

January 12, 2011

The Commuter

A Weekly Student Publication

Vol. 42 No. 12

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RE: Financial Aid Shopping Spree

ANOTHER
OPINION

"In the grip of these hard economic times, it may be understandable why some people would want to take advantage of their (bookstore) credit just before Christmas, but is it right?"



Alethea Skinner
News Editor

Is it right??!! WHAT???

"The LBCC Financial Aid office establishes yearly standard student budgets as a basis for awarding financial aid funds. Standard student budgets reflect modest expense patterns. Your actual expenses may vary according to your lifestyle and level of enrollment."

It's right there on the LBCC website for all to read.

Each student goes through the process of gathering information, completing and filing a FAFSA. The Financial Aid office reviews the paperwork and makes a decision. Each student is awarded the money the school thinks is needed to cover education and expenses (which includes personal expenses) for the year. The student chooses which parts of the award to accept. And then, it is theirs to spend.

So, is it any wonder students on campus have been heard discussing why it becomes anyone's business how they spend THEIR financial aid? Why should it cause anyone "alarm" to hear students planning to spend a portion of their financial aid bookstore credit on an Xbox, PS3 or a Wii for Christmas?

Are such purchases right?

Several students decided to answer the question but wanted to only use their first names.

Jessica says, "Yes, it's right! I bought Christmas presents with part of my financial aid. I'm broke, and I didn't want my kids to go without presents." Renee agreed with her. While she didn't buy Christmas presents for her children because her mom and family helped, she did buy a birthday present for her daughter this term.

"Financial aid is to help you make it through school and get whatever you need," Renee added. Her daughter needed a birthday present, and that made it an expense that had to be met with her bookstore credit.

Amber says her financial aid "is for both school and other things. It helps pay my bills. I buy things from the bookstore because financial aid is there, and I don't have the money from another source."

Other students, like Alannah Castro, are

so involved in school-related work that they have no other job. They use their financial aid for everything. They buy clothes, food, and everything else the bookstore makes available.

Without the bookstore credit, many students and their children would be hungry as they waited for disbursement two or three weeks into the term. For them, the bookstore credit is vital to survival.

Is it right?

If you consider school your "job" and financial aid your "paycheck," yes, it is right to spend the money you "work for" (by attending classes and making satisfactory academic progress toward your program goals) on the things you and your family deem necessary.

And, depending upon the circumstances, necessity might include a Wii, a DVD player, a laptop, or games.

For example, a parent might decide a DVD player is a necessity in order to play a movie for a restless child in order to buy some necessary study time, while another student saves money by having movie nights at home.

One student whose wife is also a student said, "Sometimes you need a game." Parents of small children, he and his wife both receive financial aid, and their budget includes that possibility. Others agreed. "When you have a young child who refuses to sleep, or you need something to relieve the stress of the day, sometimes a game will get you through."

Laptops serve so many purposes these days it's hard to not think of it as an educational necessity. However, they also keep students from spending money each month on cable bills, games, etc.

There are students who don't think the school should sell anything electronic/game oriented or allow students to use credit at the bookstore. However, 100 percent of the students asked for their opinion about whether it was "right" to take advantage of their bookstore credit and make non-educational purchases agree with Jesse Duke who summed it up this way: "The money is for you to spend on your needs and wants. The bookstore puts stuff in there. They know people will want it and will buy it."

In my opinion, receiving financial aid and spending it wisely is something that each student has to learn. Bookstore credit is one way to help them. If they blow it one term, they will gain wisdom from the experience and make a better choice in subsequent terms.

Since this is my last term, I won't be standing in any more early morning lines with the "crazies," but I will always conclude it is "right" for students to spend their financial aid on what they think is necessary for themselves and their families.

A Word on the Tucson Shooting from President Hamann

Dear Campus Community:

As I walked onto our campus [yesterday] morning and saw our flags at half mast, I said a prayer for both the victims and the perpetrator of the tragedy in Tucson, and I thought about what we might do to help prevent such things from happening in our future. Perhaps this is a good time to remind ourselves that our Purpose as a People is more important than who's in Power... Perhaps this is a good time to remind ourselves that "Liberty and Justice" exist only when they exist for all of us; even or especially for those with whom we disagree. I ask that you join me in reminding ourselves and our leaders of these truths so that, perhaps, we together can hold our future in safer hands.

Thanks,

Greg
LBCC President

Advice from Weiss

Question: I'm trying to still get into a certain class. How long do I have to pull this off?

Answer: The last day to drop or add classes, live, at the registration counter, is January 14th. The last day to drop or add classes on-line is January 16th. However, the truth is that most teachers of full term classes stopped adding students to their classes several days ago. LBCC has so many more students than ever before (up 50% from two years ago) that classes fill rapidly and teachers, out of necessity, are quicker to settle who's in and who's out of their classes.

As long as we're talking about important dates, here are a couple of others to keep track of:



Counselor Mark Weiss

The last day to apply for graduation in June, is January 28th. Please help spread the word. We don't want anyone to miss out on walking for graduation because they didn't know when to apply.

Interestingly, the priority deadline to apply for financial aid for spring term (if you are a just trying to get aid this spring) is also January 28th.

The next big deadline to keep in mind is that Priority Registration for Spring Term is March 4th through March 11th, depending on how many credits you have completed at LBCC. It is absolutely critical to your success that you get registered early.

Mark

Mark Weiss has been a counselor and adviser at LBCC for 20 years. The purpose of this column is to answer students' questions about the college, academic advising, and how to be successful at LBCC. Please send your questions to mark.weiss@linnbenton.edu or stop by the Career and Counseling Center in Takena Hall.

NEWS
from the
DIVERSITY
ACHIEVEMENT
CENTER

Portland, Oregon's city of roses, our city of roses, a city only but 60 miles away from our homes, our families, our hearts has a secret known by too few. I'm not one to be aware of such secrets or, to be honest, care about them; but recently I've been blessed with the privilege of joining the leaders of the diversity center at LBCC in a meeting which further modified my pursuit of purification of not only myself but of the world

around me.

Would you believe me if I were to voice to you that our city of Portland, Oregon, is the number one location for sex trafficking in the whole entirety of our nation? Had you a clue? More importantly, have you a clue to stop this? Our job at the diversity center - correction, our job as human beings - is to look past our daily inconveniences, find the issues that dare be written another day in our proud

past, and at last subdue the injustice which, with awareness, can forever be issues of the past.

The following are the events to help educate.

- **OATH (Oregonians Against Trafficking Humans) Presentation,** Tuesday, Jan. 18
- **Eyes On the Prize Movie Nights,** Thursday, Jan. 20 and Feb. 24
- **National Hugging Day,**

Friday, Jan. 21
• **Holocaust Display,** Monday, Jan. 24

Let us open minds, open eyes to those who are blind, and free those in bonds due to criminal minds.

Ebrahim Mohamed
Siala

Arizona Goes Gun Crazy

On Saturday morning, Jared L. Loughner, a 22-year-old college dropout, opened fire on a gathering at a supermarket in Tucson, Arizona. He left 14 people wounded and killed six, including a chief federal judge.

Accusations immediately flew around about what caused the incident, from local radio and its fiery rhetoric, to Sarah Palin's website, where she pinpointed the districts of liberal Congressmen with rifle crosshairs.

Naturally, the issue of gun control has come up, with Sheriff Clarence W. Dupnik of Pima County (where the shooting occurred) referring to the entire state of Arizona as "Tombstone" in reference to the frequent gunbattles in Tombstone, AZ, during the late 1800s.

Bearing arms is within our Constitutional rights; however, we have a lot of dilemmas here. The one most obvious to me is that technically anything is possible. That being said, we have to be as realistic and practical as possible. Yet, the fact is that we are still arguing what is practical more than 200 years after the Second Amendment was written.

Loughner legally purchased the pistol he used to attack those people. (He was expelled from college for getting in five violent incidents with campus police.) It was some model of a Glock 9mm semiautomatic pistol for usage by military and police forces.

Immediately, I noticed a problem with perception. A New York Times columnist wrote a piece entitled "A Right to Bear Guns?" in which she implied that Glock's are not "regular" guns and that they are "easy to fire over and over" and that they have no value in home defense and are only good for killing people.

First, it's a gun. Of course it's designed to kill people, that's what makes it good for



provided by giffords.house.gov

U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords suffered a near-fatal gunshot wound Jan. 8 at a gathering in Tucson, AZ.

home defense. Second, any sort of semiautomatic pistol is easy to fire over and over again. Glock is not special in this regard. I'm not sure what a "regular" pistol is.

The fact of the matter is that most modern guns are easy to fire over and over again. Unless you are using a black-powder flintlock pistol or a really old-fashioned revolver, all modern pistols function in roughly the same way.

He just as easily could have used a Beretta, Sig-Sauer, H&K, Desert Eagle, Colt, Smith & Wesson, Ruger, or any of the other semiautomatic weapons manufactured and commonly on the market.

However, the article does go on to make two valid points. First, pointing out that Glock's are manufactured to easily accept 30-round magazines. Again, we have an issue of perception here. Any pistol can have a massive clip. You pretty much just have a normal clip that is longer.

Regardless though, it is a valid point. Who needs a 30-round magazine for home defense? Are you going to fight off a platoon of raiders breaking in? As said before, you might, but probably not.

California has a law restricting the size of magazines for just this reason, though I don't suggest the California route as best, because they are kind of crazy about their gun laws (and about every other kind of law as well).

The second issue the article points out is also valid, namely that the founding fathers could not have anticipated this kind of technology. When they wrote that we have the right to bear arms, people fought standing in lines--in the middle of fields, in brightly colored jackets--shooting about three times a minute.

Also, the Second Amendment says: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Joe Schmo and his assault weaponry is not in the context of a well regulated militia.

Granted though, this in itself causes more problems of perception and, more specifically, of definition. The term "assault weapon" is pretty broad, so it is really unfair to categorize so many different weapons in one blanket category.

Background checks need to be more important. Even a cursory look at this man's background showed he had troubles with violence, and an in depth check would have shown he also had problems with paranoia. There were numerous website posts where he claimed the government was trying to take over our brains and mind control us. Either way, he should not have been sold such a potent killing machine. Of course, his being able to legally procure a weapon is simply the last failure.

He should have received help or at least supervision to prevent him from wanting to do this in the first place. Next, there should have been tighter regulation on assault weapons (and better definition on what an assault weapon is) and similar tactical equipment. Sell people rifles, sell people pistols, sell people shotguns, we wouldn't be a country if we hadn't had our own guns. That being said, keep the machine guns and massive magazines locked in the armory at the militia/police/National Guard depots.



Adam LaMascus
Opinion Editor

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Map showing location near Cascade Ridge Apartments, Reeves Pkwy, Industrial Way, W. Mary St, W. Tangent St, W. Morton St, W. Wheeler St, W. 5th St, W. 6th St, W. 7th St, W. 8th St, W. 9th St, W. 10th St, W. 11th St, W. 12th St, W. 13th St, W. 14th St, W. 15th St, W. 16th St, W. 17th St, W. 18th St, W. 19th St, W. 20th St, W. 21st St, W. 22nd St, W. 23rd St, W. 24th St, W. 25th St, W. 26th St, W. 27th St, W. 28th St, W. 29th St, W. 30th St, W. 31st St, W. 32nd St, W. 33rd St, W. 34th St, W. 35th St, W. 36th St, W. 37th St, W. 38th St, W. 39th St, W. 40th St, W. 41st St, W. 42nd St, W. 43rd St, W. 44th St, W. 45th St, W. 46th St, W. 47th St, W. 48th St, W. 49th St, W. 50th St, W. 51st St, W. 52nd St, W. 53rd St, W. 54th St, W. 55th St, W. 56th St, W. 57th St, W. 58th St, W. 59th St, W. 60th St, W. 61st St, W. 62nd St, W. 63rd St, W. 64th St, W. 65th St, W. 66th St, W. 67th St, W. 68th St, W. 69th St, W. 70th St, W. 71st St, W. 72nd St, W. 73rd St, W. 74th St, W. 75th St, W. 76th St, W. 77th St, W. 78th St, W. 79th St, W. 80th St, W. 81st St, W. 82nd St, W. 83rd St, W. 84th St, W. 85th St, W. 86th St, W. 87th 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A word from your local ASG

Due to the economic downturn, our state is facing a major budget shortfall. One of the areas under consideration for further budget cuts is funding for community colleges. In an effort to raise the awareness of our legislators about the effects such cuts might have, we, the Associated Student Government, are asking that you consider writing a short description of how being able to attend community college has affected your life, and what life might be like without having the ability to be here. We will then be compiling these stories into a brief, which we will take with us when we go to the legislature this winter. We will also be asking for as many students as are willing to join us on our trip, (date to be determined,) as having faces to go with the stories will have an even more powerful effect.

The Following is an example of what we are looking for:

My name is (Student's Name), and without Linn-Benton Community College I would be homeless and without a way to support my son. Over the last several years my own personal economic situation has deteriorated from being in food service management, to being a temp at several different manufacturing jobs, to being unemployed and on the verge of filing bankruptcy... well, if I could have afforded to. Thanks

to the open enrollment policy at LB I was able to begin retraining myself and at the same time have the means to maintain support for my son. I may not be living comfortably, but I am surviving and believe that without being able to be here at LB, I would have become another statistic.

We went to the English department and asked them to help us gather stories, and the writing center has agreed to proofread the stories before they are turned in. We are also working together with several other community colleges to raise awareness on their campuses as well. Community college funding as a whole is what is at stake. Any student interested in joining us as we try to raise the awareness of our legislators to our situation can either contact Ivan Merlin by email at asgprep4linnbenton.edu, or come into the Student Life and Leadership office (next to the Hot Shot Coffee Shop) and speak with any ASG member. Thank you for your time, and I hope you will consider adding this small project to your busy schedules.

Ivan B. Merlin Sr.
Representative

The views of the ASG do not necessarily reflect those of The Commuter. Any questions or comments can be directed to the Student Life & Leadership office.



Ongoing

Gallery: Eugene Photographer
South Santiam Hall Gallery
Portraits of farmers, families and colorful individuals by Eugene photographer Susie Morrill are on exhibit until Jan. 28.

Gallery: Northwest Artists
North Santiam Hall Gallery
Salem artists Carol Hausser and Cynthia Herron, two abstract painters, share the walls with Eugene artist Beverly Soasey, who works in mixed-media sculpture and assemblages until Feb. 25.

Wednesday 1/12

Pizza Social: Benton Center
3:30 – 6:30 p.m. • *Benton Center*
This event will provide free pizza to students to show appreciation for our distance education students. Sponsored by Student Life & Leadership.

Math Success Seminar

3 – 3:50 p.m. • *WH-225*
So much math, so little time! Also, it's free.

Thursday 1/13

Horticulture Club Meeting
Noon – 1 p.m. • *The Greenhouse*
Interested in horticulture? Join the Horticulture Club! We would love to see you there.

LBCC Dance Club Auditions

2:30 – 4 p.m. • *AC-120*
Come audition to be part of the Spring Dance Concert. No solos or preparation needed, just come and have fun! All styles and levels welcome.

Pizza Social: Sweet Home Center

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. • *Sweet Home Center*
This event will provide free pizza to students to show appreciation for our distance education students. Sponsored by Student Life & Leadership.

Public Reception and Gallery Talk

7 – 9 p.m. • *South Santiam Hall Gallery*
Join photographer Susie Morrill of Eugene as she discusses her work.

Friday 1/14

Quick Solutions for School Stress
Noon – 1 p.m. • *Diversity Achievement Center*

Join a discussion about causes of stress for college students and some ideas on what to do to relieve the stress so many of us feel.

Deadline to add/drop a full term class with refund in person

Tuition due date in person

Last day to charge books to Financial Aid

Saturday 1/15

LBCC Women's and Men's Basketball Games

4 – 8 p.m.
Vs. Mt. Hood C.C. Women play at 4:00pm. Men play at 6:00pm. Free admission for LBCC students & staff. General admission \$2.00

LBCC Dance Club Auditions

3 – 5 p.m. • *AC-120*
Come audition to be part of the Spring Dance Concert. No solos or preparation needed, just come and have fun! All styles and levels welcome.

Sunday 1/16

Deadline to add/drop a full term class with refund via SIS/Webrunner

Tuition due date via SIS/Webrunner

Monday 1/17

Campus Closed
It's Martin Luther King Jr. Day, so enjoy the day!

Tuesday 1/18

Disability Awareness for All: Vision Impairment
10 – 11 a.m. and Noon – 1 p.m. • *Diversity Achievement Center*
Learn how others with vision impairments experience the classroom. Explore disability access.

Note-taking Success Seminar: Benton Center

5 – 5:50 p.m. • *BC-232*
Better notes = better grades. It's free!

Last day to return winter books for a refund

Wednesday 1/19

Note-taking Success Seminar: Lebanon

1:30 – 2:20 p.m. • *LC-202*
Better notes = better grades. It's free!

Note-taking Success Seminar

3 – 3:50 p.m. • *WH-225*
Better notes = better grades. It's free!

BACK in the DAY

Adam LaMascus

Opinion Editor

This day in history ...

Jan. 12, 1848: Go Sicily!

The city of Palermo rises in revolt against the Bourbon dynasty, a royal family that rules France, Sicily, Naples, Parma, and Spain. Sicily achieves independence for 16 months before a Bourbon army crushes new nation and reestablishes control.

Jan. 13, 532: Nika!

A large chariot race is held in the Hippodrome in Constantinople. Chariot racing is extremely popular in the Byzantine empire and chariot teams are so powerful they are sort of a lobbyist group/sports team. This race is memorable because during it, the teams begin shouting insults at the emperor Justinian, and the crowd begins to chant "Nika!" ("victory" in Greek.) and then begins to throw things at Justinian's palace. The result is a massive riot that lasts a week during which half the city is burned down and tens of thousands of people are killed. Their descendants are the Raider fans.

Jan. 14, 1950: For the Motherland!

The first test flight is conducted for the Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-17. The MiG-17 is the more advanced cousin to the infamous MiG-15 from the Korean War. Even though it only has guns and is sub-sonic, the plane proves to be a threat to American supersonic fighters armed with missiles during the Vietnam war. Who'd have thought?

Jan. 15, 1919: Better red than dead?

Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, two of the most prominent Communists in Germany are captured, tortured, then executed by pro-government troopers of the paramilitary Freikorps. Liebknecht and Luxemburg are the leaders of the so-called "Spartacist Revolt," a communist rebellion against the Weimar Republic that had just been brutally and efficiently put down by the Freikorps on Jan. 12.

Jan. 16, 1572: Why???

Thomas Howard, the Duke of Norfolk (a Catholic) is put on trial for conspiring with king Philip II of Spain (Catholic) to bring Queen Mary I (the "Bloody Mary," also Catholic) back to England and overthrow Queen Elizabeth I and her Protestant government. Howard is found guilty of treason and executed. On an interesting side note, Jan. 16, 1556, was also the day Philip II became king of Spain.

Jan. 17, 1961: Good ol' Ike ...

President and former general Dwight D. Eisenhower delivers his televised farewell speech to the United States. In this speech, he famously warns the U.S. not to fall victim to a military-industrial complex. Many people would argue that we have not listened to his advice, citing such numbers as the report which stated that in 2009 the U.S. made up 43% of global military expenditure. Yet we can't seem to get our brave soldiers enough body armor. Bureaucracy at its finest.

Jan. 18, 1788: That's not a knife ...

The First Fleet arrives in Australia from Britain, bringing 778 convicts to establish the first European colony there. An English friend of mine jokes that the U.S. and Australia were British experiments. Make a country populated by criminals, and another by religious wackos, then see how they turn out.

Thought for the week:

"A leader leads by example, not by force."

-Sun Tzu

If you have a Campus Short, please e-mail them to commuter@linnbenton.edu.

Academic Success Seminars

Boost Your COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE!

Just drop in, or sign up in WebRunner (formerly SIS) under "Study Skills."
www.linnbenton.edu/go/webrunner

Always 50 minutes!

ALWAYS FREE!

Always helpful!



Linn-Benton COMMUNITY COLLEGE

So Much Math, So Little Time

Wednesday January 12 Albany WH-225 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Better Notes = Better Grades

Tuesday January 18 Benton Center BC-232 5:00 – 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday January 19 Albany WH-225 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Wednesday January 19 Lebanon LC-202 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Prepare for Tests

Tuesday January 25 Benton Center BC-232 5:00 – 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday January 26 Albany WH-225 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Wednesday January 26 Lebanon LC-202 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Get Organized

Tuesday February 1 Benton Center BC-232 5:00 – 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday February 2 Albany WH-225 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Wednesday February 2 Lebanon LC-202 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Active Learning Strategies

Tuesday February 8 Benton Center BC-232 5:00 – 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday February 9 Albany WH-225 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Wednesday February 9 Lebanon LC-202 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Accomplish Your Academic Goals

Tuesday February 15 Benton Center BC-232 5:00 – 5:50 p.m.

Wednesday February 16 Albany WH-225 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Wednesday February 16 Lebanon LC-202 1:30 – 2:20 p.m.

Academic Success Seminars are organized by the Learning Center. For more information, visit WebRunner under "Study Skills" or call 541-917-4684.

LBCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer. Persons having questions about or requests for special needs and accommodations should contact the Disability Coordinator at Linn-Benton Community College, RCH-105, 6500 Pacific Blvd. SW, Albany, OR 97321, phone 541-917-4690 or via Oregon Telecommunications Relay TDD at 1-800-735-2900 or 1-800-735-1232. Contact should be made 72 hours or more in advance of the event.

THE COMMONS FARE 12/01-12/07

Wednesday

Dishes: Beef Stew; Lavender, Fennel & Garlic Rubbed Pork ChoBeeps and Kolokopita
Soup: Red Lentil and Chicken & Rice

Thursday

Dishes: Turkey Club, Chile Verde and Thai Green Curry w/ Tofu
Soup: Turkey Vegetable and Beer Cheese

Friday

Chef's Choice

Monday

Martin Luther King Jr. Day- LBCC Closure

Tuesday

Dishes: Beef Stroganoff, Fish à la Florentine and Sweet & Sour Tempeh
Soup: Cheddar Cauliflower and Beef Vegetable



Corban University offers regionally accredited bachelor's degree programs for Christians, with majors in Business and Organizational Leadership, Healthcare Administration, and Family Studies. We also have master's degrees in education, counseling, and business.

Classes are offered online or on campus in Salem one night per week.

Degree programs for Christian adults

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Affordable • Accredited • Convenient

Find out how easy it is to advance your career while building your faith by checking us out online at corbandegrees.com/lbcc or call 1-800-764-1383.

MOTO MAN RIDES AGAIN

On Your Mark, Get Set, Commute!

Chris Botherton
Staff Writer

“The Edge ... There is no honest way to explain it because the only people who really know where it is are the ones who have gone over.” –Hunter S. Thompson, “Midnight on the Coast Highway”

“Remember when sex was safe and motorcycles were dangerous?” –Author Unknown

The first quote was written in 1965 after a blistering midnight run down California’s Highway 1 by Hunter S. Thompson. During that time, the most protection that was offered was a leather jacket and helmets that did little more than keep the weather off your onion. The second quote rings true in that there are so many more options out there for motorcycle

safety equipment.

The technology for this safety equipment has trickled down from racing. Leather suits with high density foam armor in them, helmets that absorb the impact of a crash while keeping your brains inside your head.

The leather suits with body armor started as a racing suit, but now anyone with a credit card can order one for themselves, even if they never see a track. The same with helmets, as the same safety materials that go into a racer’s helmet can be found in one found in Cycle Gear stores.

Not only did they cover the things that protect you during a crash, but they covered things to prevent you from having the crash in the first place. Brembo makes brakes that won’t fade, even if the rotors hit 1200 degrees. They test their products to standards that they will never reach in the real world.

A more recent thing

that has trickled down from racing technology is the slipper clutch. Most people think that the most dangerous thing that you can do is braking during a corner; however, downshifting is even more dangerous. It is much easier to lock up the rear tire if your motor and tire speed don’t match.

With the development of the slipper clutch, when a rider heads into a turn, they can just jam the bike into the gear that they want and let out the clutch. The clutch will slip until the tire and motor catch up to each other instead of the tire losing traction. These slipper clutches are now available in most sport bikes in one form or another.

The safety technology is moving at a blistering pace, but it has to in order to keep up with the racers that need it. Then as commuters, we all benefit from this technology trickling down.

Dear Conscience,

Question: In the middle of winter, why do women still insist on wearing short skirts and skimpy tops?



Ashley Christie
Shoulder Devil

This is a very good question, and the answer is simple: They’re morons who don’t know how to read a thermometer – probably a digital one at that.

It’s January in Oregon people. That means that it’s cold, and wet, and time to bundle up in sweaters and fleece pullovers, or at the very least long pants.

Now where I live, down south, the temperature runs pretty high; if you want to run around in short shorts and barely-there-tops, you’re more than welcome to join me. It runs a nice and balmy 294 degrees year round. You’d love it.

Perhaps these women feel cute with their teeth chattering and goose bumps running up and down their legs. Apparently no one ever told them that hypothermia is not sexy.

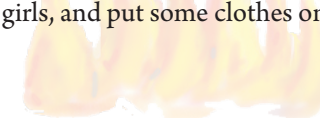
They think that trading in their flip flops for Ugg boots makes them winter weather appropriate. It doesn’t.

(In fact, while I’m on the topic, Ugg boots are only appropriate if you’re an Australian sheep farmer).

Perhaps the blame for these women freezing to death lies with their role models. I know that the Kardashians run around in as little as possible, but these girls also live in Southern California. Do you know how warm it is Los Angeles?

I’ll give you a hint: it’s more than 20 degrees!

So let me just leave those ladies with this: “You go girls, and put some clothes on.”



Justin Bolger
Shoulder Angel

An interesting question with an inspirational answer: These young ladies are taking pride in who they are and showing off their fiercely female independence. There’s something truly beautiful in that.

Despite it being the coldest part of winter, with the streets frozen over and a layer of frost covering the city, you’ll notice these women don’t show any signs of being cold – no shivers, goosebumps, no complaints! Not only this, but the ice seems to melt with every passing step; this is their aura of righteousness at work.

I can tell you from experience: when you’re cool, the sun shines on you all the time! It happens to the best of us. I know this because it happens to me. Haha, I jest! ... kinda.

Being from one of the more exciting neighborhoods behind the pearly gates, the temperature can vary quite a bit throughout the year. It can be anywhere from 68 to 76 degrees. I imagine down on Earth it can’t be so different. Your world just has a different interior design for each of the seasons, right?

It’s nice to know that wholesome role models such as Britney Spears and Kim Kardashian are still able to inspire our youth with their ideas of girl power. I get all warm and fuzzy just thinking about it!

So let me just leave those ladies with this: “You go, girls!”



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“She walks in beauty, like the night of cloudless climes and starry skies”

Remembering Diane Goudriaan

Alethea Skinner
News Editor

Every life travels a road that runs from the cradle to the grave, and over the course of time, each road intersects with many others.

Today, I walked a portion of the road that was Diane Goudriaan's life – a road that spanned nearly seven decades.

Her journey began on July 10, 1942, in Calgary, Ontario, Canada. Her road crossed the United States border, continued through Illinois and ended on December 30, 2010, when she lost her battle with cancer in Corvallis, Oregon.

In talking with some of her colleagues, I retraced a few of her most recent steps. I also read online accounts and memories of those whose paths she crossed over the years. Listening to their memories, and reading their thoughts and words of love, concern and encouragement, I wished our roads had intersected sooner.

She participated.

Wherever her winding road took her – whether to church, school, the hospital, or out in the community – she was involved. She volunteered. She invested herself in the lives of those with whom she came in contact. And as Dee Dee Egan-Strombeck wrote in her obituary posted at findagrave.com and katu.com websites, “Everyone who came into contact with Diane became a friend ...”

“Her smile, spirit, values, deeply ingrained Anglican faith, inspiration, strength, peace, beauty, and her will to live each day to the fullest and continue to serve others outside herself was profound.”

In an article Diane wrote in the Summer 2006 RSVP Advisory Council newsletter, she talked about choices she made on her journey. She said, “Putting pen to paper on this topic has allowed me to take a walk along the path of my life journey. As a young mom, I volunteered with Sunday School, Block Parents, and teams and clubs to which my children belonged. When I was a full-time employee, I was on committees connected to work. Now that I (think I) am semi-retired (working 27+ hours per week), I sit on the Linn-Benton R.S.V.P. Advisory Board – an organization committed to bettering/supporting the lives of seniors.”

“One of the major outcomes of my volunteer involvements was re-entry into the workforce after 20 years as an at-home mom. When asked by my colleagues



Diane Goudriaan in her element.

provided by Goudriaan Family

Diane Bunn-Lounds-Goudriaan (July 10, 1942 - Dec. 30, 2010)

Family: Husband, Neil; children: Jon, Sarah and Robert Lounds, their spouses and nine grandchildren and Dierdre, Deanne, Damon Goudriaan, their spouses and eight grandchildren, and three brothers, Ken, Bob and Neil Bunn.

Activities & Interests: Teacher, planner, travel partner, friend, walker, swimmer, bridge player, hiker, triathlete, mentor, tour director, volunteer, wonderful cook, pastry chef.

Job at LBCC: GED instructor in Luckiamute Center

Memorial Contributions: *In lieu of flowers*—The Sheri Hildreth Ovarian Cancer Foundation (SHOC), PO Box 327 Gladstone, OR 97027. Forms can be downloaded through their website at www.shocfoundation.org. *The mission of the foundation is to provide funding for ovarian cancer research, educate women about early detection, empower women recovering and to find emotional, spiritual, physical balance and well-being.*

Post Online Comments: caringbridge.org/visit/dianeloundsgoudriaan

where I had been previously employed, I replied that I had been a ‘professional volunteer.’ My department head overheard the conversation and retorted, ‘Diane, it was those volunteer positions that got you this job!’ (Oops!) I found that I had undervalued my activities.”

It is reported that among other things, Diane participated in life as a wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, planner, travel partner, friend, walker, swimmer, bridge player, hiker, runner, mentor, tour director, volunteer, wonderful cook, and pastry chef.

For the last six years, she was a GED instructor in the Luckiamute Center on the LBCC campus. In her environment, she was part social worker and part teacher. Even when she was very ill, Diane was found in the classroom engaged with her students. Her illness was a four-year struggle, but her dedication and desire to be with her students kept her going.

She inspired.

Her colleague Linda Burke said she taught her students more than academics. She taught them manners, grace and the realities of life – her life. She taught them of their worth. “I was truly blessed to know and work with her. She is one to aspire to be like.”

Mary Garcia, a student who is completing the GED program, said, “She was perfect. She was supportive and she was loved. She will be missed.”

Her supervisor, Russ Burchard, said Diane was an incredible person who had a unique way of connecting to people. He also said he was so proud to be associated with a teacher like that and thought how lucky their students were to have such a teacher.

She connected.

It is no wonder then that Diane's obituary can be found linked in distant newspapers such as the Dallas

Morning News and the India Times. She remained connected with those she met along her journey. This was shown in a note Diane wrote that was published in “Grace Notes,” a newsletter from a church she attended years earlier, “... we never know whose words touch whom. Having been on the Lenten Task Force and assisted with the editing, I know the time commitment and work involved. Thank you again – I'll look forward to next year's edition. P.S. Thanks to all who wrote pieces – it was like having letters from old friends.”

She created memories.

Without exception, each person characterized her in similar terms: love, care, compassion, humor, dedication, breath of fresh air, gentility, and gracious. Even her students spoke of her in related terms.

In talking with one colleague, the words of Lord Byron's poem came to mind. As I said the words, she nodded.

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

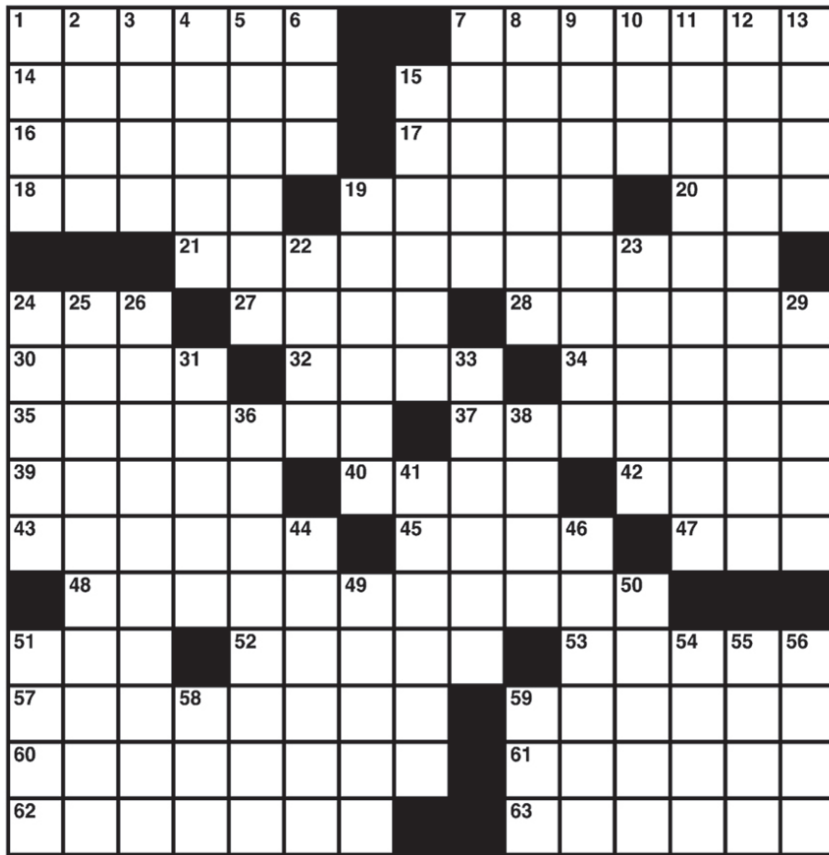
Yes, that was Diane.

Los Angeles Times Daily Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Lewis

ACROSS

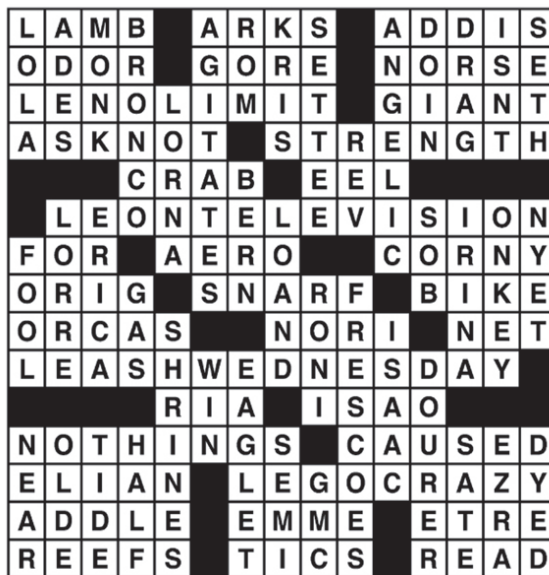
- 1 Hired goons
- 7 Snub
- 14 Power to attract
- 15 Like an unexpectedly large gift
- 16 Buys time
- 17 Heed
- 18 "The Bridges at Toko-Ri" setting
- 19 Sticking points?
- 20 Suggested actions
- 21 "Fantastic Voyage" setting
- 24 Bad check letters
- 27 Land buy
- 28 Refuse to make changes
- 30 Heroic
- 32 Cologne title
- 34 Rivera with two Tonys
- 35 Its contents are under pressure
- 37 Authority level
- 39 Nottingham's river
- 40 1973 Toni Morrison novel
- 42 She played WKRP's Jennifer
- 43 Fancy watches
- 45 Benchmark
- 47 Defense agency since Nov. 2001
- 48 Geneticist's pursuit
- 51 Keep entirely to oneself
- 52 Work with dough
- 53 Rhodes with a scholarship
- 57 Some tattoos
- 59 Equivalence
- 60 "I kid you not!"
- 61 "8 Simple Rules" star John
- 62 Son of Agamemnon
- 63 Biological catalyst



By Barry C. Silk & Doug Peterson

- 7 They're next in line
- 8 Detailed windows
- 9 Rakes it in
- 10 Realm until the 19th cen.
- 11 SUV that replaced the Passport
- 12 Cuckoos in clocks, e.g.
- 13 Chinese menu possessive
- 15 Quiet aircraft
- 19 Gourmet mushrooms
- 22 Three less than once
- 23 Waters of music
- 24 "Super-duper!"
- 25 Solution for a fertility problem, perhaps
- 26 Vehicle with a deluge gun
- 29 Patty Hearst's nom de guerre
- 31 Partygoers may get their kicks out of one
- 33 Switch magazines, maybe

Last Week's Puzzle Solved



(c)2009 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

- 36 "Sorry, Charlie" brand
- 38 "Locked room" mystery writer John Dickson
- 41 Restless
- 44 Hill body
- 46 2002 Campaign Reform Act co-sponsor
- 49 Hawks
- 50 Big name at airports
- 51 Jaunty greeting
- 54 Normal in Illinois, say
- 55 One often follows a bullet
- 56 Instrument played with a plectrum
- 58 Some NFL pass catchers
- 59 Post-opposite

Classifieds

Deadline: Ads accepted by 5 p.m. Friday will appear in the following Wednesday issue. Ads will appear only once per submission. If you wish a particular ad to appear in successive issues, you must resubmit it.

Cost: Ads that do not solicit for a private business are free to students, staff and faculty. All others are charged at a rate of 10 cents per word, payable when the ad is accepted.

Help Wanted

You can sign up at www.linnbenton.edu/go/StudentEmployment to look at student & graduate jobs. *For more info about the opportunities listed below, please see Carla in Student Employment in the Career Center (Takena 101).

Management Trainee

(#8633, Oregon) If you are wanting to get training in bank management, this is the opportunity for you!! Employees often move up through this organization.

Intern-Electrical Engineering

(#8642, Albany) If you have junior standing or higher in engineering or related field or equivalent experience &

Personals: Ads placed in the "Personals" category are limited to one ad per advertiser per week; no more than 50 words per ad.

Libel/Taste: The Commuter will not knowingly publish material that treats individuals or groups in an unfair manner. Any advertisement judged libelous or in poor taste by the newspaper editorial staff will be rejected.

education, this full-time job could be for you!

Mental Health Support

Specialist (#8636, Albany) Do you have one year education and/or experience in mental illness, emotional/behavioral difficulties or other related conditions and a current Oregon Drivers License and acceptable driving record? This full-time job pays \$12.25-14.25/hr plus benefits.

Conservation Biology Paid

Internships (#8639, Corvallis) Here is a possibility to get some field experience in plant identification, research, and rare habitat surveys.

Persons having questions about or requests for special needs and accommodations should contact the Disability Coordinator at Linn-Benton Community College, RCH-105, 6500 Pacific Blvd. SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, Phone (541)-917-4690 or via Oregon Telecommunications Relay TTD at 1-800-735-2900 or 1-800-735-1232.

Contact should be made 72 hours or more in advance of the event.

Do you know where this picture was taken?

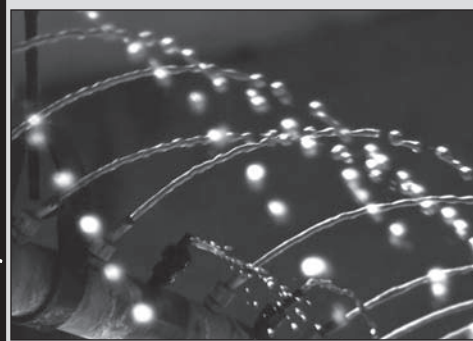


Photo by Tony Brown

Answers must be emailed to commuter@linnbenton.edu by 8 a.m. the following Monday. One winner will be drawn from correct entries each week and will win a prize donated by the campus bookstore.

Last Week's Answer: Foundation donor board in the Calapooia Center



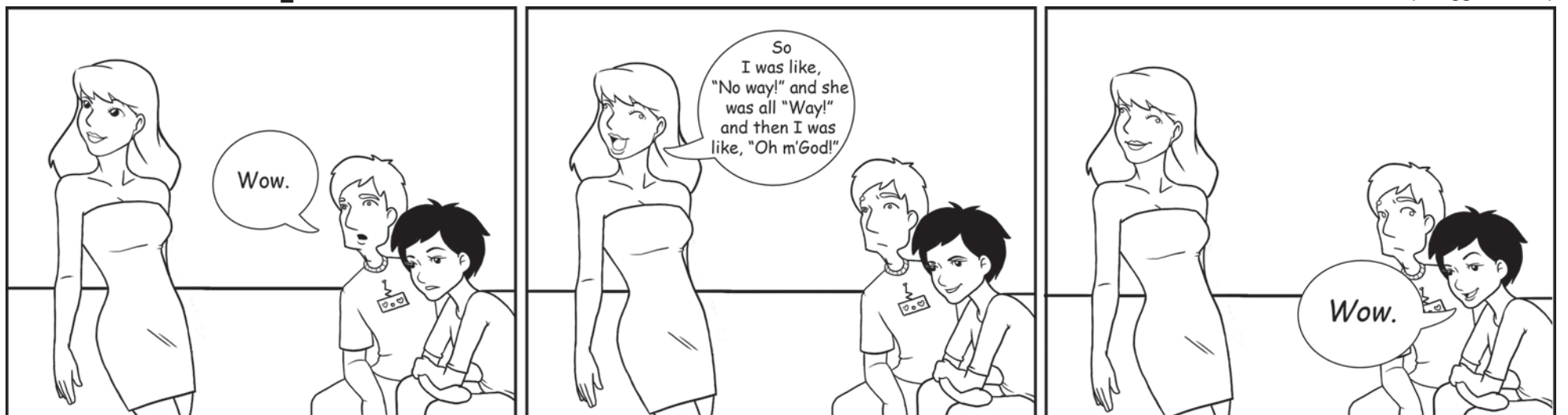
Last Week's Winner: Congratulations to Eric Fleming! Please stop by The Commuter office (F-220) and see Tony to claim your prize.

Where on Campus Am I?

Add/Drop

An LBCC student-generated comic.

By Maggie O'Reilly



SUDOKU

THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mepham Group

Level: 1 2 3 4

	8	7						9
	2	3				7	5	6
	1		5	7			3	
	7		6	2			4	3
2								1
			4	5	9			7
3	6		7		4	5		
1							7	4
	5			8		6	9	

Last Issue's Puzzle Solved

7	9	1	8	4	6	5	2	3
3	2	8	7	1	5	4	9	6
5	4	6	2	3	9	8	7	1
1	5	4	9	2	7	3	6	8
9	8	7	4	6	3	1	5	2
2	6	3	1	5	8	7	4	9
4	7	2	3	9	1	6	8	5
6	1	9	5	8	4	2	3	7
8	3	5	6	7	2	9	1	4

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit www.sudoku.org.uk

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HOROSCOPES

Your weekly guide to the Zodiac

ARIES

3/21-4/19

You put the "super" in superficial, and no matter what else I tell you, all you're going to take away from this is that you're super. It's no wonder your ego is so big.

TAURUS

4/20-5/20

Stop procrastinating and get to work. You said you'd have it done three months ago and you haven't even started.

GEMINI

5/21-6/21

While others might call you gossipy, manipulative, or just a general all-around SOB, I say ... wait ... that's exactly what I'd call you. In fact, I just did.

CANCER

6/22-7/22

You're like that emo kid in high school I avoided, all angsty and melodramatic. I thought you'd have grown out of that by now. Do you think you will anytime soon?

LEO

7/23-8/22

Has anyone ever told you to "get a life"? Well the joke's on them, because you're a cat and you have nine. But that doesn't mean they're wrong, you're still kind of a nerd.

VIRGO

8/23-9/22

Some call it OCD, but not me. Nope. You're just very precise about every little thing and like things organized. It's not like you color code your M&M's or anything crazy like that ... do you?

LIBRA

9/23-10/23

You're super awesome and a total badass. Way to be! High-five! Or are you? I can't decide.

SCORPIO

10/24-11/21

I was watching "Family Guy" the other day and realized that you and Stewie have a lot in common. You're both freaky smart, dream of world domination, and are big babies.

SAGITTARIUS

11/22-12/21

What is it with your need to be eternally cheery and upbeat? Maybe I want to be angry and bitter and miserable. Don't judge me.

CAPRICORN

12/22-1/19

This is your lucky day! Just kidding, your life is horrible. I don't know how you get out of bed in the morning.

AQUARIUS

1/20-2/18

I really wish that someone would get around to inventing that teleportation machine we were all promised. Maybe you should get on that.

PISCES

2/19-3/20

You should go watch "Finding Nemo." That's a really cute movie. Repeat after me, "Fish are friends, not food."

THE COMMUTER STAFF

The Commuter is the weekly student-run newspaper for LBCC, financed by student fees and advertising. Opinions expressed in The Commuter do not necessarily reflect those of the LBCC administration, faculty and Associated Students of LBCC. Editorials, columns, letters and cartoons reflect the opinions of the authors.

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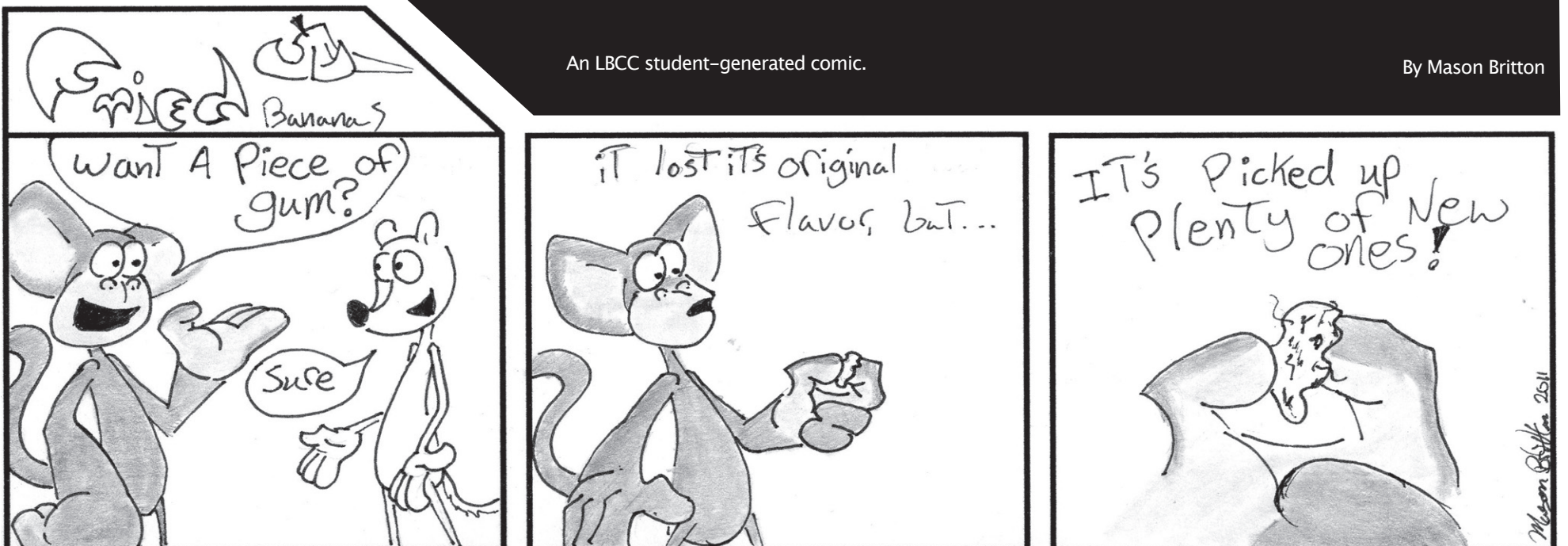
Letters Welcome
The Commuter encourages readers to use its "Opinion" pages to express their views on campus, community, regional and national issues. The Commuter attempts to print all submissions received, but reserves the right to edit for grammar, length, libel, privacy concerns and taste. Opinions expressed by letter submitters do not represent the views of the Commuter staff or the College. Deliver letters to The Commuter Office, Forum 222 or at commuter@linnbenton.edu

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Jan. 18

Upcoming Home Basketball Games

Women's Basketball

- Saturday, Jan. 15
Mt. Hood CC
4 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 19
SWOCC
5:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 29
Chemeketa CC
4 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 5
Lane CC
4 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 12
Portland CC
4 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 16
Umpqua CC
5:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 26
Clackamas CC
4 p.m.

Men's Basketball

- Saturday, Jan. 15
Mt. Hood CC
6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 19
SWOCC
7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Jan. 29
Chemeketa CC
6 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 5
Lane CC
6 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 12
Portland CC
6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb. 16
Umpqua CC
7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Feb. 26
Clackamas CC
6 p.m.



LBCC Dance Club Starts Off on the Right Foot

Paula Buck
Contributing Writer

LBCC's first official Dance Club, started last year, is non-exclusive and open to all levels of experience and styles. Any admitted student at LBCC with an interest in dance is welcome and encouraged to join, whether they have a dance background or not.

The Dance Club was "created with the intention of having the role of LBCC's dance company," said Katherine Sanders, dance teacher and LBCC Dance Club advisor. She also said it was created "because I really wanted to give our students the opportunity to create and perform their own dances."

With the support of Katherine Sanders and any interested and willing student participants, the dance club will perform concerts annually. Last year, students said their experience was fun and rewarding. They had a chance to be part of a production where friends, family, and fellow students could watch them perform. The club is also a fantastic opportunity to make new friends and bond with other students.

The money the club raises through its performances goes toward bringing in guest teachers of other styles of dance, such as African and Hula, to host workshops. The workshops are held to help broaden students' experience in dance and are open to everyone enrolled at LBCC.

The Dance Club's main goal is to open a dance community

Dance Club Show Auditions

When: Thursday, 1/13
2:30 - 4 p.m. &
Saturday, 1/15
3 - 5 p.m.

Where: AC 120



Members of last year's Dance Club

provided by LBCC Dance Club

for all to enjoy. This year may bring even more interest, as the club works towards its second annual spring concert which is expected to include jazz, hip-hop, modern, Tahitian, and lyrical styles. Six to eight student pieces and two or three faculty pieces will be performed.

You can also look forward to some new faces taking part in Dance Club functions as new students join.

"I'm very excited and very thrilled to have this experience in my life," said Nancy Contreras-Colin, a new choreographer in the club.

Choreographers are currently getting organized and in place for their spots in the spring show. Auditions will be held this week in the Activities Center, Room 120, on Thursday, Jan. 13, from 2:30 to 4 p.m. For those who can't make that, there is also an audition on Saturday, Jan. 15, from 3 to 5 p.m.

There is an open spot for everyone who auditions; no one will ever be turned away. If you go, be sure to wear non-restrictive clothing like sweat pants or yoga pants. You don't even need to have a dance choreographed for the audition, just show up and have fun!



Sunset at Hoodoo from the ski lift.

Shayne Morgan

La Niña Brings a Powdery Present

Shayne Morgan
Contributing Writer

Let's face it. The weather in the valley can be downright – well, wet. Throw in a little La Niña weather and you've got rain blowing out of the clouds like a fire hose. I, like the majority of web-footed Oregonians, need to stay active to beat the winter blues.

Hoodoo Ski Resort is a place where students can indulge in an often overlooked activity: snow sports. Located on Highway 20, 75 miles east of Albany, Hoodoo rests on the summit of Santiam Pass where high elevations cause La Niña to change the brisk rains to deep endless blankets of fresh mountain snow.

According to Hoodoo Ski & Ride school director John Judy, this year is one of the biggest snow years in quite some time. Thanks to the La Niña weather cycles, the

powder is extra deep and Judy anticipates not only a boost in snow, but also a boost in sales this season.

"We are hoping for a record year."

Hoodoo also offers an onsite Ski & Ride School. The school teaches snowboarding, alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, adaptive skiing, and snow biking.

Snow bikes offer an alternative choice to skiing and riding. Snow biking is fun and easy to learn – a quick 30-minute lesson will give you the basics and have you on your way up the mountain. The lesson costs \$40 and includes the rental of the snow bike of your choice. You may trade for different snow bike types throughout the day at no extra charge. Snow biking is allowed on all of Hoodoo's runs.

Hoodoo boasts stunning Cascade mountain views and short lift lines, featuring 806 skiable acres with 30 alpine trails.

LBCC student Lisa Battaglia skied

Hoodoo for the first time last spring. "I rented my brand new ski gear and the staff was extremely helpful," Battaglia said.

"I couldn't believe the beauty of the mountains and how quiet it was. The spring skiing weather at Hoodoo – there's nothing like it," she added.

The adventurous can jump on to some steep black diamond runs such as Chuck's Backside or Leap of Faith, but if you're just looking for a fun day with the family, slide onto the Autobahn tubing area. Hoodoo's Autobahn Tube Park has up to 20 runs, over 250 tubes, and a tube tow that accelerates you to the start.

Hoodoo has something for everyone – from the beginner to the advanced level – and don't forget to check out night skiing on the weekends. For more information, log on to www.hoodoo.com. See you on the mountain.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

The Green Hornet

Spoiled playboy Britt Reid (Seth Rogen) is the newest superhero to go from comic book to big screen with his sidekick Kato (Jay Chou). After his father is killed, Reid decides to pose as a villain to take out the bad guys with high-tech gadgets and a badass car.



Rated: PG-13 • **Runtime:** 108 min. • **Genre:** Superhero

The Dilemma

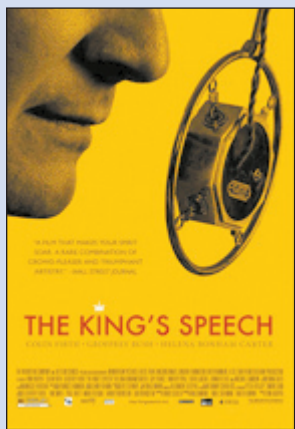
Ron Howard directs Vince Vaughn and Kevin James as Ronny and Nick, longtime best buds whose friendship is tested when Ronny sees Nick's wife (Winona Rider) kissing another man. What's a bro to do?



Rated: PG-13 • **Runtime:** 118 min. • **Genre:** Bromance

The King's Speech

Colin Firth stars as George VI, a man suddenly forced to take the British throne when his brother abdicates. He relies on his wife (Helena Bonham Carter) and speech therapist (Geoffrey Rush) to overcome his st-st-stuttering pr-pr-problem and be a monarch the country can be proud of.



Rated: R • **Runtime:** 111 min. • **Genre:** Oscar Bait

Sources: [Imdb](http://imdb.com), Yahoo! Movies, Fandango.com

Portman Shines as "Black Swan"

Ashley Christie
 Page Designer

Like a lot of little girls, I spent a great deal of my childhood in a tutu, leaping and twirling around my house. And while I thought I was full of ease and grace, in reality I was knocking things down and tripping over my two left feet.

Luckily, Natalie Portman didn't have this problem in Darren Aronofsky's latest film, "Black Swan."

Portman stars as Nina Sayers, a dancer for the New York City Ballet, who's up for the starring role in the company's production of "Swan Lake." Nina is a perfectionist who is meticulous about dance, which her director, Thomas (Vincent Cassel), says makes her ideal for the White Swan. However, she lacks the passion and sensuality needed to portray the White Swan's evil twin, the Black Swan.

Thomas casts Nina as the star anyway and decides to make newcomer Lily (Mila Kunis) her understudy. Throughout rehearsals, Nina has trouble capturing the darker persona and becomes increasingly paranoid that Lily is trying to take over the role.

Nina falls into a self-destructive spiral and her overprotective mother (Barbara Hershey) is convinced the role is too much for her. But Nina is determined to be the perfect Black Swan no matter what it takes.

"Black Swan" is dark, creepy, and totally engrossing. Most of this is due to the casting of Natalie Portman and her performance as Nina Sayers.

Portman has proven herself to be a strong actress. She can lead the people of the planet Naboo or deliver a curse-laden rap on "SNL," and you believe her. She's made the transition from precocious child actor to full-blown movie star without becoming tabloid fodder, which has earned her the nickname "Anti-Lohan" by Gary



Susman of moviefone.com.

Here, she's perfectly cast as Nina, a sweet and innocent young woman who is trapped in a state of perpetual adolescence by her overbearing mother. We first meet Nina at home, in a very pink bedroom, surrounded by stuffed animals, that you'd swear belonged to a five-year-old.

The film follows her struggle to cross over into adulthood as she tries to tap into the inner sexuality needed to be the seductive Black Swan. Through Nina, the film touches on themes of identity, duality, and the cost of perfection.

The story does a good job of playing with the audience's emotions to keep us guessing about what is really going on. Is Lily really stalking Nina? Or is Nina just a bonkers ballerina? Is a sex scene between Nina and Lily really necessary? And seriously, this girl is totally loony tunes, right? Right?

Aronofsky ("Requiem for a Dream," "The Wrestler") isn't afraid to showcase the ugly side of human nature. Light and dark, good and evil, he likes to play with the inner struggle within everyone in all of his movies. Manohla Dargis of The New York Times explains, "he [Aronofsky] has built a small, vivid catalog by exploring human extremes with wildly uneven degrees of visual wow, sensitivity and intelligence."

Dargis goes on to describe "Black Swan" as "visceral and real even while it's one delirious, phantasmagoric freakout."

If you're looking for a dark and gritty thriller, or you're just into dance dramas full of tulle and feathers, "Black Swan" is for you. It has excellent performances, beautiful visual effects, and a script full of mind-bending twists, turns, and pirouettes. And that little girl, who used to live in her tutu and wreak havoc around the house, is very happy her mother convinced her that her destiny was not to be a prima ballerina.

Weekly Weather Predictions



Warning: These are only predictions. For up-to-date forecasts, please look out your window. Source: accuweather.com