

THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO Argonaut

FOR, OF AND BY THE STUDENTS SINCE 1898



Richard Pathomsiri | Argonaut

Preyusha Aryal is a senior from Nepal studying computer engineering at the University of Idaho

Far away from home

When countries shut down, international students chose between family and college

Emily Pearce
ARGONAUT

There are multiple explanations answering why international student enrollment has declined during this academic year. COVID-19, additional costs and travel bans all pose barriers to those looking to study abroad.

When the University of Idaho transitioned to online learning last March, it presented unusual challenges for students looking to earn their degree, but even more demanding were the expectations placed on international students to do the same.

Due to the pandemic and international relations, international student enrollment at UI is down 29% from 2019, according to a memo from President Scott Green on Oct. 20. Though some students were able to remain in Moscow over the summer, many were not able to attend the current 2020-2021 academic year.

“The pandemic has certainly impacted international students because other countries have been shut down,” Dana Brolley, director of International Services, said. “But there’s been more than one reason for the decline.”

The decline is due to a range of complications, including economic issues, additional costs, travel bans and the closure of overseas embassies, according to Brolley. Various COVID-19

travel bans by Presidential Proclamation prohibited travelers from entry into the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, making students who had gone home unable to get back.

Eddie Hau, junior from Taiwan studying finance at UI, thought of going home at the end of last March but would have needed to quarantine for 14 days.

The pandemic also caused widespread international flight cancellations. Some countries shut down all flights for extended periods of time, making it nearly impossible for students to go home and visit family.

Preyusha Aryal, a senior studying computer engineering from Nepal, hasn’t seen her family in over a year. According to Reuters, Nepal closed its airspace for nearly five months beginning in March. When

COVID-19 began spreading across the globe, Aryal thought it was best to stay put.

“If you go to a different country, you have to quarantine for 14 days, and coming back to the states it’s the same thing,” Aryal said. “The flights were getting canceled; people were stuck and even if they wanted to fly out it was hard.”

But travel bans aren’t the only thing making it hard for international students. The U.S. Department of State suspended routine visa services worldwide in March, according to the Bureau of Consular Affairs. Embassies and consulates began providing emergency and “mission-critical visa services” instead. In many cases, new students had trouble receiving their visas.

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Slick road conditions caused minor accidents

Plow operators work around the clock to remove snow

Angela Palermo
ARGONAUT

Recent winter storms led to school closures and dicey road conditions that resulted in a few minor traffic accidents, one of which involved a snowplow hitting a parked car.

A winter weather advisory on the Palouse remained in effect from noon Monday through Tuesday evening. Moscow received an estimated 12 inches of snow, according to an area snow depth report from Weather Street.

Police logs indicated four traffic accidents occurred within the city on Monday, including one call reporting a snowplow had hit a parked car. According to the Moscow Police Department, there were no severe accidents or slide-offs due to the slick conditions.

Plow operators had been out for several days, completing anti-icing applications before the snow even began to fall, Deputy City Supervisor Tyler Palmer said.

“It’s certainly more challenging than a typical storm when it snows continually like this,” Palmer said. “We’ve had every piece of equipment we have thrown at it to try and keep people moving.”

With heaps of fresh snow already on the ground and more in the forecast, the University of Idaho decided to cancel classes and events on Tuesday. Moscow



Richard Pathomsiri | Argonaut

A pedestrian waits to cross the road on the intersection of Sixth and Washington Street

School District also announced the closure of schools due to the poor road conditions, although online instruction would still take place, Superintendent Greg Bailey said.

A full berm removal process began earlier in the week to remove the accumulation of snow cast aside by plows in the downtown area. According to Palmer, this involves blowing the snow into trucks which then haul it away.

With over 185 miles of street to maintain, the city focuses on clearing the highest volume roads first, before moving to arterial, collector and side streets.

“We’re in the middle of a full plow right now,” Palmer said Tuesday morning. “We’ve gone through several full plows of the city at this point.”

More information about the removal process can be found on the city’s website, along with a video explaining the procedures that go into making the roads as safe as possible in snowy conditions.

The latest road conditions can be obtained by calling 511.

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Gritman Medical Center hosts vaccine training

Students practice immunizations

Sierra Pesnell
ARGONAUT

Local medical, nursing and athletic training students had the opportunity to practice administering COVID-19 vaccines during an educational programming at Gritman Medical Center.

The event was hosted by University of Idaho’s WWAMI Medical Education Program and the Area Health Education Center on Feb. 10.

While many of the participating students have already received the vaccine, the program was designed to instruct them on how to administer the immunization, they practiced injecting each other using harmless saline solution. The interprofessional training consisted of 40 WWAMI students.

Dr. Dustin Worth, WWAMI faculty member and physician, said the learning process for the students is in practicing giving the vaccine.



Dustin Worth

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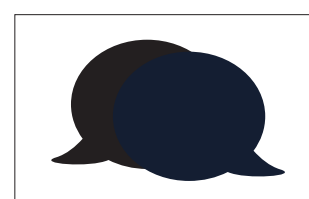
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Mental health services during social isolation

The pandemic's toll on mental health services and UI students

Haadiya Tariq
ARGONAUT

When the University of Idaho shut down at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic last spring, the Counseling and Testing Center moved all their services online within a week, relying on telepsychiatry visits rather than in person appointments.

Telepsychiatry is the use of technology to provide psychiatric care virtually. The center has been using Zoom for the appointments.

"At this point we have been doing telepsychiatry for almost a year, so everybody's gotten quite proficient at it," CTC Director Gregory Lambeth said.

The shift from providing all services in person to now 100% online was a drastic change for everyone.

"The biggest challenges were not

unforeseen," Lambeth said. "They were about how clinicians and clients both were going to adapt to doing the work in a very different kind of way."

Lambeth believes it has been tiring for clinicians to do appointments solely on Zoom throughout the entire day, but they have proven their stamina.

"We were able to provide the continuity of our services," Lambeth said. "We are still an accessible resource."



Gregory Lambeth

The inability to see clients in person does limit some aspects of counseling. Evaluations for some disorders must be done in person, with tests involving the manipulation of objects or speed.

At this time, such testing through the CTC has been restricted to what can be done virtually. Lambeth hopes to bring back in person evaluations this summer, on a limited basis.

The use of telepsychiatry has allowed the center to schedule appointments with

students on other UI campuses, which has not been possible in the past.

The CTC has offered group counseling in the past, now on Zoom, and has grown to eight groups in total. Group counseling allows clients to interact with other students facing similar struggles. This can validate individuals' experiences and allow them to hear how others have dealt with similar struggles. Lambeth said this social form of counseling is needed now more than ever.

"That's the most groups we've ever run at the CTC," Lambeth said. "One of the things impacted the most by the pandemic is social connections and the ability to interact with friends and peers."

Despite seeing a downturn in the number of students contacting the center, Lambeth believes there is evidence of a greater need to address mental health symptoms on campus.

In 2019, the number of unique clients who visited the CTC was 1,269. This number declined to just 1,187 in 2020.

While these numbers do not account for

the change in student population, Lambeth said the decrease is still significant.

The number of clinical appointments at the CTC increased overall, but the number of different students requesting services has decreased. This means individual students may be more likely to consistently make appointments, but fewer students overall are accessing the center.

Normal appointments are only provided online, however crisis situations have been addressed in person. This includes clients who are manic, highly distressed, agitated or intoxicated.

Despite the perception that students may need more support during this isolating and stressful time, the CTC has seen a notable drop in the number of crisis situations brought to them.

To read more of this article, visit us online at uiargonaut.com

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VACCINE

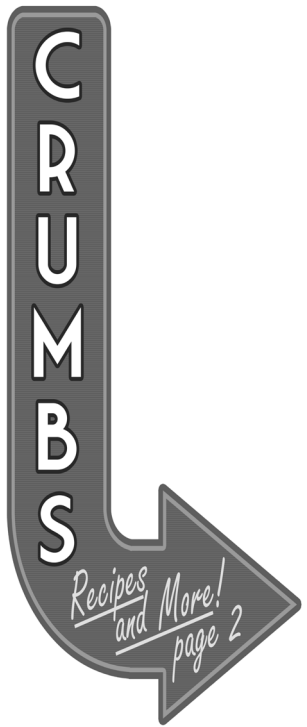
FROM PAGE 1

"It's a combination of knowing how to do it safely and then building their confidence," Worth said. "When you get that opportunity to put yourself in the place of the patient, that helps you be more compassionate and understanding."

Noting the various challenges the program has faced in the health care field, Worth said removing students from the clinical training environment has been difficult.

"It was a real challenge, when the pandemic first started, to be training in the healthcare field and wanting to help," Worth said. "It's been exciting to get them back to training and to be able to see they were qualified for that first line of vaccinations."

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INTERNATIONAL

FROM PAGE 1

Bandita Karki, a senior studying statistics and mathematics from Nepal, has not experienced this issue but has seen how it affects students in her country looking to study abroad.

"I applied in 2017 and didn't have any problems," Karki said. "But right now, the U.S. Embassy in Nepal is closed and no one has been able to apply for visas."

Jaime Bellingham, a fifth-year student from New Zealand working on her master's in human psychology at UI, spent two months trying to get a visa appointment. They wanted physical paperwork which took an additional three months to send, due to postal delays.

While some students have stayed in Moscow, unable to travel home and visit family, Bellingham was able to return home over the summer. According to Brolley, the distance between students and their families makes it difficult to stay in the country and finish school.

"I know there's a lot of worry, guilt and pressure they feel in relationship to their family," Brolley said. "Yet, at the same time, they've invested a lot into completing a degree and are nearly finished. To walk away from that... it's a really difficult choice to make."

While Aryal has been away from her family for extended periods of time before, this time she's worried about the possibility of them contracting a deadly virus before they can all be reunited. At the same time, Aryal worries about herself getting sick because she may not be able to afford medication and doesn't have insurance in the states.

"It's super hard because once you're here because you're not present with (family)," Aryal said. "It's difficult just having to deal with that."

When cases of COVID-19 started popping up in the U.S.,

Bellingham returned home to stay with her parents. Upon arriving, she was quarantined by the government to keep her parents safe.

Despite wanting to return home to her family, Karki was unable to due to travel restrictions in her country. A few months ago, some of her family members tested positive for COVID-19.

"It was an emotionally draining period to even think about the consequences," Karki said. "I was not able to focus on anything during that time. But things have started getting better and I'm hoping for a better tomorrow."

When the pandemic first began, many universities made the switch to remote coursework. But international students in the U.S. weren't allowed to have an online-only education at the time. The additional stress and regulations placed on them eventually took its toll on their academic performance.

"That introduced a lot of uncertainty in the community," Karki said. "We were all really worried about it, but I think the university has been doing their best."

International students are now required to take only one online class each semester which allows them to worry less about the virus, according to Bellingham. She said online courses are different because there's less social interaction, but it also makes school easier.

"It was hard to communicate, you could not meet your friends, do homework together or have a quick discussion," Aryal said. "Zoom is fine, but I was missing that human interaction."

Time zone differences and technology challenges also make it harder for students who've returned home, Brolley said. Some platforms can be less stable and make it harder to access materials.

In Nepal, Karki said not everyone has internet access or a computer they can work on at home. Students in Moscow have access to the internet and computers through the library and other



Dana Brolley



Richard Pathomsiri | Argonaut

Preyusha Aryal is a senior from Nepal studying computer engineering

various locations across campus.

"Back in Nepal, there's a lot of uncertainty about the lack of vaccines," Karki said. "Nobody received a stimulus check or anything."

Due to economic uncertainty, some students were not able to receive support from their families. It's had a major impact on international students who pay out-of-state tuition, Brolley said.

"Last semester was mostly tough because we weren't sure what was happening," Karki said. "I used to work for the athletics department, but they shut down for more than four months. For someone who lives paycheck to paycheck, it was exhausting to not be able to work for such a long time."

Because there are currently no active cases of COVID-19 in New Zealand, Bellingham's family is able to live somewhat normally. Citizens can go to concerts and interact with others in-person. In the U.S., Bellingham gets a stipend from the athletic department to play golf at the university's course.

"One of the challenges is that international students aren't eligible for any federal resources," Brolley said. "There's money, but they're

not eligible for any of it and even getting some kind of service through a federally funded program puts them at risk because it's a violation of their immigration."

Though the government cannot provide funding for international students, the university provides some aid.

While the International Programs Office provides scholarships to their students, there's also the Bruce Pitman Emergency Fund. The fund has been assisting individuals who are struggling financially, dealing with job loss and those without support.

Advisors and staff have helped as much as they can, even crowdfunding to raise money for students, Brolley said.

The Counseling and Testing Center is also available to those suffering from external stressors in school, at home or in daily life. Individuals who are food insecure can access the Vandal Food Pantry.

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Life

LIFESTYLES, INTERESTS, FEATURES AND ENTERTAINMENT

The silver mobile store

Shop Sovereign Boutique is eager to empower women via fashion

Ryan Hill
ARGONAUT

Shop Sovereign is a new business that opened in October 2020. The owner, Cassidy Jess, wanted to open a clothing boutique store that is able to travel.

"It was made to empower women and express themselves through fashion and cultivate a unique experience to encourage women to feel confident in dressing to reflect their true self," Jess said.

Jess said that the clothing she sells is collected herself. At times, the clothing is mistaken as used because it comes out of a vintage trailer, but she assures that it is new.

"I try to bring together a closet that reflects anywhere from a college student, a high school student, to a mom," Jess said.

Jess tries to keep the price range of the clothes affordable, between \$30 to \$40. She does research to find out which clothes have the best quality and style to fit the price range.

When starting her business, she wanted to have creative freedom. She enjoys talking to her customers and helping them

find the clothes that will help empower them. According to Jess, it is a gratifying experience.

Currently, her store operates in Moscow. However, thanks to the mobility of the shop, Jess is planning on traveling throughout the Pacific Northwest to other towns to sell clothes as well. She plans to go to Spokane, Coeur d'Alene and Lewiston in the spring.

Occasionally for special events, Jess will have champagne and treats for her customers.

Since the shop is a pop-up, her hours are limited. Shop Sovereign is open noon-6 p.m. Thursday and Friday, and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday. Customers can shop online at the boutique's website.

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Hailee Mallett | Argonaut

Shop Sovereign Boutique offers cute clothes and accessories. The boutique is located in the Monarch Hotel Parking Lot in Moscow

UI Virtual Alternative Service Break



Alternate Service Break | Courtesy
ASB Students in Noste, Togo

Connecting Vandals to students in Africa

Bailey Brockett
ARGONAUT

The University of Idaho Alternative Service Break program is turning 20-years old and has adopted COVID-19 restrictions to still allow students to experience the heartwarming impact of community service.

The program's upcoming event is the Global Connections ASB. They have created this completely virtual event for UI students to connect and become virtual pen-pals with students in Togo, Africa.

To make this event possible, the Center for Volunteerism and Social Action has collaborated with the Institute for Community Partnerships and Sustainable Development, a nonprofit organization created by UI professor Ro Afatchao. The event will consist of a weekly meeting for four weeks where specific teams will learn about the students, social justice issues and culture of Togo while sharing their own as well. It will conclude with a live video call on March 24 where UI and

Togo students will be able to interact face to face. The registration deadline is Feb. 17, and students can register for the event on the ASB's website.

The program is education-based and a student-led group that connects UI students to different organizations, locally and internationally, to unite on a variety of service projects. The program has a few different structures, like pre-COVID-19 weekend trips and 1-2 week trips over winter and spring break. These have ranged all the way from local to international.

Recent trips have included assisting the Community Cancer Services organization in Sandpoint and partnering with the North Idaho Correctional Institute where students worked with inmates to help them earn GEDs or technical certificates. This past winter, students went on an international trip to Togo to assist Institute for Community Partnerships and Sustainable Development, where students helped to build a school.

All of the virtual events and weekend trips are free, and the spring and winter trips cost around \$150 to \$1,500. There

are scholarships available based on financial need.

Madi Thurston, the ASB Coordinator, holds the organization in high regards and believes it is something every student should get involved with. The ASB program has made a significant impact on UI students. It allows students to experience and learn about social justice, culture, and more. It allows them to make connections and give back to their community.

"It's an opportunity for students from different backgrounds, who may not usually meet, to come together to work with a different community on a social justice issue," Thurston said. "It allows students to make an impact in these communities."

UI student Michael Eze has attended several of the program's events, and has enjoyed his experience immensely. Attending his first event assisting the Community Cancer Services organization in Sandpoint showed him how gratifying giving back to a community can be.

"It just shows you that little things really matter," Eze said. "It was great

being able to give back to that community because I had an aunt who had just recently died of cancer, and it was nice to give back to that community and do something in her name."

Eze recommends that students take advantage of as many of the program's events as possible, as they have made such an impression on him and his perspective of community service.

"I would 100% recommend all of them," Eze said. "If could do all of them, I would. I feel like community service is a key component in your academic career."

Not only is the program rewarding for students, but it is also beneficial to the communities being served. It helps highlight all the work that local non-profits are doing and shows students there are available resources.

Zazuetta, a UI student and ASB student leader, said how passionate the local trips made her about food insecurity in the community. Zazuetta led a trip last fall partnered with Vandal Food Pantry, Food Not Bombs and Backyard Harvest to help those experiencing food insecurity.

"It's really awesome to see the community come together," Zazuetta said. "I definitely think having it local gave me a different feel, because I was doing work for my own community. It was a bit more personal."

Zazuetta found that her position as a student leader enriched her overall experience of the trip and recommends that students should take any available opportunities to lead future trips.

"It challenged me in ways I had never been challenged before," Zazuetta said. "It pushed me to look at these issues in a way that wasn't just discussing them (in classes.)"

During the COVID-19 pandemic and different circumstances, now is the perfect time to get involved to give back to the community. Thurston said Alternative Service Breaks is a starting point for anyone who feels the need to give back.

"Now more than ever people need a sense of community and ASB has always been centered around community and making connections, whether it's with local organizations or with people from a foreign country."

To learn more information about the program, visit their website and find out about upcoming events.

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Weekly horoscope Feb. 14-20

Your weekly guide to consulting the stars

Rebecca Pratt
ARGONAUT

Capricorn: Dec. 22 – Jan. 20
Capricorns by nature have a love of good food and drinks, so now is the time to indulge! Your soul will thank you for feeding it what it craves most. Along with this time of self-indulgence, thank your stars for a little fun and more self-love. Listen to what your inner voice and body want.

Aquarius: Jan. 21 – Feb. 18
Your social skills can make others fall madly in love with you, but you don't need to be told this. You're good at getting people to have fun and trust you. You may see within the next week that you're blossoming in new ways with new people. Give yourself the chance to put down roots and build on these new connections. This will come naturally if you are able to include these new relationships in your signature Aquarius spontaneity.

Pisces: Feb. 19 - March 20
You're a creative, free-spirit and sensual sign. Suffice to say, the waters run deep in you. So deep sometimes you can get swept away by it all. Try not to let yourself lose control in the next week, as it will exhaust your emotions. Remember to breathe. Your sign is a powerful one whose power does not rule you, you rule said power.

Aries: March 21 - April 20
Mars rules your sign and as a result, you can be a bit forceful. Watch your aggression and hot-headedness this week as you may feel a bit tense. Know that at the root of anger is passion. This does not excuse one's rage, but it does give it context. Paying better attention to the origins of your frustration will help you this week and your whole life.

Taurus: April 21 – May 21
Work-life has been strained for you. Others on your crew may need your steadiness though. You are good in a crisis and a reliable helper. Be sure this week to be putting out helpful and open vibes. Your team will need your aid if you are open to it.

Gemini: May 22 – June 21
You love using your mind. Anything around you slightly resembling a puzzle, you try to solve. You're always moving from piece to piece, puzzle to puzzle. Finding something or someone to spend a great deal of your time and energy on would help you reach conclusion someday. This week keep your eyes peeled for the puzzle. You may solve it completely.

Cancer: June 22 – July 22
Joy is heading your way at high speeds! It may knock your socks off, so brace yourself. Childlike happiness is a rare thing in our adulthood and can be hidden in the simplest things. If you can find it in yourself to let go of your harsh, adult mindset, you may find this joy exploding in your heart and mind.

Leo: July 23 – Aug. 23
Your personal life has needed some attention and affection. Take time from your many dedications to check in on yourself sometimes. Proper watering, sunlight and love will do wonders in any environment. Even in your own life.

You can see Virgo, Libra, Scorpio and Sagittarius online at uiargonaut.com

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Keeping the spirit of jazz alive

The popular festival goes completely online this year

Ryan Hill
ARGONAUT

The University of Idaho's annual Jazz Festival is known for its concerts, workshops and of course, jazz. It is one of the largest educational jazz festivals in the country, attracting at least 5,000 students. As universities move to online learning, the festival will be held remotely compared to past events being held in-person.

"It is 100% virtual," orchestra and double bass instructor for the Lionel Hampton School of Music, Joshua Skinner said. "I proposed a couple of different plans, and we decided virtual was best

just not knowing how the current world pandemic was going to impact things."

This format includes workshops and concerts. This year, there will not be as many workshops compared to previous years. Instead, there will only be one hosted virtually every hour. "We couldn't keep the exact form of everything that we normally would have on campus," Skinner said. "It just was not physically possible. So, what decided is to try to offer the highest quality resources that we could by reducing that down to get people involved with each of those."

Skinner said the festival committee knew they wouldn't be able to host big band concerts this year, as it would be difficult for them to

do remotely due to size restrictions in certain areas.

"We've for years recorded the concerts as an archival component of what we do with the international jazz collections here on campus," Skinner said.

On Feb. 25, Skinner will be talking about the history of the Jazz Festival and its relationship with Lionel Hampton. Members of the big band will show their favorite clips of Hampton at the festival and will talk about Hampton's achievements at the festival.

Skinner said that some concerts will be live on Zoom for viewers, and performances will feature groups such as Saje and vocalist Camille Thurman.

While it might not

seem the same with no in-person events, no sitting in on jazz performances from other schools, and no big live band, Skinner hopes that they will still be able to keep the magic of jazz fest alive.

Skinner, staff and student performers were disappointed to not have the festival in-person. However, Skinner understood that they had to adapt to the pandemic. They still wanted to provide a great show to the people and keep the spirit of jazz alive. Skinner is hopeful that there will be an in-person Jazz Festival for 2022.

To access the schedule for the concerts and workshops, visit UI's website.

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Outdoor program coordinates cross country ski tour

All-level outdoor event held by UI

Sierra Pesnell
ARGONAUT

University of Idaho Outdoor Program will hold a cross country ski trip this weekend at Palouse Divide, Idaho. It will be an opportunity for students to learn new skills while exploring the Palouse outdoors.

The trip is available to students, and they can rent equipment from the UI Outdoor Programs at the Student Recreation Center. Non-students can participate in the tour, and it is open to cross country skiers of all levels.

Nate Moody, UI Outdoor Program Coordinator, said participants will be able to explore the Palouse area.

"It just gives an opportunity for students who haven't necessarily explored around Moscow

to go find areas to recreate during the winter," Moody said.

Moody said there are benefits of the trip following the nature aspect of things.

"Students can explore, and the trip leaders can help share some of the experience of learning a new skill, through cross country skiing, but also just to see and understand a little bit more about the ecology," Moody said.

The cross-country ski trip will take place Feb. 20 with a pre-trip meeting on Feb. 16. The cost for students is \$40 with equipment included, while the non-student fee is \$60.

Visit the UI Outdoor Program website to sign-up and for future programs.

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Cooking class in a box

Office of Alumni Relations works with Ampersand to give graduates cooking classes at home

Emily Pearce
ARGONAUT

Ampersand Oil and Vinegar Tap House has found a way to give people the experience of taking a cooking class out of a box. Sent to homes around the nation, the cooking kit provides non-perishables from Ampersand along with the atmosphere of the tap house with online instruction.

On Feb. 24, the Office of Alumni Relations will host their fifth Vandal cooking class, "Gourmet Tailgate Cooking Class," with a four-course meal.

Keely Garrity, the owner of Ampersand, wanted to continue cooking classes when shops shut down in March 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, around the same time Office of Alumni Relations needed a way to facilitate their alumni program. Garrity, an alumna graduating from University of Idaho in 2006, thought it was the perfect opportunity to create something new.

"I was approached by the Vandal Alumni Association in April last year right when the businesses were getting shut down for the two-week period," Garrity said. "They asked if I would be interested in doing an online cooking class and I jumped at the opportunity."

Starting Ampersand in 2014, Garrity has been instructing cooking classes at the tap house for years. Vandal Cooking Classes began in April 2020 as a way to engage people during the pandemic.

"I think it's just been an innovative event that we have started throughout COVID-19 and people were looking for something to do," Kristi Overfelt, Office of Alumni Relations assistant director, said. "Ampersand is a really nice business downtown it's an owned business and I think people want to support it."

The Office of Alumni Relations has been marketing the event and adding it to their alumni newsletter. But even without advertising, the classes have been

promoting themselves.

"In September, Ampersand took a few months off and people were calling, asking when the event would be going on again," Overfelt said. "People look forward to the event and are excited about it."

During the upcoming event, Garrity will show how to make artichoke stuffed mushrooms, Ampersand's award-winning chili, caprese stuffed bread and maple bacon cupcakes.

Customers will receive a box that provides everything they need to participate in the class. They will get non-perishable items from the tap house, a grocery list and a utensil list. Along with essentials, they will get a bit of Ampersand's atmosphere.

"If you've ever been to the Ampersand it's an experience store," Garrity said. "I like to say we engage all five of your senses, it smells good, it's beautiful, customers sample everything that tastes really good, the music is wonderful and the textiles are very luxurious. We wanted to make sure that we could package that all up in our box, and so it's like receiving a little guest."

With the rise in popularity of the class, they can now support 115 patrons. Hosting the event online has given them opportunities to extend the classes all over the country, and people order these boxes as far as Florida, Pennsylvania and Washington D.C. according to Overfelt. There are more people attending the class outside of Moscow, with 60% outside the region and 40% within the region.

Although the Vandal Cooking Classes were created as a way to engage people during the pandemic, events will continue after quarantine and COVID-19 pandemic.

To learn more about the upcoming cooking class, visit or register on their website.

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Eimite Darney | Argonaut

Donate blood today: see upcoming local blood drives

Vitalant calls for blood donors due to pandemic lull

Esther David
ARGONAUT

Vitalant, a nonprofit company, regularly partners with University of Idaho and other companies as blood drive coordinators. On Feb. 17, Vitalant came to the ISUB for its first blood drive for 2021 on campus.

Joe Fairbanks, Vitalant territory manager, sets up blood drives in the Washington-Idaho area. Blood donors are always needed to maintain an adequate blood supply for patients, but during the holidays and the COVID-19 pandemic, donor numbers have dropped sharply.

"Even though we are going through the pandemic, people are forgetting about donating blood," Fairbanks said.

According to Fairbanks, a lot of folks seem hesitant to give donations at this time, worried about safety. During the current health crisis, Vitalant has put into place several safety measures to ensure the process is secure. These include well-ventilated areas, good physical distancing, wearing a mask and a health questionnaire.

"We're going to ask you about your health whether during the pandemic or not," Fairbanks said.

Donating blood is important, and every two seconds a patient in the U.S. needs blood. Donations are tested, processed, stored and then distributed to up to three people within 42 days of donation. For some UI students, donating blood can be counted as credit or community participation hours for courses, Fairbanks



Pexels | Courtesy

A person attending a blood drive

said, providing a further incentive to donate.

Donors can sign up online, which is encouraged, although walk-ins are available. Before becoming a blood donor,

participants need to make sure they are eligible to donate blood. Donors must be at least 16-years-old, and minors must have paperwork signed by a parent or legal guardian, while also meeting height

and weight guidelines, and health history requirements. There must be at least 56 days between donations, which means donors can donate up to six times per year.

If people are unable to donate blood but are passionate about doing so, they can volunteer to host a blood drive and spread the word by talking to friends or a family, called a blood buddy, to donate blood in their name. This is a great way to keep up the energy about donating blood, said Fairbanks. People unable to donate blood can also look into donating plasma, platelet or marrow.

"Make sure that you eat. Stay hydrated. Those things are very important for a safe donation," Fairbanks said.

Events such as the one at UI this week will serve eight people every hour for safety. The process from start to finish takes roughly 45 minutes, and includes completing paperwork, a health screening and donating.

In case potential donors miss Wednesday's event, there are a variety of blood drives on the Palouse. Every week, there is a blood drive at Moscow's Best Western, with the next one on Monday, Feb. 22. Monthly, there is a blood drive at UI. The next two blood drives on campus at the ISUB will be Tuesday, March 2 and Thursday, April 8. For more information about donations, or to sign up to be a donor, visit Vitalant's website.

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The Latah Recovery Center is looking for Volunteers!

Those interested in psychology, sociology, addictions, mental health, and behavioral health may be particularly interested.

The Latah Recovery Community Center, Inc. (The Center) is a private, nonprofit organization serving people who are in recovery from alcohol and other drug use or mental health disorders.



To volunteer, contact Karlie Smith:
vista.latahrecoverycenter@gmail.com
(208) 883-1045



Sports

Keeping an eye out for antlers



Eimile Darney | Argonaut

Shed hunting provides a good way to get outdoors, exercise, earn a little extra cash

Ryan Hill
ARGONAUT

Shed hunting is a winter activity where hikers, hunters and outdoor people alike can play nature's version of "I Spy." Deer, elk and moose all drop their antlers every winter in order to grow bigger ones, and people have made a hobby out of finding the sheds.

Shed hunters, new and experienced, take on the risk of getting lost in potentially unfamiliar areas while looking deep in the woods. Forests are easy to get lost in, but with an abundance of tracking apps available on cell phones shed hunting has become a more popular hobby.

Bradley Dammerman, the owner of Idaho Whitetail Guides, said shed hunting has been around for a long time, but recently the sport has been gaining traction because of the decreased likeliness of getting lost.

There are many reasons people pick up shed hunting as a hobby, whether it's a way to get some good exercise or to collect trophies without harming any animals. Dave Carr, an employee at Idaho Whitetail Guides, said hunters like him shed hunt not only for the trophies, but to see which bucks survived the hunting season by using their antlers as a sort of identification, telling them apart by certain unique features.

"Sometimes people have bucks that they're chasing and they don't get during deer season," Carr said. "And for me, it's fun to pick up

their sheds after the fact and see if they made it through the season."

Local hunter Johnny Saltharella described shed hunting as an Easter egg hunt. He's been shed hunting for 25 years since learning about the sport from his dad. He said he likes shed hunting because it gives him more reasons to be outside.

"It's one of the things you can do to learn about the land and the animals that are out there, is to find their sheds," Saltharella said. "It's a nice time when there's not a lot of pressure in the woods and sees who made it through, without going out in the early morning or the evening and disrupting when they are feeding or bedding down, you can just go out there and look for animals."

Dammerman said other reasons people shed hunt is to decorate their walls, furniture and utensils with the sheds. Using antlers as decorations can create some rustic, cabin-like designs and provides another way for people to get creative with incorporating the rugged outdoors into the comfort of their own homes. Saltharella said he knows plenty of hunters who make jewelry and knife handles, among other things, out of the antlers.

Another reason why people do it is for money. Antlers have many uses and can be sold for a pretty penny. Prices vary based on the color of the antlers, which is a good indication of the age and wear.

"They are worth so much a pound,"

Dammerman said. "There are guys out there looking for them on the weekend to help pay bills."

The value

varies depending on the species and the condition of the sheds. Dammerman said a good set of antlers that haven't been chewed on by squirrels and bleached by the sun, go from \$10 to \$15 a pound. It might not seem like much, but if a person can find a good stack of them during their shedding season the cash can add up quickly, sometimes reaching up to thousands of dollars.

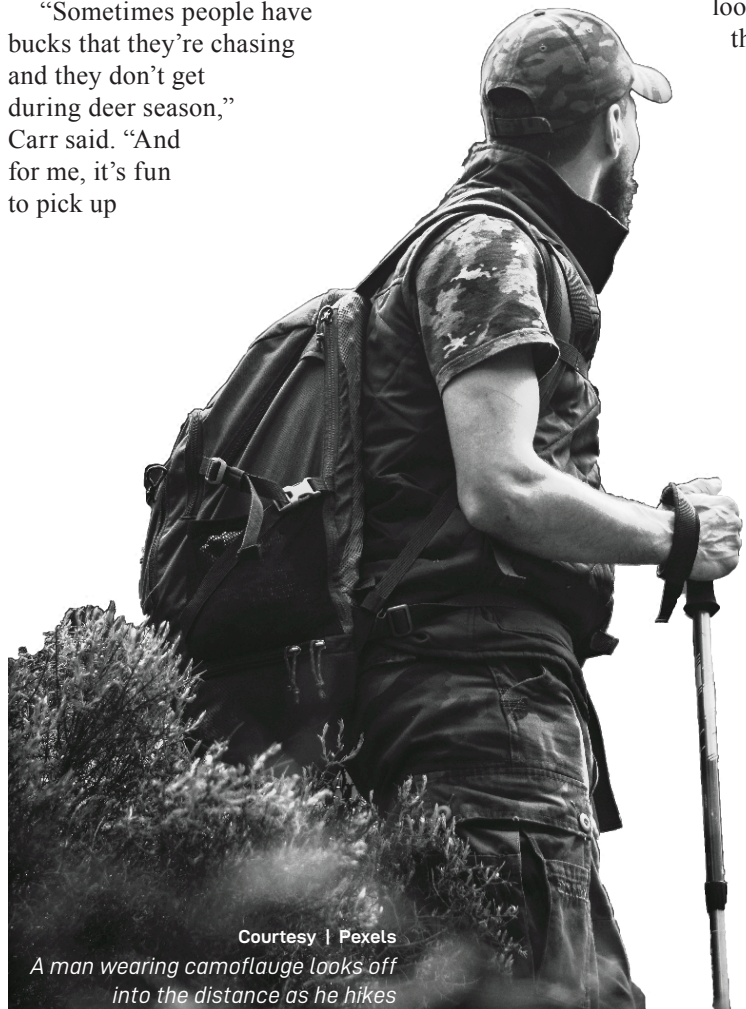
However, Saltharella said people looking to find antlers need to get them quickly. Squirrels, rabbits, porcupines and coyotes chew on antlers as a source of calcium. If they hang out in the sun too long, they can become bleached and brittle. Damage from the surroundings can seriously devalue the antlers.

On top of people who shed hunt as a hobby, others take this activity seriously and are quite competitive. Saltharella

said he knew hunters who would fly or parachute into remote areas where large quantities of antlers are located, then gather as many sheds as they can within two weeks.

Different animals shed their antlers at different times of the year. Saltharella and Dammerman both said moose usually begin shedding their antlers in December, though Dammerman said he's seen them shed in November as well. Saltharella said elk normally shed around Easter. Both said deer tend to shed in January, but it depends on the winter and how cold it gets because those factors determine when the animals shed their antlers.

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Courtesy | Pexels

A man wearing camouflage looks off into the distance as he hikes



Anteia McCollum | Argonaut

(Top) The farm fields around Cottonwood Creek and Gifford-Reubens Road provide a lot of feed for deer, and as a result is a popular place for shed hunters to visit during the winter and spring months (Bottom) The mountains surrounding the North Fork, a large tributary which flows into the Clearwater River, are filled with deer, elk and some moose who all shed their antlers after their mating seasons

Junior is only “senior” on the team

Swimmer plans to graduate early, aiming for master's degree at University of Utah

Sierra Pesnell
ARGONAUT

Katie Hale, a junior swimmer at the University of Idaho majoring in environmental science, is the only “senior” on this year’s swim and dive team, which is made up of mostly freshmen and sophomores. Because she is graduating early, Hale will be competing in her last swim meet as a Vandal at the Western Athletic Conference Championships on Feb. 17-20.

Hale said she enjoyed being a leader for her team, even through the adverse challenges posed by COVID-19 restrictions on practices and meets over the season. Most of their meets were canceled for the 2020-21 season and they spent the majority of their time in practice much farther apart than usual, putting Hale and her team in a unique position to form renewed bonds.

“I’ve really enjoyed kind of being a leader on the team,” Hale said. “And I’m really grateful that we have a season and that our campus has been open, and that we’ve been able to train still.”

Hale grew up in Park City, Utah, and began swimming after her mother got her interested in the sport when she was a child. Her brother was able to get involved as well, forming a sibling duo in the pool. As Hale grew older, she became more committed to the sport and participated in competitions throughout high school, eventually catching the eye of recruiters from several colleges.

“It was just something really fun that my brother and I got to do together,” Hale said.

Hale said while she was a high school

student, UI head swim coach Mark Sowa persistently recruited her to swim for the Vandals. After a visit to UI’s campus and being able to see the swim team in person, Hale said she knew quickly this was the right place for her. She said she immediately got along well with the rest of the team and they accepted her as part of the Vandal family swiftly.

Hale was also interested in UI’s academic side. She said she was searching for a college with a quality environmental science degree and UI was just the place to get what she wanted. UI provided many opportunities to learn more about environmental science while getting hands-on research at a land grant university.

“It was a really easy decision for me, and I’m super glad that I ended up here,” Hale said. “I clicked really well with the girls that were here and with Mark, and the environmental science program here is amazing.”

Hale said the transition from high school swim to college competition was a slight adjustment for her. She said the physical distance, especially over such a long period of time, between her and her family was one of the most challenging things to deal with. She said balancing a new training schedule as a collegiate athlete with a very different life routine, compared to high school, was also challenging, but she was able to get used to it the longer she stayed.

“I definitely was not used to the hours and I had never lifted weights before,” Hale said. “It was really different being so far away from home, I had never really been away from home without my family before.”

Traveling to the University of Utah is the next step in Hale’s adventure. She’ll be striving toward receiving her master’s degree while continuing to swim for the



Courtesy | Vandal Athletics

Junior swimmer Katie Hale competing in finals during the 2020 WAC Championships

Utes. Hale will be able to complete two additional years as a collegiate athlete because the NCAA recognizing the 2020-2021 season as a redshirt season due to COVID-19 and graduating from UI one year early.

Hale said that, overall, she had a great experience at UI both on the swim team and in her degree program. She said the toughest challenges she faced were COVID-19 restrictions posed during her final season with the Vandals, but that she will remember her time there fondly despite them.

“I’ve had the best time swimming here and being a student-athlete, and it’s just been an amazing school,” Hale said. “It’s definitely been an interesting season. And we’ve definitely had to make some sacrifices and change our training.”

Hale said Sowa’s mentorship throughout her college career, both in and out of the pool, is what helped her get through college quick enough to graduate early, a

feat not many students accomplish.

“He’s been nothing but supportive and has taught me a lot about what it means to be a teammate and what it means to be a person,” Hale said. “He’s really given me the tools to be as successful as I am in the pool, and also academically.”

The WAC Championships take place in St. George, Utah Feb. 17-20. Hale will be competing in the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle and 100-yard backstroke. Each season there have been unique highlights for Hale during the WAC Championships.

“The energy is always super different. It’s kind of like the buildup of the season. So that’s something I look forward to,” Hale said. “There’s a lot of uncertainties with the meet. But I think that just makes it even more exciting.”

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WEEKLY WORKOUT

Starter Spartan spree

The perfect workout to begin getting in shape for competing in a spartan race

Anteia McCollum
ARGONAUT

A Spartan race is a race with varying distances and plenty of obstacles. They can vary between three miles or marathon length, with several hurdles to overcome, like mud pits or rope climbing.

This workout can be done anywhere at any time, including outdoors or in the comfort of the living room. To personalize the workout add weights or adjust repetitions and time.

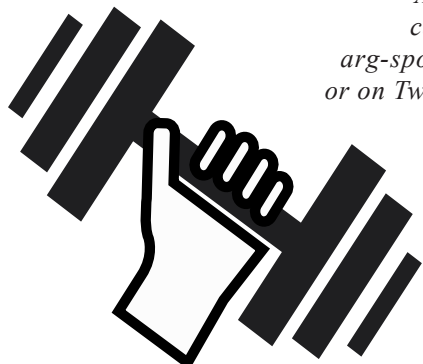
As a warm up, jog or jump rope for about five minutes.

- 10 burpees
- 20 crunches
- 30 second plank
- 30 second high knees
- 2 minutes jump rope

Do these movements three times through to complete the workout, with a minute of recovery between sets.

To help with recovery, stretch or do a few cool down exercises. drink plenty of water and eat protein-rich foods.

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Recovering from shoveling snow

Moscow's recent snow abundance has everybody sore from shoveling

Anteia McCollum
ARGONAUT

Moscow has received what seems like a winter’s worth of snow over the course of the last week. While some are glad to see it after a concerning and prolonged absence, most dread the hindrances snow poses, especially when that fluffy white stuff is piled up in the driveway or hiding the wheels of the cars parked on the streets.

Keeping yourself warm while outside in the winter burns calories on its own, so add in the intensity of shoveling the snow piled up around the car, on the sidewalks or in the streets and suddenly, a workout is born.

According to LiveStrong, someone who weighs 185 pounds can burn over 250 calories from a half-hour of shoveling. Shoveling snow works your whole body, and even after just a little of the activity can make someone’s arms, back, shoulders and legs sore the next day.

Sore or stiff muscles are caused by “microscopic damage” because of a change in exercise intensity or using them in new ways, according to the National Health Service. The stiff or sore feeling usually lasts from anywhere between three and five days.

Because Moscow citizens aren’t



Anteia McCollum | Argonaut

Roads on campus are nearly snow-free, but sidewalks are nonexistent

shoveling snow all year long, using muscles in ways they aren’t used to by clearing out enough room to walk results in body-wide stiffness. If it’s hard to get out of bed the next morning after shoveling all day, there are a few things someone can do to make it a little easier next time.

The first is getting enough rest. The body needs time to heal all those microscopic tears in the muscles after working out, and rest is essential to helping with that process. Getting rest also improves performance, reduces the risk of injury and prevents muscle fatigue, according to Healthline.

Rest doesn’t necessarily mean sitting on the couch doing nothing. Stretching is also important when it comes to healing sore muscles.

Yoga is good for stretching sore muscles while also improving breathing and flexibility.

Taking an ice bath or using ice packs on muscles that are especially sore is also a good way to help alleviate pain. The same microscopic tears which cause soreness can also cause inflammation and slight swelling. Ice, whether used as a cold press or in the form of an ice bath, helps slow the circulation and helps to relieve swelling and pain.

To read more of this article visit
thevandalnation.com

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THURSDAY Feb. 18	FRIDAY Feb. 19	SATURDAY Feb. 20	SUNDAY Feb. 21	MONDAY Feb. 22	TUESDAY Feb. 23	WEDNESDAY Feb. 24
Women’s Basketball vs. Portland State @ Moscow, ID 6 p.m.	Track & Field/Cross Country - Bobcat Bonus @ Bozeman, MT All day	Women’s Basketball vs. Portland State @ Portland, OR Noon	Volleyball vs. Northern Arizona @ Moscow, ID 2 p.m.	Volleyball vs. Northern Arizona @ Moscow, ID 6 p.m.	Men’s Golf - Joust at Goose Creek @ Riverside, CA All day	Men’s Basketball vs. Montana State @ Moscow, ID 6 p.m.
Men’s Basketball vs. Portland State @ Portland, OR 7:05 p.m.	Soccer vs. Washington State University @ Pullman, WA 7 p.m.	Men’s Basketball vs. Portland State @ Moscow, ID Noon		Men’s Golf - Joust at Goose Creek @ Riverside, CA All day		
Swim - WAC Championships @ St. George, UT TBA	Swim - WAC Championships @ St. George, UT TBA	Swim - WAC Championships @ St. George, UT TBA				



Opinion

‘Heartbeat’ abortion ban is unpractical, unfeasible

Old men with enough money to afford kids shouldn't be making decisions for women

In the Idaho Legislature’s latest act of folly, the Senate State Affairs committee provided favorable recommendation Monday toward a bill banning abortion after a fetal heartbeat can be detected.

Similar legislation has been invalidated in courts across the country. If the ban is approved, it would take only one case in one court where the legislation is upheld and it would be pushed into effect.

The bill is a ridiculous proposition that would severely limit the option of abortion for women of all ages; disregarding many valid reasons for why someone would be seeking an abortion, despite whether their beliefs say life begins at conception, birth or somewhere in between.

According to the American Pregnancy Association, most women discover their pregnancy between four and seven weeks. A fetal heartbeat could first be

detected as early as five and a half weeks. Many women do not realize they are pregnant before the heartbeat is detected.

The proposed bill would make an exception for cases of pregnancy as a result of sexual assault or incest, but only if the woman was able to provide proof in the form of court documentation, a law enforcement report to a physician or if a doctor certifies the woman was unable to report the crime for health reasons.

What this tells me is a sexual assault victim would need to report the crime almost immediately in order to have the possibility of getting documentation from the courts or a police report.

This poses a major issue for the mental health of a woman who was assaulted in an incredibly personal way and, if she is even able to report the incident immediately, finding out she was pregnant in the middle of it all.

If the thought of a woman choosing abortion makes you uncomfortable, try imagining getting pregnant through sexual assault just to find out the government is forcing you to carry your

assaulter’s baby to full term because there is no court or police documentation. The amount of proof a woman needs to provide in the short timeframe she would have to discover the baby’s heartbeat is absurd.

Of course, adoption is an option. But carrying a child to full term is a difficult thing for nearly every woman and more often than not leaves permanent marks on their bodies.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly one-third of all births are performed via cesarean section. Those are permanent scars reminding the victim of what they were forced to go through after their horrifying experience. Not to mention the number of children who remain in the foster care system until they are too old, left to fend for themselves without a family.

Children are insanely expensive. Hospital bills, baby food, cribs, diapers, wipes and all of the other things someone would need to raise an infant are costly. The costs only multiply as they get older.

“Middle-income, married-couple parents of a child born in 2015 may expect to spend \$233,610 for food, shelter, and other necessities to raise a

child through age 17,” according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Living is hard, being a mother who is responsible for another life is harder. The responsibilities of being a mom cost a person time, emotional health, money and so many other things a person may not be ready to give up. The reason for not wanting to give those things up is nobody’s business.

I wouldn’t consider myself fully pro-choice because I would never choose abortion for myself. I would prefer a woman keep her baby too. But I am lucky enough to have a wonderful group of people close to me who are more than willing to help if I were to discover an unexpected pregnancy.

Who am I to tell other women, in similar or different situations, they need to make the same choices I do? I’m nobody in that aspect. I can’t tell other women what to do when it comes to having children, and a bunch of old guys shouldn’t be able to either.

Anteia McCollum can be reached at arg-opinion@uidaho.edu or on Twitter @antxi5



Anteia McCollum ARGONAUT

2021 spring break vision

Spring break will be more relaxed this year, though we should still exercise caution to contain the virus

Lockdown last year still causes nightmares. Introverts thrived from the “forced to stay home” rule. Extroverts suffocated from a lack of human interaction aside from their family.

Now that I’m thinking about it, I’m both.

I love spending time by myself reading a book, watching Netflix or taking walks around downtown Moscow. The other side of me will talk your ears off, order random food from a menu or go shopping for hours with friends.

It’s hard to believe 2020 was only a year ago. It feels like hundreds of years stuffed into 365 days.

I remember going home on the Holiday Break bus, unsure of my return to the University of Idaho campus after the week break ended.

An email encouraging students to stay home and do online classes for the rest of the semester arrived in my inbox. I was thankful I had brought most of my stuff that I needed home instead of in my dorm room.

When I stepped off the Holiday Break bus at Shaka’s gas station in mid-March, I planned to hang out with friends. All of those plans were crushed under the bus tires as it rolled away.

The first cases erupted in the U.S. and all bets were off for a normal spring and summer.

Traveling plans canceled, walking into stores ceased, everyone afraid of their own shadow. It felt like living in a ghost town. Hardly any cars on the street. Businesses shut down. Everything became silent.

As 2020 rolled on, business opened, people started spending time with friends and family outside their home, some colleges had their students return to campus. Our world tested its limits.

I don’t think this virus will go away easily. It will take time, perseverance, dedication and everyone doing their part to eliminate it quickly, even as it changes.

We are already in the middle of February 2021. If nothing else severe happens, the year should fly by faster than last year.

I think we can get out more to the places we love this spring break. Caution is key. We can relax but not be careless.

Shops will start allowing more people to enter, maybe more seating will be available. Masks will still be worn in a lot of places, though maybe not required.

You, friends and family, may start living a more back-to-normal life than you did the previous year.

Social distancing will still be important. Curbside and takeout will still be a viable option for those who want to be extra cautious or just want a cozy night indoors away from the eyes of the public.

Those who wished to travel last year around spring break are no longer restricted in Idaho. There are CDC guidelines still to follow but you can go take that trip you have been wanting to take.

I hope the vaccine for the virus means a brighter, safer future for all. Some put their hope in a new president and administration to create a different virus-stricken world.

It’s up to us to make the change this world needs to heal. If spring break brings sunshine, get outdoors and soak it up with friends and family, taking hikes or going to your favorite restaurant or place for drinks.

Don’t let last year and this year’s thunderstorms rain on your parade. Turn the clouds into cotton candy, so they melt away and bring forth better days.

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Kim Stager ARGONAUT

Finally, some dam solutions

It's time to break out of the toxic relationship we have with hydropower

The Pacific Northwest has a power problem. We have plenty of electricity, sure, and our electric bills are considerably lower than they would be anywhere else in the country. Our leaders call themselves champions of sustainable energy and the region’s last coal plants were shut down in 2020, so at face value, it looks an awful lot like we’ve got our power situation figured out.

And yet, I don’t think we are role models for anyone.

With what we know about river ecosystems and fish migrations today, we don’t get to pat ourselves on the back for relying on hydroelectric dams. What many have long considered “the lesser of two evils” has wreaked havoc on salmon and lamprey populations for decades and fundamentally changed our river ecosystems.

Dam breaching in the PNW is always going to be controversial, but I believe it is essential. While we currently depend on our eight Columbia and Snake River dams for hydropower, the time has come to re-evaluate that relationship.

I am excited by a plan announced by Idaho Rep. Mike Simpson, which proposes to breach the four Lower Snake River dams. It’s bold, it’s detailed and it’s exactly the kind of problem-solving we need our national and state leaders to be putting forward to address the climate crisis. At the center of the multi-state and industry-spanning plan is a love of Idaho’s salmon and a desire to do everything we can to prevent their

untimely extinction.

I don’t love every detail of Simpson’s plan: the 35-year ban on lawsuits against federal projects on the Columbia River and the room in the proposal for nuclear power development worries me. But I don’t have to love everything about the plan to support it, and I believe that it would benefit Idaho and the entire PNW greatly to have this conversation in Congress.

Environmentalists have spent too much time-fighting in court to win only small

conservation victories that are ultimately not enough to save our river ecosystems. This plan offers too much to be dismissed on a partisan basis, or to be thrown out with the bathwater before it can be drafted as actual legislation.

It makes me hopeful that this region’s diverse stakeholders are discussing and considering this plan’s compromises in good faith, and to see how many people genuinely care about saving Idaho’s salmon. This is our chance to innovate and build a future we’re proud of while securing a future for one of the PNW’s most iconic and beloved species.

It will take all of us putting our heads together to make this plan a reality, from tribe and state officials to conservation organizations and universities across the Columbia River Basin. It will take time, effort and at least \$33.5 billion to grow this conversation into a Snake River recovery. It will take a lot from our PNW community and require us to make some changes to our way of life, but it will be worth it. Nothing short of our Idaho environmental legacy is at stake.

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Beth Hoots ARGONAUT

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Stage 3 doesn't change the importance of COVID-19

Despite taking a step forward, we don't want to take two steps back

Last week, Idaho moved up to Stage 3, bringing cheers and excitement from business owners and college students alike. Although this phase is crucial and beneficial for small businesses to remain open, we must not forget that we are still in a global pandemic. This pandemic will not end simply because we "are over it," and because places are slowly opening back up.

When Idaho moved up and down COVID-19 Stages in the past, many abandoned all protocols and cautions. That same reckless behavior is the reason why we have fluctuated through stages so heavily.

There is nothing gained with moving forwards with COVID-19 protocols if we must move back again within a month to rising cases. I fully understand that people are desperate to get back to normal and embrace the activities they've missed, but their overexcitement could prove costly to everyone in the long run.

Throughout this pandemic, we are going to

have to accept that going back to "normal" will never fully be possible. COVID-19 will stay around, it is up to us to vaccinate and take care of those most vulnerable around us, to curve the death rate.

Vaccine distribution is underway, but we must stay vigilant and safe. Going overboard with activities and social events will prove to be nothing but destructive in this process.

I hope everyone holds the safety of others in the back of their minds. Continue ordering from local restaurants, supporting small businesses and donating to extra-curricular; however, do not forget that these same organizations will struggle more if they are once again forced to close within a week due to people's irresponsibility.

Keep others safe this winter and don't sacrifice our livelihoods for your holiday parties and unnecessary events. Remain vigilant during the next few months, as we slowly move towards a future that allows us to enjoy the activities and celebrations of the past.

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Dani Moore
ARGONAUT

I love telemarketers

Robocalls and scams alike are great opportunity to have a little fun

I love telemarketers. I always have and I always will. There is something tremendously whimsical about a stranger selling you a scam.

I understand that a repetitive phone call from a man you can't quite understand may be annoying. If they catch you in the wrong mood or doing something really important, it's justifiable to be upset. However, I implore you to take a grander look.

Oh, what car do I have? A 2019 Lamborghini Huracan. How many miles do I have on it? A mere 10,000—I barely just rolled it off the lot. Do I need car insurance? You betcha! How did you know?

Do I want to lower my credit card rates? Of course, I do! How

much credit card debt do I have? A measly \$1 million—nothing I can't pay off with time, right? Wait, why did you hang up?

A phone call from a telemarketer gives me a chance to flex my creative muscles. I am whoever I want to be. I have as much money as I want to have. I am as annoying as I possibly can conceive.

Fret not, I don't mess with telemarketers maliciously. Quite frankly, that would be rude. And a little unnecessary. I like to think of it as a little tug back and forth; locker room talk with the fella across the line.

Despite my best intentions, I have been hung up on. I have even been cussed out. That is terribly ironic that they are upset with me for annoying them. Especially when considering that latest trends indicate telemarketers have increasingly become more annoying in past months.

YouMail Robocall Index reports telemarketer calls going up 12% from

the months of September to October. Some can see this as a bad thing, maybe even something terrible.

This is a blessing, everyone. Do not take it for granted.

Answer that phone call. Tell him how your day was. Go as far as asking them how their day was! If anything, this is a chance to converse with someone you'll never know that sounds like a wonderful opportunity to me.

And hey, don't feel bad about messing with them afterwards. Those who are good at heart will struggle with this task. I get it, they're a real person with real feelings. So am I. I just happen to be a person with a new 2019 Lamborghini Huracan and an insurmountable amount of credit card debt.

At least, that's who I want them to think I am. As far as their concerned, that's who I'll always be. To my next victim, I look forward to our enthralling conversation; please don't hang up on me—I love telemarketers.

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It's not ADHD all the time

The stigma ADHD traits that social media perpetrates are not all accurate to the disorder

Memes, TikToks, Instagram posts, and the like are full of jokes and "relatable moments" for people with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. People who have been properly diagnosed or have friends who have been can clearly see the information gaps and misrepresented behaviors or symptoms.

ADHD has a long-time reputation of being easily stuck onto children who are disruptive, impulsive or perceived as hyperactive. It's true, it's not an easy thing to accurately diagnose. Young girls go underdiagnosed and young boys get over-diagnosed because they tend to display more of the "traditional" symptoms. Boys are more likely on average to act out physically and have poor impulse control.

The stigma surrounding ADHD perpetuates that victims are easily distracted, can't sit still, and... well that's pretty much it. ADHD is portrayed online by someone acting spazzy or not moving or behaving like the norm. As someone who has been diagnosed twice by medical and psychological professionals with ADHD, I see the danger these posts harbor. The biggest threat of all is showing symptoms that, despite being a large part of the disorder, are only the tip of the iceberg.

These traits are also "relatable"

to a wide range of people with and without ADHD. This leads to many people self-diagnosing with little to no other research. As a consumer of this type of content, I am also a doubter of the validity of these accounts ADHD diagnoses. More times than not, the problems described on these posts complain or laugh at the easy-to-understand issues facing those with the disorder.

I do see content from time to time referencing the more nuanced problems neurotypical people would not be able to understand fully. Posts I see that talk about the disorganization, forgetfulness, disassociation, highs, and lows in energy, lack of social awareness and mind-numbing boredom are the posts that are believable. Post's that laugh at ADHD victims' inability to accomplish small everyday

tasks such as laundry and homework, inability to manage time, overthinking and over-analyzing, anger issues or impulsivity are insulting. When I see memes or videos referencing ADHD brains sensitivity to light, sound, temperature, uncomfortable clothing, smells, and so many other things I feel a little less crazy and a little more normal.

I cannot tell you how much I hear and have heard my whole life. Whether it's people saying, "Oh my gosh, I got so distracted. I must have ADHD or something," or my dripping with sarcasm favorite "Sorry! ADD moment." No, getting distracted from your conversation by a happenstance sound or sight does not mean you have ADHD. It's hard to open up to someone who does not have this neurological difference and cannot begin to put themselves in the very chaotic dizzying and most of the time overwhelming shoes of an ADHD brain, only to have them say "I get distracted too," "I get peaks

and valleys of energy too," "I get hyper-focused too."

It makes me and other ADHD friends of mine feel overlooked and belittled. If I am talking to you about my experience or struggles with my brain because of its chemistry and design I don't need a non-diagnosed person comparing their distractibility or high energy to my disorienting experience as an ADHD person.

The posts I see make things worse. It shows how mental health and wellbeing is not something 15-year-olds on Tiktok and out-of-touch Instagram captions should be discussing and taken credibly. People should at least look into understanding the issues they discuss online because it can lead to further misunderstandings, especially concerning something as complex and hard to understand as ADHD and ADD.

I would ask many people to do three very simple things. One, stop self-diagnosing mental disorders and mental diseases. Talk to trained and reputable medical personal for any suspicions you may have.

Two, do your research and get it from trusted sources on whatever you post about.

Three, stop simplifying ADHD or considering it made up. I hate to break it to you but we are no longer in the early 2000s, it's 2021. There is more than enough research and studies that prove ADHD is a thing many people must live their lives around and for many, it is hard to do.

I don't tell someone having a seizure that their condition is made up and that sometimes I get an eye twitch so I can completely relate. Awareness and educating ourselves can solve nearly every problem our modern society has with stigma, including ADHD.

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**EPIC
GEAR
EVERY DAY**

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CRUMBS

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