

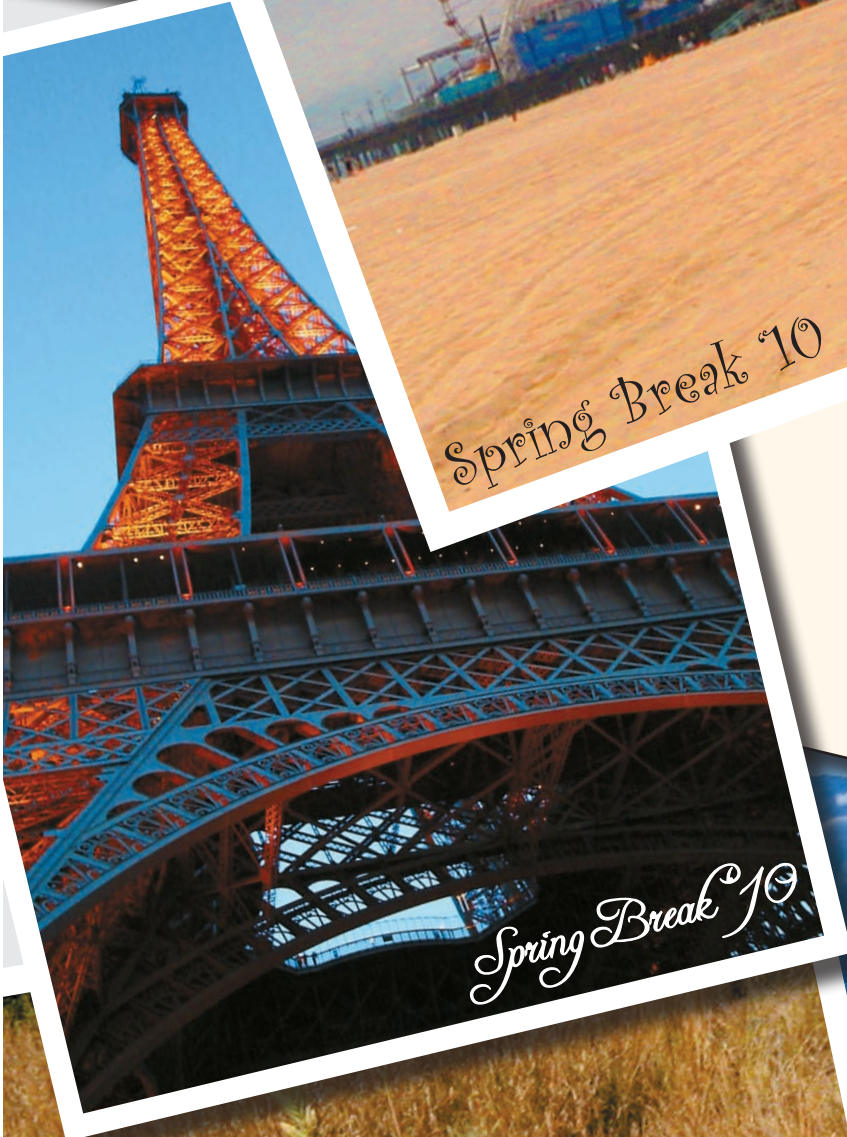
# Commuter



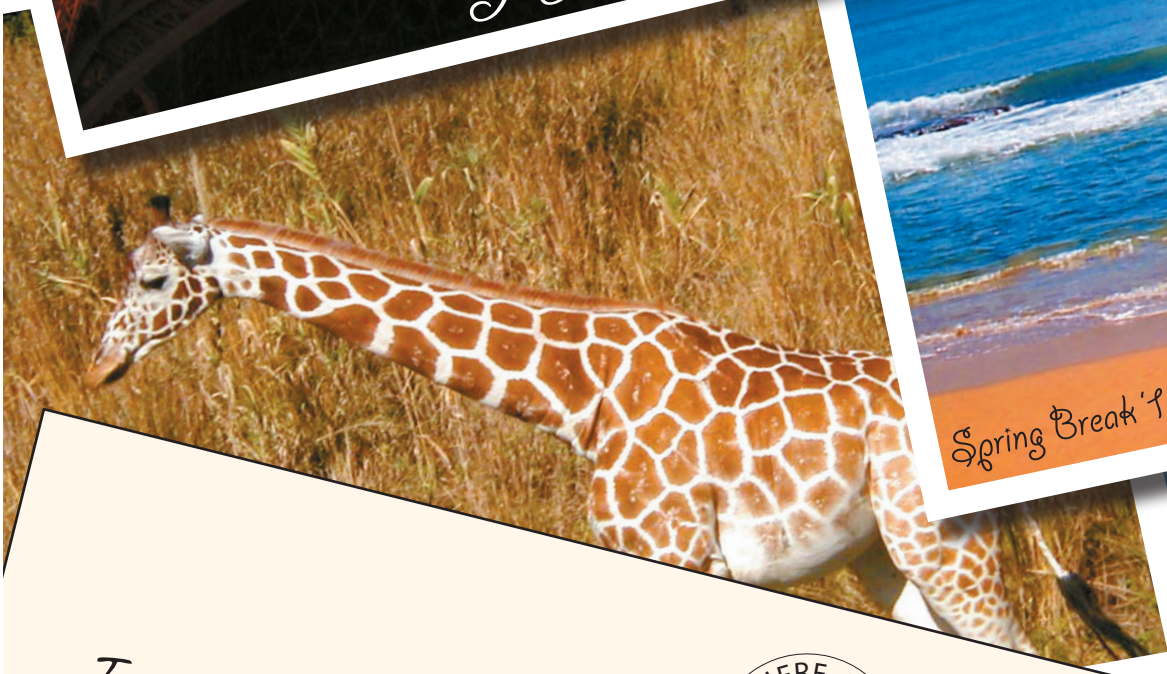
Spring Break '10

Spring break blues

pg. 7



Spring Break '10



Spring Break '10

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 Final Fantasy XIII pg. 12



**The Commuter**

Editor-In-Chief: Max Brown

Opinion Editor: Adam LaMascus

Newsroom Desk: 541-917-4451

E-mail: commuter@linnbenton.edu

# Opinion

Submissions to The Commuter:

E-mail: commuter@linnbenton.edu

Drop-in: Forum 222

## A word from your local ASG

Welcome back everyone!!! Am I a nerd for loving the start of another term? If so, then so be it.

Even though my twisted enjoyment of this often stressful time may not be the popular opinion for the average college student, I know that there are those of you out there who share these sentiments. I must admit, though, that not everything about a new term always goes well, but there's nothing like a fresh start.



Nic Bowman

The start of a new term, to me, means new challenges, new classmates, and new knowledge. However, I haven't always found excitement or pleasure in the simple idea of something being new – or at least new to me. Until just a few years ago, I was very much against trying things that didn't fit into my normal daily routine. I didn't like the idea of "new". What I already *knew* was all I needed. Have you ever tried a food that you didn't like as a kid later on in life as an adult, only to discover that you actually enjoy it? This seems to be happening to me quite a bit ... and not just with food. The "I'll try anything once" motto I've been testing out for a little while seems to be working pretty well for me, but only because I truly believe that there are many things in life that I have yet to discover the joy of. And yes, maybe I do have to go through or put up with some things that are unpleasant, but what is good without the bad? Approach life with an open mind.

Now that I've gone completely off on an unsolicited advisory tangent, let me bring it back to the intended scope of this column. The Associated Student Government is hiring for next year's team and applications are already available in the Student Life & Leadership office. Here's the two-fold connection to my intro. Maybe you're the type of individual who has never given a single thought to participating in student government. Do you think it's too political? Do you not have the time? Have you ever asked anybody about it? Involvement in student government at LBCC can be just about as personalized of an experience as one could want. On the other hand, what if you want consistency in your scholastic life while you engage in the excitement of each new term throughout the year? ASG can offer that as well. Having an attachment to the college outside of class time and homework can be very helpful during term transitions, other stressful times such as finals, or when you're just feeling burnt out.

I don't expect a hundred people to be lined up for applications after reading this article, but what I would hope for is that maybe those who read this do stop for just a moment and consider trying something new.

Carpe Diem!

*Nic Bowman*  
ASG President

The views of the ASG do not necessarily reflect those of The Commuter. Any questions or comments can be directed to the Student Life & Leadership office.

## Of the politicians, for the politicians, by the politicians

Adam LaMascus  
The Commuter

I'm feeling fed up with American politics. I woke up Sunday morning, and the first thing I saw was a news article by the Associated Press, discussing how President Obama has managed to upset the GOP. Upon reading the article, I discovered their ire was caused by the fact that he had appointed 15 people to a labor board. The Republicans had been blocking nominees, largely because a Democratic president picked them, for so long that the Senate had gone out on vacation. The President declared, "I simply cannot allow partisan politics to stand in the way of the basic functioning of government," and put them in the offices anyway.

Republicans rallied to this, declaring that it showed blatant disregard for Congress and the will of the people, and all the usual rhetoric. Never mind that President Bush made over 170 appointments in the same way. But hey, things like "facts" and "hypocrisy" have never stopped the GOP (or the Democrats, for that matter) before! Let's complain about "big government" interference with our lives while simultaneously attempting to get an amendment to the Constitution saying gay people don't get equal rights.

Of course, the fault doesn't rest entirely with the Right. Just look at the Left's failure to accomplish much while they had a huge majority in every major office in the US government because they were too busy arguing. One of the funniest things I ever saw was an Onion headline, the day after President Obama was elected: "Democrats stunned at failure to blow election." By the way, President Clinton also made about 140 bypassing appointments while he was in office.

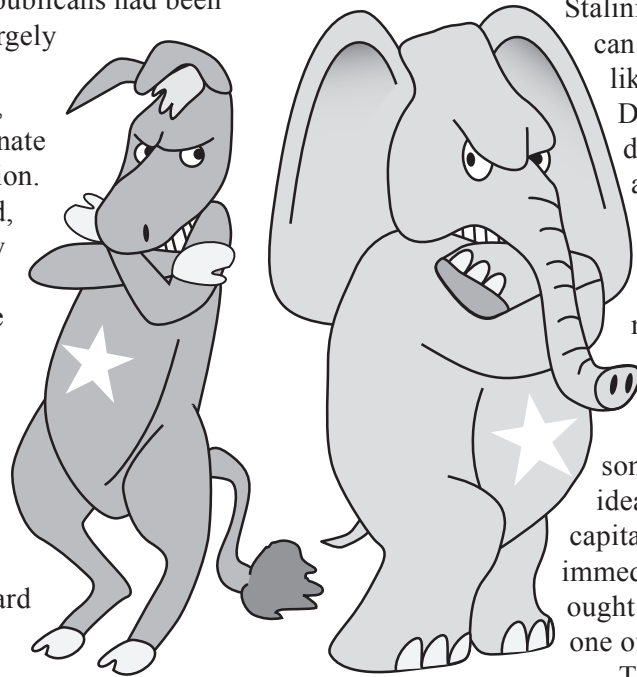
Our president was elected in the middle of two highly controversial and

internationally important wars, a national depression, and a political situation that makes World War I look fluid. The Democrats are now whining because after a year, lo and behold, the man isn't Jesus and can't miracle everything into perfection. The Republicans are whining because he wants to make America better and they do not understand his methodology.

Attention: Socialism is not fascism or Stalinism, and it actually can work. Look at places like Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and to a degree, Germany and France. Also, countries like Cuba, Venezuela, and North Korea are not socialist. They are not even really communist, so please, whenever somebody suggests an idea that might not be capitalist, you should not immediately reply that they ought to go live in Cuba or one of those other places.

The rampant stagnation, hypocrisy, ignorance, close-mindedness and flat out stupidity on both sides of the aisle on Capitol Hill is ridiculous. I find it telling that up until President Obama's stimulus packages passed, Congress had an approval rating of 19%, according to the Washington Post. Not only are they unproductive and inefficient, but in many American's opinions, they no longer stand for what we believe in.

All of this federal bickering and inefficiency reminds me of something my grandpa's brother once said. The man, an Oklahoman, had a large Confederate flag on his car. I was a small child, and not knowing any better, asked if he didn't like black people. He chuckled and said some of his best friends were black, and that the reason he has that flag was that no group of bickering politicians, almost all of whom have never even been to where he lives, should be telling him what to do and how to live his life. I find myself agreeing with him more every day.





## Will you be our friend?

Follow *The Commuter* on  
**Facebook & Twitter**

Tell us what you're thinking and keep up-to-date on the latest news. Plus, check our website for more stories, pictures, videos, and blogs at [commuter.linnbenton.edu](http://commuter.linnbenton.edu).

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# Opinion

**Submissions to The Commuter:**  
**E-mail:** commuter@linnbenton.edu  
**Drop-in:** Forum 222

## Letter to the editor

### What is the "10" all about?

You might have noticed some LBCC staff members wearing a button with a "10" on it. No wording or description, just a "10."

These are the supporters of getting "10 Work Days Back."

The classified employees at LBCC - those are the non-student, non-instructor, and non-management employees - are asking for 10 days to be added back into their work contracts. The *current* classified employee's contract has 241 work days per year; this was trimmed from 251 work days the beginning of last spring term because of the budget cuts. The classified employees had a choice between entire employee positions being removed or working fewer days per year.

Because of the passing of the ballot measures in January 2010, and the overall economic trends, the classified employees would like the days that were removed from their work contracts to be returned.

As a student, I don't get to interact with many of the classified employees, but the most prevalent ones I do interact with are the library staff ... The LBCC library, that is open five days a week, from 7:30 a.m.

to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Friday. No weekend hours, no later evening hours.

I support the "10 Work Days Back" because I would like to see the library staff have the *flexibility* to have later weekday hours and the option for weekend hours. Maybe there is not enough demand for expanded library hours, but I would use them. You might also use them if you knew you could. I also support the other classified employees I haven't met, or that affect me directly. They have lives and families too.

Budgets and budgeting are tricky things. Especially when the fuel of budgets (e.g. money) is in short supply. But this college is not run by just the instructors and management. There are those other skilled professionals, the classified employees that make this place work. I hope a balance can be found, so that everyone is in a better position in life.

Thank you for your time in reading this.

*Mark D. Overholser*  
 Engineering Transfer Student

### Back in the day

#### This day in history ...

#### March 31, 1492: Spain is less than tolerant ...

Queen Isabella of Castille (modern day Spain) gives all 150,000 Jewish subjects an ultimatum: convert to Christianity or be exiled. This is known as the Alhambra decree. Spain does not revoke the decree until 1968. Way to be on top of the times.

#### April 1, 1873: Not a great track record ...

The RMS Atlantic hits a rock and sinks off the coast of Nova Scotia, killing 562 passengers, becoming the worst maritime disaster in the world until 1904. Interestingly, the Atlantic is owned by White Star Lines, which also owns and operates the Titanic, and later, the Britannic, a ship that also sinks in a huge disaster. Even though they change their name, the company still exists, and I'm pretty sure I'll never sail on a ship of theirs.

#### April 2, 1453: Nobody's business but the Turks ...

Sultan Mehmet II of the Ottoman Empire begins the siege of Constantinople, capitol of the Byzantine Empire. The city falls on May 29, essentially ending the Byzantine Empire. The victorious Turks rename the city Istanbul. With this victory, there are no longer any Christian powers in the Middle East, North Africa, or Asia Minor.

#### April 3, 1882: Strategic, uh, sheep purposes ...

The British Royal Navy dispatches a task force in response to the government of Argentina invading the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. A short and intense battle, known as the Falkland War, ensues. 655 Argentine soldiers and 255 British servicemen are killed. Many people wonder about this, as sheep are, quite literally, the island's main resource.

#### April 4, 1968: "The whole nation flinched" ...

Martin Luther King Jr. is shot in the head and killed by James Earl Ray while on a balcony of a motel in Memphis, Tenn. Ray flees to the UK and is captured. He dies in prison of Hepatitis C. King was an amazing man, and his death is a great loss to the world. RIP.

#### April 5, 1242: Who thought this was a good idea?

After losing multiple crusades to the Muslims, the Catholic Church decides crusading against other Christians would be easier. The Teutonic Knights, supported by the Livonian Order, militia and knights from Denmark, invade the Kingdom of Novgorod (in modern Russia). The crusade ends when the Knights are lured onto a frozen lake and defeated, many falling through the ice and drowning. This is known as the "Battle on the Ice." What a shock: trying to fight Russians, who outnumber you, in the winter, on a frozen lake, while wearing full armor, is a bad idea!

#### April 6, 1199: "The Lion killed by an Ant" ...

King Richard I of England, known as "the Lionheart," dies of gangrene after being shot in the neck by a crossbow. The Catholic Church declares it divine irony. Richard extensively used crossbows, though the Church had banned them, then is killed by one. As his dying act, Richard lives up to his name and pardons the crossbowman, a young boy, who had killed him, telling him to go live a full life. However, the minute Richard dies, his men flay, torture, and hang the boy.

#### Thought for the week:

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice."

-Martin Luther King Jr.

## Academic Success Seminars

**Boost Your COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE!**

**Sign up on SIS under Study Skills - or just drop in!**

Always 50 minutes!

ALWAYS FREE!

Always helpful!

#### So Much Math, So Little Time

Monday	April 5	Lebanon	LC-205	4:30 - 5:20pm
Tuesday	April 6	Benton Center	BC-232	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	April 7	Albany	IA-207	2:00 - 2:50pm
Wednesday	April 7	Sweet Home	SHC-102	4:30 - 5:20pm

#### Better Notes = Better Grades

Tuesday	April 13	Benton Center	BC-232	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	April 14	Albany	IA-207	2:00 - 2:50pm
Wednesday	April 14	Sweet Home	SHC-102	4:30 - 5:20pm
Wednesday	April 14	Lebanon	LC-205	5:00 - 5:50pm

#### Prepare for Tests

Tuesday	April 20	Benton Center	BC-232	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	April 21	Albany	IA-207	2:00 - 2:50pm
Wednesday	April 21	Lebanon	LC-205	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	April 21	Sweet Home	SHC-102	4:30 - 5:20pm

#### Get Organized

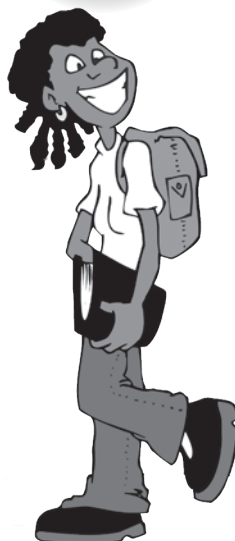
Tuesday	April 27	Benton Center	BC-232	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	April 28	Albany	IA-207	2:00 - 2:50pm
Wednesday	April 28	Lebanon	LC-205	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	April 28	Sweet Home	SHC-102	4:30 - 5:20pm

#### Active Learning Strategies

Tuesday	May 4	Benton Center	BC-232	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	May 5	Albany	IA-207	2:00 - 2:50pm
Wednesday	May 5	Lebanon	LC-205	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	May 5	Sweet Home	SHC-102	4:30 - 5:20pm

#### Tips to Overcome Procrastination

Tuesday	May 11	Benton Center	BC-232	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	May 12	Albany	IA-207	2:00 - 2:50pm
Wednesday	May 12	Lebanon	LC-205	5:00 - 5:50pm
Wednesday	May 12	Sweet Home	SHC-102	4:30 - 5:20pm



Academic Success Seminars are organized by the Learning Center.

For more information and to sign up, visit SIS under 'Study Skills' or call 541-917-4684.

LBCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer. For disability accommodations, call 541-917-4789. Submit requests 4 to 6 weeks before the event where possible. To call by TDD, call the Oregon Telecommunications Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900 and provide them with the number you wish to reach.

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# Campus News

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 the Sweet Home, Lebanon,  
 and Benton Centers.



**Wednesday 3/31**

## Movie: The Fight in the Fields

Noon – 1:20 p.m. • DAC F220

The film will be shown in celebration of Cesar Chavez's birthday - the influential Latino leader of the Non-violent National Farm Workers Association. There will be birthday cake all day.

**Monday 4/5**

## Phlebotomy Program Blood Draw

9 a.m. – 3 p.m. • Lebanon Center, room 205

The phlebotomy program at LBCC is in need of volunteers for a blood draw to help the students complete their training. Cookies and juice will be provided. For more information, contact the LBCC Business, Healthcare, and Workforce Division at 541-917-4927.

**Wednesday 4/7**

## The Culture of Poverty and Culture of Professionalism

Noon – 1 p.m. • DAC F220

Learn about distinct cultures and their unique sets of behavioral norms, vocabulary, and expectations. There will be pizza and refreshments for lunch.

**Wednesday 4/7**

## "Mark Allison and Friends" Reception

Noon – 1 p.m. • North Santiam Hall Gallery

A public reception for an exhibit by Corvallis artists Mark Allison, Bill Shumway and Bruce Tucker will be held in the second floor atrium. They will discuss their work on exhibit, which includes more than 40 figurative and landscape paintings. The exhibit runs through April 16.

**Thursday 4/8**

## AAWCC Spring Bunco

6 p.m. • Fireside Room

It's a potluck so bring some food to share, a friend or two, and come have some fun! The charity for this event is our own Linn Benton Lunch Box, so your \$5 admission fee to play is going toward a good cause. Feel free to bring food as a donation as well.

**Wednesday 4/14**

## "Words & Letters" Reception

Noon – 1 p.m. • South Santiam Hall Gallery

Poems by 17 students, instructors and friends of LBCC. The poems have been lettered by nine calligraphers who have been students or colleagues of Yuki Tanaka, a calligraphy instructor at LBCC. They have used a variety of media to scribe the poems. The exhibit runs through April 30.

**Tue-Thu 4/27-29**

## Muslim Week

DAC F220

There will be an assortment of refreshments all week.

# Brilliant Bio Bob

**Lacey Jarrell**  
 for The Commuter

You can tell by the way he smiles when he teaches that he enjoys his subject matter. Using analogies of human interaction, with the wave of a hand he explains, "Electrons are like hands ... When hydrogens want to bond, they hold hands."

This is how Bio Bob teaches plant biology.

When Bob Ross, a.k.a. "Bio Bob," started at Linn Benton Community College 42 years ago, he was the entire Biology Department. Today, although he is only a small part of the department, he is no less vital to its success.

"Bob is very caring, and he always tries to get a sense of wonder and enjoyment across to his students," said Patty Petzel, an instructional assistant who has worked with Ross for 26 years.

It is this wonder of the natural world that first interested Ross in biology and laid the foundation of his love for plants.

"As a child, I spent all my days outside. I had a great fascination for nature," Ross explained.

During the days Ross spent outside studying anthills and inspecting plants, he developed a knack for observation that would set the path for the rest of his life. Although he later contemplated playing professional piano and traveling the world, Ross eventually graduated from the University of Oregon with a bachelor's in Biology and began teaching science in public schools.

Throughout his career at LBCC, Ross has taught a myriad of classes such as zoology, cell biology and botany. Ross technically retired from LBCC in 1998, but has not been able to stay away. The love of science and the inspiration of the students keep bringing him back.

"It is such a thrill to work with people and watch them blossom, to reach their full human potential," Ross said. He now works

part time teaching plant biology and Oregon ecology classes to non-science majors.

When he is not dazzling students with wonders of the natural world, Ross is often out exploring the outdoors or volunteering for the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Geological Survey. Ross often spends his donated time helping identify rare and endangered plants or areas of concern in the Western Cascades.

But as always, he is never far from the classroom. Ross also finds time to utilize his outdoor hobbies as an opportunity to dig up new or interesting material he can present to students in his science classes. A background in professional photography allows him to capture compelling images of plants and other interesting organisms in the local area that illustrate concepts like "structure and function" and adaptation.

Ross currently has three project areas he is studying for the divisions, each involving the ecological effects of natural disasters. No matter what Ross works on, his enthusiasm always seems to be catching.

What is it that makes Bio Bob so unique?

"He genuinely cares for each student. Plus, he can take a biology topic and relate it to anything. You can take a walk through the parking lot with Bob and he will turn it into a nature walk," said student Mike Dicianna.

### At a glance

**Who:** Bob Ross, aka Bio Bob  
**What:** Biology faculty/Botanist  
**When:** Oregon Ecology, fall and spring term and Plant Biology, winter term

### For more information

Bob Ross at rossb@linnbenton.edu  
 "Wildflowers of the Western Cascades" by Robert A. Ross and Henrietta L. Chambers

If you have a Campus Short, please e-mail them to  
 commuter@linnbenton.edu.

# It's a SOCCER Tailgate Party!

**Saturday, April 17**

**11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. • LBCC west field**

**LBCC Runners vs. W.O.U.**



Come cheer on  
**THE RUNNERS**  
 at their last game  
 of the season!



Questions? Contact  
 Allison at 541-917-4963  
 spbteam@linnbenton.edu.

**Linn-Benton**  
 COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Sponsored by the  
 Student Programming Board.

LBCC is an equal  
 opportunity educator and employer.

## THE COMMUTER'S STAFF

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 Associated Students of LBCC. Editorials, columns, letters and cartoons reflect the opinions of the authors.

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### 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 The Commuter Office, Forum 222 or at commuter@linnbenton.edu

Web Address: <http://commuter.linnbenton.edu>  
 Phone: 541-917-4451, 4452 or 4453 Fax: 541-917-4454  
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# Campus News

News about Linn-Benton Community College, including the Sweet Home, Lebanon, and Benton Centers.

## How to save big on your textbooks

**Justin Bolger**  
 The Commuter

Are your textbook mini-mountains costing you a fortune? Fear not, there are many ways on campus to guard your green!

"I spent \$300 on one book alone. The book's required," said Jared Caterlie, a student at LBCC.

The library, Learning Center and the bookstore are looking out for your wallet by having their own book lending programs.

According to Jorry Wolfe, the library department chair, the library has the texts for every English and writing class, along with an assortment of other books, available for two-hour checkouts.

"I would like to see it just grow and provide more," said Wolfe, "We ask instructors to provide copies of the textbook. If that's impossible for them to do, we don't make it available."

This is a great way for students to save money. The only problem is that it's a little inconvenient. "If you own a book, it's yours 24/7," said Wolfe.

The Learning Center also offers all of the books from the Math Department and study skills classes. Since the Learning

Center works a little differently from the library, you can check these books out for an entire day, according to Wolfe.

For books not provided by either of these departments, students might check out the rental program at the campus bookstore. The cost essentially works as if the student

has purchased a used book and is selling it back, and it's good for the whole term.

"So if they rent it, they know that they don't get any money back," said Nancie Meyer, the textbook coordinator, "but also if they bought a used one, they never know for sure if

we're actually going to need the book at the end of the term."

Currently, they only provide this option for about three percent of the books on sale but the size of the collection is increasing. Just last term, they added three books to the collection. The program is facing issues because in order for it to work they need instructors to use the same book for two years.

All of these programs need faculty member participation in order to grow, which Wolfe says will happen "as students ask for the books and faculty see the use, and see there's need and that it's beneficial."

### The low-down:

**What:** textbooks can be checked-out or rented instead of purchased

**Where:** on campus at the library, Learning Center, and bookstore

**Why:** to save students a lot of money

### More info:

**Library:** 541-917-4649

**Learning Center:** 541-917-4684

**Bookstore:** 541-917-4950

## Classifieds

**Deadline:** Ads accepted by 5 p.m. Friday will appear in the following Wednesday issue. Ads will appear only once per submission. If you wish a particular ad to appear in successive issues, you must resubmit it.

**Cost:** Ads that do not solicit for a private business are free to students, staff and faculty. All others are charged at a rate of 10 cents per word, payable when the ad is accepted.

**Personals:** Ads placed in the "Personals" category are limited to one ad per advertiser per week; no more than 50 words per ad.

**Libel/Taste:** The Commuter will not knowingly publish material that treats individuals or groups in an unfair manner. Any advertisement judged libelous or in poor taste by the newspaper editorial staff will be rejected.

### Help Wanted

You can sign up at [www.linnbenton.edu/go/StudentEmployment](http://www.linnbenton.edu/go/StudentEmployment) to look at student & graduate jobs. \*For more info about the opportunities listed below, please see Carla in Student Employment in the Career Center (Takena 101).

**Service Tech** (#7876, Albany) You can start at part-time (24


hrs/wk) and maybe work into full-time. You need strong mechanical aptitude, ODL with good driving record and customer service skills. \$10/hr or more DOE.

**Office Clerk I or II** (#7899, Corvallis) This full-time job is an entry-level office position at a bank. Pay is \$8.40-11.49/hr depending on skills.

**GIS Systems Engineer**

(#7892, Beaverton) Full-time job preferring a bachelors degree in computer science. 3-5 years prior experience as a systems engineer.

**Part-time Kiosk Sales Rep** (#7891, Salem) This is part-time job includes nights and weekends and pay is commission sales. Requires one year experience in a sales environment.



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# Associated Student Government Needs YOU!



**Four ASG Positions Are Still Open:**

- Vice President - 8 hrs/week
- PR Secretary - 8 hrs/week
- Representatives (2) - 5 hrs/week

**TUITION GRANTS AWARDED FOR ALL POSITIONS!**

Applications are at Student Life & Leadership.

**APPLY BY NOON APRIL 12.**

Questions? Contact Alex at 541-917-4466 [asgprsec@linnbenton.edu](mailto:asgprsec@linnbenton.edu)

Linn-Benton COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
 LBCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

LBCC's Pacific Islanders Club Presents:

# Annual Luau

April 3, 2010  
 5:00 - 8:30 p.m. • LBCC

**Postponed until May 15**



LBCC Students with ID: \$10  
 General Admission: \$25

Buy tickets at: SL&L Office or any LBCC center

For details, call Angie Klampe, 541-917-4790, or Chelsea Ellertson, 541-917-4459.

**Entertainment • Island food**

LBCC is an equal educator and employer. For disability accommodations, call 541-917-4789. Submit requests 4 to 6 weeks before the event. To call by TDD, call via 1-800-735-2900.

Linn-Benton COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## Science internships available for all

Max Brown  
The Commuter

A great opportunity is available for students interested in the earth sciences, but you have to hurry because time is almost up!

Oregon State University is partnering with community colleges in recruiting students for a paid internship involving earth sciences. The program is called Increasing Diversity in the Earth Sciences (IDES).

The application deadline for this program is April 1. To



**"The neat thing about the program is it's not just limited to science majors."**

**-Deron Carter, geology instructor**

apply visit the IDES website, [ides.science.oregonstate.edu](http://ides.science.oregonstate.edu). Students who apply will be informed if they were selected by April 15.

Deron Carter, geology

instructor at LBCC, said students who miss the deadline might be able to apply next year, as the program will be continuing for multiple years, and he encourages everyone interested to at least seek more information.

The brochure for IDES says the two-year program targets students from traditionally under-represented groups for an internship. The first year students will learn the basics of geographic information systems, image processing, and they will start work on a project. The projects will be worked on through the first summer with help from a mentor.

For the second year students will continue work on their projects while learning about careers in earth sciences. Students will meet professionals in fields in which they have an interest. During this time they will also begin to start mentoring students new to the program.

The program will pay for travel, lodging, and subsistence during the first summer workshop. They also will pay a stipend during the summer research project, and continue to pay students during the academic year to stay involved with the project.

"I got involved because I thought this was a great opportunity for students. It involves some great building of skill sets that help a student become really employable, especially in conjunction with a four-year degree," Carter said.

The program has eligibility requirements, such as a GPA of 3.0 or better and completion (with a grade of C- or better) of MTH 111, WR 121, and CS 101 or equivalent computer skills. Because the program is aimed at under-represented groups in the earth sciences, students should visit the IDES website or Deron Carter at LBCC for more information if this applies to them.

"The neat thing about the program is it's not just limited to science majors. Anyone that just has an interest in learning about earth science or blending some earth or environmental issues into their major can apply for these internships," Carter said.

## Smokers on the move?

Max Brown  
The Commuter

Smokers on LBCC campus will soon have to plan different routes to catch their between-class cigarettes. As a result of a survey, the current locations for smoking shelters will be modified or moved, and there will be one less shelter.

Last term, ASG collected feedback about the smoking areas on campus during the week of March 8. The college asked ASG to gather this information because Oregon Department of Health started to enforce a smoking law with which LBCC was not in compliance.

LBCC should have already been in compliance with this law, but students, staff, faculty and visitors were not following college policies. The school decided to issue the survey so it could fix the problems causing the non-compliance while keeping everyone on campus happy.

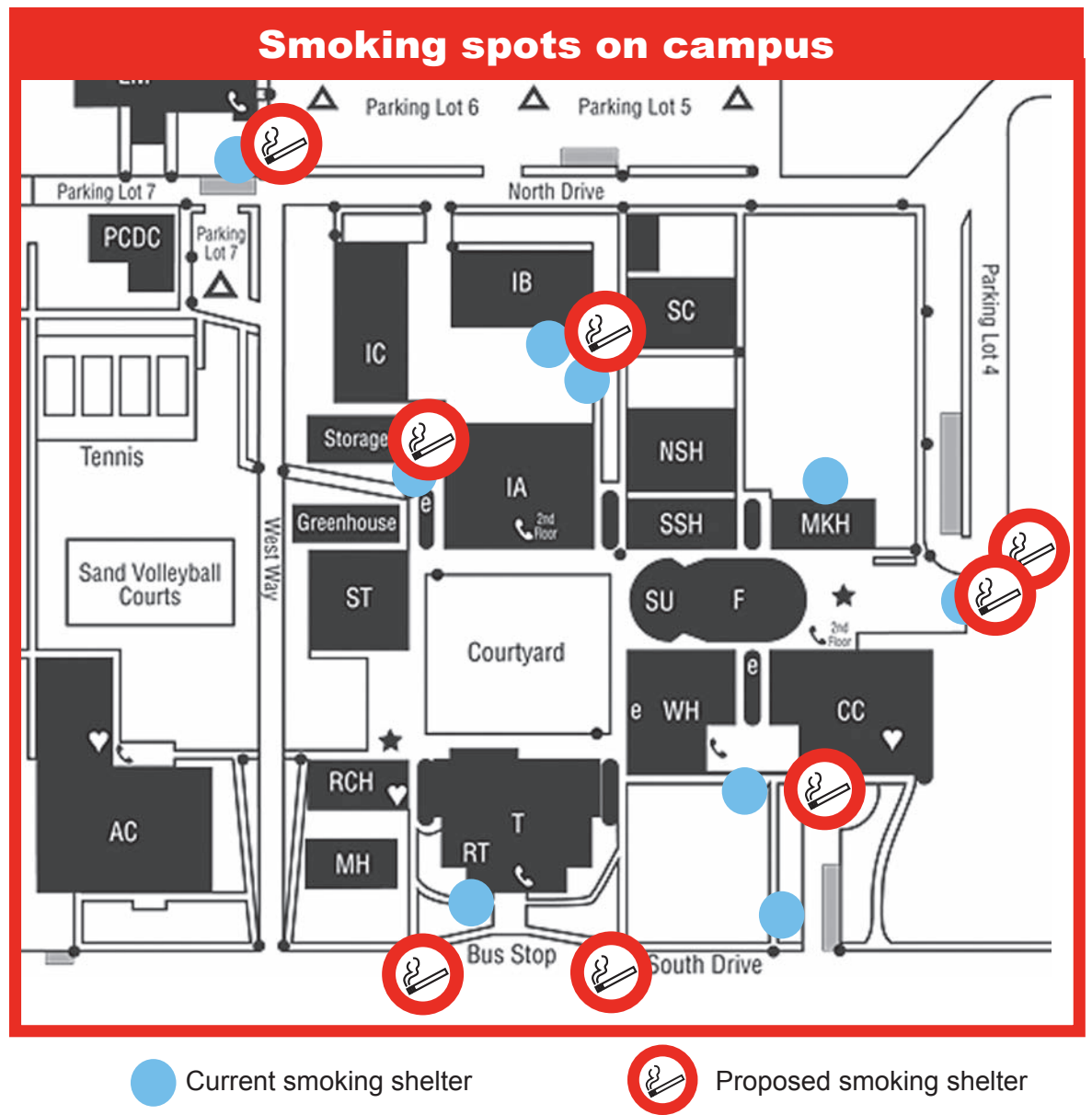
The survey asked people if they knew the rules about smoking on LBCC campus, and Oregon laws in general. It also asked for opinions about whether the smoking locations should be moved and what administration should do to prevent non-compliance.

Marcene Olson,

manager of safety & loss prevention at LBCC, said in an e-mail "those who smoke appeared to be willing to have shelters moved ... as long as designated smoking areas could remain on campus."

She also mentioned that many of the comments asked for the shelters to be expanded along with increased maintenance of the shelters. Below you will find a map with the proposed new locations of smoking shelters.

Check out The Commuter for more stories following this issue in the future. For more information (and to read the original article) visit [commuter.linnbenton.edu](http://commuter.linnbenton.edu).



## Perspectives:

What is the best April Fool's joke you have perpetrated or been the victim of?



Nathan Young  
Film & TV Production

"In high school, we told a friend that someone in our friend group got his sister pregnant."



Alexis Trask  
Administrative Professional

"In the morning, my mom said I could have a puppy, then told me no. When I got home from school, she surprised me with a puppy."



Jeb Oliver  
History

"In high school some friends tossed a kid into a trash can during an ethics class, and I helped him out."



Kira Swinehart  
General Studies

"Once while living with a bunch of guys, I Saran-Wrapped the toilet."



Mickey Feavel  
Accounting

"My coworkers had a fake cop come into our work and arrest me."

The Commuter  
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# Feature

Something a little different.

## Five reasons you should've stayed home over spring break

Maya Lazaro  
The Commuter

With rocky beaches, torrential rain, and air so cold the hairs on your arm are forming icicles, spring break in Oregon is about as entertaining as watching "Antique Road Show." Those who were forced to stay in-state this past week looked on enviously as their fellow college classmates charged the world's sunniest beaches in skin-baring swimsuits and enough self-tanner to shock Lindsay Lohan. "It isn't fair," you say. "Why did my friends get to go to Cancun when I was stuck here in dreary, drizzly Oregon?" You needn't despair, however. Below are five reasons why having an MTV Spring Break experience can backfire big-time. Looks like staying home wasn't such a bad idea after all.

**Premature aging** – Sure, right now those beach-goers look young, but in ten years they'll be virtually indistinguishable from your 90-year-old grandmother. All those hours lounging on the beach will seem like a bad idea when

not even an overzealous plastic surgeon can fix the amount of sagging skin, wrinkles, and age spots your classmates have developed for their sun worship. Your skin may be paler

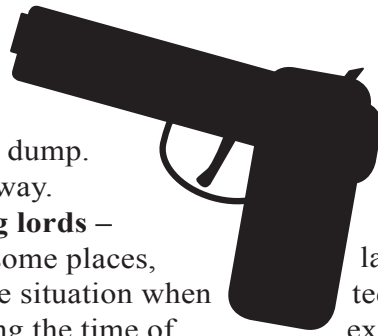


than a goth club crowd on Friday night, but at least it hasn't absorbed more radiation than a toxic waste dump. Vitamin D is overrated anyway.

**Kidnapped by drug lords** – Now a legitimate threat in some places, finding yourself in a hostage situation when you're supposed to be having the time of your life seems like a pretty good reason to stay home. Instead of doing shots at the local bar, your friends were most likely getting shot at by a territorial mafia. Unless you're one of those people who finds being tied up, beaten and humiliated a sensual experience, then be thankful you spent last week staring at the television instead of staring down the barrel of a drug dealer's pistol.



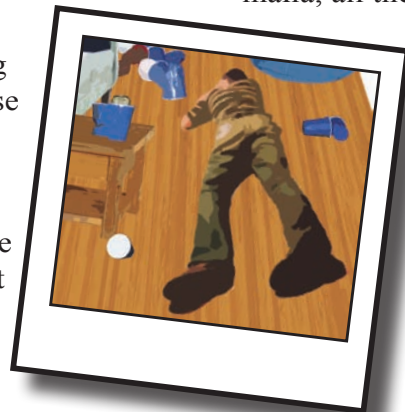
**STD's** – With copious amounts of alcohol clouding their already underdeveloped sense of judgment, chances are high that your classmates have caught more than Frisbees during their Spring break. However pleasurable those evening trysts in that hotel hot tub were, no level of pleasure can erase the itching, burning sensation they'll be feeling in the next few days. Let's just say that the beach isn't the only place your friends will be seeing crabs.



**Memory Loss** – One side effect of heavy partying is forgetfulness, which can be a huge inconvenience when you've awakened to the heaviest of hangovers wearing nothing but a coconut bra and tube socks. Just what did happen last night after that tenth tequila shot? Like the existence of alien life forms and the popularity of Miley Cyrus, some things remain a mystery. If your friends start bragging about their numerous hook-ups over the break, ask for details. Chances are they probably don't remember a single one. And considering the beautifying effects of beer goggles, maybe some experiences are better left forgotten.



**Embarrassing Facebook Photos** – What's worse than being held hostage by the mafia, all the while suffering from gonorrhea, noticeable skin damage and frequent blackouts? Having the experience documented for all future employers and potential in-laws to see. While your spring break photos may be a snooze-fest, at least you can feel superior knowing that those photos of your friends passed out in their own vomit are going to haunt them for the rest of their adult lives.



### Student-submitted art

e-mail your own artwork to [commuter.submissions@gmail.com](mailto:commuter.submissions@gmail.com)



**Fell Swoop**  
by Krista Buell

**THE COMMONS FARE**  
3/31-4/06

**Wednesday**  
Dishes: Chicken Fried Steak, Chicken Massaman Curry and Lasagna Florentine  
Soup: Tortilla and Navy Bean

**Thursday**  
Dishes: Pulled Pork Sandwich, Grilled Chicken w/ Chutney and Falafel  
Soup: Beef Barley and Tomato Florentine

**Friday**  
Chef's Choice

**Monday**  
Dishes: Swiss Steak, Sweet & Sour Chicken and Eggs Benton  
Soups: Creamy Chicken Mushroom and Minestrone

**Tuesday**  
Dishes: Roast Turkey w/ Dressing and Gravy, Poached Salmon over Mushroom Rice Pilaf & Béarnaise and Eggplant Parmesan  
Dishes: Seafood Chowder and Tomato Basil

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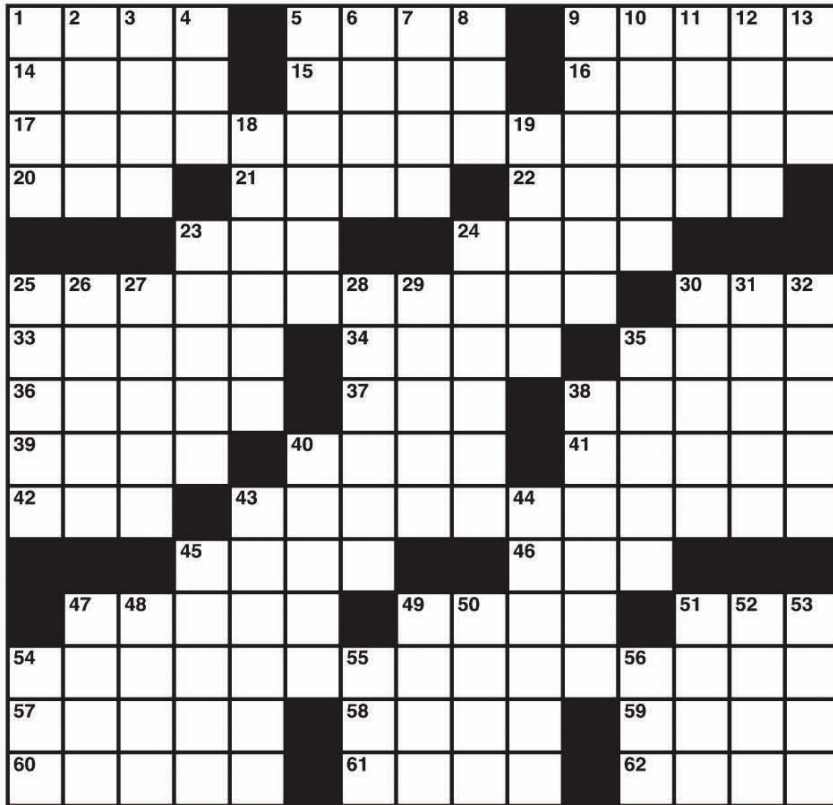
# Surreal Living

Crosswords, cartoons and some fun facts to brighten your day.

## Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

- ACROSS**
- 1 Run smoothly
  - 5 Uzi filler
  - 9 Bench warmers aren't on it
  - 14 Excellent
  - 15 Known as "the Impaler," prince who inspired "Dracula"
  - 16 American competitor
  - 17 Life insurance clause
  - 20 Printers' widths
  - 21 A deadly sin
  - 22 Posh
  - 23 Neurologist's test, briefly
  - 24 Publicizes
  - 25 Hoedown activity
  - 30 Poor, as an excuse
  - 33 Second most populous Oklahoma city
  - 34 Alan of "The West Wing"
  - 35 Marquis de \_\_\_
  - 36 Youngest of the musical Jacksons
  - 37 Golfer's concern
  - 38 Mass of grass
  - 39 Vocalized
  - 40 Defendant's answer
  - 41 Accountant's review
  - 42 Barely squeeze (out)
  - 43 Apple variety
  - 45 Petting places
  - 46 BMOG, for one
  - 47 Washington neighbor
  - 49 Yoked beasts
  - 51 Psychic's asset, for short
  - 54 Inadvertent remark
  - 57 Common news hr.
  - 58 "I'd advise against it"
  - 59 Brand with a paw print in its logo
  - 60 Bears, in Latin
  - 61 Pump or loafer
  - 62 17-, 25-, 43- and 54-Across begin with a kind of one



By Barry C. Silk

- DOWN**
- 1 Lose brightness
  - 2 Weaver's machine
  - 3 "We're treating"
  - 4 Surfing area with no water, with "the"
  - 5 Get even for
  - 6 LXII x XVII
  - 7 Quite a few
  - 8 Unusual
  - 9 Regard highly
  - 10 Portable shelters
  - 11 Part of QE2: Abbr.
  - 12 ABA member
  - 13 Perhaps will
  - 18 Ogle
  - 19 "Fear of Flying" author Jong
  - 23 Painter's stand
  - 24 Like llamas
  - 25 Missouri city nickname
  - 26 Fundamental particle
  - 27 Radii neighbors
  - 28 City in which the State Fair of Texas is held annually
  - 29 Out of this world
  - 30 Riyadh resident
  - 31 Fess up

### Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



(c)2009 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

- 32 Pool measurement
- 35 Batter's dry spell
- 38 Vegas attraction
- 40 Evidence
- 43 End a vacation, say
- 44 Mimieux of "The Time Machine"
- 45 Mothers of Invention musician
- 47 Robert of "The Sopranos"
- 48 Cacophonies
- 49 "Whoops!"
- 50 Strange: Pref.
- 51 Alaska's first governor
- 52 Japanese wrestling
- 53 Nuisance
- 54 Early Beatle Sutcliffe
- 55 NFL six-pointers
- 56 Ending with beat

## Student-submitted art

e-mail your own artwork to commuter.submissions@gmail.com



## Did you know?

- In Medieval Europe, kings could force knights to change their heraldry, usually to add markings to indicate that they were a coward, liar, or traitor.
- Muammar Gaddafi, ruler of Libya, has called for a jihad against Switzerland, which has recently banned the construction of minarets (towers from which Muslims are called to prayer).
- NASA has recently discovered two "primitive" supermassive black holes, the kind which they believe help shape galaxies.
- The ancient Egyptians were the first to use ingredients such as lead, arsenic, and mercury in makeup. Numerous makeups still contain such harmful ingredients.
- As of 1900, the world population was approximately 1.8 billion. It is currently about 6.5 billion.
- English longbowmen in the Medieval period had deformed skeletons from drawing their bows millions of times during their lives.

## Add/Drop

An LBCC student generated comic.

By Maggie O'Reilly





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# Surreal Living

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## SUDOKU

THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mepham Group

Level: **1** 2 3 4

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

SOLUTION TO LAST PUZZLE

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

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit [www.sudoku.org.uk](http://www.sudoku.org.uk)

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## Poetry spotlight

### Dewdrops and Double Helixes

by Canon Thompson

Sprang forth from echoed burial chambers  
light of foreign stars engulfs us.  
Angles falling in sequence, angels rising above this,  
lift us over this chasm and return us...

And we will dance a final pirouette,  
around the distant reflections of burning embers.  
Sunlit vistas open slowly like a thousand petalled lotus  
reflecting prismatically through ancient dewdrops...

These dewdrops have seen the fall of empires,  
and the rise of hopeful dreamers with their hearts open wide,  
all joined together by an intangible connectivity  
a spiderweb with double helixed strands...

And the fact remains that we just can't remember  
are we really here?  
Or is this all just the dream of a sleeping god?  
And are we merely the eyes and ears of the universe itself?

This is why we take comfort in the fact that nothing is real,  
and yet, everything continues in a glorious symphony, the joyous, anguished, delirious gasps of  
fallen angels, aching to return to a union, but chained by our habits,  
to a bittersweet canvas of disappointment and bliss...

We fell into a shallow grave and came out the other side of the mirror.  
Awkwardly gaining a semblance of balance, we faltered in our uneasy steps towards the light,  
yearning for a forgotten remembrance of something better, ignoring the delights that layed at our  
fingertips, striving to remember why...

The answer lies within us all, obscured by a thick gauze of responsibilities, doubt and grief.

Please remember your innocence...



### LBCC Poetry Club

Meetings are every Tuesday at 2:30 p.m. in the LBCC Library Reading Room.

April is poetry month and there's a special kick-off April 1 at 4 p.m. in the LBCC Reading Room.

### Thursday 4/1

#### Poet Laureate Kay Ryan online video conference

10 a.m. • [www.loc.gov/poetry/mindsjoy](http://www.loc.gov/poetry/mindsjoy)  
During the video conference, Ryan will talk to selected students from community college campuses on the process of writing poetry. It will be streamed live.

### Fried Bananas

An LBCC student generated comic.

By Mason Britton



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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Reviews, upcoming events, and the cure for weekend boredom.

**Baja Fresh**  
 845 NW 9th St. • Corvallis  
 (541)452-1010

Open daily 10:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.

## Baja gets "Fresh"

**Kara Johnson**  
 for The Commuter

A convenient walk from the Benton Center, the 9th Street Baja Fresh is not only inviting and clean, but also consistently delicious!

You walk in and are welcomed by a great atmosphere. The building has windows that wrap around the entire restaurant, making for great lighting.

From the entrance you can see cooks behind the counter preparing assorted meats and vibrantly colored vegetables.

Fun, traditional Mexican-style music can be heard while you wait for your order and enjoy Coca-Cola products with their free refillable soda fountains.

"The best part about Baja Fresh are the reusable plastic cups. You only have to pay 99 cents for endless refills every time you go, plus there is less wasting of the paper cups," Serenna Folk stated while waiting for her order.

As a person who sometimes worries about the sanitation of eating establishments, I always feel comfortable in this Baja Fresh. It is extremely clean, from the spotless tiles to the frequently-tended salsa bar.

The food at Baja is always fresh. They don't have any freezers, none of their food comes in a can and it is all MSG free. I guess there is a reason that the word "Fresh" is in their name.

Baja Fresh is very reasonably priced and the portion sizes leave you feeling satisfied. Every time you eat there, you get unlimited chips and salsa - and not just any kind of salsa, either. Baja Fresh has more than six types of salsa to cater to everyone's preferences, including a seasonal salsa that changes with the months.

Keri, a cashier at Baja Fresh, puts it like this: "Every morning we make fresh salsa, then try it out with a fresh hot chip! That way we know whether to make it a little spicier or milder."

The menu at Baja Fresh is rather diverse and can sometimes feel overwhelming. I'll admit to having ordered things and not being fully sure what I was getting. However, I have never been disappointed with their reliably tasty food.

I ordered the Chicken Burrito Ultimo on my last visit. It was \$6.45 and worth every penny. This burrito was rather large, delectable and the receipt came with a coupon inviting me to "buy one burrito and a drink, [and] get one burrito free!" Perfect for a lunch out with a friend for under \$10.00.

I highly recommend Baja Fresh. It will leave you feeling full and guilt-free about the amount of food you just ate.

## Jude Law steals hearts (and other vital organs)

**Ashley Christie**  
 The Commuter

Welcome to the future. The new sci-fi thriller "Repo Men" gives audiences a peek into the year 2025. In this time, a company called The Union has perfected breakthrough technology for creating artificial organs and limbs which help people extend their lives. The downside of these miracle medical body parts is the cost. They are extremely expensive, and when the client can't pay their bill, The Union sends one of their repo men out to collect (without any concern for the organ's host).

Jude Law stars as Remy, The Union's best repo man. That is, until he has an accident while on the job and finds himself in need of a new heart. Remy is back on the job in no time, but it seems when they installed the faux organ they slipped in a real conscience, free of charge. Now Remy's heart just isn't into repossessing anymore.

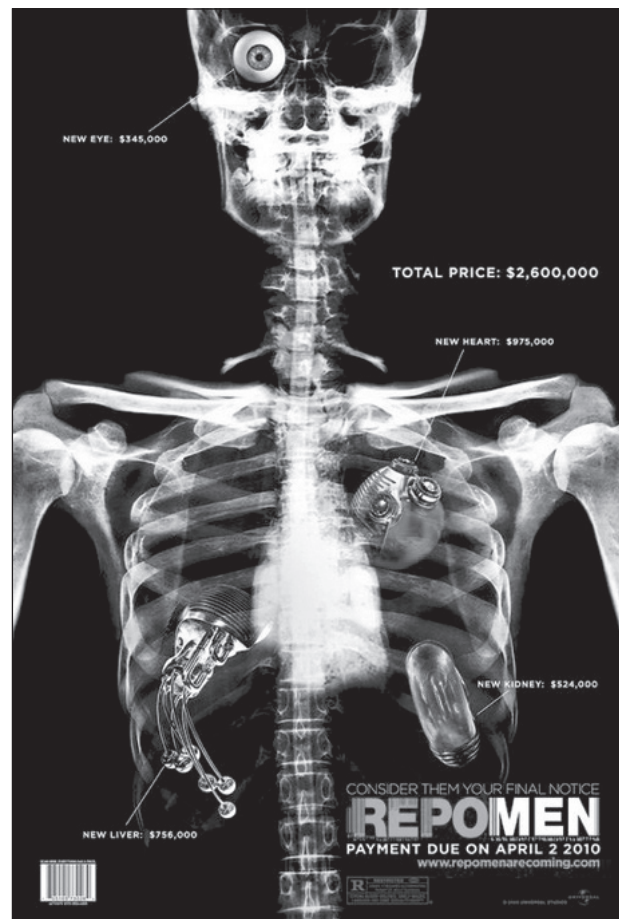
Without his job, Remy has no way of paying his mounting medical bills and soon finds himself on the other side of repo-ing. The Union sends out Remy's ex-partner and best friend Jake (Forest Whitaker) to collect. Remy is on the run; he soon joins another debtor, Beth (Alice Braga), and together they try and find a

way to break out of The Union's system. "Repo Men" is extremely violent, incredibly bloody and surprisingly entertaining. Now, you may not think "action hero" when you hear the name Jude Law, but he pulls it off, and Forest Whitaker also gives a well-acted performance. Liev Schreiber stars as Remy's

boss and he is so funny and charming that you forgive his character for being a soulless bastard.

The film starts strong with lots of action and engaging plot setup. Unfortunately, the middle of the movie gets a bit boring with an unnecessary storyline about Remy and Beth falling in love. But the end picks back up with plenty of blood and guts (and an especially awesome hallway fight scene that includes hammers and a hacksaw), and doesn't let go until the twist ending (which is pretty decent).

"Repo Men" isn't perfect. The love story doesn't work and anyone who is really squeamish will probably watch most of the film through their fingers. But overall it's enjoyable, and good for a fun time at the movies.



### Upcoming music events

- Thursday 4/1**
- Rusty Hinges (Blues)**  
 Calapooia Brewing  
 140 Southeast Hill, Albany  
 7:30 p.m. • 21 & over • Free  
 calapooiabrewing.com
  - Valeri Lopez (Indie/ Acoustic)**  
 Bombs Away Cafe  
 2527 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis  
 7:30 p.m. • All ages • Free  
 bombsawaycafe.com

- Friday 4/2**
- The Squirmin' Hermans (Kazoo Core) & Accidental Intoxication (Punk Rock)**  
 The Space  
 1132 NE Broadway, Salem  
 7 p.m. • 21 & over • \$3  
 thespaceistheplace.com

- Sonny Hess & Lisa Mann (Blues)**  
 Hotel Oregon  
 310 NE Evans St, McMinnville  
 7 p.m. • 21 & over • Free  
 mcmenamins.com
- Intervision (R&B)**  
 Bombs Away Cafe  
 2527 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis  
 10 p.m. • All ages • \$5  
 bombsawaycafe.com

- Saturday 4/3**
- Break As We Fall (Indie Rock)**  
 Calapooia Brewing  
 140 Southeast Hill, Albany  
 8 p.m. • 21 & over • \$3  
 calapooiabrewing.com

- The Oregon Valley Boys (Swing)**  
 Boon's Treasury  
 (McMenamin's)  
 888 Liberty St. NE, Salem  
 9 p.m. • 21 & over • Free  
 mcmenamins.com
- Wolfbeater**  
 Bombs Away Cafe  
 2527 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis  
 10 p.m. • All ages • \$3  
 bombsawaycafe.com

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Reviews, upcoming events, and the cure for weekend boredom.

## “Gravity” flies high

Joel DeVylidere  
 The Commuter

Rapidly radiating over country radio’s airwaves is a new brand of honky-tonk. Sharp like a razor and steady like a “band” made entirely of studio musicians, country emo (or countremo, as I like to call it) is permeating and forever changing the genre we know as country. It mixes modern country (or honky-pop) with a songwriting sensibility that’s mournful to the point of poeticism.

Leading the change is long-time country music star Keith Urban, whose countremo ditty entitled “Til Summer Comes Around” is topping the American country charts. I noticed this song while engaged in one of my “country slumps,” where I flip on KRKT and act all heart-broken with the best of them. The lyrical sharpness and accomplished-sounding guitar work caught my ear. “Wow,” I thought. “This is depressing.”

Actually, Keith Urban’s whole album (the 2009-released “Defying Gravity”) is excellent. The decidedly modern Urban walks the line between country and pop almost the entire length of “Defying Gravity,” focusing



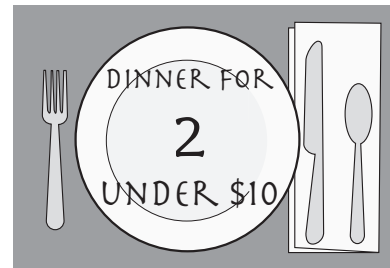
unashamedly on the happy-go-easy vocal hooks that shape his post-love romance tunes into near masterpieces. To add to the greatness, this record’s continuity is noticeable and almost explicit; Urban explores eleven different places “falling in love” can take you, in as many tracks.

The spectrum of emotions and experiences in this single album is impressive. Urban doesn’t mince words. “I want to kiss a girl/ I want to hold her tight,” he asserts on the opening track, which has already had its run as a number one single. He starts off running but trips early; it’s no easy journey through love for Urban. The aforementioned “Til Summer Comes Around,” which is only number four on the track list, has Urban waiting years in a small-town

for his love, honoring her promise to return for him someday. “I ... count the days ’til you just might come back,” Urban mourns in a hopeful tone.

The painful trend of trust and heartbreak is just one thread that makes up this work of art, however. Keith is ready to take a risk in “My Heart is Open,” prepared to chase down his love in “Hit the Ground Running,” and just excited to be out on a date in “Sweet Thing.” He finishes the album with “Thank You,” which is a vulnerable song that expresses gratitude to his wife for saving his life.

There are lots of places that the songwriting could go that it doesn’t. There could be a focus on the failed past relationships as a basis for a hopeless view of life and all of its opportunities, as is common in contemplative collections of songs like this one. Conversely, there could be a disregard for any wisdom and a refusal to learn from experience, like you might hear in most radiopop. Instead, “Defying Gravity” commits to incorporate those emotions into an outlook that’s tempered by experience and yet resoundingly hopeful. As a whole, it’s not so emo after all.



## Creamy shrimp pasta with ham

Jana West  
 The Commuter

This is a very basic cheese sauce that can easily be adjusted or jazzed up to suit your own taste. Fresh herbs, a dry white wine or some freshly grated nutmeg would be great additions to this sauce. Don’t be afraid to experiment and tweak the recipe. I like the combination of the salty ham with the sweetness of the shrimp, but you could easily use chicken or omit the meat altogether and use steamed vegetables. I usually stop by the deli counter and have them cut me a slice of ham about 1/4 inch thick instead of buying ham from the meat department. If you eat a lot of shrimp like I do, buy a bag of frozen shrimp when it goes on sale and take some out of the freezer when needed. If you can find a good sale, it ends up being less than five dollars a pound. I used Stella Parmesan, which can usually be found for \$4.99. You can, of course, use better cheeses, but to keep it under \$10 this is a great option.

### Grocery list:

1/2 lb. ham, cubed	\$2.49
1/2 lb. shrimp, peeled & deveined	\$2.49
1 pint of milk	\$ .99
1 cup grated parmesan	\$2.49
1 head garlic, roasted	\$ .50
1/2 box fettuccine noodles	\$ .84
<b>GRAND TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$9.80</b>

### Also needed:

- 3 Tbs. butter
- 2 1/2 Tbs. flour

1. Brown the ham in a hot pan for a few minutes, then remove from pan and set aside.
2. In the same pan, sauté shrimp in 1 tablespoon butter for about three minutes, or until they are done cooking (shrimp don’t take very long to cook and are rubbery when overdone). Remove and set aside.
3. Add the remaining butter to the pan with flour and cook for a few minutes until the flour starts to brown. Add the milk, whisking in a little at a time.
4. Once the milk is incorporated, add a little more until the flour/butter (roux) is completely mixed into all the milk.
5. Add the grated Parmesan gradually, until it has completely melted into the sauce. Save a few pinches of Parmesan for garnish.
6. Toss roasted garlic, shrimp and ham into the sauce while the noodles are cooking.

*Optional: I happened to have some peas in the freezer, so I added them to the mix. Green onions or diced tomatoes would also make a great garnish. The cheese sauce can easily be adapted into a mac and cheese dish by substituting sharp cheddar in place of Parmesan.*



Creamy shrimp pasta with ham.

Photo by Jana West

## redbox review

### The Informant! (Rated R, Runtime 108 min.)

Ashley Christie  
 The Commuter

“The Informant!” is Steven Soderbergh’s latest movie starring Matt Damon as Mark Whitacre, a corporate whistleblower in the early ‘90s. The film, which is based on a true story, follows Whitacre, an Ivy League-educated chemist who climbs to the top of the corporate ladder and becomes an executive at Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), an agri-business powerhouse and Fortune 500 company in Illinois.

When Whitacre learns about ADM’s illegal price-fixing of Lysine, a food additive, he becomes an FBI informant. After almost three years undercover, the truth about ADM is about to come out and Whitacre may not be the do-gooder Boy Scout he seems to be.

“The Informant!” is supposed to be a comedy, I think. Soderbergh assumes that if Damon gains 30 pounds and wears a bad mustache he can automatically make an



unfunny situation funny. Damon is given the responsibility of carrying the comedic weight of the movie, when he is surrounded by actual comedians like Tom Papa, Joel McHale, and Patton Oswalt, who were cast as the straight-men.

Not only is the movie unfunny, it’s also really, really boring. While watching Whitacre, you’re not sure if he’s an inept moron, a criminal mastermind or just a compulsive liar. But, by the time you get to the end to find out the truth (if you’re still awake), you don’t really care.

One of the greatest sleep-inducing aspects of this movie is a voice-over by Damon. Corn, and corn additives like Lysine, don’t make thrilling entertainment on their own, and having to listen to the main character explain more about them doesn’t help.

“The Informant!” isn’t awful, just kind of ... meh. I expected more from Jason Bourne and the “Ocean’s 11” director. It was an okay effort and I guess there are worse ways to waste a dollar.

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# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Reviews, upcoming events, and the cure for weekend boredom.

## Coming attractions

### Clash of the Titans

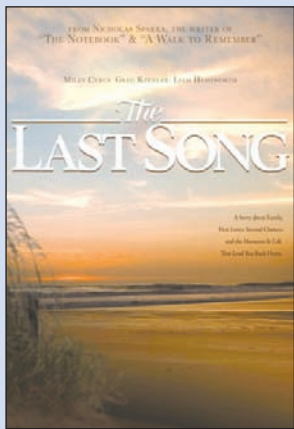
Half god and half man, Perseus (Sam Worthington) is orphaned by the god Hades and lives his days on earth acting as a mortal. He later leads the effort to destroy Hades before the evil god takes Zeus' (Liam Neeson) power from him. Perseus' dilemma worsens as he fights deeper and deeper into dark realms. Will he consent to using his powers as a god to attain victory? Also with Ralph Fiennes.



Runtime: 110 minutes • Rating: PG-13

### The Last Song

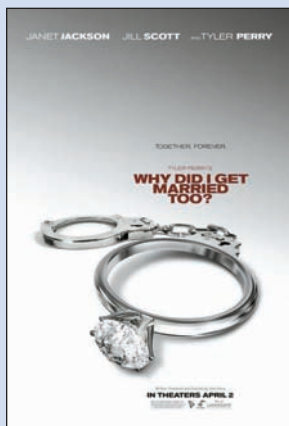
Ronnie (Miley Cyrus) is a New York City teenager whose divorced parents decide it would be better for her to stay with her father (Greg Kinnear) for the summer in a southern beach town called Tybee Island. In this big-screen adaptation of the Nicholas Sparks novel of the same name, will a shared love of music begin to reunite the essentially estranged father and daughter? No spoilers here.



Runtime: 107 minutes • Rating: PG

### Tyler Perry's Why Did I Get Married Too?

The sequel to "Why Did I Get Married" features Janet Jackson, Sharon Leal and Perry himself as part of a cast of couples who are experiencing troubles in their marriage. During their group vacation in the Bahamas, much of the couples' marital issues are brought to the surface after the arrival of an ex-husband who is determined to re-unite with his already re-married spouse.



Runtime: 121 minutes • Rating: PG-13

Sources: [Imdb](#), [Yahoo! Movies](#), [Fandango.com](#)

## Paradigm shift: "FFXIII"

Max Brown  
The Commuter

Final Fantasy XIII is finally out after five years of production. The combat and graphics really showcase how much effort was put into this game, but then again it also has some serious shortcomings.



When I first started playing this game, I became very afraid that it would be terrible. Part of the problem is that they try to teach you a lot about the new Active Time Battle (ATB) combat system while not giving enough explanation of the storyline or terms the characters use while talking with each other. The game does eventually explain terms and story points, but it takes too long. Sometimes I felt lost and had to turn to the in-game Datalog for more information.

Most games have very basic introduction areas to get used to the systems of the game, which is fine and makes a lot of sense. The way FFXIII handles it makes me want to claw my eyes out. I love the combat in this game, but the introduction areas are boring and simplistic. You get to learn the combat system with maybe three abilities, so it gets repetitive when this lasts around an hour. For me, though, these flaws can be forgiven because the game gets better.

The new iteration of Final Fantasy's ATB system is one of the best yet. Instead of controlling three characters during combat, you take control of only one character while you give certain roles to the other two characters by switching paradigms - then the AI plays them. This could have turned out very poorly if the AI were terrible, but it is actually quite competent.

Paradigms are basically your character's classes. Each character has three main paradigms which can be switched at any time during combat. These could be things like Medic (healer), Sentinel (tank), and a handful of other roles. Changing paradigms during battle is the core of the system. You may end up changing paradigms every few seconds, or only once a battle, but in the end it adds a ton to the gameplay and is very well done.

This lends to an interesting and fast-paced combat experience. It's actually one of the most fascinating combat systems in Final Fantasy. Usually these games are fun, but the combat can be less than challenging. The new system makes most every combat encounter challenging but quick, so you don't become bored with it.

The visuals of this game are amazing. Every environment you enter is rich and interesting. The designs of characters, weapons, enemies, vehicles and everything else are well done. This game, if nothing else, is incredibly beautiful.

The worst part of this game is how linear it is. Most of the time you run in a straight line and encounter a few batches of enemies, then you see a cut scene - rinse and repeat.

John Teti, from [origin.avclub.com](#), said it best in his review: "The first 20 hours of FF13 are like watching Star Wars' Death Star trench scene in excruciating slow motion."

Usually I don't mind a bit of linear game play, as I really enjoy the story of Final Fantasy games. But I don't know if any story could make me ignore how linear this game is.

The story, once you understand what is going on, becomes more interesting. I personally don't think it is as good as most of the Final Fantasy games, but it is still enjoyable. Most of the characters are interesting, but sometimes I felt their dialog was a bit weak or awkward.

I won't go into great detail about the other systems in this game, such as upgrading weapons, because I felt most of them were satisfactory but not amazingly impressive. There are some side quests in the game, but they all come at a single point. I understand you can go back after you beat the game to complete the rest of these, which is pretty neat.

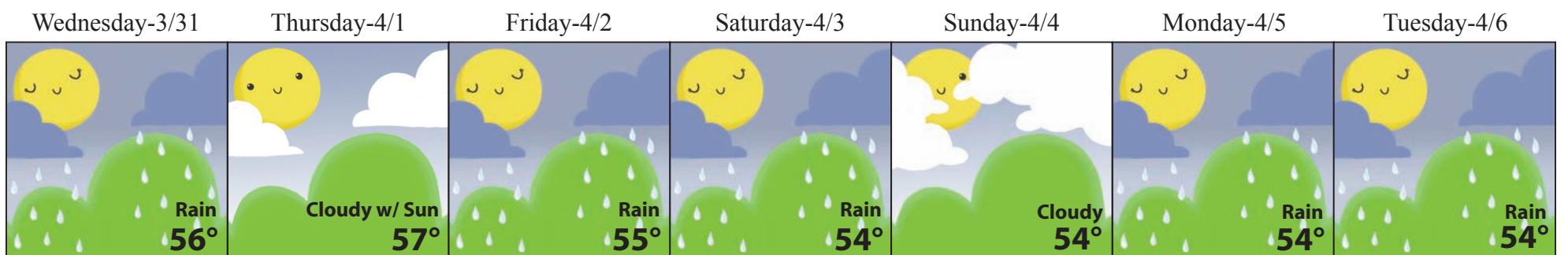
I do feel this is one of the weaker Final Fantasy games, but it is still pretty decent after the first six hours or so, which is actually a small fraction of the game. Give it a try, especially if you have always had a longing to jog the Death Star trench. Overall, the game can get a bit tedious, but I think it is still worth playing.

Rating: Teen

System: Xbox 360 and PS3

Cost: \$59.99

## Weekly Weather Predictions



Warning: These are only predictions. For up-to-date forecasts, please look out your window. Source: [weather.com](#)