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Administration names inflation as main factor in tuition and housing increases

Robin Linares
Staff Writer

The price of a college education is one of many goods and services impacted by inflation. In the 2022-2023 academic year, the sticker price for Willamette tuition was \$45,000 per year, a standard double dorm was \$7,440 dollars per year and the 19-meal dining plan was \$6,900 per year. However, prices for this academic year depict higher increases than normal.

By comparison, in the 2023-2024 school year, the sticker price for tuition is \$48,000 per year, a \$3,000 increase. A standard double dorm is now \$7,900, a \$460 increase. A 19-meal dining plan is now \$7,590 per year, a \$690 increase.

While it isn't unusual for prices to slightly increase, this year's increase is particularly high. Daniel Valles, the

senior vice president and chief operations officer, clarified that sticker prices are not what students pay, and that the Willamette financial aid packages significantly decrease the price paid. However, he acknowledged that the percent increase for tuition, which is 6.7%, is an abnormally large increase in the past few years, especially since the pandemic. "During the pandemic we had really attempted to keep our increases a little bit lower," Valles said. "I seem to recall them being in the 3% to 4% per year range."

Valles noted the factors considered when determining the tuition and housing rates for this academic year. One mentioned was that Willamette, [like other academic institutions], has struggled to rebound from the economic burden of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the more prevalent issue is the high level of inflation, which exacerbates the issues left from the pan-

demic.

Tori Ruiz, the assistant director of residence life and housing operations, described how inflation rates, particularly the food and shelter rates, impact Willamette housing and meal plan costs. "Labor costs more, parts cost more, the upkeep of the building costs more. It just costs more to do business," Ruiz explained. "[For Bon Appetit], they have to purchase food just like the rest of us, so in order to stay afloat, they have to raise their own prices." According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics], the average percent increase in U.S. cities for food and shelter from Aug. 2022 to Aug. 2023 were 4.3% and 7.3% respectively.

Alysha Villelli ('26) acknowledged the concerns of inflation on the university, but noted that these issues are felt at the student level. "I understand that the price of living is increasing, especially with

inflation, so we have to accept some changes," Villelli said. "But coming back after COVID, and having so many students reemerging into the college experience, I think keeping tuition and housing at a similar rate would have been a good idea."

Felix Mcpartland-Cosmann ('25) noted the impacts these increases can have on students, especially those coming from lower-income backgrounds. "I imagine that can be pretty stressful. Especially if they are taking out student loans, that's like an ever-increasing number that they are dealing with," Mcpartland-Cosmann said.

Another aspect Valles wants students to remember is that the discussions of budgeting for the following academic year starts in the first semester of the current one. As he explained, the process for deciding tuition rates for the 2023-2024 academic year

started in October 2022. This is so students have an estimated tuition price for when they fill out the FAFSA, which typically opens in October. A drawback of creating the estimate with this timeline is that the Board of Trustees, who set the budget, have a harder time anticipating the economic climate and incoming class size for the following academic year. At the next meeting in February, the housing prices are estimated when they have more information about the incoming class, but that also delays when students receive housing information.

In regards to communication, Valles stated that tuition rates are shared soon after the October board meeting, and the students are informed of housing prices during the second semester when they are making housing decisions for the following year. How-

Contd. on pg.1

Punk shows and vintage clothes: Blast Off Vintage

Isaac Schaffer
Staff Writer

There's only one place in Salem where you can shop vintage clothes, records and skateboards between sets of punk rock bands: Blast Off Vintage.

Just a half-mile walk from campus, the shop boasts a wide collection of leather jackets, sweaters, shirts, vintage dresses, skateboards and music-related paraphernalia. Don't be alarmed if you feel the floor shaking while you shop; they host all-ages shows in their basement, featuring punk and hard rock groups.

Co-owners Kati Geisler and Pete Ingraham opened it up nine years ago and have carefully curated their selection of clothing and bands ever since, keeping it as accessible and community oriented as possible. "I hand picked and purchased every item in here," Geisler said. "I'll usually leave on a Thursday, and I'll get as

far south [in Oregon] as I can and 'junk' my way all the way back."

Their store occupies a unique niche in Salem. According to Joe Frazier, a local who attended a show Sept. 29, there's not much of a punk scene in Salem apart from Blast Off Vintage, making it a special place. "It's very community based. [Kati and Pete] are down to help people out. And just being one of the only venues in town, let alone punk venue [makes it special]," Frazier pointed out.

Another notable aspect of Blast Off is their prices, which they strive to keep as low as possible. "We try to keep our prices at a level that anyone can afford," Geisler explained. "It's important because we have a gigantic houseless population—and we actually have a large teenage houseless population, so we never want to charge them anything."

Beyond clothing and music, they also have a skate section that you can peruse,

which Ingraham said he keeps "cheaper than Zumiez."

Vera Sieck ('27) appreciates their varied shop collection. "They have an amazing selection of leather jackets. I really want a leather jacket from there," Sieck began. "They have a lot of beautiful old dresses from the '40s and '50s, but they also have, like, a bunch of band shirts."

Sieck noted that with their vintage selection, prices can be higher than a regular thrift store, but are overall affordable. This affordability carries over to their shows as well. For a ten dollar entrance fee, one can see three to four bands in a night. Their dimly lit basement is regularly filled with bands both local and from afar.

In the crowd, expect to see people of all ages moshing, dancing and enjoying being mere feet from groups like The Latter Day Skanks, D.O.A., Zeke, Agent Orange and many more. "A lot of the kids, it's their first time ever seeing live



Photo by Lucy Devlaemenck

music. They get to stand real close to the band," Ingraham said.

It was also Sieck's first time at a punk show when they went a couple of weeks ago. "It was super safe," Sieck reassured. "I know punk shows can be intimidating, but I didn't feel worried about being there."

For Willamette students, Geisler said Blast Off Vintage has a special offer: "Kick some ass in class, and every semester bring me your grades. Every semester no matter what, I'll give you five dollars for every A you ever get in credit in this store."

Contd. on pg.1

<i>News - Pg. 1</i>	<i>Lifestyles - Pg. 3</i>	<i>Sports - Pg. 5</i>	<i>Photojournalism - Pg. 7</i>	<i>Opinions - Pg. 9</i>
-Bishop Wellness hires nurse practitioner	-New computer science professor	-This actually IS my first Rodeo	-Parents weekend in Silver Falls	-Opinion: Should the Bistro be open on weekends?
-Tuition Increase	-24 Hour theater	-Fast Break Sports Report		-Opinion: Dorm life isn't all that great

Bishop wellness hires nurse practitioner; Medical services to resume in spring

Alan Cohen
Staff Writer

On Aug. 1, students and families were struck by an email from the Director of Bishop Wellness Center Don Thomson stating that all on-campus medical services were being disrupted due to “unforeseen staff departures at the end of the spring semester and early July, leaving us without any medical health providers (nurse practitioner or physician) to staff our clinic.” Nearly two months later, Willamette University announced the hiring of a new Lead Nurse Practitioner, with medical services resuming shortly.

In an interview, Thomson stated that last year “Bishop Wellness Center had a nurse practitioner at 32 hours a week, a medical assistant supporting the nurse practitioner at 40 hours a week and a part-time consulting doctor at 9 hours a week.” The consulting physician and nurse practitioner gave notice of their leave half-way through and right after the spring semester, respectively. He also stated that the reason for their leave was purely professional, as they “moved on to bigger and better things.” Last year’s medical assistant is still working at Bishop Wellness

Center.

The disruption in medical services caused by the staff departures has not affected counseling services, which continue to operate normally, despite issues of their own.

“In a post-Covid world, hiring medical providers has become very difficult,” Thomson mentioned. This staffing issue is not specific to Willamette or other institutions, as the supply of medical professionals has declined substantially at a national level.

“We enlisted the help of an executive search firm because we knew we were going into a profoundly competitive hiring market,” he continued. The application was open to nurse practitioners, physicians and physician assistants, as their licenses allow them to order lab tests and prescribe medications. The incentives for the position, according to Thomson, included a generous benefit package with health, dental and life insurance, as well as contributions of 10% of the salary to the employee’s retirement plan.

As recently posted on the Willamette University website, the new medical provider is Lauren Carlson, a board-certified nurse practitioner with more than a decade of experience in the medical field who

has worked for Santiam Memorial Hospital in Stayton, Oregon and at Corbyn University. Her biography defines her as “passionate about health equity, social justice, lifestyle medicine, and relationship building.”

“I really can’t overstate how excited she is to join us, she is really looking forward to coming onboard,” Thomson stated. He added that what most attracted Carlson to the position was working in a setting where college students are navigating healthcare on their own for the first time.

Carlson will start working part-time and then transition to full-time medical services in the spring. Her schedule and availability for the fall semester are yet to be announced. Bishop Wellness Center is no longer seeking new health professionals, as medical needs will soon be fully met by Carlson and her medical assistant, who will also be working full-time starting in the spring.

As Bishop Wellness Center prepares to welcome Carlson to the team and resume normal operations, students are expected to make use of [external medical resources] for their physical health needs and medication refills. Bishop Wellness Center can be reached at (503) 370-6062 for any questions or guidance.

Tuition increase contd.

ever, he also expressed that the medium of communication of these changes hasn’t always been consistent. “We’ve sent letters in the past. I think we have, at some point, sent emails, so usually there’s some form of communication in the spring,” Valles said. For Ruiz, she is working to have more intentional communication regarding the housing prices, including notices in Today@Willamette.

Valles noted that he wants to continue finding

ways to have open communication with students. One way he mentioned was with open office hours in the Bistro with the Associated Students of Willamette University so students can have an opportunity to ask him questions.

Ruiz placed similar emphasis on expanding student communication, and encouraged students to visit the Residence Life and Housing office and ask questions. Ultimately, she wants the student body to know that they are here to help.

Art by Maille Olgyay



The Bistro reckons with post-pandemic realities

Chrissy Ewald
Staff Writer

Willamette's beloved student-run cafe is going through a self-improvement phase. Manager Max Kass ('24) and financial manager Ash Scott ('25) are in the middle of an outreach and programming push in an effort to put the business back on its feet.

The Bistro hasn't turned a profit since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. A combination of low traffic, inflation and Oregon's stepwise minimum wage increases have cut into profits significantly. Bistro managers have raised prices in response over the past few years, but that hasn't been enough to balance the budget. "I ran into people who said, 'I've never been to the Bistro before and I've been here for two years, three years.' It's surprising," Kass said.

While the Bistro has gotten financial advice from the university and is consulting with students at the business school, it is difficult for them to get actual funding from outside sources. A one-time grant of \$18,000 from the Associ-

ated Students of Willamette University (ASWU) kept them afloat during fall of 2020, but ASWU said they wouldn't give the Bistro any more grants in the future. That promise was kept when the Bistro asked ASWU for \$19,000 in spring 2022. ASWU could not afford to grant that much money, so ASWU's treasurer at the time, Michael Burke ('23), tried to set up a deal with the university to split the cost, but the university did not approve the deal.

During a normal year, the Bistro retains its net profits at the end of each semester and puts them in a special university savings account. It can use this money for improvements or save it for later. COVID wiped out the Bistro's savings, so their account currently holds debt. Associate Dean of Students and Director of Student Engagement and Leadership Lisa Holliday, who advises the Bistro, said the university is currently "floating" the Bistro's debt. This means they can continue to go into debt without consequences. If the Bistro returns to profitability, it will need to pay off that debt as it is able. Once the debt is paid off,

it can begin adding money to the account again.

Despite these hurdles, the Bistro is still open and looking to grow. "We've been doing how many events, the open mics and everything, just trying to get as many people in the door for as many things as we possibly can," said Scott. "We've got to get back from COVID somehow. It's just been throwing a bunch of stuff at the wall and seeing what works."

"Yeah, that's been my motto for years," said Kass. "Let's go past the line of doing too much: too many promotions, too many posts, too many giveaways, too many events, and then be able to look back at the semester and say, 'These three things worked really well to bring new customers in, to bring people from the Salem community, and these two things no one showed up to,'" he said. "We can take a look at all that and really figure out, you know, what worked and what didn't."

The Bistro is also trying to return to being open at night. They've maintained last year's happy hours from 7 p.m. to closing. However, The Bistro used to be open until 1 a.m. be-



fore COVID. "I think the issue is that students don't think of the Bistro as a place to hang out late at night anymore," said Kass. "We want to reopen to those late night hours, but we also recognize that COVID kind of created an environment on campus where after a certain point, most people just go back to their dorms," he said. "The community aspect on campus has changed so much, and we want to bring that back by hosting more late night events and seeing if people respond to being in the Bistro late at night on a more regular basis. But

until we can really tell if that's something students even want anymore, I think being open till 1 a.m. will be tough for us."

Kass and Scott said the best way students can support the Bistro is by showing up. "Come to events, come in later at night so we stay open later," Scott said. Both managers are optimistic that foot traffic will continue to increase as Willamette's enrollment rebounds and students are drawn back to the Bistro for events or just to hang out.

Staff Picks

Compiled by: Priya Thoren, Opinions Editor

Topic: Fictional world that you'd like to live in!
The Pick: Middle Earth

Submitted by: Bjorn Domst, Copy Editor

Staff Comment: I would definitely pick Middle Earth so I could just tuck myself away in a hobbit hole in the Shire and not concern myself with the worries of the world.

The Pick: Breaking Bad

Submitted by: Monte Remer, Lifestyles Editor

Staff Comment: Breaking Bad. Need to brush up on a few things.

The Pick: Gilmore Girls

Submitted by: Eleanor Hu, Managing Editor

Staff Comment: Definitely Gilmore Girls now that fall has started—I want to enjoy the rain and changing leaves in Stars Hollow.

The Pick: The Big Lebowski

Submitted by: Skeet Starr, Sports Editor

Staff Comment: The Big Lebowski because I don't bowl enough.

The Pick: Twilight

Submitted by: Caramia Christensen, Artist

Staff Comment: Twilight!! Forks, Washington is so beautiful and autumn is my favorite season + I think co-existing with vampires would be super cool.

The Pick: Animal

Crossing

Submitted by: Emma Innes, News Editor

Staff Comment: Animal Crossing. I just want to relax and rest. It seems at this point is just to live on an island that I can decorate to my liking and live easily with low-effort farming and orchard tending. Plus there will be a bunch of friends on there as well. Another big plus is that the Able Sister's store has some clothes I would love to wear. I can relax on my island, but I can also wear the "princess dress" as much as I want and declare myself Queen of the island. Tom Nook wouldn't be able to stop me. I can even set up a throne. The only downside is

the occasional tarantula and scorpion

The Pick: Stardew Valley

Submitted by: Izzie Cornelison, Staff Writer

Staff Comment: Does Stardew Valley count? If so 100% Stardew Valley. My woes are reduced to if my turnip harvest is today or tomorrow and if I can give Haley a gift today or not. There is no death just a little money cut, the people are so nice and also I would be filthy rich right now.

The Pick: Smiling Friends

Submitted by: Ernie Samora, Staff Writer

Staff Comment: Smiling Friends bc I would be a big green alligator man with a

bunch of other ppl of differing art styles, a world of smiles :)

The Pick: Far Far Away (Shrek 2)

Submitted by: Bella Montalvo, Editor-In-Chief

Staff Comment: Far Far Away in Shrek 2 is absolutely the place I need to be! The carriages, fairytale themed fast food, attending balls with Fiona and Donkey, I don't think it gets much better than that.

The Pick: Harry Potter

Submitted by: Priya Thoren, Opinions Editor

Staff Comment: Harry Potter!! I'd love to meet all of my favorite characters and explore Hogwarts (and get to learn magic, duh).

New professor Lucas Cordova builds community in computer sciences

Sage Lamott
Staff Writer

New computer science professor Lucas Cordova’s teaching philosophy can be summarized in simple terms: “be more human.” In conversation with Professor Cordova, the new professor emphasized an approach centered around community involvement, student engagement and campus vibrancy.

Cordova’s love of the community comes from having lived in Salem for many years. Becoming a professor at Willamette has now allowed him to “become more integrated into the community.” He views the university as an “opportunity to bring people and cultures together.” The school’s growing STEM, and more specifically its computer science and data science departments, were an immense draw for Cordova when selecting where to work. “The university is seeing rapid growth within the computer science department,” he said, “and I am really eager to contribute to that growth.”

Enjoying the Willamette environment so far, he discussed his appreciation for the open access of the Ford

building. He mentioned how Ford’s second floor in particular has an open and creative ambiance that allows for easy collaboration and student assistance. “I love the vibrancy of Willamette. I don’t know if I’ve ever experienced that before,” Cordova said.

The new computer science professor has been in the teaching field for seven years, having previously worked at Western Oregon University and the Oregon Institute of Technology. Before diving into teaching, Cordova worked in the software development industry, giving him practical experience that allows him to center his teaching around real-world application. When referencing the liberal arts learning style of the university, he acknowledged the value of showing students the practicality of what they’re learning. He strives for students to walk away from his class with tangible uses of all the code they’ve learned. In his own words, he prefers “application versus theory when it comes to coding and data.” He additionally refers to his students as “peers in training,” which allows for a sense of class camaraderie that he values.

Cordova still recalls his first computer science profes-

sor in college. “She was a woman of color,” he said, “and I was inspired that other people who looked like me did the thing I wanted to do.” While his original major intent was chemistry, her class was a factor in his decision to switch majors. He said that he tries to emulate her here at Willamette, because it “takes just that one professor to make students feel welcomed.”

Actively integrating the positive experience he had in college, he adds the same level of care and compassion to his courses. He noted, “It is okay to mess up and show weakness. I want my students to engage with the class and ask questions. That’s what learning is all about.” His teaching philosophy centers around collaborative learning, which benefits his students and fellow academic peers. “Good students are the students that try, that can think outside of the box,” he commented.

A detriment to this learning has emerged in the classroom, however, in the form of AI—especially in Cordova’s field. His approach tries to properly utilize AI instead of fighting against it. “AI is a tool we can use to expedite and improve what we are already doing,” he said. He cited the

example of students using Chat GPT to learn interview strategies. The system can ask questions and provide feedback on student responses, serving as a quick and easy assistant in preparing for an interview. He feels that “AI isn’t something to be afraid of. It’s a resource in our field. We just need to figure out how to utilize it.”

Bringing a fresh attitude,

mindset and approach to teaching data science, Cordova provides a much needed new perspective to teaching within the computer science department. If you ever have any data science questions, be sure to swing by his office on Ford second! There’s a fancy, brand-new coffee machine in there.

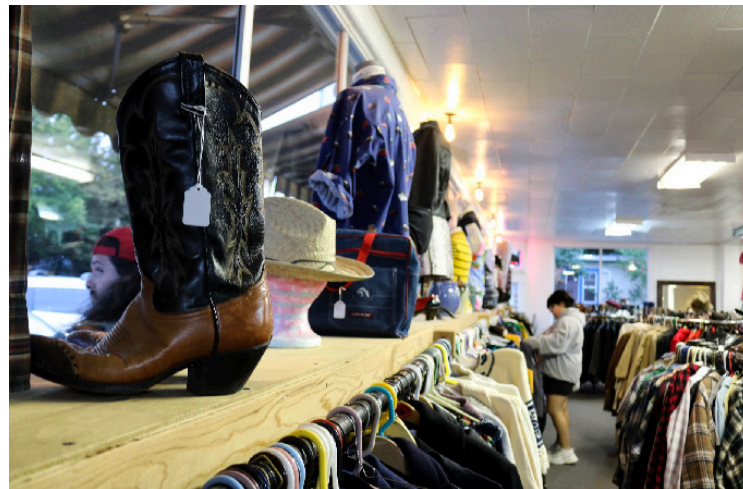
Photo from Willamette Website



Blast Off Vintage *contd.*

If you want to stop by before the end of semester, their hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. They also have shows upcoming on Oct. 7, Oct. 28 and Nov. 4, as well as an underground market with crafty vendors before the show on Oct. 7. It is recommended to bring ear plugs if you haven’t been to a show before—the space is small and the speakers are not.

You can stay up to date on their events schedule on Facebook or Instagram @blastoffvintage.



Photos by Lucy Devlaemenck



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Willamette students perform five plays at the 24-hour Theatre Festival

Izzy Cornelison
Staff Writer

When you watch a production, the cast, crew and creative team have usually had weeks to put together a cohesive show. On Sunday, Sept. 23, the Student Theatre Arts Group for Equity (S.T.A.G.E.) debuted five shows that were written, directed, staged and performed all within the span of 24 hours. At 8:00 p.m., actors showed up in the costumes they would be performing in, forcing the writers to write characters around them. The following evening in Smith Auditorium, they performed.

The first play, “Who is He?”—written by Ike Turman ('26) and directed by Maddy Maes ('27)—featured Erik, a Willamette student played by Derec Gregory ('27), who has become reclusive and obsessed with President Stephen E. Thorsett. Erik's friend, played by Clare Strode ('26), tries to pull him out of the obsession. However, Erik's professor, played by Pen Hanks ('26), tells Erik he is more like Thorsett than he thinks. The play concludes with Erik becoming Thorsett, and the audience learns the “E” stands for Erik. The play left the audience breathless from laughter with its well-timed jokes about Thorsett.

“[The time constraint] kinda forces you to make a lot of bold decisions quickly,” said Maes. “Usually when I direct a full length show that has a normal amount of time to rehearse, we work through things, we try things different



ways, we're watching characters evolve. So I think what was different about this is you only had 12 hours, so you're just making decisions and being confident.”

The second play, “No Radiohead,” written by Lilly Thies ('26) and directed by Otis Perrone ('27), opened with two brothers hosting auditions for their band. The eldest brother Jackson, played by Arlo Craft ('26), was the lead guitarist and singer of the band, while little brother Petey, played by Valentine Wells ('27), was in the band without an official role. Before closing down their table, Green, played by Blue Kalmbach ('27), entered the scene with their instrument of choice, the Schlug: an ancient

Arlo Craft (left), Blue Kalmbach (middle), and Valentine Wells (right), performing the play *No Radiohead*. Photo by Juno Tejchman, president of S.T.A.G.E. Photo by Izzy Cornelison

and magical instrument which takes over the body of the player. The band made a deal with Green to let them play in their band as long as they played “no Radiohead.”

The third play, “Cunnilingus for Christmas,” written by Vincent Shillings ('26), was, as the title suggests, set on Christmas Eve. The play opened on Lauren, played by Teya Fukuhara ('27), a high up business woman at Buisness Incorporated, lost in the snow. Andy, played by Iris McClure ('27), came out of the storm saving Lauren from her plight and insisted Lauren stay at her house for the night, but Lauren refused. Lauren was

adamant about getting home to Seattle when she saw Heather, played by Francesca Finch ('26), who seriously caught her eye. Lauren agreed to stay the night as long as Heather would be there. The audience saw that Heather viewed Andy as more than a friend, but Andy thought of her as a close friend and housemate.

The next play, “Slime and Slime again,” written by Ceph Tronco ('26) and directed by Vera Sieck ('26), was a conversation between a detective named Vyctor Jones, played by Miles Wooster ('27), and a shop owner named Coup Malix, played by Helena Fitzgerald ('27).

Vyctor was hired to investigate the mysterious disappearances of his customers. As the plot unfolded, the audience learned Vyctor was the culprit all along and caught Coup at the end of her wits, leading her to take down his crime ring. The play watched like a murder mystery with many interesting plot twists and funny one line quips from Coup.

Last but not least was “The Picklers Dill-emma,” written by Savanna Starks ('25) and directed by Kilie Jarnagan ('27). It opened on an unnamed pickleball player, played by Kendall Morrow ('24), and an unnamed civilian, played by Hana Garcia ('27). The Pickleball player turned out to be the Pickle devil, traveling and stealing years off of people's lives. The civilian revealed himself to be the Pickle God, the Devil's ex. The play culminated in a game between the ex-lovers, with either the banishment of the Pickle Devil or the reunion of the couple, depending on who won.

“You only have a little bit of time to make a performance happen, and I think some of the best decisions can happen when you don't have time to think,” said Jarnagan.

Ultimately, the 24-hour Theatre Festival was a success. All five plays were produced in less than 24 hours and managed to make the audience howl with laughter and swell with emotion.

Kendall Morrow (left) and Hana Garcia (right) face off in a game of ‘the fastest growing casual indoor outdoor sport sweeping North America’ pickleball. Photo by Juno Tejchman, president of S.T.A.G.E. Photo by



This actually IS my first rodeo

Mary Vickery
Staff Writer

Giddyup! Along with many a cowboy and cowgirl, I gathered in Salem on Sept. 23 for the Northwest Professional Rodeo Association (NPRA) finals. After forking over \$10 to park, I joined my fellow Salemites at the Oregon Fairgrounds Pavilion for my first rodeo.

Rodeo is a multifaceted sport with many different events for competitors. At the NPRA finals, athletes showcased their skills in Bareback, Saddle Bronc, Bull Riding, Tie-Down Roping, Breakaway Roping, Team Roping, Steer Wrestling, Wild Cow Wrestling, Wild Cow Milking, Barrel

racing, Novice Saddle Bronc and Novice Bareback. Events vary significantly in rules, form and skillset, but all mimic or are influenced by cattle ranching practices.

Seats steadily filled before stopping at about half occupancy. However, social media organizer Erik Wurgler claimed that contrary to my assessment, the NPRA finals have been building a lot of steam recently. Organizers are aiming to make the rodeo a more family-friendly event for all—local shops set up stands with Western-style clothing, jewelry and bags. One booth caught my eye due to a laminated green sign advertising “Concealed Carry Bags!” in Comic Sans.

As the foot traffic set-

tled, the night opened up with a unique rendition of the national anthem. A blonde “beauty” in Western gear entered the arena on a horse, waving “the greatest symbol of freedom the world has ever known.” With hair and flag rippling in the flowing air, the crowd was taken over by the voice of the night’s announcer, Jim Bob Custer. The room stood and people ripped their hats off with urgency as Custer monologued, “You know there are other sports where the athletes will kneel in protest at the presentation of the flag and at the playing of the national anthem, but tonight I want you to notice something different. Here, in the world of professional rodeo, WE STAND.”

Custer’s politicized spiel was capped by a prayer and officially ended when a local high school Future Farmers of America (FFA) student sang the national anthem. Though the energy was low in the stands, the chutes were full of cowboys, gearing up to wrangle the livestock. Each cowboy seemed to have a distinct ritual: some smacked themselves, some jumped up and down and some stood eerily still, eyes set forward in thought.

Bareback riding kicked the night off, keeping the volume of the crowd at a steady chatter. Riders must ride their bronco for eight seconds with one hand holding the reins, and the other to the wind. They are then judged on various criteria, including body language and adaptability. All of the cowboys put up a good fight, but not everyone could beat Kyle Bounds, winner of bareback for the night as well as the six previous NPRA finals. To announce his victory, Bounds was paraded around the arena in the back of a white Chevy pickup truck.

Bounds is from Harrisburg, Oregon and has been riding bareback since 2010. I got a chance to talk to him by interrupting a photoshoot session with fans after the rodeo. Bounds noted that, “Rodeo is basically showing the toughest of the toughest guys around. You want to show everyone you’re the best.” He also made a direct point to mention the animals they work with in the rodeo, asserting that, “The animals are our number one priority. We take care of the animals better than we take care of ourselves.” Bounds plans to go “down south” for the winter and continue riding bareback for as long as he can.

Events came and went, the crowd stayed temperate, a cowboy was thrown from a bronco and cows were milked wildly (wild cow milking being an event in which two cowboys work together to capture and



Photo by Skeet Starr

milk a cow, then deliver said cow milk to a nearby panel of officials in a timed period). In a room full of people in their element, I was struck. Meanwhile, behind the chutes, bull riding athletes geared up. They shook themselves out, steadied their breaths and set their heads straight, waiting with darkened eyes and barren faces. As helmets were brought out, a sense of seriousness wafted about the crowd and steadiness faltered in the Pavilion.

Riding a 2000 pound mass of anxious, uncontainable wild energy is dangerous. The rider mounts the bull in the chute. They then grab onto a braided rope around the chest of the bull with one hand, hold on for dear life and open the chute. Thrashing from his front to hind legs, shifting his hips and kicking back, the bull will do anything he can to get his rider off his back and onto the dirt. The only thing keeping the body of the rider from flinging about and under the bull is their one-handed grip. Eventually, the rider will be thrown. It is the job of a bull-

fighter to keep the bull from trampling the fallen rider and to give them time to get to safety.

Bullfighter Dan Newman has been at his craft for 33 years, starting at 19 years old. He began when his football program at a community college dropped, and a friend roped him in. Newman has found that skills from football have somewhat transferred over to bullfighting. Further, he asserted that the key to surviving is to just “react to what’s happening,” and that “believing in yourself” is a big factor.

Ultimately, the winner of the 2023 NPRA bull riding finals was 17-year-old Shane Scott. Scott beamed with excitement and pride on his walk back to the dressing room. He summed up his experience with rodeo succinctly, saying, “Sometimes I win, sometimes I don’t.” Among other sports, rodeo stands out as one that welcomes such a notion with open arms.

Photo by Skeet Starr



Fast Break sports report

Skeet Starr
Sports Editor

8/2

Hello Bearcat Fan! I want to say that at Saturday’s women’s soccer game, Blitz the Bearcat waltzed in all casual with their handler, then stood at the halfway line and occasionally swayed around and sort of moved their hands in a pseudo-waving gesture. Mostly though they just looked blankly at the game. Then after fifteen minutes they just peaced out. I don’t know. The whole thing seemed kinda off to me. Anyway, let’s go to the news!

Volleyball picked up two more wins to bring their streak to three. They will take on George Fox at home on Saturday.

Men’s Soccer couldn’t hold off the Whitworth counter attack on Saturday (2-3), but scraped out a tie against Whitman on Sunday (2-2). The men now sit at third in the conference, with a game in hand on second place Whitworth and

first place Pacific Lutheran.

Natalie Rodriguez de la Torre (‘27) opened up the scoring two days in a row for Women’s Soccer, but the squad couldn’t hold the lead in either case, losing 1-2 to both Whits.

Football. 14-70. Linfield. That’s all I can write through my tears.

Jay Chew (‘26) and Zoe Heino (‘26) represented Bearcat Cross-Country again at the Charles Bowles Invitational Cross Country meet. The ‘Cats men snagged 13th overall while the women took 15th.

Neither Tennis team shocked the world at the ITA regional finals.

In the wide world of sports: Portland’s beloved Damian Lillard has been traded to the Milwaukee Bucks. The Trailblazers will receive Jrue Holiday, Deandre Ayton and Toumani Camara. Speaking for all Oregonians, thank you, Dame!

Consider in the coming weeks: What’s the most alive you have ever felt?

Art by Minna Zhou



Bush park turned into Slalom skateboarding arena for World Championships

Jackson Garrett
Sports Writer

This past weekend 86 riders from 12 different countries made their way out to Salem to compete in the 2023 World Championships of Slalom Skateboarding. The soap box derby hill in Bush's Pasture Park was lined with racers, spectators, sponsors and media all weekend.

Similar to slalom skiing, slalom skateboarders race downhill, weaving in between cones as they go. Two riders race simultaneously and are given penalties for knocking over cones. These penalties are usually within 0.1 seconds per cone. However, most races have a limit to how many cones they can knock over (usually five), and after that they are disqualified. This sport began in the 1960s and became more mainstream in the early 2000s with the increasing popularity of other types of skating such as street and vert competition.

This weekend the competition was divided up into various categories of women and men, amateurs and professionals, etc. On Friday, giant slalom races took place, where the cones were farthest apart. Saturday and Sunday held hybrid and tight slalom races, where the cones were closer together. At the end of Sunday, trophies were given out to winners of all divisions.

The event was hosted by Sk8kings, a slalom skating industry leader that travels the world putting on and covering these events. Sk8kings also sponsor their own riders. Maria Carrasco, the production director of the championships, has been running five or six events per year since 2017. Her work

has taken her all over the U.S. and Europe. She explained that this somewhat niche sport has lofty long-term goals. Recently sanctioned by World Skate, "the governing body of all roller sports," they hope it "is also the portal to the Olympics for us ... that is our ultimate goal: to get our sport into the Olympics."

Joe McLaren, creative director and racer for Sk8kings, was also in attendance at the championships. Born in Denver, Colorado, McLaren has been skating since he was 3, skating slalom since 2002 and competing professionally since 2007. Although McLaren got fifth place on Saturday, he said he has eight overall Professional World Championships, as well as other event-specific medals. "Just last month, I won my sixteenth Professional U.S. Championship," he remarked.

McLaren has just been getting back his typical cycle of five or six events per year after taking a break during COVID and from a recent injury. "The last few years have been a bit slower for me during COVID and early 2021 when I got somewhat intense lower back surgery." The years of skating took a toll on McLaren's body, but he is eager to get back onto the scene.

As the day was winding down, a man won his event and jogged up the hill, screaming in joy with a Latvian flag wrapped around his back. He met his teammates at the top of the hill and they embraced and danced in celebration. The scene seemed like something you could see in an Olympic race, even if there aren't oak trees in most major stadiums.

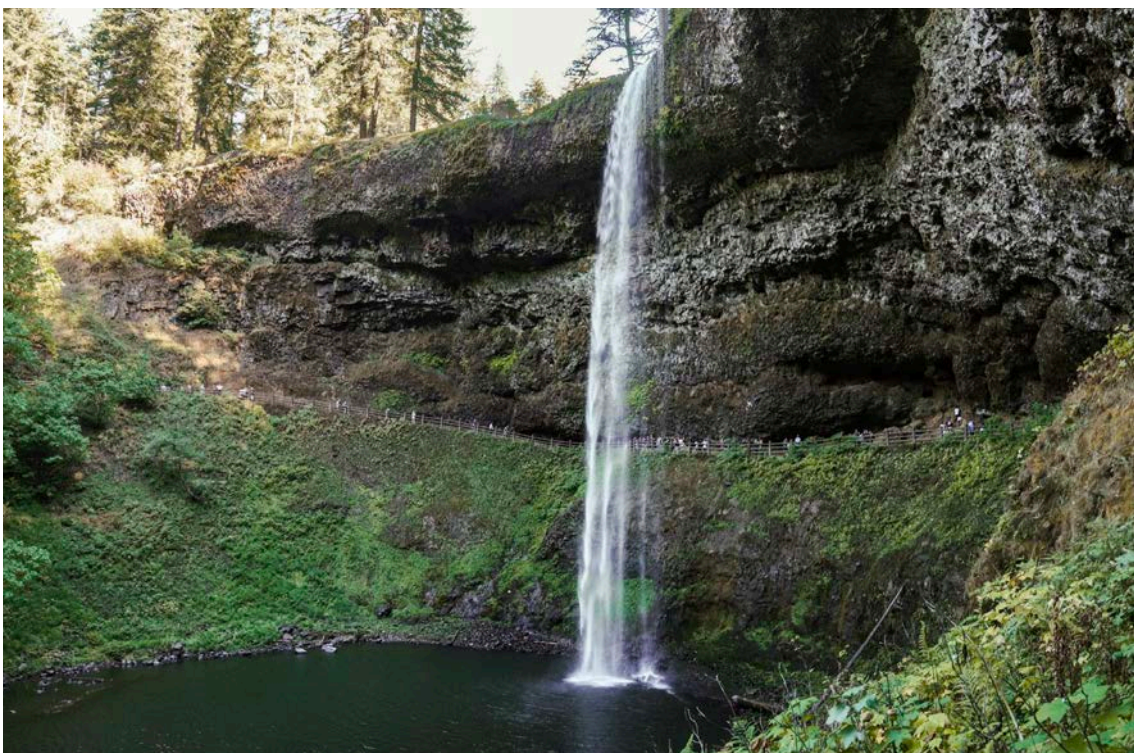
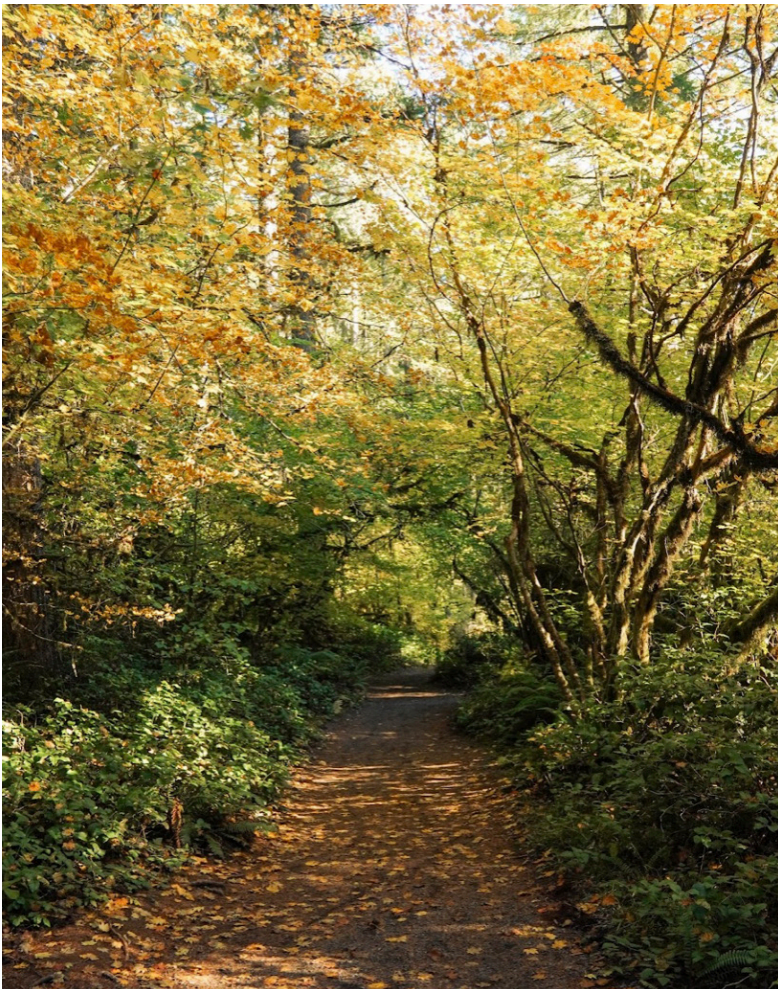
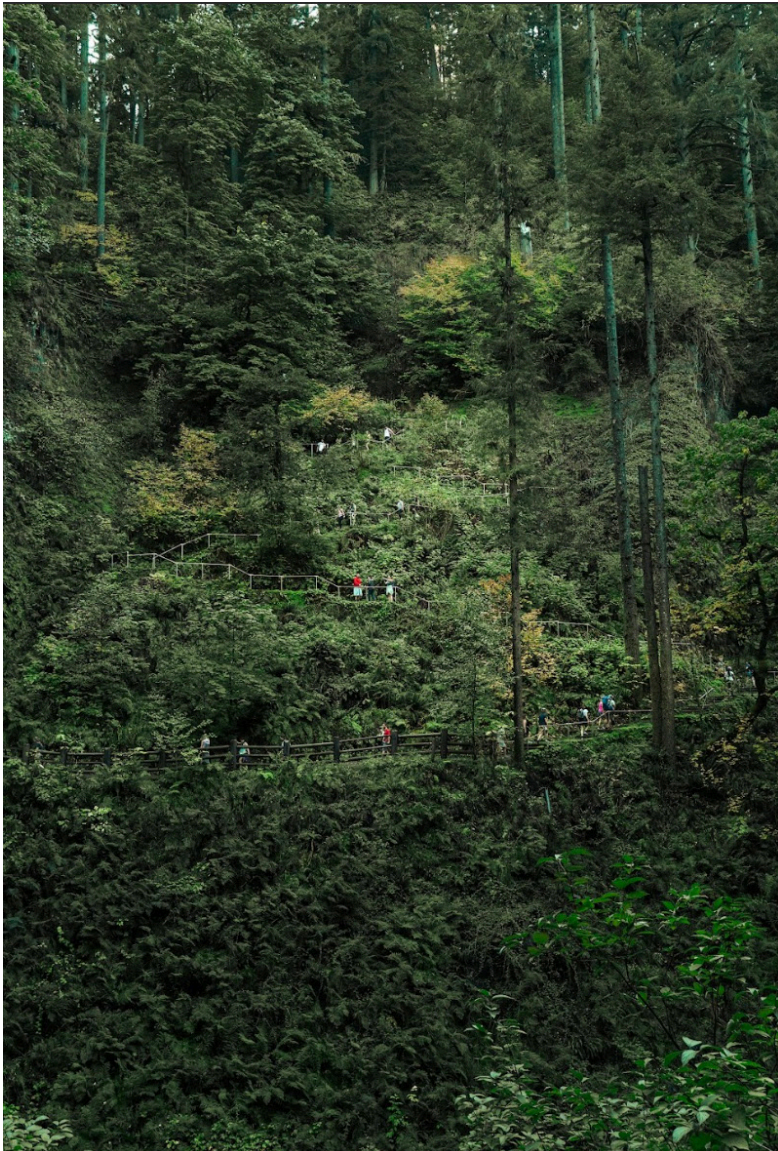
Photos by Jason Lehman

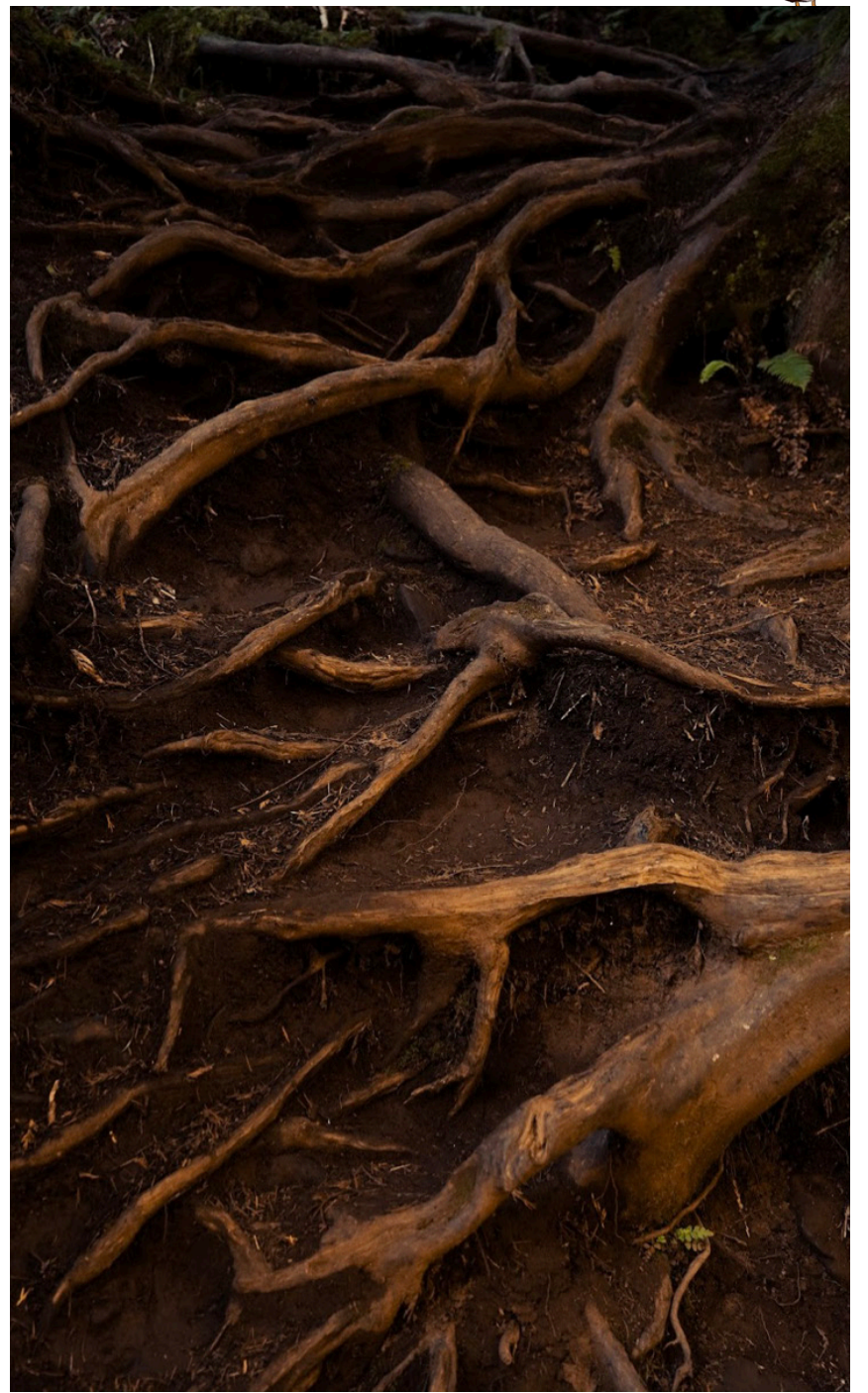




Photojournalism: Parents weekend in Silver Falls

Jason Lehman
Staff Photographer





Opinion: Should we be able to spend weekends at The Bistro?

Marit Hickey
Staff Writer

Many questions can be asked about Willamette as an institution, but one in particular weighs heavily on the student body: why isn't The Bistro, the beloved student-run coffee shop at the heart of campus, open on the weekends?

Since opening its doors in the fall of 1986, The Bistro has been one of the only spots for students to gather on campus that isn't a library or academic building. Originally founded by two sophomores, Eric Fishman and John Donovan, The Bistro was [designed to give students] somewhere to grab a late-night or between-meals snack and meet each other when Goudy closed.

I was almost personally offended the first time I learned that The Bistro was closed on weekends. After all, it is the nature of a young adult to indulge in the biological urge to buy themselves a little treat as a reward for studying on a Saturday. In preparation for this article, The Collegian sent out a survey that asked 42 Willamette students if they wanted The Bistro to be open on weekends in addition to its regular hours, which they largely did. Of the 42 responses, 71.4% said, "Yes," with an additional 26.2% selecting the "Sometimes / limited hours" option. So if one were to generalize, it seems that most students want The Bistro to have at least some weekend hours.

When asked why there aren't any weekend hours at The Bistro, Maddy Montanye ('25), the kitchen manager for The Bistro, gave two main reasons. Right now, it is not financially viable to staff on the weekends, and furthermore, student workers deserve to have breaks to study, engage in hobbies and have social lives. When told that students seemed interested in weekend hours, they offered this insight: "[As] it is, we're already wondering if we are open too often, because we're losing money. We've had a hard time garnering interest in our late-night events."

Later, talking about

the relationship between The Bistro and post-COVID Willamette students, they added, "We want to be a culturally significant spot. Maybe being open on the weekends would boost that, but at the same time I'm not sure it would be worth it. For example, we put in a lot of effort into being a fun space in the evenings, and we don't get a lot of engagement in that. I think we might not get as much engagement as you would assume on the weekends."

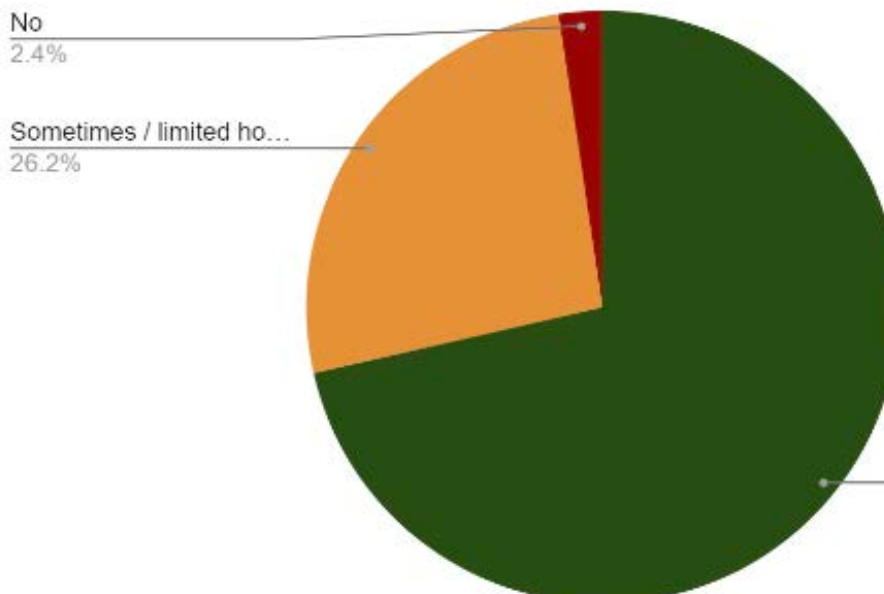
Hearing this, it became clear that the issue is not so cut and dry. Why would The Bistro add weekend hours when the effort they put into their current times is not being reflected back?

So, after some time spent ponderously watching ducks, it would be easy to reach the conclusion that if Willamette as a campus wants to keep claiming its undying love and support for The Bistro (and perhaps gain some weekend hours), then maybe students should show up more often when it's open.

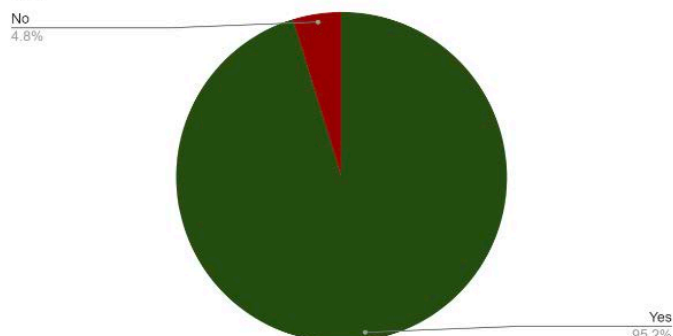
There is not any moral value attached to your choice of whether or not to go to The Bistro; college students don't have especially large budgets. But if there's one other thing about college students that is commonly understood, it's that sometimes we want a little treat at the end of the day. It's no coincidence that The Bistro was established here on campus by students. It was designed to be our place to hang out, run into friends, and most of all buy ourselves that little treat after a hard day.

When asked if there's anything they want people to know about The Bistro, Montanye said, "[i]t probably just seems like we're another part of the university machine, but we're not. We are for the students, by the students, and we try to create a good space. It's hard to be a student-run business, but we're giving people a lot of really valuable job and life skills. Don't count us out."

Count of In your opinion, should the Bistro be open on weekends?



Count of If the Bistro was open on the weekends, would you go?



Opinion: “Dorm life is not perfect” - Why Kaneko isn’t all that special

Marit Hickey
Staff Writer

If you don’t live in Willamette’s Kaneko, the newest dorm equipped with air conditioning and balconies, you probably think it’s the fanciest dorm on campus. But if you do live in Kaneko, you perhaps long for the other dorms and their community connection and character, as well as the convenience that comes with not having to walk 15 minutes across the Sky Bridge just because you forgot a book.

Allie Jakubauskas (‘27), a Kaneko West Wing resident, described her experience living in the dorm so far. “I really love it. We have balconies, which I’m a big fan of,” she said. However, Jakubauskas did admit that the walk is slightly inconvenient. “If I’m leaving to go, I’m leaving for the day,” she said. “It’s good motivation to get out and stay and finish my work.”

When speaking with Jakubauskas, it became clear how attitude and preference shaped a lot of people’s opinions on where they live. Ellie Norman (‘26), who lived in Kaneko during their first year, said they prefer their windows in Doney because the windows in Kaneko are the balcony doors. Norman didn’t like how “you have to open [the doors] and see everything.” Conversely, Jakubauskas mentioned she’ll “just go out there and do yoga on the balcony.”

When it comes to the older dorms on campus, no

one knows them quite as well as Kaiona Apio (‘24), who has been living in the older dorms for the last four years and is now the Community and Resident Advisor (CRA) for the Matthews Complex. As the CRA, Apio is the one to go to when there’s a problem in the dorm. For example, “When we got back in the fall, there was no hot water,” Apio explained. Due to all their years living in dorms, they know how to sum it up pretty well. “Dorm life is not perfect,” they said. “I think it depends on the perspective you come in with.”

Though Kaneko has newer dorms and AC, its residents have a further walk from campus and less community in the dorm. Even Jakubauskas admits that if she couldn’t live in Kaneko, her next pick would be “Matthew’s or Belknap because it’s central.” However, Ami Bisping (‘26), the Resident Advisor for Terra House—the dorm that arguably got hit the hardest with the cold water fiasco—said, “It was a challenge with everyone moving in and doing training and having to shower in cold water.”

Despite surviving the two weeks of cold showers, Bisping explained why she loves Terra: “Community gatherings are just really easy when you’re in halls that have common areas that are accessible to everyone.” Bisping described how she felt it could be difficult to achieve the same thing in a larger dorm, like Kaneko. This sentiment exemplified how every dorm has positive and negative attributes and shared



the idea that many of the people interviewed shared. Apio explained how older buildings will have more problems, but “the older dorms have more character.” Jakubauskas agreed, stating, “I think Kaneko has a nicer look, but I think the dorms have a warmer vibe.”

After speaking to residents, RAs and CRAs regard-

ing the differences between Kaneko and the older dorms on campus, it’s clear that it simply doesn’t matter. Dorm life is not going to be smooth sailing, regardless of whether your dorm has a balcony or not. You might have to walk fifteen minutes to your class, or you might have to master the art of a speedy army

Art by Caramia Christensen

shower because the water won’t heat up, but that’s what makes the dorm experience a memory and allows residents to form connections and bonds. The differences between Kaneko and other dorms don’t matter because they represent, at its core, the classic college dorm experience.



ASWU Student Org Upcoming Events

- Murder Mystery, Friday, Oct 20, 2023, Friday
- Cape Lookout Hike, Oct 21, 2023, Saturday
- Pumpkin Ride Ziplining, Oct 22, Sunday
- Student Org and Club Orientation, Oct 26, 2023, Thursday

ASWU sponsored orgs from the University Calendar are added here.
See more at: <https://events.willamette.edu/>

GET QUACKING!

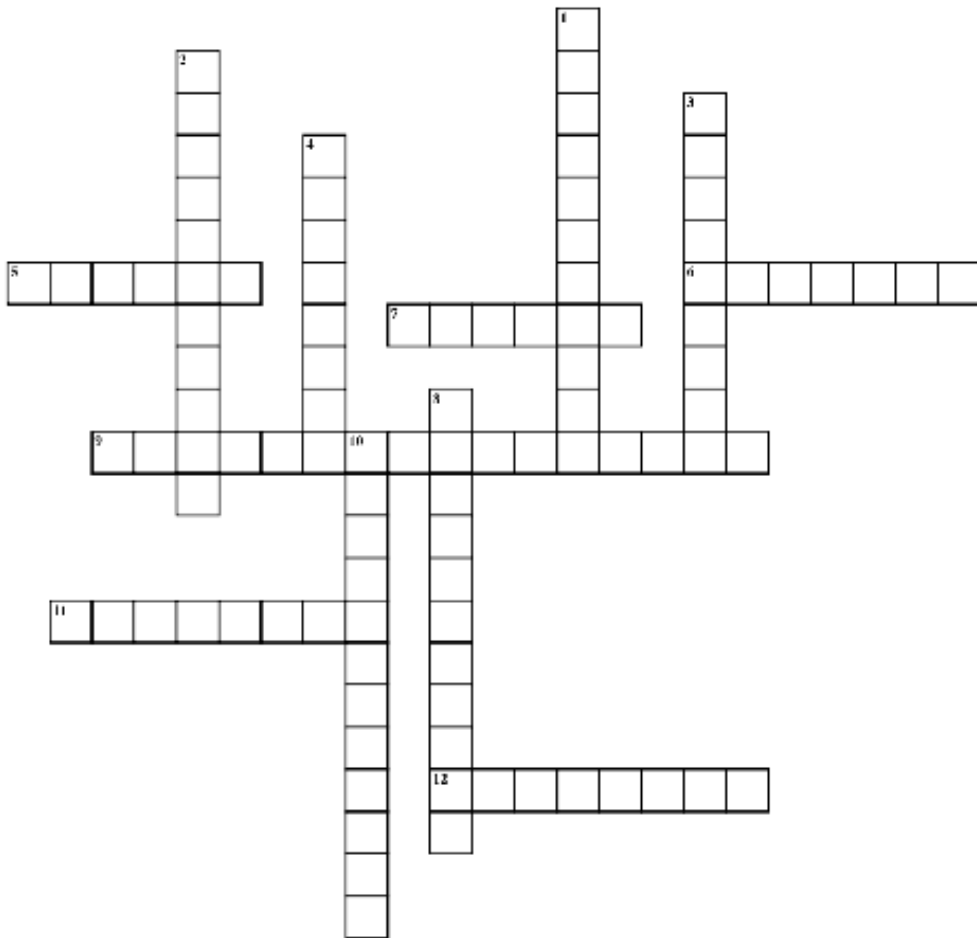


YOUR AD HERE!

Contact us at
collegian-editor-in-chief@willamette.edu



Happy Haunting



Across

- [5] _____ mystery
- [6] Sends _____ up your spine.
- [7] "Have a break, have a _____."
- [9] Author of 1820 classic "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."
- [11] All Saint's date.
- [12] in-the-box, be nimble, of all trades

Down

- [1] For both mummy costumes and Halloween pranks.
- [2] It was a graveyard smash!
- [3] Children's author and cousin of Franken Stein.
- [4] includes the tibia, occipital and ulna
- [8] 1975 musical picture show
- [10] Linus and Sally wait up for the _____.

Crossword answers- Across: 5. Murder 6. Shivers 7. kirkat 9. washingtonirving 11. novfirst 12. olantern Down: 1. toiletpaper 2. monstermash 3. R.L.stein 4. skeleton. 8. rockyhorror 10. greatpumpkin

Cartoon by Isis Coyle

