

MAY 2023

BLOT

To Live in a Bee-autiful World

All the buzz on nature's honey makers

UI's Sustainability Pledge: A Greener Future for Campus and Community

Take a look into UI's mission for positive change

From Waste to Wardrobe

How the fashion industry impacts
the environment

THE SUSTAINABILITY ISSUE

Blot Magazine

MAY 2023

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Editor's Letter

Dear Reader,

With this being the last release of the year, we are bound to reflect on what spring brings: excitement, anticipation, uncertainty, and an air of change and renewal. However, this air of change and renewal can be felt year-round, depending on how we approach our lifestyle and personal habits. For this issue, our staff has focused our efforts into bringing you the stories of sustainability at the University of Idaho's campus, and the Moscow community as a whole. What does it mean to be truly sustainable? What are some of the ways to incorporate this into your daily life? In this issue, our writers have immersed themselves in discovering sustainable gardening and agriculture methods, the age-old practice of exchanging books (and recommending your favorite classics, too), diving into the campus initiatives and projects relating to sustainability at UI, giving insight into the effects of fast fashion, personifying our most treasured, new-to-us collectibles, and championing the all-important, yet often misunderstood honeybee. As you enter the summer months as a new alum, a returning student, a staff or faculty member, or a Moscow community member, I urge you to ponder on what change and renewal means to you, preferably with a copy of Blot by your side!



Katarina Hockema

Editor in Chief



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Locally Growing Produce For The Moscow Community

Multiple Moscow organizations' productive gardening, farming and produce distribution

Story By **ROSE OWENS**

Photos By **COURTESY**

Design By **MEGAN SCHWARTZ**

Idaho is well-known as a farming state, and is very agriculturally diverse. At the University of Idaho and throughout the surrounding community of Moscow, there are multiple organizations that work to produce crops in a more efficient and sustainable way. There are many ways in which farming can be done that is better for the environment, such as getting rid of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, using less water, and decreasing waste of overproduction.

One of the farms owned by the University of Idaho is the Soil Stewards farm, operated by the Soil Stewards Club. They run a three-acre, fully-certified organic farm, eliminating the need for synthetic pesticides or fertilizers.

"We have a drip system, so that conserves a lot of water, as opposed to standard sprinklers," Josie Waterskirchen, president of the club, said. "We also have a low till, so that reduces the overall erosion and keeps the soil structure better intact."

The club hosts multiple events, some partnered with UI's Student Sustainability Cooperative. One of their most popular events is their pumpkin festival held annually each fall. The club sells their produce weekly at farm stands during the summer, and partway into the fall semester. They also have community-supported agriculture boxes, which

function as a vegetable subscription sold at affordable prices.

An issue that happens frequently with farming and gardening is accidental overproduction. This is when people grow more produce than they need. Often, the extra goes to waste, unused. Backyard Harvest is a non-profit organization that works to reduce this waste with their gleaning operations.

"When a farmer has extra produce, gleaning is going out and picking whatever is left," Executive Director Beau Mosman said.

Certain people in the Moscow community aren't able to afford to go to the Backyard Harvest's Farmers Market. Whether transportation is the issue, or a lack of funds, Backyard Harvest's initiatives are able to help these individuals. Due to the fact that the local vendors at farmers markets don't typically accept SNAP benefits (previously known as food stamps), Backyard Harvest has created a system that allows people to still make purchases at farmers markets.

Backyard Harvest has a produce drop-off station in the summer located at Moscow Food Co-Op. Donators drop off their extra produce, and a Backyard Harvest employee is notified to retrieve the items. They work with over 40 different organizations throughout four counties to distribute the produce to

places such as food banks for those in need. Another way that Backyard Harvest and similar organizations reduce waste is by not using packaging with their produce during distribution, which is more necessary for grocery stores to do.

During the summer, volunteers can sign up through their website for a gleaning event. These take place multiple times a week at different local farms. Volunteers are able to take home half of the produce they harvest and receive a free t-shirt.

If you have eaten in The Eatery, you most likely have seen the hydroponics towers. The leafy greens grown in the towers are bought by The Eatery from the Hydroponics Club and served onsite. The club has seven different systems on campus where they grow produce without soil. The plants are grown using a nutrient solution dissolved in a liquid. A main difference this creates is the need to monitor the PH level closely.

“They use less water and your inputs are more efficiently used for wasting less fertilizer,” Daniel Guillor, president of the club, said.

A great benefit of hydroponics is their versatility to use anywhere. You are able to reduce fossil fuels necessary to transport produce if you are able to grow them close to where they will be consumed. They also grow much quicker than traditional soil-grown produce, which is a key factor in more efficient farming. Like other organizations here in Moscow, the Hydroponics Club grows their produce for the community. They sell their produce at winter markets, usually in the 1912 Center.

Whether they are small-scale operations or fully-functioning farms, these organizations have a great impact on creating better ways to grow and harvest crops in our community.



VOLUNTEERS HELP HARVEST FRUIT FOR BACKYARD HARVEST'S GLEANING OPERATION. PHOTO COURTESY OF BACKYARD HARVEST



THE HYDROPONICS CLUB WORKS ON THE NUTRIENT FILM TECHNIQUE TOWERS IN THE EATERY. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HYDROPONICS CLUB



THE PRODUCE DROP OFF STATION FOR BACKYARD HARVEST LOCATED AT MOSCOW FOOD CO-OP. PHOTO COURTESY OF BACKYARD HARVEST

Once Upon A Time

Story By **DAKOTA BROWN** Design By **JACQUELINE WALKER**

Once upon a time in a basement blessed by 70s shag carpet and bright orange walls, there lived a girl who found comfort in collecting useless things: movie ticket stubs, old receipts, and paper cranes. Music boxes, shiny rocks, and portals to different worlds. These portals were books, and they had the power to take her anywhere she could ever have wanted to go.

The girl made it a goal to convince her loved ones to try some of her stories, promising adventure and experiences beyond their wildest imaginations. She collected a list of ten tales that inspired her so much; she was compelled to convince an audience with a single quote and nothing more, but of course, we're getting ahead of the story.

During the Christmas of 2022, the girl gifted her family portals of their own. She selected pages shaded in sin for her mother, who appreciated a darker sort of story (*The Cement Garden*). For her grandmother, a fantasy focused on fighting for power and finding yourself (*The Cruel Prince*), and for her grandfather, a tale about a boy who believed himself to be a vessel of God who would be responsible for something unimaginable (*A Prayer for Owen Meany*). Many others received portals for the holiday, and as we've passed the spring equinox, most have been explored and the people have come back wanting more. Who would the girl be to deprive the people of what they want? So surely, she spends countless hours curating those tales for here and now.

I hope you're ready for an adventure.

Recommendations

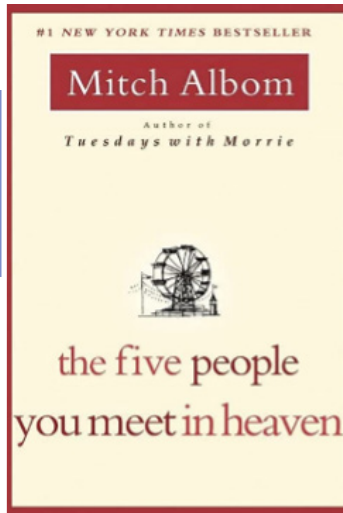
GOOD OMENS
TERRY PRATCHETT AND
NEIL GAIMAN



"It has been said that civilization is twenty-four hours and two meals away from barbarism."

1

THE FIVE PEOPLE
YOU MEET IN HEAVEN
MITCH ALBOM



2

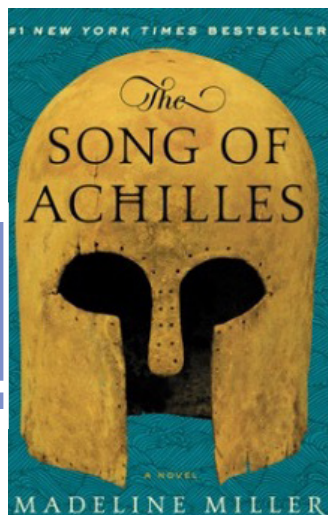
"Sometimes when you sacrifice something precious, you're not really losing it. You're just passing it on to someone else."

"I want to meet you in every place I have loved. Listen to me—I am your echo. I would rather break the world than lose you."

3



THIS IS HOW YOU
LOSE THE TIME WAR
AMAL EL-MOHTAR
AND MAX GLADSTONE



THE SONG OF ACHILLES
MADLINE MILLER

4

"Name one hero who was happy."



CLAP WHEN YOU LAND
ELIZABETH ACEVEDO

5

“How can you lose an entire person, only to gain a part of them back in someone entirely new?”

“This is my favorite book in the world, though I have never read it.”

6



READY PLAYER ONE
ERNEST CLINE

THE PRINCESS BRIDE
WILLIAM GOLDMAN



7

“No one in the world gets what they want and that is beautiful.”

“Some truths only tragedy can teach.”

8

LEGENDBORN
TRACY DEONN

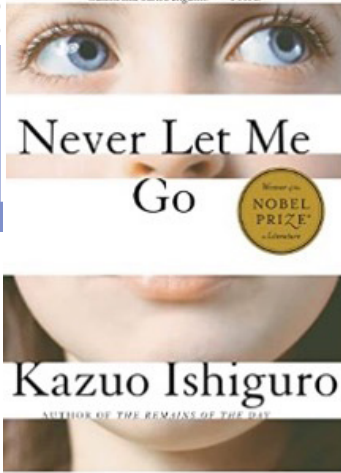


THE BALLAD OF
SONGBIRDS AND SNAKES
SUZANNE COLLINS



“Snow lands on top.” # 9

NEVER LET ME GO
KAZUO ISHIGURO



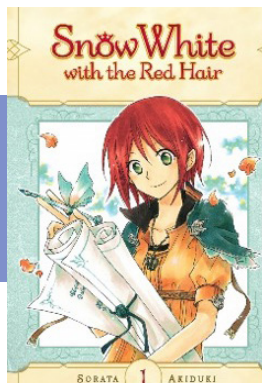
10

“It never occurred to me that our lives, until then so closely interwoven, could unravel.”

Once upon a time, there was a reader like you, in need of a new world to explore. Maybe you're hiding away in the safety of your own basement that's in need of desperate renovation, or perhaps you're seeking a way to escape it. All I know is there are stories out there waiting and a girl who is hoping you find at least one that makes you fall in love somewhere within its pages.

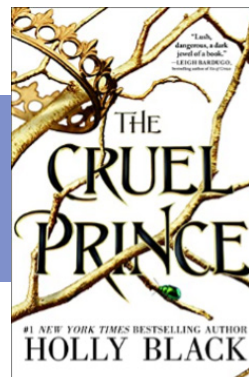
The End

Honorable Mentions



SNOW WHITE WITH
THE RED HAIR
SORATA AKIZUKI

“They say red is the color of destiny.”



THE CRUEL PRINCE
HOLLY BLACK

“If I cannot become better than them, I will become so much worse.”

UI's Sustainability Pledge: A Greener Future for Campus and Community

Take a look into UI's mission for positive change

Story and Photos By **KATARINA HOCKEMA** Design By **GENESIS CORTEZ**

When you think of sustainability, you are likely to think of the environment first. Recycling, donating used items, different farming techniques, and renewable energy are just a few things that come to mind. However, true sustainability, and the way the University of Idaho views it, is so much more.

Byron Flynn is a UI affiliate and College of Engineering alumnus involved in multiple initiatives on campus. This includes the President's Sustainability Working Group and its production of the White Paper, or the directional template to implement sustainable measures at UI, the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) advisory board, and presiding over the Academy of Engineers. Outside of direct university work, Flynn is a recent retiree from General Electric, specifically through GE Renewable Energy as an employee working with grid, wind, and hydroelectric projects.

One of the largest influences that Flynn cited as part of UI's sustainability goals is the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) established by the United Nations. The goals, ranging from achieving zero poverty, to quality education, to affordable and clean energy and climate action act as a worldwide guide for companies, universities, and local, state, and national governments to use to achieve a more sustainable and quality future by 2030, allowing these institutions to model their policies and practices to match the goal's objectives.

"Sometimes, different efforts that organizations have on sustainability are criticized because they're really just checking a box ... I don't feel it's correct, and many companies don't feel it's correct that sustainability is thought of as a destination ... it's a journey," Flynn said. "The very nature of having something that is sustainable means that it continues on."

Another idea that Flynn applies to UI's sustainability mission is the three pillars of sustainability, or the concept that true sustainability can only be achieved when financial, social/societal and environmental objectives work in harmony together.

"One of the things that's important is a balance between all three of those (things), if you focus on financial, but don't think about societal and don't think about environmental, then your business is not going to be as strong as if you're thinking about societal and financial and environmental," Flynn said. "If you just think about environmental, and you don't think about how much it costs to accomplish that environmental goal, there are things you can do that are very good for the environment that might be really expensive. That will make your business hard to sustain, or your organization hard to sustain."

Flynn also connects the 17 Goals from the U.N. in this mindset, as they offer a focus, or a "to-do" list of sorts for all institutions to specify and achieve the

goals, keeping the three pillars in mind.

When it comes to applying these ideas and mindsets to UI, one of the ways that Flynn has worked with the curriculum side of the university is through the College of Engineering's Capstone program. Flynn has worked with senior engineering students to encourage them to select a minimum group of three Global Goals from the U.N.'s list to incorporate into their senior design project, allowing them to have a sustainable mindset when it comes to brainstorming, planning, and creating their project and the solution or goal they want to achieve through its inclusion. This also aids graduating seniors in fostering this mindset when they enter the workforce and move their company or organization towards achieving these goals as well.

"I was talking with a student years ago, and they were working on introducing a new way to produce or get fertilizer into a field. They were figuring out ways to do that to save money and make it less expensive. They were actually from Nepal; they're going to take that back to their home, and introduce it to some of the farmers back there," Flynn said. "It would help with food insecurity and poverty, and they were really excited about it. That particular student had a good, clear picture of the work that they were doing on introducing fertilizer ... and how that could be a benefit, and help map directly to a sustainability goal."

Flynn has also helped UI's Engineering Diversity team, helping to attract new, diverse, and underrepresented students from different backgrounds to enroll in the College of Engineering, enriching the student experience by allowing individuals with unique perspectives to contribute to the College's class structure and direction.

Looking at measurable, hands-on initiatives, Flynn has also aided UI in reducing the amount of plastic waste that is produced by supporting a ban on plastic water bottles at college-sponsored events, instead providing refillable water stations for staff, faculty, students and guests, hoping to educate those



BYRON FLYNN, COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING ALUM.
PHOTO COURTESY OF UI

involved on more cost-effective, environmentally-friendly alternatives to single-use plastic.

"It's more sustainable that you're actually improving the systems and you're helping educate the people that are involved in changing the processes that they've created, and eliminating the water bottles," Flynn said. "You may actually learn a new way to save more money that you didn't think about before, so that's why it is a good dialogue."

Above all, Flynn hopes to encourage small, doable change among students, as a heroic effort is more likely to fall short by causing too much pressure on one individual to solve a problem.

"You just change. You start to change behaviors and start changing expectations. That's when things start to become really sustainable," Flynn said.

Patricia Colberg, the Associate Dean of the College of Engineering and a Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE), has also had a large influence on UI's sustainability initiatives and goals.

Like Flynn, Colberg served on the President's Sustainability Working Group and a member of the College of Engineering's Steering Committee for Sustainability Initiatives.

While Chair of the CEE Department from 2015 to 2021, she banned bottle water from department events and convinced the College to stop providing free bottled water at Engineering EXPO, a showcase of engineering student senior design projects that is held each spring. Shortly after she arrived at UI, she installed an Elkay water station on the first floor of the Buchanan Engineering Building. A year later, she worked with an undergraduate student on a proposal





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



COURTESY OF U.N. WEBSITE

to the UI Sustainability Cooperative to install a water station in the Janssen Building. According to Colberg, most bottled water is actually tap water. She further stated that in addition to the plastic waste, bottled water is very expensive (costing about 3,000 times more than tap water) and undermines the public's trust in UI's excellent public water supplies.

Colberg encourages student involvement, especially among younger students who are new to the campus.

"I think sustainability is a lifestyle; it is a choice. And I think the good news is that a lot of students now coming out of high school, and hopefully younger kids as well, are much more aware of some of these issues, and I think that's going to be our biggest strength."

Colberg would like to see the implementation of "Sustainability Ambassadors" on campus, i.e., designated students who are knowledgeable and willing to educate others about sustainable practices.

In particular, she hopes to see student involvement in the newly-implemented recycling program launched by UI on April 3.

Colberg is confident that this time around, providing clear education on the difference between what can be recycled and what items cannot will reduce contamination and ensure that the new recycling program is a success.

When it comes to other ways for students to get involved and make a positive change, Colberg recommends reduced vehicle usage on campus, opting instead for walking or biking, reduced showering time, and reflecting on how one moves throughout the community.

"I think there's a plethora of knowledge about how to improve these practices, not just in the College of Engineering, but I think in other places as well," Colberg said. "I think students are really hungry to know how they can be better, if you will, environmental citizens."

Overall, Colberg has hope for the success of these goals not only at UI, but in Moscow as a whole as the university and greater community continue to collaborate.

"I think if we do that, we're going to explore all those different issues and we're going to tackle them one by one by one and continue to create a very special community," Colberg said. "I think we're going to create an even more sustainable world where our community is going to continue to thrive."

Sarah Dawson is the current sustainability director at UI, where, according to Dawson, she identifies goals and implements actions that will advance sustainability in operations, education, research, and outreach on campus, otherwise trying to make the university more operationally-efficient and minimize its environmental impact while create opportunities for students to increase environmental education opportunities.

Having held this position since Aug. of 2022, Dawson has worked in higher education as a sustainability director for nearly 15 years.

Her involvement in campus sustainability initiatives and groups is extensive, holding a role in ASUI, the Student Sustainability Cooperative, the Provost's Office, RSSW, the colleges, Dining Services, and Creative Services.

“I think students are really hungry to know how they can be better, if you will, environmental citizens.”

“Creating a sustainable campus is not possible without contributions from nearly every office on campus,” Dawson stated in an email interview. “All of these groups and many more are integral to our success.”

When it comes to future-thinking goals that Dawson would like UI to achieve, she is focused on improving UI’s rating system for the current sustainability presence found on campus.

Her goal is to work towards an AASHE STARS (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education / Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System) platinum rating in their system.

“AASHE STARS is the most comprehensive sustainability standard in higher education, and focuses on sustainability in operations (including food, landscaping, waste, energy use, water use, building efficiency, etc.), academics, research, outreach, and other areas,” Dawson stated. “We’re currently rated silver, so a gold rating will be our next step.”

Reflecting on what the university has positively achieved in terms of sustainability goals, Dawson focuses on renewable energy and water filtration as top accomplishments.

“The university has made great strides in sustainability around energy use with the biomass plant to heat the campus, the steam turbines inside that are generating electricity, and the solar array on the IRIC building,” Dawson stated. “We also have a water reclamation facility that has saved billions of gallons of fresh water from being pumped from our declining aquifer. I would like to continue to focus on water conservation measures.”

For other goals, Dawson advocates for the continuation of diverting waste from landfills by reducing waste generation on campus and installing a composting program.

When asked about her thoughts on the financial, social/societal and environmental pillars of true sustainability, Dawson prioritizes the people involved in these equations, and their right to live in a quality

world that can only be achieved by our collective agreement and work, ensured by the financial security to pursue these goals.

“I think the ultimate goal is to create a society where everyone has access to the benefits of green space, clean air, clean water, and healthy food, and that these things are around in perpetuity,” Dawson stated. “We can’t pursue true environmental sustainability while ignoring the people who live in the environment. Everyone has the right to enjoy environmental benefits.”

Above all, Dawson emphasizes the role that students have as an inspiration to those working in sustainability, the enthusiasm they have to achieve these initiatives and goals, and the ways that they can help adjust their lifestyles to live more sustainably.

“They (the students) are determined to make the world a better place, and that enthusiasm keeps us going. If students want to be more sustainable, they can use alternative transportation to get to campus (walk or bike), use reusable bottles, turn down plastic bags and straws, take shorter showers, eat a plant-based meal now and again, make sure to recycle properly, etc.,” Dawson stated. “Additionally, get engaged! Volunteer to work with the Student Sustainability Cooperative on all the cool projects they have going on. Join the Pollinator Committee or Tree Committee on campus (send me an email if you’re interested!). Work with ASUI on their single-use-plastic waste-reduction campaign. We can use your help!”





From Waste to Wardrobe

How the fashion industry impacts the environment

Story By **VANESSA WERNER**

Photos By **KINSEY WALT**

Design By **JACQUELINE WALKER**

“..92 million tons of textile waste is created each year.”

According to the BBC, around 85% of all textiles that are thrown away in the United States are either dumped into a landfill or burned. Globally, it is estimated that 92 million tons of textile waste is created each year.

“...The equivalent of a rubbish truck full of clothes ends up on landfill sites every second,” Abigail Beall, a science journalist from the BBC, said.

Most clothing items that end up in landfills come from fast fashion brands. Fast fashion has many negative environmental impacts.

The fashion system uses large amounts of nonrenewable sources such as “petroleum, extracted to produce clothes that are often used only for a short period of time, after which the materials are largely lost to landfill or incineration,” Chetna Prajapati, who studies ways of making sustainable textiles at Loughborough University in the U.K., said.

The system uses valuable resources such as water, pollutes the environment and destroys ecosystems



along with creating societal impacts across the world. According to Princeton University, it takes about 3,000 liters (about 792.52 gal) of water to make one t-shirt.

“Recycling clothing items is a much more beneficial option...”

Certain materials that clothes are made of aren't very sustainable, as well. For example, according to Prajapati, shirts that state that they're made of 100% cotton are often made of other components such as labels and sewing threads. These are typically made from other materials like polyester, which- along with other synthetic materials- uses an estimated 342 million barrels of oil every year, according to the BBC.

Similarly, jeans can be made from cotton yarn, which is typically mixed with elastane and other things such as zippers, buttons and polyester thread. They are then dyed using a variety of dyes, which require toxic chemicals that ultimately end up in the water bodies. These materials make it more difficult to separate from clothes that can be recycled due to high labor intensity.

Recycling clothing items is a much more beneficial option than disposing of older clothing, as these items often end up in landfills, harming the environment. However, only a small percentage of clothing is actually recycled. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, only 15% of all used clothing gets recycled.



“Donating clothes increases their lifespan.”

Some fast fashion brands also have unethical working conditions. For example, children are often exploited for work in the industry, only being paid around \$4.25 an hour, according to Borgen Magazine. In addition, they typically must work in hazardous conditions and are exposed to harsh chemicals such as those from fiber dust and dyes.

A better alternative to throwing out or buying new clothes is donating them and buying them from thrift stores and other secondhand shops that distribute used clothing.

“It’s a good way to repurpose items.”

“Donating clothes increases their lifespan,” Gunn Wilson, a manager at Storm Cellar, a local store in Moscow, said.

Making clothing donations allows other people to buy and wear the clothes and opens the possibility of donating an item again if the person decides they don’t like it. They can even sell clothes or give them to a secondhand store.

It is also important to know the difference between a thrift store and a secondhand store. A thrift store accepts donations as is and donates proceeds to a local charity or nonprofit organization; a secondhand store decides what items to take and sells them on behalf of the original owner, and the original owner gains a portion of the sale when someone buys what they donated while the store keeps the other portion of the profits.





Another benefit of buying secondhand is giving a new use to clothing.

“It’s a good way to repurpose items,” Steve Otto, one of the managers at the Hope Center, another business in Moscow, said.

Individuals can restyle clothes, make new clothes out of older pieces, or make accessories out of clothes. One can also be creative and make a pillowcase, patches or a quilt out of older fabrics. These are just some of the efficient ways to reuse old clothes while also reducing waste in landfills. Similarly, shopping secondhand reduces the amount of resource consumption and reduces chemical pollution from items being discarded.

“...more affordable ... you won’t find the same item twice.”

As well, buying clothes from thrift stores and other secondhand stores is more affordable than buying completely new clothes. Secondhand shopping is also unique because, chances are, you won’t find the same item twice. The chances of finding two of the same items at secondhand stores are slim because they’re likely not being widely produced anymore- especially vintage clothes.

Throwing away clothes has many negative effects on the environment- next time you clean out your closet, consider donating any unused clothes instead.

If Thrift Finds Could Talk



Story By MADILYN SLEIGHT

Design and Illustration By MEGAN SCHWARTZ

You let the bags down gently on your coffee table, back from another successful thrifting excursion.

You spent... what? Maybe \$50 total?

You got some real good finds for a steal, you thought to yourself.

You gently unravel your new mug from some musty dusty paper. A silly frog-shaped mug with silly little arms and little yellow eyes. A strange affectionate connection between the two of you emerges. You suddenly remember how good a cup of coffee sounds right about now—

"I used to hold paint water... so don't drink from me— RIBBIT!"

You nod to yourself. Best for him to hold your toothbrush then.

You move to the vinyl record you purchased to hang on your wall. Does anyone even listen to these anymore anyway? It's like orchestra music or something. It was only like 50 cents and would be better suited to hang above your couch.

"I play the wedding songs of two lovers married in 1939..." the record protested as you set it aside.

Someone used to enjoy this album. Maybe you would give it a listen... someday.

Next, a cookbook of only JELL-O recipes some 1950s housewife probably used. You bought it for the novelty. A cookbook just for JELL-O?? Who were these people?! You couldn't wait to show your roommates when they got home. Maybe you would try a recipe just for kicks and giggles.

"... I was used to prepare spectacular JELL-O dishes to entertain house guests at dinner parties.

The spinach and broccoli JELL-O really isn't as bad as you might think!"

Hard pass, you think. But as you skim through the pages, you noticed a sweet orange

and pineapple JELL-O salad that looked kind of good and reminded you of something your grandma used to make.

Maybe you regret buying this one... but who else would be willing to give these wacky recipes a try?

You slip on the new sweater you bought for the fall. Colorful and loose-fitting. It doesn't match anything you own. You can't seem to find a tag anywhere, so you are unsure of the brand.

"I was knit by hand by some old lady as a present for her granddaughter. The kid is your age. In fact, she probably goes to your school. The old lady spent months creating me. Stitch by painful, arthritis-ridden stitch. You know what that kid did? Turned around and donated me to the thrift store."

That's kind of rude, you think. You run your fingers over the uneven stitches, more aware of the imperfections.

It's kind of cute actually, you think to yourself. Might become a closet staple when the weather gets cold. That poor lady's hard work shouldn't end up in the trash somewhere.

Finally, you pull the final items out of the bag: a new purse and wallet.

You check inside the wallet, hoping to see some forgotten cash but instead find a gift card to

Red Robin and a fortune from a fortune cookie.

"The girl who had me last was big into astrology and stuff. She always collected these little fortunes. There's more in the bottom of the purse."

You check... there are dozens of fortunes in the purse. Kinda cute, you think. Maybe you and this girl would've been friends in another life.

You spend a couple of minutes putting away your new things... well... new to you.

To Live in a Bee-autiful World

Story and Photos By **DAKOTA BROWN** Design and Illustrations By **KINSEY WALT**

My grandparents have been cultivating the perfect enchanted forest in their backyard for years. In the warmer months, they spend hours outdoors refining the edges of their bushes, trimming flower stems, and lounging in the gazebo. When my grandma isn't busy building Dahlia bouquets, she's crafting fairy houses from moss and stone; whereas grandpa is always adding a new tree to the lot and walking us through to show off the new shade bringers, saying things like "This one is purple!" and "This one, this one will be taller than anything else in the yard 15 years from now."

They have fountains that finches bathe in, blueberry bushes beaming by mid-June, and a designated "nap shack" situated in the sky via a wooden stair incline up an old walnut tree.



Looks beautiful, right? Now, imagine if you were a bee.

I have been trying to convince my grandparents to get a hive for quite some time, and they are never quite convinced that their slice of paradise could be a home for honey makers. I can hear my grandparents' voices through the paper as I write this.

"Why would we get a hive box? The bees are coming here without one anyways."



The proof is in the pollen. The bees bless the garden on a daily basis during the growing season and by building a permanent residency their flower yield would increase. Plus, who doesn't love the idea of a little bit of honey being added to sweeten the deal?

When I was seven years old, I had an aluminum swing-set in my backyard. On a hot summer day, I realized that I had made a dire playtime error by leaving the grass and climbing onto the swing. I shoved off from the ground as hard as possible. I didn't know the wasps were waiting.

After a series of stings and sobs I declared that all bees must die and anyone who disagreed with me was an awful supporter of the tiny yellow and black flying beads of evil.

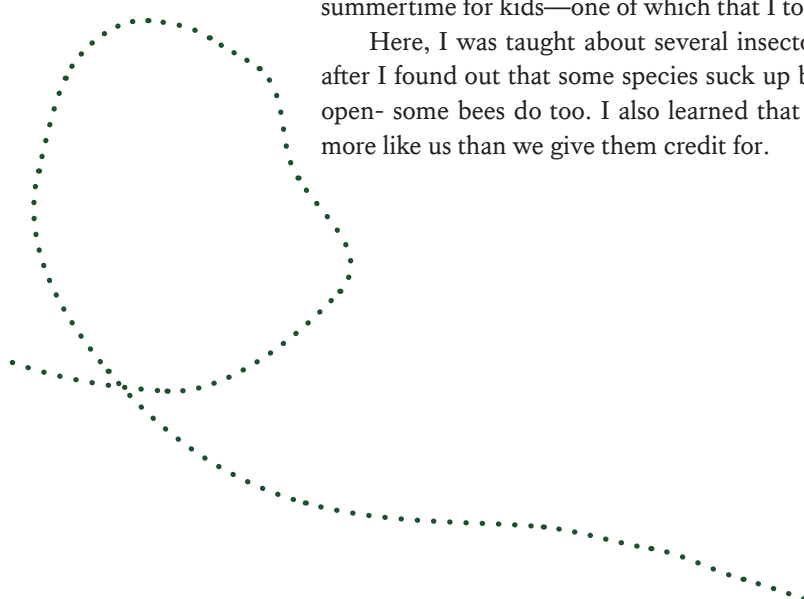
My Deedah came to the house with a lighter and asked my mom to borrow a can of her hairspray. In mere moments, the interior of the aluminum set was ablaze and the entire hive demolished by flames. Charred insect carcasses littered throughout the piping. Not a single survivor. Deedah smiled and handed the hairspray back to my mom before hugging me, "There you go, no more nasty yellowjackets to bother you. Be more careful next time! Wasps are angry little buggers. You would've been fine if it were a honey or bumble bee."

But by this time, I had cemented the idea in my mind that all bees were bad, so I shook my head. How could he defend a creature like that? Something so primitive it attacked with no reason. Something that took over my play area and then decided I was the enemy. Something so, so, so...

Seeing that I was clearly upset, my Deedah took it upon himself to explain to me that not all bees are the same, and we wouldn't be able to survive without them. They are responsible for so much that has helped us over the last 200,000 years, and they themselves have been here so much longer!

I began researching bees, the desire for gaining more knowledge about them waning and growing throughout the years. At Lewis-Clark State College, they host classes in the summertime for kids—one of which that I took, was all about bugs.

Here, I was taught about several insectoids and began an irrational fear of butterflies after I found out that some species suck up blood from dead bodies that are left out in the open- some bees do too. I also learned that bees operate on a hierarchy system- they are more like us than we give them credit for.



Last year, I learned of a company called Flow that specializes in creating quality products for the beekeeping community. They invented a new system of extracting honey from hives by producing “Flow Frames” which use partially formed comb cells as a base for bees to fill with honey and cap off with wax. When the frame becomes full, the clear design allows the user to see that it’s ready for harvest. By completing the actions of the product guide, one can release a flow of honey through a trough to collect from a tap. This process has revolutionized the game for many keepers, and it’s the hive I am continually recommending to my grandfolks.

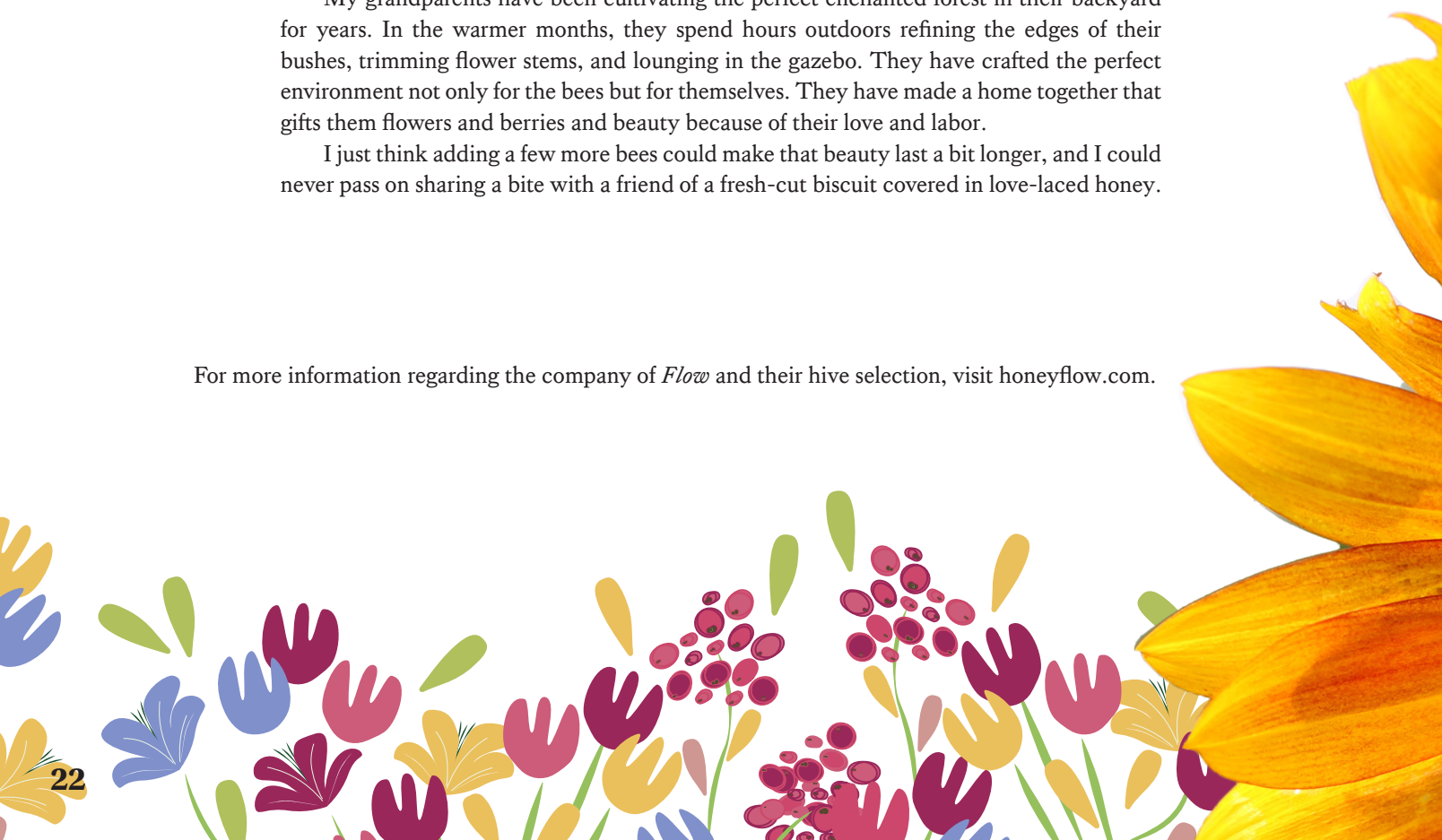
It took me a long time to get over my fear of the honey makers. Even with all the research I was doing, I still held reservations about all kinds of bees because of getting stung when I was younger. I have often believed that this experience, common enough, is also applicable to how people view their relationships with others.

When we get stung in life, we want to see anything else that is capable of that action as being an immediate threat to us, when in reality, that couldn’t be further from the truth. It is a dangerous game to play, assuming the worst intentions—whether it’s with insects or people.

My grandparents have been cultivating the perfect enchanted forest in their backyard for years. In the warmer months, they spend hours outdoors refining the edges of their bushes, trimming flower stems, and lounging in the gazebo. They have crafted the perfect environment not only for the bees but for themselves. They have made a home together that gifts them flowers and berries and beauty because of their love and labor.

I just think adding a few more bees could make that beauty last a bit longer, and I could never pass on sharing a bite with a friend of a fresh-cut biscuit covered in love-laced honey.

For more information regarding the company of *Flow* and their hive selection, visit honeyflow.com.



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