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BL T MAGAZINE

Kendall Store



The Nostalgia Issue

THE TEAM



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EDITOR'S NOTE

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Dear Readers,

My fuzzy socks glide my feet across the hardwood floor of my grandparent's house. Huddling in the corner of the living room I quickly unplug the silver stereo set and run off for my room down the hall. Quickly plugging it into the wall, I grab one of my two CDs and begin blaring Taylor Swift's Fearless album, singing and dancing along.

We all have memories we hold sacred in our hearts, snapshots in time we chose to relive over and over in our minds. In this issue of Blot we take a look at the past with our nostalgia issue.

In this issue we reflect on the experiences of past and current students. Alumni share their fondest memories at University of Idaho.

Current students reflect on their style choices and the way '90s trends have found their way into modern fashion. We take a look at the roller rink with an article on the roller derby team, Palouse River Rollers.

Humans of Moscow hosts a discussion with former UI history professor Richard Spence who specializes in espionage, secret societies and the occult.

And of course, this issue is full of creative content including a quiz on which '90s comeback trend you are, a flash fiction piece about keepsakes and a poem about fall.

I hope you enjoy the issue and keep an eye out for more stories on our website.

B. Finnegan

Brianna Finnegan
Editor-in-Chief

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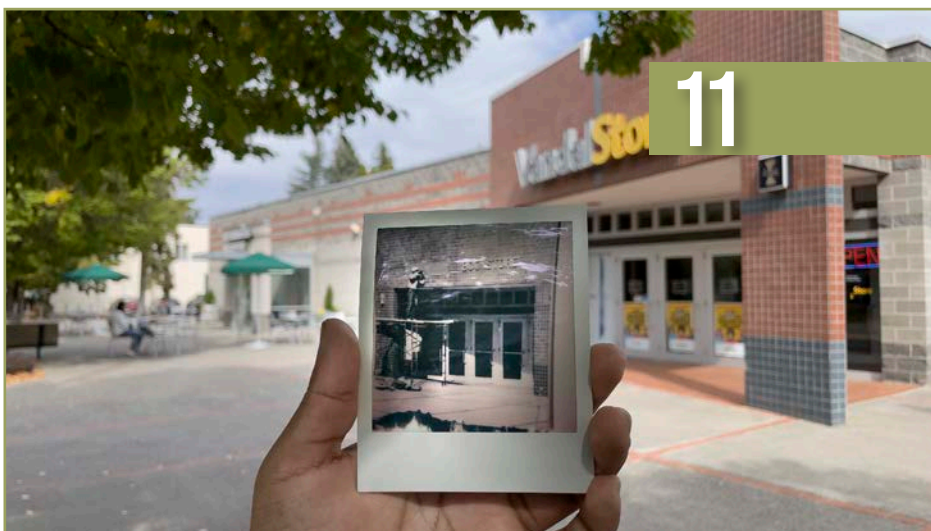
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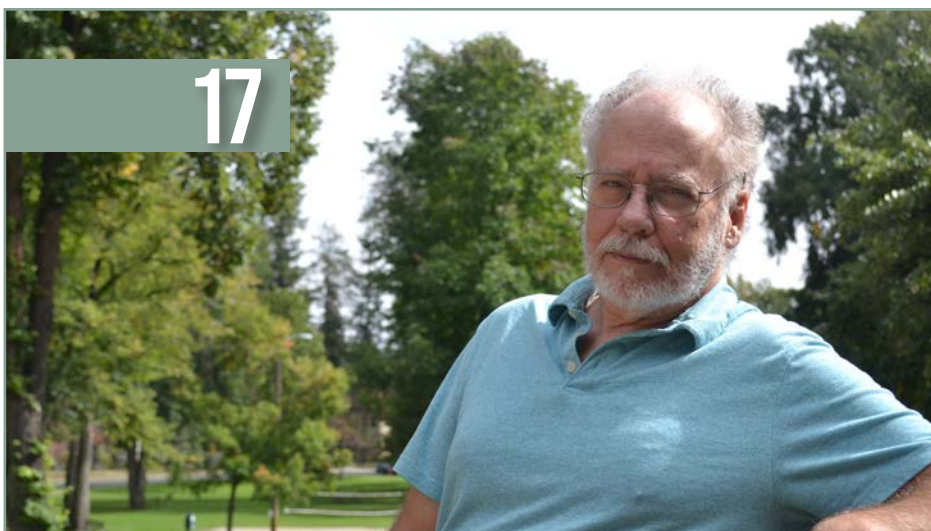
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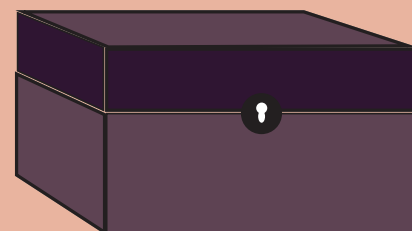
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GETTIN' DOWN AND DERBY

ROLLER DERBY LEAGUE, PALOUSE RIVER ROLLERS REFLECT ON THE LAST YEAR & HOW THEY'RE GEARING UP FOR COMEBACK SEASON

It's a quiet Sunday morning in Pullman, Washington. The sun is shining, birds are chirping from a nearby patch of pine trees and crisp, cold air lingers in the shaded parking lot of the Gladish Community Center. Approaching the propped open door to the community center's gymnasium, the faint echo of heavy metal music and wheels scuffing hardwood floors can be heard, along with indistinguishable hollers and cheers. Once inside, the calm morning takes on an entirely new mood as skaters weave past one another to the sound of blaring electric guitars, heavy stomps of wheels and shouts of encouragement from their fellow teammates and coaches.

This is the sound of roller derby, a high-contact sport in which two teams race around a circular track on roller skates.

During the pandemic, interest in roller skating saw an unprecedented spike, with searches for skates hitting the top 100 on the Google Trends interest-over-time chart in May of 2020, and

Story By | *Abby Fackler*
Photos By | *Abby Fackler & Anteia McCollum*
Design By | *Dani Moore*

some retailers claiming to be in "a skate shortage worldwide," according to Vogue. But Palouse River Rollers, a non-profit flat track roller derby league based out of Pullman, was into skating before it went viral, founding the league in 2014. Through the league's performance in bouts, or roller derby competitions, and the community they've fostered within the environment, PRR shows that skating is more than a trend – it's a way of life.

Sarah Boyer and Mimi Dissmore, new skater coaches more affectionately known as 'Whiskey Smash' and 'Shark Bait' within the derby community, found their way to PRR not long after it was founded.

"This will be my eighth season, so I've been skating seven years, and Whiskey's been skating six," Dissmore said.

In their time at PRR, they've been a part of countless bouts that have taken place in the Pacific Northwest region, helping their team rank in the top 150 teams in the world.

"We traveled up to eight hours, but we also played tournaments against international teams, we played against a European team, which was a really cool experience," Dissmore said.

Before the pandemic, bouts for PRR, which are skaters safe enough on roller skates to participate in bouts, would practice four to six hours per week to prepare for competitions and new skaters would practice twice a week to learn new



DISSMORE CIRCLES ABOUT NEW SKATERS TAKING A BREAK

skills. The teams would travel two to three times a month to compete in different bouts. However, despite increased interest in the sport over the last year, the pandemic delivered a near-fatal blow to roller derby.

“2020 happened and we weren’t on skates, (due to) a lot of the closures our governing body put a kibosh on skating practice,” Manda Argona, president of PRR, said. “I got to participate in two bouts before everything got shut down.”

According to Argona, skating practice picked back up again in July of 2020, but it’s looked much different than it did before COVID-19.

Prior to the pandemic, there were two teams – All Stars, the more competitive option, and Rampage, for people interested in a more relaxed vibe, according to Dissmore and Boyer. Now PRR only consists of one team but is divided into bouts and new skaters. Because of no-contact regulations put into place since practices resumed, there hasn’t been a bout since the start of the pandemic.

“I had higher hopes before the pandemic,” Argona said. “But I would love for us to get back to the point where we’re hosting bouts and playing against other folks. I know it’s going to take

probably six more months, maybe up to another year. But I definitely think we’re seeing folks that are interested and have the time now to dedicate to the sport.”

While the dynamic of bouts and practices were challenged over the last year, interest in PRR only strengthened. According to Argona, PRR is gaining so many members at once that it’s been difficult to keep up with.

“This is the most new skaters our league has had at one time,” Argona said. “We’re almost at capacity.”

Among those new skaters is Megan Russo, who moved to the area in November of 2020 and was looking for opportunities to meet new people after being isolated during the pandemic. One of their friends recommended they consider roller derby.

“I Googled it and I was like, ‘alright, let’s do this,’” Russo said.



NEW SKATER COACHES MIMI DISSMORE AND SARAH BOYER PRACTICE CONTACT TYPICALLY USED IN A BOUT.

**“I GOOGLED IT AND I WAS LIKE,
‘ALRIGHT, LET’S DO THIS,’ ”
-MEGAN RUSSO**

While Russo was excited to participate in the sport, they were also worried about whether they would be accepted into it.

“I’m nonbinary, so I didn’t know if I was allowed – but you are,” Russo said. “They welcome anyone who’s female-presenting nonbinary, just not males.”

While roller derby has a history of being women-dominated, modern roller derby leagues such as PRR provide a welcome space for all female-presenting individuals looking to join. This is part of what has shaped PRR’s sense of community within the league.

SKATERS HUDDLE TO DO A TEAM CHANT AT THE END OF PRACTICE.



“ROLLER DERBY HAS A REALLY INTENSE SENSE OF COMMUNITY,” -SARAH BOYER

“There’s a lot of talk today about creating safe spaces for queer people and for women, and this is one of those spaces,” Boyer said. “It hasn’t always been that way because we’re a league run by humans, and humans make errors. We’ve been really fortunate to have people willing to invest their time and energy in themselves and gather resources to help make this the best and safest place it can be.”

According to Argona, a lot of what the first practices consist of is going over every member’s preferred name and pronouns, and gently reminding each other if they slip up on either.

While the sport itself is what initially hooks people, it’s the caring, inclusive and fun environment PRR radiates that keeps its members passionate about roller derby.

“Roller derby has a really intense sense of community,” Boyer said. “The way we interact with our teammates, and the way our teammates care about each other is a really strong force that pulls you back to practice.”

This is Boyer’s first year as a new skater coach, and during her time she’s found joy in watching new members discover their own love for the sport. This is what motivates her to get out of bed in the morning, even when she’d rather stay home.

“You can never totally leave everything at the door, because that’s not the reality of human nature,” Boyer said. “But when you get here, you’re here to participate and be the best person you can be for that day, for yourself and your teammates, and that’s pretty special.”

The sport hasn’t only connected members to each other, it’s also connected them to themselves. For Dissmore, it helped connect her to her body.

“I learned a lot about myself, and how I can persevere through things and grow,” Dissmore said. “It was a really empowering experience. I contribute a lot of who I am now, seven years later, to learning how to skate. I’m a new skater coach because I want to share that with other folks.”



A NEW SKATER PRACTICES WEAVING THROUGH OPPONENTS.

Russo, who experiences social anxiety, is looking forward to continuing skating to foster deeper connections with other people and with herself.

“I was working one-on-one with Shark Bait, but yes, there are other people here – which is what I’m scared of,” Russo said. “But it wasn’t that scary doing one-on-one and focusing on your body makes you forget what’s around you.”

While PRR is eager to get back to practicing roller derby without restrictions, having such a tight community has allowed them to be okay with sitting back and waiting things out.

“Competing and winning is fun, but also just being here, being on roller skates and being around people who want to do the same thing is fun,” Boyer said. “If it’s not fun, why are we doing it?”

'90'S FASHION A PHOTO STORY

HOW '90'S TRENDS
HAVE GRASPED THE
NEXT GENERATION

Story By | *Nataly Davies*
Photos By | *Nataly Davies*
Design By | *Becca Ebenroth*



CONVERSE SHOES COMPLIMENT THE '90S GRUNGE LOOK.



ASPIRING NEWS ANCHOR JOHN WEBB SAID HIS STYLE IS INFLUENCED BY ABC. WORLD NEWS DAVID MUIY.



MADISON HARDY WEARS HER NEW BLACK PANTS AND DENIM JACKET WITH A MONOCHROME STRIPPED CROP TOP.



HARDY USES JENNIFER ANISTON AS BOTH HER CLOSET AND HAIR INPIRATION.

Paparazzi photos of Jennifer Lopez and Ben Affleck are flooding the media and a new flip phone was announced by Samsung this August. Meanwhile, at the center of the internet, people have implemented '90s statements in their appearance, from bucket hats to Dr. Marten platform boots.

Although the influence of this era has caught young millennials and Generation Z's attention, they are set out to personalize this trend to reflect their aesthetic. This audience has had encouragement from the body positivity and self-acceptance movement to explore and experiment with styles proudly.

*John Webb developed his passion for fashion from an early age, but it wasn't until he left Wallace, Idaho that he began incorporating it into his daily routine.

"When I was a young kid, I knew what I wanted to be when I grew up and that was a news anchor for television," Webb said. "I researched it and went to the stations at our local area where I got to know the people who

were on the air and dressed very nice. I asked myself, 'How will I get to that point in my life?' And at a young age I knew it began with fashion."

The fear of possible critics from a small town left the future broadcasting student in limbo, but once he arrived at the University of Idaho, the energy from those who appreciated self-expression through clothes gave him the boost to open up.

"A LOT OF PEOPLE THEY SAY THAT STYLE IS NOT FOR THEM," BROWN-HAYES SAID. "MOST PEOPLE SAY THAT BECAUSE THEY'VE NEVER EXPERIMENTED. I SAY TRY DIFFERENT STYLES, BECAUSE YOU MIGHT ACTUALLY FALL IN LOVE WITH SOMETHING YOU THOUGHT WOULDN'T WORK FOR YOU."

"I had the basics down like solid neutral colors and then I began to add in items I saw online like loafers and necklaces I saw on influencers," Webb said. "I try to shop at Nordstrom or H&M to find a good deal. I'm not sure what style my closet is but I definitely am drawn to '90s statements."

While students have the ability to experiment with their daily outfits, professionals like Madison Hardy, Coeur d' Alene/Post Falls Press news reporter, have a narrow timeframe to wear their favorite outfits.

"I CARE LESS OF WHAT PEOPLE THINK ABOUT ME IN MY PERSONAL CLOTHES THAN WHEN IN MY PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE," HARDY SAID. "THERE IS MORE FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUALITY. I HAVE CLOTHES THAT ARE MORE '90S-ESQUE OR THAT FIT THE VIBE OF WHERE I'M HEADING."





JUST AS HARDY DOES WITH HER OVERALL LOOK, SHE PERSONALIZED CONVERSE WITH HER NICKNAME.



THE '90S ARE TAKING OVER CLOSETS

"I care less of what people think about me in my personal clothes than when in my professional attire," Hardy said. "There is more freedom and individuality. I have clothes that are more '90s-esque or that fit the vibe of where I'm heading."

Hardy has a greater appreciation for those moments of individuality. She finds inspiration through idols like Jennifer Aniston, who inspired her blow out hair style, and Jennifer Garner. Recently, she purchased a black jean jacket for her '90s goth selection. Owner of The Killer Clothing Collective, Patrick Brown-Hayes understands why certain trends

"EVERY TIME YOU GET DRESSED UP, THAT IS HOW YOU TELL THE WORLD WHAT AND WHO YOU ARE BEFORE YOU SPEAK," BROWN-HAYES SAID.

return, but believes people should look at the original idea for true inspiration. However, with access to an overwhelming amount of shopping sites, it can be intimidating to start searching for the next outfit. "If you wanted to go research the '90s, like, really look at what people were wearing in the '90s go look at Vogue, and Harper's Bazaar in the library," Brown-Hayes said. "Don't go looking at trash on the internet."

**John Webb is a member of the student media board*



PLATFORM SHOES ARE ANOTHER STAPLE STATEMENT SEEN IN '90S OUTFITS.



"EVERYONE ALWAYS TALKS ABOUT HOW THINGS COME BACK AROUND AND THE '90S DEFINITELY ARE RIGHT NOW."

CHANGES
FOR BETTER
OR
FOR WORSE

VANDALS BACK TO THE FUTURE

THOUGH CURRENT STUDENTS AREN'T GETTING JIGGY TO AS MUCH RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS, THERE ARE SHARED EXPERIENCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO REGARDLESS OF YOUR GRADUATING YEAR

Story By | Bailey Brockett
Photos By | Daniel Ramirez, Nataly Davies & Courtesy
Design By | Ashley Isenberger



Wilson said.

They were watching movies like “The Bodyguard” and “Basic Instinct,” and attended or listened to Vandal football games. They were barhopping from Mingles to The Garden, and seeing live bands every weekend, even in the Pitman Center.

“Music was basically the only entertainment,” Lantz said. “We were getting more and more touring bands, and everyone would go to them. It was liberating because you would get up to campus and no one was watching over you, and partying and just getting together all the time is what we did.”

**“MUSIC WAS BASICALLY THE ONLY ENTERTAINMENT,”
LANTZ SAID.**

1990s

University of Idaho student, Carlos Lantz was walking home from a fun-filled evening at The Garden Lounge, stumbling around through the dim lighting of the upper UI campus. A wave of curiosity swept over him as he passed the infamous Ridenbaugh Hall. He spontaneously decided to stroll in and play whatever tune he had stuck in his head on one of the many pianos, as students often did at the time, enjoying a delightful end to his evening.

On the other end of campus, on another dimly lit evening, ASUI President Sean Wilson, was leaving a senate meeting with his fellow cabinet members. As they were passing a cheering crowd on the Gamma Phi lawn, they turned to see the members of Delta Tau Delta streaking down the hill. One of the men sprinted over to the lawn and bear hugged a woman, who subsequently went from cheering to screaming with pure terror in approximately half a second.

Back in 1994, Lantz and his peers were listening to Pearl

Jam, Nirvana, The Grateful Dead and he said he couldn’t pass a fraternity without hearing “Give it Away” by the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Wilson was listening to Metallica and The Scorpions, and often heard “Insane in the Membrane,” “Baby Got Back” and “Smells like Teen Spirit.”

“There was also, ‘When I Look Into Your Eyes’ by Firehouse if you wanted something to kiss your girlfriend to,”

The talk of the town was current events like Desert Storm and the Gulf War. Lantz remembered one of his professors joked about getting drafted. Computers were also becoming a part of the everyday experience, and UI was starting to



revamp their first computer labs, which students had to schedule a time to use.

“It was the beginning of the internet,” Wilson said. “1992 was when I first learned to use email, Mozilla and Netscape and my favorite computer lab as an upperclassman was in the basement of the Pitman Center.”

The true campus experience entailed rushing from class to class, sweating your way up the hill to the Administration Building and the constant inability to find a decent parking spot. People would zoom past you on their bikes, and some would bump into you if you were walking too slow, but the people-watching never disappointed.

“Hanging out with friends between classes and watching the people talking was so interesting and it just seems sort of archaic now,” Lantz said.

“HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS BETWEEN CLASSES AND WATCHING THE PEOPLE TALKING WAS SO INTERESTING AND IT JUST SEEMS SORT OF ARCHAIC NOW,” LANTZ SAID.

Now

Kallyn Mai, the current ASUI president, had greatly anticipated her family visiting for homecoming weekend her freshman year of college. She was looking forward to combining her little piece of home with her new Vandal family. Mai gave her family the full homecoming experience, starting with a family luncheon in her sorority, then the homecoming parade and before the football game started, they set up a classic tailgate in their camper



KALLYN MAI (L) AND KATIE HETTINGA (R) HOLD LEAD POSITIONS IN ASUI, AIMING TO BRING POSITIVE CHANGE AT UI.

outside the Kibbie dome. Mai’s mom laid out heaps of chips and salsa and cheese and crackers for all to enjoy before they went in to cheer on the Vandal football team.

It was also current ASUI Academic Affairs Officer, Savannah Stroebel’s freshman year of college. Her first week of college, she was living in the Living Learning Communities, and decided to attend the paint party on the Theophilus Tower lawn. Greek students, Tower students, Wallace students and everyone alike were jumping and singing

as a DJ blasted music and paint was splattered in every direction. As a first-generation college student, Stroebel wasn’t quite sure what to expect from college and was completely unaware of how many social opportunities are available. She felt positively overwhelmed by the paint party and anticipated the next incredible memory she would be making in her new college experience.

Of course, the talk of the town now is COVID-19, but as society is learning to adjust to

it, new current events are entering the public sphere. Both Mai and Stroebel noted the recent 2021 Met Gala, all the wildfires and natural disasters, the recent events in Afghanistan, the Olympics and many of the social justice movements that have occurred in the past few years, notably the Black Lives Matter movement.

“The BLM movement and revolution occurring last summer brought attention to our generation that our country has scars and wounds to heal from,” Mai said. “I think especially on our campus, minority students are fighting to be heard and to feel welcome. It’s no secret that Idaho isn’t the safest place for BIPOC identities. We all need to do

**“WE ALL NEED TO DO
BETTER TO CREATE A SAFE
ENVIRONMENT AND STAND
UP TO RACISM. PERIOD.”**

better to create a safe environment and stand up to racism. Period.”

Right now, Mai, Stroebel and the rest of campus, is wrapped up in streaming services and podcasts. Mai and her roommates are watching “Nine Perfect Strangers” on Hulu, and copious amounts of Netflix’s reality TV series, “The Circle.” She is listening to “NPR Life Kit” and “CNN 5 Things.” Stroebel, along with her country artist favorites, noted Doja Cat, Mac Miller, Harry Styles, Ariana Grande and Lil Nas X as defining artists of the times. Stroebel also noted Disney+ as the main streaming service in the public eye.

“I feel like Disney is catering towards the nostalgic side of its audiences, because they have the old classic movies on there, but they’re also doing a lot of remakes like Cruella and The Lion King,” Stroebel said.

The current campus experience isn’t complete without being a part of the Facebook meme page for the university, Uidaho Memes for

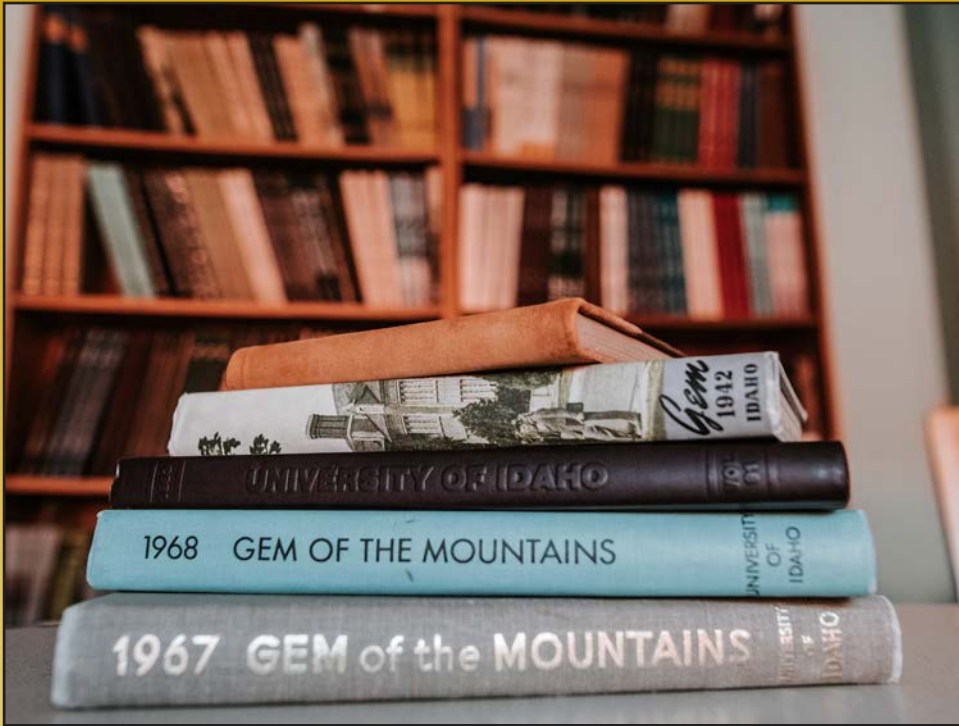
Socially Distant Teens, according to Stroebel. It also isn’t complete without believing that Ridenbaugh is haunted, looking forward to homecoming and dreading gnat season. Current students are also experiencing a transitional period as everyone is adapting to in-person classes again, after a year of virtual learning as a result of COVID-19.

“I know that was a big adjustment for me,” Mai said. “All of my classes last semester were online, and I now have an in-person class and I felt a little uncomfortable on the first day of school, I’m not going to lie.”

Timeless Lessons

Technology is vastly different, with smartphones instead of processors that would fill up two discs with one paper, as Lantz described. The social issues have shifted, and the campus layout has changed. Universally, what remains the same, other than the dreaded hike up the hill to the Administration Building, is the





for the social experiences of college life, as they have given her a much broader view of what the world might look like and have helped in her process of becoming a teacher.

“I know these experiences will help me be a better teacher,” she said. “It has solidified the kind of teacher I want to be for students, and that’s changed my life.”

“I KNOW THESE EXPERIENCES WILL HELP ME BE A BETTER TEACHER,” MAI SAID. “IT HAS SOLIDIFIED THE KIND OF TEACHER I WANT TO BE FOR STUDENTS.”

impact college has on its students.

Lantz appreciated college for providing a newfound ability to empathize with his fellow classmates and see other’s viewpoints.

“The biggest thing I’m grateful for is learning critical thinking and being able to look at things and no one was really telling you what was right or wrong,” he said.

Wilson enjoyed being able to tailor his college experience to his personality and goals. He recommends this to every student.

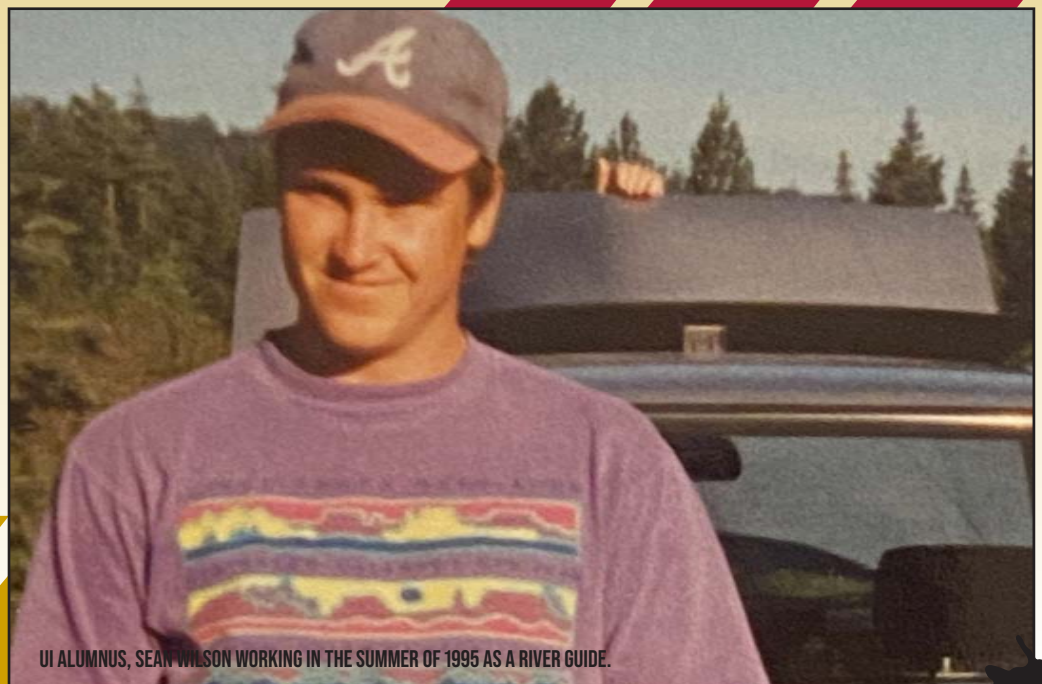
“College is what you make of it,” he said. “Go make your experience your own. Be whoever you want to be because you can absolutely do that here. Most of my favorite memories came after I figured out what was important to me.”

Mai feels that her experience here at UI has helped her mature and grow

in several ways, from having to make difficult decisions to realizing and achieving her goals.

“I’ve learned that I love working with people,” Mai said. “I love being a leader and making things happen. That’s who I am as a person, and our campus and leadership roles have facilitated that for me.”

Stroebele is grateful



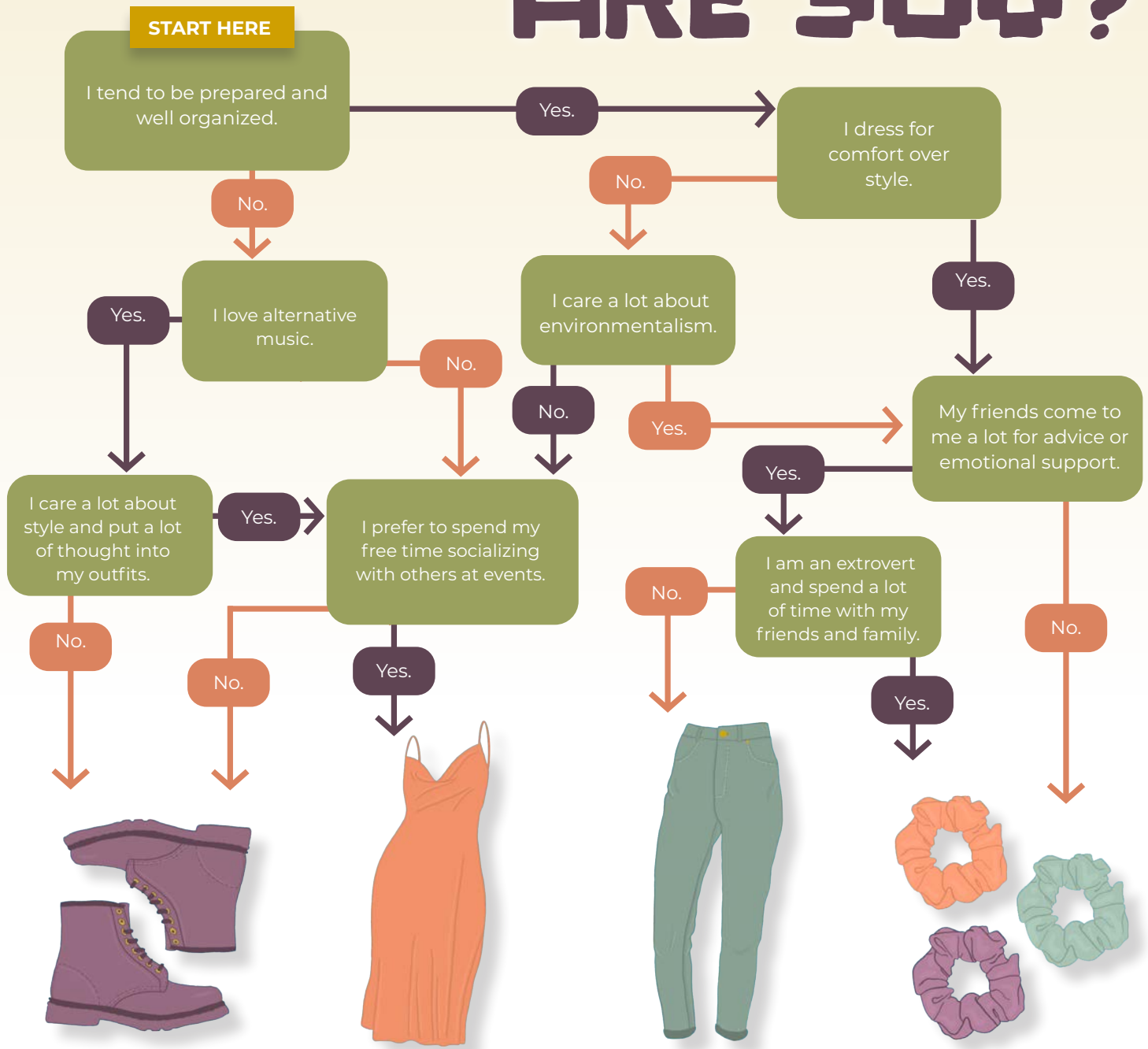
UI ALUMNUS, SEAN WILSON WORKING IN THE SUMMER OF 1995 AS A RIVER GUIDE.

WHAT 90'S

Quiz By
Design By
Illustrations By

Brianna Finnegan
Ashley Isenberger
Ashley Isenberger

COMEBACK TRENDS ARE YOU?



DR. MARTENS

You are the friend with a bit of an edge. You might be a little more disorganized than others and tend to prefer a cozy night at home over a night on the town.

SLIP DRESS

You are the life of the party. You like to look stylish while also staying comfortable. You're probably one of the most outgoing friends in your friend group and tend to get along with anyone.

MOM JEANS

You're the leader of your group. People tend to rely on you for advice, support or even just to remind them to take care of themselves. You tend to be laid back but are always there if someone needs you.

SCRUNCHIE

You tend to be one of the most reliable friends in your friend group. You're a great source for advice and love spending time with your friends and family.

Humans of Moscow

Story By | Brianna Finnegan
Photos By | Brianna Finnegan
Design By | Ashley Isenberger

RICHARD SPENCE, A RECENTLY
RETIRED UI PROFESSOR, OPENS UP
ABOUT RETIREMENT, HISTORY AND HIS
FASCINATION WITH SECRET SOCIETIES

His eyes beam beneath the metal frames of his glasses. As Richard Spence sits at a picnic table in East City Park he talks about UFOs and intelligence agencies. Spence, a recently retired University of Idaho professor, has made a career out of studying the history behind espionage, secret societies and the occult.

Q: What made you interested in history?

A: History interested me because it was about everything. Chemistry, you study chemistry. Anthropology, you study anthropology. History is about the sum total of human experience. It just seems to be bigger and more interesting.

Q: What got you into studying the history of spies, occultism and secret societies?

A: Well, they're interesting, because there's a lot of questions about them. There's always something to be discovered. Let's take, for instance, the American Civil War, there's still things to be known about it, but it's been hashed over in so many ways.. There's probably not a lot to be discovered about something like that. One of the things that attracted me to things like



RICHARD SPENCE ENJOYS HIS DAY SITTING IN THE CITY PARK.

espionage and secret societies and occultism, is that there are lots of questions about whether or not they even exist. The other thing they have in common is the element of secrecy. Espionage is all about guarding your secrets and stealing the other guys'. That's the kind of common link between something like occultism, which is about the uncovering of secrets and the guarding of secrets, where there's really this interesting relationship between those two things. Same thing with a secret society, which really just means not a society that is secret that nobody knows about it, but what goes on inside it is secrets.

Q: What are some of the things you learned through your work?

A: I suppose something we all know but really miss is that people lie all the time. They lie about where they were born. They lie about what their name is. They lie about what it is that they've done. They create these whole false histories for themselves and that's an interesting thing to figure out why they do that. Maybe it's just because it's not very interesting. But still you wonder, why did you tell all these elaborate lies, what are you hiding?



SPENCE WALKS THE PATHS OF EAST CITY PARK.

Q: What have you been doing since you retired?

A: The difference in being retired, is you're not working for anybody anymore, and therefore you pretty much can do what you want when you want. I started working with a company called The Great Courses. The first course I did for them was The Real History of Secret Societies which is available on Amazon Prime. I write the scripts and then I go back east and I sit and I talk and they film them. I get experience working in front of cameras, reading teleprompters and writing specifically for that kind of medium, which was something that I always wanted to do. It still gives me an ability to work with history, talk about the things that I want to talk about, but in a different kind of medium and I get paid for it.

Q: What are some of the subjects that interest you the most right now?

A: Just this last week I gave a talk for the local library at the 1912 Center and it was what didn't happen at Roswell. Roswell is one of the more popular stories about flying saucer crashes. That's one of those things that once you begin to look into it, you find out that none of that is true, none of it. I mean the whole story as it exists today, bears no relation to what actually happened at the time. I think part of the problem with that whole field, is that historians have never really looked at it. You've got people who are UFO researchers and look at it, but they're almost always coming at it by trying to prove one thing or another, maybe they've already got some kind of conclusion and they're looking for evidence to support them. Whereas what historians do is try to go back and reconstruct things from the beginning, which was what I was trying to do with the Roswell thing. I think, to me, that's just a whole field that can really benefit by having some, simple historical analysis.

“THE DIFFERENCE IN BEING RETIRED, IS YOU’RE NOT WORKING FOR ANYBODY ANYMORE, AND THEREFORE YOU PRETTY MUCH CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT WHEN YOU WANT...”

Q: How has your research and career shaped your personal views on intelligence agencies and the occult?

A: I think it's becoming aware that intelligence agencies, they have a bigger historical footprint than people realize. The CIA doesn't go in and advertise everything that they do, that's completely the opposite of their whole reason to exist. The CIA is a giant bureaucratic secret society, everybody knows they exist, but nobody knows exactly what it is that they do. You're not supposed to know that. I think it's given me a greater appreciation for the role that intelligence agencies have played in everything from popular culture to politics. What my research did is convince me not to believe in anything. Anybody who has had my classes will generally know that I always say that there's this great distinction you have to make between believing something, and knowing something. If you know something, you know it. Believing something is something you can't prove, because then you would know it. When you believe something, you're holding something to be true that you actually can't demonstrate is true. You're taking it on faith.

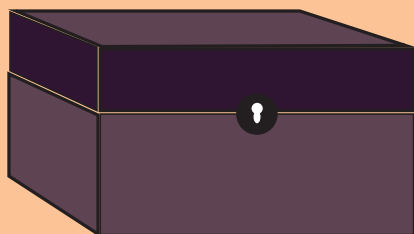
CAUGHT IN A KEEPSAKE

EVAN AND ABBY, DO NOT OPEN UNTIL YOUR LAST SUMMER – OR ELSE!!! LOVE, YOUR 10-YEAR-OLD SELVES

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“That’s a bit ominous, don’t you think?” Evan said, wiping more dirt off the corners of our keepsake box. Years ago, we dug a hole in his backyard and threw a random assortment of whatever we thought would be important for our future selves inside a green pillowcase. One item was this wooden box. Taped crudely to the front was a small index card with the note, written as a warning.



“Yeah, we weren’t messing around back then.” I laughed, grabbing the green pillowcase from his free hand. I could hear things clinking together inside. Evan continued rubbing the edges of the box, almost like he was trying to uncover some secret code along the ridgeline of it. “Are you going to open that thing?” I asked, watching him continue to mess with the outside of it.

“I thought I remembered putting something else on here...but I guess not. The box needs a key to open it. Do you have it lying around somewhere?” he said.

I thought carefully. A key? Hmmm, no I didn’t have anything like that laying around in my room. Not wanting to disappoint Evan, I told him I’d look for it at my house sometime soon. I’d been gone for a long time, so I figured it was a long-shot at me finding something so small. I ruffled the pillow sack.

“Let’s check the other things we willed to our future selves. We can worry about the box later.” I pushed my arm inside the pillowcase and almost had a stroke when I touched something furry. “What the f*** is that?!” I yelped, throwing my hand backwards and out of the bag. Evan laughed and traded the box for the pillowcase in my hands.

“You’re such a baby Abs, honestly. You think a freaking hamster or somethings been living in there for almost a decade? Jesus.” He reached into the bag and pulled out a small, stuffed lion. The fake fur around the edges of its neck was matted into the rest of its body. Bits of threading had come loose, and stuffing poked through the seams.

“Mr. Hamish!” I squealed, leaping my hands towards the grungy toy. A note was tied around his left paw, written in smeared blue ink.

“Be brave Abs, you’re going to kill it at the spelling bee next Thursday. I know I’ve been busy but don’t worry!

Haven’t forgotten about you. Mom and I made you some cookies to snack on while you study. See you sometime soon.”

—Evan

“You kept that thing? Oh my god, what child names their stuffed animal Hamish? And the note too?” Evan smirked, looking at the beat up lion.

“Its not like you never had a stuffed toy you loved.” My face was beaming. A mixture of long-lost love for a childhood toy and rage directed towards my old friend.

“Ah yes, and I left him to wither away in a pillowcase for almost ten years.” I was fuming. Even rolled his eyes, “Shut it. It’s not like I knew what time was going to do the guy.”

“Clearly. Just pull out another item already.” Evan impatiently started scrolling on his phone.

The older we got, the more difficult it was to engage with him. We ran in different circles after middle school, and this reunion we had going on wasn’t what I’d imagined. My mother always told me that she thought we’d end up together someday, but that never happened. I was off

attending school across the country and Evan stayed here with his family.

It was his idea to dig up our little time capsule a few weeks ago. He had heard I was back for spring break and reached out. Maybe I just thought he would be a little more excited to see me, but the longer I spent in his backyard with him, the more I realized just how much time had changed us. It's not a bad thing, people grow up and apart from each other — that's just part of life.

Still, standing here rummaging through our memories, I wish we could go back.

The next item I pulled out was a section of tie-dyed material. In red sharpie across the fabric, I recognized my blocky handwriting.

PROPURDEE OF EVAN OCONOR
(Property of Evan O'Connor)

Evan grabbed the fabric from my hands, forgetting about whatever he was looking at on his phone.

"You gave me a tie-dye shirt with my favorite colors for my seventh birthday. I was new here and nobody came to my party but you. My parents had rented out a bouncy house and set up a huge table for our entire class. You're the only reason that is still a good memory to me."

"That can't be true. Miley Practor showed up for a little bit!" I chuckled. Until our senior year of high school Miley had been apologizing for what she did at Evan's birthday party.

"I don't think you can call vomiting the second you arrive and dropping off a present much of an appearance." Evan snorted and rubbed his fingers on the tattered cloth. It was a faded sprinkle of red and blue. He seemed to be caught up in old feelings.

The last item we pulled from the

pillowcase was a stack of miniature Jenga blocks. Not enough for a full set, but we had written words along a few wooden pieces. On most though, only a few letters were given.

THE KEY IS LEFT ALONE

HEREWA	HETA
LOWERSFA	SEDUA
ROWGA	

"Did we think we were going to grow up and be CIA agents or something? Half of this isn't even in English."

Evan tossed the wooden blocks back into the pillowcase.

"God you can be dense. Don't you remember anything from elementary school?"

"We didn't learn any new languages in elementary school." Evan said, scrunching his eyebrows together.

"Not any real ones, but the older kids on the playground taught everyone pig latin so we could pass notes in class."

Evan smacked his forehead and grabbed the blocks back out of the bag. Before he could line them up to read, his phone started buzzing like crazy. He picked up the call, and panic covered his face. "It's already 5:15? Shit. I'm sorry Amanda. I'll be right there."

Evan poured the wooden blocks into my lap and fished his keys out of his pocket. "I have to go, I told Amanda I'd pick her up for dinner and I'm already late. Maybe we can look through these some other time."

Without giving me the chance to respond, I watched my childhood friend run out the side-door of his parents' house and over to his pickup. He sped away within seconds. I should've figured something like this would happen.

Placing the wooden Jenga blocks on the ground, I mentally rearranged the letters in my head and took off all the A's. As soon as I uncovered the message, I knew where I needed to go to find the key.

THE KEY IS LEFT ALONE WHERE THE FLOWERS USED TO GROW

The key had to be buried inside one of my mother's flower pots on our back porch.

I gathered up Hamish, the wooden blocks and locked box. Placing them into the green pillowcase, I left Evan's backyard and started towards my parents' home.

When I arrived, I bee-lined directly to the pots out back. I had three to choose from for finding buried treasure. I decided on the smallest one to the right, thinking that at a younger age that would've been my choice. Digging around in the dirt, my hands clasped around a small object.

I'd found the key.

By then it was beginning to get dark outside, so I carried the pillowcase and my key towards my old room. Since moving, I hadn't changed a thing on the interior from my senior year of high school. There were photos of friends lining my walls, and progressively as the years went on you would see less and less of Mr. Evan O' Connor.

I sat down on the corner of my bed, placing our childhood treasures in the corner of my room. All except for the box. The words on the index card screamed at me.

EVAN AND ABBY, DO NOT OPEN UNTIL YOUR LAST SUMMER – OR ELSE!!!

LOVE, YOUR TEN-YEAR-OLD SELVES

I wonder what we thought was

so important that we needed to lock it away from the other things. Gently shaking the box revealed that whatever was inside didn't make much sound. It was fairly light too.

My hands gripped the small silver key and slid it into the lock. One turn and it was opened with ease. Opening the cover, my curiosity melted away into a memory.

In the box were clippings from an art project we'd done years ago. There was a folded up poster we had spent hours drawing. At the top it was labelled; EVAN AND ABBY'S HOME.

I suppose it was easy to think you'd end up living with your best friend when you're younger. We had colored our house to be bright blue with white shutters. There was a room dedicated to things Evan used to love adjacent to my own. We'd given ourselves a green lawn, mowed improperly because neither of us could scribble grass really well. Our house tilted a little.

Misshapen foundations lead to unstable structures.

We must've thought we would own a farm or something, because littered throughout the poster were various interpretations of future pets we would own one day. Each given a name and a vague description. Like the fat goat-like creature that Evan had added in the corner of the picture. He'd written in bent letters: MANNY THE MUNCHER.

Smaller details emerged on the paper. We had drawn ourselves standing in front of the home. Smiling and throwing our hands in the air.

BEST FRIENDS FOREVER scrawled around us.

Smaller notes filled up the rest of the box. Pieces of scrap paper we passed in class, tickets from concerts our parents had taken us

to, a few pictures of us from when we were little.

There was one of us covered in dirt, we had spent the day four-wheeling with our families and gained a million mud freckles from the adventure. Another from Evan's birthday party, we were laying on our backs in the bouncy house and giving goofy grins. A third was a prehistoric selfie from a disposable camera, our eyes looking at the wrong side. We were laughing.

These were moments I hadn't thought about in forever.

The final thing I found was another index card like the one on the front of the box. This one looked like it was written in Evan's handwriting and not my own.

HEY ABS, I ADDED THIS IN AFTER YOU LEFT MY HOUSE. I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND.

I smiled.

ANYWAYS, I WANTED TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR FUTURE LIFE.

Okay. I said in my head. I was imagining myself talking to Evan again, only this time we were in the bodies of our childhood selves.

DID WE END UP GOING TO THE SAME SCHOOL?

No.

DO WE BUY A BLUE HOUSE AND MOVE IN TOGETHER?

No. We didn't.

DO WE SEE EACH OTHER OFTEN?

We haven't for a while.

IF NOT, WHY?

This one got me. I didn't know how to answer ten-year-old Evan's simple question. Why was it we grew apart? Even I didn't really know the real answer.

A messaging sound went off on my phone. I sat the box back down on my bed and picked it up.

Did you end up finding a way to open that box? – Evan O'Connor.

I looked at the message for a little bit before closing my phone. I didn't have the energy to deal with him then. I wanted to go back to those moments. I wanted to touch each drawing, every note and photograph to transport myself back to when things were better.

The last index card, I took it out again and looked through Evan's questions. Flipping it over, I noticed one more thing he had written.

EVEN IF WE DON'T, I HOPE YOU KNOW I STILL CARE ABOUT YOU. ALWAYS WILL. MAYBE WE SHOULD TRY TO HANG OUT AGAIN. I'M SURE WE'D LIKE THAT.

I smiled again.

We might.



Cuffing Season

AS SEASONS CHANGE, WE YEARN FOR AFFINITIES

With every season

The Palouse hills show

Their true character.

Come fall, wheat yellows,

Soil is overturned and

The loan becomes a new.

Much like these hills,

People begin to turn a page,

A new chapter,

And experience newfound affinities

With hearts throbbing.

It's cuffing season, and everyone is taken

The sweet fall air makes us need someone

To cozy up with as weather becomes bitter.

Poem By | *Emily Pearce*
Design By | *Dani Moore*

Pumpkin patches are full of harvest,

Apples fall from trees into our mugs.

Enjoying toasty apple cider,

With each other's significant other.

Much to do with the people we love,

Friends, family and our better halves.

May we all find a moment,

Holding hands under the lights of Main Street.

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"GO VANDALS" ART OF THE PALOUSE DONE BY UI SENIOR MEGAN BIGGS.