





The Commuter

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LOCAL NEWS

Community news about the mid-Willamette Valley, including Albany, Lebanon, and Corvallis.

Editor's Note:

Gregory Dewar
The Commuter

You may have noticed our gratuitous cover this week. Christmas is a battlefield, at least for most of us here in the office. Unwanted relatives, expensive gift-giving, and the obligatory gift baskets with cheese logs no one really wants or likes. Hickory Farms' day is sufficiently made infinitely over on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. The gingerbread men on our cover are not conscientious objectors to this war, but throw themselves headlong into it. Will Blue Team take Christmas this year? Or perhaps the invasion by Red Team will succeed.

Cover credit this week goes to the entire office for making the gingerbread men and designing the layout. We had fun and the frosting gore proves it. Does this cover really relate to anything in the issue? We have a few listings for Christmas bazaars and that's about it. But randomness is something you've come to expect from us here at our new "edgier" Commuter with our new upbeat staff and ambitious drive.

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Wheelsmith Cycles:

Custom bikes in Independence, OR

Chris Brotherton
The Commuter

I had driven down the road at least a dozen times before I noticed the motorcycles. There were only three of them sitting out front, but it was enough to finally catch my attention. The chrome gleamed in the sunlight as I drove by, but I was unable to stop at the time. What had caught my attention was the fact that both bikes I had seen were Triumphs. Not the nice new fiberglass covered, fuel-injected machines on the showroom floors. These were from at least 30 years ago and they were obviously customs. Is this a custom British motorcycle shop? I would definitely have to go back.

It was an almost warm, sunny day in November when I finally got to go back for a leisurely look around the shop. Of course, I rode my own motorcycle, as a car just would not do for this trip. As soon as you walk through the door, there are the familiar scents from a mechanical shop: grease, and gas, with a slight metallic hint in the air. At the front of the shop were completed motorcycles. One bike was a Triumph that was glossy black with a white racing stripe running along the tank and straight dual exhaust wrapped in black exhaust wrap. There was no front fender residing between the fork tubes and just a solo

saddle. There was another that was an electric blue color with a white racing stripe and exhaust wrap.

As I looked through the walkway to the back of the shop, I could see two lifts, both of them with bikes on them. One bike was obviously a custom, purple with pinstripes and another was built of one-of-a-kind metal work, but missing an engine. The other was a customer's bike, a Norton, in for an engine rebuild. This one is a machine that was built for fun and speed. The handlebars are short and clipped directly to the triple clamps, pointing in a drastic angle towards the ground to keep the rider's elbows tucked into the side of the machine, in true café racer style.

On the day that I was there, Bob, the owner of Wheelsmith Cycles (I found out his first name from his assistant, but not his last, his website and business card didn't give a last name, either), was busy trying to finish up the Norton café racer. Although the main work was done, I could see that there was still a lot of buttoning-up work to be done. I asked if he minded if I watched, and with a friendly smile through his bushy beard, he gave me permission to watch him work. When he pulled the spark plug wires, the brass tip that slides inside the coil tip stayed there. After pulling the wires apart, Bob grabbed a new long wire and with the skilled hands of a craftsman cut two wires to length,

slid the boots on, and then soldered the new tips on. The whole time that he was working, he carried on a conversation with me, giving me a brief history of Triumph, the name passed on through many hands throughout history. He also told me about the dirt track motorcycle that was standing by the lift. Then he brought up their secret project.

He wouldn't tell me much about the secret project, only that it will be another race bike and that it will be ready in the spring. By the look in his eyes, he was very excited about it. I guess I will have to come back in the spring. Damn, I hate waiting.

Before I knew it, an hour had passed and there were almost no wires or loose parts sitting under the old Norton. Just watching him, you could tell that he knew his way around motorcycles. Bob has more than 25 years' of motorcycle repair experience and charges a fair rate. Shop labor is only \$60 an hour, and a custom bike usually goes for around \$15,000. If you are a motorcyclist that appreciates high quality customs and an experienced shop tech, it would be worth it to check out Wheelsmith Cycle in Independence, Oregon. If you would like a closer look at some of the custom bikes, or to see the custom parts available for old Brit-Bikes, simply visit their website, <http://www.wheelsmithcycle.com>.

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. Letters should be limited to 300 words or less. The Commuter attempts to print all letters received, but reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, libel, privacy concerns and taste. Opinions expressed by letter writers do not represent the views of The Commuter Staff or the College. Deliver letters to The Commuter Office, Forum 222 or at commuter@ml.linnbenton.edu

Web Address: <http://commuter.linnbenton.edu>**Phone:** (541) 917-4451, 4452 or 4453**Fax:** (541) 917-4454**Address:** 6500 SW Pacific Blvd.

Albany, OR 97321

You, too, can prevent Christmas tree fires

Loren Newman
The Commuter

According to the National Fire Protection Association (N.F.P.A) between 2003 and 2006 an average of sixteen people a year were killed by their Christmas traditions, chiefly Christmas trees. In those three years, Christmas trees were the cause of an average of 25 injuries, 16 deaths and 13.1 million dollars of damage annually. A Christmas tree takes just seconds to burn and the resulting fire can be deadly.

Christmas tree fires can be caused by many different ignition sources and are easily preventable. The N.F.P.A. recommends these tips to prevent Christmas tree fires in your home. By

following these simple steps, you can significantly lower the chances of a horrific holiday related fire in your home. No one likes burnt presents.

For more pictures and video of the devastating effect of a tree fire see our online site <http://www.lbcommuter.com>.

- When decorating your tree, always use lights listed by a testing laboratory. Some lights are designed only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. Larger tree lights should also have some type of reflector rather than a bare bulb.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use tree lights. Any string of lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulb connections should not be used. Connect no more than three strands of push-in bulbs and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- Always unplug Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and extend their life.
- Never use lit candles to decorate a tree, and make sure any lit candles in the room are placed well away from tree branches.
- Try to keep live trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily. Do not purchase a tree that is dry or dropping needles. Check for fresh, green needles. And place your tree in a sturdy tree stand designed not to tip over.
- Children are fascinated with Christmas trees. Keep a watchful eye on them when around the tree and do not let them play with the wiring or lights. Store matches and lighters up high, out of reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Make sure the tree is at least three feet (one meter) away from any heat source, such as fireplaces and radiators. Try to position the tree near an outlet so that cords are not running long distances. Do not place the tree where it may block exits.
- Safely dispose of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house or garage, or placed against the house.

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LOCAL NEWS

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Holiday food looms ahead

Hannah Kessi
 For The Commuter

Who would want good nutrition to ruin their life during the holiday season? "Don't let good nutrition ruin your life," encouraged Ann Marchant, dietitian at Oregon State University Student Health Services.

A meeting was organized by the Benton Annex Women's Center on Wednesday, Nov. 19, where more than 30 students learned the secret to eating healthy for the holidays. This meeting was intended to encourage students to lead healthy lifestyles through a balanced diet.

In regards to daily diet, Marchant spoke to the students and said that it's not what you are eating that is bad, it's what you are NOT eating. She said that the amount of vegetables and fruits being consumed is low, and the average intake of sweets is far beyond the recommendation of "eat sparingly".

This problem is increased by the holidays, where unhealthy eating and drinking is coupled with physical inactivity, resulting in weight gain.

The students in the room were quick to admit that this holiday eating habit does have negative consequences, but they were concerned with having to give up those yummy desserts that only come around once a year. "Sweets aren't poison," smiled Marchant, in regards to this concern. "Sometimes you can have your cake and eat it too!" She continued to explain that sweets just need to be consumed in moderation and accompanied by a healthy, balanced diet.

In regards to eating during the holiday season, Marchant shared some helpful hints for enjoying the fine food with a little less guilt. First, eat an apple before meals as a way to ease some of your pre-meal hunger with a healthy supplement. After you have finished your first course, wait 10 minutes before dishing up your plate with a second serving. If you are still hungry after waiting 10 minutes, then go ahead and eat!

In addition to the holidays, she encourages students to look at their average daily diet and make lasting changes instead of targeting the holidays as the only time that healthy eating will be practiced.

"Make changes that you can continue for five years."

Most people try to make change by skipping meals in an attempt to lose weight before the holiday season. Once the weight is off and the holiday is over, the weight is gained again.

For daily diet practices, Marchant promotes a pattern of consistent meal times, and eating the recommended quantities of food from the five food groups. This includes the recommended amounts of grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy and poultry.

Marchant also warned that serving size does matter, so serve a small initial serving to avoid overeating.

After the holidays are over continue eating a variety of the food groups, living on without letting good nutrition ruin your life.

Healthy Living

Pumpkin's orange power

Two popular ways to prepare cooked pumpkin are sweet, aromatic dishes, such as pies and tarts, and savory, spicy ones, such as curries.

Content of 1 cup (250 ml) cooked

Beta carotene	5,100 mcg
(Vitamin A, abundant in orange and red vegetables)	
Calories	49
Carbohydrates	12 g
Fiber	3 g
Calcium	37 mg
Potassium	560 mcg

Source: U.S. Agriculture Department, U.S. National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Lee Hulteng

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Classifieds

They just make cents. Place an ad today with The Commuter at commuterads@linnbenton.edu

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:

Chief Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator (#6987, Stayton) This full-time position is seeking 2 years of college and 4 years experience. If this is you, please contact us in Student Employment

Entry-level Law Enforcement Professionals (#6969, U.S.) If you are graduating this year, it's not too soon to explore your career opportunities with the Dept. of Homeland Security.

Census Takers (#6951, our local area) We are coming up on a census year and the government is already hiring people for next year. Become a census taker by calling toll-free 1-866-861-2010! You have to call to be tested. Pay is \$14-18/hr DOE.

Front Desk/Customer Service (#6986, Albany) Part-time, 4-11pm on Mon & Tues and 8am-2pm on Sat & Sun. Pay is \$7.95/hr plus membership and discounts at this fitness center.

Other Stuff:

Pregnant? Free pregnancy test. Information on options. Non-pressured. Confidential.

Options Pregnancy Resource Center.
 Corvallis 757-9645. Albany 924-0166.
www.possiblypregnant.org

For Sale:

1998 Toyota Corolla LE Sedan in real good shape. 52,000 miles. Blue book, \$7,300. Asking \$6,000 OBO. Call Kat in Lebanon at 541-451-5427

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Walmart Vision Center
 3290 S. Santiam Hwy
 in Lebanon
 541-258-7251



Dr. Matt Knecht

10% off all eye exams and any complete pair of glasses or year supply of contacts

*Offer not valid with insurance. Must present student ID card at appointment

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CAMPUS NEWS

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

Study jam for finals

Tyler Caskey
 For The Commuter

LBCC's Associated Student Government (ASG) will be hosting a study jam on Saturday Dec. 6 and Sunday Dec. 7 from 8 a.m.–midnight.

This study jam will help prepare students for their finals and will be held in the commons. Many things will be available for students, including massages, refreshments, textbooks, professors and help from other volunteer students will be available as they are needed to best accommodate for those studying.

The top 40 most used textbooks at LBCC will be available for reference, and the math desk will be staffed all day throughout the

jams. College Skills Zone will be open from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. both days and the Writing Center will be open 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. – 6 p.m. Sunday.

Patrick Pici, VP of the ASG hopes to see a good turnout to continue this study jam all three terms. Pici says "It will be good for group projects, and is an excellent place for students who want to learn and study. The atmosphere will be a quiet place, away from distractions at home and other places."

If you are interested in volunteering for even an hour, please respond by email to Kim McAlooney at asgrep@linnbenton.edu or (541) 917- 4457. You can also stop into the ASG office on the main campus at LBCC.



Dec. 3, 2008

Upcoming Choir Concerts

James Reddan, the new LBCC music and choral director, will be directing the fall choral concert, "Poetic Peace: Ecstasy in Song", on Thursday, Dec. 4, 2008, at 7:30 p.m. at the Russell Tripp Performance Center in Takena Hall. Tickets are \$6 for general admission seating.

Register for winter term

Priority registration for winter term began on Monday, December 1, 2008. Students who have attended previously can check SIS for their priority registration time. A schedule for priority registration is located in the printed schedule of classes on page A27. Open registration will begin on Dec. 8. Be sure to register early to ensure seating availability.

Buy pizza and support the LBCC choirs and the festivals coming up in Spring 2009

A fundraiser will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 3 from 5 p.m. – 9 p.m. at Abby's Legendary Pizza, which is located at 3033 Santiam Highway Southeast, in Albany in an effort to raise money for the LBCC Concert and Chamber Choirs to participate in music festivals in Seattle and San Francisco during spring term 2009. Please alert your host/hostess, and 15% of every bill during these hours will be donated to the LBCC choirs.

Bluegrass benefit for C.A.R.D.V.

Mark Weiss, Sid Rosen and friends will be performing a

blue grass concert at the Methodist church on the corner of 11th and Monroe St. in Corvallis, on Dec. 5, with special guest Alex Hargreaves the youngest ever winner of the National Old Time Fiddlers, Contest. The cover charge is on a 'what you can pay' sliding scale from \$2 to \$10. Children get in free. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

Christmas Storybook Land

During the holiday season, the Linn County Fair and Expo center is transformed into a Christmas Storybook Land wonder. The best part is that it is free. Take a walk through the mystical woods of Christmas Storybook Land, and see characters and scenes from your favorite storybooks and movies, and at the end of your trek meet Santa Claus, and drop off some non-perishable foods in donation to FISH of Albany. FISH will then distribute the food to families in need this holiday season. Hours of operation are 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. – 8:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. You will only be able to visit Christmas Storybook Land Dec. 5 until Dec. 20, so don't procrastinate.

Holiday Bazaar

The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis is hosting a holiday bazaar on December 6th from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at their fellowship on 2945 NW Circle Blvd, Corvallis, OR. Kathy Clark, of LBCC, will be featuring her ceramic masks. Bazaar offerings include: fragrant swags, jewelry, paintings, textiles, hand knit caps and socks, jams and jellies, homemade baked goods, fused glass, note cards, and a "recycled gifts" table in which folks interested in sustainable giving can find almost new, antique or whimsical alternative gifts to give. Heier International and the Peace Corps, among other nonprofit causes, will be represented.

First Alternative
 NATURAL FOODS CO-OP



**HEALTH OR KNOWLEDGE...
 WHY CHOOSE?**

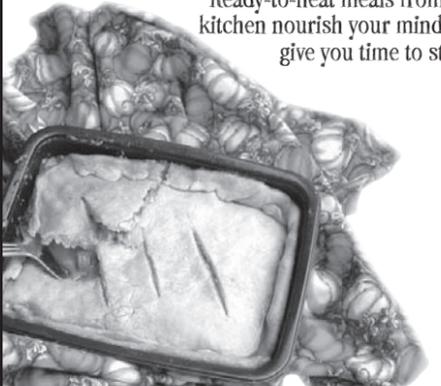
Ready-to-heat meals from our kitchen nourish your mind and give you time to study.

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Featuring locally made jewelry and fair trade gifts for the holidays!



THE COMMONS FARE 12/03-12/10

Wednesday

Dishes: Prime Rib with Popovers*, Coquilles Saint-Jacques a' la Parisienne, Tofu Stir-fry with Broccoli over Rice.

Soups: Billy Bi, Beef Vegetable

Thursday

Dishes: Hungarian Chicken, Sushi/Sashimi, Spanakopita,

Soups: Chili Mac, Cream of Broccoli

Friday

Chef's Choice

Monday

Dishes: BBQ Country Ribs*, Moroccan Chicken*, Omelet Bar*

Soups: Saffron Chicken*, Vegetarian Vegetable

Tuesday

Dishes: Spice-rubbed Beef*, Coulibiac, Portabella Polenta with Vegetables, Mascarpone Cheese, and Sun-dried Tomato Pesto

Soups: Chicken Consomme*, Roasted Garlic Pesto

*Gluten-free



Wouldn't it be great if the things you really needed in life were free?

If you were to become unexpectedly pregnant today, finding the right help shouldn't come with a price tag.

- Talk with someone who genuinely cares
- Get a confirmation pregnancy test
- Learn more about all available options

At Options Pregnancy Resource Centers we offer personalized care and resources that are absolutely **free, confidential** and **available** at just the right time—whenever you need them.

Since 1986, we're here for you.



possiblypregnant.org

Corvallis
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Albany
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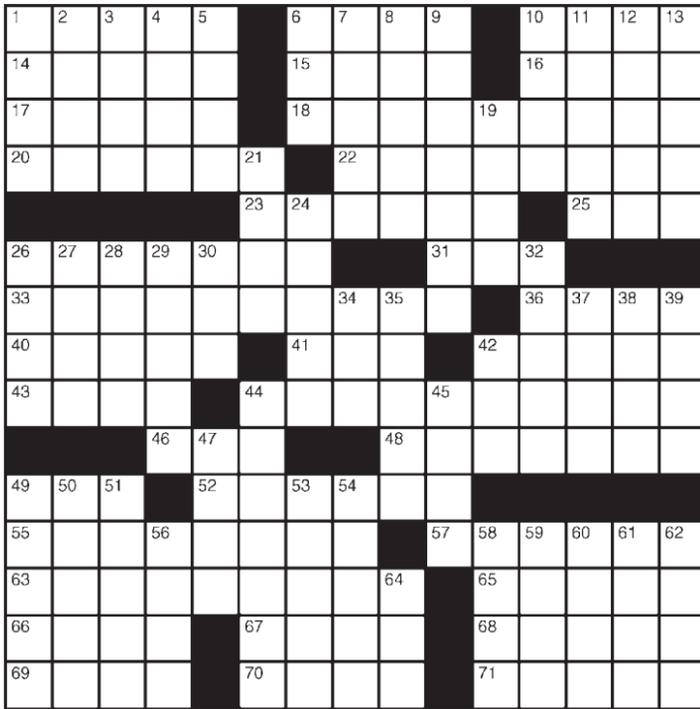
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SURREAL LIVING

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

Crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Dinky
 - 6 High cards
 - 10 Family man
 - 14 Outdoor dining area
 - 15 Sari wearer
 - 16 Nev. neighbor
 - 17 Medicinal plants
 - 18 Here today, gone tomorrow
 - 20 Standing
 - 22 On the nose
 - 23 Missive
 - 25 Pouch
 - 26 Consider beneath contempt
 - 31 TiVo button
 - 33 Speed up
 - 36 Itemization
 - 40 Parcel out
 - 41 Winter driving hazard
 - 42 Driver's news source
 - 43 Goose call
 - 44 Early end to a lawsuit
 - 46 Blackjack
 - 48 Wild spree
 - 49 Ready to go
 - 52 Peruse again
 - 55 Put out
 - 57 Circumvents
 - 63 Boundless
 - 65 Sun Valley state
 - 66 Irritate
 - 67 Sea eagle
 - 68 Entire
 - 69 Brooding location
 - 70 Slugger Sammy
 - 71 Early TV bovine



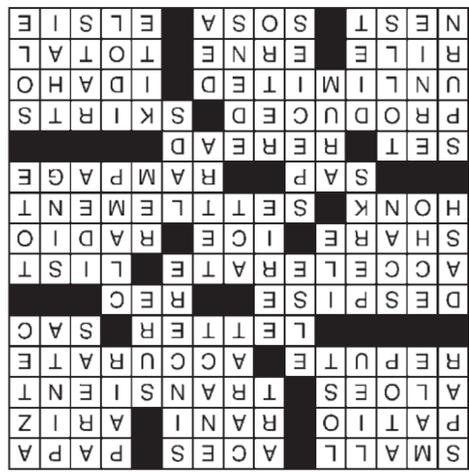
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11/27/08

- DOWN**
- 1 Practice boxing
 - 2 Stag attendee
 - 3 On the summit of
 - 4 Stead
 - 5 Type of soul or sheep
 - 6 Gallery work
 - 7 Jeweler's measure
 - 8 Make law
 - 9 Earnest

- 10 Tango team
- 11 Vicinities
- 12 One of a sailing trio
- 13 Montezuma, for one
- 19 Confident
- 21 Choice word
- 24 Unworldly
- 26 Hightail it
- 27 Come again?
- 28 Read quickly
- 29 Fringe benefits
- 30 ___-de-France
- 32 Gripping device
- 34 Don't hesitate
- 35 Colorful tropical fish
- 37 Invention origination
- 38 Spill the beans
- 39 Carry the load
- 42 ZZZ letters
- 44 Biological classification
- 45 Glasgow guys
- 47 Kind of lily
- 49 Brush off

Solutions



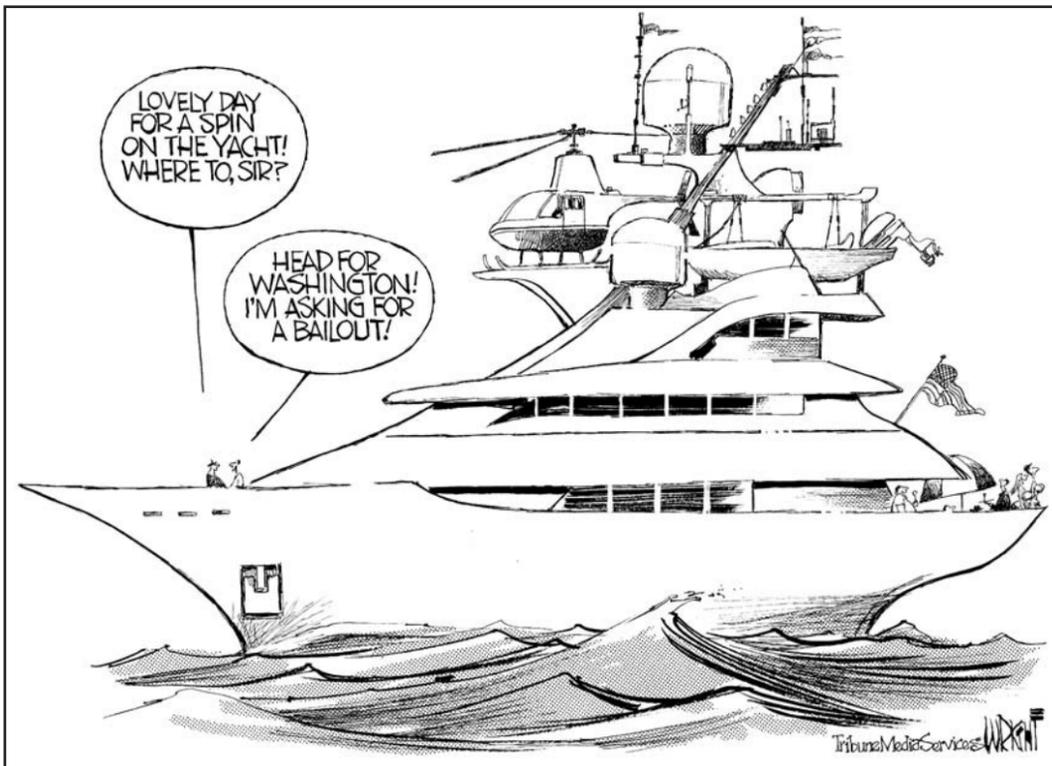
- 50 Banks of baseball
- 51 Travel charges
- 53 Reminiscent of things past
- 54 Utopias
- 56 Menu plan
- 58 Wind-borne toy
- 59 Teen heartthrob
- 60 Spills the beans
- 61 From Bangkok
- 62 Shoe part
- 64 Narc's org.



"... And those are just some of the things I like to roll in."



"Call 9-1-1!"



"Whoa, my bad — it is vinegar."

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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

Let's Do The Time-Warp Again

Halee Fisher
For The Commuter

Flying toast, lingerie and much more is what to expect at the Majestic Theater's "Rocky Horror Picture Show" this coming January.

From the "Rocky Horror" fans of Transsexual Transylvania, launching toilet paper rolls, to each person joining the time-warp dance, the "Rocky Horror Picture Show" is still a favorite of both world-wide and local Corvallis residents. "Rocky Horror" derived from being a potentially ill-fated movie in the late 1970s,

to being the longest-running theatrical release in film history.

Essentially what to expect is Dr. Frank-N Furter, your average mad-scientist, alien transvestite, who if he's not belting out a song, is having sex with someone - gender not an issue.

"Rocky Horror" is the only movie around where you're encouraged to arrive in lingerie, holler obscenities toward the screen and to cast objects across the theater," said Shannon Skaré, a fan of "Rocky Horror," who religiously dresses up in costume for

Majestic's monthly showings.

The public generally recognizes "Rocky Horror Picture



Courtesy of (MCT)

Show" as being a cult movie - due to its devoted, obsessive fan base.

"This movie isn't for everyone either you hate it or you love it, but damn-it (Janet) I liked it!" said, Brianna McGinley, a student of Harding Alternative High School in Corvallis. McGinley, who was once a skeptic of the "Rocky Horror," is now a fan of the famous cult flick.

Brian Watkins, the facilities manager of the Majestic Theater, mentioned that the last 30 years of the lively and interactive drag-fest persuaded him into the theater industry.

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show" is literally one of the greatest motion pictures ever

made," said Watkins. He also mentioned the awards "Rocky Horror" has acquired since its release, such as the Video Premiere Award in 2001 and the National Film Registry in 2005.

The Majestic Theater, uniformed with its authentic velvet red curtains and its historical ambience, is located at 115 SW 2nd St. Corvallis. "Rocky Horror Picture Show" is planned to show 7:30 p.m. Saturday, January 17, costing \$7 a ticket.

"Come join us in on all the fun," Watkins said. "And prepare to be time-warped!"

New punkers at the old Deli

Kris Nelson
The Commuter

First on the line-up was Bad Terms, a band whose members are between 14 and 18 years old. Although these three guys may seem young, their talent as musicians really shows. After their set, I got to sit down with the lead vocalist and guitarist Keaton Noble and talk about how their band is coming along. Half-way through, Jacob Carter, the bassist and background vocalist joined the interview. The other member, Tanner Noble, who plays the drums, only talked with me briefly, due to the fact that he was cleaning up the equipment.

Bad Terms started about a year ago, around December 2007. They are based out of Corvallis. Their main influences are the Angries and the Wobblies. On a larger scale they like

the Clash, Dead To Me, and the Sub-Humans. They have played shows with Viking Funeral, the Wobblies, the Angries, Blood on the Banjo, Adelitas, Solid Gold, Muckraker, and Resist. Their future plans are to release an E.P. with some of their songs, make more music, and release a full-length CD. If you want to catch Bad Terms live, you can see them on Saturday December 13 at the Interzone in Corvallis. To listen to some of their music go to <http://myspace.com/mindsomush>.

The next band to play was the Angries from Corvallis. Although I didn't get to talk with them for a while, I had brief talks with some of the members throughout the night. The band features Caitlin on vocals, Justin on guitar, Robb on bass, and Mike on drums. Their influences, as listed on their Myspace, are Bikini Kill, the Briefs, the Gits, the Happy Bastards, Tourist,

the Ramones, New Bomb Turks, the Kinks, Defiance Ohio, and X-Ray Spex. Currently, they have a CD out entitled, "Get Your Angries Out." The Angries have two shows coming up: One on December 6th, at Fox & Firkin in Corvallis and another one on December 13th, at the Interzone. Check the Angries out at <http://myspace.com/theangriesrock>.

KTP was the third band to play. They came from Lawrence, Kansas as part of their 2008 US tour. Their current release is called "Rockers." Merritt plays guitar and sings. Al is the bassist and sings as well. Brent plays drums and Andy plays the guitar. This show was their first time playing in Oregon. KTP has shared the stage with bands such as Against Me!, the Street Dogs, Dead to Me, and UK Subs. Their tour started November 7th and goes until December 20th. If you want to see

what KTP are up to, go to their blog at <http://www.kingsoftheplains.blogspot.com> or their official site <http://ktp-punk.com>. To listen to some of their songs, visit: <http://myspace.com/ktp>

The Wobblies were the last band to play. The band consists of three guys from the Portland/Corvallis areas. A.J. sings and plays guitar. Pope Charles is the bassist and Ty is the drummer. Both Ty and Pope Charles do some of the vocals. The Wobblies' current release is called "American Bliss." I would recommend listening to their song "The Voice of Reason," which can be found at <http://myspace.com/wobbliesmusic>

If you want to find out more information about the Wobblies go to their Myspace or the official site: <http://the-wobblies.org>. The Wobblies are playing at the Interzone on December 12th.

Spring comes early here.
(So Apply Now.)

Northwest Christian University is accepting applications through the end of 2008 for our spring semester, which begins in January. Don't wait. Apply now online at: www.northwestchristian.edu/admissions/apply.

NORTHWEST CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Developing Ethical Leaders
for a Changing World

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Poverty's Posterboy

Kris Nelson
The Commuter

Poverty's Posterboy started out promoting concerts and about a year ago he started rapping. Recently I met up with him at Ciddizzi's Pizza in downtown Albany. I discussed his musical influences with him, a couple upcoming shows, and what he's working on with his rap.

Some of the music that influences Poverty's Posterboy is stuff like Beethoven, Nirvana, the Beatles, Eminem and Slayer. He also enjoys local hip-hop. Artists like Soufside Ink, Bilyeu, Lyric, Kross-Breed, and Mafmatix.

On December 4, Poverty's Posterboy will be playing at Riley's in downtown Albany. This show is presented by Dub-U-Records and will also feature performances by Bilyeu, Weside, J-Lil, Soufside Ink, Lessin Lyrisist, and Lyric & Kross-Breed. The show starts at 10 p.m.

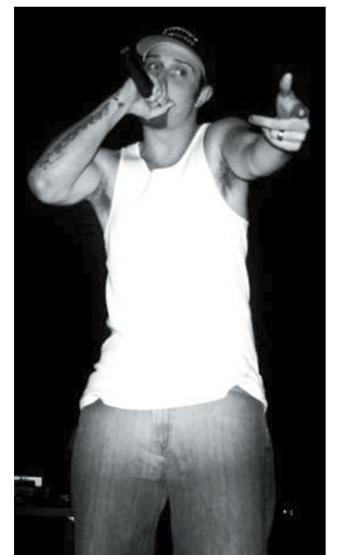
Also, Poverty's Posterboy will be playing at the Grange Hall in North Albany, December 12, alongside Paradox, Yung Royal, Markus Tha Great White, Pynt Syze, Contra & C-Logic, Suganuts, Bird, Soufside Ink, and Lessin Lyrisist. The doors for this show open at 7 p.m. Poverty's Posterboy likes to play around 4 to 5 shows a month. About 25-30 shows a year.

One of Poverty's Posterboy's favorite collaborations is a song called, "A Town's Finest." This song features Yung Royal, Markus Tha Great White, Suganuts, Weside, and Soufside Ink. Another song by Poverty's Posterboy is entitled, "Albany's Track." "If you've lived in Albany a long time, it'll bring back memories," he added as he told me about the track.

Poverty's Posterboy is in a group with Bilyeu called Northwest Noize. They are currently working on an album together. Also, Bilyeu

and Poverty's Posterboy are both working on solo albums.

If you want more details about either of his shows or you want to hear some of his music go to: <http://myspace.com/povertys-posterboy>.



Courtesy of Poverty's Posterboy

The Commuter

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

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

Gears Of War 2 Review

Rick Casillas

The Commuter

Gears of War 2 does what any good sophomore effort of an excellent series should: it takes the base upon which it is built and makes it grander. You won't find any ground-breaking changes in the second installment of the testosterone-driven, thick-necked sequel; instead, Epic has spent their time polishing their tried and true formula, pulling back the scope of the experience and showing us war on an epic scale not seen in enough games.

The story picks up after the anti-climactic conclusion of the first game. Marcus and Dom, having just sent the light bomb into the depths of the Locust stronghold, find that they've only stirred the nest, with the Locust redoubling their efforts in obliterating humanity through the sinking of their cities. You, of course, being the last hope of mankind, dig downward once again to cut off the head of the Locust horde, killing their queen in a last ditch attempt to prevent the destruction of your remaining city.

While the original Gears of War breached the zenith of an FPS experience on this generation's consoles in many ways, it did have a single failing in its storyline. Convoluted and blurry, the motivations of our characters always felt shallow and confusing. I often found myself turning to my friend on our first pass through and asking him why the hell we were in a creepy old mansion cutting the power to the mineshaft in the first place. Fortunately, the break-neck speed and inventive situations we had to tear and shoot our way through proved a suitable distraction, with short term goals tethering me firmly to the tug of an otherwise forgettable narrative.

This time Epic has made a noticeable effort in fleshing out its campaign, providing a slightly clearer objective and a more personal motivation to dredge on through the buckets of Locust blood with Dom's plight to find his wife. I was worried when I first learned of the softening of my bloodthirsty sidekick, as one of my favorite things about the series has always been the one-liner military banter exchanged between the characters. The desperate search was buyable though, and without giving anything away, it was brought to a heartfelt and genuine conclusion that only further endeared me to his character's motivations.

Other favorites made an appearance: Baird's barely enduring complaining was still a welcome sound, and the Cole train was there in all his glory. In addition to the regular crew, a few new recruits made their way onstage; their presence only enhanced the original cast without detracting from the four-man dynamic I had grown accustomed to. You have the wonderfully one-dimensional Dizzy, a mechanically inclined southern conscript with a zest for life and the Derrick he pilots, who he affectionately refers to as "Betty." There's Tai, a Samoan looking giant of a man whose serene spiritualist outlook provides a chilling contrast to a plot twist that takes place later on in the game. And finally Carmine, the obligatory rookie whose wide-eyed wonder of our veterans and half-hearted battle cries give you a humanistic perspective of how a normal person might react if plopped into such a jarring environment. Epic did a wonderful job of giving each character a role just purposeful enough to step into and make interesting, without stepping on the toes of our already established troupe.

The build of the environments you sludge through are varied and intricately designed. During your slow descent to the kingdom of the Locust, you make your way through spacious caverns, razor hail-battered buildings, and chaos inspired architecture. Several times I stopped just to stare at the water effects of rain that splashed and dribbled down dirty windows, or the rivulets of gore that spilled across polished marbled floors. Making full use of the Unreal 3 engine, the detail of the levels was downright awe-inspiring, and sometimes disgusting, as a combination of delight and abhorrence crossed my face on more than one blood-soaked occasion. The plot moved at a well paced amble set to the backdrop of a soundtrack that surged and lifted with an orchestrated precision alongside tense moments and close escapes, lending itself to the experience. The vastly improved AI of your opponents gave each encounter a unique feel. The Locusts have evolved since the first installment, drones work in syncopation with one another, slowly advancing with cover fire and complex tactics unseen before.

New ferocious enemies add dimensions to gameplay, altering your approach with every firefight. One example is the Kantus, a lither, robe-adorned version of the Locust, who hang in the back tossing ink grenades and reviving fallen comrades; another are Ticklers, tiny bloated monstrosities with explosives strapped to their backs that pursue you behind cover. Boomers come in all flavors now, toting everything from grenade launchers to mini-guns to

shields and maces, all varieties of course announcing their job in deep thunderous voices (a practice I would love to see carried out in real life) which you hear while rounding a corner before they let loose a hail of fire on you.

New additions to your arsenal also give you choices in that approach, my favorites being the flamethrower, mortars, and boom shield. The flamethrower, an often overlooked weapon in other games, gets the star treatment in Gears of War 2. Nothing snaps your attention faster than seeing a plume of fire pillowing against your tightly packed caravan of players. The boom shield also provides mobile cover, deflecting bullets and guarding your advance while always giving the option of ramming it into the ground to serve as a more permanent fixture. Oh and mortars, the new love of my life. Simplified yet woefully complex in its utilization, this two-handed artillery mammoth provides much needed air support, clearing out nests of opposition and raining death from the sky with a well practiced aim. Most of the new weapons avoid the trappings seen in other shooters, where multiple weapons serve the exact same purpose; in fact, features have been added to the old pantheon of killin' sticks, such as grenades being used as proximity mines and different unique curb stomping finishers being added depending on what weapon you wield.

The difference in the array of armaments is seen most prominently online during multiplayer matches, where the focus of your attacks shift and change based on your inventory. Seen by most as an afterthought in the first, online matches received a major overhaul, eliminating most problems from the previous installment while providing a new spread of appealing options. Grouped up into categories, online matches begin with players voting choices of maps and game modes from a short list. While an option for single modes

would have been nice, I do understand this organizes the player base better, corralling us all into the same room so game queues are shortened. While all the classics still have a presence, some new twists on old favorite deathmatch modes show themselves.

Submission is at first glance a simple game of capture the flag, until you realize that the flag is an AI controlled character capable of holding his own, who must be subdued and dragged forcibly to your base before you can score. Guardian is the traditional slugfest, except one of your players is given leadership and acts as a spawn point as long as they're kept alive; I witnessed several matches where innovative teams holed up in corners of the map, defending their V.I.P while

probes hunted for the enemies headquarters. But among all these new options, one proved more addicting and rewarding than the rest: Horde mode, which allows up to 5 players to cooperatively survive wave after wave of Locust in a vain attempt to reach 50 rounds. The first 20 rounds or so you spend assessing the value of your cohorts, learning their habits and working out a defensible strategy to help you stay alive, and as the difficulty and intensity of the fights become ever more pressing, the value of teamwork and sound division of roles becomes a necessity. Its one fault is that although the enemies become tougher as rounds go on, the types of waves don't change; every first, eleventh, twenty first and so on round is always complimented by a handful of wretches and a couple of drones. Some variety would have been welcomed, but even that complaint pales in comparison to the enjoyment derived from this fight-for-your-life survival mode.

Despite the high praise I have for this game, it is not without its faults. The epic feel I spoke of earlier is due in large part to vehicle-based levels, as a substantial amount of time in the game is spent on the backs of various organic vehicles from the Locust army, such as the towering Brumaks or the squid-like Reavers. Mercifully, the levels that force you into the cockpit are as simplistic and easy to maneuver as they are confusing. While the thrill of gunning down legions of troops on the back of one of these beasts is undeniable, making your way through checkpoints relies heavily on just firing blindly and following child-like instructions like shooting something in the mouth. The Panzer Dragoon-esque Reaver chase I found particularly tedious; the landscape whizzing past and enemies quickly darting across the screen were so frustratingly difficult to keep a bead on that I just ended up shooting in wide angled swathes across the landscape, hoping that my co-op partner was faring better than I. Multiplayer also suffered from erratic lag and excessively long wait times where I would sit upward of 5-10 minutes in the lobby, while the game dutifully searched for comparably skilled partners. Even with these minute blemishes, Gears of War 2 is a standout title, worthy of the accession of its predecessor. It's rare to find a game that combines pick-up and play values with a complex, involved undercurrent that only reveals itself through careful observation and patient practice. All in all, the efforts of Epic have paid off, culminating in a satisfying experience that exceeded my expectations and planted itself as yet another shrine to return to in my gaming pilgrimage.

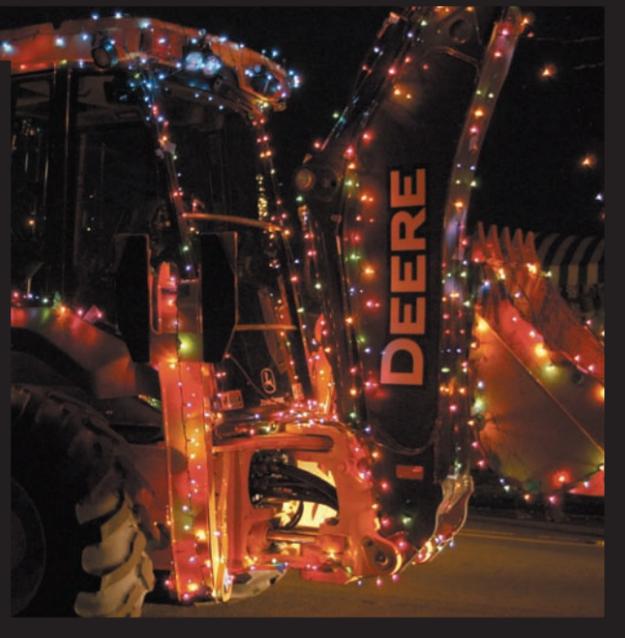
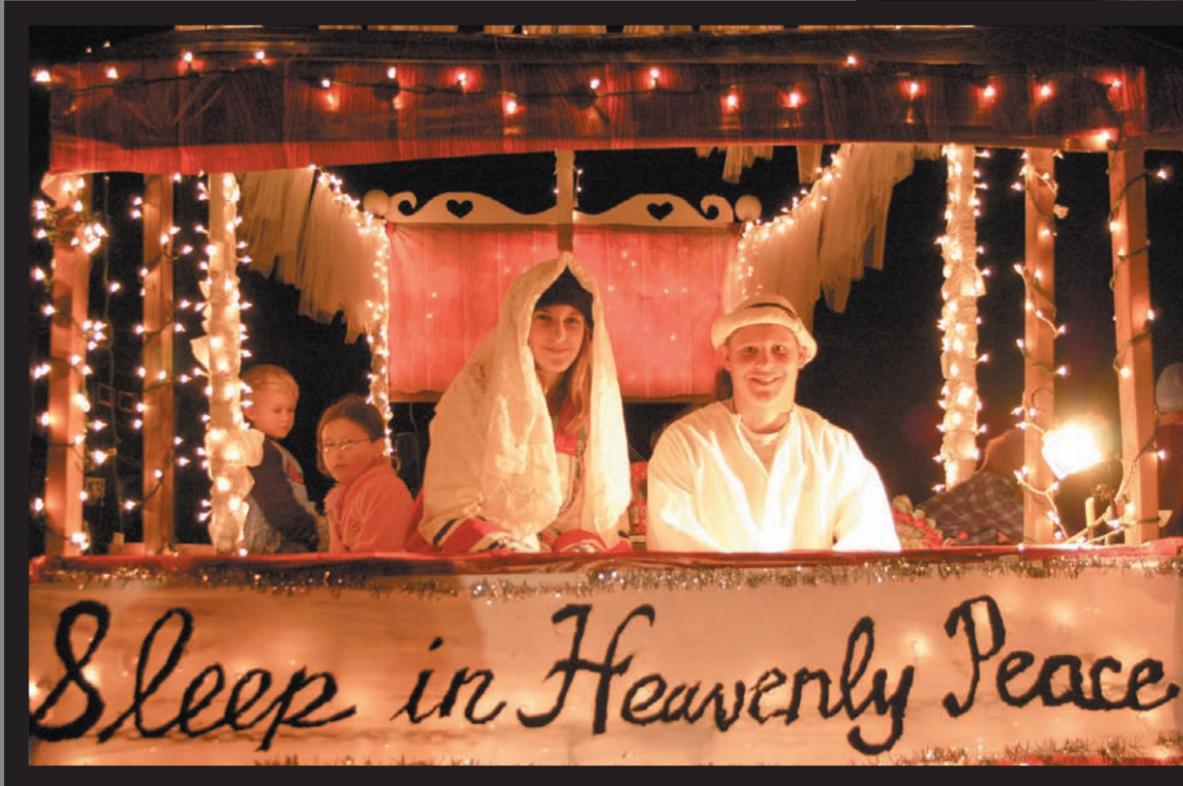


Photo by (MCT)

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**Corvallis
 Holiday Parade
 2008**

Photos by Eve Bruntlett



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Great games you can “fall back” on

Gary Brittsan
 The Commuter

The last few months of 2008 have been amazing for gamers. Some of the most anticipated games in years all miraculously decided to come out at the same time. Whether you're a console gamer or a PC gamer, a Microsoft lover or a die-hard Sony fan, this has been a great time for you. So if you're looking for the perfect gift for that special gamer in your life, or just trying to find a way to spend that extra Christmas dough you scored, I'll be here to help you find your way.

Rock Band 2/Guitar Hero: World Tour (PS2/PS3/360)

Who doesn't love getting together with a group of friends and playing great songs on pretend instruments? These two games, which both came out around the same time, do exactly that. They play pretty much the same way, the only real difference being an extra pad on the drums in Guitar Hero. Guitar Hero also has a song creation feature, which can be very deep if you want to put the effort into it. You can download and play songs other people have created, which makes up for the lack of official downloadable content offered. Rock Band 2, on the other hand, puts out at least three new songs each week (which you still have to pay for, of course), and almost all of the songs from Rock Band 1 can be transferred and played in Rock Band 2 for a small fee.

Warhammer: Age of Reckoning/World of Warcraft: Wrath of the Lich King (PC)

If you're a fan of PC online role-playing games, these past



Screenshot from “Mirror’s Edge” courtesy of Flickr-USE

few months have doubtless held much joy for you: a new expansion for WoW fans, and a brand new game for those who've grown tired of WoW. Both of these games have been talked about and anticipated for years, and both managed to live up to the hype.

Dead Space/Resistance 2/Fallout 3/Left 4 Dead (PC/PS3/360)

First-person shooter fans never had it so good! With a slew of sequels, and some new franchises to boot, every system has something to enjoy. Whether you like killing zombies, aliens, mutants, different aliens, foreign governments, or aliens, there's a new game out there for you. Some other new shooters to come out recently are Gears of War 2, Far Cry 2, Call of Duty: World at War, and Brothers in Arms: Hell's Highway.

Valkyria Chronicles (PS3)

Another visually stunning

game, Valkyria Chronicles is a strategy RPG that introduces several new innovations to the genre. During a fight, you view an overhead map of the battlefield, showing ally and enemy positions. When you want to move a unit, however, you zoom in to a third-person view and take direct control of how they move around the battle, setting up firing positions and then moving to a first-person view to actually line up and fire your shot. You then move back out to the overhead tactical view and start the process again with your next unit. Set in a 1930's-era fantasy world, the game features tanks and machine guns in a conflict between two nations. With a good story, nice music, and truly innovative gameplay, Valkyria Chronicles is a great game for both fans of strategy RPGs and newcomers to the genre.

Mirror's Edge (PC/PS3/360)

Remember that opening scene in Casino Royale

where Bond is chasing a guy up buildings, across rooftops, and through construction sites while he pulls off some amazing jumps and stunts? That's what's known as parkour, and that's what Mirror's Edge is all about. Played from a first-per-

son point of view, the idea is to get from one place to another as quickly and efficiently as possible, accomplished by hopping fences, ducking under pipes, sliding down cables, and jumping off buildings. It's hard to describe the visual beauty of this game, as well as the fast-paced movement aesthetic involved. I really recommend checking out the trailer, which can be seen at <http://mirror-edge.com>.

LittleBigPlanet (PS3)

Calling this game a multiplayer platformer doesn't do it nearly enough justice. Designed with player creativity in mind, this imaginative game has unlimited potential. You and up to three friends make your way through the stages, avoiding obstacles and collecting points, with fully customizable characters. If you're feeling particularly creative, there is a very deep, detailed level creation system, where the possibilities are literally endless. Re-create your favorite scene from a movie, make



Screenshot of “LittleBigPlanet” courtesy of MCT

son point of view, the idea is to get from one place to another as quickly and efficiently as possible, accomplished by hopping fences, ducking under pipes, sliding down cables, and jumping off buildings. It's hard to describe the visual beauty of this game, as well as the fast-paced movement aesthetic involved. I really recommend checking out the trailer, which can be seen at <http://mirror-edge.com>.

Fable 2 (360)

Fable 2 is an action RPG that takes everything done right in Fable 1 and makes it better. Featuring a huge environment to explore, the choices you make throughout the game have real, tangible effects on the world around you. You can use smooth talking, powerful magic, or brute force to get through tough situations. You can opt to help those in need and be good, or raze everything in your way on the

a racetrack to challenge your friends on, or build a level from a different game. Within a week of the game's release, people had already designed ways to compose music and built a calculator that actually works. And the best part about it is you can share your levels online, or download levels other people have created to try out yourself. If you enjoy exploring creativity, either your own or that of others, this game was made for you.

This has been just a sample of the games that have come out in recent months. With so much to choose from, 'tis the season to be a gamer. For more information and reviews on games, check out <http://www.gamerankings.com>, a site that compiles ratings and reviews from other websites to provide an overall average score for every game.



Screenshot of “Fable 2” courtesy of MCT

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Colorful Cats making films

Sabrina Dean
For The Commuter

Indie filmmaking can be one of those jobs where you need to be on your toes, ready for the unexpected. Thus is the case for the filmmaking duo of Colorful Cats Studios, Jason Angelone and David Chung.

These two Albany locals are taking their ideas, using what they have available, and making their dreams come true, one film at a time. With next year's Salem Film Festival less than five months away, and hopes of getting a submission in, these two are out filming and working hard to meet their goals.

Angelone aspires to be some combination of M. Night Shyamalan and Steven Spielberg. Often a shy, quiet, movie buff, with a green-screen pinned to his kitchen wall and a poster of the 101 greatest movie quotes, it's hard to get much out of him without the subject of filming attached. Actors such as Jim Carrey inspire Chung because of the reactions his antics may get from spectators. When told that people find him odd or strange he simply says, "I am odd, I like the attention."

"You can't be shy around David

because he will embarrass you," says Angelone. "I get a lot of ideas by following [him] around."

Angelone and Chung have been filming together for four years. It all started with Chung's audition for the sci-fi channel show "Who Wants to Be A Superhero?" which he needed help filming. Angelone, on the other hand, has been filming since the age of 10. "I remember I had heard he had done some filming, and I saw it as an opportunity," said Chung. "I made up my own costume, and he did all the filming and editing, we put our heads together and gathered some friends for some scenes."

It can be fairly easy to run into these guys during one of their filming sessions. It would be difficult to miss one of their chase scenes, or someone dressed head-to-toe in blue doing cartwheels, or the capturing of a criminal taking place. Some of their filming locations include Albany, Dunes City, Silver Creek Falls (the location on a day of filming I got to witness, myself), East of Salem. There, I got to watch the chaos and process step-by-step.

The changes in angles, revising of lines, and re-filming of the different per-

spectives, are all created along the way for the two. Even the ideas for scenes and other films are formulated on the spot and can be influenced by sudden and instant occurrences and the environment. Chung suggested filming at Silver Creek Falls based on a small article in a newspaper.

Although clichéd, it is true that filming can be unpredictable. In a previous film, they had a scene in which one of their actors was playing a thief. Whether he was a good actor, or it was a simple mistake, the authorities were contacted and the actor was almost arrested. It wasn't until Angelone walked up with the camera and confirmed his story that he was released.

A common place in Albany used for filming is the comic and gaming store, Fantasy Knights, near the Heritage Mall. Store owner, Ernst "Seeth" Laemmert said he lets the duo use his store to film because "It's always been my belief that all forms of creativity should be encouraged... they're two very creative guys."

Laemmert was even featured, in the most recent project by the guys, playing himself. "We've even talked about having the chance, selling some of their stuff

here. That would be the coolest thing ever."

When asked what they enjoyed most about making films, Angelone said, "Having people watch [our films] and react to them."

Chung recalled their previous experience at the Salem Film Festival, "I remember at the very end of our film 'Evidence', the murderer jumped out and this lady in the audience jumped."

When asked about their film "Evidence" it was described as "a cross between The Blair Witch Project and Disturbia, without the funding," said Angelone. The two have a lot of plans and ideas for projects including a mockery of a documentary, "Super," in which a man is delusional about having super powers, poking fun at their start with Chung's audition tape.

That film, and two other projects, will be submitted to the 2009 Salem Film Festival in April.

Anyone interested can find Angelone and Chung's work posted on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/user/spidy8>), under the username "spidy8".

Miracle at 111 First Avenue

James Scales
The Commuter

Rounding off this season at the Albany Civic Theatre, comes a Christmas movie tradition brought to the stage: Miracle on 34th Street by Will Severin, Patricia Di Benedetto Snyder, and John Vreeke adapted from the novel by Valentine Davies. It includes music by Will Severin and is directed by Jackie Tasker. Performed by the Albany Civic theatre, it follows Kris Kringle and his strange ways of thinking about

Christmas as he acquires the job as Macy's Santa Claus. His ways of playing Santa are soon questioned by the rest of the Macy's employees, including Susan, the woman who hired him. Once the store settles down, Kris gets into a little bit of trouble with the law. One little girl, who believes in Santa Claus, or Kris Kringle, or whatever you may want to call him, tries desperately to save the man, and the holiday.

The Albany Civic Theatre's production is delightful. I was lucky enough to sit in on a

dress rehearsal and plan to go back with my family. The large cast of twenty-nine, some of whom play multiple roles, is perfect. They very much seem to enjoy their roles and that brings a whole new dynamic to the play. Upon opening, a drunken "Santa" stumbles in and riles things up backstage at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The setting is in the late 1940's and the property master stuck to the time period. Everything on stage is from that era or older, truly taking you back and dropping

you into the setting.

Consisting of so many scenes, the relatively small stage is brilliantly set together with the use of directed lighting: four backgrounds for the price of one. The stage crew is certainly doing their job and everything (to me) seemed to be going off without a hitch.

Hopefully, I have enticed you enough that you will go see this wonderful Christmas classic, performed by some very talented actors. I certainly will be attending to get into the Christmas Spirit.

Albany Civic Theatre is located at 111 First Avenue Albany, Oregon. Tickets cost \$8 for the matinee, \$11 for regular showing. The box office opens 45 minutes before curtain. Shows are, December 5, 6, 11-13th, 18-20th at 8:00 p.m. Matinees are December 7th, and 14th at 2:30 p.m. And as it is time for gift giving, season tickets and season samplers are available. Ask at the box office for details at <http://www.albanycivic.org>.

New album for this "Day and Age"

Lydia Elliott
The Commuter

First there was Springsteen, then U2, now it's The Killers. With their fourth album, Day and Age, commanding Thanksgiving album sales, the Killers are taking their rock influences and running with them.

Seeking to leave their synth-induced pop music behind, the band hopes instead to pay homage to the greats of rock n' roll music, according to a Paste magazine interview with Brandon Flowers, the lead vocalist. According to Flowers, the dismal sales of rock music inspired them to try to bring some attention back to the genre.

"This album has to be great, everything hinges on it right now." Flowers said. He went on to say that Day and Age was their "most

playful album".

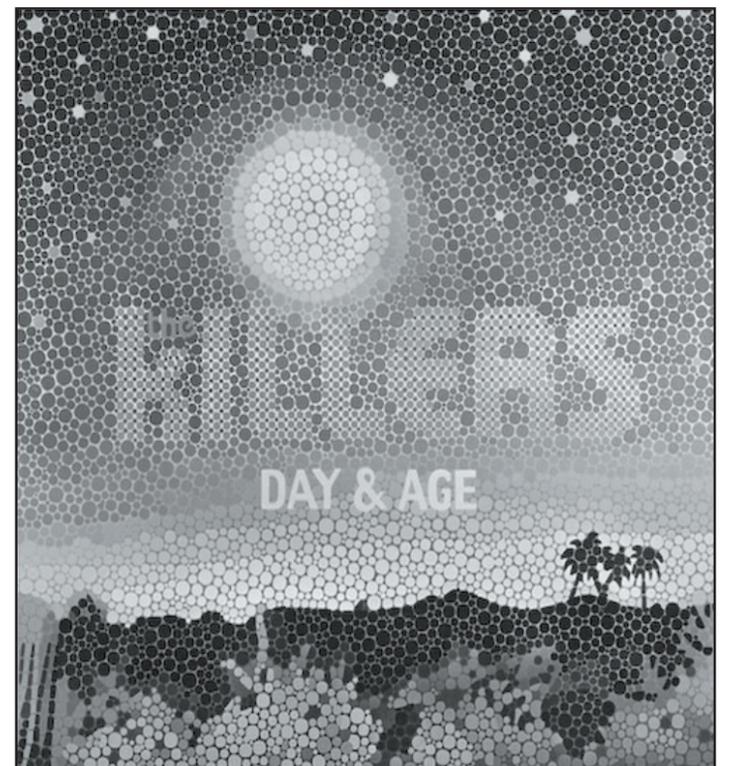
Combining earnest rootsiness and glitzy dance beats, this album exudes confidence and bravado from a band that obviously knows it is here to stay. The first three songs offer a thrilling hook, full of their best riffs, haunting atmospheres, and plenty of existential angst. Included in the triumvirate of power songs is "Human," the album's first single, which simply asks us all, "Are we human? Or are we dancers?"

Well, it seems we are all both, as expressed in this album. For fans of earlier Killer's pop, don't be dismayed. The heavy influence of The Smiths and Pet Shop Boys still make themselves felt throughout the album. "A Dustland Fairytale" swells with orchestra music, piano, and the Killer's classic: the synthesizer.

The images it leaves of broken American dreams and heartland heartbreak make it a classic for long-term fans.

For those who are new to the band's music, try "Spaceman," and "Neon Tiger," two songs that demonstrate the full range of what the Killer's have to offer. Most of all, the band just wants people to enjoy their music and have fun with it. "I think more people need to have fun," Flowers said.

Despite the relatively thin album jacket and lack of song lyrics included, this is a must-have for any fan of the The Killers' music. They may not be replacing U2 yet, but they have something to offer fans of both bands. Day and Age is an album you can dance, sing along or for some tracks, just rock out to at <http://www.thekillersmusic.com>.



Courtesy of The Killers

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The Twilight Experience

Frank C. Warren
 The Commuter

Thursday November 21 didn't bear much meaning to the majority of the population but to those who have followed the Twilight series by Stephanie Meyers it was a bloody extravaganza. With the



Tyler Nordby Courtesy of Tyler Nordby

premiere of the first of four in the series, fans of the movie flocked to theaters in Twilight t-shirts, Twilight getup and a few in vampire costumes. The

Carmike Cinemas in Corvallis was one of many theaters in Oregon that were sold out at the opening night of the movie. The Carmike, using all of their theaters to host the event, had an attendance of over 1000. Michelle Visser, a reluctant Twilight fan who was dragged along to the fiasco by friends said, "I hadn't actually thought I would like the movie, but I found the characters funny and likeable and I really had a good time."

The film itself was shot in southern Washington and parts of Oregon. Many Oregon and Washington residents may recognize many of the sights in the movie, and if not the sights, maybe some of the extras in the film.

Tyler Nordby, a student at LBCC who is studying drama, said he was excited to have an opportunity to appear in the movie. A friend of his told him he thought it would be a good idea for him to check out Extras Only in Portland. Extras Only helped to get him involved in the movie, along with some short jobs along the way. Nordby never had actu-



Extras playing students in the movie "Twilight."

Photo courtesy of (MCT)

ally believed that he would be in a movie like this. It's hard to believe that he ever dealt with shyness in his youth and worked only on the outside of a stage, rather than performing on one. Up until the middle of high school, his only drama experience was as a sound, lighting and camera assistant.

Nordby is in more than a

dozen shots in the movie. Oftentimes he is either walking around in the background, as he is in the mainstream movie trailer, or for a larger portion, where he sits behind Bella in the classroom. Sometimes you see him in the hallway of the school talking with someone next to the lockers, or see him in a fleeting moment in the cafeteria.

Nordby has high hopes that he'll be in the next movie in the series, New Moon, which is rumored to be coming out close to 2010. He is currently moving forward in his life with high hopes of being in more movies, as an extra or actor.

Edward Cullen and Bella Swan from the movie "Twilight."

Photo courtesy of (MCT)



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Choir in the coffee house

MaryAnne Turner
 The Commuter

Just before noon on Tuesday an angelic sound was heard coming from the Hot Shot coffee house. Music professor and director James Reddan and his chamber choir graced the warm room and it's aroma of coffee with the presence of their harmonies. It was only a small glimpse of what is to come at Thursday night's show, "Poetic Peace: Ecstasy in Song".

The new "Re-Choired Element" that was once the Chamber Choir, and is now made up of 20 students, performed five of their pieces that will be performed Thursday, which were "Deck the Halls" in seven-eight time, "Salmo 150", "We Three Kings", "Glory of the Father", and "Peace I Leave with You." You can find video of this coffee house performance on our online website.

James Reddan started teaching at LBCC at the beginning of this year, in place of Susan Peck who

moved on to teach at Portland State University. Performing with Chamber Choir, or the "Re-Choired Element", will be the 32-member Concert Choir. They will be utilizing the holiday theme, but mostly a theme of peace. But, it's not just music you'll be hearing. An important part of the choral elements are the lyrics. They're the words that put concrete meaning to the music. Vocalists of Reddan's choir will be reading poems of peace between songs to accompany the comforting theme.

These young musicians perform in the standard three to four part pieces, but they also live up to Reddan's challenge of eight parts, singing two soprano parts, two alto parts, two tenor parts and two bass parts.

Don't miss the chance to see these talented young musicians perform on Thursday evening in the Russell Trip Performance Center, at 7:30 pm. The cost is \$6 and will also help fund the Performing Arts department.

Holiday events!

Salvation Army Food Boxes
 12/03/08 9:00a.m.-11:45a.m.

Spirit Mountain Casino Toy Drive for Doernbecher Childrens Hospital
 10\$ free slot play per toy donated
 12/01/08-12/20/08

Christmas Showcase @ Corban College
 12/05/08 @ 7:30p.m.
 12/06/08 @ 3:00p.m. and 7:30p.m.

The Christmas Truce
 12/05/08 8p.m.
 Actors Cabaret of Eugene
 996 Willamette Street

Holiday High Tea
 12/06/08 3p.m.
 Shelton-McMurphey-Johnson House 303 Willamette Street, Eugene

Holiday Craft Fair
 12/06/08 9a.m. - 4p.m.
 Eastside Faith Center 95 Centennial Loop, Eugene

28th Annual Arts & Craft Event
 12/06,07/08 10a.m. - 5p.m.
 Lane County Fairgrounds Performance Hall 796 W 13th Ave, Eugene

Tall Jazz Holiday concert
 12/07/08 3p.m.-5p.m.
 Willamette Valley Vineyards 8800 Enchanted Way, Turner

Cascade Chorus Community Christmas Celebration
 12/07/08 2p.m.
 Sheldon High School heater 2455 Willakenzie Road, Eugene

C-Logic plays Albany

Kris Nelson
 The Commuter

Cedric Simmons, also known as C-Logic, is releasing a mix tape in late December called Logical Contradiction.

C-Logic is originally from the Vancouver, Washington area and he currently plays shows in Oregon. Soon he would like to do shows all over the state and other areas. On December 12, he is playing at the Grange Hall in North Albany. He is playing a show on December 19th at Bogey's Bar in downtown Albany. C-Logic has had the chance to play shows with Glasses Malone, Sukanuts, Einstein, C-money, and Josh Z, to name a few.

C-Logic raps with an artist named Contra. When asked how their music could be described he replied, "It is party music, but at the same time can have deep meanings." Some of it

sounds commercial while some is underground. C-Logic believes in giving people good music, with influences such as Nas, DJ Quik, and Jadakiss. He is always looking to collaborate with serious artists.

According to his Myspace page, C-Logic started rapping as a hobby in 2005 and began seriously rapping in 2007. In early 2008 he began recording music with the artist Mu\$ik for a solo album early this year.

This month, C-Logic & Contra are starting a new feature "Myspace Weekly", where they will be putting up a new song each week. You can check it out at <http://www.myspace.com/clog-icthalitigator>

For more details on either of these shows keep tuned into my music corner online at <http://www.commuter.linnbenton.edu/Kris-Nelson>



Halo 3: Recon

JJ Oliveros
 For The Commuter

New campaign, new player, new maps, and new fun, "Halo 3: Recon" will be released in fall of 2009.

Creators of the bestselling video game "Halo 3" have announced the making of a new installment in the Halo trilogy. "Halo 3: Recon" will be the fourth version of Halo created by Bungie. Now there are a lot of questions out there about Recon, but the information Bungie has released is only a small dose of information to tease the thousands of Halo fans.

On Sept. 27, 2007, "Halo 3" broke sales and pre-order records, which were held by "Halo 2" at the time, with a whopping \$170 million on the first day of availability. With the release of the new

game, players want to know what to expect, major changes, and if this will be another record breaker. According to Bungie, gamers will not be playing as Master Chief. This is big news! Gamers everywhere are used to playing as Master Chief. But in "Recon" you will play as an ODST (Orbital Drop Shock Trooper). Game play will be focused more on stealth, which is to not be seen by the enemy.

Bungie says it will keep some game play the same. According its Web site (www.bungie.net), there has been a lot of talk about this game using a third-person shooter. Bungie has stated that "Recon" will remain true to Halo culture as a first-person shooter, and multiplayer mode will exist on "Recon". IGN states that "The new campaign chapters pre-

dates the events that unfold in "Halo 3".

Local Halo enthusiast Jake Likewise said, "I am probably most excited for the graphics, because when I saw the trailer it looked pretty legit."

The trailer debuted on Oct. 8.

"I expect Bungie to make a very good story line, I also want a longer campaign, which will have more of a challenge in co-op," Likewise said.

Co-op means that more than one person can play in campaign mode through Xbox live.

"It will be kind of weird not to play as Master Chief, but I think the ODST will be fun playing. It will be something new so I am excited to try that. I will probably pre-order my copy when I can. I mean it's still far from the release date."

Linn-Benton Community College presents
38th ANNUAL CHILDREN'S WINTER FESTIVAL

"A White Winter"
Free Activities and Gifts for Children Ages 0-12
Saturday, Dec. 13, 2008 • 1-4 p.m.

Linn-Benton Community College
 6500 Pacific Blvd. SW, Albany, College Center Building

- Crafts
- Face Painting
- Cookie Decorating
- Magic & Puppet Show
- Kwanzaa Activities
- Hanukkah Activities
- Photo Opportunity with Santa Claus & Father Claus

Free. All children must be accompanied by an adult. A donation of two cans of food will be appreciated. Call (541) 917-4457 for more information.

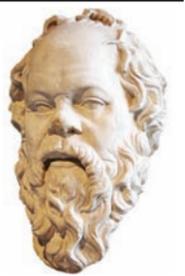
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For disability accommodations, call 917-4789.
 Submit requests four to six weeks before the event.

The Commuter
Editor-In-Chief: Gregory Dewar
Opinion Editor: Brandon Goldner
Newsroom Desk: 917-4451

opinion

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 Please sign and keep to 300 words or less.



PHILOSOPH-OFF MARIJUANA : SIN OR SALVATION?

Brandon Goldner
The Commuter

People ought to be scared. The war on marijuana has stalled ever since Bill Clinton admitted to having been infected by "the pot." No wonder he was such an idiot. Ever wonder why they call it dope?

But for some reason, our nation has stood idly by these last few administrations while states have been enacting laws making

cannabis legal for medical use.

The likes of California and Oregon are to be suspected of supporting

anti-Americanism at every turn, and as such it's no surprise that they're pushing the pro-trainwreck agenda. But what about our gentle queen Rhode Island? Apparently Giovanni da Verrazzano was high off his ass when he discovered it in 1624.

And even for those states that are tough on drugs, the penalties criminals face are not nearly harsh enough. Did you know that you can get away with only serving ONE life sentence in prison if you are found to be growing marijuana in Oklahoma? This is outrageous. I don't want my children threatened with the prospect of their art teacher walking free 65 years later if he's found to be harvesting purple kush between classes. I say give him the death penalty, or at least consecutive life sentences with no possibility of parole or commutation.

And were you aware that you can only go to jail for a year if you're in possession of any amount on your first offense in Kansas? ARE YOU JOKING? You're telling me that the



"Did you know that you can get away with only serving ONE life sentence in prison if you are found to be growing marijuana in Oklahoma?"

Brandon Goldner

guy behind the gym who smokes weed out of a discarded pop can will only be going to jail for a year? Give me a break. It's little comfort to know that, after he's released, if he's found to be tokin' buds in the bathroom out of bong made out of a 20 oz. bottle of Dr. Pepper, a Bic pen, aluminum foil and glue from a glue gun, that he'll be thrown in for another three years. Great. What about after that, when he's serving tables at a local Wendy's and he walks right up to me with

his stale breath and smelly clothes and asks if I need anything else beside the # 6 super double value meal that I JUST ordered

seconds ago? Then I'd say, 'Yeah, I do, buddy. I need you to get shock therapy, because you're a freakin' wacko.'

Here's the bottom line: There are some things people should be able to do legally, and there are some things that they shouldn't. I'm not being unreasonable here, I'm being rational. It's common sense to demand that we be able to buy a gun at a gun show without a permit or a background check and use cash so as not to be tracked down later on. It's equally sensible to equate being high with being mentally ill; if your mindstate is altered, there's no difference between what you're capable of and what an ax-wielding psychopathic lunatic from a mental institution is capable of.

Bill O'Reilly sure hit the nail on the head when he said to marijuana users, "Don't get in a car." That's right. "And don't get near my family." Oh. So. True.

Rick Casillas
The Commuter

My opponent is being hella dumb, bros. For firstly, the only prison that can hold a cannabis connoisseur is your mind. Yeah trip on that, bitches.

Have you ever thought that maybe the world is just one raindrop among thousands, caught in a storm above God as he sits waiting for the bus, crashing down towards the pavement of oblivion? Or that

maybe we're the dogs and dogs are us? No? Well then you're obviously not smoking enough pot. My opponent speaks of harsher prison sentences. Well, the only prison that can hold a cannabis connoisseur is the mind, yeah trip on that, you sober freak.

Times are tough. There's that stock-market thing, and global cooling slash rubbing or whatever deal. Things are hard, too; people want you to learn stuff, you have to do things to earn money. And the saving grace through all our troubles isn't the support of a loving partner or an uh...uh... hold on a second I forgot where I was going with this.

Oh yeah! I saw a commercial yesterday about pot, there were these dudes in a car and they hit some kid on a bike. I thought to myself, "That kid wasn't wearing a helmet, that's karma for you." Speaking of commercials, I can't believe how commercial they've gotten. I mean it's like imperialistic corporate America isn't satisfied making us into their little suits and making us work in cubicles, they want that bloody oil stained



"Have you ever thought...that maybe we're the dogs and dogs are us? No? Then you're obviously not smoking enough pot."

Rick Casillas

money back every time you buy a soda. Hey, rich corporate guy, I am not a robot. You cannot put me in a box like you would with a robot. I have dreams and ambitions. Someday I might join some kind of reggae country fusion band, and I'm going to wear sandals ALL THE TIME. Especially in winter because that's when I get most of my glass sculpturing done and my disc golf league is doing warm ups, have you ever noticed how similar your toes are to your fingers? They're like tiny stubby hands on your

legs...what was I saying?

Oh yeah, my opponent is being hella judgmental, bros, I mean pot is natural.

It's from the ground just like Easter Lilies, Poison Oak, and Elves. It ain't just him, neither. Ever since I learned to read last summer I've been assaulted with anti-marijuana propaganda, and being a pseudo intellectual philosophy major that owns several books I can say with absolute certainty that all of the misunderstandings emanate from them just not getting it. Has my conformibot opponent ever gotten really high and eaten too much before taking a nap? Has my industrial puppet of an adversary ever beaten Sons of Liberty at 2 a.m. after demolishing a bowl and consequently had his mind blown? No, he hasn't, he sits in his Ivory Tower earning a living wage and maintaining stable relationships while I walk the paths of great men before me. So suck it, Brando, it looks like your drinks arrived, cause' you just got served.

How I lost my gaming virginity

MaryAnne Turner
The Commuter

It was a cold rainy day not too long ago. Blair, my boyfriend, was completely glued to his Nintendo DS, and I was tired of studying. I couldn't go outside and ride my long board. For one, it was raining, and second, we now lived out in the boonies and our driveway was gravel (though off-road long boarding proved pretty sweet!).

"Here honey, you should try out this game. Do you want to start an account? You can make a character." Blair had been pushing me to get into RPGs (role playing games) for a while now.

So I thought to myself, "Hell, why not? There's nothing better to do." And so began a long journey to save an imaginary world from the monster of the underworld in Dragon Quest IV.

I'll admit, I used a walkthrough, but in my defense it is my first RPG. In this game you follow a story. You do one mission, which then causes another mission. Then you have missions within missions, and you encounter monsters along the way. When you beat

the monsters you gain experience points and gold, which you can use to buy armor and weapons to raise your defense and other attributes. Experience points make you gain levels, which also make your attributes improve.

There are cool things in the item shop, too. You can get medicinal herbs to raise your hit points, or antidotal herbs to cure your self of poison, or even a Chimaera Wing to get to a city quickly. These are things you can also find in various places when you break baskets or pottery, or find a treasure chest.

I proceeded to type my name and choose a character. The prologue started with my character (MaryAnne) finishing a long day of warrior training. Then I got to sit down and have dinner with my parents, all the while trying to pretend that my fate is flowers and rainbows, about the fate I may encounter when I'm grown and enter the world outside the hamlet, foreshadowing the battles I must soon fight in.

As I played through chapters one, two, three and four, I was amazed that it wasn't just a "kill the bad guys" kind of game. It was a story that I was a part of. I

felt like I was in "The Never Ending Story".

In each of the first four chapters I was a different character, and in chapter five the character, MaryAnne, which I chose and played in the prologue was my lead character. MaryAnne found the other characters one-by-one in various places and circumstances.

My favorite part so far is the casino. You actually get to buy tokens and play a few of the games (video poker being the best).

Then the unthinkable, inexcusable happened. I awoke on Thanksgiving morning and before I could get out of bed, Blair had something to tell me. He accidentally saved over my 38 hours and 47 minutes of play. But I was in chapter five and finally at level 20! Now what? You can delete, but you can't un-delete.

At this point it's been five days since I had to start over. I've progressed a lot faster this time around. It's not as interesting, but it's still fun. It's probably for the best that I lost interest this week anyway. After all, when you're playing video games, God knows you're not writing that ten-page research paper.

Letter to the Editor

I would personally like to acknowledge and thank some people on campus who have supported the Native American Student Union. Deanna Trask, we would not have pulled the month off without you! I am beyond grateful...if ever you need anything... you got it!

A special thanks to President Cavin, V.P. President Thallamer, and offices. A huge thank you to the kitchen staff: Chef Jan, Laurie Chang, Corleen Chang, and anyone whose name I might have missed. Lyle Jincks, you are amazing, "Wah Doh". Thanks too, to Jessica Perkins, Brian Edwards, and Christine Baker, without you we would not have eaten; Curt Smith that means you too!

Again, I must say, without the support of our faculty we would not get the "club" experience. Huge thanks goes to Michele Wilson, Callie Palmer, and Toni Klohk. Jeana Wiser, you rock!! Thanks again.

Jeanie Burgard Smith
 President/NASU

Submit to The Commuter!

commuter@linnbenton.edu

917-4451

Forum 222

Opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not express the views of The Commuter, its staff, Linn-Benton Community College, or the President of the United States of America.

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Please sign and keep to 300 words or less.

All the news unfit to print: blogs from The Commuter

Lydia Elliot
The Commuter

First it was losing a diamond out of my ring, then it was caressing a spider (you don't want to know...), followed by a visit from my parents. Then finding myself outside at 7a.m. in the freezing cold, with a migraine, helping the neighbor I barely know break into her own house after her son locked the house, and car, keys in the car

Whoops!
It's really an awkward way to meet someone, standing in your pajamas in the cold: No bra, mascara under my eyes and my short hair sticking out in every direction, looking like some kind of lost Calvin Klein "heroin chic" ad from the 90's.

I tried to make some kind of conversation, but could only babble randomly, still lost in my dream, where I was...

more at www.lbcommuter.com

Minda Trulove
The Commuter

Back in the mid-to-late nineties, a group of 10 male college students decided to try and enrich their campus with an a cappella group. The group came together through the work of one individual by the name of Dan Ponce, who knew what the group needed to be and sound like. This group started out only having one song, Billy Joel's "For the longest time." They grew substantially from there and became "Straight No Chaser".

The original members of the group started out small, but by the end 1999 they had sold over 50,000 copies of three albums. When the members graduated, they hand chose their replacements to guarantee the continued success of the program. The original members went their separate ways, becoming news anchors, cruise line performers and even Simba of the Lion King. Then in 2006, things changed.

Indiana University decided to have a reunion of the original SNC group. Randy Stine of the original group had gone on to have his own video recording business. For fun he decided to...
more at www.lbcommuter.com

This just in: people are stupid

Rick Casillas
The Commuter

Fat fingers and absent minds are causing a rash of misdialed 911 calls to be made from the LBCC campus this fall. According to Bruce Thompson, security manager of LBCC and dialing enthusiast, emergency operators are contacted through campus phone lines upward of 5-6 times per week, wasting the valuable time of dispatchers and security personnel alike that would otherwise be allocated to real emergencies. "When we have a false call to take care of, we're pulling resources," says Thompson.

The crux of the quandary is the insatiable desire of students and faculty to have contact with the outside world. To dial out of the school's internal

directory you must press 9, and to place a long distance call you naturally hit 1; and that's where it all goes to hell as lead fingered zealots pound the crap out of that little button twice, accidentally contacting



"Take your time dialing. Make sure you get the number right the first time," Thompson slowly explains.

Rick Casillas

emergency operators and alerting the security staff. "We get a lot of them every year. Anytime you have that combination of numbers you're going to talk to 911 operators," says Thompson with assurance.

So how can you, the average Joe or Jill, prevent this unnecessary fluctuation of collateral dialing

damage? Well for starters, you can stop it. In my over four years of experience utilizing opposable thumbs I have yet to incorrectly dial a search and rescue team while attempting to send a fax. You too can hope to reach such heights if you dare, and I'm not the only one that has faith in you. "Take your time dialing. Make sure you get the right number the first time," Thompson slowly explains. So the next time you make a fist and blindly punch at the faceplate of a phone, think of poor little Jimmy dying in a ditch somewhere after his Segway was overturned, all because E.M.T.s were too busy responding to your Sunday call to mom. Will that make your mother happy, knowing the cost of your call was poor little Jimmy's life? I don't think she'll accept that charge.

American ideals revisited

Coquille Rex
For The Commuter

The election of 2008 has reawakened within me a sense of hope and faith in the fundamental principles of America that I have not known since childhood. Having lived a very sheltered life, I had never been exposed to racism and, as far as I understood, women already had equal rights. I believed what I had read about our Nation and its foundations to be true, so when I stepped out of the wilderness of Alaska and into the "real" world, I had not yet been taught to be cynical or doubtful about the workings of our government. I remember reading the Constitution and the Emancipation Proclamation both in elementary school and high school and feeling so confused about the disparities between what America was founded on and the rights that were still being fought over hundreds of years later. To me, it made no sense that "civil rights" would need to be defended or that our nation was so full of ignorance and hate. I had a naive attitude towards humanity and politics; I believed that America was a nation "of the people, by the people and for the people." I believed that it was self-evident that all people were created equal. To think any less would be to regress to a time before our constitution was written; it would mean that the basic truths that our forefathers had written about were not in fact looked upon as truths but as ideals that were not actually achievable by the average American. This was a drastically different way of thinking to me and created what seemed to be a "loophole" for people to act ignorantly with no remorse for the pain they caused others.

More and more I began to witness my fellow citizens violate each other's supposedly inalienable rights by using race, gender, sexual

orientation or socioeconomic status to separate and categorize groups as less valued than one another. I stood firm in my idealistic views of America. I believed that the people I kept encountering were not necessarily typical of the average educated American. I felt pity for those who persisted in the ignorance of discrimination and struggled within myself to find ways to help them to understand the ramifications of their beliefs and attitudes. Still, I believed that the majority of Americans were true to our nation's ideals and beliefs. Day by day I encountered more and more discriminatory attitudes being portrayed by everyone from my pastor to my neighbor. However, the moment that I learned that sexism and racism were indeed a standard way of thought to Americans was when my Social Studies teacher rejected my thoughts regarding who could or could not become our president.

I wrote an essay about the foundations of the American political system; I wrote of a day when we may see a woman or a non-Caucasian person who could become our President. I used the Emancipation Proclamation and our Constitution as my reference material supporting the fact that any educated American could have the opportunity to run in an election. My paper was handed back to me the following week and for the first time in my life I saw the letter "F" as a grade on my assignment along with a note that read "This essay is supposed to be reality based and factual, what you have written is fantasy." I refused to change my essay; I stood firm in my belief in the American dream. Deep down inside, I began to understand that the ideals that I believed to be universal were not so universal; I found that I, myself, was in the minority. I began to doubt my supposed "freedom of speech." I started to fear that the "system" was not designed to work for me. I learned to become cynical. My faith in

the American people's desire to create a better nation was dashed.

For many years, I felt heartbreak at each election. I felt as though my vote did not count. I felt that my voice was too small to be heard. My heart sank as I realized that yet another election was coming up and this time there were issues that I felt were extremely important. I worried that I would, yet again, cast a vote that would not count.

As I got to know the candidates, I came across Barack Obama's autobiography. His experiences as a child and his beliefs in the unity of the American people struck a chord deep within me. Suddenly, I realized that not only was there a woman running, there was a man who represented much more than just a black man. Obama had lived in poverty, he had lived as an Indonesian child, he had lived as a child of white grandparents, he had devoted his life's work to the betterment of society; now, here he was, the perfect example of the American dream. Here I was, seeing the dreams that I had expressed as a high school student being realized in this election year. My faith in America began to be restored. Our country's reaction to this election solidified in me a desire to once again be a part of that change.

Today, I join with the chorus of American voices. I refuse to accept the doubt, fear, and cynicism that have been forced upon me. I rise up in the face of those who would say that we are a divided nation and vehemently refute their flawed logic. We are One Nation. We are indivisible. There is Liberty. There is justice for all. There is room in this American symphony for every instrument, for every note, for every voice; now, there is a proper director in the office of president that I believe we can look to and find the beat of our nation; it is the heartbeat of patriotism and of service and responsibility to one another.



PERSPECTIVES: What did you think about The Commuter this term?


Colby Herman
Undeclared

"I thought it was good. I liked the layout and front covers."


Megan Enright
Undeclared

"I liked it a lot."


Elijah Teal-Cribbs
Philosophy

"I liked the edgier editor."


Brittney Marcelo
Nursing

"I've never actually read it."


Anna Beaudoin
Dental Hygiene

"I didn't know about it."

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The woman in the laundry room: Part 2

Catch the first part of the story in the Nov. 19 edition of *The Commuter*, or visit www.lbcommuter.com

Brandon Goldner
 The Commuter

"Hello," said I, feeling an obligation to the greeting I didn't want to extend. She looked up and smiled distractedly, as if we'd met in a library and I'd interrupted her research. We walked down to our door. It opened, and then shut behind us.

We continued debating. "We should bring her some food," she said. "What if this is some sort of test from God," I said, "and what if we fail?"

I was starting to loosen. I'm not heartless; I don't want people to starve or freeze to death. An hour went by. "What if she stays here all winter, until March or something? Could you handle that?"

Finally, I told Corinne that if she wanted to help, I would be supportive. We started looking for what we could give. We didn't have much food. Corinne didn't have any money, but I had a couple of dollar bills that were still pretty crisp. There was a blanket that we didn't use anymore. "But don't we need it at some point?"

"We'll just tell her to leave it in the laundry room when she's done."

We got the two dollars and the blanket and walked down the hall. We got to the stairs. There wasn't anybody there. We went in the laundry room, but she wasn't there either. There was a piece of paper on the old television set with the cord wrapped around it. Scribbled were some phone numbers, the addresses and names of churches. I left the blanket and the two dollars, but decided to leave a note to make sure she knew it was for her. "Ma'am - We wanted you to have these if you can make use of it. Thank you. -B"

I can't figure out why I thanked her. Maybe it was for the lesson. Maybe it was because I didn't know what else to write.

We left, but we checked a couple of times to see if she'd come back. I got to thinking maybe it really was a test, just to see if we'd help. To be selfish, it felt more like a test for myself. I knew Corinne was going to do something; it was me that was slow getting on board.



"I can't figure out why I thanked her. Maybe it was for the lesson. Maybe it was because I didn't know what else to write."

Brandon Goldner

We were about to forget it and call it a night, but we wanted to go back a final time. We got to the end of the hall, and we heard something from down the stairs. We looked at each other. I didn't really want to go down. Corinne gestured, and her eyes said, "Come on." So we went down the stairs. Nobody in the hallway between the flights. We went to the first set and looked down and there was the woman, about halfway up.

"Hello," Corinne said, voice full of kindness.

I was a little ashamed and nervous. "Um. We wanted you to know we left some stuff for you upstairs. There's a blanket and a couple of bucks, if you wanted them."

The woman peered at us. Her face was dark.

"That won't do a damn's worth of good. I don't need a blanket, I need a place to sleep."

We both felt horrible, but almost offended. We were just trying to help. Then the woman spoke again.

"I gotta get out of that laundry room, can't sleep there."

We were sympathetic, but I

asked anyway. "Why not?"

"Because I was raped five different times up there last night."

Corinne turned away faster than you would have believed and looked down. I was aghast. What the hell was she saying? Stupidly, I tried to say something intelligible, but only managed to say, "Are you serious?"

I really meant it, too. The swirling in my head was beginning to die down, and my brain recovered from the initial shock.

"Yes. Five different times. Do you have any room? Can I sleep with you?"

Corinne was still turned away, but we both know what had happened. Our sympathy had turned to coldness. Who was she suggesting had done it? And the laundry room was between two different apartments, one on our hall and the other on the corner at the end, both occupied. We can't walk around past midnight without feeling like we're keeping someone up. The slightest bit of noise would have been noticed, let alone what she was suggesting.

The woman was crazy.

...to be continued next issue.

Teaching my daughter how to eat like a bachelor

Chris Brotherton
 The Commuter

The past few months, ever since my wife got her promotion and started working five days a week, I have been the "stay at home" parent. My son is old enough that he is in school during the day, so all I have to do is keep my two year old daughter entertained and fed.

When my son was this age, I was working all the time, so I was unable to see a lot of the things that he did during this developmental stage. Because of this, there are a few things that my daughter threw at me that I wasn't ready for.

Keeping her entertained is not too hard. Even while sitting at the computer I can still play games with her and make sure that she isn't climbing the curtains. During this time, my 60 inch television sees more Spongebob Squarepants than anything else. Plus she likes to chase the dog through the house, so I am actually able to sit down and work.

However, one of the things that I wasn't expecting is how much she can eat in a day. Now, she isn't one of those kids you see on Jerry Springer, who is two years old and pushing a hundred pounds. That is why I was so surprised by how much this little girl could eat. I don't know where she puts it, but I am betting that a lot of it gets burnt off running up and down the stairs.

I have never been a gourmet cook by any means. Usually if it doesn't have instructions on the box, I am fairly well lost. When I am just cooking for me, I am not too picky about if I am having hot dogs for breakfast, but I would like my daughter to know better. Luckily there are microwavable pancakes and French toast. I try not to feed her unhealthy things, staying away from fast food restaurants unless we are running errands.

Even though she just wants candy all the time (she is two, after all) I stay away from letting her have that. But she will eat fruit salad followed by a bowl of baked beans. She is young enough to not be sick of ramen, and she likes Rice-a-Roni. Also, I always have the old standby of macaroni and cheese.

I am not trying to sound like a guy who can't take care of himself and would starve if he didn't have a woman in his life to take care of him. I know my way around a BBQ pretty well and I can order a pizza with great efficiency. However, when it comes to actually planning a well rounded meal, my wife has me beat by a long shot. But I am realizing that I am going to have to learn to make real meals, otherwise my daughter is going to be in college, cooking a can of beans on the stove, without a pan. Followed by a farting contest with the guys.

Poker bites

A story of luck and heartache in Nevada

Damon Solomos
 The Commuter

While on a recent road trip to Reno, I had the pleasure of playing in a poker tournament at The Grand Sierra Resort. I'm an avid poker player, and if you ask any of my friends that I regularly play with, they will tell you that I am good. What follows is the story of a single hand that taught me poker's greatest lesson.

The hand started with me on the button. Picking up my first playable hand, ace and jack, I wanted to see the flop, so I called the big blind. Every one folded down to



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one person, the man to my right. He raised two hundred dollars. I called. The table went quiet as the flop came. Three cards: Ace, ace, and ten. I had picked up a monster hand. Working the odds, I realized that there was still one hand that could beat me at the moment, and that was if my lone opponent had ace king in the pocket. The odds were very slim that he had that. I put him on a pair of face cards. I said to myself, "He has pocket queens."

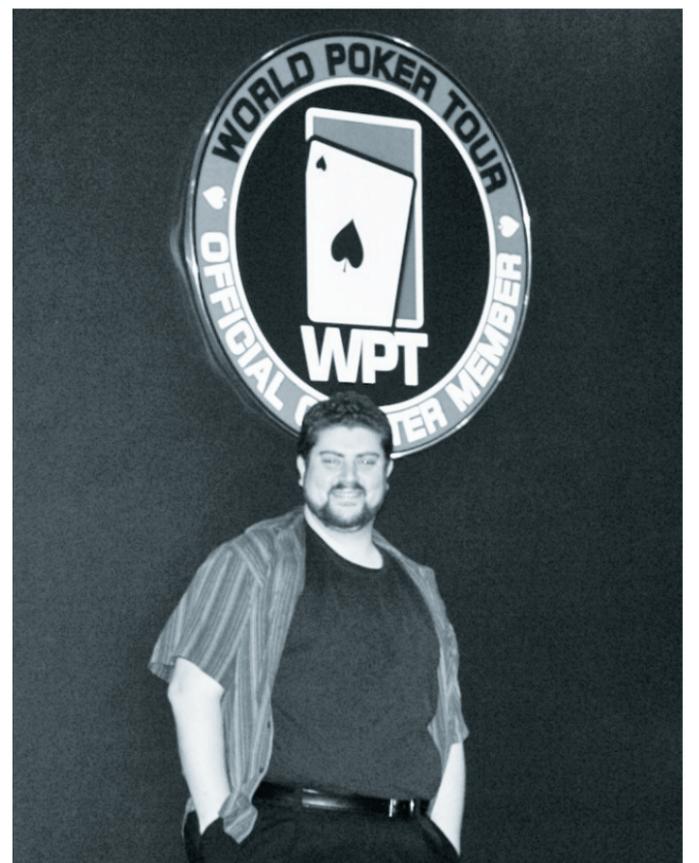
So I did what any aggressive poker player would have done and said, "I'm all in." My opponent looked at the board and called quickly, throwing over two

kings. I read him right, and more than that, he read me wrong. I threw over my higher ace and jack and his face sunk. I had him beat. The table reacted with, "Well played," and, "That's harsh," depending on who they were cheering for. The next card came, and the table got quiet again. A six landed. No help to anyone, but I was still in the lead. My opponent stood, getting ready to shake my hand and walk away. Chatter started up as the whole table expected the next hand to start.

Then Fifth Street landed. The last card, and it's the king. My aces fell to his full house. He cheered and the whole table groaned. A lady on my right said, "You played it right, hon." I said, "Well played," and I shook his

hand and walked away. I couldn't be mad, 'cause I did exactly what any poker master would have done. Then why did he beat me?

It's poker's greatest lesson, one that can only really be driven home having played a real money game, one lesson that can only be taught when you do everything right and still lose. The lesson is this: Odds, skill, and talent will win you a lot of hands, but when the luck factor kicks in, even the greenest amateur can take out the most experienced player. It was a lesson well learned, and one of the best and most fun hands I have ever played.



The author posing at the World Poker Tour in Reno, Nevada.

Photo courtesy of David Solomos