leadership, and/or extracurricular activities. Deadline date- July 1, 2004 Application materials are available in the kiosk next to Financial Aid.

Trident/Hispanic Dental Assoc. Foundation Scholarship-For students accepted into or currently enrolled in an accredited dental or dental hygiene program for the academic year 2004-2005. Must have a GPA of 3.0 or better, and be of Hispanic origin (at least one parent of Hispanic descent). Evidence of community service, leadership, and/or extracurricular activities will also be evaluated. Deadline date: July 1, 2004 Awards of \$500, \$1,000, \$1,500 Applications are available in the kiosk next to Financial Aid or online at www.hdassoc.org

Coca Cola Scholarship Foundation: Due date May 31st-Each year, this Foundation awards \$20,000 to 50 National Scholars and \$4,000 to 200 regional scholars from across the country. You must be NOMINATED to apply for this scholarship. If you have a GPA of 2.5, have completed 100 hours of community service in the previous 12 months (verified), and plan to enroll in at least 2 courses per term at LBCC, you may qualify. To complete a request to be nominated, please fill out the information in the kiosk next to Financial Aid.

American Association of University Women (AAUW) of Corvallis Scholarship-To qualify applicants must be women, 25 yrs. of age or older who reside in Benton County or in the area served by the 509J school district. Must be enrolled at least 8 credit hours per term and working toward an undergraduate degree or certificate. Application due date is April 1, 2004. For more information and the application, please see the kiosk next to Financial Aid.

Lake Oswego Women's Art Scholarship - must be a female art major in the Fall of 2004. Check out the poster on the window of Financial Aid, Tadena Hall.

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Recipes for the Multicultural Club's International Cookbook. Submit recipes at www.typensave.com, use group login lbcccookbook and password e0a7f.

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Gas Attendant (2321-Albany) Full-time or part-time positions available. The shifts are 5 or 8/hr shifts, 2-5 days a week. See Carla in Student Employment (T101) before these are filled!

CWE Student Engineer (#2320-Wah Chang, Albany) If you have a strong interest in mechanical, industrial or electrical engineering field, check on this! Preference given to engineering transfer students who have completed 2 terms. Pay is \$10.50-13/hr DOE. See Carla, Student Employment (T101) for more info!

Seed Warehouse Position (2322-Albany) If you are available Mon, Wed, and Friday from 7:30am to 4pm, this position is part-time and is for 4 months! You must be able to lift 60 lbs. See Carla in Student Employment (T101)!

Albany Public Library offers online book club via e-mail

Julie Johnson
The Commuter

The Albany Public Library now offers an Online Book Club that uses e-mail to keep participants in touch with each other.

This service started two months ago and is paid for by the Friends of the Albany Public Library.

This service gives each member a narrative e-mail that describes the book of the week. All members receive a daily e-mail starting every Monday, and each day they receive a new e-mail containing a portion of a chapter of the book.

The objective is to entice the member to read the entire book. For example, after reading two to three chapters of a book, the member has the choice to check

out the book from the library.

A new book is offered each week from the following categories: Fiction, nonfiction romance, business and young adult books.

The website also offers the reader 11 different book clubs that they can join. At the moment there are 241 members in the club and there were 400,820 hits on the website for the month of February.

Librarian John Burton said, "The participants enjoy this service because they can explore new books they would not have read otherwise."

It takes less than 10 minutes to sign up and you do not need an Albany library card to use the online service.

To join the club you need to go to <http://library.ci.albany.or.us>.

Click on the book club you find most interesting, and plug in your e-mail address.

You will then receive a personal e-mail from your book critic who will give complete information on new books.

Each day you will receive at least a three-page overview of a book that is showcased. The book jacket has a summary that explains the main characters. The first chapter of the book is also included.

The online book club service also offers a club forum that is connected with fellow members who have already read the book. Members have the opportunity to share their opinions with other readers. Purchase the book by going to:

<http://www.deareader.com/bookstores.html>.

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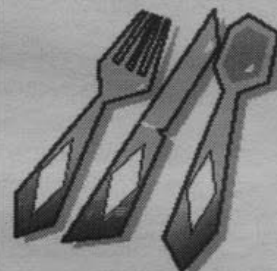
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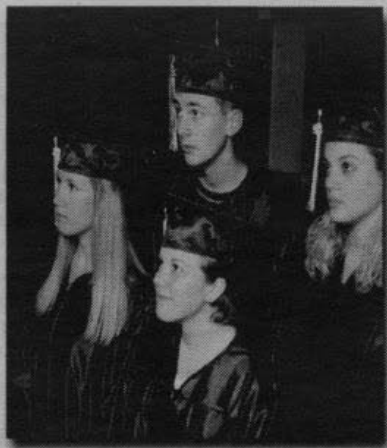
If you plan to participate in the commencement ceremony and/or plan to graduate Spring Term 2004, you must turn in your graduation application to the Admissions Office by:

April 9, 2004

NOTE: you may be required to meet with your advisor before you apply, so **don't wait until the last minute!**

You can print a graduation worksheet and graduation application from LBCC's web page, www.linnbenton.edu/admissions and click on "forms." Select the name of the form you wish to print. You may also pick up forms at the Admissions Office.

Caps and gowns will be available to order in Tadena Hall on April 26 and 27. They will be distributed June 1 and 2 in Tadena Hall.



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CAMPUS NEWS

News about Linn-Benton Community College, including the administration, faculty and students on campus

Patrol: Ride-along offers look at the daily life of a cop

▲ From page 1
 to stop the car.

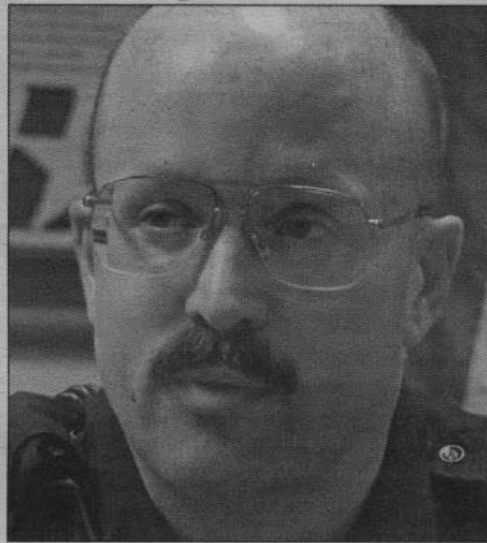
Early in the day, while cruising the Fred Meyer parking lot, Struble notices a car with no license plate parked in front of the barbershop. He approaches the vehicle to speak to the man behind the wheel and several tiny heads pop up from the backseat. After checking the identification of the driver and the adult female in the front seat, he learns they are waiting for the barbershop to open because their four children have head lice and need haircuts.

Struble patiently waits while the family roots around the backseat to find the temporary license that had fallen out of the back window.

"I could cite them," Struble says later, "but sometimes you have to step back and be a human being. Adding fines to a family already down on their luck could take food or medication away from the children."

He pointed out that major crimes are often solved through a simple traffic stop. "Look at what happened with Timothy McVeigh," Struble says. McVeigh was convicted and later executed for his role in the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City in April 1995. He was apprehended on a routine traffic stop 90 minutes after the bombing.

At the station, Struble has a conversation with Dawn Hietalla, watch supervisor, about an Eddie Eagle gun safety



"Sometimes you have to step back and be a human being. Adding fines to a family already down on their luck could take food or medication away from the children."

► Officer Damon Struble

More information about the Eddie Eagle gun safety program and the Patrol Observation program are available on the Albany Police Department website at: www.ci.albany.or.us/police/

class she has scheduled for later in the afternoon at Periwinkle Elementary School. Hietalla asks if he can teach the class if she isn't available and Struble agrees. The Eddie Eagle program teaches elementary school children what to do if they see a dangerous weapon. Information about the class is available on the APD website, as well as information about free gun locks.

Back on patrol, Struble is cruising through Bowman Park when he spots a vagrant who has a warrant out for failure to appear on a previous citation for prohibited camping. He arrests the man and transports him to the Linn County Jail. His bicycle and backpack are inventoried and taken to APD's evidence specialist, Judy

Singer, for safe keeping. When the man is released, he can claim his property at the police station.

Singer oversees the evidence storeroom, where items from cases are put until they're needed for court or are otherwise disposed of. "Drugs, money and jewelry is stored in a vault inside the storeroom," Singer says. "We like to keep things like that extra secure."

She said it's her job to catalog evidence and to "mother hen" the officers to keep them on track." Singer has had this job for five and a half years, and enjoys what she does.

"Some things that come in don't smell too great, so Febreeze has become my friend," she says.

Later in the day, Struble pulls over a Mazda because a strap holding down the trunk partially obscures the license plate. The driver has not registered the vehicle in his name and has no insurance, so the driver is cited and the car is towed. Before the car is removed, it has to be inventoried. Officer Mark Linville of the APD arrived on the scene to assist Struble.

"I knew he'd have his back turned while he inventoried the car, so I'm here to make sure he's covered," said Linville, who used to work with Struble in the Linn County Sheriff's office.

Officer Struble tells me that 90 percent of the crime in Albany is related to methamphetamines. Drug-related crime is number one in Albany, followed by sex offenses. He says that is one of the worst things about his job—the way adults put their children in jeopardy.

Struble is married and has three children. Hunting and fishing are two things he enjoys on his time off, but he prefers to spend time with his kids.

"One of the bad things about this job is the long hours. My wife used to be a Benton County corrections officer, so for the most part, she understands the demands of the job," he says.

The biggest reward, Struble says, is returning stolen property. He also said this is how people see their tax dollars at work and they appreciate what we do.

"Knowing we can make Albany a safer place is a reward in itself."

Helping Hands opens new shelter, more than doubles capacity

Sheena Bishop
 The Commuter

Pastor Les Bailey opened his church to the homeless nearly 18 years ago. After 14 years of serving the needs of others through the church, board members turned his efforts into a non-profit organization.

The birth of Albany Helping Hands five years ago is lead by Bailey, now the executive director, accompanied by Director John Donovan and President Bill Lane.

Key to this team are the specialties of each member. Some are nurses, contractors or pastors. Some work as secretaries and help keep things organized. Working as a team, they have made the most recent Helping Hands project a success. That is the new shelter, located at 615 Ninth Avenue in Albany.

Money from grants and donations from the community was used to purchase the building

Aug. 29 of last year.

The new shelter is actually two buildings, formerly AK Carpets and Denero's Restaurant. The restaurant is now a dining hall, the other side offers a place for recreation, showers, laundry and sleep. Games will be available and so far a television and five computers have been donated.

"We knew we needed to do this and we had zero in the bank," Donovan said.

The project began about a year and a half ago when the board members realized the original

shelter no longer served their purposes. "The whole concept is that we can serve the county," Donovan explained, "and that's where we took our statistics from."

The renovation adds up to \$1 million. The Grande Ronde tribe gave a grant to help get the ball rolling. Last November, 26 local churches donated the proceeds from their Thanksgiving Celebration to the project.

Most of the labor for the project has also been donated. Were they paid workers, an estimated \$400,000 would be spent

on the work.

The new building double the current number of people Helping Hands is able to feed. With space for 80, the bunks will be divided six to an area and two family units will be included in the design.

The bunks are being constructed by volunteers. The team

is hoping to receive donated lumber.

The original shelter is located at the intersection of Hwy. 20 and Pacific Blvd.

An auction will be held March 13 at the new shelter. Beginning at 10 a.m., it will feature furniture, bicycles, floor lamps, antiques and a foosball table.

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INFO

Visit Paris without leaving town

by Adam Michaels
for The Daily Spin

Las Vegas has long been the home of exotic attractions. Now the city is the adopted parent of two miniature scale wonders of Paris.

The Arc de Triumph and Eiffle Tower are two attractions in Vegas's Paris sector. No need to parlez le francais in this mini-city, Vegas tourists can feel free to speak their native tongue.

Visitors get all the ritz and quality of Paris without the overpriced food and snooty attitudes associated with France.

"I'm glad I can see this without actually having to go to Paris. Now all they need is a line of tourists marching on the fake streets," said Mcdoe, an tourist from Santa Cruz, Calif.

Las Vegas city planning officials stated the new buildings would be part of... PARIS P. 5E



photos by
Scott McClure



ONE MAN'S STRUGGLE WITH GAMBLING ADDICTION

by Laurent L.N. Bonczijl

Our Vegas trip started at 3:30 a.m. for me. I quickly swallowed breakfast and homemade espresso before going out the door. I picked up three staff members at 4:30 in the back parking lot and shortly we were on our way to Portland international airport. Both the drive and the flight went without a hitch.

At the airport the security decided to do a thorough check of my bag. My clean shirt and a fresh high and tight must have looked suspicious and terrorist-like to them, since I got the extra safety check on the way back, also.

Arriving in Vegas the weather was fair, blue skies and a little wind that kept you from overheating. It was my fourth time in Vegas, so I decided to go to the casinos that had sprouted up since my last trip a couple of years ago. I particularly liked the Paris and New York, New York. Instead of the typical brightly colored carpet and receding ceiling that always give me a slight feeling of claustrophobia, their gambling areas have high ceilings with a fake sky design painted on them.

I was able to refrain from gambling until Saturday night, when I decided to splurge on video poker at Caesars Palace. After running out of nickels, I only had two of them on me, I scraped the bottom of my jeans' pocket for all my loose change and traded it for a two-dollar roll of nickels. I was now ready to indulge in sin.

Out of a spirit of fairness for the one-armed bandits I played 50 cents in one and lost it all in less than a minute. So I decided to go back to jacks-or-better poker, whose five-cent minimum bet seemed really out of this world compared to the penny machines a few feet down the hall. I sat down and introduced a whole 40 cents in the machine to start playing. I had a few good hands, mostly double pairs and three of a kind, I even got a full house which took my credit up to a whopping 80 cents.

I was feeling feverish with the returns on my investment when a stroke of bad luck hit me. Pairs or lesser than jacks pairs for a few hands melted down my winnings. I was getting dangerously close to zero, so I decided to put the rest of my change in the video machine. Bad plan: I steadily lost everything. I gambled a few more coins at casinos on my way back to the hotel and ended up the weekend being \$3.35 in the hole.

Reflecting on my losses in the plane back home, I realized that less than four bucks for several hours of gambling really wasn't that bad.

MEDIEVAL COMBAT FUN FOR FAMILIES

by Jacob Espinoza

In a town full of strippers, prostitutes and blackjack tables, The Excalibur provides the "Tournament of Kings," a dinner show fit for the young kids and drunken adults alike. Based on the times of kings, queens, knights and court jesters, "Tournament of Kings" comes equipped with horseback riding, sword fights, Mordred the fire wizard and a chicken dinner.

Whether learning the proper technique of toasting, cheering for the king of your section, or booing the evil wizard, "Tournament of Kings" keeps the crowd in the action throughout the entire show.

King Arthur has gathered all of the rulers of Europe to the center of the Excalibur's 900-seat circular theater for a competition/banquet to celebrate the return of his son. The competition is cut short, however, and the group must join forces in order to fight off the evil wizard and his army of corny-looking dragons with swords.

"Tournament of Kings" is a good break for families spending their vacation in Las Vegas, but will most likely leave older groups a little disappointed. The Excalibur takes pictures of all of their guests and sells them after the show in a cardboard Excalibur frame for \$20. Inside the theater is one of the few places in Las Vegas which doesn't allow cigarette smoking. This is good news for families and bad news for drunken 20-year-olds looking to add to their buzz.

"Tournament of Kings" shows twice every night, and sells out regularly with tickets selling for \$43.95, not including taxes. Those interested in attending can purchase tickets up to thirty days in advance by calling (702) 597-7600, or can be booked online at www.excalibur.com.



PHOTOS BY ↑
JEREMY HENNIGT
&
↓ SCOTT MCCLURE



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ON THE
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holding small stacks of cards with photos of naked and partial phone number to call. The street is littered with the cards. Some star bursts concealing their nipples, others lack this censorship.

Swarms of pedestrians start walking before the light turns. Drivers honk their horns, in a hurry to collect their next fare.

Inside casinos, dealers with serious, focused expressions happily. Players drink, smoke and talk around the table.

People walk down the street with glasses of wine and cans of beer in hand. Speakers everywhere shout rock and roll, pop and oldies from all over the world walk below billboard-size advertisements that look like TVs. Advertisements for current attractions are played repeatedly.

My water bottle was empty for hours on my last night in Vegas. There are no drinking fountains on the street. There is a water shortage in this brown desert. But I watched the fountains of the Bellagio Hotel and listened to Elton John sing "Your Song" during a sunset of glowing pink clouds.

The Strip
to pedestrian
Looking down
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Sphinxes and
Hispanic
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of passersby.
speak to me
their share of
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photo by Scott McClure



photo by Jeremy Hennig

THE ROAD: VEGAS

THE STRIP EXPERIENCE

by Erica Hennig

The Strip is flashing, singing and sparkling. Outdoor escalators give priority to pedestrians, rising high into the cool, glowing lights of hotels and casinos. Walking down, I felt a rush of excitement at the fast-moving cars, which always seemed on the verge of disaster. All around, people move at a quickened pace, laughing, screaming, chatting or silent and just watching.

You're not in Oregon anymore. Casinos and lions and porn, oh my!

Hispanic men and women stand in front of trusty business-size cards in front of me. These people have faces that seem to me through eyes that have seen a lot of hard times. I feel it. Their eyes are more joyful as they speak in Spanish than others, but darken and turn away when I look straight into them. They are looking at naked women. There's a partial view of naked women. There's a partial view of naked women.

Some show women with a partial view of naked women. There's a partial view of naked women.

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HARD WHAT?!

by Michelle Bertalot

What do "The YMCA," Grease and Matchbox 20 have in common? They were all favorites of the "Hard" Rock Café in Las Vegas. I personally don't consider "Greased Lightning" and the Village People hard rock, but I'm more into punk/ska, so maybe I'm missing something.

I had mahi-mahi (fish) which was superb. The tangy, citrus green sauce that graced the special had a little kick of spiciness, but combined harmony and melody for a delicious dish. The fish almost made up for the ringing in my ears from the music that pumped out of the speakers.

Some would consider the servers "enthusiastic." I considered them annoying. A waiter ran through the table area with a pot and ladle combining the two clumsily to an INXS song. A few minutes after that whole ordeal, the servers attempted to turn the hungry customers into dance superstars by leading us in the YMCA.

The Hard Rock Café doesn't stand alone. About 50 feet away from the restaurant is the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, which I also frequented. I watched our very own Sports Editor, Jacob Espinoza, break even at 4 a.m. at the blackjack table. The man put \$50 on one hand and won, leaving the Hard Rock in Las Vegas a happy man.

But the Hard Rock doesn't just offer a loss in hearing, money and good food. Signed guitars and original clothing worn in concert by a spectrum of artists are displayed throughout the buildings. Some sections focus on certain bands or members, such as the late Bradley Nowell from Sublime and there is a small showcase on my favorite band, No Doubt.

The Hard Rock isn't a place to take your grandparents, especially if they already use hearing aids, for those of us that still are blessed with our hearing, I recommend a good pair of ear plugs. Don't worry, you'll still hear the music.

WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN AT VEGAS' LUXOR

by Peggy Isaacs

Within the walls of the Great Pyramid at Luxor Las Vegas travelers will feel like pharaohs in one of the most luxurious and celebrated resorts.

A distinctive landmark in the city of lights, Luxor rises 350 feet into the desert sky. The world's brightest beam of light crowns the top of the pyramid, guiding travelers from across the desert toward Las Vegas.

Built in 1993, Luxor has become the second largest hotel in the United States with 4,467 guest rooms and suites.

Once inside, the awe-inspiring, life-size replica of the Great Temple of Ramses II, rises 35 feet into the expansive atrium, measuring 29 million cubic feet. An enormous marble floor awaits your pleasures when entering the registration area. Intricate murals depicting scenes from daily life in ancient Egypt amaze the senses as ancient architecture comes more in focus, if only in the mind's eye.

Having been in Egypt, and not able to take the cruise to Luxor, the full Egyptian experience was finally fulfilled.

After cruising the Nile, the room opens up into the casino as far as the eye can see—slot machines, cars with progressive jackpots, card tables, waitresses and people, people, people.

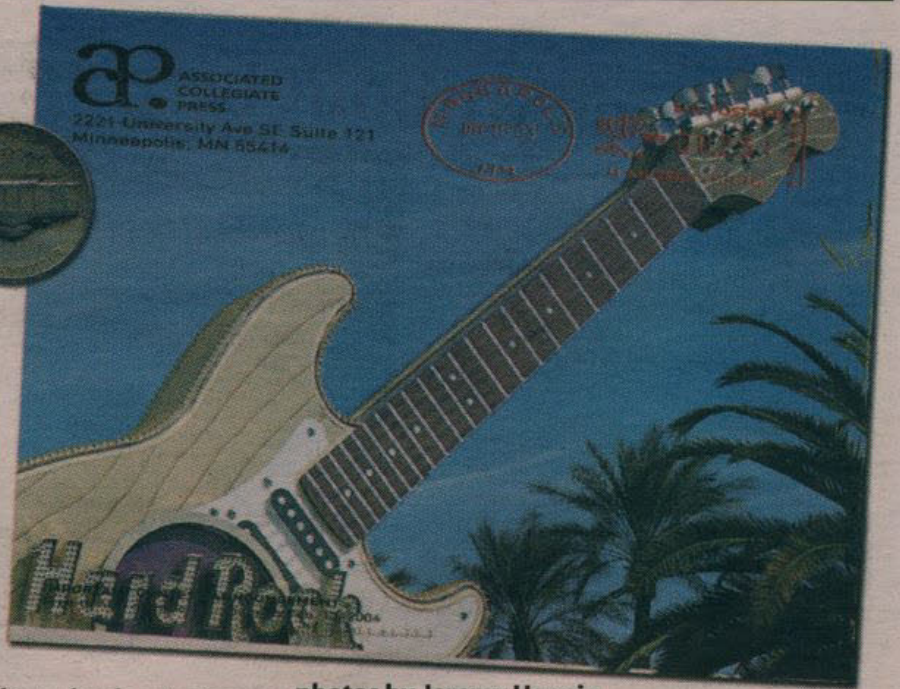
Like in all the casinos, the sound of the machines going off beckons one to sit down and lose money, which quite a few people do. Searching the machines for the best one, the proof of a win or unfortunate loss is left on the screen for all to see and experience.

If gambling is not your thing, the casino offers a 24-hour spa, the only one in Las Vegas, five swimming pools and four Jacuzzis.

RA, the Egyptian sun god, has become the hippest new nightclub at Luxor Las Vegas.

Also, the best and most diverse entertainment is offered at the Luxor Theater. It is home to the Off-Broadway sensation, Blue Man Group.

"Lasting Impressions" starring Bill Acosta, vocal impressionist, "Midnight Fantasy," The Strip's newest, sexiest topless revue, IMAX theaters, a King Tut museum and motion ride, complete Luxor's abundant entertainment options.



photos by Jeremy Hennig



photo by Scott McClure



photo by Jeremy Hennig



photos by Scott McClure

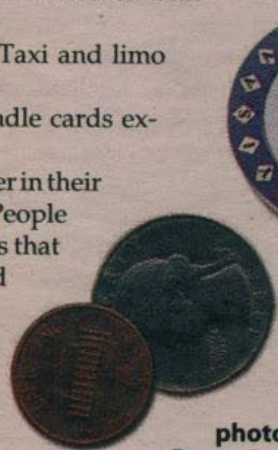


photo by Peggy Isaacs

Sports Editor: Jacob Espinoza
 Newsroom Desk: 917-4453
 commutersports@linnbenton.edu

SPORTS

Coverage of competitive and recreational activities at LBCC, as well as from around the state and nation

Roadrunner youngsters must step up to the plate

Matt Holland
 The Commuter

The baseball team kicks off its season with a double-header at Yakima Community College this Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

With such a short time left until the first game, the team has been doing everything it can to be ready.

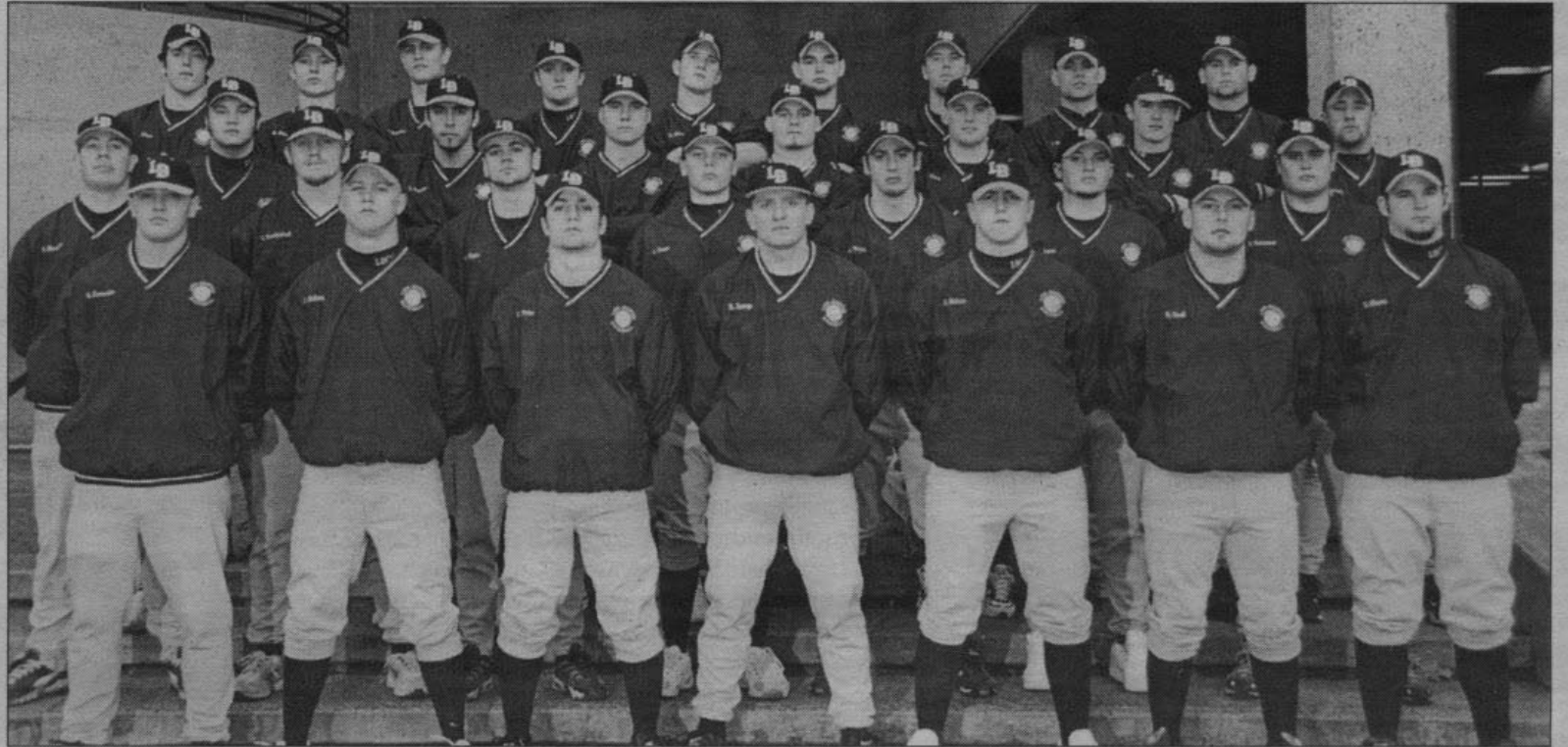
"We're young and some of our inexperience may factor into how well we do, but I think we're really talented. We'll just have to see if the talent can overcome the inexperience," said LB sophomore baseball player Neal Glynn.

The team's most recent practices focus on pitching and hitting. Two or three pitchers throw in each cage, while the rest of the team takes turns batting. Kyle Koontz, a right-handed pitcher and a sophomore, described the time as a "competition."

The pitchers try to get the batters out (by striking them out or getting them to hit a pop-fly), while hitters work on different situations against the pitchers, such as bunting or scoring the runner from third base.

After the pitching/hitting time is over, the team does some conditioning work. On Monday and Friday, the team will just run. On Wednesday, however, it's a little different, explained Koontz.

"Wednesday is our easy conditioning day," Koontz said with a smile. "We just divide up into teams and play basketball."



Linn-Benton's freshman-loaded baseball team expects to be competitive in Southern Region play this year despite lack of experience.

photo by Lewis Forquer

Koontz said the team works on defense Tuesday and Thursday. This involves bunt coverage (what each player is supposed to do if the other team bunts), taking ground balls and fly balls and general defensive strategy.

Despite the team's hard work, one question still remains. Will the team do well this year?

Head Coach Greg Hawk and the returning sophomores are optimistic.

"I think we'll be a very competitive team," said Hawk. "Some guys haven't kept up their academic eligibility, but we offer study halls to get them back

on track. Once we get everyone back at the end of the term, we'll be competitive."

Hawk added that he expects one of the strengths of this year's team to be pitching.

"We have great pitching depth," Hawk said. This opinion was echoed by some of the sophomore players.

Glynn, who plays the infield, agreed that the Roadrunners' pitching is "solid."

With so many freshmen playing this year, Hawk is looking to some of the sophomores to lead the team.

Jeremy Robinson, a sophomore from Newport; Michael

Myhre, a sophomore from Roseburg; and Glynn are three of the older guys that Hawk mentioned as important leaders for the team.

"Neal Glynn is a great leader," Hawk said. "He works real hard and he leads by example."

Koontz agreed. "(Neal) got hurt last year," he said, "but he worked real hard to come back this year." Koontz added that the team's hitting strength should be superior to last year.

"I think we have a very solid line-up this year," Koontz explained. "Last year we had three or four guys who could hit the ball really well, but the rest of

the guys didn't do that good. This year everyone can hit the ball well."

Glynn also felt that the catching position will be a strong point for the team. "We have some catchers that can play the position well," he said.

The only area where the team may be weak is the infield, according to Hawk and Koontz, who both expressed some concern in this area. However, both felt the Roadrunners would improve in that area as the season progresses.

"If we can play as a team, I think we have the talent to be a top team," Koontz said.

Professional athletes should not fear opening up about sexuality

Kacie Kantor
 For The Commuter

GUEST COMMENTARY

Out of the four major sports in the United States, football, basketball, baseball, and hockey, there are about 3,700 professional athletes.

If you use the common rate that ten percent of the population is homosexual you arrive at 370 gay athletes in professional sports today. However, there is not a single player that claims they are homosexual or are open about it to the public. Now, of course this doesn't include all other popular sports including female leagues or sports throughout the world.

Currently, in these leagues and teams, there are many open homosexuals. So, why don't these men come out and be proud of who they are instead of waiting until they retire? There are many other athletes, male and female, who have come out and are very successful in their careers and standing up for what they believe in.

So what's the social problem? Well, when you have all these professional athletes that millions of kids, teens and even adults look up to, they feel pressured to also keep their sexuality hidden to fit in with the current social norms, maybe not completely hidden from family and close friends, but definitely from the public.

What if all homosexual athletes were extremely open and content with themselves? What effect would this have on

society? Would it not open everyone's eyes and bring more acceptance for all people? If we can get over the forbidden secret of homosexuals in professional sports, similar to the way we did with African Americans, it will be a huge step. Writer Toby Miller repeats this by saying, "Jackie Robinson experienced, as we know, a mix of support and racism from fans, players and bosses alike, but he broke new territory for those who followed."

He is referring to the first black man in professional baseball. Robinson had to stand above the ridicule and name-calling. He had to prove that he was just as good, if not better than all the other athletes out there.

Just because someone is unusual or has different beliefs does not mean this will affect his or her playing ability. In today's society, we are much more accepting than we were many years ago. This is just another milestone that we need to go through in order to make things fair in the world of professional sports.

"Only by being open can people begin to dispel the myths surrounding gays in sports and all arenas," ex-NFL player David Kopay told a crowd at Harvard University in 2001. Kopay was the first athlete from one of the four major sports to reveal he was gay after he retired.

This act would be considered "professional suicide for a male athlete," by Billy

Bean, a former major league baseball player who came out after he retired in 1996. But would it really be career suicide?

According to a 2002 study of 2,191 adults online, Witteck-Combs Communication and Harris Interactive found that 65 percent say it would not change their opinion of their favorite male or female athlete if they revealed they were homosexual. This mirrored a 2001 study done by ESPN that showed 63 percent of fans opinions would not change. This is just the percentage whose opinions wouldn't change. Surprisingly, five percent said they would have a more favorable opinion of the athlete.

Martina Navratilova may be the most openly gay female athlete ever. She won 167 singles tennis titles, 19 Wimbledon titles in singles, double and mixed doubles, one short of the Wimbledon titles record held by Billie Jean King, who is also a lesbian. Lastly, Patty Sheehan has 35 LPGA golf titles and is a member of the LPGA Hall of Fame.

Obviously these women's careers were not negatively affected. Of a few openly gay males, Rudy Galindo earned figure skating titles in singles and doubles. Greg Louganis has four Olympic gold medals in diving, and finally, Ian Roberts, most interestingly, is a star in the extremely masculine sport of rugby in Australia.

We know many men hide their homosexuality due to the pressure of society,

which says they have to be masculine and strong and that being homosexual is the opposite of this.

However, Roberts proves society wrong by excelling at the most physical sport in the entire world! This shows that one's sexuality has no affect on their athletic ability. All of these individuals have successful careers and were well-liked by their fans. There will always be people who won't accept a gay athlete, but someone dislikes every athlete for some reason or another anyway.

What is it going to take for more professional athletes to open up about their sexuality? For a majority of athletes it is going to take understanding from teammates, fans, the administrators and owners of the leagues. All these people need to realize that they are all there for the same reason—love of the game.

Once someone equal the status of Jackie Robinson and breaks the barrier of homosexuals in professional sports, we will see a surge of others coming out.

Looking at other areas of the world, I feel this will be an extremely positive event. No one should feel ashamed or left out due to their sexuality.

When we get over the myths and stereotypes of homosexuality and gays in professional sports, people throughout the world will see the ones they look up to being open and proud of who they are. Certain cultures believe it's necessary to be a man's man or that women need to be at home, married, taking care of children, but that doesn't necessarily mean we have to do that.

Sports Editor: Jacob Espinoza
Newsroom Desk: 917-4453
 commutersports@linnbenton.edu

SPORTS

Coverage of competitive and recreational activities at LBCC, as well as from around the state and nation

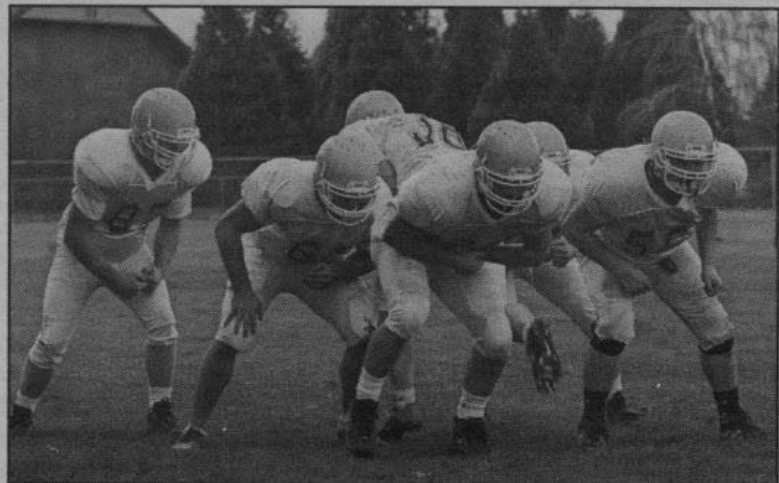


photo by Lewis Forquer

The North Valley Hunters of Albany will begin league play on April 10, during a league wide jamboree in Eugene. The Hunters are one of two teams added to the National Nineman Football League this year.

NNFL kicks off season with two new teams

Joel Meacham
The Commuter

Hard hits and long bombs will soon be common sights on high school fields in the Willamette Valley as the National Nineman Football League opens its 2004 season.

Opening day, April 10, will feature a league-wide jamboree that pits all the teams from the Willamette Division against the teams of the McKenzie Division in short scrimmages in Eugene.

Peter Machacek, operations manager for the league, said one of its goals is to give high school football players a way to continue playing and to prepare to go on to the next level.

"We are working with athletic directors and coaches throughout the area to try and get communities and players excited about the league," Machacek said. "The league gives fans a chance to keep watching players they may have watched in the past and introduces them to new talent they may not have seen before."

The teams are filled with ex-high school players as well as some with college or semi-pro experience. For others, this is the first time they have ever strapped on a helmet to go to war on the gridiron.

The NNFL looks at each game as more than just a football game, Machacek said "We look at them as events. You are not just going to watch a football game, you are going to be entertained."

For the first time this season teams will have their own home fields, which is expected to help each team establish a loyal fan base in the local communities.

In the past, the league held two games on a neutral field on Saturdays, either at Churchill High School in Eugene or at Crow High School outside of Eugene.

With several returning veteran players and coaching staffs on most of the teams, the league expects to be far more competitive this season. This includes

the new expansion teams in Albany and Stayton.

The new Albany team is called the North Valley Hunters, coached by Len Cruze.

"We had over 60 players try-out and we kept 27 players, representing Lebanon, Scio, Jefferson, Philomath, Albany and the Salem areas," Cruz said,

WWW.NINEMAN.COM

For information on the teams and schedules of the Nineman National Football League.

"All but two players are new to our league. Our guys ages range from 18 to 31, and

many have received all-league and all-state awards from playing high school football. We also have some players that have played college ball at the Division II level. One of our guys turned down playing in NFL Europe and Arena 2 to stay home, so he could be close to his longtime girlfriend."

All of the Hunters' home games will be played at Jefferson High under the lights, and start at 7 p.m.

The defending 2003 champion Capitol Enforcers of Salem are returning several of the key players that helped them win the league championship in their inaugural season last year.

The team the Enforcers defeated in last year's title game, the Oregon Outlaws from Eugene, are also returning a lot of the same team, and have acquired some talented players from the Springfield Wildcats.

Springfield has a new coach, Jason Martin, and a lot of new faces that should lead to some exciting new things for their fans to watch.

Cascade Steel Head Coach and team owner Matt Long, whose team plays in Monroe, said his team will be better this year. "We are planning on avenging our 0-8 record of last year," he said.

Head Coach Andy Dunn of the expansion Santiam Thrashers of Stayton said he hopes his team will bring an exciting addition to the league this year.

"We have some very talented young athletes who would like to play in the championship game," Dunn said.

Two Runners named All-Stars

Jacob Espinoza
The Commuter

Two Linn-Benton Roadrunners, Ryan Schmidt and Marissa Higgins, played in the 2004 NWAACC All-Star game last weekend. Higgins was named a member of the women's All-Star team after finishing the season averaging 14.9 points per game, including 80 percent from the free-throw line.

"It was a good game to be a part of," says Higgins. "It was fun playing with people who are very athletic and have the same mindset as me."

After returning as starting point guard at Linn-Benton this year, Higgins got the opportunity to play off guard during the All-Star game because the Southern Division All-Star team was filled with ball handlers. "It was fun getting the opportunity to play an off guard because I've never really gotten the opportunity to play that position before."

It's no wonder why her coaches have kept her at the point guard position. Higgins finished this season averaging 5.5 assists per game, fourth best in the NWAACC.

"Marissa's got a good court sense, she's a good ball player and a good person," says sophomore Sharon Van Eaton. "I've had her as a teammate for six years now, I've learned a lot from her." Van Eaton played at West Albany High School with Higgins as her point guard. The two decided to play college ball together at Linn-Benton.

"My teammates are a big part of why I got recognized," Higgins said. "I know there are some things that I can do personally, but they went out every night and competed just as hard as I did."

After leading Linn-Benton to its first ever NWAACC Tournament birth, Schmidt was rewarded with a much deserved spot on the men's NWAACC all-star team.

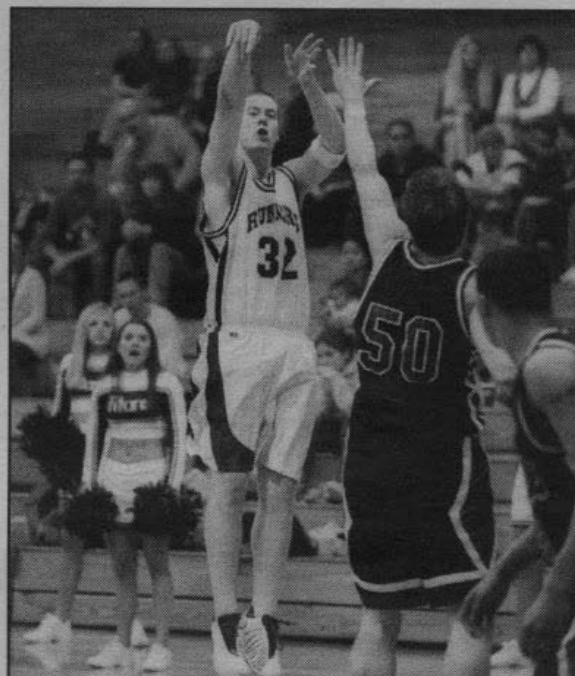
"It was nice being selected to play in the game," Schmidt said, "When I made my decision to come back last year, making first team all-league and playing in the All-Star game were two of my individual goals."

He didn't leave the selection committee much of a choice. Schmidt took every game throughout the year personal. He led the team with 21.4 points and 5.6 rebounds per game and was second with 3.7 assists.

"It was a lot of fun to watch his commitment," said Head Coach Randy Falk. "He can be a model for a lot of athletes because of the time he spent in the weight room, the time he spent (in the gym) after practice and his commitment to his studies."

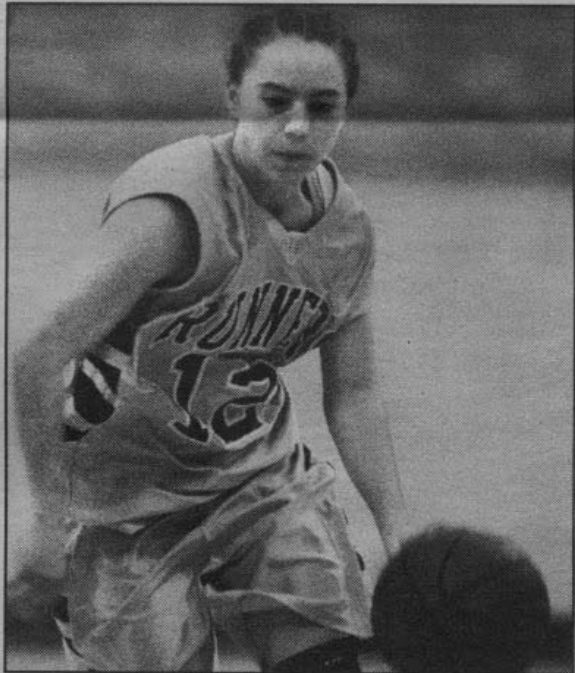
Schmidt's commitment to his studies may be

as important to his commitment to his jump shot because he plans on transferring to a Division I basketball program next year. He has narrowed his choices down to Boise State, Hawaii, the University of Oregon and Oregon State. Schmidt plans on visiting Boise State and Hawaii following spring break.



photos by Lewis Forquer

Ryan Schmidt and Marisa Higgins were both selected as members of the Southern Division All-Star team. Schmidt finished Saturday's All-Star game with 15, while Higgins scored seven in the women's game.



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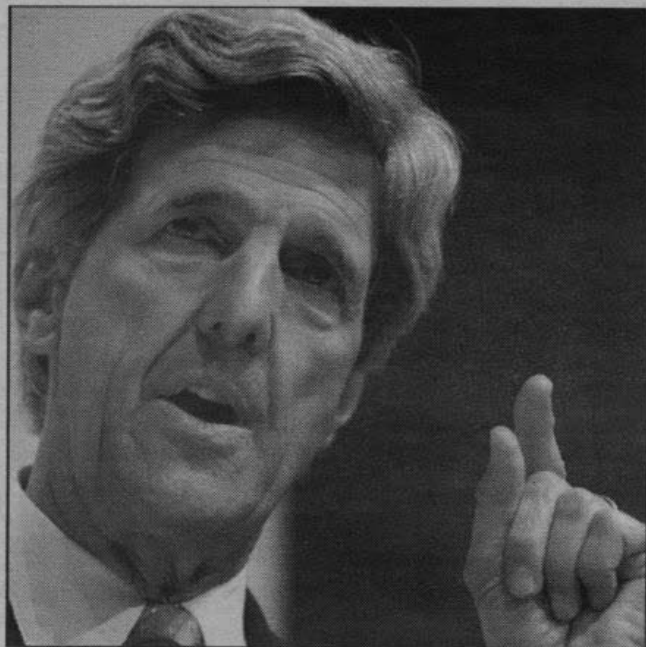
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Editor-In-Chief: Michelle Bertalot
Newsroom Desk: 917-4451
 commuter@linnbenton.edu

NATIONAL NEWS

Current events from across the United States and pertinent international news



Grover Jeffers Jr.
 The Dallas Morning News

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—President Bush unveiled television commercials in Spanish and met with Mexico's president.

Sen. John Kerry recalled memories of Democratic hero John F. Kennedy, cruised San Antonio's Riverwalk and stumped with Henry Cisneros, the Alamo City's popular former mayor.

In the first week of their head-to-head matchup, both candidates for the White House were already trying to appeal to Hispanic voters, an up-for-grabs constituency that could determine the outcome in several crucial swing states.

"Both parties will fight hard for the Hispanic vote," said Andy Hernandez, a political science professor at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. "It's too big of a prize to ignore."

The 35 million Hispanics in America make up nearly 13 percent of the U.S. population. They accounted for 7 percent of voters in the 2000 election and are the country's fastest-growing minority group, according to the U.S. census.

With their numbers already heavy in Texas, California, New York and parts of Florida, Hispanic voters could determine which candidate wins the battleground states of Illinois, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Arizona, as well as other parts of the Midwest and Southwest.

Kerry is given little chance to win in President Bush's home state of Texas, but he's expected to continue to appeal to the state's Hispanics for money and votes.

"He'll try to reinforce the Mexican-American vote as Democratic," commented Jerry Polinard, a long time political science professor at the University of Texas Pan-American. "And President Bush will try to im-

Bush vs. Kerry

Candidates square off in battle over the Hispanic vote in this fall's election

prove on what he did in 2000."

Bush gobbled about 35 percent of the Hispanic vote in 2000 and is hungry for about 40 percent in November.

With a war chest that's expected to exceed \$200 million, Bush has already started using Spanish-language television ads to woo Spanish-speaking voters.

While Kerry campaigned in Houston and San Antonio over the weekend, Bush met with Mexican President Vicente Fox at his ranch near Crawford, Texas.

On Saturday, the president reiterated his stance on immigration, an issue important to many Hispanic voters.

"I put forth what I think is a very reasonable proposal, and a humane proposal, one that is not amnesty but, in fact, recognizes that there are good, honorable, hard-working people here doing jobs Americans won't do," Bush said. "And I certainly hope the Congress takes this issue up."

Though historically most of the Hispanic vote has been Democratic, there is room for Republican growth, analysts say.

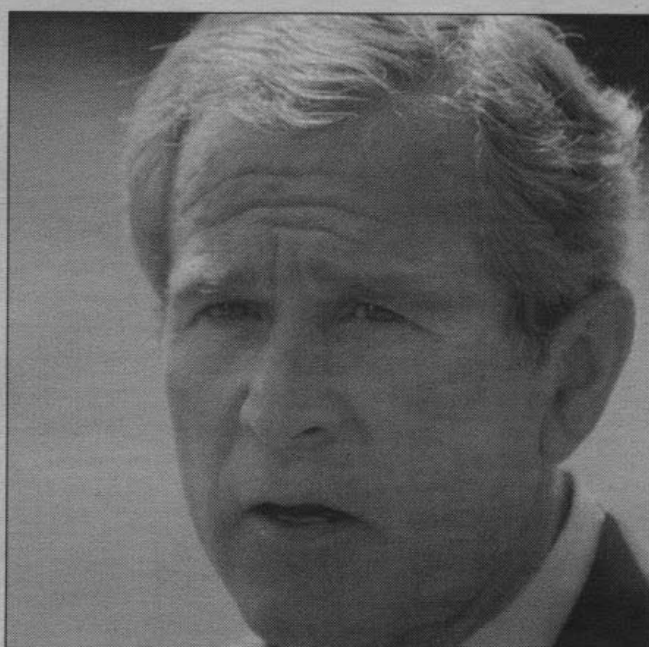
That's because Hispanics come from different places such as Mexico, Cuba, Central America and Puerto Rico.

Cubans make up about 3 percent of the Hispanic vote, Hernandez said, but about 80 percent of them vote Republican.

As governor of Texas, Bush attracted Hispanic voters by placing Latinos in key state posts. As president, he took moderate stances on issues such as immigration and forged a friendship with Fox early on.

Republican National Committee Chairman Ed Gillespie said Bush would continue to court Hispanic voters. The RNC is expected to spend at least \$10 million on the effort.

Kerry is expected to enjoy Hispanic support from the



large Puerto Rican populations in the Northeast, as well as the Mexican-American populations of Texas and other Southwestern states.

About 75 percent of Puerto Ricans vote with the Democratic Party, Hernandez said, while Mexican-Americans are about 65 percent Democratic.

In 2000, Al Gore won the Texas Hispanic vote by a 2-to-1 ratio, rolling in the heavily Democratic Rio Grande Valley.

Kerry hopes to improve on Gore's performance, and he brings a special appeal to many Hispanic voters in Texas.

His alliance with Sen. Edward Kennedy and his Massachusetts roots link him to John F. Kennedy, the first Catholic president and a beloved figure among Hispanics.

"The Kennedy name is still magic here," said Dr. Polinard, the political science professor. "The old image of a picture of Christ and JFK in every home still applies."

Kerry made several references to President Kennedy during his Texas swing Saturday, even describing Edward Kennedy's eulogy of his slain brother, Robert Kennedy, in 1968.

"He (Edward Kennedy) quoted the poet ... when he said, 'Some men see things as they are and ask why. I dream things that never were and ask, why not?'" Kerry said. "We need to ask why not again in America. I ask you to join me in that battle."

Hernandez, the St. Mary's professor, said Kerry was doing well with Hispanics now but could have a setback when Bush's television ads take hold.

"Initially he'll poll pretty well because of his message of jobs, health care and education," Hernandez said. "But as the campaign gets fully engaged, he'll see the effects of the president's media blitz."

Nadar likely to run under multiple parties in November

Maria Recio
 Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON— Q: Ralph Nader, independent presidential candidate, will be listed on the November ballot as:

- a) the Reform Party candidate
- b) the Green Party candidate
- c) an independent
- d) all of the above.

The answer is likely to be "d." Nader has made it clear that he will use whatever tactic helps him get on state ballots, and he has lots of options.

In 2000, Nader was the Green Party candidate and won 2.7 percent of the popular vote while on the ballot in only 43 states. In Florida and New Hampshire, if only a small number of Nader voters had gone to Democrat Al Gore, he would have defeated Republican George W. Bush. Democrats fear a repeat this year.

An Associated Press poll released Friday put Nader's support at 6 percent nationally, with Democratic candidate John

Kerry in a virtual tie with Bush. The poll, taken March 1-3, was of 771 registered voters and had an error margin of 3.5 percentage points.

Nader's independent, anti-corporate, populist campaign starts its uphill effort to get on the ballot in all 50 states this week in Texas. And there are signs that he may end up as the nominee of both the Reform Party and the Green Party, which are strange bedfellows ideologically. Texas has one of the toughest standards for ballot qualification in the nation. Starting Wednesday, any minor candidate has 60 days to get more than 60,000 signatures. Complicating the task is that anyone who votes in Tuesday's Texas primary can't sign the petition.

But it's easier for a third party to get listed on the Texas ballot than an individual; a third party needs only 40,000 voter signatures collected in a 75-day period starting Wednesday. As a result, Nader is engaged in an

unlikely flirtation with the Reform Party.

The Reform Party, founded by Dallas billionaire Ross Perot in the fiery spirit of his anti-deficit, anti-free-trade 1992 presidential candidacy, all but disappeared after the 2000 campaign, when it split between followers of Perot and conservative commentator Pat Buchanan, the party's nominee four years ago. Nader met with Reform Party officials recently during a three-day Texas swing. The party has voted to collect the signatures needed to put Nader's name on the ballot as its candidate in Texas.

"Everybody's thrilled to death to have Nader run on our line," said Beverly Kennedy, the Reform Party's Dallas County chair. The Nader campaign also plans to get him on the Texas ballot as an independent.

"We're gearing up for an independent run," said Nader spokesman Kevin Zeese.

The campaign Web site is

seeking \$20,000 to help.

The national Reform Party has maintained ballot lines in seven states that are pretty much Nader's for the asking.

Meanwhile, the pro-environment Green Party, which backed Nader in 2000, has a vigorous Draft Nader movement under way, with Nader stand-ins running for delegates to the party's June convention.

In California, Nader ally Peter Camejo won the Green Party's presidential nomination in last week's state primary, collecting 74 percent support. But Camejo says he won't run for president. "I think it's very important for Greens to endorse Ralph Nader. Nader's campaign is a factor in the election now," Camejo said.

Greens are trying to determine if Nader would accept a draft and have asked him to make his intentions clear. Nader declared in December that he wouldn't seek the Green Party's nomination because he didn't

want his candidacy to be constrained by Green Party rules, but that's not the same as renouncing Green Party support.

Zeese said Nader would soon issue a "statement of intent" regarding the Green Party. It has ballot lines in 21 states and is organizing to get on ballots in about 20 more.

Would Nader accept a Green Party draft? "We'll see," said Zeese. "We get a lot of calls from Greens who want him to run. The Reform Party is also calling. He's not seeking the Reform Party nomination, either."

Zeese noted that in 2000, Nader's name was on the ballot in 13 different incarnations, including as the nominee of the Progressive Party in Vermont and the Mountain Party in West Virginia. Nader was clear when announcing that he would run again this year that he would be on ballots under different party names.

"Fifty states, that's definitely what the goal is," said Zeese.

A & E Editor: Peggy Isaacs
 Newsroom Desk: 917-4453
 commuter@linnbenton.edu

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Information about plays, movies,
 books, artwork and other entertaining
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BOOK REVIEW

New travel books ease roadtrip tension

Peggy Isaacs
 The Commuter

Wilderness Press seems to be on the right track again with the newest editions of the Oregon and Washington Byway books.

Both books are descriptive and informative. "Washington Byways," by Tony Huegel covers 56 of Washington's best adventure roads to travel.

"Oregon Byways," by Art Bernstein, offers 75 scenic drives to choose from in the Cascades and Siskiyou, canyons and coast.

The books are laid out the same way, with each drive numbered and detailed descriptions of location, highlights, difficulty, distance, directions, information specific to the drive and a short narrative of what to look for on the drive. A map outlines each route.

Black and white pictures give glimpses of what to expect for the wandering traveler.

At the National College Newspaper Convention, journalists from all over the country were asked to give their opinion on the books.

Critiques came from all ages, male and female, students, advisers and speakers.

One faculty advisor from the state of Washington said the books "offer a quick guide to many of the less challenging hikes in Washington. Very useful to the casual hiker."

A copy editor from Florida referred to the graphics, saying they "are easy to figure out and the maps are clearly understood."

The news editor from a Florida paper said, "Informative, lots of maps and pictures."

A page designer out of Minneapolis, Minn. gave a great description, stating that the book offers "a collection of quick-reads with a good graphic key and easy-to-use maps. The space for notes at the end of each map makes it even more usable."

Out of all the journalists interviewed, only two negative comments were made about the books.

One was that some of the maps could use more detail and the size was not convenient to slip into small purses.

All in all, the books were well received by everyone who critiqued them and were even used as a picture tour by some who have never been to the Pacific Northwest.

For more information or to order the books, call Wilderness Press at (800) 443-7227.



photo courtesy of KRT News Service

Rob Pardo is the senior vice president of game design at Blizzard Entertainment and the lead designer for "World of Warcraft."

Blizzard Entertainment excites online gamers with upcoming Warcraft release

Tamara Chuang
 The Orange County Register

IRVINE, Calif.— In the secret world of Azeroth, Hiorc the Orc roams the land trying to make a decent living as a warrior. The ghostly, green female orc is not above killing a few mottled boars for pelts and other goodies.

She's part of a fantasy game land, "World of Warcraft," set in a period akin to the Middle Earth of J.R.R. Tolkien. The game sprang out of the creative minds at Irvine-based Blizzard Entertainment, one of the most successful computer game developers in the world.

"World of Warcraft" is Blizzard's first attempt at a massively multi-player online game, or MMOG, an online gaming genre ruled by titles such as "EverQuest" and "Lineage."

Fans are already eagerly awaiting its summer launch, and some 400,000 people volunteered last month to test the new game before its public debut.

Blizzard plans to offer gamers a world where characters have occupations, buy and trade goods, eat and sleep.

It's a world where hundreds, even thousands of gamers can play one another at the same time.

"We have a whole trade program, which feeds the (Azeroth) economy," explained Jeff Kaplan, associate designer as he demonstrated "World of Warcraft." "There's a ton of other stuff you can do in the game if you don't want to just kill."

To make sure this imaginary land looks like a thriving medieval metropolis and to find any remaining technological kinks, Blizzard needed thousands of beta testers, people who will try out the new game before it goes on sale. Based on comments from users, programmers can fix character flaws, add new quests and ensure that every acre in Azeroth is in good working order.

"We need to test how well the hardware is holding up and how well the world zones hold up," Kaplan said.

The meaning of Massive MMOGs are more than just an online game that pits one player against another or against a computer. Players pay a monthly fee to im-

merse themselves in a strange Internet land filled with hundreds, even thousands of other players. Such games have become a lifestyle for some, including followers of "The Sims Online," where gamers live life, make friends, buy clothes and go to work.

For others, MMOGs are a way to surround themselves in a genre they love, from the Middle Ages of "Dark Side of Camelot" to the sci-fi theatrics of "Star Wars Galaxies."

"World of Warcraft" has been in development for four years, with 60 full-time Blizzard designers and engineers working on the game. Including folks who added their cinematic prowess, sound expertise and other administrative duties, some 500 people have lent a hand in the game's development.

Blizzard must whittle its pool of 400,000 applicants down to 10,000 beta testers. The company will look for players with a variety of computer systems, processors, graphics cards and online access, as well as players from different regions.

"Most games don't even sell 100,000," said Rob Pardo, senior vice president of game design.

Beta testers get the thrill of playing the game before everyone else, and their suggestions help the development of the game, said Kaplan, who had the enviable job of inventing missions for players, designing dungeons and adding elements such as the slithering snakes in the caves.

Blizzard plans to support thousands of players, with multiple computer servers handling all the online traffic. Each server can support 2,000 to 3,000 players.

"One of the key elements (of an MMOG) is we need massive amounts of people to play because they contribute to the local economy," Kaplan said. "Our world is massive."

No kidding. The world has 60 zones, which are like cities. To get from one zone to another takes time.

For example, when Hiorc the Orc travels to the land of Orgrimmar, she lucks out and finds a winged lion offering a taxi service. It takes her a few minutes by air. By foot, it would have taken her a half hour, Kaplan said.

"At the same time, we didn't want to

make it too big so that it seemed sparse," Kaplan said. "The social experience is what keeps people coming back."

Game companies are embracing this type of massively multi-player world for a good reason, money.

"EverQuest" from Sony Online, which charges around \$13 a month for access, is one of the most popular MMOG sites, with 430,000 subscribers. Blizzard hasn't determined how much it will charge.

Worldwide revenues for online gaming are expected to jump to \$1.3 billion this year, up from \$960 million last year, according to The Themis Group, a market researcher in Connecticut. By 2008, revenues are projected to reach \$4.1 billion.

Despite such growth, some are worried. Gamers can spend hours at a time playing MMOGs. And with more games in development competition for players is fierce.

"If you talk to people in the industry and at the game developer's conference, there's a concern that there are too many games here and they are cannibalizing the market," said Dave "Fargo" Kosak, executive editor of Irvine-based GameSpy.com, a Web portal for the gaming community.

Some MMOGs have already felt the pain. "Motor City Online," an MMOG from Electronic Arts that let players build and race cars, shut down in August.

Cyan Worlds unplugged its "Myst"-inspired "URU Live" game Wednesday because it didn't attract enough subscribers to pay for administering the site.

That said, the industry feels Blizzard's new game has a better chance at success because the "Warcraft" series has a massive following as a regular computer game and many of its players might not be regular MMOGers, said Richard Ow, an industry analyst with The NPD Group market-research firm.

"Warcraft" as a brand is very popular and strategy games are one of the strongest genres of games," Ow said. "Warcraft" (compared to other MMOGs) is different dollars."

Added Kosak, "World of Warcraft" is probably one of the most eagerly anticipated MMOGs among gamers. The ("Warcraft") franchise is really strong. The developer has a great reputation."

A & E Editor: Peggy Isaacs
Newsroom Desk: 917-4453
 commuter@linnbenton.edu

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Information about plays, movies, books, artwork and other entertaining or artistic endeavors

Ninja Gaiden faster, bloodier than ever

Adam Peoples
 The Commuter

Everybody wants to be a ninja.

Kids in grade school sit at their desks thinking how they could run up the walls, jump to the rafters and swing to freedom, leaving a trail of shurikens in their wake. Ninjas are just so damn cool.

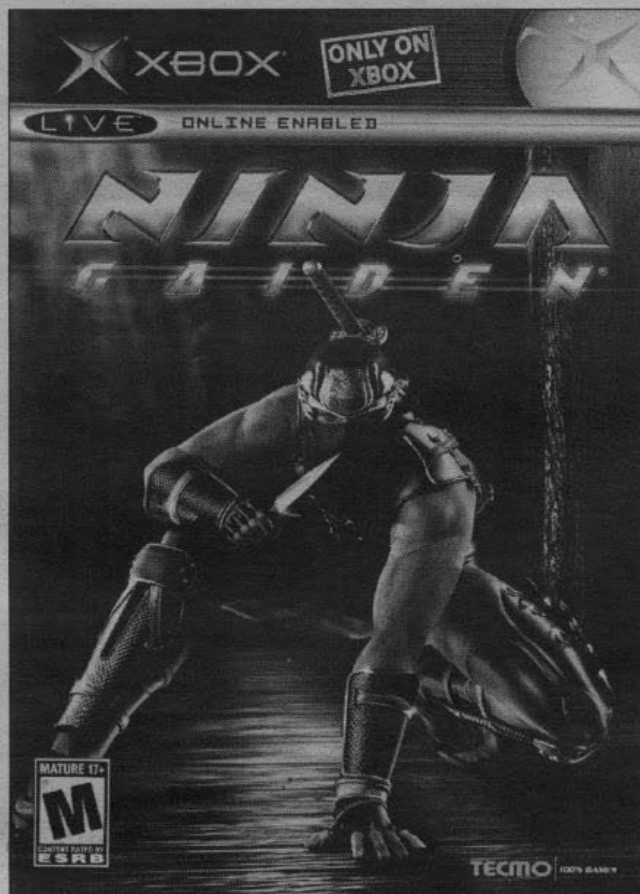
Tecmo's "Ninja Gaiden" is perhaps the closest we'll come to fulfilling our ninja fantasies. Developed by Team Ninja, the company's third Xbox game is one sweet mess of slicing, dashing and dicing.

The series of the ninja side-story hasn't seen new life since "Ninja Gaiden III" on the original Nintendo console. Obviously, technology has changed, and what once was a two-dimensional side-scroller is a now full on, three-dimensional, ass-kicking extravaganza in what may be the best looking Xbox game yet.

Polish goes a long way to make a good game great. Although the game was delayed from an original release planned last fall to a final release of March 2, the wait has been worth it. Everything in "Ninja Gaiden" has a glossy layer of quality, making for a unified look and a solid game, from the menu's sound effects to the computer-generated movies.

The game's frame-rate runs smoothly, and as our hero beheads enemies in showers of blood, the game engine keeps purring. Loads from cut-scene to gameplay are fast, leaving you in awe of the graphical integrity as a hideous boss fiend attacks.

Ryu Hayabusa, aforementioned ninja hero and sworn protector of the Dragon Sword, begins the latest game in traditional cloth garb on a training retreat. His adventure begins when his village is attacked and a sacred sword is stolen. Of course this sword unlocks virtual Hellfire and leaves Ryu's clansmen slain about town. After equipping a "Matrix-esque" leather ensemble,



Ryu prepares to track down the evil incarnation.

As Ryu progresses from cloth to black leather, the visual change throughout the game is amazing. Everything takes a much more modern turn, with massive, zeppelin-like airships and mechanical combatants. Ryu also encounters an opposing clan of ninjas, a slew of unholy fiends and huge boss battles.

Luckily, players are offered a variety of ways to

dispatch the various types of evil threatening Ryu's vengeful quest. A long list of weapons awaits him. Katanas, nunchakus and broadswords are available as melee weapons. Projectiles include a bow, shuriken (throwing stars) and kunai (throwing daggers).

This mixture keeps the combat varied. The diverse fighting styles of enemies and the different weapon choices add a lot of life into what would be a stale combat heavy game.

Two issues come up when considering a purchase of "Ninja Gaiden." The most important concept to grasp is that there is a ton of combat in the game. "Ninja Gaiden" has a few puzzle elements, but the emphasis lies on the brutal fighting. Taking on multiple deadly enemies at once tests your ninja skills.

The second issue pertains to the level of difficulty. When you start the game up you are offered "normal" or "hard" modes of play. These are misleading, as normal is hard and hard is insanely difficult. If you are the type of player to throw the controller, pad your television set before playing.

The difficult battles and sheer amount of fighting prevent "Ninja Gaiden" from being a game for everyone. Sadistic gamers with a fancy for quick and fierce ninja combat have a godsend in "Ninja Gaiden" with all three original titles being hidden inside. Unlocking these classic games will require serious dedication, but a cool reward for worthy players.

Final word: Speaking in terms of visual presence, "Ninja Gaiden" wipes the floor with any other ninja title on the market. The audio is superb, with 5.1 surround and sweet sound effects. Gameplay is a mixed bag, however. The lack of stealth aspects makes the game feel more like a brawler than an honest ninja experience. Yet the combat style present is fluid, challenging and ultimately rewarding. "Ninja Gaiden" unleashes the repressed ninja within us all and it feels damn good.

The tiny Graphics Gallery behind the main AHSS Art Gallery is one of two areas in the building where student work can be viewed on a regular basis. Currently on view are works by the Illustration II class. In the hallway nearby, drawings done by students in Analee Fuentes' Drawing II class.



photo by Jeremy Hennig

Student art hard to find, worth the search

Charrie A. Cochran-Wilson
 The Commuter

Great works of art can often be found in the most obscure locations.

Beyond the well-lit and professionally hung works of the AHSS Gallery is a world of blood, sweat, dedication and hard work held up by push pins. This is the world of the Fine and Graphic Arts Departments, where students spend several hours each day pouring their all into some incredible works of art. A few of the students in these programs are life-long artists; however, many are brand new to the processes involved in creating work that is both interesting and well-crafted.

To find these student works one must walk to the back of the gallery and turn either left or right. To the right is a hall where Fine Arts students' remarkable work is hung. To the left are double doors that lead to the Graphics Department's amazing array of graphic works.

Analee Fuentes' Drawing II class is currently exhibited in the hallway. The students were asked to make a Surrealist collaborative work based on the idea of The Exquisite Corpse. There are 15 drawings done by 11 students. There are three bodies made up of individual sections which are interchangeable. This was a fun project for the students who worked independently then put the pieces together.

Through the double doors to the left is a small gallery area for the Graphic Arts Department that currently exhibits two assignments by the Illustration II class. One is a collection of fruits and vegetables done in pastels from magazine cut outs. These are wonderful pictures.

But the true gems in this area are a select number of assignments that give us a glimpse into the students' psyche. These works are based on assigned phrases and had to be completed in two to three hours.

While these are all interesting pieces, one demands more attention; Israel Helfrich's "Hope." His assigned phrase was "Hope is fragile yet resilient," and he has done a superb job of capturing the essence of these words. The piece draws the viewer into the world of a man who is surrounded by the darkness of despair and yet looks toward the light of hope. It is a piece that forces reflection into the strength of the human spirit.

Portfolios, grades and exhibition are the only rewards for the multitude of hours students devote to these pieces. Too often the only people fortunate enough to view the work of the many gifted artists in these two departments are their colleagues. These small exhibit spaces allow all of us to experience them for a limited time.

Take a moment to give them all a much deserved look. Who knows, you may be able to say "I saw this when..."

'Umbrella' composed as play by LB instructors

Sheena Bishop
 The Commuter

The issues and life-altering events and stories of students at Linn-Benton have been printed in the campus art and writing collection of "The Eloquent Umbrella" for several years now. What they haven't done is put it on the stage, that is until now.

Political science teacher Doug Clark and teacher Jane Donovan have taken stories, poetry, essays, prose and plays about peace and justice issues from recent volumes of "The Umbrella" and worked them into a theatrical production.

"The Umbrella" originally began as a two-page insert in The Commuter, but later was expanded. The submissions are reviewed by a student panel of editors, who decide what will make it in the book. It won a national award for student publication in 1997 and continues to be a strong outlet for students.

The idea behind assembling a compilation was to take the

controversial aspects of political sciences expressed in the "The Umbrella" and develop a local view for what people in this community are up against. It demonstrates the struggles and passions of people, making it simpler for the reader or viewer to connect with the message.

Auditions were Monday and Tuesday this week, determining the six to eight thespians that will perform the compilation. They will be depicting struggles with race, war, identity, protest and environmental rights themes. They have titled the piece "Peace in the Valley."

The performance will be taken on the road, performing May 13 until May 26. Shows will be held on the Main Campus, Lebanon Center, Corvallis Art Center, Two Rivers Mall, Philomath High School, Mennonite Village in Albany and the OSU Lab Theater.

Information about the play and performances can be obtained through Doug Clark at T-212 or Jane Donovan at T-237.

'PEACE IN THE VALLEY' SCHEDULE

Lebanon Center—May 15, 7 p.m.	Corvallis Art Center—May 23, 7 p.m.
Lakeside Center, Mennonite Village, Albany—May 16, 6 p.m.	Oregon State University Lab Theater—May 24, 7 p.m.
Two Rivers Mall, downtown Albany—May 21, 7 p.m.	Philomath High School—May 24-26, 1:30 p.m.

A & E Editor: Peggy Isaacs
 Newsroom Desk: 917-4453
 commuter@linnbenton.edu

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Information about plays, movies,
 books, artwork and other entertaining
 or artistic endeavors

CALENDAR

AFTER DARK

Chinook Winds Casino

1777 NW 44th St.
 Lincoln City
 541-996-5825

Mar. 19-20
Comedy on the Coast
David Gee, Benny Ricardo, Bob Kubota
 8 p.m.
 \$12

Douglas County Fairgrounds

Douglas Hall
 I-5 exit 123
 Roseburg
 541-957-7010

Mar. 26-28
The Spring Fair
Scott Huckabay
Baby Gramps & more
 26th- 4-9 p.m.
 27th - 10 a.m.-9 p.m.
 28th- 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. M-Th.
 \$2 Adults/\$1.50 6-12 yrs.

Majestic Theatre

115 SW Second St.
 Corvallis
 754-1551

Mar. 25-28
BIG TOP Debut
 Presented by the Circle
 Church of Christ
 25,26,27- 7:30 p.m.
 27,28- 2:30 p.m.
 \$3 donation

Orchard Cafe

234 Lyon St.
 Albany
 924-1661

Mar. 12
Marilyn Johnston
 Poetry Reading
 8 p.m.
 Free

W.O.W. Hall

291 W 8th St.
 Eugene
 541-687-2746

Mar. 10
Mason Jennings
The Beautiful Girls
 Rock
 8 p.m.
 \$12

Mar. 26
Charlie Peacock
 Jazz & Spoken Word
 8 p.m.
 \$8 Advance
 \$10 Door

April 1
Janis Ian
 Rock
 7 p.m.
 \$18 Advance
 \$20 Door

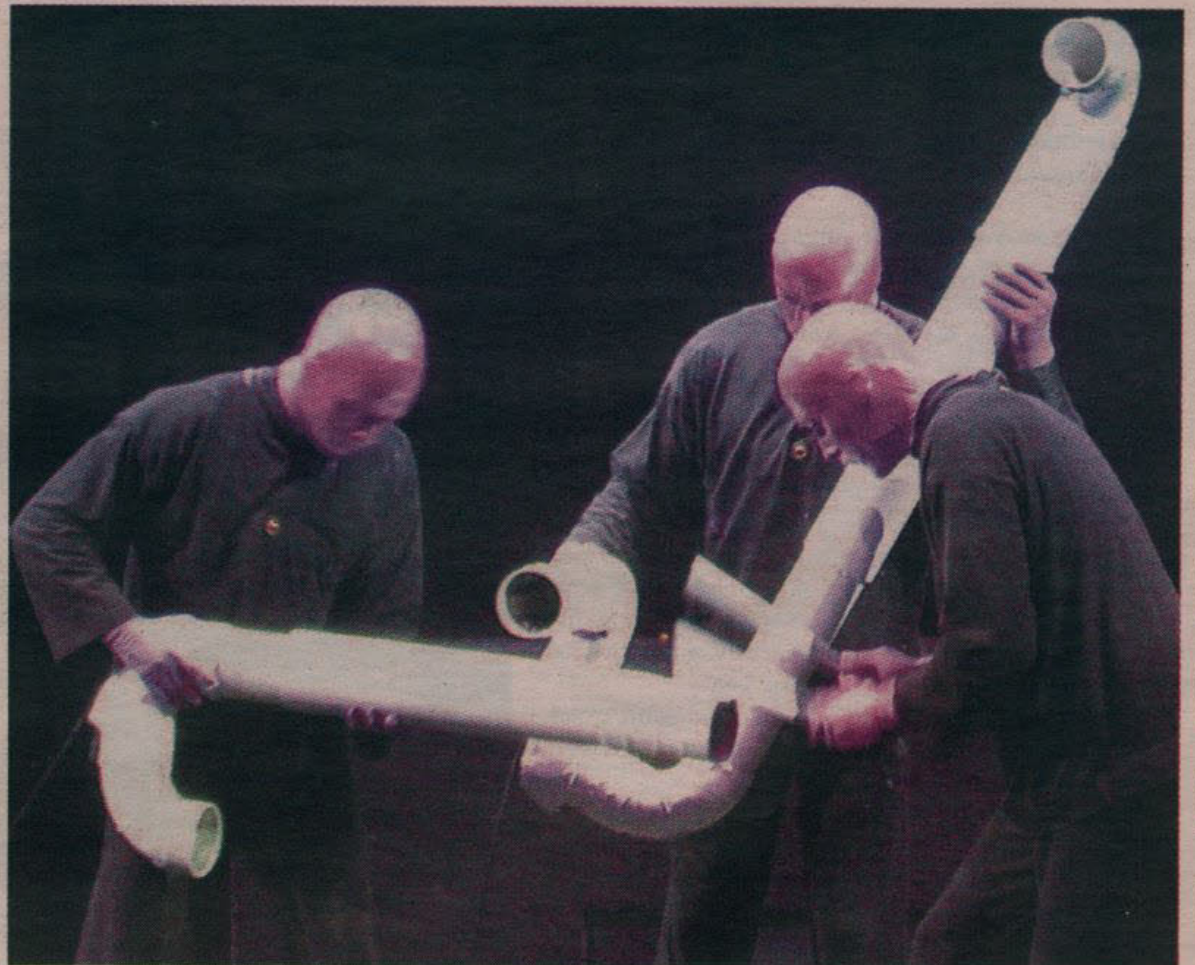


photo by Peggy Isaacs

Three members of Blue Man Group—Matthew Banks, Marcus Weiss and Aurelien Bernard—perform their auditory and visual experience last Friday at the Luxor Theater in Las Vegas.

Blue Man Group grows into one of hippest acts in Vegas

Peggy Isaacs
 The Commuter

Creators and original performers of Blue Man Group, Matt Goldman, Phil Stanton and Chris Wink, are proud of their new production and its impact on Las Vegas.

"Vegas is a place that reinvents itself every six years," Wink said. "We like the idea of being part of the next re-inventions."

Blue Man Group has become the most exciting entertainment phenomenon to arrive in Las Vegas since its opening in March 2000 at Luxor Las Vegas. The show has received excellent critiques from the Las Vegas and national press.

Now a 30-man team, they are billed "the hottest new show in Las Vegas." Their performance this past weekend was a show that lived up to expectations, closing with a standing ovation in the 1,200 seat Luxor Theater.

Blue Man Group is dedicated to creating and developing exciting and innovative work in a variety of media. The Las Vegas show features three enigmatic bald and blue characters who take the audience through a multi-sensory experience

that combines theater, percussion music, art, science and vaudeville into an incomparable form of entertainment.

Richard Zoglin of Time magazine, who reviewed Blue Man Group's first production in New York, caught up with the group in Vegas and wrote that the show was "the hippest show in Las Vegas. The show has become Vegas-big. The crowd reaction is bigger too—wild and happy, like a rock concert. Blue Man Group is a milestone."

The live show at Luxor is a hybrid of new material as well as "signature" pieces from Blue Man Group productions in New York, Boston and Chicago. The enormous stage at the Luxor Theater has allowed them to expand the scope of their work, including a three-story high Drum Wall, an expanded seven-member band and an arsenal of new musical instruments developed for their debut album, "Audio," released on Virgin records December 1999.

Blue Man Group's Las Vegas expansion is also exemplified by one of the new pieces in which the Blue Man character brings an enormous "live wire" desert landscape to life, complete with a roadside diner and tumbleweed.

"Vegas is a place that reinvents itself every six years; we like the idea of being part of the next re-inventions."

▶ Chris Wink

ART REVIEW

Native American art connects people with universe in AHSS

Charrie A. Cochran-Wilson
 For The Commuter

With the help of the ancients, Northwest artist Lillian Pitt has brought the inspirational art of Native American tribes in the Columbia River Gorge to the AHSS Gallery.

The exhibit includes blankets, masks, 3-D pieces, prints and silver jewelry. Ancient spirits and the ancestral ways of her tribe provide Lillian Pitt with the strength she uses to create wonderfully contemporary works from natural materials and ancient ideas. Over 10,000 years of ancestral history in the gorge provides her with images and inspiration that represents

resents itself in her captivating pieces.

The blankets appear to be exquisitely soft, but no touching is allowed. They seem to glow as they add a colorful balance to the exhibit. The silver pieces are small replications of the images seen in the larger works.

The dry point prints are limited edition interpretations of pictographs and rock paintings that can be found in the Warm Springs area near the Gorge.

"It is an honor and privilege to move the clay into such likeness of my people," Pitt writes in her artist's statement. The 3-

D pieces she creates with anagama clay, wood and copper are awe-inspiring. The images of "her people" and the spirits who guide them, such as "Shadow Spirit Watching the Spirals Dance," have an aura about them that makes one feel somewhat connected to them and her.

The piece that impressed me the most was "Shadow Spirit Watching Over the Dying Salmon." It is a 3-D work comprised of a clay form, a wooden rack and copper salmon. The salmon are split and hung over the rack in a manner reminiscent of the true process. A snake

figure waits patiently for morsels of food that might fall from the salmon. There is a light that emanates from the figure and the salmon that gives this piece a sense of life. It is almost possible to feel the presence of the spirits that must have guided Pitt on this creative journey.

This exhibit will be up until April 1. There is also an artist lecture by Pitt that day.

Whether you believe in the connectedness of people and the universe or not, the works in this exhibit are spectacular and should be experienced for their aesthetic effect. You may not only see the beauty, you may feel the presence of the spirits.

