

KD MAGAZINE

Spring 2008 Volume 2 Issue 3





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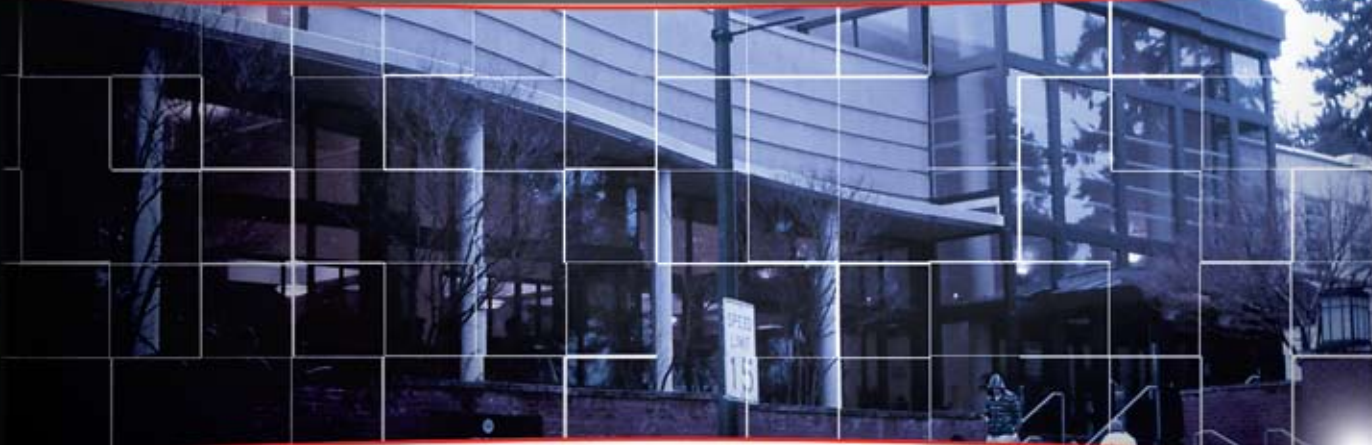
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18



12



24

A Multicultural Publication

KD MAGAZINE

Spring 2008 Volume 2 Issue 3

features

12 RIDING A NEW WAVE

Legendary surfer Elijah Mack exposes the underground realm of river surfing.

Story by CHRISTINA O'CONNOR Photos by BENJAMIN BRAYFIELD

18 THE CITY OF LIGHTS

A French student uncovers the history and traditions behind the little known district of Monmartre, Paris as she leads a self-guided tour.

Story and Photos by MELISSA HOFFMAN

24 FIXED ON FIXIES

Recreational bicyclists take to fixed-gear bikes, transforming the culture into a thrill-seeking channel for personal expression.

Story by MATT NICHOLSON Photos by DAVE MARTINEZ



6



8



38



34



32

departments

4 EDITOR'S NOTE Letter from the editor.

6 PASSPORT Beppe and Gianni's Trattoria celebrates Italian food, a distinguished painter brings the country's culture home to Eugene, and students strive to preserve the Italian language through a community club.

8 DIALOGUE Oregon native Nancy Hughes works to alleviate health problems in Central America through her foundation, StoveTeam International.

10 THE FORUM A war veteran's and a mother's obstacles to obtaining college educations at the University of Oregon.

30 SOUNDWAVES Master drummer and dancer from Guinea, West Africa brings African music and dance to the community.

32 SPICES AND SPIRITS Wandering Goat Coffee Company describes the adversity behind coffee farming and helps promote global fair-trade standards.

34 PEOPLE IN MOTION A nationally competitive wushu club grows as a martial arts team without a traditional emphasis on combat.

36 MOVING PICTURES The truth behind the Bijou Art Cinemas' plans for the future.

38 COLORS & SHAPES The Last Friday ArtWalks exhibit Eugene's artist culture in its most organic form.

40 THE LAST A student reveals the long-lasting controversies behind her parents' and grandparents' mixed-race marriages.

We all are different. We come from various backgrounds and have dissimilar stories to tell. Each day, we carry around our past experiences and use them to protect ourselves or to guide our direction. For these reasons, KD Magazine thrives.

But while planning for the spring issue, the staff and I struggled to find the kinds of stories that would uphold KD's mission: to enlighten readers on multicultural and international topics and trends. We were looking too hard. Not until mid-search did I realize that diversity is all around us; it encompasses our daily lives. Whether it's the girl who wonders about her family's identity ("Caught Between Races") or the globally renowned sportsman who invents new ways to surf ("Riding a New Wave"), there's an irreplaceable story in everyone. We didn't have to look far to find the nationally competitive Wushu Club, documented in "A New Kind of Martial Art," or the African dancers and drummers, featured in "Rhythmic Connections." A student was eager to uncover her European expedition, and she guides us through the hilly area of Monmartre, Paris in "The City of Lights." Also, a Eugene competition reveals a countrywide bicycle craze, highlighted in "Fixed on Fixies," and the local founder of StoveTeam International shares her compassion for helping Central American citizens in "Getting Families off the Floor." Once we embraced this comprehensive approach to cultural diversity and individuality, the possibilities seemed endless.

Appropriately, this is the first issue in which the staff's work was not limited. KD's growing participation and readership provided means for a website, which we finished in January. The site allowed us to publish a passionate story about a war-torn couple ("Love and War"), as well as a student's account of her self-discovery through her father's Puerto Rican culture ("Island Heritage"). With this new outlet for expression, everyone had a chance to tell his or her story.

Our full-sized staff comprised a unique set of individuals with varying experience levels, ranging from freshmen undergraduates to Post-Baccalaureate students. Throughout the term, they helped me realize that as long as we continue to search for and appreciate each other's differences, we'll become more knowledgeable of and passionate for the world around us. Only with their diversity and range of creativity could we create such an enriching edition of KD Magazine. Now, I use KD as a lens through which to view humanity. I hope our readers find the same inspiration in its pages as I do.

Enjoy the issue,



Meghan McCloskey
Editor in Chief



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Spring 2008 Volume 2 Issue 3

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Meghan McCloskey

DIRECTOR

Jiyea Park

MANAGING EDITOR

Quena Keis

ACCOUNTING MANAGER

Jose Tancuan

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Maria Culp, Allyson Marrs,
Erin McNamara, Grace Pettygrove

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Kelcey Friend

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

Chia-Jung Chang, Amanda Hays, Dan Huston,

WRITERS

Lorie Anne Acio, Lisa Anderson,
Inka Bajandas, Chia-Jung Chang, Melissa
Hoffman, Maiko Nakai, Katrina Nattress,
Grace Neal, Matt Nicholson, Christina
O'Connor, Amy Purcell, Sarah Wilson

WEB MANAGEMENT

Zach Blank, Amanda Hays, Vera Westbrook

ART DIRECTOR

Faith Stafford

DESIGNERS

Kelsey Barratt, Meredith Fisher, Alex Grigas,
Whitney Highfield, Megan Jarosak, Tristen
Knight, Stuart Mayberry, Tomoi Miyachi,
Ji Eun "Janice" Yoon, Jiyea Park

PHOTO EDITOR

Benjamin Brayfield

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Desiree Afleje, Ashley Baer, Dave Martinez,
Melissa Miller, Kari Odden, Katie Onheiber,
Jarod Opperman, Alexia Wray, Amelia Wirts

CONTACT

Mail: PO Box 30023 Eugene, OR 97401

Email: kdmagazine@gmail.com

COVER: River surfing legend Elijah Mack rides the Siuslaw River along the Pacific Coast in Oregon. Learn more about the innovative sport in "Riding a New Wave" on page 12..



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From its flavorsome cuisine to its time-honored artwork, Italy's rich, long-standing traditions have made their way to the Northwest. Beppe & Gianni's offers authentic food and wine, while oil painter Jerry Ross celebrates the culture's art. Each week, Eugenians eagerly study the Italian tongue.



ABOVE: La bruschetta is one of Beppe & Gianni's signature appetizers. The chefs create the dishes with imported Italian ingredients, bringing authentic Italian flavor to Eugene.

Tasting Italy

Beppe Macchi and Gianni Barofsky met when they were teenagers working at Mazzi's, an Italian restaurant owned by Beppe's cousin in South Eugene. The start of a 16-year friendship led to a partnership in combining fine food with delicate ingredients, packaged at affordable prices. Now, Beppe & Gianni's Trattoria encompasses all aspects of authentic Italian cuisine — from Italian bottled waters to wines, pastas to sauces, and service to atmosphere.

In 1998, the 19th-avenue restaurant replaced Gazebo, a Mediterranean, Greek and North African eatery. "The location was the best fit for our Trattoria," Gianni says. "The aesthetics, the neighborhood, the market in Eugene — it was a good feel."

Although the restaurant is open only for dinner, the cooks begin preparations at 10 a.m., concocting different types of pastas: ravioli, tortellini, lasagna, angel hair, and bishop hats that are individually hand-folded. Other pastas such as bucatini and spaghetti are imported directly from Italy. For poultry and seafood, Beppe and Gianni buy from neighborhood suppliers such as butcher shops and fish markets. "Whatever I can get locally, I try to do," Gianni says. This not only assures the freshest products but also supports the nearby businesses.

Although Gianni describes Italian food as simple, chefs pay very close attention to its taste and detail. The food usually comprises two or three ingredients that drive the

flavor but do not overpower it. Pappardelle con carne, Gianni's favorite dish, is home-made, wide-cut pasta cooked in Chianti red wine and mixed in a braised-beef tomato sauce. Another favorite is capelli d'angelo: bishop hats stuffed with Swiss chard, prosciutto, ricotta, and parmesan cheese in a brown-butter sage sauce. "When I serve this to Italians, they are so amazed," Gianni says. "They stir at how they feel as if they are home."

Beppe & Gianni's menu appeals to meat lovers and vegetarians alike. It offers several types of salads and pastas served with pomodoro, a tomato sauce with fresh basil, and Aglio E Olio, a sauce made of garlic, olive oil and red pepper. The restaurant also uses

organic produce whenever possible.

A popular delicacy at Beppe & Gianni's is tiramisu, a special dessert but a typical Italian indulgence. Gianni makes his tiramisu from ladyfingers soaked in espresso and rum, layered with a mixture of eggs and wine and combined with layers of chocolate. And to top it all off, the restaurant offers over 100 wines from Italy and the Northwest.

Aside from the food, the restaurant's environment provides an inviting and calming experience for guests. "The moment I stepped into the restaurant, I felt at home,"

says University of Oregon student Rebecca Lin. "The food made me feel as if I were in Italy." Wall paintings of vibrant orchards and mosaic tiles add to its romantic aura. In Italy, a Trattoria is a "family-run restaurant," and Beppe & Gianni's aims to portray such an environment by resembling a casual home — where the mother is cooking in the kitchen.

In recognition of the restaurant's appealing atmosphere, authentic food and good service, Eugene Weekly readers have voted Beppe & Gianni's the "Best Italian Restaurant in Eugene" for the past eight

years in the Best Restaurants in Eugene poll. Additionally, last year's People's Choice Awards chose Beppe & Gianni's for "Best Italian" and awarded it second-place for "Best Appetizer."

"We are very pleased when we get praised," Gianni says. "Recognition is nice, but it is not something we want to aggressively put on the market." Beppe and Gianni say putting their "best food forward" is their most important goal, and they are humbly appreciative of the Eugene residents who continue to dine at their restaurant.
- Lorie Anne Acio

Painter by Night

A lifelong oil painter and 15-year computer science instructor, 63-year-old Jerry Ross wears long, curly white hair and exhibits an observant gaze. He alludes to having dual careers: in addition to teaching at Lane Community College, Ross leads oil painting classes at the Maude Kerns Arts Center on Wednesday evenings.

He first fell in love with Italy in 1991, when he traveled there for a computer science conference. "I bawled when I had to go back to the states," he says. "Italians are friendlier people. They're more gregarious and easier to relate to."

After his trip, Ross began to frequent the country to explore, paint and savor the culture. His wife worked in Italy in the late 1990s and helped him connect with some art galleries; for 10 years now, he has exhibited his portrait and landscape paintings in Milan, Bologna and Rome. "It's a more significant experience to show in Italy," Ross says. "It's like having a show in New York City."

Ross says his work is perceived differently in Italy than in the United States. "Ninety-five percent of the world's art is in one little country (Italy), and it offers a



culture of support," Ross says. "I was painting in the countryside once and a guy came by and said, 'You are a true painter. I'll give you \$150 for your painting. Drop it by when you're done.' It was a big eye-opener

for me that even a farmer in a rural area had such an appreciation for art." Lots of people in Italy attend his exhibits and post fliers to promote his work. La Repubblica, an Italian newspaper, even wrote a feature story about Ross.

But in Eugene and Springfield, Ross says the public looks at his work with curiosity, bewilderment, and misunderstanding. "It's ironic that I've been in Eugene for 30 years, and I have no ongoing relationship with any gallery," Ross says. "That's sad. For Eugene being so 'arts and outdoors,' there's so little venue opportunity." Still, since he's lived in Eugene, Ross has won the 2000 Mayor's Choice Award for the Mayor's Art Show, launched the Salon des Refusés exhibit, taught at the University of Oregon Craft Center and at the Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts, and has displayed his work in numerous local galleries.

Now approaching retirement, he and his wife anticipate spending springs and summers in Eugene and falls and winters in Italy. "Our vision and dream is to shuttle between the two," Ross says. "Sicily's climate is like Arizona's, so it's the best of the Southwest and Italy." - Lisa Anderson

La Serata Italiana

Every Wednesday at 7 p.m., a diverse group of people gathers at Track Town Pizza for a "Serata Italiana," an Italian evening of conversation. Attendees include first-year Italian majors, graduate students, former Italian students who wish to maintain their language skills, and community members who want to learn or practice the dialect. "It is a very open gathering," says University of Oregon student and Italian major Tim Cooper. "This is a great way to practice Italian."

"It is more relaxed than a classroom, because we are not being graded," says Kerry Marnell, who is studying German and

Romance Languages at the U of O. Instead of professors, graduate teaching fellows facilitate the conversations. They keep all the meetings casual so non-fluent speakers feel encouraged to participate. While some people choose to hold informal discussions about their clothing or their weekend plans, others converse about more serious topics such as Italy's current events.

After two years of studying the language, University of Oregon business major Satoshi Iwase no longer takes Italian courses but has been actively participating in Serata Italiana since 2006. He uses what he learns

to converse with his friends he met during his studies abroad in Perugia, Italy. "It is difficult to find a community of foreigners in my country (Japan) who speak in foreign languages, especially Italian," he says.

While Serata Italiana is only a casual gathering, it helps to build a connection between Italy and the United States. Participants gain a strong sense of Italian culture, cuisine and current events. So next time you feel inspired to learn, swing by Track Town, order a slice of pizza, and immerse yourself in the beauty and tradition of the Italian tongue. - Lorie Anne Acio

Lifting Families off the Floor

STORY MAIKO NAKAI • PHOTO DESIREE AFLLEJE



ABOVE: In March, Nancy Hughes traveled to El Salvador to bring fuel-efficient stoves like the model behind her to families in need.

Nancy Hughes, founder of StoveTeam International, brings fuel-efficient stoves to Central American families to promote better health

Many people in Central America cook their meals over indoor fire pits, which sit on the floors inside their unventilated homes. Women, often carrying babies on their backs, cook for an average of six hours per day in excessive smoke. The smoke produces twice the amount of carbon monoxide that health officials consider threatening, which causes eye infections and respiratory illnesses in those who inhale the deadly toxin. Children at play often fall onto the open-fire pits and acquire serious burns.

Sixty-five-year-old Nancy Hughes, founder of StoveTeam International, is determined to prevent these types of injuries and to improve the health of Central America's rural population. The StoveTeam's smoke-free, fuel-efficient stoves are miracles for rural families. The group's next destination is El Salvador, where its members will demonstrate stoves, work on expanding their factory's capacity, and evaluate the effectiveness of their activities.

What is StoveTeam International?

It is a project to bring fuel-efficient stoves to poor families in Central America, where the major cause of death among women and children is smoke inhalation from indoor fire pits. These open fires are sometimes called "three stone fires" and are quite common throughout the world. The fires cause burns, upper-respiratory diseases, eye problems, and contribute to poor health.

What motivated you to establish StoveTeam International?

I worked in the kitchen with Cascade Medical Team in Solola, Guatemala in the spring of 2004. One evening, a patient came into the kitchen of the public hospital where we were working. This beautiful, eighteen-year-old indigenous woman had fallen onto a kitchen fire at age two and lost the use of her hands. Her burned hands had grown to be bent backwards, with her fingers reaching her wrists. For sixteen years she had prayed to use her hands. It was at that point when I thought, I need to do something to prevent burns rather than treat them. When I returned to Eugene, I asked Southtowne Rotary Club about sponsoring a grant to provide safer, fuel-efficient stoves to the people in Central America. They encouraged me to write a grant, and I not only wrote that grant but also went on to write grants to Carlos Santana's Milagro Foundation and Synchronicity Foundation.

Who are the members of your team, and how did you gather them?

There are seven full-time volunteers in Oregon who coordinate the activities. Most of us are retired. One is a practicing certified public accountant, one is a part-time substitute teacher, one sells educational software, and all of us are members of Eugene Southtowne Rotary Club. The members of the teams come from all over the US and Canada.

Most of the volunteers found out about our project from Rotary International, by checking our website or talking to members of previous teams. Many have listened to the speeches I've given throughout California, Washington, Oregon and Idaho. I have even given speeches in South Africa and Bahrain, although we haven't had volunteers from there yet.

What are StoveTeam International's main activities?

We set up small factories in Central America, which produce portable, affordable and fuel-efficient stoves that reduce deforestation and contribute to better health. Local

people suffer from burns, upper-respiratory infections and hernias when cooking over indoor fire pits. Hernias are caused when people carry heavy loads of fuel wood. Women and small children carry up to 100 pounds of fuel wood on their heads every day.

We are taking between 10 and 30 volunteers to Central America every three months because the work is escalating. The current need in El Salvador alone is for approximately 1 million stoves. We also have requests from Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

Each volunteer pays \$1,600 for the trip, including flights, accommodations, and transportation within the country. It is a chance to see how most people in Central America live, and many volunteers find that the experience changes their lives. One of our volunteers is there now, helping to build a new factory, and this is his third trip this year.

Can you explain more about the stoves?

The stove is made of a thin shell of ferro-cement, with pumice as insulation. The combustion chamber is made of baldosa, or what one might call Mexican floor tile. The plancha, or comal, is made of steel and the remaining metal parts are made of rebar or flat-bar. All pieces are manufactured in El Salvador and all materials are available on site. The entire stove weighs less than 40 pounds, so it can be easily carried from place to place. Our factory is currently producing 300 stoves per month, and we hope to increase to 1,000 per month by the end of the year. At the moment, we have a factory in Sonsonate and a factory being constructed in Suchitoto.

What kind of process must families complete in order to receive their stoves?

We are invited by churches, Habitat for Humanity, Peace Corps, FIASA and Engineers Without Borders to demonstrate our stoves to communities. We have about twenty stoves with us at a demonstration. Individuals are then given the opportunity to buy them or order them.

The total price of a stove is \$40, but grants cover \$20, so the buyer's cost is \$20, which is the amount they would normally pay for wood. Our stoves save that additional wood, and it ends up costing the people no more than they would ordinarily pay. The money is collected in payments of \$5 a month for four months. This keeps us from developing a "hand-out mentality," as people take

pride in being able to purchase a good stove. The Peace Corps, for example, comes to our factories to pick up any additional orders for stoves. We currently have two factories in El Salvador. Nothing has to be imported from the U.S. except a few tools. Everything is there, all ready for local people, and we employ local people to do the work, thus contributing to more employment within the country.

What are some families' reactions to their new stoves?

On our first demonstration, I heard a woman say, "It's a miracle! There's no smoke." In another example, one woman had five family members who had breathing problems. They started using our stove and she said they were all breathing normally and feeling great after three weeks. People also can't believe how quickly it cooks. It takes only eight minutes to boil a liter of water, so it saves not only wood, but also time.

What kinds of difficulties have you or your team members faced?

Our biggest problem is in establishing enough factories to keep up with demand. Demand is extremely high, especially in El Salvador. We need to raise additional funds to expand our factory capacity to serve the demand. We also need to get our stoves certified so that they can receive carbon credits.

Most people in El Salvador speak Spanish and most are literate, so we have very few problems in communicating with the indigenous people. In Guatemala it is more challenging, as there are 24 different indigenous languages, so we have to hire double interpreters.

What changes do you see in the native people's lives and in their health conditions?

I see fewer burns, fewer upper respiratory infections, better general health and an increase in time for small business opportunities. I also have seen less creosote buildup inside the homes. In addition, as women take less time to cook for their families, they have the time to carry the stove outside and sell such things as pupusas (stuffed tortillas) and fried yucca (somewhat like french fries). This brings in extra income and a new sense of purpose. It's empowering for women.

Is there anything else you want to emphasize to readers?

Just remember that you do not need any special qualifications to make real changes in the world. All you need is a purpose and a passion. **KD**

Above the Norm

STORY CHIA-JUNG CHANG • PHOTOS ALEXIA WRAY



ABOVE: Thirty-three-year-old University of Oregon student Emily Pearson with her four-year-old son, Ruben, in their home outside of Cottage Grove.

Two non-traditional students share their experiences at the University of Oregon

Whether enrolling in a new school or moving to an unfamiliar state, everyone feels like an outsider at some point in his or her life. At the University of Oregon, where typical students range between ages 18 and 22, non-traditional students such as veterans and parents stand out. These men and women are our classmates, co-workers, friends, and people we pass on the streets, and each one of their stories is unique and inspiring. Even on open-minded campuses such as the University of Oregon's, these students say it's discomfoting to contrast with the norm.

Like many people, 25-year-old Shane Addis started his education as a traditional-aged student, but due to financial difficulties dropped out after his freshman year. He decided to join the Marine Corps Reserve and complete a nine-month tour in Iraq.

In 2005, Addis returned to the University of Oregon as a full-time student, hoping to finish his education while serving in the Marine Reserve. Roaming the school with no one who shared his interests or experiences, Addis struggled to find support from his friends. Not until the end of his first year back did he discover the Veterans and Family Student Association (VFSA).

Addis soon learned that many other veterans felt the same disconnection at the University of Oregon, so he fought to get the word out about the organization. He believed student veterans should unite to create a social and academic connection with one another. Addis' goal was to provide support to students like him, who had offered their lives to fight for the liberty that each United State's citizen cherishes. He knew that a close community of friends and

fellow veterans would enhance his academic experience, so he started as VFSA's Public Relations Coordinator, fighting for the organization's housing and funding.

"It's hard to be on campus without really knowing anyone or have someone to talk with that understands your experiences," Addis says. "I know lots of veterans on campus who do not have the support system that a person needs, and we can change that by just reaching out to them."

VFSA soon gained members, as it organized events such as Vet Awareness Week and spread news about the group. VFSA grew from 20-some people to more than 80 members. Now, Addis leads the association with his co-director, Amber Lippel, who helped him establish an extensive email list and set up the group's bi-weekly meetings. Addis and many of the veterans in VFSA also have participated in "Telling," a production put on by University of Oregon Theater Arts Department Head John Schmor, whose aim is to share the stories and experiences of community veterans and their families.

In addition to veterans, student parents also struggle. They have double the workload and double the responsibilities of traditional undergraduates. Their families are affected by both their academic and home lives. They may spend little time with their children, which causes growing tension between family members. Worrying about setting good examples for their kids is an added stress to tackling their heavy academic workloads.

Balancing academics with other responsibilities is challenging for most college students, but it's more difficult for parents, because the ways in which they handle their duties affect other people. Financial problems are

often worrisome for student parents; unlike military veterans, they usually have to pay their way through school. They often work harder than their younger, traditional-aged classmates, because they believe their grades will affect not only themselves, but also their children.

Thirty-three-year-old Emily Pearson is a single mom who has studied at the University of Oregon for almost two years, driving an hour to campus everyday from her home outside of Cottage Grove, Ore. Her four-year-old son, Ruben, is enrolled in full-time daycare, which allows her to work on the team projects and attend the group sessions required in order to complete her Educational Studies major.

Pearson earned her associate degree from Lane Community College after 12 years of on-and-off enrollment. After her divorce, she decided that the best way to support her son would be to go back to college for her bachelor's degree and eventually



ABOVE: Pearson and Ruben decided to live on a one-acre farm in Cottage Grove, Ore., where Ruben has room to play, as opposed to living in the university's confined family housing units.

become an elementary school teacher. Originally, she wanted to be a stay-at-home mother and school Ruben herself. But teaching became the most reasonable option, with its family-oriented ideals and vacation time. Her goals to become financially stable and to better provide for Ruben motivated her, but paying for her academic lifestyle became difficult.

Pearson currently lives off of grants and student loans and receives only \$200 per month in childcare. Each month, she divides her \$1,000 in student loans among rent,

food, gas, childcare and car maintenance. Resources for student parents are not clearly advertised on campus, which makes finding help difficult. Pearson works with the State Welfare Department to alleviate her financial problems, but the department lacks programs for people in her situation. Instead, it encourages them to take low-income jobs over attending school.

"Being a student and a parent is an exercise in how much guilt a person can take. I try to be everything my son needs, do everything I need to do as a student, take care of myself, and I am constantly failing at something," Pearson says. "I just try to keep from failing at all things at once."

Money isn't the only problem Pearson has encountered while attending the University of Oregon. In her first couple of courses, she felt scrutinized by her fellow students not because of her age, but because of her appearance. Sitting among the younger students who wore trendy clothes

and carried fashionable bags, Pearson was often ignored and dismissed during group discussions and activities. Later she realized that wearing common, popular clothing helped others feel more comfortable around her. While Pearson was happy she'd finally found a way to fit in with her peers, she was appalled by her classmates' scrutiny.

At home, she faces a different conflict. It resides in the delicate balance of studying and taking care of Ruben, who needs lots of attention from his mom. Pearson's solution is commuting to campus each day, working and studying before classes, while Ruben attends daycare. At night she is able to give him the attention he needs. On their one-acre farm, Pearson and Ruben

are able to raise cattle, but most importantly Ruben can run and play. Pearson chose to live on the farm instead of in the university's family housing units, because she felt that the school's accommodations were not safe for her growing son. Busy streets, cramped yards and dangerous playgrounds surround the university buildings.

Now, as a senior ready to graduate, Pearson has a positive outlook on the future: She plans on attending the University of Oregon Graduate School and earning her master's degree in elementary education.

Whether a parent, veteran or simply an outsider to the University of Oregon's traditional-aged students, the experiences shared by Pearson and Addis reflect the lives of many people. These people lead lives of bravery. They are heroes to everyone who knows them and to all who have heard their stories. Their motivations come from inner-strength — the main ingredient in achieving one's goals. **KD**

Addis believed student veterans should unite to create strong social and academic connections



RIDING

anew wave

A world-renowned innovator pioneers land-locked surfing

STORY CHRISTINA O'CONNOR • PHOTOS BENJAMIN BRAYFIELD



On mornings when the waves are good,

37-year-old barbershop owner Elijah Mack cruises down Highway 126 and heads toward the coastline in Florence, Oregon. "Those mornings are cold and lonely," he says. His deep-set eyes flicker with an innocent excitement when he talks about surfing. Before the sun comes up, Mack steals glances of the waves. But when he reaches the coast, he veers away from the ocean and travels inland. The waves he seeks aren't near the sandy shores of the beach; they're by the mossy banks of the river. Now, the riders in search of truly gnarly surf don't head to Hawaiian or Californian shores — these extreme surfers have taken to rivers.

"There's still this realm that's really untapped," Mack says as he discusses the adventure and obscurity linked to river surfing. Although the sport has been around for about 30 years, it remains relatively unknown to most parts of the world. But many surfers, including Mack, Eugene's river surfing legend, anticipate the coming popularity of the sport.

Unlike in the ocean, a river wave is formed in areas of the river where the water first gets deeper. The flow of the water responds to the change in depth and creates a whitewater wave. While an ocean wave moves along toward the shore, a river wave is stationary. It gives surfers the sensation of quick movement even though they don't ride down the river. This makes for some challenges: "The water just grinds on itself and creates this pit of whitewater that will shove you deep down into the river," Mack says. The ocean may have a more intense force, but the wrath of a river wave is continuous; after a wipe out, it could pin a surfer in its unrelenting flow. In addition, a river's freshwater is less buoyant than the ocean's saltwater, which makes it difficult to stay afloat.

On the other hand, the unceasing rush of a river wave means that a rider rarely faces a bad surf. In the summer, when big-wave riders on the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii are unhappy about the flat ocean at Waimea Bay, river surfers in Canada, Germany, and Idaho experience perfect conditions. "In the ocean, the water changes all the time," says Bjorn Lob, a German filmmaker and river surfer. "(But) the Eisbach Canal always has the same amount of water running through," he says of the popular Munich locale. In addition, river surfers enjoy longer rides than ocean surfers. Because a river's current is everlasting, surfers can carve and shred the stationary waves until their legs give out.

Years from now, if the sport takes off the way it's shaping up to, future generations of surfers will pay homage to the Isar River in Munich, Germany. "Munich is full of waves," Lob says. The sport originated in the inland and urban area of Munich, when first-ever river surfers Arthur and Alexander Pauli took their boards into fresh water in 1975. In the 1970s and 1980s, the only other river surfers resided in Wyoming and Hawaii, but now a surf culture is rising in Montreal, Canada. While just a handful of surfers lived in Montreal five years ago, an estimated 400 currently inhabit the city. Neil Egsgard and a few other river riders are at the center of a tight-knit community in Alberta, Canada. These surfing communities have come together and formed groups, including the World River Surfing Association (WRSA) and the Alberta River Surfing Association (ARSA). This type of growth is encouraging to Mack, who's the president of the WRSA.

Mack grew up in Oceanside, California and has been ocean surfing since he was eight years old. He says he "always tried to make (his) life around the ocean, wherever (he) went." He has spent time in San Francisco, Mexico, and on Oahu's North Shore. Mack's surf-obsessed lifestyle might have made his move to Eugene — two hours from the Pacific Ocean — very difficult if it weren't for Oregon's rivers.

He had long known about the sport after seeing photos of waves in Munich and Wyoming, but it wasn't until the 1990s when he stumbled across his first river wave in Chico, California. Mack surfed the break, and a couple of years later when he was hanging out at a bar in Phoenix, Arizona, a bartender told him about a local river wave. Finally, "it clicked in my mind. I said, 'You know what, I've seen this one in Wyoming, this one in Munich, this one I found in Chico, and now this one.'" Mack realized that these waves were everywhere, even in land-locked areas.

Mack and other river surfers have modified traditional surfboards to better withstand the rivers' conditions. Mack says there is a higher risk of nose-diving on rivers: "All the water is coming at you from an angle, and it creates a situation where pearling happens often." Boards that are shorter, wider, and thicker than regular surfboards provide extra flotation and ease while moving in the water. Mack uses a custom-made 5-foot-5-inch board, although a specially made river board is not always necessary in making the transition from ocean to river. Top surfers in Germany use regular-sized surfboards designed for the sea.

Still, a river wave must be approached differently than an ocean wave. In Munich, surfers hop into the Isar River waves much like skaters drop into half-pipes, jumping directly down into it from a wall against the bank. Sometimes surfers can float into a wave by paddling against the current and letting it pull them in, though rocks, branches, and other obstructions often defy this



PREVIOUS: Safari surf style. Pro surfer Gavin Sutherland flew from Hawaii to Africa to ride this over-head wave in Zambia on the Zambezi River. Photo by Deb Piningier. ABOVE: Elijah Mack prepares to descend the riverbank along the Siuslaw River. Mack's devotion to river surfing causes him to pull his car over if he drives past a surfable wave. TOP RIGHT: "The Tube Steak wave is the gnarliest stationary wave in the world," Mack says. "Every time you ride it, you have to be towed in and picked up by a rescue crew before you hit the whirlpools behind it. Those pools will kill you." Photo by Jordan Junck. BOTTOM RIGHT: Jean Louis St Arneault surfing the Skookumchuck main wave in the documentary, "In Memory of Victor Maher" created by Björn Richie Lob of Pipeline Pictures. Lob's passion for surfing continues in his ongoing documentary of the river surfing evolution. Photo by Björn Richie Lob

tactic. When people seek larger waves, surfers are often towed into the water by jet skis. At Skookumchuck Narrows in the Canadian Rapids, Mack says there is "a huge, raging current that's hundreds of feet deep and about a half mile wide, and the waves are 12-feet tall." He's one of the few surfers who has confronted the current. Giant whirlpools form behind the wave, and jet skis must quickly collect the surfers before they risk getting sucked in.

A 12-foot surge may sound insignificant to big-wave ocean surfers who have endured breaks twice the size, but river waves can be quite deceiving. "An 8-foot tall ocean wave isn't much. You need to get up to 20 feet to have it get really heavy," Mack says, but the Victoria Falls river wave in Africa is powerful at only 8 feet tall.

Perhaps these visual illusions account for the surf industry's rejection of the sport. Over the years, river surfing has received little media attention, despite the cultural explosion of extreme sports throughout the 1990s and 2000s. Photographs of river surfing in major surf magazines have been surprisingly scarce, and competitions have received little sponsorship and even less press coverage. As a result, few people know anything about river surfing. Just about anybody can picture Hawaii's Pipeline, with the break's swaying palm trees, soft sand and huge winter swells, but not many people can conjure up an image of the momentous river-break pipeline in Idaho.

According to Egsgard, river surfing lacks the romanticized image that draws so many people to ocean surfing. "It's not very glamorous. It's cold. There isn't a nice, sunny beach," he says. In Alberta, Canada, where Egsgard heads the ARSA, river surfing culture is not prevalent in daily life. He says some people have heard of the sport, but not many practice it regularly. Even in Eugene, a city hugged closely by the Willamette and McKenzie Rivers, the surfing scene consists primarily of Mack and his family. In Munich, the industry is more developed. During the summer, "(Munich) becomes like a little Hawaii in the center of the city," Lob says. "Everybody's in board shorts and bikinis." Crowds of people flock to the river to watch surfers and bask in big fields under the sun.

Although ocean surfing has now saturated popular culture, it once stood on the same obscure frontier that the river sport currently occupies. Throughout the early part of the 20th century, surfing was limited to a loose clique of adventurers who hung around on the shores of Waikiki Beach in Hawaii. "Surfing used to be underground," Mack says. "Until the late 1950s, it was an outcast sport." The same was once true for skateboarding and snowboarding. Twenty years ago, skateboarding was a little known activity, viewed merely as a surfer's solution to bad waves. Today, all three have moved off the fringes and into the heart of the mainstream. Professional skaters, surfers and boarders now grace the covers of ESPN Magazine and Sports Illustrated. Surf clothing brands such as Billabong and skate brands such as Volcom are fashionable for more than just the sports' participants.

For Mack and other river surfing pioneers, this frontier is an exciting place to stand. Often hailed as "The Godfather of River Surfing," Mack enjoys being a forerunner of a growing movement. "But I never think of myself as somebody who's special," he says with a quick smile. "I think of myself as a person who has slipped into a seam of time." Egsgard is also aware of the impact that he and other river surfers have on the sport. He and the ARSA are trying to establish a river surfing scene that's inclusive and welcoming. Egsgard is aware of the unpleasant localism that can develop in ocean surfing, when locals don't allow strangers to surf in "their" oceans, so he strives to make the river surfing community friendly and supportive.

A 12-foot wave may sound like nothing to a big-wave ocean surfer. After all, what's so challenging about a 12-foot wave when you can surf one twice the size? But those breaks in the river can often be deceiving as well as extremely dangerous.



The sport's obscurity has given rise to a culture separate from ocean surfing and other board sports. Mack believes that river riders have a certain passion that has faded for other board athletes, who lurk in the shadows of commercialism. "The people I know who are doing it — they love it," Mack says. "They don't want to get a Local Motion sticker ... and drive around with a surfboard on the top of their truck all day and never get in the water." The river surfers in Canada and Munich exemplify a strong dedication. Some parts of Canada are cold and have small waves, yet there remains a group of surfers so stoked to get in the river that nothing can deter them. "The Alberta guys want to go out there in the freezing snow and get in the water," Egsgard says with great admiration. River surfers in Germany have similar dedication: "The guys in Munich ... they're out there with lights at nighttime," Mack says. Void of any major media attention or sponsorship, "(river surfing) is fueled by something other than style and reputation, because nobody knows who you are, and nobody cares."

Ocean surfers today are often hell-bent to find a quiet wave break. But for river surfers, there are many waterways yet to be explored and breaks yet to be surfed. For Mack, hunting for new waves is just as exciting as surfing them. "I like to get up and drive two or three hours to find a wave," he says. Because the rivers aren't mapped out, surfers go to great lengths to discover good riding-water. Mack often drives alone down isolated roads or hikes through forgotten forests in pursuit of waves. River surfers get a lot of their leads from kayakers via word-of-mouth, and other times they simply follow rivers along the roads and hope for some good surf.

Mack anticipates the industry will take notice before long. He believes pictures of river surfers will show up in magazines, and soon people everywhere will flock to Munich, Montreal, Eugene, and any river they can find along the way. Rivers across the country may become just as crowded as any snowboarding slope, skate park, or ocean break.

Right now, river surfers have something that all ocean surfers seem to want: those desert-island mornings that Mack experiences every time he scans the waves at dawn. But the spread of river surfing would diminish that, creating an escalating commercial industry. Mack, although striving to promote the sport, is nervous about the prospect of commercialization. He finds much of the modern industries within surfing, skating, and snowboarding to be superficial; what first began as free-spirited adventures are now moneymaking enterprises.

Munich surfers are already beginning to experience some of the consequences of popularization. When Lob first started surfing more than a decade ago, surfers had a golden rule: if anybody with a camera shows up, get out of the water. With this rule, the sport wouldn't be exposed to the media and surfers could keep the waves to themselves. But as more and more people started to participate in river surfing, the rules began to relax. Now the Isar River is crowded with both surfers and spectators. "A lot of surfers are really angry about it," Lob says. As a result, localism has formed. Long-time surfers feel a sense of ownership toward the rivers, and they attempt to kick newcomers off of their territories. Lob disapproves of such actions and doesn't like what it's doing to the river surfing experience.

Although they may soon find themselves nostalgic for quieter times on the water, river surfing pioneers are excited about the growth of their sport. And despite any ambivalent feelings about commercialization, Mack, Egsgard, and Lob all support building artificial river-wave parks in their cities, which would help produce perfect waves in every river. Construction is in the planning stages in Canada and Germany. Mack and American Wave Machines, a company that builds artificial river waves for water parks, are pushing for a park in Eugene. So far, the city has allotted \$15,000

RIGHT: River surfing allows the surf culture to expand in areas where oceans are hours away. River waves are ubiquitous, and they're easily found with a map and a good knowledge of the water flow rate, measured in cubic feet per second (CFS). Between rides, surfers rest on rocks on the Clackamas river. On this day, the water looks heavenly.

for preliminary work. The safety and accessibility of the parks will help spread the popularity of the sport. "It's going to be really user-friendly, instead of having to go out and jump into something crazy (like an actual river)," Mack says.

Although the sport is changing and growing, no one is quite sure of its direction. River surfing could very well be the next big thing, just like Mack, Egsgard, and Lob predict. But nothing is certain yet. And maybe that doesn't matter. After all, "it's more than just getting on the wave," Mack says. "A lot of it is about getting to it. It's about the journey." KD



Finally, "it clicked in my mind. I said, 'You know what, I've seen this one in Wyoming, this one in Munich, this one found in Chico, and now this one.'" At that moment, Mack realized that these waves were everywhere.





ZOUZOU

MOULIN ROUGE

ILLUMINATED SIGN

City ^{The} of Lights

From boulevards to bakeries: A student-guided journey through the bustling district of Montmartre, Paris

STORYANDPHOTOS • MELISSAHOFFMAN



At first glance, the Parisian district of Montmartre is a tourist's nightmare. People crowd Rue de Steinkerque, spilling out of cafés and shops and onto the congested sidewalks. Walking up the street from the Métro station is a hazardous adventure — you barely have time to mutter “désolé” to one person before bumping into another. The most common grievance among tourists in Paris is pick pocketing. So you clutch your belongings close to your body and make your way through the mob. The noise is alarming. You hardly hear a trace of English, and the mixture of German, Spanish and French is hurried and incomprehensible. In the distance, the Sacré Cœur Basilica stands tall above the horizon.

You have a choice: You can fight your way up the street to the Square Louis Michel and tour the Sacré Cœur Basilica, stopping on the steps to take a picture with the broad landscape in the background — an undoubtedly positive experience — or you can experience the district like a true Parisian. Rather than fighting your way up the steps, you can make a left and discover the Montmartre that has charmed generations of painters, poets, and musicians alike.

To get to this hilly area, ride the Métro and get off at Anvers. Climb the steps from the station and take a long look around. You will see quintessential Paris: The long Boulevard Rochechouart is lined with reaching trees and towering lampposts, and various shops and cafés fill the sidewalks. Tourists and locals are seated at the small tables, cigarettes in hand, sipping espressos, while shiny red, blue and green awnings shade them from the sun. If you sense the quaint innocence that lingers over the boulevard, you've seen

past the modern tourist attraction to what has become Montmartre. Look beyond the neon signs advertising the seedy nightclubs and overt sex shops that populate the boulevard. Beyond the chain stores and the crowds, you will see the charming, historic district hidden deep within the heart of Paris.

“Every neighborhood of Paris has a different feel,” says Nikki Barnes, a 20-year-old student from Akron, Ohio, who moved to Paris in September. “It's more relaxed up in Montmartre. A long time ago, it was its own city, and it retains a unique charm — it's not like waking around in the Bastille, where everybody is just rushing around.”

The name Montmartre comes from the French words for “mountain of the martyr,” which refer to the martyrdom of Saint Denis, the famous first bishop of Paris, who was beheaded on the Montmartre hill in approximately A.D. 250. According to the legend, after his head was chopped off, Saint Denis picked it up and walked two miles, preaching the entire way.

At 130 meters above sea level, Montmartre is the highest natural point in Paris and is best known for the Roman Catholic church that stands on its summit: the Sacré Cœur, which means “sacred heart.” In 1876, the Sacré Cœur's construction began in honor of the 58,000 soldiers and civilians who died during the Franco-Prussian War. The basilica was not completed until 1914, mainly because it was difficult to lay the foundation on the surface of the hill. Weighing 21 tons, the bell tower on top of Sacré Cœur houses one of the world's heaviest bells. The church is a popular site for tourists, and is worth the visit if you've never been, but it's best to see on weekday mornings before the crowds arrive. If you

If you sense the quaint innocence that lingers over the boulevard, you've seen past the modern tourist attraction to what has become Montmartre



get to Montmartre before the visiting families and couples do, take the stairs straight through Place Louis Michel. Pause every so often to admire the scenery, to take some pictures, or simply to kiss your loved one. Each step offers a breathtaking view of the Parisian skyline.

If you don't want to climb the countless stairs to the basilica, the Funiculaire is a gondola-like tram that ascends and descends the hill between Rouchechouart and Rue du Cardinal Dubois every 10 minutes. Another option for getting up the hill is taking the Montmartrebus. The bus loops up, down, and around the village, stopping frequently. You'll see a good amount of Montmartre from the warmth of your seat. A third alternative to reach the basilica is riding Le Montmartrain, a tourist train that departs from La Place Pigalle every 45 minutes for guided tours, stopping at Sacré Cœur, Place du Tetre, and The Montmartre Cemetery.

But the cheapest and best way to see the area is to walk. The hike up the stairs can be refreshing, especially on a clear day, and the view is incredible. The basilica's steps are usually packed with locals and tourists who are eating, reading or strumming guitars. Sit and observe the numerous street performers. Watch the man whose painted face blends into his flowing white robe; he poses as a marble statue and bends to kiss the hand of any woman who offers him a coin. You'll notice local artists toting amplifiers and microphones up the steps, getting ready to perform songs by The Beatles, Louis Armstrong and Bob Marley.

You'll soon discover that exploring Montmartre is a personal experience. "I feel like it's its own city. It's up on the hill. Sometimes it's nice to get away from where you live. You can just look down on Paris," Barnes says. She advises first-time visitors to climb the stairs and admire the landscape from the basilica. "I think you have to at least walk up and look down on Paris, because it's really pretty. You don't have to go into Sacré Cœur, but go for the view," she says.

On sunny days, the sloping green grass in the center of the square invites you to relax on its terrain. If you plan on spending the day atop Montmartre, bring a blanket and a baguette sandwich or a crêpe from one of the street vendors. Arrive early. "In nice weather, French people take over every green space in Paris. The locals hang out on the grass at Montmartre," Barnes says. The Parisian skyline is a beautiful backdrop for a variety of activities, including picnicking, reading, chatting and throwing a Frisbee. To your right, the Eiffel Tower rises above the rooftops to greet you. This silhouette of Paris never looks the same on film: the way the light shines on the spire of Notre Dame, the shadowy rooftops that stretch in every direction, and the melding of the blue sky with the deep purple outline of the city's skyscrapers.

After your visit to Sacré Cœur, walk along Rue Tardieu and turn right onto any one of the various streets that run up the hill. Spend time in the charming shops that extend onto the cobblestone roads, their towers of postcards and paintings tactfully placed in the middle of the narrow sidewalks, alluring you to purchase a print of the Moulin Rouge or Notre Dame. The souvenir shops are overpriced, but bargains hide within the bins of discount purses and Eiffel-Tower-printed scarves; you might stumble upon a hand-woven piece of clothing or an original painting of the Paris lights. Wander in and out of the various book, tea, and trinket stores. If nothing else, remember to say "bonjour" and "merci" when entering and leaving a store. French people regard their language as a symbol of their country, and even attempting a few poorly spoken words will instantly boost a shopkeeper's attitude. Regardless of which shops you enter or which streets you wander, you'll travel into the past. Montmartre's slender roads are nearly all that remain of the original city of lights.

The 19th century was a time of grand renovation in Paris. Napoleon III and Baron Hausmann devised a plan to transform the medieval town of Paris into what people now call the "most beautiful city in Europe," which included destructing hundreds of centuries-old buildings in order to create modern, uniform structures, sprawling boulevards, and the infamous tree-lined sidewalks. This plan included redistributing Paris' central land to financially influential people and supporters of the project, which pushed the then-inhabitants to the outskirts of the city. Even today, Paris' ritzy



PREVIOUS: Montmartre is home to the red-light district of Pigalle, which boasts entertainment such as cabaret shows at the world-renowned Moulin Rouge. Pigalle is dotted with dozens of seedy sex shops and notorious nightclubs, and is popular with tourists and locals alike for its sensational nightlife. OPPOSITE: The steps of the Sacré Cœur Basilica are a popular gathering place for tourists and locals alike. Perched on the landing, guitarists encourage audience participation in songs from The Beatles, Maroon 5, and Bob Marley. TOP: The Montmartre Train makes stops at all of the major sights in Montmartre and is a picturesque way to see the village in the afternoon. Hop on near Place du Tetre to take the complete tour. MIDDLE: While sometimes bombarded with throngs of tourists, no trip to the city of lights is complete without a visit to the artistic heart of Paris, which boasts many famous former residents such as Salvador Dali, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, and Vincent Van Gogh. BOTTOM: The Montmartre Cemetery, one of the largest burial grounds in Paris, is the final resting place for many artists who lived and worked in the area.



ABOVE: This large square in the middle of Place du Tetre is a longstanding bohemian hub, where artists flock to to sell their work. For a mere 20 euro and 20 minutes, one can have his or her face memorialized by any number of willing portrait artists.

districts are located at the city's center and its lower class, artsy neighborhoods are found on the border. In the 19th century, when Montmartre was located on the outskirts of what was then Paris, it quickly became a popular drinking area. Many artists, such as Salvador Dali, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh, worked in Montmartre throughout this time period, transforming the rural village into the bohemian epicenter that resonates today. Cabarets such as the Moulin Rouge and Le Chat Noir were established during this time of free-spirited expansion.

Today, the Place du Tetre will allow you a glimpse into the glory days of Picasso, Monet and Van Gogh. Every day, hundreds of artists gather in this tiny square with their beautiful hand-painted landscapes of all sizes. For an average of 20 euros, you can have your portrait drawn in about 15 minutes. If art isn't your thing, or if you're on a budget, settle into an outdoor table at Au Clairon des Chasseurs, a café ranked highly among some tourists. If it's a cold day, large heaters will be set up under the red awnings next to each table, making for a cozy ambiance. If this is your first time in Montmartre, order an espresso and a crêpe with Nutella. When the waiter brings you a doll-sized cup of espresso and a beautiful crêpe smeared with chocolate and fried to perfection, do like the French: Relax and enjoy your meal. Slowly sip your coffee while keeping an eye on the scene that unfolds in front of you. Survey the people strolling through the square and observe the artists interacting with their customers. People-watching is a long-standing pastime in Paris, and if you partake in it, you will instantly blend into the culture. The waiters at Au Clairon des Chasseurs are friendly and used to tourists, and they let you sit

Do like the French: Relax and enjoy your meal

for hours after purchasing only one drink; no one pressures you to leave. If you have some reading to catch up on, bring it with you. There's nothing better than spending the morning with a novel and an espresso.

Among Barnes' favorite things to see atop Montmartre, she says the cemetery is one of the district's highlights. The famous Montmartre Cemetery is the final resting place of handfuls of noteworthy artists, actors, singers and composers, most of whom lived and worked in the area surrounding Montmartre. In the graveyard rests

Edgar Degas, Gustave Moreau, Alexandre Dumas and many others. In the early 1800s, cemeteries were banned from Paris after officials labeled them health hazards. Montmartre, then outside of the city limits, became home to one of Paris' four replacement graveyards. It was built below street-level in the hollow of an old quarry, and descending the steps and into the cemetery can feel like traveling back in time. The burial ground epitomizes early 19th-century Montmartre: whimsical, artsy and romantic. Studying the weather-beaten headstones yields an enlightening experience; Barnes finds something new to admire each time she visits. "They have so many feral cats running around in the cemetery. And they just lay on top of the mausoleums, so they're up really high." Set aside the better part of an afternoon to see the cemetery — it's the biggest one in the city.

For history buffs, there are many museums to visit while exploring the area. Nestled behind the Place du Tetre is a little-known yet captivating exhibition devoted to Salvador Dali, a renowned Surrealist painter who lived and worked in Montmartre for some time. Justin Cantoni, a 23-year-old American tourist,



ABOVE: The Parisian skyline. Many tourists come to Montmartre to climb the steps that lead to the 19th-century Sacré-Cœur Basilica and look out at the city. A favorite activity is stopping on the stairs and taking pictures with the broad landscape in the background.

visited Montmartre solely to see the Espace Dali. "It's the artsy district. I went (to Montmartre) because of the Dali Museum. And after, we just ended up walking around the city all day," he says.

Another interesting museum is the Museum of Montmartre, dedicated to the history and culture of the area, from its artistic heritage to its furnishings. The museum is located in the tall stone house where painter Maurice Utrillo lived and worked. The mansion is in the garden, near the back of the property, and is the oldest house in Montmartre. The first documented owner, Claude Roze, bought it in 1680, and it later belonged to Impressionist painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir. From the street, the museum looks like any other residence in Montmartre: ivy clings to the iron balconies that overlook the street, and the picturesque green shutters welcome visitors. But after entering the museum's shop and shuffling into the courtyard, the beauty of the walled garden enchants you. The ancient charm of Montmartre is overwhelming. As you learn about the founders and the history of the quaint village you're exploring, allow yourself to travel back in time, back to the years in which the museum was a working mansion on the outskirts of Paris.

The critically acclaimed French movie "Amélie" is set in a fictionalized version of Montmartre's mountaintop village. Visit Le Café des Deux Moulins, where the main character works in the film, located at 15 Rue Lepic. The grocery store (Maison Collignon) and the theatre (Studio 28 Cinema) featured in the movie are nearby.

If you stay in Montmartre for the night, numerous hotels are open near the summit, but use caution when booking via phone

or Internet. Check the location of your hotel or hostel before confirming, because you'll want to stay away from the red-light district of Pigalle, as it is less than tourist-friendly. As night falls, the red-light district wakes up. Neon lights flash upon sketchy figures of drug dealers and prostitutes congregating on the corners of rancid-smelling intersections. If you venture out into the invigorating Parisian nightlife that's away from the red-light neighborhood, either hit the clubs or see a movie. Purchase tickets to the Moulin Rouge in advance, as seats fill up quickly for this famous show.

"Parisians from other districts of Paris often go to Montmartre to party," says Ida Driscoll, an ex-patriot who has lived in Paris for seven years. "There are some major nightclubs and bars

Montmartre will welcome you to wander her hills and explore her streets.

up there, like La Loco, Le Divan du Monde, and Elysée Montmartre." Nightclubs are everywhere, and their cover charges are ridiculously expensive. Some clubs waive the cover if you eat at their restaurant beforehand, but most charge 15 to 20 euro to get in and another 2 to 3 euro for a coat check. If you party through the night and into the morning, you'll miss the last Métro. But the system resumes at 5:30 a.m., so you can join the crowds of locals either heading home, wearing their party clothes, or shuffling to work in their suits.

Whether you have a few hours or a few days to spend in Montmartre, you'll realize that the district is a precious needle hidden in a proverbial haystack. Bring a camera, a loved one, or a good book, but plan on staying awhile. Montmartre will welcome you to wander her hills and explore her streets. Be prepared, for she will not easily relinquish its hold upon you. **KD**



A red brick wall with a window and a light fixture. The wall is painted red, and the bricks are outlined in white. A window with a yellow frame is on the right side, and a light fixture is in the top left corner. The text is overlaid on the wall.

Alternative
Transportation:

Fixed on Fixies

Extreme-sports enthusiasts
take to Eugene on the hottest
breed of bicycle

STORYMATTNICHOLSON • PHOTOSDAVEMATRINEZ



“As soon as you are out, go get another beer. It makes it all better!” yells Luke DeMoe as the group of twenty-some riders circle each other like sharks. They dress mostly in American Apparel hoodies and jeans with one pant leg rolled up. As they ride past their opponents, they swipe at their handlebars in an attempt to throw them to the ground. They call this the “foot-down” competition, in which touching a foot to the concrete constitutes disqualification. The contest is part of Eugene’s first fixed-gear bike rally, organized by local bike shop manager DeMoe. Riding a stripped-down, modified professional road bike, DeMoe glides past an unsuspecting rider and grabs his handlebars, yanking them hard to the right and sending the rider tumbling. Gradually the crowd thins, leaving DeMoe and fellow rider Steve Hauck in a face-off. After circling each other, Hauck tangles up with DeMoe and hurls him to the pavement. The crowd cheers. Hauck pumps his fist in the air in triumph, while DeMoe gives his bike a comical kick that sends it airborne. Almost 40 riders attend this first-ever fixed-gear bike gathering in Eugene, which includes a skid competition, a trick contest, and complimentary Papst Blue Ribbon.

Just as fixed-gear riders don’t make up an average group of bikers, they don’t ride an average type of bike. Specifically, bikes that can’t coast and don’t have brakes. To a common, sane-minded person, a fixed-gear bike may sound like a death trap on wheels. But for a growing number of adrenaline-seeking riders looking to take their daily commute to the next level, fixed-gear bikes are a fun new challenge. Originally used by competitive cyclists to test their speeds and endurance, fixed-gear bikes, or fixies, have migrated from the track to the street, generating acclaim among riders in regions throughout the U.S., mainly in the Northwest. Fixies are particularly popular at the University of Oregon, where more and more students are jumping on for the ride.

A fixed-gear bike is unique because it has only a single speed and a locked rear hub, which means it cannot coast; whenever the bike is moving, so are the pedals. To stop, a rider shifts his or her weight forward over the front wheel and applies backward force on the turning pedals. By backpedaling, the rider freezes the pedal’s rotation, causing the rear tire to lock and skid, slowing the bike to a halt. Some fixed-gear bikes have a front brake, but because riders’ legs act as braking mechanisms, many fixie enthusiasts consider them unnecessary. For this reason, several states have deemed fixed-gear bikes illegal for road use. DeMoe says the lack of brakes makes riders more alert. “You know that you don’t have brakes, so you’re going to be more aware of your surroundings and of traffic, to anticipate what a car is potentially going to do,” he says. “People with coasting bikes will just coast through and rely on their brakes, and assume that if anything does happen they’re going to be able to slow down.”

So why do riders subject themselves to a mode of transportation so seemingly impractical and dangerous? Fixie riders acknowledge that their risky hobby isn’t for everyone. “It’s a whole different style of riding that takes a different breed of person to ride,” says University of Oregon student Ross Sherbak. “They’re going to be a little more outgoing, more on the edge.” But DeMoe admits that riding without brakes is the only thing that makes fixed-gears more dangerous than conventional bikes. “There really isn’t any rhyme or reason to not have a brake on a bike,” he says. “(But) a fixed gear with brakes? There’s no dangers to it.”

DeMoe says the bikes’ roots in track racing heavily influence the fixed-gear culture’s attraction to danger and thrill seeking. He

TOP: Luke Raleigh, a veteran employee at Colin’s Bike Shop, is involved with organizing many of the fixed-gear bike events around Eugene. The fixed-gear trend has created a community of its own, as many of the local riders keep in touch through online blogs. The counterculture of fixed-gear bikes has attracted a distinct crowd. BOTTOM: Andrew Bennett holds his place during the track-stand contest. A freshman from South Eugene High School, Bennett built his first fixed-gear bike in 7th grade. He’s been racing for Collin’s Bike Shop since he was 15 years old.



ABOVE: Sean Watters has a multitude of tricks he uses to impress fellow riders. Bar spins, tire grabs, and supermans have become routine for the rider. Watters' bike is a creation of his own. Many riders customize their bikes to reflect their personalities. From wheels to handlebars, the most dedicated fixed-gear riders leave very little of their bike untouched.



ABOVE: Knowing a group of people with the same interest in bikes is one benefit of the fixie culture. Each bike has its individual style, and people within the group are always supportive of new ideas. Being able to convert any bike into a fixed-gear has catalyzed the do-it-yourself trend. The counterculture linked to fixed-gear bikes has attracted a distinct crowd.

says bicycle messengers were the first people to bring the bikes from the racing track to the street, as the messengers wanted fast, efficient and reliable transportation for their routes.

The fixed-gear model's simplicity makes the bikes more efficient than conventional ones, and with only one gear and no shifters, they rarely brake down. Originally, bike messengers were more interested in speed and efficiency than in safety issues such as stopping.

But DeMoe says "the biggest influence (on fixed gear bikers) is the 'screw you' attitude: We don't need gears; we don't need brakes." This mind-set has made a strong connection with young bicycle enthusiasts at the university who are looking for new adrenaline thrills and want to stand out from the traditional cycling crowd.

For these adventurous riders, the danger is part of the allure. "It's like living on the edge," says university senior Kevin Kaufman, who custom-built his fixie and uses it to commute to class. Adding to the trend's edginess is its dress code, which tends to shun helmets. "It'd be smart to wear a helmet," says Kaufman, "but it's part of the fixed-gear culture (not to)." Kaufman's roommate and fellow fixie rider Miles Davenport says fixed-gear bikers avoid wearing helmets because they want to seem macho. "It's like if you wear a helmet you're saying you're scared," he says. Regardless, Davenport decided to start wearing a helmet after he was hit by a car on campus last year. He separated a shoulder and injured a wrist, but he felt lucky to walk away from the accident mostly intact. "I didn't (wear a helmet) before I got hit by a car, and I was like 'wow, I'm lucky to be alive right now.'"

Despite the risks, or perhaps because of them, the campus' fixie population continues to grow, changing and developing with the styles of new riders. The individuality of each bike has

The bike's roots in track racing heavily influence the fixed-gear culture's attraction to danger and thrill seeking

propelled the fixed-gear culture's popularity. Many riders build their bikes from the frame up, choosing different parts and accessories that make them unique to their personalities and styles. Kaufman, Davenport, and their roommate Chris Buehler took this approach, and now each of

their bikes has a unique style of handlebars. Many riders also customize their creations by changing the colors of handlebar grips, tires and chains. DeMoe says lots of people modify their bike's accessories every month, simply to give them new character. "People aren't even wearing parts out," DeMoe says. "They're coming in and just replacing them with something fresh and new, just to have a different personality or a different flavor to the bike." Many riders repaint their entire bikes to achieve a new look. "I've never seen more people paint their bicycles on their own than in the fixed-gear culture," DeMoe says. "It's a way to differentiate themselves from other fixed-gears."

Though each bike is an individual creation, fixie riders find inspiration in fellow riders and borrow ideas from one another. "Everybody is so interested in what everyone else has on their bike, that it kind of brings those social circles together," DeMoe says. "You'll ride by a fixed-gear that's parked, and you'll stop and look at every little piece on it. And you're not judging it, you're just seeing what that person has and if there's any ideas that you want to take."

Kaufman says he was initially attracted to the fixed-gear culture for its social characteristics; riding fixies was something to do at night with his friends. "The only reason I got one was because all my friends had one," Kaufman says. "Getting started, I didn't know that much about it, but people brought me into it." DeMoe says camaraderie is the foundation for the culture's social atmosphere. The individuality, exclusivity and danger of fixie riding make members feel as though they are connected to one another. "Fixed-gears let you feel like you're a part of something," DeMoe says. "People feel like if you're part of that culture, there's some characteristic about you that they're going to like." The sport's camaraderie draws newcomers to the fixed-gear culture.

The low cost of building fixed-gear bicycles makes the trend accessible to a wide array of riders. While there may be a sense of exclusivity in regard to the sport's danger, DeMoe says there is not the kind of economic exclusion that is often present in other sports, such as road biking. "There's no reason for it to be intimidating to any one group," he says. "Sometimes you show up on a road-bike ride, and you've got a \$600 bike, and another guy's got a \$6,000 bike, and that's fairly intimidating. Rarely ever do we see a (fixed-gear) bike that's more than \$500 or \$600 ... so there's not that intimidation factor."

Beyond customization, the unique mechanics of fixed gears lend themselves to an assortment of tricks, which offers riders another outlet to showcase their personal styles and flair. Skidding, while it is the only way to stop the bikes, is the basis for many fixie tricks. By transferring a considerable amount of weight from the back wheel to the front while skidding, a rider can glide for hundreds of feet.

Another common trick is the wheelie, which essentially turns the bike into a unicycle while its chain directly drives the back wheel. By adjusting the power applied to the pedals, a person can balance while riding on one wheel. Bar spins, which entail spinning the handlebars and front wheel of the bike, are possible on fixies because the bikes don't have brake cables that would normally get in the way. By mixing these maneuvers, riders can create hundreds of combination tricks, adding yet another dimension to the individuality of fixed-gear biking.

Under a rare gap of blue sky that postpones intrusive thunderclouds, a mob of fixie riders gathers in Autzen Stadium's expansive parking lot for the skid-competition portion of the day's events. Clustered together with the riders, a broad spectrum of colored frames and rims creates a kaleidoscope of brilliant metal, strewn across the football stadium's parking lot. Three at a time, bikers race through the lot in order to gain maximum momentum, then lock their pedals as they fly past the orange starting line where they initiate their skids. A small crowd of on-looking riders cheers them on. Leaning far over the front handlebars, the riders glide across the expansive parking lot. With their rear wheels locked and motionless, they appear to glide effortlessly across the blacktop as if it were an ice-covered pond. The winning skid lasts nearly an entire minute and is over 150 meters long. Only one crash ensued: a rider lost control of his rear wheel during his skid, and his bike weaved radically before throwing him hard to the ground. The crash earned him a pair of sizeable road-rashes up his forearms, and the crowd applauded his battle wounds as loudly as they did the winning skid.

At the end of the day, DeMoe is enthusiastic about the event's showing. "I think it went well; no trips to the hospital. I would say it was a success," he says, though jokingly he avoids taking responsibility as the event's organizer. He is, however, excited for what the competition means for Eugene's fixed-gear culture. "This definitely unified fixed-gears for the first time ever in Eugene," he says, "and I would love to take credit for that." **KD**

TOP: Sean Watters has been riding his bike for only two years. He stumbled upon the fixed-gear community when his previous bike was stolen. Once he started riding a fixed-gear bike, he fell in love with the trend.

BOTTOM: Nick Bernard likes fixed-gear bikes because they are self-sufficient. Spending one year on a fixie, Bernard has personalized his bike many times. Personalization is common in fixie owners, as some buy new accessories each month.





Rythmic Connections

West African music and dance come to Eugene for a unique ensemble

When you drive by the Harmony Roadhouse Music Studio on Wilamette Street, you don't notice the old, light-green house with covered windows amidst all the concrete and commercial buildings. Walking by on a Monday night though, you'll hear the sounds of African drums emanating from its walls.

Inside the house, nine people sit on the metal folding chairs that form a tight circle. The polyrhythmic sounds of Guinean music ring from their drums. Most of the players use their hands, but one woman stands and uses sticks to beat on three different sized drums. Leading the group is Alsene Yansane, master drummer and dancer from Guinea, West Africa. It's easy to spot him amongst the students. His dark skin, bright orange t-shirt and camouflage-print pants stand out. His short dreads sway with his head as it bobs gently to the music. His wife of three years, Andrea DiPalma, plays alongside him.

Yansane has been participating in Guinea's music and dance tradition since

he was a young boy. National competitions were held in his childhood neighborhood located in downtown Conakry. After he became frustrated with traditional school, he used his skills as a drummer and dancer to become a professional artist. His 14 years of performing with Ballets Africains, one of the most prestigious national groups of Guinea, brought his skills to a new level, enabling him to leave his country in order to teach and perform in Eugene.

African music has no written history and is traditionally taught through spoken language. For this reason, researchers must depend on archaeological findings and testimony from Africans for most background information on the subject. But because music and dance are such huge parts of African culture, kids start experimenting and practicing at early ages. DiPalma translates for Yansane, who speaks to her in Susu, Guinea's national language: "We had these large tomato-paste cans that we would flip over and play," he says. "That's how a lot of

people got started." Yansane explains how children would mimic the adult competitions: "The kids would get together and play, and the girls would come and dance,

It's very grass-rooty compared to the formal teaching in the U.S.

and vice versa." If a child shows a particular aptitude for an art, they will usually begin training in that area. "There's a very, very entrenched tutor and tutee situation," Yansane says. "It's like master and apprentice."

"It's very grass-rooty compared to the formal teaching in the U.S.," DiPalma adds. As children become more serious about playing and performing instruments or dances, they often go on to join performance groups in their neighborhoods. Instructors at the University of Oregon carry on this

tradition of African drumming and dance. Brian West teaches two classes in the University of Oregon's Gerlinger Annex, where groups of students circle around him with their drums. "Remember," he reminds them, "this is an aurally taught tradition, so we don't need to use our books." The advanced drumming class plays along with West, some students mimicking the beat he makes and others adding separate ones to create a polyrhythmic sound. He teaches a beat the same way Yansane does: imitating it with his voice. "Bom bitty bom-bom. Bom bitty bom-bom." The drummers follow along by creating the same beat with their hands.

African music incorporates two types of percussive instruments. The first is an idiophone, which creates music from real-world sounds such as hands clapping, sticks stamping on the ground, bells jingling or sea shells shaking on a gourd. The other is a drum, also known as a membranophone, which is played with the hands, sticks and bundles of cornstalks that create whispering sounds. Each of these instruments comes in many varieties. In different regions of Africa, other devices are used to add to the musical sounds. These include string instruments such as bows or harps, and wind instruments such as flutes or horns.

The dũndũn and the djembe are the two most popular drums used in West Africa and derive from Manding culture. The djembe is said to contain three spirits: the spirit of the tree, the spirit of the animal from which the drum is made, and the spirit of the instrument maker. It is one of the most commonly used drums in drum circles and has even made its way into popular American music, such as in Ben Harper's "Burn One Down." The dũndũn comes in three different sizes, and three sounds work together to form one smooth baseline with multiple beats. The mix of the dũndũn's baseline with the djembe guides the dancers' rhythmic movements. The relationships between drummers and dancers are so interactive that sometimes it's hard to tell who is leading whom.

Dance and music are so closely tied together in African culture that some languages don't have a word for each separate entity. Rhythm drives both the beat of the music and the movement of the dancers. Rita Honka has been teaching at the University of Oregon since 1994 as a dancer and choreographer in modern and African dance, and she says African music and dance work together as a partnership. "They're so symbiotic, you just can't separate them," she says. "It's bigger than the two parts. One plus one equals three. The music, the dance and the whole entity."

Until recently, African music was used only for practical means; it was not just an art. Everyone in African communities sings at events such as births, weddings, funerals

and rites of passage. For this reason, most people in these regions are expected to be able to perform music and dance at a basic level. "Guinea is so very rich in dance and music, it's not separate from their lives at all," DiPalma says. "Their lives, when they're not sleeping, are really focused around art."

But now African music and dance are sometimes used inside and outside of the communities to put on performances. "Sometimes there are shows," DiPalma explains, "but it's kind of like even when they're doing their own thing in the neighborhood or at home in the compound, there's a little show in all of it." Some countries have a national group of musicians

and dancers who perform both nationally and internationally, showcasing cultural traditions and talents. In this same way, the Ballets Africains allowed Yansane to perform Guinea's traditions across the globe. He came to the U.S. in February 2007 for a chance to make a living from his talents. "In Guinea, there's just not the option to make money. You (teach arts) for the good and benefit of the community," DiPalma says.

"The reason I do it is because I was given a gift from God, and I believe that I should share it," Yansane says. "If you have something to share, it would be a damn shame to die without passing it on. It would be like robbing humanity." -Simone Nash-Pronold

OPPOSITE: African drumming instructor Brian West (far left) leads a group of students in Gerlinger Annex, where they take turns playing solos. BELOW: Alseny Yansane plays with John Elliott and Brishan Thomas, who have studied in Guinea and have been drumming with Alseny since February 2007.



A Nurturing Brew

Wandering Goat Organic Coffee Roasters supports worldwide coffee farmers

On Madison Street in Eugene's Whitaker neighborhood, the bitter, earthy aroma of coffee hangs in the air at Wandering Goat Organic Coffee Roasters. Inside the café, the narrow room is filled with black tables and chairs, a couch in the back corner, and local art adorning the red and yellow walls. It's a coffee shop with a relaxing wine-bar feel, and good-quality coffee is its focal point. The owners and staff at Wandering Goat are dedicated to excellence, sustainability and fair trade beans.

Michael Nixon started Wandering Goat with his partner Heather Jones Nixon in 2004. They owned a roasting business before opening the coffee shop in the same building in December 2006. Today, the staff has grown to include a café manager, a wholesale manager, an office manager, coffee trainers and about 15 baristas. Wandering Goat now roasts beans for 30 businesses and 30 home roasters in the Eugene area. The Nixons and barista Jeff Rowls spent four years roasting and learning about coffee before they opened the shop. They perfected each roast and developed roasting profiles, which serve as guides for monitoring heat, temperature and air flow throughout the process. Roasting is a vital step in developing the beans' unique flavors and qualities, as excellent coffee reflects the roaster, the importer, and most importantly, the coffee farmers.

Nixon works closely with small coffee importers such as Elan Organics and Holland's Coffee. Wandering Goat's coffees originate from Guatemala, Columbia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Bolivia, Kenya, Sumatra and Peru. Nixon and his staff constantly communicate with their importers, who travel to the coffee farms, grow crops and maintain suitable conditions for coffee plants. Mega importers buy coffee from auctions, while small importers work and communicate with farmers on site. "That's how we choose our importers. They're ones who are open enough and small enough to have that communication," Nixon says. "We can tap into that without having to be on the grounds ourselves."

Millions of people around the world work in the coffee industry. Before reaching a consumer's cup, coffee beans travel from the farmers to the importer and then to the roaster — and each hand wants a fair share in the profit. Unfortunately, the coffee farmers receive the least, earning much less than it costs to produce the beans. Fair trade organizations work to ensure that these



ABOVE: After the coffee beans are done roasting, they're dropped into a bin that is built into the roaster. They are churned and examined briefly, then they're emptied into large buckets and labeled.

farmers get paid a reasonable amount for their beans. Still, fair trade coffee makes up less than one percent of the entire industry. "There's more fair trade coffee produced than people are buying," Nixon says. "It's just a matter of time for people to start realizing that fair trade is out there."

A number of agencies and programs aid the fair trade movement. One of the largest and most well known is Fair Trade Labeling and Organizing (FLO), which comprises a collection of groups throughout the world.

FLO emerged when coffee's market price fell far below the cost of production. At this time, farmers were getting paid less than the amount it cost to make the coffee, and they struggled to rise from poverty. FLO was implemented to fix this imbalance in the market. The organization helped to ensure that coffee beans met fair trade standards, so farmers could make enough money to feed their families and maintain their farms.

Utz Kapeh, Rainforest Allegiance and the Fair Trade Federation are other fair



ABOVE: Owner Michael Nixon checks a sample of beans during the roasting process. The beans, he says, start out smelling grainy, then they begin to smell like fresh bread. Finally, near the end of the process, they acquire their "roasted coffee" smell.

trade programs. Like FLO, these groups hold themselves to high standards in their social, economical and sustainable practices. They work directly with coffee farmers and co-ops to build strong relationships with importers, roasters and consumers. "That's our job as a company. To make sure our coffee's getting sourced the right way," Nixon says.

Fair trade coffee farms are small, usually about five acres. Each plant produces about one pound of coffee. Farms must have suitable land, water and soil in order

That could be a whole farm in a bag

to create quality beans. The process begins when a farmer picks a few shining, red coffee cherries at their maximum ripeness and removes their outer coverings, soaking them or drying them in the sun. After the farmer peels off their hard skins, the raw, green coffee beans reveal themselves. The farmer polishes and dries the beans before they go to the co-op, importer and roaster.

A co-op, formally known as a cooperative, is a member-owned establishment in which a collection of farmers prepares beans for importing. The co-ops' mills are often too expensive for individual coffee farmers to maintain, so they go in on the co-ops

together. Ultimately, this step in the fair trade process contributes to more money and higher quality of lives for everyone in the agricultural industry.

Despite its benefits, fair trade isn't a perfect system. In order to receive money, coffee farmers must be members of certified co-ops. This can be difficult, depending on farmers' and co-ops' locations. Coffee growers who have acres of suitable soil and coffee plants but don't have access to co-ops can't be certified for fair trade. But Nixon says many farms that do not meet fair trade standards still grow quality coffee

plants. "I've heard people say, 'If it's not fair trade, it's horrible,' and that's just not the case. There are exceptions to that rule."

Every week, Nixon and his staff roast 1,200 to 1,600 pounds of coffee. The burlap sacks hold about 150 pounds of raw, grayish-green beans. "It really makes you think about it," Nixon says. "That could be a whole farm in a bag." They pay special attention to roast the beans perfectly, bringing out the unique aspects of each blend. Wandering Goat's baristas won't serve an espresso or a cup of coffee that isn't just right. "That's the ultimate disservice to the farmers," Nixon says. "Have

a farmer work all year long, growing this tree to produce one little tiny pound of coffee, and then have us roast it bad, or serve it bad, or have it taste bad. To really show the consumer the end value of coffee, it has to taste awesome."

Wandering Goat does not flaunt its certifications; the coffee is its sole focus. Nixon and his staff want customers to walk in their door without knowing anything about organic beans or fair trade. They hope people can taste the value in their coffee. "It's not sitting on the burner or (available for) free refills at the gas station. It's like, 'wow, this is an amazing culinary experience,'" Nixon says. "It can be such a little refuge in the day to have this amazing coffee."

Wandering Goat's dedication to sustainability and excellence doesn't apply only to its beans. The building operates on 100 percent wind energy. Additionally, the company reduces its waste by buying reusable, recyclable napkins, bags, straws, cups, office paper and cleaning supplies. Even its roasting machine, the Loring SmartRoaster, is the most efficient in the world, according to Nixon. "It's about quality and sustainability, and that applies to every business decision or coffee decision," he says. "Ultimately, if you don't have sustainability, it's not real quality. It's not lasting." - Amy Purcell

A Modern Martial Art

The University of Oregon Wushu Club mixes Chinese culture with self-expression

With their arms stretched at right angles with their torsos, hands akimbo, four members of the University of Oregon's Wushu Club set up in their beginning stances. In unison, they lunge across the cramped room, first chopping the air in straight motions then spinning quickly. They pause just long enough to reveal the shapes of their airborne bodies. Their hands, feet, arms and legs are angled unnaturally, outlining their carefully choreographed forms. Smooth, sweeping motions are accentuated by sharp, quick punches, and the sound of their hands slapping against their feet punctuates their spinning leaps high off the ground. This is wushu.

Though the term may not be familiar to most people, the graceful, vigorous sport likely is. Jet Li films and other popular movies such as "The Matrix" and "Crouching

Tiger, Hidden Dragon" demonstrate moves taken from the contemporary Chinese sport. "People just don't know it's wushu and call it karate," says Nelson Leung, the University of Oregon Wushu Club's coordinator. Wushu means "martial arts" in Chinese, but since the sport's origins as a military skill in the mid-20th century, it has encompassed art, Chinese philosophy and bodily concentration. Wushu enthusiasts believe the sport slows the process of aging; they say it's the "practice of keeping one's mind and body agile forever."

When the Chinese government officially established "modern wushu" in 1949, it nationalized the sport and created official types of competitive wushu through countrywide committees. The government wanted to maintain its cultural tradition of martial arts while removing its emphasis on combat. As a result, wushu evolved into

the practice of intricate forms and martial-arts movements, and it quickly gained international popularity.

Sue Ann Ooi, University of Oregon senior and Wushu Club coach, says many people seek participation as a fun way to stay in shape. The martial art is rigorous, and the team's practices include lots of

Beauty distinguishes it from other forms of kung fu

physical conditioning. But its intense bodily aspect is only the beginning of its appeal. The spiritual emphasis on developing self-control and character brings wushu from mere exercise to personal discipline. "You really have to know yourself, your spirit,

BELOW: Wushu is a full-contact sport derived from Chinese martial arts. Four students demonstrate forms and sparring, which blend gymnastics, Chinese boxing and other Chinese grappling techniques. OPPOSITE: Members of the University of Oregon Wushu Club demonstrate traditional battle in Hendricks Park. From left: Nathan Andrus-Hughes, Nelson Leung, Thuy-Linh Le and Byron Chang lead the Wushu team in tournaments and demonstrations.



PHOTOS BY BENJAMIN BRAYFIELD

your heart and your body," says second-year club member Colin Cook. "It is a way of self-discovery and self-cultivation. It is one of the ways that I express myself."

Culture is part of self-expression for some members of the club. "I am Chinese also," Leung says. "Since I was little, the reason I wanted to do (wushu) was to be more in touch with my culture."

For Cook, a sophomore majoring in Chinese and Spanish, wushu brings about a greater interest in Chinese culture and philosophy. Eventually he plans to visit the country to study Chinese and practice the sport. "Wushu completes a circle of things in my life that interest me and make up who I am," he says. In high school, Cook studied taekwon do because of its force and effectiveness, but wushu's emphasis on form over fighting drew him to the modern martial art. "The beauty of the movements, the coordination, the power, the speed, the grace, all combined into one, is really enthralling," Cook says. As an art form more than a martial skill, beauty distinguishes wushu from many types of kung fu. At

the University of Oregon, even the fighting is choreographed, highlighting the beauty of the movements and shapes.

There are at least seven divisions of competitive wushu, ranging from Long Fist, or "Chang Quan" in Chinese, to imitation, a style in which movements are meant to mimic live objects such as eagles and snakes. Long Fist, the primary and most basic style, is highly standardized and full of sweeping, graceful motions. All beginners start with Long Fist, and after two years of practice they add weapons, most often staffs, to their movements. From there, the athletes incorporate more fist styles and weapons such as broadswords, long swords, and chain whips.

The various styles originated in China and have been growing in popularity around the world. In 1990, the International Wushu Federation (IWUF) was founded and represented over 80 countries. In 1994, architecture student Daniel Wu, known for his lifelong practice of the Chinese



sport, established the Wushu Club at the University of Oregon. Wu's participation and success in the sport helped him accomplish his goals of becoming a model, actor and director in Hong Kong after graduation. He was awarded the Best New Director at the 2005 Hong Kong Film Awards for his movie "Heavenly Kings."

Even now, the Wushu Club is entirely student led and continues to strengthen its bright beginnings. In 1996, the University of Oregon hosted the first Collegiate Wushu Competition, which was open to all colleges in North America. It was the first wushu tournament in the United States, as well as the first competition in the world to include a team event. The collegiate contest, held March 1st, is the first of two major matches in which the club participates. Eighteen members competed this year at the Collegiate Wushu Competition. The second contest is the Chinese Martial Arts Tournament, which will take place April 5th at UC Berkeley.

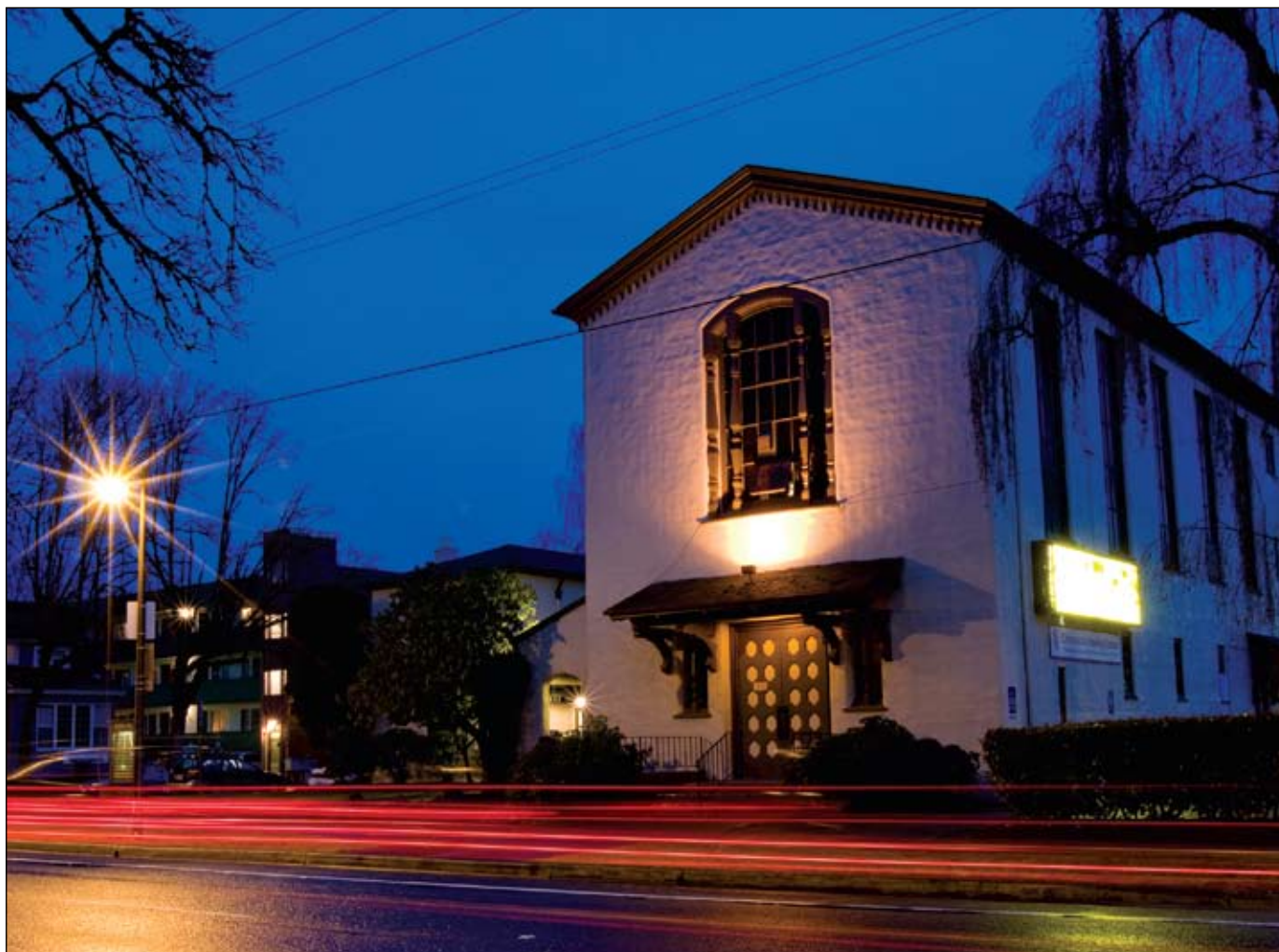
some punches, and then leave. Everyone's like, what was that?"

The group's closeness builds on the members' lighthearted dedication in making wushu a vibrant part of campus life. Every member is energetic and friendly, which makes the club more than just visually appealing. The members welcome beginners, even those who have never heard of the sport. After all, many of the members had never experienced wushu until they came to the University of Oregon.

At first glance, the sport looks like a collection of kung fu moves, but closer inspection reveals a martial art turned artistic craft. The club teaches its members discipline while they learn to expose their strong sense of character. At the University of Oregon, there's more to the sport than the competitions, practices and workouts: there's a tight-knit group of companions. "I came here first for the wushu," says Colin, "(and) I found a group of really great people." -Amelia Writs

The atmosphere at competitions is unique because athletes from other schools offer helpful advice to their opponents, and members of Oregon's club encourage everyone, even beginners, to compete. "It's not as intense as other sports may be, where you want to beat the other team," Leung says. This hospitable feeling rubs off on all Oregon club members, who believe community and encouragement should be the group's main focus. The community atmosphere of the Wushu Club's meetings is what kept Ooi coming back during her first year, as she had never tried the sport before she signed up as a freshman. Even after practices, the members spend time together eating dinner and hanging out.

In addition to competitions, the University of Oregon Wushu Club performs many demonstrations at campus events throughout the year. "Sometimes we'll bust out a random demo in the middle of the EMU," Nelson says. "We'll do some kicks, fly around, do



The Jewel of Eugene

The Bijou Art Cinemas continues to thrive as it upholds its promise to the late owner

It's late on a drizzly Friday evening in February, and a crowd lines up outside the building at 492 East 13th Ave. Wooden awnings shelter the group from the Oregon rain. Fridays mean one thing here: a new rotation of independent art films. Behind the yellow and pink stained glass windows, families use to mourn their loved ones and worship God in the mission-style funeral home and church. But for nearly three decades, the people have been coming to worship something different: smart, alternative films.

In 1980, the late Michael S. Lamont sold his photography equipment in order to buy the 83-year-old chapel and convert the space into what it is today: the Bijou Art Cinemas. The word "bijou" is defined as a jewel or a small, delicately worked piece, and this is exactly what the Art Cinemas

means to the city of Eugene. "We've developed a niche," says Louise Thomas, theater manager since the mid-1990s and on-and-off employee since 1986. "These movies matter to people. They're an alternative to the run-of-the-mill stuff at mall theaters."

Since Lamont's death last December, there have been rumors about the selling or closing down of the Bijou, but Thomas assures that the theater will stay open. "I hate rumors," she says. "I heard a rumor that I inherited the building, and that's not true!" Now, Thomas is running the theater and may even buy it, but if she doesn't, she says the executive of estate will sell the business to someone who will respect Lamont's wishes to keep the Bijou open. Thomas is hesitant about buying the theater because she's worried about competition if another theater were to open. For now, she promises

that the Bijou Art Cinemas will continue as a haven for "smart" films.

Although the long-time employee took time off from the theater in 1999, she decided to come back and help Lamont run the Bijou in 2002, a year after he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, known widely as Lou Gherig's disease. The illness slowly disabled Lamont from walking, eating, speaking and breathing. According to Thomas, Lamont lived on a ventilator for his last five years of life.

When the Bijou first opened, theaters such as Steve Bove's Cinema 7 also offered obscure, foreign and domestic films, which brought competition to the Bijou. But these theaters eventually closed, and the Bijou gained acclaim in Eugene's counterculture as the only local outlet for art films. "I think the Bijou offers something that we can't get

elsewhere without resorting to the two-hour drive to Portland, and it's been (offering) that for years, with passion and enthusiasm," says Molly Templeton, the art and music editor for Eugene Weekly.

The films that we play make a difference. They're smart.

Thomas has recently attended meetings concerning the opening of another alternative theater in Eugene. "People think more is better," she says. "That is not the case." If another art theater opens, the Bijou will have to change drastically. "Two theaters in the same town are not able to play the same films," she says. "The Regal theater and Cinemark theater can, because Cinemark is technically in Springfield, not Eugene." Employees believe it's important that the Bijou stays a one-of-a-kind theater in the community. "The films that we play make a difference. They're smart," Thomas says. "I will occasionally go to a movie somewhere else, but it doesn't make as much of an impact on me. (While) viewing mainstream movies, you can turn your brain off — you can't (turn your brain off) at the Bijou."

Movie selection aside, the aesthetic alone makes the Bijou a place every Eugenie should visit at least once. Picture a small, run-down lobby with vintage brown, striped theater seats lining the walls. A worn, wooden concession stand offers an odd selection of organic popcorn (add nutritional yeast for 50 cents more), coffee, Naked Juice, vitamin water, cookies, and traditional candy and soda. If you're early to your movie, check out the peculiar lobby and courtyard. Sit with Boo, the twenty-something-year-old theater cat that is most likely napping on one of the run-down theater chairs, because she is too old and too fat to move without assistance. "She can get out of the chair but needs help to get in," says Bijou employee Madjym. On a summer night, kill time in the courtyard, where more old theater chairs and pews welcome you to sit and listen to the soothing drone of the waterfall fountain, located at the far end of the quad. Lanterns hang from the awnings, casting a yellow glow over the courtyard. Here you will also find bathrooms with long hallways, labeled in Medieval writing. The courtyard feels enchanted, surreal, much like an amusement park.

"There's a bit of nostalgia here, but it's not just that," says Templeton, who grew up in Elmira, Ore. and has been visiting the Bijou since high school. "It's the movies they show and the people who work here. It's that it feels like a certain kind of movie theater ought to feel, all funky and smart and run by funky, smart people who care about

movies." The Bijou employees are always happy and willing to chat about movies; this is one of the reasons why they work here. "If the people who work in chain theaters are movie fans — and chances are good at least some of them are — you almost never have a chance to find out," Templeton says.

The Bijou will continue to offer these unique, offbeat films for as long as it can. All of the worries concerning the future of the theater are merely speculation. As of now, the Bijou will run as usual, and if someone else buys the theater, Thomas says there will be business changes, but nothing drastic. "(The Bijou) will continue one way or another."

As the curtain opens in the cave-like theater, and the muddled sound starts projecting through the speakers, try to get comfortable in your hard, lumpy, worn seat. Nibble at your organic popcorn and take a swig of your Naked Juice. Your Bijou experience is about to begin. And when the lights go up and you step back out into the drizzly night, think about whether you've been to a theater quite like the Bijou. Even if you've seen countless films here, each visit can be different. "Going to the Bijou as a teenager was eye-opening," Templeton says, "and I hope to keep having my experience broadened by going there for years to come." —Katrina Natress

OPPOSITE: Every Friday, a new rotation of alternative films draws a cluster of people outside the door to the Bijou Art Cinemas. The 83-year-old chapel-turned-theater is considered a delicate jewel of Eugene. BELOW: "You can see the sound waves on the side of the 35mm film," says Bijou projectionist Kevin Mergel. "The audio is set up like a record, but instead of a needle it uses light."



A Walk of Art

The Last Friday ArtWalks showcase Eugene's cutting-edge art scene



Once a month, the Lane Community Art Council invites community members to join in The Last Friday ArtWalk, an inclusive artist forum centered in Eugene's Whiteaker neighborhood. Alternative to isolated, fine art galleries, the ArtWalk does not confine viewers to museum walls; instead it allows them to freely explore the unconventional exhibits. Many hosts offer rich conversation, snacks and even wine to visitors who enter their homes. During the interactive displays, the audience watches painters, sculptures and illustrators in their comfortable surroundings and develops an understanding for their inspirations. Walkers see the true intentions of the artists in their most organic forms.

On these special nights, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., over 30 businesses and private residences open their doors to present their unusual masterpieces to the greater Eugene area. Hosts tack up posters in their front windows to alert and attract community members. Some venues host the same

artist each month, while others incorporate diversity and showcase different people at each ArtWalk.

The self-guided tours are one-of-a-kind ways to explore Eugene. Most exhibits are within walking distance of one another, allowing perfect opportunities for enjoying warm spring or summer evenings with

such as Kiki Metzler, claim that it has been almost three years since the public art adventures began. Regardless, the ArtWalk is special in that it provides an outlet for Eugene's local and unconventional artists. "Lots of skilled artists are not showcased in posh art museums. It is almost like local artists' crafts don't have enough merit to be

A typical walk features an array of unbelievable public art, from ethereal etchings to exquisitely painted eggs to clay masks

friends and family. It is rumored that this summer the ArtWalk will also host flamethrowers, live music and face painting. Even in the colder months, the tour is festive and stimulating while art-lovers endure the nasty Oregon weather for the unique event.

It is unclear when The Last Friday ArtWalk tradition developed. Some people say this is its first year, while other artists,

valued as fine art," Metzler says. "This is our way to display the gifted and talented artists, the ones who don't usually see the light of day. But I could care less if we are famous. I just want to relax and enjoy the art."

A first stop on the walk is the Art of Glass exhibit, located at Blaire Boulevard's stained-glass supply store and gallery. At this location, the artists change every month.



ABOVE: Patricia "Trancita" Rowe shows off her glass kaleidoscopes.

In January, the event included a meet-and-greet session with Patricia "Transita" Rowe, an artist from Southern California. Transita (as she preferred to be called) took over an entire section of the store to display her glass kaleidoscopes. Inside the gallery, visitors explored the colorful instruments while Transita offered vivid explanations and stories about her inspiration. "I have a gift of taking away pain, and I try to put my healing touch into each one of my kaleidoscopes, because it is amazing the healing affects of cascading, pure color," she says. "The colors clear your mind and perform deep healing effects."

Another stop on the eclectic tour is Possum Place's Lego my Lego exhibit at a home on Taylor Street. The house was recently added to the ArtWalk, and homeowners Marcia Koenig and Greg Oldson plan to continue their participation in the event. From the outside, the abode looks like all the others on the block, but on the inside is a thought-provoking land of Legos. Koenig and Oldson's interactive exhibit is stimulating for visitors of all ages: the main room is furnished with tables of various lengths and sizes, and they're all coated with legos. With the artists' intent in mind, Koenig and Oldson's friend Elliot Martinez built Lego panoramas of unsolved murder cases. "I wanted to do something controversial, because it is something that everyone can appreciate," Martinez says. "I didn't want to just be the guy making Lego space-ships — I actually wanted to tell a story." Martinez had so much fun building Lego scenes that he plans to work with Koenig and Oldson in future ArtWalks.

Just around the corner from Possum Place is Kiki Metzler's Polk Studio. This venue is a private home that Metzler uses

for her exhibit, which features her hand-painted goose eggs. It is one of the longest running exhibits of the Last Friday ArtWalk. In addition to her main attraction, the interior of Kiki's home offers an artistic feast for the eyes. Upon entering the foyer, viewers are struck by the beauty of her framed artwork, which covers the walls like photos in a salon. The viewers' eyes are then drawn to the table covered with boxes of large goose eggs. For Metzler and her admirers, these are not typical Easter eggs, but rather exquisitely hand-painted pieces of art. Each egg, unique in color and theme, takes several days for Metzler to adorn with portraits of elephants, owls and dragons. Her painting

BELOW: Kiki Metzler not only paints and draws on canvas, but also decorates eggs, gourds, and ceramics. On her eggs, she paints portraits of elephants, owls and dragons.



process requires numerous steps until the finishing touches, when she says "each egg pops" with the final, vibrant painted lines and colors.

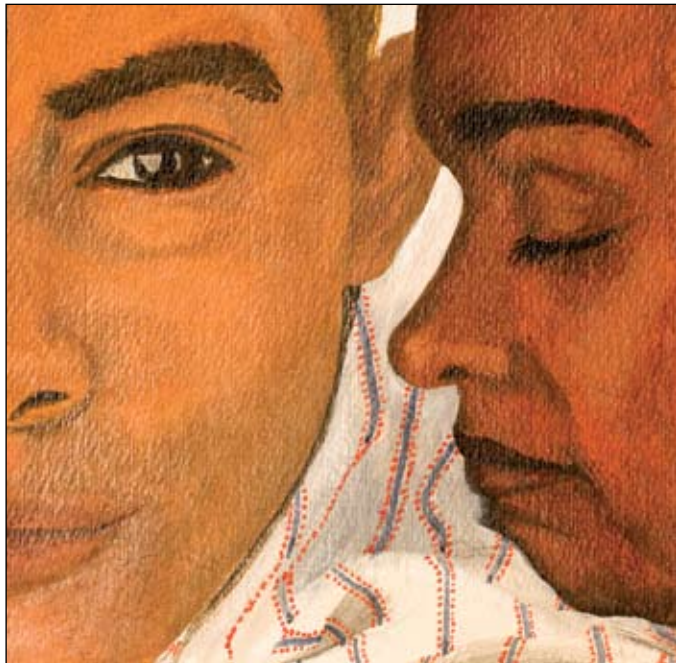
"I love the ArtWalks, and as a host it is fun and entertaining to watch my neighbors look at my art, but my favorite is when I can escape and go see the other artist's artwork," Metzler says. "I grew up with all kinds of people around; I love people. It doesn't bother me much to open my home and allow others to enjoy my hobby." She also opens her studio to other artists in need of venues or work areas. Her space plays host to a diverse array of arts and crafts, including clay sculptures and painted mirrors and canvases. But Metzler offers more than just her art and her workspace to this artist community. She provides a mantra of sorts for both artists and art-lovers in her personal philosophy: life is an incredible miracle, and there are a lot of good people to be explored. As the attendees view the art in Metzler's home, they see her craftsmanship as it is intended. Of course, this is in addition to the plethora of wild stories that the artists share about their work.

If trekking the Whiteaker neighborhood does not sound appealing, there are First Friday ArtWalks that offer more structured explorations of the downtown art galleries. However, if you choose to take Metzler's advice, you will wander the neighborhood and observe Whiteaker's artistic community in its most natural form. You will see that the diverse collection of work presented at the ArtWalks offers an escape from confined, quiet museums and a break from typical Friday night soirees or movies. -Sarah Wilson

Caught Between Races

An interracial family copes with three generations of hardship

STORY GRACE NEAL • ART KELLY WALKER



“What is your ethnicity? Do you mind me asking? Please don’t be offended.” These are just a couple of questions that I am sometimes asked when I meet new people. I usually laugh a little and respond proudly: “African American, Cherokee and Yakima American Indian and Caucasian.” And no, I am not offended. I am flattered when someone comments on the beauty or exoticism of my skin color. For the most part, people seem intrigued by me.

My father is the same racial mix as I am, and my mother is Caucasian. Growing up in an interracial household, I didn’t mull over people’s skin colors. I owned both black- and white-skinned Barbie dolls. The Santa Claus ornaments on our Christmas trees were also black- and white-skinned. The heroines of my favorite books were of various races: Caucasian, African American and American Indian. I thought nothing of it. I didn’t think about the fact that the majority of my friends and schoolmates were white, or that I was often the only person of color when standing in a group of people. Call it naivety, but I didn’t understand racism, and I didn’t know that interracial relationships had ever been taboo. When I was young, I never thought I’d someday be caught between races.

At a certain point in our country’s history, a black man could have been hanged for so much as looking at a white woman. These extreme punishments are not enforced now, but that doesn’t mean our society is past racism. Its mentality of interracial coupling is still skewed.

My father’s parents met in the mid-1950s. My grandmother was both Caucasian and Yakima American Indian, and my grandfather was African American and Cherokee American Indian, but these ethnicities meant nothing back then. In society’s eyes, my grandparents were simply a white woman and a black man. They fell in love, and as Catholics, they wanted to marry in the Catholic church that my grandmother attended in Portland, Ore. But the pastor refused to marry them because he worried about the congregation’s reaction; it was too risky to marry an interracial couple. My grandparents

had no choice but to go to the Washington state, where one of my grandmother’s relatives married them. That was 54 years ago.

This disapproval of interracial marriages didn’t stop with my grandparent’s generation; my dad was affected, too. My grandmother would take my dad, my aunts and my uncles with her on her errands, but she would go to the same stores every time — the ones where her kids would not be subjected to racist remarks or disapproving eyes. Unfortunately, my grandmother couldn’t always shelter her kids from racism.

One time, in the 1960s, my grandmother brought cupcakes to my dad’s second-grade classroom in celebration of his recent birthday. He attended a predominantly white Catholic school in Portland. My father’s classmates didn’t react with glee at the site of the treats, and instead they whispered to each other in surprise: “Kevin’s mom is white?” I guess it was hard to believe that the fair-skinned woman at the front of the room could bear a child with chocolate-brown skin and curly-black hair.

As my dad grew older, he endured racism from all sides. The African American kids in his school called him “Oreo” — black on the outside, white on the inside. When a Caucasian student used the “n” word in front of him, the boy said casually, “It’s okay Kevin, you’re not one of them. You are part white.” My father was caught between races.

My mom and dad met in the early 1980s. When they started dating, they didn’t face the same disapprovals that my grandparents did, although some people still couldn’t understand why they were together. One day, after my mom dropped my dad off at work, one of my dad’s co-workers spread rumors that he was cheating on my mom with “some white woman.” And when my friends’ parents would pick up their kids from my house, they would notice my dad’s skin color and drop their jaws in disbelief.

As a 20-year-old woman, I experience the subtleties of racism, too. After one of my friends met my past boyfriend, she said, “Wow, you prefer white guys!” I couldn’t help but wonder if she would have said that if my skin were not tinted brown. Similarly, my mom, sister and I were at a restaurant once, where our waitress commented on my sister’s and my “wonderful dark-brown skin.” She turned

**Race is a social construct, not a biological one.
My heritage does not define me as a person.**

to my mom and asked if we were her daughters. When my mom said yes, the waitress shot her a look of skepticism.

Although these incidences were hurtful, I don’t consider them examples of racism. I consider them disregard for the fact that interracial coupling is possible. At times I find it hard to identify with a society that demands I define myself as one race or another. When I take tests, I never know which bubble to fill for ethnicity. I sometimes play “eenie-meenie-minnie-moe” to help me decide, because I’m permitted to choose just one.

I feel fortunate to never have faced the same adversity that my grandparents and father did, but I am still painfully aware of our society’s fascination with racial identities. Race is a social construct, not a biological one; my heritage does not define me as a person. It’s hard to believe that only 54 years ago my grandparents were forced to Washington, just so they could marry. I know our society has come a long way in its views of interracial couples and people of mixed heritage, but it still has a long way to go before we’re all treated equally, judged by our inner qualities and not by the color of our skin. **KD**

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