

'No Kings,' 'Boots Across Oregon' rallies bring thousands to Oregon Capitol

Sirena Coulter-Kress, Staff Writer & Robin Linares, News Editor

Thousands gathered on Oct. 18 at the Oregon State Capitol State Park with signs, and some with inflatable costumes, to join the "No Kings" rally and march through downtown Salem. Across the capitol mall, a smaller crowd of approximately 150 people gathered in a rally to promote a petition to recall Oregon Governor Tina Kotek.

This "No Kings" event in Salem, which, according to rally organizers, had nearly 10,000 people in attendance, was one of more than 2,700 demonstrations with over 7 million participants across the country that came together in protest against President Donald Trump and the policies enacted in his second administration. This demonstration also occurred in the midst of Trump's push to send the national guard into Portland and as the Salem region sees increased reports of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) activity in the area.

One of the organizing groups of the Oct. 18 "No Kings" rally, Salem Region Indivisible (SRI), which is a regional chapter of the national grassroots organization Indivisible, was present in full force, including tabling volunteers and volunteers prepared to act in a de-escalating capacity according to Thom Gapen, SRI's director of communications. From SRI's website, their vision is "To build a movement around a progressive agenda, defend the rule of law, and to mobilize diverse coalitions to save our democracy."

Gapen spoke about the organization of the "No Kings" rallies, which as a national movement comes from a large coalition of organizations across the United States, such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), MoveOn, the 50501 movement and more. Gapen estimated an attendance of nearly 10,000, which is around two times more than they had seen in previous rallies, he said. He stressed that organizing events such as this is a learning process and



Rally-goers gather along Center Street and Summer Street for the "No Kings" Rally on Oct. 18, 2025.

Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

that they are still "building the plane as [they] fly it."

The rally started at 12 p.m. and included several speakers prior to the march through downtown Salem at 2 p.m. According to the SRI Facebook page, speakers included Hannah Shooting Bear from Indigenous NOW, Sandy Chung with the ACLU, RJ Hampton with the NAACP, and Vanessa Nordyke, a Salem city councilor and mayoral candidate.

Nordyke explained that she was initially invited to speak at the rally after running into the organizers at Salem's "Pride in the Park."

"Beyond being invited to speak, I really wanted to be there because both personally and professionally, I have been impacted by the policies from the federal administration this year," Nordyke said, "This is a really important way to find others who have been similarly affected, find those who share your values and to give each other hope."

According to Gapen, SRI trained around 40 volunteers for almost a month to prepare them to keep

the peace between attendees of the "No Kings" event and the aforementioned counter-rally on the other side of the Capitol mall. "We kinda knew that, if you'll pardon my French," Gapen said, "they were pissed off — we didn't know how they were gonna act. We didn't know how they were gonna react with us across the way."

Despite the presence of hired security and human rights observers in the crowd at the rally, the No Kings website states, "A core principle behind all No Kings events is a commitment to nonviolent action. We expect all participants to seek to de-escalate any potential confrontation with those who disagree with our values and to act lawfully at these events."

One of these human rights observers was Elise Strauss, who sported a frog hat and the signature neon vest to note that she was a volunteer. She described her role as an "impartial observer of infractions of the rule of law" who could act as a witness if there happened to be an altercation. Noting that her role was focused on keeping the peace, she

expressed admiration for peaceful protest efforts in Portland with the "freedom frog" referring to the man protesting in an inflatable frog costume at Portland's ICE facility in early October.

Many rally-goers followed in Portland's footsteps with the inflatable costumes, which included frog, chicken, axolotl, dinosaur and unicorn costumes. Ryan Davis, who was adorned in a pink and purple unicorn costume and held a large American flag, explained why he valued this new wave of inflatable expression. "Inflatables grab attention and steer people towards curiosity about the cause we are promoting," Davis said.

Davis expressed that he was there to advocate for freedom of speech and to protect democracy. He felt that the inflatable costumes acted as "the antithesis of violence" and can act as a "less invasive form of self-expression," while remaining eye-catching.

Two current Willamette students, Reilly Harrington ('28) and Alyssa Thompson ('28), were present at the rally.

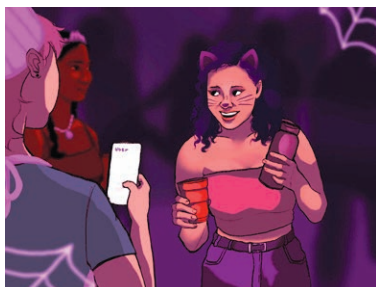
"Everyone's voice matters, and it's important to hear from everyone. I think that you should never be silent, especially if you have something to say," Thompson stated. "That includes the youth and especially [as] we're moving out into the world and starting to have more power to make change."

Seth Cotlar, history professor and chair of Willamette's history department, was also in attendance. He expressed his admiration of the turnout at the Salem event and noted how far it extended throughout the country. "I think it was also really important that it happened in so many places around the country. Not just in big cities and not just in really blue parts of the country, but all over the country," Cotlar said. "It's a useful reminder that the majority of Americans do not approve of what Donald Trump is doing."

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The recall rally

At the opposite end of the State Capitol State Park, a smaller assembly of approximately 150 people showed up for the “Boots Across Oregon” caravan and rally at the State Capitol. According to a poster advertising the event, the goals for the rally were to promote the recall of Oregon Governor Tina Kotek and to be a tribute to Charlie Kirk’s national day of remembrance, likely referring to Trump’s executive order declaring Kirk’s birthday, Oct. 14, to become the National Day of Remembrance for Charlie Kirk.

The caravan and rally event was organized by Oregon for the People, which was founded by Bill Minnix, a La Pine resident, speaker at the recall rally event and chief petitioner of the petition to recall Kotek.

At the time of writing, to get the recall election on the ballot, Minnix had until Oct. 27 to collect 292,933 signatures. At the event, one of the organizers, who did not provide her name to The Collegian, noted that Minnix had not shared at that time how many signatures had been collected. Minnix did not respond to a request for comment in time for publication.

According to posters advertised on Minnix’s Facebook regarding the caravan, the schedules and routes were coordinated and approved by law enforcement. The travel path was notably routed in a way to avoid Center Street, where the “No Kings” rally was primarily situated, likely to minimize potential clashes between movements.

At 2 p.m., the same time the “No Kings” event began its march

through downtown Salem, speakers at the recall rally took to an American-flag-backdropped stage that had a photo of Charlie Kirk propped on a stand. There was also an area where people could purchase Donald Trump merch, and many attendees were dressed in more muted camouflage, which provided another visual distinction between the two events.

Considering the stark ideological differences between the two Capitol events, there was minimal confrontation between the two groups besides occasional verbal spats. Additionally, members of The Collegian staff were briefly heckled by one of the attendees of the “Boots Across Oregon” rally.

Youth’s role in protest movements

Organizers at both rallies expressed their interest in youth involvement and simultaneous struggle with sustaining interest and involvement with the demographic.

Gapen spoke to the importance of showing up and fighting for what one believes in, in order to affect change, as well as voicing the difficulties SRI has experienced engaging youth — including Willamette students — in their events and rallies that don’t fall under the banner of the “No Kings” movement, despite often taking place across the street.

Additionally, Cotlar noted the diversity in generational turnout at the “No Kings” event and acknowledged the importance of the mutual sharing of knowledge that can be provided between generations. He explained members of older generations have lived experience of a time before Trump-era politics that can



A truck from the “Boots Across Oregon” caravan supports a poster reading, “FAKE NEWS MEDIA IS EVIL” across from the State Capitol in Salem, Oregon, on Oct. 18, 2025.

Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

provide a different perspective on current events. “For those who are 20, Donald Trump has always been in your world,” Cotlar said. “In part, I think that’s why a lot of older folks are out there.”

Nordyke expressed the importance of local action, especially as things can be daunting to view from federal-level politics under this current administration. With her role as a councilor, she said, “There’s actually a lot that happens with the local lev-

el that is going to impact our college students, our Willamette University students, our Bearcats.” She noted these impacts include things like local climate action plans, public transportation and affordable housing and Salem’s commitment as a sanctuary city.

When asked if they had anything else to say directly to other students, Harrington said to “Use your voice in whatever capacity you can. That’s how you make change.”

Willamette welcomes Ken Wytsma in part-time chaplaincy role one year after termination of Office of Spiritual and Religious Life

Amelia Hare • Staff Writer



Ken Wytsma, Willamette’s new chaplain, speaks with The Collegian in his office in the Dean’s Suite in Smullin Hall on Sept. 30, 2025.

Photo by KEENAN YOSHIZAWA

This fall, Willamette welcomed Pastor Ken Wytsma as the newest university chaplain, marking the return of the chaplaincy role to Willamette since the closure of the Office of Spiritual and Religious Life (OSRL) in June 2024.

Wytsma is a scholar of justice, theology, history, and religion and an author. One of his books, “The Myth of Equality: Uncovering the Roots of Injustice and Privilege,” was one of

nearly 400 books taken out of the Naval Academy library by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth according to the New York Times.

The hiring of Wytsma comes one academic year after the termination of Rev. Ineda Pearl Player, Willamette’s previous chaplain. For many, Pearl served as an important member of the Willamette community, seen through the letters sent to Willamette’s administration by fac-

ulty and staff expressing frustration over her termination and the closing of the OSRL. WU admin cited financial challenges as the reason for the termination of the office and Pearl’s full-time position.

Wytsma met and worked over the summer with Willamette President Steve Thorsett, Provost Jennifer Henderson, and United Methodist Church (UMC) to bring the chaplaincy back to life at Willamette. The university had its first chaplain in 1956 with the formation of the Office of the Chaplains, which later became the OSRL. The office hosted community events like convocations and other religious occasions.

“It was an opportunity presented, and I loved the university. I always have,” Wytsma said.

While his role is only part-time for the foreseeable future, working 10 hours a week, Wytsma assures that he’s “just scratching the surface.” His role mostly consists of offering spiritual guidance for students, facilitating celebrations of faith among the community, and bridging the Salem community and Willamette through religious events and social organizing.

Historically, chaplains have been utilized to assist students, staff and faculty through spiritual guidance, along with being a resource to facilitate community gatherings — something Wytsma wants to continue throughout his new role. Wytsma noted the chaplain’s role in facilitat-

ing personal growth in students while at the same time enabling community conversations. “You [the chaplain] are standing, like, in the heart of the community, where you’re also standing in the heart of the sacred individual,” he said, emphasizing the importance of a chaplain in aiding the Willamette public to engage with each other.

This sentiment is shared among some Willamette students, like Q Wilson (’27), who worked with Pearl as an intern before her termination. Wilson highlighted the necessity of chaplains engaging with the community. “There is a very strong need on college campuses, or at least on this college campus, to humanize one another,” they said. “Creating those spaces to be together, with one another as human people.”

Wilson also noted how chaplains can engage with students in a way that fits the needs of the community. “A chaplains job is to bring the community together, around what Pearl called ‘big energy.’”

Wytsma’s office is in the Dean Suite on the first floor of Walton at the Willamette Salem campus. If needed, he also holds office hours for Pacific Northwest College of Art (PNCA) students and the Graduate Professional Center.

Wytsma’s role, while part-time, still offers him the opportunity to begin working with his new community. “There’s a lot to kind of learn and a lot to engage with,” he said.

ASWU adjusts precedents following club leaders' fall funding round frustrations

Aubrey Lee • Staff Writer

On Thursday, Oct. 9, the associated students of Willamette University's (ASWU) senate gathered for one of its usual weekly meetings — which was met with higher than usual attendance.

About 20 audience members were present, and several clubs and individuals provided public comments expressing concerns over the outcomes of the first fall funding round and how funds are allocated between clubs and organizations on campus. In response, at its Oct. 23 meeting, the ASWU senate passed a redraft of the funding precedent to expand communication and transparency for future funding cycles, including the most recent fall funding round two, which began on Oct. 24.

In a typical funding round, club treasurers submit their funding requests to the ASWU finance board, with a cost breakdown and description of items they request. These requests must also meet ASWU's precedents for funding. After that, the finance board has about a week to consider all of the funding requested by ASWU-affiliated clubs. The finance board then submits a funding recommendation that is voted on by the entirety of the ASWU senate.

BSU president speaks on "WingstopGate" posters

The first to speak when the floor was opened for public comment on Oct. 9 was Kayla Davis ('26), the president of the Black Student Union (BSU). Davis spoke in response to posters which had been circulated on campus by an unknown actor. The posters, easily recognizable by their banner reading: "WingStopGate," argued that in the fall funding round 1 funds had been unfairly allocated and that BSU did not receive the funding it deserved.

While the posters echoed many other clubs' calls for more transparency within ASWU, the posters argued on behalf of BSU, without the club's consent, said Davis. Addition-

ally, as the posters were not made by an ASWU-associated club, they also violated the Student Engagement and Leadership (SEAL) offices posting policies.

During her public comment, Davis, when addressing the posters, said that "it does not promote equality on campus to utilize Black voices as a stepping stone to receive the things that you want." She ended her statement acknowledging the issues that other clubs are facing and encouraged other clubs to advocate for their concerns.

Clubs leaders voice concern

Among the clubs affected by the recent funding decisions was the Native Indigenous Student Union (NISU). NISU had requested funds for an event for Indigenous Heritage Month in November, but according to NISU President Mae Sauntere Hernandez ('27), as of Oct. 17 the request was not listed as either approved or denied. Additionally, NISU had requested funds for two separate trips to the Grand Ronde Museum and the Grand Ronde Nursery, but on the form, the events seemed to be considered together as one event.

In a public comment at the ASWU senate meeting, Hernandez stressed the need for more transparency within ASWU and suggested the implementation of an appeals process as the way to best correct many of the communication errors this funding round. In a later interview with The Collegian, Hernandez said, "For there not to be an appeal process, for mistakes that were not our own, and for things that failed due to technology is crazy."

Likely in response to this concern, at the Oct. 21 finance board meeting, the board approved a precedent for an appeals process as part of their larger project to re-draft the funding precedents and procedures. Their recommendations for a redraft were then passed by an ASWU senate

vote at their Oct. 23 meeting.

Another club that was affected by the fall funding round was Castaway Club. After being denied all van funding, which is crucial to the functioning of Castaway as it engages in fishing and stream clean-up outings, both Eyan Hackney ('26), president and co-founder, and Jack Crone ('28), vice president and co-founder, began to look into the current funding precedents. Though the SEAL office later agreed to fund Castaway as the original denial of funds was due to administrative error, the pair said they believe they have discovered systemic bias within the ASWU funding precedents, and now have concerns about the transparency of the finance board.

"This is kind of like a Band-Aid on a bullet hole."

—Mitch Septoff

One of Castaway's biggest concerns is in regards to the lack of transparency. On Oct. 8, Crone requested the meeting minutes for the ASWU finance board, but he instead discovered that no meeting minutes had been recorded.

According to the ASWU Treasurer Mitch Septoff ('26), who heads the finance board, in past years, the board has prioritized speed over communication, so during funding round decisions, taking meeting minutes is not always the priority. But to Crone, it's "a core part of ASWU to have that clarity, to take minutes, and to let students be informed." Without the minutes, Crone believes the ASWU finance board lacks accountability.

Castaway's other concern was alleged systemic bias in ASWU's funding precedents. Because of the way funds are allocated, sports clubs

tend to receive more money than civic or cultural organizations. According to Hackney, in the pre-fall and the most recent fall funding round, sports and recreational clubs received about \$32,000, while cultural and civic clubs received around \$20,000, resulting in a funding gap of \$12,000 — a funding gap, Hackney said, that "no amount of goodwill can fill." By the time of publication, The Collegian could not independently verify these numbers.

ASWU makes adjustments

In response to recent push-back, for the upcoming fall funding round 2, which has been accepting funding requests from Oct. 24-31, the finance board will take two weeks to consider all funding requests. This change is part of a larger effort by the ASWU Finance Board and the ASWU Treasurer Septoff to address some of the grievances brought up in public comment.

Additionally, in future finance board meetings, ASWU Director of Communications Katelyn Beissel Rosales ('28) will be taking meeting minutes. Meeting minutes from both the Oct. 14 and Oct. 21 finance board meetings are currently published on the official ASWU website under Documents.

In Septoff's words, "[These changes are] kind of like a Band-Aid on a bullet hole." Even before the controversies of the first fall funding round, Septoff and the finance board have been working to implement larger long-term changes to the funding precedents. They hope to make the language easier to understand and hopefully close the funding gap between civic and cultural clubs and sports clubs.

Until then, Septoff encourages anyone to reach out to him with questions or concerns, either via email (mdseptoff@willamette.edu) or by attending his office hours in the Bistro, Wednesday and Friday from 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

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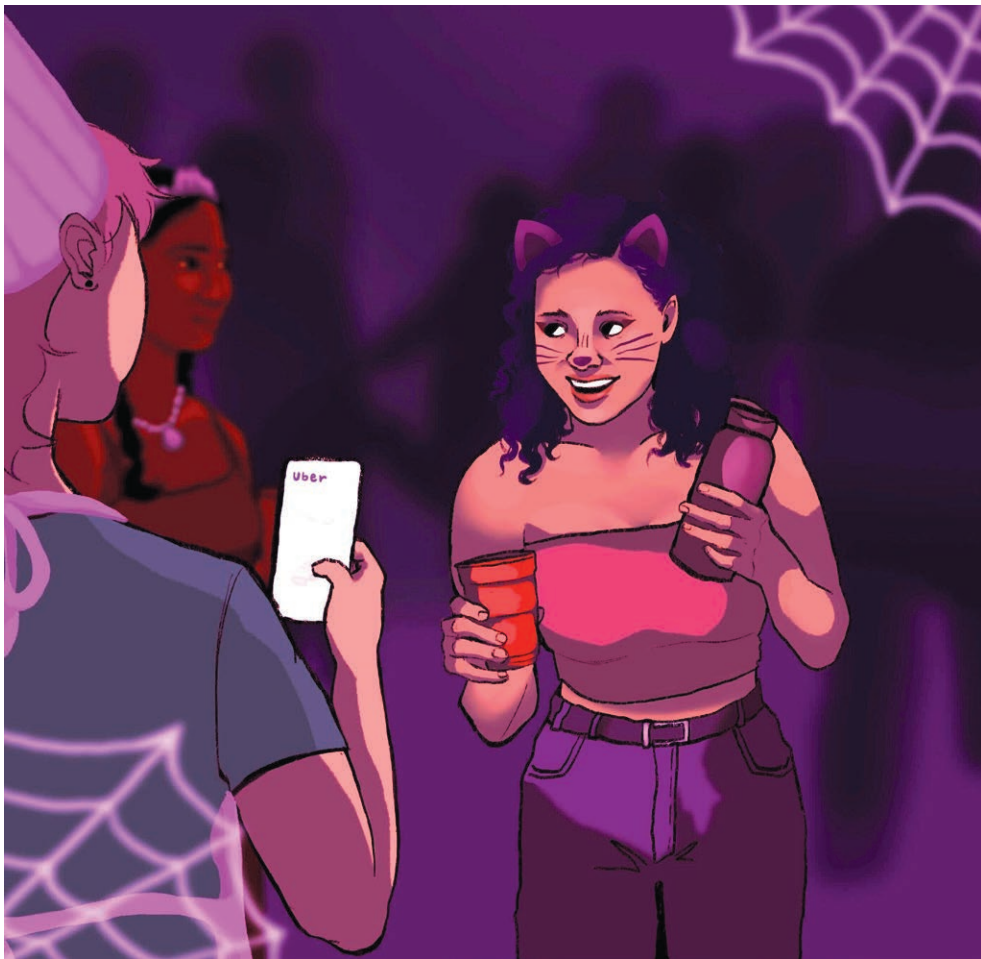


For Senate Meeting Minutes:

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3. Click 'Documents'

Willamette health and safety experts, students provide guidance for safe Halloween season

Avneet Dhaliwal • Staff Writer



Students at a college party. One is ordering an Uber on their phone, while the other is holding a solo cup in their right hand and a water bottle in their left.

Art by WES MOWRY-SILVERMAN

College students are injured seriously during festive events every year — in some cases, mortally. A visit to the emergency room from alcohol poisoning, cannabis intoxication or polysubstance use is no one's ideal way to spend a holiday. With Halloween right around the corner, Willamette health and safety leaders and community members provided some reminders and

strategies to stay safe this spooky season.

"If you're going to choose to participate in those activities, have a plan," said AJ Christensen, director of Campus Safety. "[Ask yourself], 'Who's your safe driver?' Make sure if you're going in areas unknown to you, go in groups [and] go with people you trust."

Juniors and seniors often have

established a set of rules that they share with friends or family before they go out to have fun. Despite being friends with someone for a long time, there still may be things such as health conditions or drinking habits that can come as a shock if not discussed beforehand. For many, clear communication and strict boundaries established with peers is the easiest way to have a good time.

"I give [my friends] all the information that they need to know," said Grace Grahou ('26). "I should at least know two people [in the group] of people that I'm going with. [Also], some people can be nice, but when they drink, they can show you a side that you've never seen before."

Advocates at the Bishop Wellness Center encourage students to stock up on essentials before they may actually need them. The self-service cart in the entry way of the Bishop Wellness Center, for example, has free condoms and dental dams. They also provide various medications, such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen or liquid IV for hangovers in the vending machine on the first floor of the UC building.

During a safety or health related scare, Campus Safety and Willamette Emergency Medical Services (WEMS) should be among the first personnel contacted for an on-campus emergency. However, at time of reporting, WEMS has been out-of-service and were unable to share when they will return to service.

"If there is a medical emergency, generally, the first line that you should always be calling is campus safety, whether WEMS is on call or not," said Safia Bethune ('27), a co-director for WEMS.

All Willamette health and safety members wish to direct students to campus safety as the first line

to call in the event of a medical emergency because campus safety is able to get the appropriate personnel to students faster without students having to bear that burden, rather than students immediately calling 911 themselves. The aftermath of a medical emergency usually involves different university personnel reaching out for assistance. One of the possible groups checking in would be the care team at Willamette.

"There's a care team at Willamette. They're the ones to get information [on student crises] and reach out to the student if needed to provide support," said Lauren Carlson, director of health services and lead nurse practitioner at the Bishop Wellness Center. "There's a high level of privacy [surrounding] health information. So [student crises] are not always on [Bishop Wellness Center's] radar."

Willamette University follows a strong medical amnesty policy that allows university personnel to help students regardless of the legality of the student's behavior in hopes of fostering an environment where students are encouraged to reach out for assistance without fear of repercussions.

"We want people to be able to have fun, but we want them to do it safely too," Christensen said.

Campus Safety can be reached at: (503) 370-6911.

Bishop Wellness Center can be reached immediately from 8 a.m. - noon and 1 - 4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri at: (503) 370-6062.

For more information on alcohol, sex and drug safety and partner violence visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's web page.

'Rocky Horror' celebrates 50 years of camp

Ethan Barker • Staff Writer

A screening of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" (1975) is unlike nearly any other cinematic experience. Audience members yell vulgarities and responses at the movie, actors in costume may sync their movements to the onscreen action, and showings often happen every weekend in some theaters, including the Clinton Street Theater in Portland, without fail.

This October, Salem alone has hosted three different screenings of the cult film. Willamette's own Student Theatre Arts Group for Equity club (STAGE) showed the film in Ford Theater; the Grand Cinema downtown hosted the Denton Delinquents shadowcast, who performed along with the movie; and the Elsinore Theater will play the 50th anniversary edition of the movie on Thursday, Oct. 30.

Jasper Woodward, a member of Cult Cinema Club at Willamette, shared some thoughts on why the film remains popular today.

"A lot of times, there were youth who were kicked out of their homes around the street who could find safe spaces in 'Rocky Horror' communities and shadow casts," Woodward said. "Even on a smaller scale, that still is true, where it gives

the space for people who don't get to be themselves or express their identities, to have this one time every once in a while to be weird and be with people who kind of get what's going on."

The shows welcome all and often have special rituals for "virgins," the commonly accepted term for those at a live show that have never attended before. Nowadays, you can easily find guides to the show anywhere online. Lists of props, ideas for costumes, and the all-important callouts are only a quick search away.

Of course, you can watch the movie itself on Hulu. But there's nothing like going to an actual screening. It's less of a movie and more an interactive theater experience with a community that's unique to "Rocky Horror." The movie, filled with campy performances and earworm songs, is only half of the experience. To (intentionally) misquote the movie, "Don't dream it, see it!"



The Rocky Horror lips on a theater screen.
Art by ADRIAN AXTELL



Willamette Events Board falls into spooky season with Grocery Bingo

Maya Darski • Staff Writer



Bingo!
Art by BASIL ALLEN

As Willamette’s trees start to fade red, orange and yellow, campus organizations such as the Willamette Events Board (WEB) get ready for the height of autumn season with activities and events for all students to enjoy.

On Oct. 10, spooky season activities were kicked off by WEB’s “Grocery Bingo” event. In Montag Den, students gathered for a competition of luck, aiming to win fall-themed Trader Joe’s snacks such as caramel popcorn and Ghosts and Bats chips, or a gift card. There were many variations of bingo played: normal bingo, filling in shapes and letters and blackout rounds. Each round filled the room with excited whispers, cheers of victory or groans of disappointment.

“It’s a lot of anticipation and also disappointment,” Olivia Jacobson (’28) commented. She had come to participate with her friend Amelia DeSantis (’27).

“I was invited by my friends to come,” DeSantis said. “I love Trader Joe’s, but in my hometown, we don’t have a Trader Joe’s, so I really like going to the one here in Salem. So this event is super fun.”

Grocery Bingo has been hosted by WEB once before, during spring semester of 2025. Vice President of WEB Eclipse Albert (’26) explained that before bingo, WEB had done trivia games.

“Trivia has the barrier of needing knowledge surrounding cer-

tain topics to be able to fully participate and have fun,” Albert explained. “We wanted to do something that had a similar vibe but would be easier for people to participate in.”

Bingo is purely based on luck, and most importantly to Albert, everyone can have fun and be silly along with friends.

WEB also sought to serve a practical purpose through the event. “We’re giving away food and money for food, which is important for college students since a lot of us are financially struggling in some way,” Albert said. “And even if you don’t win, you still have to do something fun.”

WEB and other orgs have been busy putting on other fall events. On Oct. 25, WEB hosted its annual Murder Mystery event. According to Albert, sign-ups filled up in around two days. On the same day, Residence Hall Association’s Kaneko Carnival event was also held with lots of activities such as pumpkin painting and games.

The turnout for Grocery Bingo for both this and last semester was around 50 people. Albert believes that the event’s popularity and success means WEB will likely continue it next semester. In regards to the future of Grocery Bingo, Albert noted that for the 2026-27 school year, there will be a big team transition as senior members graduate, so the event’s future is largely dependent on the new team.

WU and Bird Nerds create a welcoming environment for bird friends

Ethan Barker • Staff Writer

Think about all the times you’ve been outside on campus. The noise of birds chirping and ducks splashing in the Mill Stream is a constant soundtrack to Willamette life, but many factors work under the radar to make this place a haven for avian life.

Leading the student charge for birds are the WU Bird Nerds. Under the group’s umbrella, they lead bird-watching trips, raise awareness of the bird population on campus, and help improve life for the campus birds in many ways. Notably, the Mill Stream mallard ducks, who would ordinarily fly away for the winter, remain year round on campus due to the quality of life here. Last year, the club came together to paint the windows of the Bistro with vines and birds, allowing birds to see the window and stop flying directly into it.

Teya Fukuhara (’27), president of the WU Bird Nerds club, joined the club after an experience with the club that changed the way she viewed campus. “I did a bird walk with professor Craig freshman year,” Fukuhara said. “After that, every single walk around campus felt like something special. I would walk, and I would see three chickadees, and it was so cool to see that You just start to notice things around you that you never really realize.”

While the ducks are here year-round, in almost any other situation, they would migrate to warmer climates right about now. “But because ground staff feeds them, and they

have this pretty great thing going on, they usually stay here,” Fukuhara said. When spring comes around, the mallards, who mate for the season, are joined by ducklings, giving students a dopamine boost in time for finals.

While the ducks remain throughout the year, many birds still migrate to warmer climates. Students like Fukuhara noticed a mated pair of geese who return each year in the spring and named them Crooked Jack and Whiskey. “The male, Crooked Jack, he has scoliosis on his neck, so you can see a whole crook or something. And I just thought of Whiskey, because it’s just a badass name combo.”

Fukuhara attributes the unique birding experience at WU to the grounds staff, whose work has made the campus very wildlife-friendly. “I love the grounds staff so much. They’re so amazing. Jim Anderson, he just retired, but I did a little project on him, and he worked on making our campus pesticide-free.” The grounds staff and professors work with each other to ensure that the campus isn’t just pretty to look at, but a place where the local wildlife thrive.

The faculty, students and



White-crowned sparrow on Willamette University grounds on March 5, 2025.
Photo courtesy of Riley Teske

campus all combine to create an environment where many species of birds thrive, and where students can deepen their understanding of the many creatures that share the space with them.”

“Students here really do appreciate [the] birds, and I think it’s nice to have a club where we’re able to share that with everyone,” Fukuhara said. “You don’t have to be majoring

in biology or environmental science to like birds, you know? I think that I want to make sure that birding is for everyone.... you genuinely see the world in an entirely different format.”

You can find the club on Instagram at @wubirdnerds, or email them at wubirdnerds@gmail.com if you have questions or are interested in joining.

Unmasking WU's Halloween costume ideas

William Weeks • Staff Writer

Creepy creativity, sinister styles and ominous originality go into Halloween costumes every year. For many students, costumes are planned months prior. Others throw them together last-minute. Either way, there's always a bit of mayhem.

To get a better picture of the campus costume scene, I surveyed passersby in Jackson Plaza on Oct. 17 for their Hallows' Eve attire plans.

Some students, such as Emma Hird ('28), are leaning on the unique side of costume making. Hird plans on being a "fish in a bag." That is, a blue dress with a fish covered in Saran wrap.

Megan McNaughton ('26) will dress as "sexy Jimsy from 'Future Boy Conan,'" a character from Studio Ghibli founder Hayao Miyazaki's first work in directing.

Group costumes are forever a favorite among students. Chloe Abrahamson ('27) and her friends are doing a take on characters from the movie "Coraline." While her friends are dressing as Wybie or Coraline, she admits that masquerading as the cat might be difficult, though she added,

"At least I have the blue eyes!"

Augusta Castrodale ('26) and Jared McSorley ('26) have taken inspiration from a cape they found at the Goodwill bins and will couple as a bat and a vampire.

Many students who were interviewed stated that their ideas revolve around thrifting (such as from Blast Off Vintage, Engelberg Antiks or Goodwill) or making them from scratch, standards of the typical broke college kid.

Some staff members also plan on dressing up for the occasion. Sarah Schneider, assistant director of Student Engagement and Leadership, dressed as a farmer with her "chicken" dog last year and intends on another matching costume this year.

But there are a number of students who are wondering what to wear for Halloween despite its fast approach. This might result in the last-minute innovations, scrapped together or simply bad costumes this coming weekend.



Six people in Halloween costumes.
Art by ADDIE MARTIN

The Devil's Advocate: Edition Three

Caelyn Ochs • Staff Writer



Art by BASIL ALLEN

Disclaimer: The Devil's Advocate is a satirical column that does not reflect the views or opinions of The Collegian. The Collegian and columnist do not recommend the advice and are not responsible for its consequences if acted on.

I have a good friend who's had my back, and she's really sweet. But she's been looking like an absolute baddie these days, and lowkey I feel nervous to still approach her these days. I still wanna stay good friends though. Help a buddy out?
- Tatooine Local

Now, the solution to this is straightforward. You need to start sending this friend conservative outfit ideas, something that covers the melons, if you catch my drift. You need to convince her that she would look amazing in one of those Amish outfits, and don't forget about the bonnet — you don't want to keep getting distracted by her beautiful hair. If this doesn't work, then you need to carry around a blanket. Every time you see her say, "You look cold," and proceed to wrap her in the blanket. If her shoulders are exposed, COVER THEM. They are the most tempting feature of all.

How do I come up with an original thought? I am currently working on my thesis, and I am expected to have an original thought on a topic that has been relevant for hundreds of years. How do I add to the conversation without just repeating other people's thoughts and opinions like an academic parrot?
- A parrot

Way to tell everyone you don't know how to abuse substances, Parrot. If you did, you wouldn't have needed to even ask this. You need to shotgun four of the 16-oz Red Bulls, not the little ones; don't be a wimp. As a college student, this should be well within your wheelhouse. Once you have consumed this copious amount of caffeine in one sitting, preferably in under 5 minutes, jump into the Mill Stream. The ice-cold water mixed with caffeine should reset your system, hot-wiring your brain to be at its most creative capacity. If you don't die of a heart attack, the final step is to now stare at the topic and let the idea come to you. The original thought should come as an epiphany floating down from the heavens.

Don't forget to send in your questions to the form on The Collegian's Instagram for a chance to receive my fantastic advice.

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Opinion: Higher education needs to catch up with AI, not run from it

Teresa Butzerin • Staff Writer

When ChatGPT-3.5 was released in November of 2022, it was immediately clear that education would change forever. It sparked dramatic headlines speculating the effect of the program on higher education, such as “The College Essay Is Dead” from The Atlantic, and opened a world of untapped possibilities for cheating, plagiarism and rampant misinformation that educators were left to restrain. It’s been a few years since the initial launch of ChatGPT, and the advances in subsequent versions show that ChatGPT’s developers have not lost any ambition.

Given that AI will only become more prevalent in our lives, universities should be taking more formal steps to make sure graduating students are literate in the practical uses of AI and leave college with a well-rounded understanding of the ethical issues surrounding it. While the threat AI poses to academic integrity has caused it to become villainized in higher education, it’s time for universities to prioritize teaching students to use AI as a tool because these large language models are only getting faster, smarter and more omnipresent.

A recent study conducted by OpenAI — the company that owns ChatGPT — revealed that over one-third of adults aged 18-24 in the U.S. use the chatbot regularly, and a significant portion of this use is related to the completion of schoolwork. While many educators agree that there are ways to use AI for schoolwork without engaging in plagiarism, these applications are often not addressed directly in the classroom. Students are left to use AI in ethically ambiguous ways, likely not employing the technology to its fullest capacity. Failure of higher education to prepare students to use AI applications is not only a disservice to their future careers but maintains the status of AI as a kind of “forbidden fruit” that is only useful for cheating.

This semester, Willamette University is offering a college colloquium called “Generative AI and the Learning Experience.” The class fo-



Students may be getting more information from artificial intelligence like ChatGPT than textbooks recently.

Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI

cuses on how AI can aid the learning process, as well as concerns about the ways it may negatively impact education.

Sonali DeSilva-Craycroft (’29) said the class has provided her with the tools to kickstart the research process for essays using AI, namely Google’s Gemini Deep Research program. The program spends a few seconds browsing the internet and compiles massive lists of potential sources. “You already get a bunch of credible sources before you even start the research,” she said. “That’s really cool.”

The research abilities of these AI programs are capable of streamlining the research process and saving students hours they would have spent digging through internet archives. Unfortunately, the chances that students are going to find and use a tool like Deep Research on their own are pretty slim, which is exactly why universities need to emphasize connecting students with these programs.

While proficiency with AI can offer many advantages to stu-

dents throughout college, AI literacy is also becoming an essential skill for graduating students to find success in their careers. The OpenAI study found that most employers would be more likely to hire a less experienced candidate if they possessed skills with artificial intelligence. If one of the primary goals of higher education is to prepare students for a successful career, universities should be prioritizing the AI literacy of their students.

The concern about the negative impact of AI on critical thinking and higher education is legitimate. AI has already forced many educators to adapt how they approach teaching to combat the way chatbots have led to the normalization of academic dishonesty. Besides the threat to academic integrity that AI poses, the predictive nature of the algorithms it runs on can lead to students being fed misinformation. It is because of these weaknesses that higher education should take more steps to make students aware of AI’s shortcomings and prepare them to use the technology while avoiding the pitfalls of plagiarism and misinformation.

Professor Tim Johnson is currently teaching Business 1301: Managing with Data, Analytics, and AI at Willamette University. He pointed out that at the current stage large language models are at, students need to have the ability to validate the information they receive from these bots. “There really is sort of a paradox of use right now, which is, you can’t really use the tool unless you can double-check it,” Johnson said. Learning to use AI effectively and understanding its limitations are now essential skills for students as they graduate from college and enter the workforce.

Johnson’s class is a great step towards incorporating AI into higher education, but most classes focused on AI at Willamette University are in the realm of advanced data and computer science, which only a small percentage of students will benefit from. Even though it is obviously essential for students studying these sciences to have a thorough understanding of artificial intelligence, AI is working its way into a greater variety of fields. When asked if she plans on incorporating the AI literacy skills she is learning now into her future career, DeSilva-Craycroft said, “I want to go into education — so definitely.”

While AI may help streamline some of the tedious aspects of studying, intentional incorporation of AI in the classroom must prioritize preserving the parts of higher education that foster critical thinking and creativity. Johnson gave the analogy that using AI as a replacement for original thought is like showing up to an Olympic running event on a motorcycle. “Yeah, you can propel yourself faster down the track on a motorcycle,” he said, “but nobody’s interested in that because we want to see what humans can do.” If universities prepare students for the age of artificial intelligence while preserving the sanctity of original thought, higher education is poised to enter an exciting new era where technology will amplify the already incredible power of the human mind.

Opinion: The lion does not concern itself with direct communication



Gimena Baez Baez • Staff Writer

Over the last few months, a new meme format has arisen that further accentuates a hallmark of online Gen Z culture: an avoidance of direct language. “The lion does not concern himself with ...” and an even broader version, “The lion ...,” are two phrases that have been recently popularized into a meme online, often followed by a statement describing something that the person who created the meme does.

This phrasing and usage may seem out of nowhere, but it follows a trend within Gen Z spaces. The trend of utilizing memes in place of written text to convey a message to another person is most clearly exemplified by the lion meme, which ends up diluting the true meaning of the message.

The phrase originates from George R. R. Martin’s novel “A Game of Thrones”: “A lion does not concern itself with the opinion of sheep.” Its initial usage online was within the typical “sigma grindset” community, which, for the uninitiated, is a space where men tell other men how to live their lives as “true leaders,” constant self-improvers and overall successful men. These ideas are not perpetuated in healthy manners; they are intertwined with deep feelings of misogyny and self-hatred. Lions, which have been associated with the sigma realm for a while due to the connotations of strength and status, were not out of the norm as an inclusion within the meme.

Since its beginnings as a visual

method to perpetuate harmful rhetoric and pull young men further into these circles, the meme has become mainstream. The more common usage now involves minor gripes and silly statements, such as “The lion rewards himself with a two hour scroll after opening the list of assignments.” Versions have spread that no longer use the typical format of the black-and-white lion image with print text, instead mixing the original phrasing with older memes, such as the example above.

Other memes, like the “twin” meme, which states something in relation to the poster or sender’s “twin” (i.e., close friend), follow the trend of avoiding direct conversation. By creating these memes and then sending

them to others, you can communicate with people without having to express the words yourself. Some of these memes are unserious, but others can be heartfelt, conveying emotions like missing someone or loving them.

By easing this burden of being direct, communication is improved within interpersonal relationships amongst Gen Z. Going through the pandemic at crucial developmental ages, as the younger part of this generation did, greatly harmed communication both within the workplace and outside of it.

Read more on page 8.



A heart-to-heart for young people.
Art by ADDIE MARTIN

Talking around a sensitive and often necessary conversation through memes, however, is not entirely effective in communicating an intended message.

By combining these heartfelt ideas with satirical images, the meaning is diluted, rendering it as inconsequential. Hiding in layers of irony is not the ideal if one is trying to be serious without being direct.

Another method that is used online to communicate something that has little to no irony involved is the use of cat images merged with earnest captions. Though it is not as ironic, images in this way can never speak as loudly as words. In the hierarchy of meaning, actions are more meaningful than words, which are more meaningful than images, particularly images that remove the self from what is being said. By removing the self from the message, either by speaking in third person, adding an animal image, or both, most significance is weakened, which is crucial when it comes to conveying important emotions that are meant to be felt deeply and should be related in the clearest way possible.

Now, to be fair, sending memes that get across a feeling that one is experiencing to a friend is perfectly fine if that's a secondary mode of communication. The use of these memes doesn't need to be entirely eradicated. In fact, memes can help Gen Z communicate their thoughts and feelings better, which is certainly a net positive. It is the use of these memes entirely in place of verbal or even written communication that is negative. When a person can't discuss something with their partner or a dear friend without opening a meme generator, there is a problem.

As less clear communication occurs, relationships begin to deteriorate with those you hold closest. Humans inherently desire connection and deep relationships. With these communication difficulties that Gen Z uniquely experiences, relationships become harder to maintain healthily, eventually leading to negative emotions for those involved and a decrease in quality of life.

If Gen Z wants to communicate something important, they'll have to do it through words. At least until we can strike a balance between roundaboutness and sincerity.

Opinion: Ranking the best horror tabletop role-playing games

Thalia Reddall • Staff Writer

The most famous Tabletop Role-Playing Game (often referred to as TTRPGs), so ubiquitous to the genre it overshadows others in almost every conversation, is Dungeons and Dragons (D&D), with players nowadays usually diving into its 5th edition. However, the high fantasy D&D offers is just one of many kinds of narratives tabletop RPGs can tell, and with Halloween coming up soon, the time is never better to look into some spookier alternatives.

Running a horror game with friends quickly becomes a comedy. Watching friends get themselves killed in stupid ways will always be funny — as long as it's not real. With a wide variety of horror games available, each geared toward a different experience, here are some of the best horror-themed RPGs.

5. Vaesen

I have only had the pleasure of playing this game once, but it was a very good time for everyone involved. Like many horror tabletop RPGs, Vaesen has a focus on "investigative horror," straying away from combat and more towards solving a mystery. It makes itself distinct with a unique setting of industrial Scandinavia, pitting the new innovations of humanity against the "vaesen," magical creatures like fairies and mermaids and werewolves. The players' job isn't necessarily to fight against these vaesen, as the creatures aren't strictly evil, and most are exceedingly difficult to kill. Players are instead intended to investigate the situation — typically a conflict between vaesen and humans — and often perform some kind of ritual to sate or banish the vaesen.

For a horror game, most of which are typically light on character customization due to their high lethality, Vaesen has quite robust character creation. While it has a rather small bestiary in the base book, every monster is given a generous amount of interesting flavor and mechanics.

4. Kids on Bikes

While not strictly a horror RPG, I personally believe the rules and suggested setting for this game

best lends itself to small-town horror. Kids on Bikes takes clear inspiration from 80s movies like "E.T." (1982) or "The Lost Boys" (1987). The system is built to be a uniquely collaborative experience, where the players and the Game Master (GM) work together to build the town where all the characters live. Players also don't have to play as kids; there are rules for all ages, and I think the system works best when trying to emulate that "Stranger Things" feel with a wide variety of characters.

Kids on Bikes lacks a robust combat system and is far more focused on building characters and a world together. This can be a pleasant break from D&D, which is a primarily combat-based game, or other horror RPGs where lives are cut short constantly from fights that shouldn't have been picked ... like No. 3 on this list!

3. Mork Borg

More in line with a traditional fantasy game, Mork Borg is easily the deadliest RPG on this list, perhaps the deadliest I've ever played. It takes place in a doomed dark fantasy world, inhabited by terrifying monsters and paper-thin protagonists. Characters have hit points in the single digits, and instantly die if these hit points fall into the negatives. This is not a game for month-long character arcs. This is a game of constant death and tragedy, which makes it a pretty solid horror game.

Mork Borg supplements have been created for a massive number of genres. Most of the Mork Borg I've played has been with Pirate Borg, which is a more nautical spin on the original. The general mechanics are similar, with additional rules added for firearms and boats. Surprisingly, my group hasn't had a hero die yet. But if my character had taken just one additional damage in the second fight, she would've.

2. Liminal Horror

This has become my go-to game for one shots — campaigns that last only one game session. First, the PDF for the base rules is free on itch.io. The rules are quite simple yet have a hidden depth, using a mere four

base stats that each work as their own health bar. As the title suggests, Liminal Horror is focused on stories in liminal spaces, but the title also has a double meaning: the game focuses on how characters are changed by their encounter with horrors, with psychological damage making the characters physically and mentally stranger through the Fallout system.

Liminal Horror is an extremely versatile system, and it's remarkably easy for GMs to prepare while also being open to substantial customization. Its few rules make it easy to learn for new players, and I personally think it makes a very strong introductory RPG for this reason.

1. Call of Cthulhu

Call of Cthulhu is arguably the most iconic horror tabletop RPG. Directly based on the works of H.P. Lovecraft and his peers, this cosmic horror game is a step more complicated than the others on this list,

primarily due to an expansive skill system and unique sanity mechanics. These gameplay elements complement the aesthetics of cosmic horror well — competent, curious academics looking into something they shouldn't and being driven mad because of it. Call of Cthulhu has an impressive bestiary, its own grimoire of occult spells, and a constant pressure of insanity and death that keeps the game from getting stale.

Call of Cthulhu also has several interesting supplements, including my personal favorite, Pulp Cthulhu. This supplement provides rules to shift away from Lovecraft's hopeless world, making characters stronger, more durable, and less likely to go insane at catching the whiff of a shoggoth's deodorant. I have also found it relatively easy to adapt Call of Cthulhu's mechanics to other horror worlds, such as analog horror worlds like Vita Carnis. With that being said, this system is definitely best for Lovecraftian horror.



The consequences of playing too many tabletop roleplaying games.
Art by BASIL ALLEN

Bearcats fight the blitz, penalties in tough loss to Loggers

Catie Mohr • Sports & Rec Editor



A Willamette football player running from a mummified University of Puget Sound player, hoping to avoid an eighth-straight winless conference season.

Art by DASHA ALLYN

tions and No. 1 in fumbles forced and recovered. Linebacker Jonjon Delgado ('28) is No. 1 in the conference for individual interceptions, with 4 on the season, one of which was a pick six against the Loggers. But Willamette couldn't find that same defensive prowess and gave up the most points they'd conceded all season in Tacoma.

From the first snap, Willamette looked scattered and undisciplined. The usually strong Bearcat defense was giving up sloppy plays and struggled to adjust to the Loggers' play-calling. Penalties killed any defensive momentum, and three calls on the 'Cats directly resulted in a Puget Sound score. The Loggers offense is No. 1 in the NWC in total passing yards, with a whopping 2,338 yards on the season, and Willamette was completely outmatched by Puget Sound's running back Dre Dukes and quarterback Hayden Teeter.

The Bearcats had clearly prepared for the passing game but struggled to readjust even when the Loggers changed their play-calling. Willamette ran a lot of cover 4 defense — a defensive formation meant to cover wide receivers in the backfield and prevent Teeter from throwing the ball deep — but the Loggers were able to quickly compensate for this by utilizing first-year running back Dukes, who recorded 145 rushing yards and two touchdowns on the game.

Offensively, Willamette hasn't looked great all season, but O-line breakdowns and poor pass efficiency sealed the loss for the 'Cats. By the beginning of the fourth quarter, Willamette had already recorded eight total punts and an interception, playing 11 total scoreless drives. They went one of 12 in third down conversions and had just 55 offensive plays to Puget's 87. Quarterback Luke Rasmussen ('27) had three touchdown passes and just one interception but

was also held to a 41% completion percentage. The Loggers frequently lined up in a blitz formation that the offensive line struggled to stop, forcing Rasmussen to get the ball off far quicker than he looked comfortable doing.

After going down 21-0 in the first half, head coach Aric Williams gave the 'Cats a talking to that led to a rally, scoring a touchdown on their second drive of the half and returning a pick six in the following possession, bringing the score to 14-21. But the theme of the game was the Bearcats' struggles to maintain their momentum, and this remained true even after their second-half surge.

Defensively, Willamette seemed unable to get any stops. The Loggers recorded a staggering 509 offensive yards, ending the game with around 41 total minutes of possession, and the Bearcat defense's exhaustion was apparent by the end of the game. After coming within a score of Puget Sound in the third, the 'Cats gave up two unanswered touchdowns and a field goal to make it 14-38.

Willamette, to their credit, managed to remain composed even as emotions ran high in the fourth quarter: Loggers defensive lineman Connor Boehl was ejected from the competition after intentionally ripping the helmet off of Julien Rivera ('28) and attempting to start a fight with an O-lineman, an outburst that came off of a seemingly routine stop by the Puget defense.

In the end, Willamette was able to regain a bit of their dignity, scoring two touchdowns in quick succession in the fourth to get within 10 points of the Loggers. These bursts of energy in the second half and the consistent early-season play gives hope to the Bearcat faithful who want to believe that this is our year to break the conference losing streak.

From the beginning of their showdown in Tacoma, tensions between the Bearcats and the Puget Sound Loggers were high. For the 'Cats, the pressure coming into the matchup on Oct. 18 was enormous, as Willamette has been trying to avoid an eighth straight season without a conference win — their matchup against No. 7 Puget Sound marked their best opportunity to break that streak. But the Bearcats struggled early and came out with their worst conference loss of the season, a final score of 45-28.

The loss was characterized by uncharacteristically poor defensive play. Hopes were high for the Bearcats coming into this game, as the 'Cats had held strong against opponents like Pacific Lutheran University and Lewis & Clark in their first conference matches of the season. Last year, the Lutes had held Willamette scoreless in a brutal 50-0 loss; this year, the 'Cats came within a field goal of tying the game, narrowly losing 28-31.

Defensively, Willamette ranks No. 2 in the conference in interception

STAFF PICKS

Compiled by Priya Thoren • Opinions Editor

Topic: If you could only smell like one scent for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?

The Pick: Oxygen
Submitted by: Bjorn Domst, Managing Editor
Staff Comment: Like pure O2. So the hounds can't track me.

The Pick: Vanilla latte
Submitted by: Gimena Baez Baez, Staff Writer
Staff Comment: I'd smell good all year round.

The Pick: vanilla!
Submitted by: Amelia Hare, Staff Writer
Staff Comment: timeless, classic, always smells good

The Pick: Cedarwood
Submitted by: Ethan Barker, Staff Writer
Staff Comment: I use a cedarwood deodorant that smells really good!

The Pick: Spiced cinnamon
Submitted by: Alexander Berry, Staff Writer
Staff Comment: It smells very warm

The Pick: freshly baked brownies
Submitted by: Virginia Vaughan, Staff Writer

The Pick: ocean breeze!
Submitted by: Patricia Krepel, Staff Photographer

The Pick: Sandalwood
Submitted by: Avneet Dhaliwal, Staff Writer
Staff Comment: I love the smell of Sandalwood!



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'His story is unprecedented': Former coach reflects on Cedric Coward's journey from WU Bearcat to Memphis Grizzly

Leslie Gomez • Staff Writer

When Cedric Coward stepped onto the court for Willamette University in fall of 2021, few would have predicted that he might one day hear his name called in the first round of the NBA Draft.

Yet that projection has become reality: in June, Coward was selected 11th overall in the 2025 NBA Draft by the Portland Trail Blazers before being traded to the Memphis Grizzlies.

Starting from the DIII level and going to the highest level of professional basketball is almost unprecedented. Only 14 DIII players in history have ever been selected in the draft — and just one of those 14 was selected in the first round. But from the start of his career with the Bearcats, Coward proved just how extraordinary he was.

In his first practices, Coward stood out not just for his game but for his presence. "He came to Willamette mature beyond his years," recalled former Willamette assistant coach Chris Horton. "He was immediately a leader. Most freshmen are timid or uncomfortable in their skin — Cedric was comfortable."

In the Bearcats' 2021 season opener against Bushnell University, he registered a double-double: 12 points and 10 rebounds, along with five blocks, four assists, and three steals. He not only made the starting lineup but quickly became one of the team's most dominant players. In the 2021-22 season, he averaged 19.4 points and 12.0 rebounds per game, started 17 of 26 appearances, and earned Northwest Conference Freshman of the Year and first-team All-NWC honors.

But numbers only told part of the story. Horton, who is now the head coach at Warren Wilson College, said what truly separated Coward was his decision-making and poise. "He was the best decision-maker as an 18-year-old freshman. We'd watch him in practice and notice that he never hit the rim on his finishes, which is a ridiculous thing to say."

Coward's maturity also set him above his peers. "It's bigger than basketball," Horton emphasized. "It's not about how many points you make or your assists. You have to lead, be mature, have a routine, a process — those intangible things that help you reach your full potential. If you learn something from Ced, it's that. He was willing to be coached, to lose minutes and even be benched early in the season, but he stayed locked in and committed to his team and growth. Most players throw in the towel when adversity strikes — he wasn't that person."

Still, no one at Willamette expected his career to unfold as it did. "When you coach at Division III, you're never thinking about a player moving on to the next level," Horton admitted. "People tell you all types of things they're going to do, but when someone actually does it — and does it to this level — it's incredible."

After his breakout season



Coward faces Pacific university on Feb. 18, 2022.
Photo courtesy of the Willamette Athletics Department

with Willamette, Coward transferred to Eastern Washington University, stepping up into DI competition. He spent two seasons with the Eagles, gradually building his game. In his first year there, he averaged 7.3 points and 5.6 rebounds; by his second, he was averaging 15.4 points, 6.7 rebounds and 1.7 assists per game. His improvement earned more attention, and when his coach, David Riley, pivoted to Washington State, Coward soon followed.

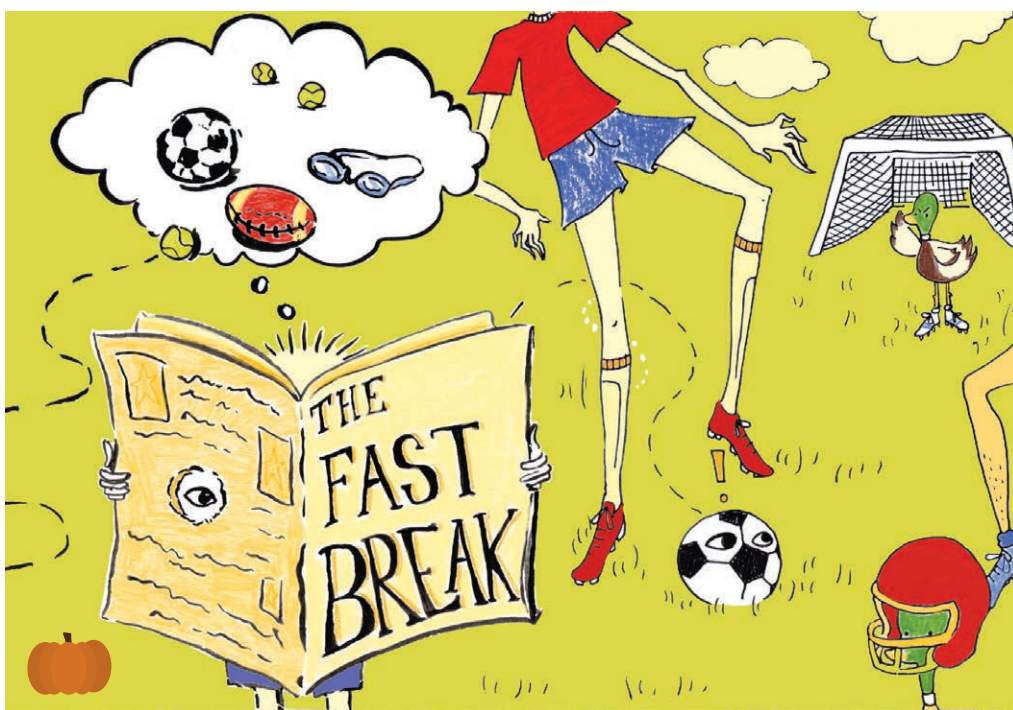
On draft night, the Portland Trail Blazers selected Coward 11th

overall, but via trade, his rights were sent to the Memphis Grizzlies. Reflecting on Coward's journey, Horton could only marvel: "It never happens — DIII to lottery pick. His story is unprecedented. He told us it would happen, and now he's living what he said he would do. To watch him go and do it is incredible."

On Oct. 22, Coward took the court for his first NBA game, shooting 100% for 14 points in 22 minutes played as the Grizzlies downed the Pelicans 128-122.

Fast Break: Atmospheric river drowns everything but not our suffering

Catie Mohr • Sports & Rec Editor • Oct. 28



Students of Willamette play a game of pickup soccer with the ducks.
Art by ALYSSA DIGGDON

Welcome back, Bearcat Fan. No exclamation point this week so as not to confuse the reader, as this column is resuming its usual dreary mood to match that of the weather and the abysmal record of our beloved 'Cats this weekend.

The rain drowned everything but our own despair. Let's get it over with.

Football suffered another loss in Forest Grove against Pacific on Saturday, in which three different quarterbacks played for a total of 77 passing yards. On the bright side, our

defense came back to good form, but couldn't stop the Boxers from a 35-14 win.

Women's soccer lost to Puget Sound and Pacific Lutheran away on Saturday and Sunday 0-4 and 0-2, respectively.

Men's soccer earned a solid win against the No. 5 Loggers 1-0 but fell to the Lutes on Sunday 3-2. They remain barely in the No. 4 spot heading into their last two matchups of the season.

Volleyball broke their six-game win streak, losing both matches to the Loggers and the Lutes in Tacoma on Friday and Saturday and barely falling to the No. 5 spot in NWC rankings. The 'Cats face the bottom half of conference standings in their last three matches of the season and will be aiming for the No. 4 seed to secure a spot in the playoffs in mid-November.

In lighter news, triathlon had a good showing in the Lone Star State, placing No. 3 in the DIII section at the West Regional Championship. Natalie Thomas ('27) was the top finisher for the Bearcats, placing No. 70 overall, with Abby Staniec ('26) and Kalima Glascott ('28) following closely behind.

In the wider world of sport: the Bears broke a four-game winning

streak, so we're back to form. I was starting to believe for a moment, but no longer. The Ducks held strong in an ugly game against the Wisconsin Badgers, prevailing against a Dante Moore injury and an atmospheric river. NBA regular season is back and so are the Jail Blazers (thanks, Chauncey!) The Portland Timbers are in MLS playoffs, battling — and currently losing the series to — the No. 1 seeded San Diego FC, and the Thorns have clinched a spot in NWSL playoffs. I have neglected to cover domestic soccer because, admittedly, I really don't understand it at all. This is my formal apology to all my loyal readers. Hockey is also happening, I, um, think. I really can't tell you anything about hockey other than that, though. Ohio State is still No. 1.

In the coming weeks... fall sports are winding down, and winter is coming. Volleyball and soccer face a bye and then their last weekend of competition, and cross country heads to the NWC championships at Pacific Lutheran on Saturday. Men's and women's basketball face their first matchups against the Portland Pilots on Nov. 3 and 4, and swim will be competing against Linfield on Nov. 1. Football faces the Bruins on the same date. How will we fare? Hopefully better than this week!

Photojournalism: Yesteryear Pumpkin Patch

Sofie Szigeti • Staff Photographer

Have you ever experienced an Oregon pumpkin patch in the fall? Yesteryear Pumpkin Patch and Christmas Trees is located just a 30-minute drive from campus in Wilsonville, Oregon and attracts visitors for its aesthetic photo ops and delicious food trucks. All photos taken at Yesteryear Pumpkin Patch in Wilsonville, Oregon on Oct. 19, 2025.



Colorful pumpkins and gourds at Yesteryear Pumpkin Patch.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI



Visitors take in the spectacle of orange pumpkins at Yesteryear Pumpkin Patch.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI



The cozy guest shop built like a barn.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI



Visitors sit below hanging pumpkin buckets and other fall decorations.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI



Visitors select pumpkins from the vast field at Yesteryear Pumpkin Patch.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI



Visitors enjoy complimentary popcorn and apple cider.
Photo by SOFIE SZIGETI

Halloween Crossword

Crossword by EZRA NELSEN

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9		10	11	12	13	
14							15				16				
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Crossword puzzle solutions are posted on our website: www.willamettecollegian.com

ACROSS

- 1 Next up
- 7 __ Angeles
- 10 Trig. prerequisite
- 14 Leaves home?
- 15 Hoppy brew, briefly
- 16 Reverse
- 17 They're above Baritones
- 18 Projection which distorts the size of land
- 20 Football player, __ Beckham Jr.
- 21 White, orange, and yellow sweets
- 22 Hazardous construction material
- 24 Submissions to eds.
- 25 Jim Carrey's __ Ventura
- 28 "Oklahoma!" bad guy
- 29 One-up
- 31 Shooting game in the dark
- 34 Latin-American dance music
- 37 Tolkien meanies

- 38 Either
- 21-across or 56-across, on Halloween
- 41 Suffix with living or bath
- 42 Educate
- 44 Percussion instrument that can only play one note
- 46 Show with a pineapple in every episode
- 49 Ctrl+__+Delete
- 50 Yang's counterpart
- 51 __ v. Wade
- 53 Bounced, in basketball
- 56 Vegetable spears
- 58 Des Moines native
- 62 Behemoths
- 63 Power
- 64 Mathematician, Turing
- 65 "Yikes!"
- 66 "Kramer vs. Kramer" Oscar winner
- 67 Shipped
- 68 Tracks with Xings
- 69 __ beef

DOWN

- 1 __ von Bismarck
- 2 Require
- 3 Great __ (dog breed)
- 4 Virus which had an outbreak in 2014
- 5 Fast-food chain with a smiling star in its logo
- 6 Metric wts.
- 7 Succotash beans
- 8 Not ruling out
- 9 "La Tosca" playwright, Victorien
- 10 Avo dip
- 11 Study of insects
- 12 Scents
- 13 Dawns
- 19 Skin abnormalities
- 21 Tree on Lebanon's flag
- 23 Target, in a joke
- 25 Tons
- 26 Mind
- 27 Jailbreak strategy
- 30 "Shucks!"
- 32 Corner keys
- 33 "__ er' done!"
- 35 Arias, e.g.

- 36 Prayer ending
- 39 Ancient animals, with horseshoes?
- 40 Use a Japanese kuwa?
- 43 "Captain America" enemy organization
- 45 Chipped away at
- 47 __ Lake, Oregon
- 48 Farther up
- 51 Indian tunes
- 52 "__ Mio" (1898 Neapolitan song)
- 54 Plays in the street
- 55 Baseball Hall of Famer, Bobby
- 57 Weezer's "Say it __ so"
- 59 Little songbird
- 60 "A Death in the Family" author James
- 61 Letters on a Manhattan patrol car
- 63 Upper-left key



Did a squirrel write this post?
Comic by DASHA ALLYN

Happy Halloween!
Can you find all 10 pumpkins hidden throughout this print?

