

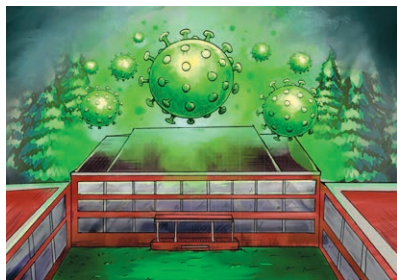
# The Collegian

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Your College, Your Paper, Your Stories, Since 1889.

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## IN THIS ISSUE



### News—pgs. 2-3

- Infectious disease protocols
- Talking \$2 cookies



### Lifestyles—pgs. 3-4

- Kaneko sword fights
- New PHEAL prof. hunt
- Flavor break: Akimatsuri



### Opinions—pg. 5-6

- Red lips, red graphs
- Ride the Cyclone



### Sports & Rec—pg. 7

- Tri's successes
- MBB preseason

## Board of trustees approves ASWU's reserve management plan

Willamette's board of trustees voted in favor of the Associated Students of Willamette University's (ASWU) reserve management plan at their meeting in late October, which removes ASWU's funds from direct investment alongside the Willamette University endowment.

Read more on page 2.

## ASWU senate votes unanimously against the affiliation of Turning Point USA chapter

Aubrey Lee, Staff Writer & Bjorn Domst, Managing Editor • Nov. 24

On Nov. 20, the Associated Students of Willamette University (ASWU) senate voted unanimously against club affiliation of a Willamette student chapter of Turning Point USA (TPUSA). This decision came after weeks of debate amongst senators and following ongoing pushback against the chapter from the Willamette student body.

In September, prospective president of the TPUSA chapter Lexi Thorsett ('26) told *The Collegian* she would not be seeking ASWU affiliation, but she has since reversed this decision.

Later, in a written statement on Nov. 10, Thorsett reaffirmed that she would not be seeking funding from ASWU, at least at the current moment. Other than funding, clubs affiliated with ASWU are able to reserve spots on campus and gain a secondary advisor from the Student Engagement and Leadership (SEAL) office.

When the possibility of TPUSA affiliation was first brought up on the agenda at the Oct. 23 senate meeting, no vote was passed due to a "lack of quorum," meaning that too many senators had chosen to abstain.

On Nov. 13, TPUSA affiliation was back on the agenda again. Following about 15 minutes of public comment largely in disapproval of affiliation, senators voted to table the motion 7-7.

Acting Vice President Pro-Tempore Hannah Moses ('28) made the final tiebreaking vote in favor of tabling the motion, as Vice President Jay Chew ('26) was not present at the meeting. It was not until this most recent Nov. 20 meeting that the senate made its unanimous decision against TPUSA affiliation.

Read more on page 6.

## Student worker, Young Democratic Socialists express discontent with Bon Appétit job cuts

Sirena Coulter-Kress • Staff Writer

To start the fall semester, Bon Appétit, the food service which operates Willamette's dining hall and food vending, cut some student worker positions and hours. Goudy no longer has student servers dishing up food and is instead entirely self-serve. Now, some students, spearheaded by the recently ASWU-affiliated Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA), are voicing their concerns with these changes.

According to Eric Thomas, general manager of Bon Appétit at Willamette since fall of 2022, students' abilities to control their own portions has been shown to lead to less food waste, enabling institutions such as Goudy to be more cost-effective.

However, without the chance to serve students, opportunities for work hours have been cut. "First off, I am not getting scheduled at all. I've had to ask for even just one day to work a week," said a current student worker at Goudy who spoke with *The Collegian* under the condition of anonymity out of concern for keeping their job. "I've noticed also that they're understaffed, like very understaffed, which confuses me because if you're understaffed, why aren't you scheduling us more?"

The student estimated that they were regularly scheduled to work around 10 hours per week last semester and are now scheduled for only four. "It's all-around kind of confusing, and they don't really tell us much about why," they said.

Alongside the removal of student servers, signs have also been placed around the dining hall stating that no food is to be removed from the premises unless it is in the green to-go boxes available for purchase.

The signs state that this is not a new policy, having been announced multiple times throughout the beginning of the semester. The goal of the signs is to reduce food loss while avoiding putting the workers in a position of having to confront people.



Two diners self-serve food from Goudy as a worker refreshes toppings on Oct. 20, 2025.

Photo by PATRICIA KREPEL

"We were always hoping to place that much emphasis on it," Thomas said. "Sometimes, depending on the person who is working the door, they weren't necessarily comfortable doing it or they didn't want to do it."

Lisa Landreman, vice president of student affairs, who oversees the contract between Willamette and Bon Appétit, said that the contract is reviewed every five years, and the university currently sits about three years into the latest contract.

On the newly-emphasized policies and changes, she said, "We are very aware of being cost-conscious, that food costs are skyrocketing for everyone. We were looking at how we can reduce waste. How can we reduce costs? So we are really doing all we can to contain costs."

YDSA, an only recently affiliated club on Willamette's campus, has chosen the changes in Goudy as the subject of its first campaign. YDSA is a youth and student subsection of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA).

YDSA's goal on Willamette's campus is "improving the day-to-day lives of students, advocating for students, ensuring that students are well taken care of by institutions and administrations, that promises are fulfilled, and that powers are not being abused," said Tristan Surbaugh ('27), vice president of YDSA. "For something like Willamette, that means protecting our student workers and advocating for the student body and its needs to the administration."

Read more on page 3.

# Board of trustees approves ASWU's reserve management plan

Avneet Dhaliwal • Staff Writer

*Disclaimer: The Collegian receives most of its funding from ASWU.*

Willamette's board of trustees voted in favor of the Associated Students of Willamette University's (ASWU) reserve management plan at their meeting in late October, which removes ASWU's funds from direct investment alongside the Willamette University endowment.

The decision came after a year-long effort, starting in the fall semester of 2024, during which ASWU has explored ways to divest its endowment fund from Willamette University's endowment in order to maintain transparency over where that money comes from and how it is used. The effort came in the wake of student-led demonstrations calling for the university's disclosure and divestment of funds associated with the U.S. arms industry.

As part of ASWU's reserve management plan, the removed funds will be transferred into a general ledger account, meaning it cannot be reinvested for other purposes and is now considered a reserve fund.

Due to the new location of the ASWU funds, it will be referred to as the "ASWU Reserve Fund" instead of

the "ASWU Endowment Fund" in legal matters and in general from now on. The funds, which amounted to approximately \$400,000 as of Oct. 2, will officially be transferred over in a couple of weeks into the ASWU Reserve Fund.

The Endowment was created back in 2004 to help support intergenerational equity. The "Student Activity Fee" that every student pays for as a part of tuition goes directly to ASWU. This money is then used for clubs and other student-led events or activities. Despite the constant growth of the fund, in recent years, it hasn't regularly been accessed for student projects.

"Students [were] paying fees [each year], and those fees are being put into the endowment, [but] students have not seen the benefits of that money in probably the last 10 years," said Stevie Bergstrom, president of ASWU.

With more accessibility to the fund, ASWU has brainstormed some possibilities in terms of application of the fund.

"Our plan moving forward with the [ASWU] Reserve Fund is to do some sort of capital improvement project [in spring of 2026] to really show students the benefit of this year-



ASWU President Stevie Bergstrom ('26) speaks about the board meeting at the ASWU senate meeting on Thursday, Oct. 30, 2025.

Photo by MAC CHILDERS

long project that we've been working on," said Bergstrom.

Suggestions from students and faculty members have ranged from installing a volleyball pit on campus, adding swings on campus, updating furniture in the UC building, and renovating the Smith Audi-

torium. Overall, ASWU is eager to receive student input over the use of the Reserve Fund.

"I'm really excited to see something really positive come out of this and to hopefully get a lot of student feedback about [the fund]," Bergstrom said.

# WU health, housing officials explain university's infectious disease protocols, provide flu season recommendations

Alexander Berry • Staff Writer



Viruses creeping into the dorms.  
Art by ADDIE MARTIN

As Willamette University is in the midst of its flu season, health officials at the Bishop Wellness Center explained how they keep track of diseases and encouraged students to utilize Bishop Wellness in preparations for the upcoming semester breaks. Last year's pertussis (whooping cough) outbreak remains a point of reference for campus health officials as they navigate this flu season.

Willamette has several established means of tracking and managing infectious diseases, as noted by Lauren Carlson, the director of health services and lead nurse practitioner for Bishop Wellness, and Don Thomson, the associate dean for health and wellbeing. Carlson explained, "The state of Oregon monitors wastewater

and the number of positive [influenza] cases that are reported." Willamette then has access to the reported cases and is able to monitor them in relation to on-campus outbreaks. Bishop Wellness sends out reminders to prioritize personal health nearing travel-heavy seasons, before and after the academic breaks.

Specific protocols at Willamette are managed through county and state public health officials and not the federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Expanding on this, Carlson said, "Historically, the CDC and OHA have been pretty aligned." Thomson added, "But we [Willamette] defer to the Oregon Health Authority because of the regional context."

Beyond more common ill-

nesses like influenza or COVID-19, Willamette experienced a whooping cough outbreak last year. Thomson was then in correspondence with the Marion County Health Department, which helped orchestrate an email response to the community. Among other things, the email noted, "Being vaccinated with Tdap [tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis] is effective at preventing pertussis or decreasing its severity, and is a critical protection." The email provided contact information for medical advice and continued to explain early symptoms of pertussis, ending with a statement about the disease's typical incubation period of 1-2 weeks.

Jake Freeland ('26), a public health major and student-athlete, contracted whooping cough last year during the outbreak. "I'm celiac and immunocompromised, which means certain vaccines I take at certain times might not be effective." Freeland self-isolated and received antibiotics to combat the bacterial infection. As a student-athlete, however, Freeland was unaware of how long the cough would linger, which impacted his return to the Willamette tennis team. "The cough lingered for 3 ½ months. ... I got it in November and was still recovering in February," he said.

Freeland discussed the importance of understanding the severity of the whooping cough and advised other students to contact trace if sick and to wear masks. Containment protocols necessary for contact tracing include exposure notifications to those potentially infected.

Bishop Wellness, in addition to antibiotics, can provide the flu vaccine across both the Willamette and PNCA campuses. Carlson also listed other communicable diseases Bishop can treat, including strep throat, sinus infections, pneumonia, ear infections and other symptoms that can accom-

pany respiratory viruses. Students are able to purchase COVID-19 tests over the counter as well. In situations where Bishop Wellness cannot provide adequate resources for students, medical referrals can be provided.

Additionally, a vaccine clinic partnership is in the works between Safeway Pharmaceuticals and Willamette University to offer vaccines not offered on campus. Carlson explained, "[Safeway] could do an MMR vaccine, meningitis vaccine, COVID vaccine and booster shots." On Nov. 17, the Bishop Wellness and Safeway Pharmaceuticals partnership had a flu and COVID vaccine clinic for the Willamette community in the University Center, providing free or low-cost vaccines to students before holiday travel.

Bishop has recommended students to go to Safeway for other medical needs but acknowledges that it may be a barrier for some students. Soon, Bishop plans to further its partnership with Safeway. While health care at Safeway is billed through students' direct insurance under preventative health care, in the future, if a student uses the school insurance with the partnership, there could be no additional cost. The anticipated continuation of the partnership is within the next academic year.

Aaron Hukari, the director of residence life and housing, commented on housing's role in combating the spread of infections as well: "RAs report up concerns coming from residents. Then, we can communicate [to the Willamette community] what the issue is."

Hukari explained that housing follows Bishop's recommendations, but challenges stem from congregate living. Hukari recommended that students stay home when sick, access health care services where possible and wash their hands.

(Goudy changes cont.)

As the frontperson for the campaign on Goudy, Surbaugh put up posters around campus in order to encourage student Goudy workers, friends of student workers, and generally concerned students to anonymously share their experiences related to Bon Appétit. At the time of interviewing, Surbaugh had received 31 responses, which they shared with

The Collegian.

Alongside dissatisfaction with the job cuts, one other issue brought out by these responses relates to food safety — several raised concerns about the reduced staff's ability to adequately monitor spills and cross-contaminations.

"If students have concerns, we ask them to come directly to us with those concerns so they can be addressed in the moment. Our team has

detailed protocols for cleaning and food handling," Thomas said in email correspondence with The Collegian. "And if a student has a concern about cross contamination or how to manage their dietary restrictions, it is best if we can work with them directly."

YDSA has tried to get into direct contact with Thomas, who has not yet responded directly to their specific concerns beyond, according to Thomas, inviting them to join the

Dining Committee and to submit comment cards.

"We'd really like Goudy to be honest and open because if there are real budget constraints, that is something they can bring to the student body and help the student body to understand," Surbaugh said. "But it shouldn't be up to the students to pick up the slack."

## Q&A: Bistro management talks higher cookie prices and economic pressures

Aubrey Lee • Staff Writer

The Bistro, Willamette's student-run coffee shop, is known beyond its drinks for its affordable cookies. But as the economy faces inflation and other factors that have caused costs to rise, the Bistro has raised the price of its chocolate chip cookies from \$1 to \$1.50 and now, as of fall semester, to \$2.

In a conversation with The Collegian's Aubrey Lee, Emma Stephens ('26), the general manager of the Bistro, and Sarah Leist ('26), the Bistro's financial manager, broke down the financial considerations the Bistro has to balance, like economic pressures and student affordability. Each has held their respective role since April of last school year.

The Q&A has been edited for length and clarity.

**Lee:** Typically, how are the Bistro's finances managed?

**Stephens:** Sarah [Leist], our financial manager, manages most of the Bistro's finances. That includes doing profit loss reports, paying for invoices, and pushing out tips and wages every two weeks. Her duties are very large; they encompass most of the financial stuff. Myself and the kitchen manager are engaged in some part of it, but most of it's Sarah, and she's doing a great job this year.

**Lee:** The cookie price has been raised to \$2. Can I ask what led to that decision?

**Leist:** Our suppliers have been raising their prices, so it's more expensive for us to buy the ingredients to make everything. I did a cost analysis on all of our cookies, and for the chocolate chip specifically, by pricing them at \$1.50, we were actively losing mon-

ey. It costs more than \$1.50 to make a chocolate chip cookie, so raising the price was just kind of inevitable.

**Stephens:** We really recognize that the chocolate chip cookies are a staple, and they've always been relatively low-priced. We just wanted to keep the Bistro open for everyone. In order to do that, we did have to raise prices. But we didn't do so without recognizing that it would have an impact on the student population in some way.

**Lee:** What has been the response to the price change from the students so far?

**Stephens:** We were really worried, especially after last year, when we raised the price 50 cents. Doing so again so early on in our managerial journey was definitely something we were worried about. But I found that people don't really care. I feel like if they're gonna buy a cookie, they're not really deterred by the 50-cent increase. I don't know if that would be true if we raised prices more, but we have not seen a decrease in cookie sales. If anything, with the specials that we've been running, we've been seeing an increase.

**Lee:** Given the larger state of the economy, are there any considerations for raising the prices of other goods in the Bistro?

**Leist:** Yeah. We've been getting emails from our matcha provider and from our coffee bean provider that they are raising their prices. So unfortunately, I think more is coming from us. We just haven't gotten to that point yet.

**Stephens:** Most of the price increases are probably going to happen next spring. But any decision we make will be with respect to what we think the general student population can handle. We are catering mostly to college students who, in this economic time, also don't have a lot of money to spend. We want people to be able to buy themselves a sweet little treat when they feel like they want it or have coffee at an affordable price.

**Lee:** Is there anything else either of you wanted to add or like to com-



Bistro cookies, now priced at \$2, on Oct. 6, 2025.

Photo by MAC CHILDERS

municate to students and customers about the Bistro?

**Leist:** All of our decisions are made with the best best interest of our employees and the Bistro as a whole and all of our consumers. Those are who we have in mind; we're not like a money-hungry corporation. We're just students like the rest of us just trying to keep our small business alive.

**Stephens:** The Bistro has never been like a for-profit business; any money that the Bistro makes does go back into running the Bistro. There have been instances in the past where the Bistro hasn't made money. We've had lots of losses, and that's put us in financial situations like debt that we're still working with. But those are tricky financial situations that we are willing to be put in because we're trying to provide a service to the student population. I think any opinions people have about the debt, you're more than welcome to have them, but we're also just college students, and we're trying our best to make sure that the business works and stays alive.

**Lee:** Since you already brought up the debt, would you mind sharing a little bit more about that situation?

**Stephens:** At the end of every year, we reset our finances in a way, and we start with a fresh slate. We start with zero dollars at the beginning of each school year. We spend a lot of money up front just on training and the costs of buying goods.

And then slowly, the theory is, over the whole year we're supposed to make enough money to pay that back. But what's happened in years past is because of the economy, because of the changes to campus ... one of the biggest things that we've been talking about with our financial consultant that we've brought in is the switch away from Compass Cash.

It was a thing before our time, like flex dollars, but you could spend it on anything on campus including the Bistro. The transition away from that took away a big source of revenue for the Bistro, so that in conjunction with the state of the economy, and the rising prices, COVID, and just people not having a lot of extra money to spend, the Bistro has not been making a lot of money to pay back all of the costs of running the business each year. So we have been put in debt very slowly over time.

Every year, we inherit that debt as something that we need to pay off. We're very grateful to receive some subsidies from ASWU in the past. Without them, we couldn't operate. But it's not because we're not running the Bistro in a way that's financially responsible. It's just because of all of these factors piling on top of each other that we really don't have any control over that we are in this financial situation. The debt is something that we're actively trying to reduce and make sure that it's not a continuing precedent in the Bistro.

**Lee:** Is there anything else either of you would like to add?

**Stephens:** We're just very grateful for the students. Honestly, I think the best part about this job is having the interaction with the public and the student body, and seeing how everybody treats the Bistro like their own space is what makes it so important to me. I feel like we don't have a lot of third spaces on campus, and I think that the Bistro is one of them. And so we want to keep it open, so people can come and hang out, regardless of where they live, what sports and clubs they are involved in or whatever. There are the hearths and stuff, but the Bistro is where everybody hangs out, and we just want to keep doing that. I love seeing people in the Bistro. It makes me so happy.



**Keep up with your student government!**



**For Senate Meeting Minutes:**

1. Scan QR Code
2. Click 'Menu' in upper right-hand corner
3. Click 'Documents'

Ad paid for by ASWU.

## Students form sword fighting group on Kaneko Quad

Caelyn Ochs • Staff Writer

Weekly, a group of friends practices sword fighting in the Kaneko Quad, allowing anyone to take a swing. This is not just some regular fighting; it's HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts).

HEMA is a combat fighting style that originated in the Middle Ages, though its techniques have since faded out of popularity or have evolved into different sword fighting practices. In order to reintroduce and preserve this art for future generations and HEMA enthusiasts, professionals have used recovered manuscripts to learn the old fighting techniques.

Liam Mattingly ('26), who runs the club, described HEMA as "living history." There is an array of clubs all over Europe and the U.S. where people can learn and even get certified to teach HEMA. This historical hobby is also a competitive sport for some; there are tournaments where individuals can duel against one another for a chance to receive medals or even cash prizes.

Mattingly has been studying the art of HEMA for 2 years. He was trained in Texas, and this semester, he decided to bestow his knowledge onto his friends and the Willamette community.

On Friday nights, Mattingly rounds up his friends and brings them to Kaneko, where the lessons begin.

Mattingly has a collection of six different styles of foam training swords, accompanied by a variety of books on HEMA and training

manuals. This, alongside his previous knowledge of the sport from back home, is what he uses to share his hobby with the rest of the community. He estimated that he has had about 20 people drop in and out to take a stab at this elaborate fighting style.

These training sessions have expanded to the Nerf Club. On occasion, Mattingly has brought his sword fighting equipment to Nerf Club's meetings to extend his knowledge to the club as its vice president, allowing members to get a mix of modern-day shoot-offs and medieval duels.

When asked if he ever thought of turning HEMA into its own official club at Willamette, he expressed how expensive the equipment is. One piece of HEMA training equipment costs on average \$100 or more, he said. Even with funding, Mattingly understands he would have to pay some money out-of-pocket to help fund the club's equipment needs, including an investment of time. He decided that he prefers these impromptu training sessions, so anyone passing by can join in.



Ryan Vickroy ('26) and Liam Mattingly ('26) duel outside Smith Auditorium on Nov. 17.

Photo by PATRICIA KREPEL

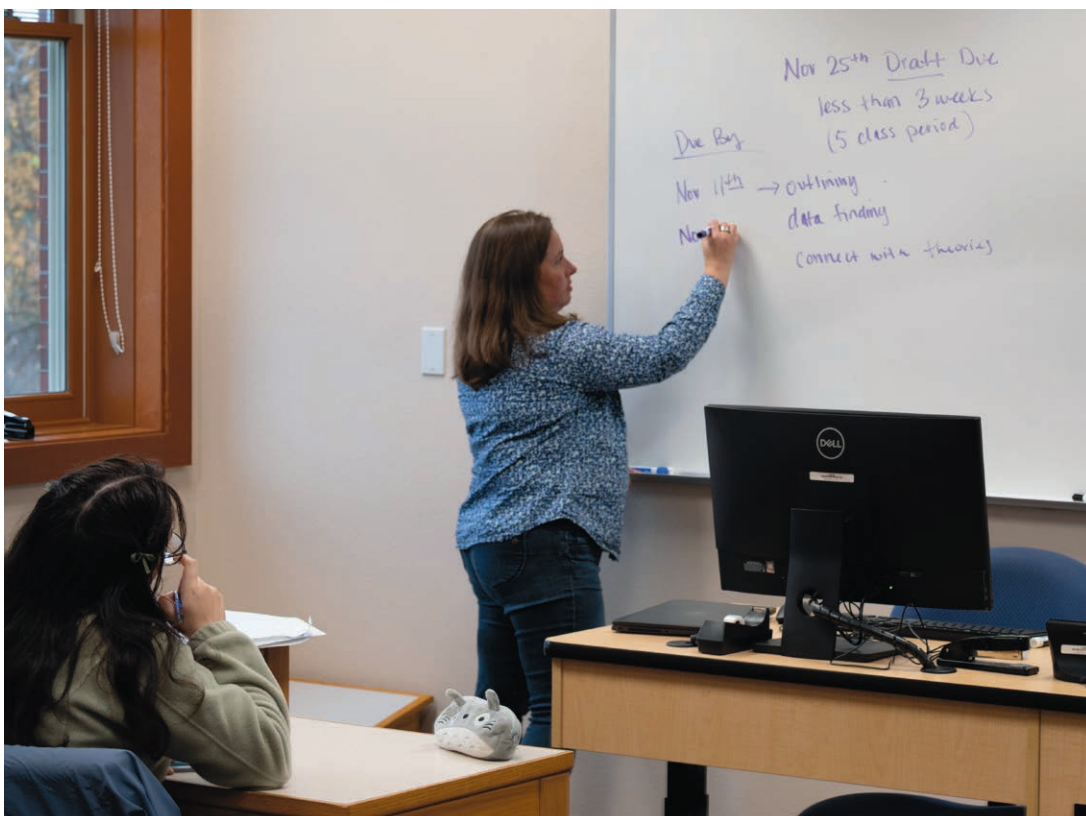
Despite the lack of official club status, many still enjoy the opportunity Mattingly has given them to learn HEMA. Ryan Vickroy ('26), a friend of Mattingly's and participant in these weekly gatherings, stated, "It's fun to learn from him, even

if it is just a bunch of friends getting together and having a good time."

Mattingly added, "I'm really glad I have a community here that has people willing to do this niche stuff with me. People are willing to try it out."

## WU plays the PHEAL'd for a new public health professor

William Weeks • Staff Writer



Professor Iroz-Elardo reviewing due dates with her public health class on Nov. 6, 2025.

Photo by MAC CHILDERS

Following the retirement of professor Joyce Millen in spring 2025 and a steep increase in the number of students majoring in the program, there has been a growing demand for a new public health (PHEAL) professor.

A committee of PHEAL professors and students as well as two non-PHEAL professors is currently

in an extensive screening process. After initial interviews with candidates, the committee has narrowed its options down to three. One such candidate, Mimi Ding, gave a presentation on Nov. 19. Should a candidate get hired, they would begin in fall 2026.

Per standard procedure, applicants must demonstrate a commitment to the teacher-scholar mod-

el. That is, professors must maintain research in addition to their teaching. The extent to which one can mix them is especially valued, noted assistant professor of public health and Search Chair Nicole Iroz-Elardo. According to her, the next professor should ask themselves, "How can I incorporate undergrad students in [my studies]?"

It can be hard for new professors to be a generalist on a topic, Iroz-Elardo pointed out. While this is a key ingredient to a good professor, many new professors are hired straight from graduate school, having just spent years focusing on their specific research.

The search has come after last year's attempted hiring failed. "That is to say, we could bring people to campus, we could evaluate them, but didn't get the right kind of person for the role," history professor Sammy Basu clarified. Hiring failures are somewhat common, as one occurred after another search by WU last year. In the interim, PHEAL has hired a visiting assistant professor.

This hiring underscores the growth of the young program. Over the last three years, the number of students majoring in public health has doubled to roughly 65, leaving Iroz-Elardo and Basu with a bit of a

larger load on top of the hiring process.

Since its founding in 2019 by Millen and Basu, the PHEAL program has been markedly interdisciplinary, emphasizing its connection to other programs. Around a quarter of PHEAL students double-major in environmental science alone. Other common pairings are anthropology and biology, which particularly serves students wishing to continue to medical school after graduation.

The hiring of Iroz-Elardo in fall 2022 continued that strategy. Despite being a PHEAL professor, her doctorate is actually in urban studies; at Willamette, she also teaches a class on urban health.

Iroz-Elardo and Basu both mentioned their vision for the program moving forward, gearing to offer both a B.A. and a B.S. in public health. This would lend itself well to the program's "mixed-methods" teaching style, combining both the qualitative and quantitative.

"The way to revive the liberal arts is to commit to applied approaches," Basu stated. "Not just theory, but how does it play out? How does it solve problems?" Their goal is for students to have practical experiences through off-campus activities at the capstone level and before.

In the future, Iroz-Elardo sees the growth curve leveling out. She seeks to maintain a community-based approach, deepening connections with other programs and local groups. She added, "I just look forward to having another colleague!"

# Akimatsuri brings fresh flavors to Goudy

Ethan Barker • Staff Writer



Chicken katsu curry, a popular dish that was served during the Akimatsuri fall festival on Nov. 4.  
Photo courtesy of JSSL

On Nov. 4, you might've noticed a line much longer than usual at Goudy Commons. Maybe you saw the Japanese-inspired decorations on all the tables and walls. That day, Japan Studies Student Leaders (JSSL) hosted Akimatsuri, a fall festival at Goudy serving Japanese foods. The festival celebrates the fall harvest season, and JSSL worked with Goudy and Bon Appetit to put together a menu of unique Japanese foods for lunch that day.

For JSSL President Sean Olson ('26), the event is especially important to the Japanese exchange students on campus, as it both celebrates culture and connects students.

"Having accessible Japanese food really brings comfort to the study abroad students over here, especially since they've been in Goudy for a long time eating American food, pizzas, burgers, all those kinds of things," Olson said.

In addition to the change in Goudy's regular food schedule, Olson said that the event brings more awareness to Japanese foods and culture as a whole, and giving the campus community a taste of a different culture can bring new perspectives. One dish in particular has been popular every year over the four years JSSL has hosted the event.

"It's been our tradition to always have chicken katsu curry because that's always been very popular," Olson said. "It brings me a big smile when you look at all the different food tables and booths, and then just out of nowhere, there's one huge line at the chicken katsu booth. So we always make sure to keep that."

Even though Akimatsuri only happens once a year, Olson said students welcome breaks from Goudy's usual offerings, whether it's from JSSL or another club.

"Goudy tends to have pasta and pizza very consistently.... But be-

cause it keeps coming up on a rolling basis every week, it gets very monotonous. I feel like being able to have that variety ... that would make the student life experience a lot better," Olson said.

In the past, Goudy has hosted similar events celebrating different cultures. In October, the Latine Heritage Month takeover had a similar unique menu, and last March, the building hosted the Women's History Fair. These events, and others throughout the year, create breaks from the aforementioned monotony.

For Olson, the community joining together over food or events like Akimatsuri is a meaningful reminder of what students can accomplish. By working with clubs and organizations, students are able to bring new experiences to their community, even starting with different menus at Goudy.

"Personally, I'm very glad I'm able to help represent and try to talk with the students," Olson said. "Being able to help voice what kind of issues as a community we want, and being able to feel that impact firsthand, by seeing a giant line at Goudy for the food, to me and for [JSSL], that brings us a huge smile."

# Opinion: Fashionable divas predict recession

Gimena Baez Baez • Staff Writer

As the number of U.S. states effectively in a recession increases, more comments online jokingly discuss recession indicators. Though the United States is not officially in a recession, fears are increasing towards the possibility of there being one soon, based on the flippant spending of the current administration and other concerns.

In terms of more tangible recession indicators, women's fashion trends have proven to be one of the most reliable and are often used by economists. This is partially due to women being the main drivers of the American economy, no matter how prejudiced the U.S. continues to be towards them. From purchases of lipstick to the appearance of fake blonde hair, women have been the tried and true skeptical divas, displaying the country's potential for economic downfall.

In 2025, the revenue of the lipstick industry in the U.S. is at \$4.15 billion, having increased by approximately 3.8% from 2024, and is expected to grow annually by 2.91%. The "lipstick index" explains that increased purchases of "affordable luxuries" like lipstick are fairly trustworthy indicators of an incoming recession.

Leonard Lauder, one of the heirs to Estée Lauder, coined the term shortly after the attacks on the Twin Towers in 2001. Lipstick sales dramatically rose after the accident, which coincidentally happened during a devastating economic crash.

Mary Mannion, a writer for J.P. Morgan, explains that these purchases of lipstick "can have a positive psychological impact during stressful times." The ability to spend on a small luxury item typically makes people feel better about their economic situation. It gives a false sense of stability and short-term happiness by being able to afford something unnecessary.

Similarly, the "hemline index" can also predict economic crashes

and potential recessions. As hemlines get longer, the economy is speculated to become worse. This trend loosely goes back to the 1920s, when hemlines were shorter during prosperous times and then promptly lowered during the Great Depression. Since then, hemlines have been decently reliable predictors of economic failure.

Part of the reasoning behind this is that when women wear shorter skirts, it represents going out, partying and generally participating in activities that require money. During 2025, online searches for maxi skirts rose 393 percent, assisting the growing belief that a recession will occur soon.

Vogue Arabia's Hanadi Merchant-Habib does not agree, however. Merchant-Habib believes that in this modern day and age, hemlines should not be viewed as recession indicators, since runway models and everyday people continue to wear both mini and maxi skirts. They are a fashion statement, not a prophet.

Generally, luxury purchases have fallen as of late due to economic uncertainty, even though fashion houses want to convince the public otherwise. Despite new releases, sales have continued to slow down as less affluent consumers prefer to keep their money saved for necessities instead of luxuries. However, "small" luxuries are still on the rise and will continue to be on the rise for the foreseeable future.

In practice, researchers at Erasmus University Rotterdam found that the index also works on a three-year delay, changing after the economy does. Nevertheless, searches for minimalist fashion and maxi skirts have risen dramatically, giving many much to worry about as we enter the new year and continue with the same political make-up in the federal government and no evident improvements to the current economic situation.



Economic predictors.  
Art by DASHA ALLYN

Recession blonde, also termed recession brunette, is another women's fashion trend that has been used to exemplify increased economic uncertainty. After the stock market crash of 2008, in the following year, the term "recession hair" was coined. This refers to how bleach blondes grow out their roots and do not get them touched up in tough economic times due to the cost of such an appointment. In general, keeping up bleached blonde hair is costly and takes lots of dedicated time. This is time and money that cannot be afforded when the economy is down.

There is a fair amount of push-back to the idea that blondes growing

out their roots is a recession indicator. Healthy hair has had a stronger push in recent years, with clients wanting to keep their hair healthy but stylish, opting to dye anything but the roots. Even so, it is reasonable to link the two together and see the clear line drawn between cost-effective styles and economic insecurity.

Though these indices and trends may not be hard-hitting proof of an incoming recession or market crash, regardless of whether a recession is on the horizon, if women are such a crucial component of the economy, we should be paying more attention.

# WU Theatre's 'Ride the Cyclone' was an emotional rollercoaster

Maisy Clunies-Ross • Staff Writer

This fall, Willamette University Theatre took on "Ride the Cyclone," written by Jacob Richmond and Brooke Maxwell and directed by Willamette University music department's Hannah Penn. The show has developed a cult fan base over the past couple of years, due to its darkly comedic tone and thoughtful ruminations on personal identity and the meaning of life. Both members of the cast and crew at Willamette have been fans of the show for a long time, which was evident in the effort put into this production.

"So much work went into this show. And along with that work, so much passion," Assistant Stage Manager Cordelia Roberts ('28) said. "Because collectively, so many of us just love this show so deeply."

This love was clear from the first glimpse of the set, a dingy amusement park that prominently featured the titular Cyclone, the large metal loops of the roller coaster track twisting around the stage. The scale was even more striking considering it was made by students. "Everything you see is built from the ground up," Roberts said.

The show began on the aforementioned Cyclone. All of the characters, members of a high school

choir in the small Canadian town Uranium, died on the rollercoaster.

Under the guidance of a fortune-telling machine called The Amazing Karnak, played by Pollox Geissinger ('28), the characters were offered a chance for one of them to be brought back to life. Throughout the show, each character made a case for why they should be brought back, preempted by a brief introduction and photo montage from The Amazing Karnak.

All of the pictures used in the montages were the actors' real childhood photos, which made the show feel more grounded. While it was clear the actors were playing heightened versions of high school archetypes, the excellent casting lent each character an emotional honesty.

Beyond the play itself, many cast members revealed a personal connection to their character. Kiele Jarnagin ('27), who played Ocean O'Connell-Rosenburg, shared Ocean's role as the class president, her drive and her zeal for extracurriculars, she said. Even Jane Doe, the one member of the choir left without an identity — and a head — in the accident, was given humanity by her actress, Lily Walsh ('26).

Despite Jane Doe's spooky

presentation, with a doll head and stilted movements, Walsh played the character as someone defined by a relatable urge: her need for connection. "A lot of the comedy comes from me scaring people," Walsh said. "But for Jane, I'm not playing things to be funny. I'm playing things in the moment. I'm trying to make this connection, and it doesn't quite work, which reads as comedic to the audience a lot of the time."

This balance between comedy and tragedy, the archetypal nature of many of the characters and their raw vulnerability, was what made the show so special. Over the course of the show, characters initially defined by superlatives, a quintessential part of high school identity formation, go on to understand themselves and each other as far more than that.

Ocean is the most successful girl in town. Noel, Otis Perrone ('27), is the most romantic boy in town. Misha, Nick Zimmerman ('27), is the angriest boy in town. Ricky, Brayden Fanthorp ('28), is the most imaginative boy in town. Constance, Tabi Momeyer ('27), is the nicest girl in town. Even Jane Doe is trapped by a label, defined by her nothingness.

Ocean, the unlikeable but persistent go-getter, started the show making her case to be brought back to life in an explosion of self-congratulatory bravado that would be perfectly at home on a LinkedIn page. It was expected, an expression of an interior world that aligned with her exterior presentation.

Noel's song reflected on his challenge of being one of the only out gay men in his small town. He retreated into his fantasies of a world where he was better understood, where he was tragic in a dramatic way, rather than tragic via the mundane evils of a fast food job and solitary existence. His performance was lent humor by the melodrama of his fantasy, a kind of lustful naivete that comes from reading about a life you have not lived.

The theme of defining oneself beyond an archetype continued with Misha and Ricky's songs. Misha, a Ukrainian immigrant, felt isolated and uncared for. Shackled by the confines of traditional masculinity, he turned his sadness into anger, exuding machismo as his rap star alter ego.

Ricky also dreamt of a world

where he was centered, rather than sidelined. He was mute when he was alive, turning all his energy inwards and becoming consumed by science fiction. In his mind, he was a space age bachelor man, tasked with saving a race of sexy cat women on a planet called Zolar, where he was finally a hero. These songs highlighted the creativity of the characters despite the limitations of their lives.

The former characters' songs contrasted with Jane and Constance's numbers. Jane didn't have an identity she needed to escape. She didn't have an identity at all. Her song was the most haunting, particularly intensified by Walsh's incredible vocal range.

Constance also reckoned with identity in her number. Long defined by her niceness, her meekness in comparison to the abrasive Ocean, in her performance, she was finally able to embrace her small town and its simple joys. "Her song is all about appreciating life and loving all the little moments and being grateful for everything," Momeyer said of her character. "I've had a really similar experience with this show, just kind of learning to slow down and appreciate everything."

This was the concluding message of the show, the one that led Ocean to make her final choice about who was brought back to life. Since the beginning of the show, Ocean was only in it for herself. The majority of her altruistic actions were for her own ego, but as she watched the rest of the choir bond and learned more about their interiority, Ocean appeared to have a change of heart. In the end, she concluded that she'd rather do it all again than not have a life at all.

That's why Jane got to live. Jane, who had no sense of self or memories of a life. She got a chance to take it all, all of the pain and the joy and the messiness of life. In another show, this message could sound trite. Preachy and cliché. But in "Ride the Cyclone," it was downright cathartic. As Jane boarded the cyclone, it felt like a triumph, not just for her but for the whole group. For the audience.

Jarnagin put the message plainly: "The world right now is in such shambles, and we're all just trying to survive and dig out of it. To be able to have a performance where the big takeaway is just to live life, I think we could all use that right now."



The members of Uranium's St. Cassian's chamber choir take their last ride on the show's titular Cyclone. Top to bottom, from left: Brayden Fanthorp ('28), Otis Perrone ('27), Kiele Jarnagin ('27), Tabi Momeyer ('27) and Nick Zimmerman ('27).

Photo courtesy of KJ Photography, taken on Oct. 30, 2025

(TPUSA unaffiliated cont.)

## Thorsett and Senator Edmunds respond

In a written response to The Collegian regarding ASWU's vote against affiliation, Thorsett expressed that she felt ASWU's decision was not fair to her prospective club. She acknowledged that ASWU's role on campus is to represent the student body of Willamette but noted that "all clubs should be held to the same standards regardless of national affiliation."

Thorsett also reasserted her prospective club's independence. "Turning Point USA chapters nationwide are individual clubs that are shaped by their community and those who join," she said.

"Time and time again, I have assured people here that we are not a violent or hateful group. We simply want a space where we can be ourselves, and to my understanding, that is what Willamette encourages."

She added, "I want to prove that Turning Point USA is not hateful and it is not violent, but I'm not even being given the chance to show that, and I am the one receiving hate and unacceptance."

In an interview with The Collegian, first-year senator Peyton Edmunds ('29) outlined several of her reasons for voting against affiliation, particularly as related to the way she perceives ASWU's role on campus.

"Overall, there is an obligation for members of ASWU to uphold what students want," she said.

Edmunds noted that she received "an overwhelming amount of emails from people saying they'd feel genuinely unsafe if TPUSA was on campus." Because of this, she said, "Any situation where I were to vote 'yes' for affiliation, I'd be just totally diminishing this obligation."

Expanding on the idea of safety concerns, Edmunds highlighted the large LGBTQ+ population on campus: "If we have an organization on campus that actively not only, like,

diminishes that but also rejects those [LGBTQ+] identities, I think it would be a net negative."

A third concern for her is TPUSA's professor watchlist and its potential impacts on the safety of professors. In a prior interview with The Collegian, Thorsett indicated that she was not interested in contributing to the professor watchlist.

Edmunds made clear that her decision was not intended to target general conservative beliefs. "I think overall, having conservative voices on campus is a good thing. I think that there is an issue at Willamette where people are only hearing a couple opinions. However, I think that ultimately, TPUSA is not the way to do it because of the affiliation with the national organization."

Based on TPUSA's club affiliation paperwork and its desire to create a social space for conservative voices, Edmunds believes that there are better ways than affiliating with the national TPUSA organization. For example, Edmunds said that she

would support affiliating a general conservative or Young Republicans group on campus.

"I'm mostly just trying to act in accordance with what my class overall is saying and represent them the best that I can," she said.

*This was a developing story at the time of print publication. Read the most updated version online.*



# Willamette triathlon takes No. 4 at nationals

Leslie Gomez • Staff Writer



Breaking through the finish line.  
Art by ADRIAN AXTELL

Since its foundation in 2021, Willamette University's triathlon program has turned an emerging NCAA sport into one of the school's most impressive competitive success stories. In just a few seasons, the Bearcats have earned podium finishes at multiple regional qualifiers, consistently ranking among the top DIII programs in the country, and most recently competed at NCAA Nationals, taking No. 4 for the second year in a row — a milestone that

one continuous race and has only recently entered the collegiate athletics world. Recognized by the NCAA as an emerging sport, it is still building its competitive infrastructure, with fewer than 50 universities nationwide fielding teams.

This means athletes often compete in unconventional formats, travel widely to find qualifying events, and line up against schools from multiple divisions in the same

signals how quickly the team has risen in the national landscape.

Competing in a sport with few DIII teams nationwide, the Bearcats are learning to thrive by embracing heavy travel to find competitive races across states, training relentlessly and building a culture rooted in adaptability and care. The Bearcats' squad regularly finishes ahead of longstanding programs at regional championships and secures top DIII placements on the national stage.

Triathlon is a sport that combines swimming, cycling and running into

race. Yet Willamette has quickly become one of the most promising DIII programs, earning recognition at this year's West Regional Championships in Texas and placing No. 3 among the top DIII teams in the country.

Unlike some DI programs, Willamette faces unique logistical challenges. There are few DIII triathlon squads in the US, so the Bearcats often compete in mixed field or unconventional events, finding races in creative ways just to get the race experience. Many races, like Newport and Mount Sasha, are community triathlons where their head coach Brett Franz works with race directors to make sure the team is able to compete with each other.

In these races, they have to make sure to have at least one other collegiate team racing, too, and the course must be close to sprint triathlon length. They travel long distances, including to major competitions — recent ventures include races in Arizona, Illinois and Texas — but despite these hurdles, the team continues to rise.

For the athletes, success goes beyond results. It's about community, growth, and the discipline it takes to balance three different forms of competition, plus academics.

Because the sport is relatively new, the team has had the rare opportunity to shape its own traditions. "We still have the liberty to create our own culture and do things how we want," said Natalie Thomas ('27), a third-year triathlete. "Other teams have built-in traditions, but we

change every year in good ways. We adapt to the people and the different personalities." Thomas was named Collegiate Triathlon Coaches Association (CTCA) All-Region after her performance in the West Regional Championships on Nov. 8 in Tempe, Arizona.

Before a race, Thomas focuses on mental clarity: "I try to keep my head as clear as possible and visualize what I've done and what my race could look like. I visualize myself performing at the level I want to perform at." She added that nutrition is also important leading up to a race in order to maintain her energy levels.

Triathletes train hard, about 15 hours a week, balancing swims, rides and runs alongside recovery and coursework. Thomas admitted the season can be grueling: "I'm sore for eight months straight. My body gets physically exhausted, but it's a good kind of tired. I crave that." Triathlon's constant progression is what keeps her hooked. "It's an emerging sport — we progress every single race. It's really rewarding."

Willamette's program represents something larger than athletics; it's proof that new programs can succeed without precedent, that small schools can compete nationally, and that team culture can be both competitive and compassionate. "Going to practice is never something I dread," Thomas said. "That's kind of a blessing, especially for a full-season athlete. You get tired, you get burnt out — but I look forward to it every day."

# Head coach Mike Lenahan talks MBB identity, preseason, pace & space

Ruby Hampton • Staff Writer

Following a disappointing 2024-25 season, men's basketball is gearing up and hoping to find more conference success as they wade through preseason under the guidance of third-year head coach Mike Lenahan.

Last season, Willamette started off strong in their non-conference games, beating Hardin-Simmons University, who traveled to the Sweet 16 in the DIII March Madness tournament, but the Bearcats were unable to hold on to that momentum and ended their season with a 3-13 conference record and a last-place conference finish.

However, in the 2023-24 season, Lenahan's first on staff, the Cats surged from their 2022-23 conference tally of 1-15 to 9-7 and one placement shy of the conference tournament.

Lenahan brought on 10 new recruits last season, growing the team to its largest roster since 2016, with 22. This season is no different, as Lenahan recruited eight new student-athletes.

Offensively, Lenahan is implementing a "pace and space" system, where a team essentially pushes the ball quickly in transition to create space for shot opportunities. Aggressive defense has been a game changer for Willamette's ability to crawl back from massive point differentials and eventual wins. The 'Cats often run a full-court press, a system that focuses opposing offensive schemes and works well with their expansive roster — the bench is deep enough

to supplement starters when they get gassed.

In Willamette's home match against Walla Walla University on Nov. 15, this tenacious defensive pressing was on full display. The 'Cats totaled 20 steals across all players and forced 23 turnovers from their opponents, efforts which ultimately helped them win the close game 90-84.

As of Nov. 24, the Bearcats lead the conference in average points-per-game and are second in 3-pointers made, which is what the strategy revolves around — spreading the floor, gassing defenses and shooting lots of 3-pointers. The Bearcats also lead the league in 3-pointer attempts, but they struggle with efficiency, making just under 30% of the 3-pointers they attempt. They've made 40% of their total field goals which puts them at last in the conference.

But for coach Lenahan, what matters at this point in the season is not perfection in their systems, but chemistry and trust among the team. What makes this season different from past seasons is the team's unwavering identity, which he described after a win over Walla Walla on Nov. 15 as, "relentless pace, togetherness and competitiveness."

"Being such a new and young team, there's going to be some ups and downs going through it, but we always have our identity to get back to, which has helped us," Lenahan said.

Lenahan noted that the team has a lot of love for each other, cre-



Bearcat men's hoops takes on LaVerne in Cone Field House on Nov. 7, 2025.

Photo by JACK GODSIL

ating a positive environment where the student-athletes can lean on each other and step up to the plate when they need to.

"We know who we are offensively, we know who we are defensively, so when you get weighed down, you're not looking around like, 'What do we do?'" he said. "It's like, 'No, how do we do what we are trying to do better?' And we've been able to respond to that really well."

When the 'Cats faced Wal-

la Walla, resilience and unity were key to sealing the win. Deacon Perry ('28) helped the team crawl back from a second-half Wolves' surge, with 21 points and 12 rebounds. Dra Uperesa-Thoma ('28) led the team in assists, with seven, and recorded five steals.

Over the weekend, however, their trip to California ended with three losses. They will head to Newberg on Dec. 5 to take on George Fox and begin their conference campaign.

# Thanksgiving Crossword

Crossword by EZRA NELSEN

## ACROSS

- 1 Atlanta nickname
- 6 Yap
- 10 "Stat!"
- 14 Capital of Bulgaria
- 15 Common jazz form
- 16 Un-wax?
- 17 "To Autumn" poet, John
- 18 Customizable dining hall meal
- 20 Includes on an email
- 22 \_\_ good example
- 23 Horace's " \_\_ Poetica"
- 24 Residents of Nebraska's biggest city
- 28 Hindu goddess of fortune
- 30 Coffee shop treats with different flavors
- 32 Smell, in Spanish
- 33 "Cheers" setting
- 34 U.K. record label
- 35 Spanish folk hero
- 37 Plead
- 39 Luxury Hyundai
- 43 Morning hrs.
- 45 Paddle
- 47 Israeli airline
- 48 Fruity market drink
- 51 Conductor
- 53 Artwork pioneered by Daniel Hopfer
- 54 Vocalist Sumac
- 55 " \_\_ the Cyclone"
- 57 View
- 58 A celebration feast that might have 18-across, 30-across, and 48-across on the menu
- 61 For this purpose
- 65 Regarding
- 66 DoorDash competitor, Uber \_\_
- 67 Smallest island nation

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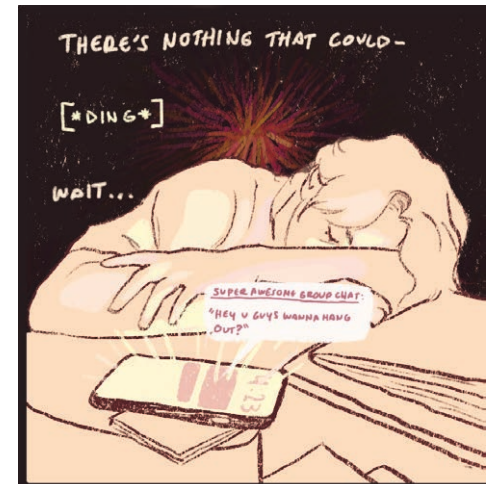
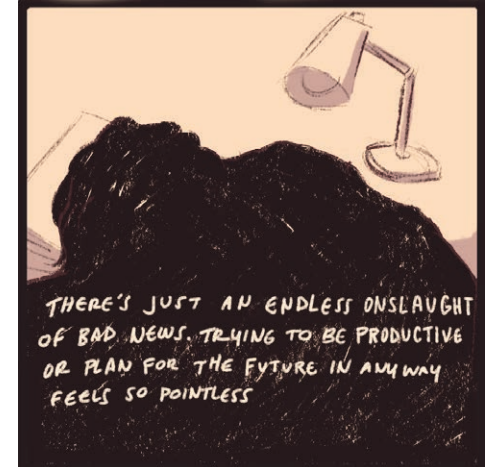
Check your answers our website: [www.willamettecollegian.com](http://www.willamettecollegian.com)

- 68 24 hours ago, abbr.
- 69 Edinburgh native
- 70 Canada export

## DOWN

- 1 Inquire
- 2 "Tic-Tac-\_\_"
- 3 All \_\_ sudden
- 4 Salem manhunts
- 5 Daytona 500 org.
- 6 Sack
- 7 Ho Chi Minh Trail country
- 8 Grandpa, in Guatemala
- 9 Unpopular opinion
- 10 "How adorable!"
- 11 Sci-fi's Connor and Jane Smith
- 12 It comes before 42-across
- 13 Coca-Cola competitor
- 19 City, county, and river in Washington
- 21 Stuck-up person

- 24 Double-reed woodwind
- 25 \_\_ Stream
- 26 "Just \_\_!"
- 27 Cover up?
- 29 "Dead Poets Society" phrase
- 31 Layered cookies
- 36 Composer Shostakovich
- 38 Match
- 40 K-12
- 41 Oregon weather
- 42 It comes after 12-across
- 44 Makes an effort
- 46 Goes bad
- 48 Wild animals
- 49 2007 film about a famous serial killer
- 50 Atlantic and Pacific
- 51 Sinatra's signature song
- 52 Entertain
- 56 Within: Prefix
- 59 Acquired
- 60 UAE time zone
- 62 Ben-\_\_
- 63 Tulsa sch.
- 64 Prize in 5-down



A light in the darkness. Comic by WES MOWRY-SILVERMAN

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