

Commuter

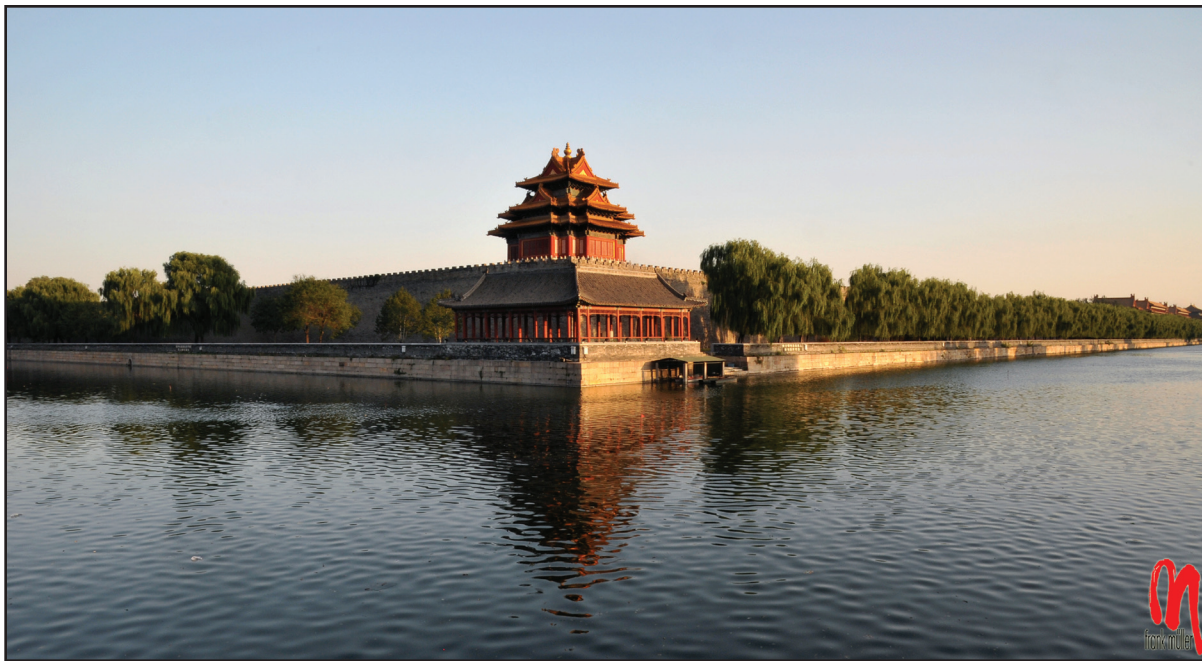
LBCC, China partner up

Ryan Henson
The Commuter

LBCC administrators headed overseas to talk with Chinese college presidents about student and faculty exchanges, according to Vice President of Student Affairs Bill Thallamer.

opportunities for our faculty and students, and financial benefits that will support exchanges,” stated Cavin in a campus-wide e-mail.

Cavin stated that LBCC would like to begin faculty exchange programs in 2009-10 and the first student exchange agreement would



Beijing, Forbidden City outer Wall with North-West Watch Tower

Photo taken by Frankartculinary @ Flickr

In order to take advantage of the relationships that began in April when the college hosted a delegation of Chinese college presidents, LB President Rita Cavin, Executive Vice president Carol Schaafsma, and Thallamer visited the cities of Beijing, Qingdao, Guangzhou, and Shanghai from July 23 until August 4.

“Our hope is that we will see ... a more culturally diverse student body, cultural

“likely” be with President Xinguang Feng of Rizhao Polytechnic College.

Students from Rizhao College would come to LBCC in the summer for up to four weeks, taking classes in English during the day and taking field trips in the evening. Part of the program would be to introduce students to our technical programs and encourage them to take part in future exchanges.

Turn to “China” on page 2

LBCC makes move on Moodle

Max Brown
The Commuter

Moodle stands for: Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment... Um yea those are indeed words, but what do they mean?

In laymans terms Moodle is course management system like Blackboard, but open source. This will be the program LBCC will use for the majority of its online classes in the coming years.

Why switch? The first reason is cost. Paul Tannahill, administrator of Blackboard and Moodle for LBCC, said that Moodle will cost just a fraction of what Blackboard costs the school, around 1/8 to 1/10 the price.

However, Tannahill does not feel that is the most important reason to switch to Moodle. “I’m trying to convey to people that the money savings we’re going to experience is really a side benefit to going to Moodle,” he said. Even if Moodle was going to cost the same as Blackboard, they would still go with



Moodle logo

Image taken from Moodle.org

Moodle. “It was designed from the ground up by educators, and not by marketing people, business people, corporate people.”

The school tested out three course management systems in the fall of last year to see how each one worked and to get feedback from teachers and students. While some people did like the other systems, the people who liked Moodle went out of their way to ask for more classes that use Moodle, which Tannahill felt was

Kidzshop 2009

Max Brown
The Commuter

The annual Kidzshop event, organized by ALTRUSA, will take place on August 15 from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Volunteers are still needed. The deadline to sign up today, August 7. If you would like to volunteer your time, fill out a form (which can be found on the Commuter site) and bring it to Lawrence LaJoie, the LBCC bookstore manager, before the deadline.

The event takes place every August and helps to buy new clothes and a pair of shoes for around 265 children in need. For every child, they have one volunteer to help them shop and spend their money wisely. Each kid gets \$100 to \$125 to spend on new clothes.

The event takes place early in the morning at the Heritage

mall, before it opens for normal business. It lasts two hours and coffee, hot chocolate, and some snacks are provided. The kids go with their volunteer shoppers to Sears, Old Navy, and Payless Shoes.

Mary Harer, a volunteer for ALTRUSA who has been working on this
Turn to “Kidz” on page 2



a strong indicator of where to go.

Tannahill said the program has a more social media feeling to it than Blackboard. He mentioned that in the polls taken of students in online classes, the most sought after aspect was community among the learners and not just a one way dialog between the instructor and the student. He said Moodle already has so many tools to facilitate this community, and they are releasing more this year.

According to Tannahill, Blackboard makes so many of your decisions for you. He said “you want your buttons on the left? Good that is where they are going to stay.” Moodle is much more flexible, you can make it do whatever you want, yet the interface of Moodle has enough consistency so students will not get lost, or have to relearn the system for every course.

One of the best features according to Tannahill is that the program is open source. This means it’s basically free and anyone can come up with improvements and share them with

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Campus News

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

Kidz: continued from page 1

event for the past eight years, says that Albany has many businesses that support this event, and that all the stores involved give them generous discounts. If they have items on sale, they will give additional discounts, according to Harer.

Harer said they were able to give 265 children this opportunity last year, and this year it has grown to 270 children. She was concerned that it would be harder to find the funding during the downturn in the economy, but was pleasantly surprised when they could take on more kids than last year.

Even though the event helps around 265 kids a year, LaJoie feels this is only the "tip of the iceberg." Harer said "the need is so much greater than we can provide, but we do our best."

ALTRUSA does not choose the children that attend this event, instead local schools and other organizations pick out a number of kids they feel are in need of the event. On top of the clothes and shoes, the kids get they also receive a free Boys and Girls club membership and a backpack filled with some school supplies, which

are donated by Coastal Farms and other organizations.

The volunteers help the kids pick out clothes that fit them and are good purchases. According to Harer, they shop very wise to give the kids the most benefit from the event.

According to LaJoie, "50 percent of the time, at least, the volunteers are digging in their pocket" for that extra shirt or the fun item for the child. "So, you see a lot of good will for the event," he said. "You see the true appreciation from the kids side. You see tears in the volunteers eyes just because it's such a great thing, a great feeling to give back," LaJoie said about the event.

If you don't have time to volunteer but would like to donate or figure out another way you can help, visit the ALTRUSA Web site: www.altrusa.org/albany,%20oregon.htm.

"It's one of those tear-jerker events that really hits you right here," LaJoie said as he pointed to his heart.

Moodle: continued from page 1

the rest of the Moodle community.

According to Tannahill, the faculty responses are positive. Nine out of 10 faculty members say it is great and easy to use. He says that it is fewer clicks and more of a intuitive way of developing and delivering an online course.

Ninty-nine percent of student issues are "I can't log in," which he says are usually because he has not set up an account for them yet, or "I forgot my password." He says once the students are in they have almost no problems. Students had a lot more issues with Blackboard, which he feels is from browser compatibilty issues.

So if Moodle is so great, when is LBCC switching to this platform? Well, they already are. Some students have already taken a few classes using Moodle. During this upcoming year they will be expanding the use of Moodle and phasing out Blackboard. Tannahill says it will be in full use by Fall term 2010.

For more information on Moodle, visit their site: Moodle.org. The site has news, support, in depth information about Moodle, downloads, and a set of forums. The site boasts over 734,205 registered users, so if you have a question they are sure to be answered.

China partnership to bring revenue: continued from page 1

"This is a good beginning step ...," Cavin stated.

Thallamer explained that when the exchange students visit, they will pay a higher tuition. School administrators would like to use that money to provide scholarships for LBCC students.

In addition, communication has also begun with Samaritan and Shanghai institute of Health Sciences, "an international, bi-lingual hospital" about exchanges of faculty and students interested in health careers.

"Our faculty and students would benefit by cooperative work experience, service learning, cultural enrichment ... and exposure to traditional Chinese medicine," Cavin stated.

In the e-mail, Cavin says she has been asked to defend sending administrators to China during the current budget crisis. She explains that, although the "timing is not ideal," the college wants to take advantage of the opportunity and maintain the relationships with the presidential delegation.

"We are carefully guarding our costs,"

Cavin stated. "We are actively seeking outside contributions and support ..."

According to Cavin, Thallamer's expenses will be picked up by China because he will be a conference speaker. Cavin and Schaafsma's total travel costs, without outside contribution, are estimated from \$3,500 to \$5,000.

"It is our hope that a model investment this summer will set the foundation for an excellent continuing revenue source for many years to come," Cavin states.



Soccer club seeks funds

Max Brown
The Commuter

The LBCC soccer club will be holding a fund-raiser on Wednesday, August 12, at El Sol de Mexico restaurant in Corvallis. The restaurant will be donating 25 percent of their proceeds to the club, but only if a flier is presented.

If you plan on going out to eat that night or wish to help out the club, you can get the flier at the Commuter Web site, or at the soccer club Web site through LBCC's main home page. The flier can be used for lunch or dinner on Wednesday at El Sol de Mexico.

The club needs to raise funds so they can help pay for uniforms and fees to participate in the Cascade Collegiate Soccer League. Art Mota, the adviser for the club said he hopes for "a good turn out."

"We can't make this happen without

some kind of support. We got to pay for uniforms, equipment, league fees, referee fees, traveling expenses, so it's not cheap. Any little bit will help a lot."

The club was started February of this year when Western Oregon University contacted LBCC to see if they had a soccer team. When Mota mentioned this to his P.E. Soccer class, a lot of the students showed interest in starting the club. Right now, the club has about 20 people.

The club is still accepting members if you have an interest in joining. For more information, contact either Art Mota (art.mota@linnbenton.edu) or Kyle Boylan (keboylan@yahoo.com), soccer club president. Also, you can find more information about this club at <http://www.linnbenton.edu/go/clubs/soccer-club>.

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Features

A little bit more
than the news.

How to ease the season of sneeze

Ryan Henson
The Commuter

Your eyes are stinging, red, and watery, and you've been sneezing in brutal, unyielding succession for the last three hours. You don't know whether to laugh, cry, or curse the heavens as you



Achoo!

Photo by Eve Bruntlett

use your shirtsleeves to soak up the infinite stream of snot that is oozing out of your raw, irritated, nostrils.

Nearly 35 million people suffer from seasonal allergy attacks due to the pollen from grass, flowers, trees, and plants. Unfortunately, according to www.Pollen.com parts of the Willamette Valley (Eugene, Salem) routinely have the highest pollen counts in the country. So, what can allergy-disabled people do that will help curb their seasonal attacks in an effective, natural, and cost-friendly way?

The number one way to relieve allergy attacks is to simply avoid allergens. Here are some ways that Stretcher.com suggests you do to minimize your allergy symptoms while maximizing your outdoor enjoyment.

- Stay indoors during peak pollen hours (5 to 10 a.m.)
- Change clothes. When you come in from outside, change your clothes and take a quick shower. Have children change clothes when they come in from playing.
- Don't dry your laundry outside.
- Bathe your pets often.
- Monitor pollen counts. Dry, windy days, especially after a rain, can be a nightmare for allergy sufferers.
- Wear a mask or filter when you mowing your lawn.

For some sufferers, because of their jobs or the severity of their allergies, it is not realistic to just avoid allergens. According to an article by Karen M. Davis, N.D., posted on Heartspring.net, there are a number of cheap and natural ways people can beat down their allergies.

- Drink more water. Lots of water will thin out your mucous and hydrate you mucous membrane tissues.
- Add more anti-inflammatory foods to your diet. Try ground flax-seed, walnuts and hempseed. Mixing these foods with fish oil supplements can help decrease the inflammation in your nasal passages.
- Jelly in the nose. Dab a little non-petroleum in the nostrils to help catch and cancel out the effects of pollen.
- Cut back on Mucus forming foods - red meat, eggs, wheat, and chocolate.

Five ways to save your cash

Frank Warren
The Commuter

Are your financial aid checks not stretching like you thought they would? Has rising tuition and textbook costs left you wondering how you're going to make ends meet? Are you sick and tired of eating nothing but oriental-flavored Top Ramen and mayonnaise sandwiches? Here are some ideas that can help you save some of the money that's been blowing through your billfold.

1. Tired of paying over \$300 for your textbooks? Quit Facebooking your friends for a few seconds and surf over to Half.com, a great resource for students looking to cut corners on textbook costs. Just plug in the ISBN number, click your mouse, save some cash, and go back to Facebook and waste some more of your time.

2. Look for garage, yard, and rummage sales. If they're in upper-middle class neighborhoods and you get there early, you can get some good, name brand stuff at really good prices. If you get there too late, oh well, maybe you should buy a 20-year-old bread maker or 487 pieces of a 500 piece jigsaw puzzle.

3. Shop on Craigslist. Yes, it's good for something other than soliciting prostitutes. You can look for bikes, cell-phones, computers, video games, clothing, and furniture – but remember just because some dude says Michael Jackson signed a jean-jacket doesn't mean it's legit.

4. Download freeware and shareware. Tucows.com and Download.com offer a wide range of software alternatives that are either free, or on a trial basis, including AVG, Spybot, Open Office, Adobe, and Gimp. Get some these programs and maybe you could leave the Forum computer lab and see your friends once in awhile.

5. Cut the cable. Just keep the broadband. Why hand over your cash to DirecTV, Blockbuster, or Netflix, when you can watch the boob tube and the big screen online for free. Hulu.com and Fancast.com have some decent full-length movies and retro-episodes of your favorite television shows just waiting for you. And it's all very legal, unlike your copy of Transformers II.



Illustration by Frank Warren

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Opinion

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Advise from Weiss Back in the day

Mark Weiss
 for the Commuter



The purpose of this column is to try and bring advising to students in a different format. I hope to answer your questions about college, college success, LBCC programs, college rules, and anything else you may have on your mind. Please write to me at mark.weiss@linnbenton.edu, and I will try to work your questions into the column (Mark Weiss has been a counselor and advisor at LBCC for over 20 years).

Q: How do I get started at LBCC this fall?

More students start for fall term, than any other quarter. For all students, there are three important steps to becoming fully admitted and gaining the advantage of early registration in subsequent terms. They are:

1) Turn in an admissions application and pay the \$30 fee. You can turn the application in Takena Hall, Albany Campus, or at any of our centers in Sweet Home, Lebanon, or Corvallis.

2) Take a placement test, or provide a previous college transcript that shows writing and math courses. The placement test is a "memory test," to gauge where you ought to begin with certain subjects. It does not put you in or out of school in any way. Again, it can be taken at the Albany Campus or any of the centers.

3) Orientation. To gain the advantage of early registration, you must go through an orientation. These can be arranged by contacting the Admissions Office. We have both live and on-line orientations.

Q: How about financial aid?

Financial Aid packets are available in front of the Financial Aid office, in Takena

Hall, and at all of our centers. They consist of information on how to fill out the form, a practice form, and a Web site that you visit to fill out the real form. Students with questions about financial aid eligibility are encouraged to stop by the "1st Stop Desk" in Takena Hall. Sometimes questions can be answered right there. Sometimes students need to make an appointment with a financial aid advisor. But start with the 1st Stop Desk.

It is important to know that the Financial Aid office requests that anyone who wants aid for fall quarter get their form sent in by July 20th. Students who apply after July 20th may not know what their financial aid award will be, by the time school starts on September 28th.

Q: Who's my advisor?

Again, a question easily answered, in a very specific way, at the 1st Stop Desk in Takena Hall. A good, general answer, however, is that your academic advisor will be a teacher in the program you wish to major in. If you are undecided, than your advisor should be one of our counselors, located in the Career Center in Takena Hall, or at one of our centers.

Q: My first choice for a program is full. What should I do?

For this year, and perhaps in the future, some programs fill early. We had a couple of programs that were full for the fall, by the end of June. This does make it hard. However, almost every program requires some "general education" courses, writing, math, health, communications, and others. These classes can be taken while you wait to get into the courses in your "major." Also, classes that are suggested by the placement tests are important to take early in your time at LBCC. Many students can go to college, productively, for up to a year, without being in courses that are part of their major. So, all is not lost if your program of choice is full for fall term.

-Mark

Adam LaMascus
 The Commuter

August 2, 338 BC – Underdog is victorious

Carthaginian General Hannibal, after invading Italy, takes advantage of Roman overconfidence and hotheadedness and assaults the Roman army at Cannae. Despite being outnumbered by 30,000 soldiers, Hannibal massacres over 45,000 Legionnaires while only losing around 6-7,000 of his own men. Regardless of this, and a string of other stunning victories by Hannibal, Carthage loses the Second Punic War.

August 3, 1914 – Global pissing match

Germany declares war on France as Europe tumbles into World War I. The war was the most deadly war in history, with over 40 million people killed or wounded. Launched because Austria's Archduke Franz Ferdinand was murdered by Serbian terrorists and inflamed because Europe's leaders were having what was in essence a global pissing match, it was also one of the most pointless wars in history.

August 4, 1693 – A little bit of the bubbly

Dom Perignon invents champagne. Many celebrate this day then curse it the next morning.

August 5, 1861 – Whipping is bad, mmmkay

The US Army finally realizes that flogging (whipping) soldiers does not increase loyalty and abolishes the practice.

August 6, 1945 – One "Little Boy" packs a big punch

The US Army Air Force B-29 "Enola Gay" drops the atomic bomb "Little Boy" on Hiroshima, killing 70,000 instantly.

August 7, 1985 -One giant leap for Japan-kind

Japan selects Chaiki Mukai, Takao Doi, and Mamoru Mohri to be its first astronauts.

August 8, 1929 – Zeppelin rocks

The German airship "Graf Zeppelin" begins the first ever around-the world flight, which it completed in just over 21 days. The beautiful vessel was named after Graf (Count) Ferdinand von Zeppelin who was a pioneer of airship technology. On an amusing side note, one of his three middle names was "August."

Thought for the week:

"Anyone who believes you can't change history has never tried to write his memoirs."

-David Ben Gurion

Letter from the editor: a new direction

Dear Readers,

We hope you have enjoyed the new print version of the Commuter. Also, we hope that you are taking time to enjoy the summer and not slaving away at your jobs or in your classes. Remember, in the words of Poet William Carlos Williamson, "In the summer, the song should sing itself."

The first thing I would like to do is hype the Commuter's award-winning Web site. In all reality, the breaking news we can cover in the printed paper is limited. In most cases, by the time the paper comes out, most news is old news. With the Web, we have the opportunity to bring you the news as it happens. There is also infinite space, audio/video capabilities, forums, photo galleries, and the opportunity for you to comment. These are the very reasons why newspapers are becoming obsolete. We implore you to visit our Web site at <http://commuter.linnbenton.edu/> and help us continue to find our place in the future of journalism.

With that out of the way, since we took over the helm, Max and I have been brainstorming different ways to make the print Commuter more interesting to readers. We both believe a college paper should offer students the news that concerns them but should also be entertaining to read. We feel that this four-page preview gives you an idea of the direction we will be taking next term. Like? Don't like? Consider this an open invitation for your suggestions, your ideas, and your criticisms. This paper belongs to the students of LBCC and is here for you – not us.

Not only do we want your feedback, we want your help. We are in direct need more student involvement. Have you ever thought it would be cool to do a CD, book, restaurant, or movie review?

Have you ever wanted to chase down a breaking news story or write your own column? Do you want to cover LB sporting events? Would you like to design pages? Do you want to be a cartoonist or a photographer? Want to write a horoscope? Want to do something I'm just not thinking of? NOW is your chance. Not only will the experience help you build a better resume and portfolio, but it's fun. Don't believe me? Come see. We have an air-conditioned office, desks, Macs, cameras, video equipment, an encouraging and experienced staff advisor, and an opportunity to do something amazing, something different, something we can be proud of. We are calling out to you.

Ryan Patrick Henson
 Editor-in-chief