

COMMUTER

VOL. 51 EDITION 23



MAY 13, 2020

Astrology Corner:

This week we have three planets stationing retrograde : Saturn on May 11, Venus on May 13, and Jupiter May 14. Pluto stationed retrograde on April 25.

When a planet moves retrograde, it is referring to the point at which the planet is closest to the earth in its orbital path. During this time because the planet is so close to earth, we tend to feel those areas of life and characteristics or pressures more intensely than other times. We call this phase retrograde because the planet appears to be moving backwards, when in reality it is the Earth moving forwards, over-taking the planet.

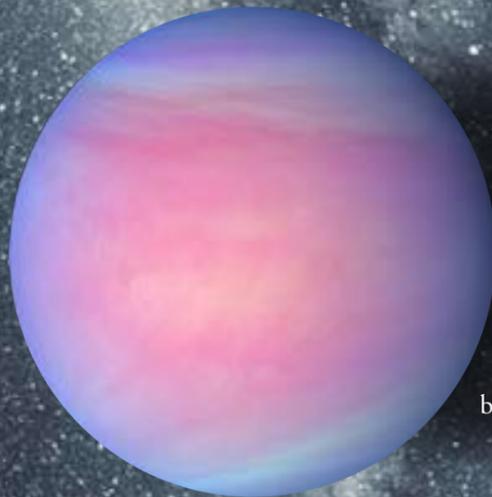


Pluto's retrograde will have us considering our reliance on control, and how we manage our unconscious instincts. He is the ruler of our underworld, and Scorpio, which we just experienced in the full moon last Thursday on May 7. Pluto initiates us with strength to integrate that which we cannot see or comprehend- yet. His retrograde will last until Oct. 4, 2020 and will stay in the sign of Capricorn, which brings us stability in setting foundation. Through this time we can use Pluto's regenerative medicine to take back our power in terms of following through with transformation in order to better support ourselves on the other side.



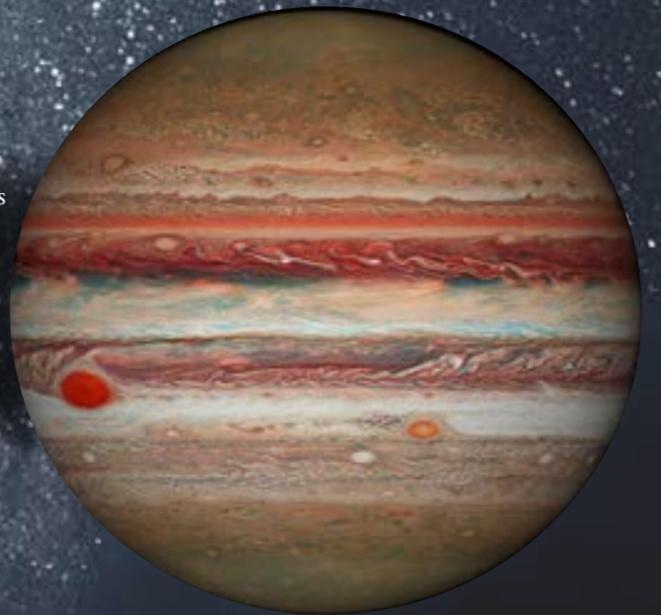
Saturn is the bringer of structure, system, limitation and authority. While he is in retrograde between May 11 and Sept. 29, 2020, we will have the chance to re-work how we do things, whether it is your day to day life, or the way you interact with others. Power struggles may show up, but we can take this as an opportunity to practice meeting each other as equals, rather than over exerting out of fear.

STORY BY
GEORGIA DUNN-HARTMAN
@CATALYST.CO.RY
BACKGROUND PHOTO: PEXELS.COM



Venus is our planet of love, beauty, relationship and value. When she moves retrograde on May 13 until June 24, in Gemini, we will be given an intimate chance to truly choose what we want to include in our futures as individuals and as society. What are your values and how can you choose them more? Create them more and give them more luxury? Saying no, is often also how we say yes. Venus in Gemini may contribute to feeling sporadic, open, indecisive and intellectually enthused. Venus rules Taurus and Libra however, so taking things slow, enjoying alone time and really allowing balance to be the name of the game will benefit in the long run.

Jupiter is our planet of wisdom, expansion, and excessiveness. Jupiter stations retrograde on Thursday, May 14 and will remain here in the sign of Capricorn, retrograde until 12, which is Jupiter's "fall sign," meaning that the natural expansiveness of Jupiter will need extra patience to get the most out of Capricorn's foundational focus. During Jupiters cycle, take the time to give structure to the inner dreams you wish to experience, and allow yourself to learn more and expand your mind in new ways. Stay wise and grounded to avoid excessiveness or impulsivity as well.



INSIDE THIS EDITION

GRAPHICS: FREEPIK.COM



BUDGET CHANGE
SEE PAGE 2



PHYSIQ FITNESS
SEE PAGE 3

DAYS GONE REVIEW
SEE PAGE 6



THE LINN-BENTON
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

COMMUTER

The Commuter is the weekly student-run newspaper for LBCC, financed by student fees and advertising. Opinions expressed in The Commuter do not necessarily reflect those of the LBCC administration, faculty and students of LBCC. Editorials, columns, letters, and cartoons reflect the opinions of the authors.

LBCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

Letters Welcome

The Commuter encourages readers to use its "Opinion" pages to express their views on campus, community, regional and national issues. The Commuter attempts to print all submissions received, but reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, libel, privacy concerns and taste. Opinions expressed by letter submitters do not represent the views of the Commuter staff or the College. Deliver letters to:

Address:

The Commuter
Forum 222
6500 Pacific Blvd. SW
Albany, OR 97321

Web Address:

LBCCommuter.com

Phone:

541-917-4451, 4452 or 4449

Email:

commuter@linnbenton.edu

 **Twitter**
@LBCCommuter

 **Facebook**
LBCC The Commuter

 **Instagram**
@LBCCommuter

Our Staff

Adviser

Rob Priewe

Editor-in-Chief

Mckenna Christmas

Layout Designer

Rebecca Fewless

Managing Editors:

Davis Ihde
Caleb Barber

A&E

Steven Pryor
Joshua Bloedel

Photography Editor

Jakob Jones

Web Master

Marci Sischo

Copy Editor

Katie Littlefield

Sports

Cam Hanson

Contributors

Bowen Orcutt
Isaiah Haqq
Georgia Ry Dunn-Hartman
Arianna Stahlbaum
Sabrina Parsons
Mckenna Christmas
Konoha Tomono-Duval
Brenda Autry
Logan Helm-Williams
Karen Canan
Hikari Kawai
Dylan Studer
Nathan Crane

RISING RATES

LBCC's Budget Takes a Substantial Hit This Biennium

STORY BY THE COMMUTER

"Today I have important information I want to share with you regarding our LBCC budget for 2020-21," wrote President Hamann in a recent newsletter. "This information is difficult to share and equally difficult to hear, but I want all of us to fully be aware of our challenges ahead as we together chart our path forward."

President Hamann continued with a brief summary of the projected revenue and expenses for the new biennium. Below are the details we deemed most immediately pertinent to current students and faculty. The rest of the newsletter can be found here: [May 9 Budget Message PDF](#)

At the time of this writing:

State Revenues are projected to be down by \$3 billion in this current biennium and may be down as much as \$8 billion in the next biennium.

LBCC reimbursable FTE Enrollment for Spring Term is down by 7.5% from last Spring, almost all of that decline in CTE programs.

Tuition Revenue for the current year is down by approximately \$1.4 million from what we budgeted.

While current enrollment is down by 7.5%, it's hard to know how to project that enrollment decline into next year. Our state leaders have suggested that we should expect something close to a 17% decrease in state support for our community colleges in 2020-21,



GRAPHIC: FREEPIK.COM

with a slightly less (but still substantial) decrease in the next biennium.

Only a couple of months ago, a \$4 million mid-biennium reduction in State Aid for LBCC would have seemed unimaginable and was certainly unforeseen, but this is the new reality for which we must now plan.

As proposed for this next year, 2020-21, the anticipated \$4 million reduction in State Aid and loss in Tuition revenue due to decreased enrollment is to be offset by a 10% increase in tuition (net increase, not in addition to the 4.25% increase already approved), a utilization of \$2 million in

reserves, and a \$3 million reduction in expenditures, mostly through as of yet not determined personnel reductions.

This is tremendously difficult yet critically important information for all of us, and the decisions we now need to make will be even more difficult yet critical if we are once again to weather some very significant challenges ahead. Difficult as it is, this is some of the most important work we do, as it is in these decisions that we will preserve that solid foundation on which to build expansive ideas for a very bright future.



As of today, the LBCC Foundation has raised \$22,052 through the LBCC Cares Roadrunner Student Emergency Fund.

In a college-wide email, Executive Director of Student Advancement Jennifer K. Boehmer congratulated and thanked supporters:

"This challenge really represented college + community joining together," wrote Boehmer. "About 50% of yesterday's total came from fac/staff, and 50% from outside community members. ALL of that effort will now go to students who need support to stay in school and accomplish their goals, even during this stressful time for our world."

For those still interested in donating click the link [here](#) to go to the donation portal.

Visit [LBCC Cares](#) to stay informed



Stay in the Motion by Online Fitness Classes Offered by Live Instructors from Physiq Fitness

STORY BY
BRENDA AUTRY

Exercise is an important part of maintaining physical and mental health. With gyms being closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, many people are looking for a way to work out at home.

Currently, Physiq Fitness in Albany is offering several of their fitness classes online. The classes include yoga, cardio dance, core, and some QFit team training classes. They are offered online through Physiq's Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Zoom links. You have to have a membership to access most of the workouts, so are they worth it?

I tried a couple of their classes to find out.

I really enjoyed the Cardio Dance class with Bethanie Gambardella. Cardio Dance, similar to Zumba, is a cardio class that incorporates choreographed dance moves to music. This type of workout works well online because it doesn't require any equipment and you can do it in a relatively small space. This class is offered twice a week live on Facebook.

Gambardella is excellent at engaging with the audience by stopping between songs to read and react to comments, asking for song requests

Physiq Fitness

ADDRESS: 1177 Waverly Drive SE, Albany

HOURS: Currently online only

PHONE: 541-981-2396

WEBSITE: Physiqfitness.com

SOCIAL MEDIA: [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)

PRICES: Between \$10 - \$39.99

OFFERS: Fitness classes, cardio equipment, weights and personal training

and checking with viewers to make sure audio and video were working well. She also does a good job staying in the shot for all her moves, making it easy to follow.

Cindy Love, a long-time Cardio Dance student and Albany resident, said the online classes are working well for her.

"I'm really glad they are offering them to help us stay active and motivated," Love said. "I miss seeing friends but it's nice to know they are doing the class, too. And I enjoy the motivating and happy instructors."

The only downside to this



PHOTOS: PHYSIQ FITNESS

As they prepare to re-open, Keizer Physiq Fitness employees scrub and sanitize the floors to help protect future customers from COVID-19.

workout was the audio wasn't the best, and it's not as much fun doing the class alone. But it still provided a great workout.

I also tried one of the QFit classes. These classes are a mix of high-intensity interval training, plyometric exercises and some exercises that use weights. The class I tried was a leg workout with Nicole Wilder.

I liked how bubbly and upbeat Wilder was and that she went over what equipment you would need at the beginning of the workout. She gave some helpful tips on things you can use from around your house (e.g. water jugs, dishtowels, paper plates) if you don't have weights, which was great! She also offered a lot of exercise modifications and alternate exercises for people who have knee and back issues, or other physical limitations.

Members can do the classes live when they are scheduled, or watch them anytime once they've finished. It made it convenient to be able to choose when I worked out.

Overall, I liked the online format. The trainers made sure that the workouts were tailored to a home environment. Attending the live version of the classes gives the added bonus of having a trainer there to provide motivation and answer your questions in real time, giving you the same type of personal experience you'd expect from a class in the gym.

Kari Timmerman, Physiq's program director, assured me that people can still join during the shutdown. "We're in the business of changing lives, and even COVID-19 can't hold us back from staying on mission."

Physiq's memberships are usually between \$10 and \$39 per month but they are offering a special if you sign up while the gym is closed -- join for \$0 and receive a free month. No payments until 30 days after they reopen.

Timmerman said even though all four of their locations (Albany, Keizer and two in Salem) are closed until Oregon's lockdown is lifted, they are working to improve facilities by adding new equipment, improved lighting in QFit rooms and extra deep cleaning for when they open. And even though 95% of the content they have online doesn't require equipment, they are offering special discounts on equipment through their website.

Physiq is also committed to giving back to the community by donating hospital-grade cleaning solutions to the public with drive through solution fill-ups being hosted at all four locations every week. Information about times and locations can be found on their social media.

If you're looking to stay in shape, or add some fitness to your daily routine, Physiq is a fantastic option.

ONLINE CLASS SCHEDULE
STAY CONNECTED. STAY ACTIVE. STAY WELL.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
6AM QFIT	8AM YOGA	8AM HIGH	6AM QFIT	8AM YOGA
9:30AM PILATES	10AM BALANCE, TONE & CORE	9:30AM QFIT	8AM YOGA	8AM HIGH
12PM YOGA	12PM BODYFLOW	12PM CORE		9AM QFIT
	4PM HIGH		6PM HIGH	SAT 10AM HIGH
7PM DANCE	7PM QFIT	7PM DANCE	7PM GRIT	12PM DANCE

PHYSIQ FITNESS



NEED SOMETHING TO BINGE?

An Inside Look at the Netflix Original "I Am Not Okay With This"



STORY BY
KATIE LITTLEFIELD

Puberty is hard for anyone; acne, changing bodies, mood swings, and - superpowers?

The end of February of this year, the show "I Am Not Okay With This" came out on Netflix as a Netflix Original. Shortly after its release my mom and I decided to binge-watch it together. I was a fan of the show so I decided to re-binge-watch to write a review. With all this spare quarantine time; Why not?

This show at first glance is reminiscent of Carrie in the trailer by replicating the famous covered in blood in a dress scene. But instead this show is a comedy-drama that follows the story of Sydney Novak (Sophia Lillis). To attempt to quickly summarize Sydney's, or Syd's, complicated life I'll start with her description of herself, "just another boring 17-year-old white girl." Residing in Brownsville Pennsylvania, she lives with her little brother Liam, who's a middle schooler that is too precious for this world, and her mom Maggie. Syd and her mom Maggie don't have the greatest mother-daughter relationship. The mood in this lower class family shifted significantly after Syd's dad, a year ago, hung himself in the basement.

Since moving to Brownsville, PA, Syd has made her first best friend ever, Dina (Sofia Bryant). Though Dina recently has found herself enamored with the school's biggest and most popular jock, Bradley Whitaker (Richard Ellis). While Dina finds herself busy with her high school romance, Syd decides to find her own; Stanley Barber (Wyatt Oleff). Stanley lives just down the street

from Syd and is an eccentric stoner who listens to vinyl in his basement while his abusive father resides drunk upstairs. Stanley is also the only person to know about the real plot of this show, Sydney's secret. Syd can essentially break, move, or even hurt anything or anyone using her mind, though not exactly within her control. When she gets angry, embarrassed, scared, or even overwhelmed things around her will go berserk. Insane events will happen like dozens of trees falling all around her or as simple as making jerk-wad Bradley's nose bleed.

The style of this show is similar to another Netflix Original, "End of The F*cking World." These shows share that almost vintage feel with the use of clothes, colors, and music. The music in "I'm Not Okay With This" is just about all 80's tunes, "to the extent that I had to double back and make sure it wasn't a period piece. It is not; it just loves the '80s, to the point that Stanley is an aficionado of VHS tapes," said New York Times in their review.

This show isn't a fixed set like The Office or Friends. It takes place in a small town with a population of 5,283 people. The show's filmed in areas such as Syd's house, Stanley's basement, the high school gymnasium, and an old fire watch tower. This show is relatable to their audience since it takes place in a high school and not all of the characters are too dolled up. Sydney even confesses to have zits on her thighs.

There's a lot of stereotypes in this show. The entitled athletic jock, dim-whitted stoner, short haired lesbian, and a principal who takes his job a little too seriously. Bradley for example treats his high school career like his prime time. He's the popular jock with

his group of minions who worship the ground he walks on. As cliché in most of these high school shows, this attitude is bound to blow up in his face.

The thing that makes this show so binge-worthy is how quick the episodes go and how they leave you wanting more with clever cliffhangers. What keeps me watching is watching the characters develop and change throughout the series. Oh and let's not forget Netflix's feature that automatically plays one episode after another after only five seconds of the credits rolling. It's a handy feature when you're all cuddled up in a blanket on the couch, but that is definitely another reason I keep watching.

One of my favorite features of this show was how the show created a moment behind every time Sydney breaks something using her mind. I should mention that this show is from the perspective and is narrated by Sydney

herself. When she's losing control and is about to break something with her mind, it's not just for no reason. We can tell this as an audience by the edited in rapid flashbacks that increase her anger as she narrates herself trying to calm down, all while a deafening high sound starts growing increasingly louder until it's released. Gives me chills.

From the reviews I've read, it seems that the Netflix Original "I Am Not Okay With This" is pretty well liked. And I'll have to agree with most of their opinions. Sure you have your stereotypical characters here and there, but over all this show is enjoyable to watch and easy to binge. From the good music to the interesting storyline; I'd recommend this to a friend. In fact I have to just about a handful already since its release.

PHOTO COURTESY: IMDB.COM





Presented by Institutional Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

LEARN THE CHALLENGES UNDOCUMENTED/ DACA STUDENTS FACE

May 14 @ 1pm via Zoom

Meeting ID: 972 4211 9198
PW: 466180

Presenters:

Javier Cervantes
Director of IEDI



& Tania Mendez
Latino Outreach & Retention Specialist



THE CLONES FINAL SEASON



STORY BY
STEVEN PRYOR
@STEVENPRR2PRYOR

After two previous iterations from 2003 and 2008, "Star Wars: The Clone Wars" streamed its seventh and final season on Disney Plus from February 21 until its conclusion on May 4. Though the series has come a long way since it initially began, Dave Filoni has pulled out all the stops to make this last season among the best material in the entire "Star Wars" saga.

The season has three major courses that all contribute to the main story arc, consisting of four episodes each to make twelve in total. The first arc, the "Bad Batch," is a reversion of an earlier story proposal for the seventh season that was previously shown at conventions in the midst of Disney's merger with Lucasfilm.

The story shows Captain Rex (voice of Dee Bradley Baker) forming a reluctant alliance with the titular "Bad Batch" to stop key planets from falling into enemy hands. The group is a nickname for Clone Force 99, a battalion of clone troopers with unique special abilities and personalities that are a standout in an already great season.

The second course, "Ahsoka in the Underworld," follows Ahsoka Tano (voice of Ashley Eckstein) forming an unlikely bond with a pair of smugglers known as the Martez sisters; Trace and

Rafa. Getting roped into dealing with intergalactic gangsters, Ahsoka is given further perspective on life since the end of the series' original run on Cartoon Network.

The final course of the season and by proxy the series is "The Siege of Mandalore." Set parallel to the events of 2005's "Revenge of the Sith," Rex and Ahsoka's paths intersect just as Order 66 is issued; forcing them into a final battle for their survival that also sees them form an "enemy mine" with the Sith Lord Darth Maul (voice of Sam Wittwer) to make it out alive.

Though ending a story arc of this magnitude was never going to be easy, the show has come a long way since the 2008 theatrical film and the first season from the same year. The final season concludes its narrative by organically placing the story amid the fall of the Old Republic and the rise of the Galactic Empire. The Clone Wars had also previously served as the basis for an animated TV series by Genndy Tartakovsky ("Dexter's Laboratory," "Samurai Jack," "Primal") that ran from 2003 to 2005 (set between the events of "Attack of the Clones" and "Revenge of the Sith"), and Filoni previously had experience crafting compelling animated TV with his work on the acclaimed Nicktoon "Avatar: The Last Airbender."

Even if what lies ahead for the saga in animated form remains to be seen, this season is proof of how far a



'STAR WARS: THE CLONE WARS'

STARRING: James Arnold Taylor, Matt Lanter, Ashley Eckstein, Sam Wittwer, Dee Bradley Baker, Tom Kane, and Matthew Wood

CREATOR: Dave Filoni (Based on characters Created by George Lucas)

Available on Disney Plus

RATED:TV-PG-V

MY RATING: ★★★★★ PHOTO COURTESY: IMDB.COM

series and its characters can go over the course of 12 years and seven seasons. Overall, "Star Wars: The Clone Wars" wraps up the story on a high note and joins some of the best material ever

produced in the "Star Wars" saga. Whatever comes next for the series in animated form, the Force will be with it; always.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

- 1 Greek letter
- 4 Eastern bishop's title
- 8 Indian music
- 12 Handle
- 13 City on the Rhine
- 14 Stench
- 15 Camel hair cloth
- 16 Trave
- 18 Olive color
- 20 Ger. dive bomber
- 21 Witless chatter
- 23 Boys' author
- 27 Elide (2 words)
- 32 Killer whale
- 33 Buddhist column
- 34 Nape
- 36 Atl. Coast Conference (abbr.)
- 37 Anatomy (abbr.)
- 39 Channel islands
- 41 Bless: Yidd.

- 43 Central nervous system (abbr.)
- 44 Enamel (Fr.)
- 48 Abstract being
- 51 Lamia (2 words)
- 55 Brown
- 56 Card
- 57 Norse epic
- 58 Vanity
- 59 Circular motion
- 60 Thoroughfare
- 61 Cut

DOWN

- 1 Interpret
- 2 Jap. pit viper
- 3 Monkey
- 4 Amer. Kennel Club (abbr.)
- 5 Round Table knight
- 6 Stigma
- 7 Korean apricot
- 8 Tropical fish
- 9 "Fables in Slang" author

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

L	A	M	A	T	O	O	A	B	I	B
A	B	I	A	A	M	C	P	R	A	E
T	R	E	A	T	I	S	E	B	I	G
E	I	N	I	N	K	L	E	T	O	M
L	O	O	L	E	T	T				
S	A	M	A	N	C	U	R	I	A	S
G	R	I	N	H	R	S	G	N	A	T
D	Y	N	A	M	I	C	T	R	Y	M
D	I	A	G	D	E	E				
S	P	A	C	H	R	O	N	A	Y	E
A	I	N	E	W	I	L	D	P	L	U
I	M	A	M	A	C	U	W	E	R	I
N	A	O	S	Y	E	S	O	C	T	A

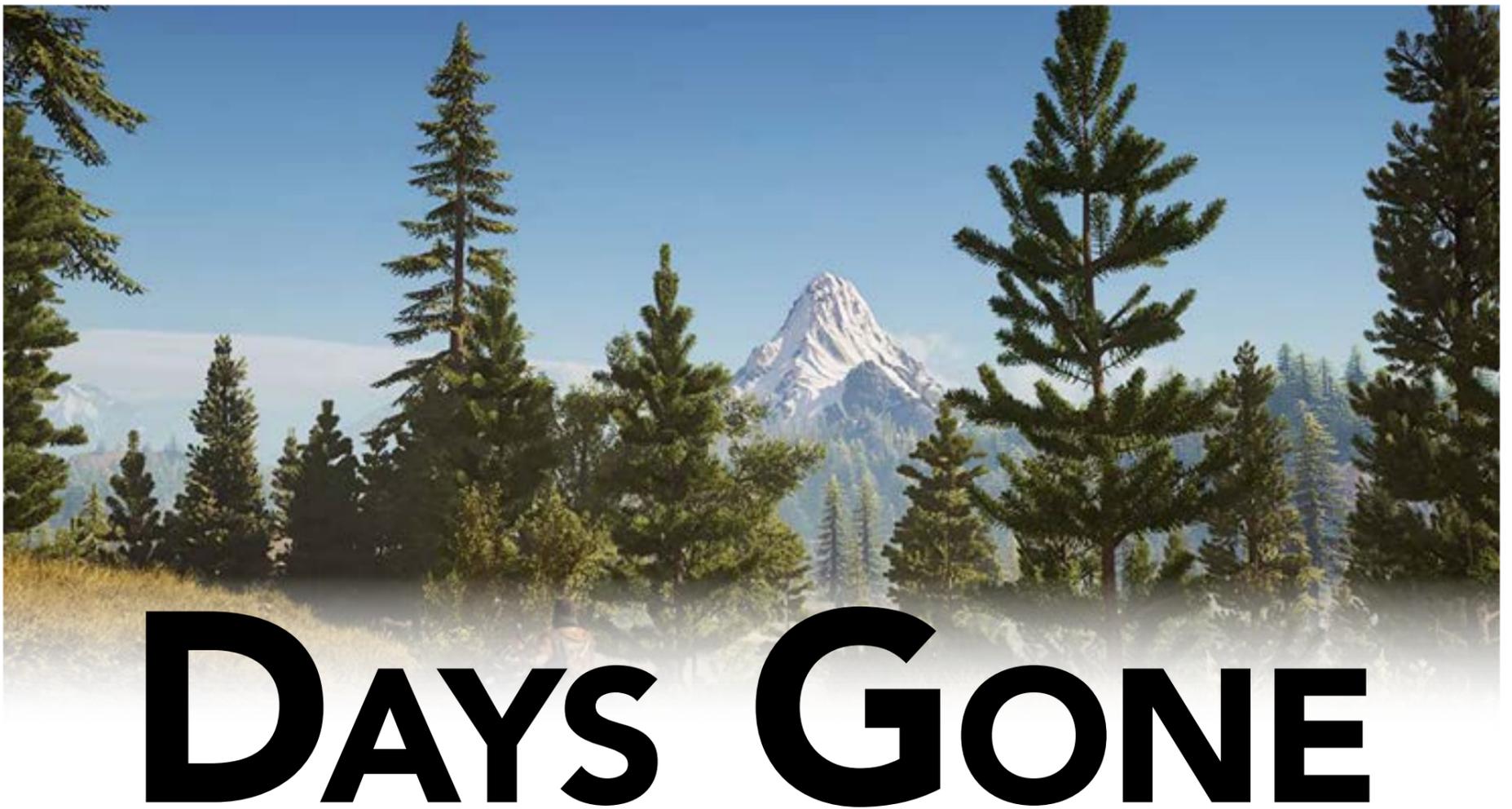
- 10 Port. colony in India
- 11 Limb
- 17 Jamaican dance music
- 19 Lug
- 22 Kidney bean
- 24 Culm (2 words)
- 25 Lo (Lat.)
- 26 Blue
- 27 Thick slice
- 28 Bowling alley
- 29 Geode
- 30 Medieval shield
- 31 Fluidity unit
- 35 Amer. Red Cross (abbr.)
- 38 Sleeping sickness fly
- 40 Compass direction
- 42 Her Majesty's Ship (abbr.)
- 45 Mime
- 46 Iodine (pref.)
- 47 Wife of Tyndareus
- 49 Farinaceous food
- 50 Enough (Scot.)
- 51 Cask
- 52 Noun-forming (suf.)
- 53 Aura
- 54 Angry

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13				14			
15			16				17			
18		19		20						
	21		22			23		24	25	26
27	28			29	30	31		32		
33			34				35		36	
37		38		39				40		
41			42			43				
	44		45	46	47		48		49	50
51	52	53					54		55	
56				57					58	
59				60						61

SUDOKU

Complete the grid so each row, column, and 3x3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit.

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



DAYS GONE

Don't Travel Too Far with this Review of "Days Gone" Taking Place Here in Eastern Oregon



STORY BY
CAM HANSON

2019 was certainly a year to remember, in better ways than 2020 thus far, and that goes for the landscape of video games as well. Many great titles were released, such as "Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice," "Resident Evil 2 Remake," and "Super Smash Bros." However, there's one title that seems to be unmentioned when it comes to solid releases that year, that being the PlayStation 4 exclusive, "Days Gone."

"Days Gone" was made by Sony Bend studios, located in Bend, OR, just 123 miles east of Linn-Benton, and tells the story of a surviving biker and his best friend in a post-apocalyptic world. It was funded and published by Sony, which explains why the title is currently and may always be a PlayStation exclusive.

The game was initially shown off at the gaming convention E3 in 2016, showcasing the game's post-apocalyptic environment, and showing the thrilling and insane sequences where you're pitted against a horde of enemies. The game was officially released on April 26th, 2019 followed by mixed critic reviews (IGN: 6.5/10, GamesRadar 7.1/10) and positive audience scores (Google 4.6/5, 8.1/10 Metacritic user score).

Days Gone is an exciting, intense adventure with hours of content at your fingertips in a unique Eastern Oregon open world. Playing a game in my home state was truly a blast, and the environment could leave anyone in awe. Coming from the fictional town of Farewell, OR, our protagonist and ex-biker Deacon St.

John and his best friend Boozer scour the Oregon wilderness, avoiding what they call "Freaks," or the infected.

These Freaks are the healthy adults that got infected and mutated by this virus gaining enhanced strength and speed while only wanting human flesh. The game explains that 99% of children and the elderly were too weak for the virus's mutations, and simply passed away within the first few weeks of the outbreak. How our friends Deacon or Boozer, or any of the other refugees, have not been infected at this point is never explained, leaving me scratching my head.

Immediately, the game hooks you in with its environment and open world, separated into two regions at the start: Belknap and the Cascade Forest. The forest offers a dense and deep area with vegetation, while Belknap is a rocky and arid area. These are both real places in Oregon and are represented well, which is a common theme in the game. Some reviews call this game's environment "boring," but I disagree.

The environment starts with Freaks and animals such as wolves, bears and deer, along with one of the more unsettling enemies in the game: "Newts." These are what seem to resemble children who somehow got infected, and they will avoid confrontation unless provoked. Without spoilers, the game evolves as you play, and introduces more to the open-world consistently, and kept me invested for the 20+ hours of content.

In this environment comes the few camps scattered around, settlements formed by the survivors of the aftermath. These places hold guns, ammo, bike parts and give players a chance to catch their breath from the enemies that await. Like

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PROS:

- Lush Environment
- Amazing traversal
- Good enemy variety
- Engaging story
- Good task variety

CONS:

- Spotty voice acting
- Questionable dialogue
- Plot holes



the environment, parts for your bike and new weapons are unlocked as you play, and are worth it.

One of the game's defining mechanics is the horde system, easily the scariest aspect of the game. Tens and hundreds of Freaks will begin to chase you at the slightest hint of your presence, starting a dash for your life as you hope to ward them off.

One of Deacon's abilities, called "focus" allowing him to slow time as he aims, which helps with these horde missions. Beyond that, there are Freaker nests you can burn around the map, which are places in infrastructure where they hide and sleep. These tasks feel very rewarding to me, making areas safer to ride through and loot at.

Human combat is a nice addition to the game, having you fight raiders, marauders and a cult group called "Rippers". The human AI in this game is admittedly dumb, falling for simple and repetitive tricks or otherwise running into your bullets; Needless to say, the Freaker content is the good stuff here.

The traversal is another huge plus. Deacon has the ability to really make his bike his own as the game goes on, and the execution on how it rides is near perfect. From the sound to the movement and speed, it's very satisfying to ride around the Pacific Northwest on your bike.

There are options for fast travel, however, it's more fun and immersive to avoid this option. Your bike needs constant repair done with a supply called scrap collected from abandoned cars. Gas is another resource that your bike needs as well, but is a bit easier to come by.

Finally, the story is a wide and

expansive trip, that keeps you hooked and introduces many characters along the way. During the outbreak, Deacon was separated from his wife when she was loaded onto an escape helicopter leaving Farewell. Convinced she has passed, Deacon visits the refugee camp where she was supposedly held and speaks to a gravesite as an in-game side mission. Deacon is voiced by the wonderful Sam Witwer, yet somehow falters in a few lines, delivering lazily or offsetting, however, this does not diminish his overall performance in the game. Some characters have plain motives yet others seem determined to get the world back to what it once was.

Something I felt wasn't touched upon enough was the biker past of Deacon, who reps his cut for the entire game. His time with the club is vague, empty and leaves much to be desired when it comes to history about this supposed peak of his life.

The overall verdict is that "Days Gone" is another PlayStation exclusive that should be on everyone's "wait for sale" list. It shows off an unbelievable open world that's the first of its kind, with a story that plays out like a five-season TV series.

The characters are well done (usually) and hold meaning, while Deacon's rabbit hole down his past is even more interesting. The feeling of clearing a region of its threats is nice and fulfilling, and the enemy variety showcases itself well for the entire duration.

I'd play this game again and recommend it to anyone looking for a fresh quarantine play.

PHOTO COURTESY: IMDB.COM

