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WELCOME BACK PSU!

MEET LEROY BROWN

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The Portland Spectator serves the student body by providing fact-based and well-researched arguments alongside in-depth news coverage of issues important to the student community. We encourage and co-facilitate a diverse marketplace of ideas filled with thought-provoking discussions.

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Under New Management

To whom it may concern,

The staff at the Portland Spectator would like to give all returning and new students at PSU a big welcome back! It's that time of year when all of us college students are running around finding new classes, unpacking our belongings, getting ripped off buying books, and, of course, meeting new people. On the subject of new people, the Portland Spectator has made some changes to its staff. This school year we will be under new management. Former Editor-in-Chief Sasha Chedygov will be officially stepping down to make way for myself, Maxwell N. Bordman, to take the reigns of this magnificent publication. As the new Editor-in-Chief the staff and I will be implementing quite a few changes with the hopes of creating a new image for the Spectator. We acknowledge that in past issues the Spectator hasn't always been the most timely, reliable, or well known publication on the PSU campus, but we will be working to change that. We, like most of our readers, are students on this campus and are interested in new ideas, issues, stories, and events relevant to the student body. At the Spectator we take pride in doing our best to provide you with unique and diverse perspectives on all things relevant to PSU students. Consider this issue as a welcome back and a first step towards a new beginning. We hope as the year progresses you will continue to pick up and (hopefully) read the magazine we have worked hard to bring you, even when we don't put a large picture of a goat on the cover.

As per usual please contact us with any questions, comments, or concerns you may have, and if you have anything specific you feel should be included in the magazine don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you for taking the time to read the Portland Spectator. We write with the PSU student body in mind and we appreciate your loyalty.

Sincerely,

Maxwell N. Bordman
Editor-in-Chief
Students and instructors alike could benefit from Qi Gong classes offered at PSU. Considering what the class may have to offer, while understanding the historical origins and intentions, may further justify and give support to its implementation someday, hopefully soon, as a course option.

So what is this exactly? First of all, “Qi” is energy and life force, while “Gong” refers to the work or exercise that requires both study and practice. It also means a method of training designed to accomplish a certain objective. Essentially, this ancient Chinese practice involves a method of building and balancing energy through exercise, or “energy work”.

Its purpose is like any other exercise: to promote longevity and vibrant health. Yet what distinguishes Qi Gong in its own unique way as a Chinese exercise-art is that it is considered an “internal” exercise (whereas “external” exercises would be ones like swimming or karate). There are two different approaches to this: passive, which lacks movement with a static and tranquil focus; and active, which is assertive and dynamic, involving movements to get the Qi flowing freely through the body’s energy pathways. As different types of Qi Gong emphasize different goals, the practitioner decides on a particular intention—whether it be developing skill in the martial arts, calming the mind, or striving for spiritual enlightenment.

The fundamental concept of Qi flowing through a meridian system is closely related to the cosmic principles and dynamics of yin and yang, represented in the Taoist theory of the universe, set forth in the I Ching. Yin and yang express that life is a process and we are but one part of that process—its symbol being a way to clarify the relationship between the parts of a whole, whether the whole is the entire earth’s ecosystem or an individual’s human body. A spiral of change forms as the circular symbol spins around both opposites turning into each other perpetually. So, while this theory is the fundamental principle of Oriental medical philosophy, applying to all natural methods of healing, it can thus be understood that when an individual’s yin and yang are balanced, the Qi flows freely, and we enjoy good health. But when yin and yang are out of balance, the Qi is blocked, and illness results. When the delicate balance between yin and yang is restored, just as when energy ceases to flow altogether, death results.

Generally, Qi Gong is believed to be about five-thousand years old, but some historians suggest that it could possibly have originated during the Stone Age. The written history of it began almost three thousand years ago when the Chinese people were introduced to the principles of yin and yang in the I Ching. It was during this time when people discovered that forming animal-like postures, and dance-like movements could improve circulation and promote overall health. Around the time of the beginning of the Common Era, the influence of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism grew in the Orient and an era of religious Qi Gong flourished. Each of these religions developed different schools of Qi Gong in accord with their particular philosophies and methods of training. For a long time the techniques and theories of religious Qi Gong were kept secret in the temples and monasteries of China. Taoist Qi Gong was probably the original form of training, governed by principles outlined in the esoteric philosophy Tao Te Ching, emphasizing gentle movement, relaxation, and a practical spirituality. Buddhism from India led to a form of Qi Gong that emphasizes more active and dynamic movements, mental concentration, and spiritual enlightenment. The Confucians practiced it to improve character and produce a superior type of individual, as indicated by an ethical and intellectual approach to life.

The religious Qi Gong era lasted roughly from about the peak of the Roman empire to just after its fall, as it gradually gave way to a style that could be used by martial artists who wished to build muscle power to become better fighters. This martial art era was heavily influenced by theories and techniques of the Taoist and Buddhist schools. The next era of Qi Gong practice emphasized the medical benefits and healing of the physical arts, as Taoist healers gradually discovered it. Medical Qi Gong was based on the philosophy of Taoism and medical knowledge of Qi circulation. During this period many improvements were made in acupuncture theory and technique. Other methods of this era included active meditation in motion rather than passive sitting.
the beginning of the 20th century is when Qi Gong began to be studied rigorously by the scientific field.

Taoists apply the cycles of creation and destruction involving the Law of the Five Elements (water=energy descending; wood=energy expanding; fire=energy ascending; earth=energy connecting; metal=energy solidifying) to understand and explain everything that happens in the universe, from the movements of the stars to the flow of Qi in the human body. Everything is regulated by these different movements of energy, which, taken symbolically, represents a force—a movement of energy. The five elements regulating the universe likewise regulate the body and the mind. This is what Taoist cosmology outlines, and Qi Gong is relevant to keeping a balance of this energy concept, so that if one of these movements of energy becomes too weak or dominant, then our vital organs, feelings, and actions will be affected—because every organ system, along with the energy channel that nourishes it, is associated with one of the five elements and a corresponding emotion and behavior.

Eastern healing arts and exercise methods are becoming increasingly popular in the United States, as a large market has formed and grown in recent history. There are several reasons it has been so welcomed, ranging from profit, to the natural human desire to sustain longevity, to people interested in exploring alternative forms of healthful services and engagements apart from the privatized medical institution we must deal with, and that is becoming increasingly unaffordable for people here. While PSU offers Tai Chi and yoga, among other “external” martial arts, Qi Gong remains absent; but it is probable that if enough students request it, with the aid of instructor suggestions, it will be a successful and welcomed addition to the Physical Education curriculum, and likely attract more students when the word gets out.
Nicotine 2.0 Reconciles Freedom and Public Health
THE E-CIGARETTE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO BOTH TOBACCO AND PUNITIVE SMOKING POLICY
Romain Bonilla

When it comes to the harms of drugs, no product comes close to the widespread damage caused by smoking tobacco. In fact, with a yearly death toll of over 400,000 in the United States, tobacco kills more than all other drugs combined, legal and illegal. According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 8.6 million people in the US suffer from smoking-related illnesses, costing $96 billion in health care expenditures each year. (1) Cigarettes are also a nuisance to non-smokers, in the form of second-hand smoke as well as cigarette butts polluting parks and sidewalks. From this perspective, it comes as no surprise that the Portland State administration is considering a campus-wide smoking ban.

Concerned policy makers in the United States have often played around with the way tobacco is marketed and regulated. Educational campaigns and mandatory warnings have helped keep the public informed of the health implications of smoking. Adding a sin tax on tobacco products gives users an economic incentive to quit. Smoking bans and no smoking zones have become commonplace in many cities and colleges, such as Portland Community College or Portland State’s Urban Plaza. While this prevents the collateral damage of second-hand smoke, it is hardly a solution to those still addicted to nicotine. In fact, nearly one out of five Americans still consumes cigarettes on a daily basis. (2)

Some mention making cigarettes illegal altogether; but let’s be honest, that’s not going to happen. Tobacco companies are known for their efficient use of lobbyists to perpetuate their multi-billion industry. (3) In addition, prohibiting the plant would be unlikely to succeed at reducing its use - just look how well prohibition works with marijuana! As long as the nicotine-dependent demand their fix, the market will continue to supply them with nicotine products. Prohibition also comes with inherent harms of its own, such as the diversion of public safety officials from violent crime and the squandering of increasingly scarce financial resources.

As of press time, Portland State has a campus-wide smoking ban in the works, in the form of a policy proposal allegedly seeking to reduce pollution. If the proposal is approved, smoking would be prohibited all over campus, including in the Park Blocks, and the smoking shelters would be torn down to make way for bicycle parking. Public Safety officials would be in charge of enforcing the policy, radically reducing their ability to prevent serious crimes such as assault or rape. And serious crimes do happen at PSU: last November, a woman was raped by two men while walking on-campus. (10) Portland cop Pete Simpson claimed “the assault appeared to be a crime of opportunity.” (10) Had a Public Safety officer been around, this tragedy may never have happened.

Assuming we can’t legislate the smoking habit out of existence, we ought to focus on how the harms of smoking can be reduced. What are the safer ways to get one’s nicotine fix? Smoking cessation products such as the transdermal patch and nicotine gum are widely marketed as a safer alternative to smoking. However these tend to be quite expensive and usually appeal to those who wish to stop the routine of nicotine dependence, not to those who continue to punctuate their days with cigarette breaks.

Another nicotine product, the “electronic cigarette,” has made a name for itself in the past decade as a safe and convenient alternative to smoking cigarettes. The device resembles a plastic cigarette and allows its user to inhale vapor containing nicotine. As opposed to smoke, vapor does not damage the respiratory system. (4) Additionally, the e-cigarette is said to lack many of the toxic chemicals found in cigarettes and cigarette papers. Among the e-cigarette’s convenient perks are the absence of cigarette butts and second-hand smoke, as well as the fact that it can be used indoors and in no smoking areas.

In contrast with nicotine gum and patches, the e-cigarette preserves the mannerisms of cigarette smoking, allowing users to hold their device as they would a cigarette or even blow vapor rings upon exhalation. The striking similarity between using an e-cigarette and smoking helps make the product more accessible to smokers who do not wish to discontinue their habit, and yet wouldn’t mind minimizing harms to their health.

However, there does not appear to be a scientific consensus on the health effects of this portable nicotine vaporizer. The first version of the device made its way to the international markets, that the e-cigarette became available for sale worldwide. (6) Since then, there have been few controlled studies on the device’s long-term effects on the human body, leaving policy
The electronic cigarette could be useful as a smoking cessation aid. The only way to know is to test.” (7)

Portland State President Wim Wiewel has expressed his support for the smoking ban proposal, citing the undeniable health implications of tobacco use. Restricting personal liberties, diverting public safety resources, and tearing down adequate forms of infrastructure, it seems, is a price Wiewel is willing to pay to save smokers from themselves. Aside from an all-out ban, President Wiewel has made no mention of other possible reforms to Portland State's smoking policy. Not only do alternatives to the ban exist, but they benefit public health and safety directly, as opposed to the absurd notion that banning smoking will push smokers to kick the habit. One example is promoting the voluntary switch from smoke to vapor, which would reduce smoking-related harms without sacrificing public funds and safety.

As the world's deadliest drug continues to plague communities here and abroad, policy makers persist in their search to bring innovative solutions to the table. (9) While there may not be a silver bullet to nicotine addiction, encouraging safer patterns of use is the more cost-effective route to reducing the harms of tobacco. Substitution – not prohibition – is our best bet for dealing with the tobacco-related problems.
PSU Study Reveals Caffeinated Coast

SEPTIC TANK WASTE COULD THREATEN COASTAL WATERS

Jacob Stein

In April 2010, PSU masters student Zoe Rodriguez del Rey and adviser Elise Granek, assistant professor of Environmental Sciences and Management, collected samples from fourteen sites off the Pacific coast, for a study on elevated caffeine levels in the water. The study yielded samples of coastal sites from seven adjacent bodies of water, from as far north as Astoria all the way south to Brookings, which were then analyzed at PSU. The results were the opposite of what Rodriguez del Rey and Professor Granek would have thought to find.

“We expected to detect more caffeine at high pollution sites,” explains Granek. By high pollution sites, she means coastal waters near known higher population centers – Coos Bay or Astoria. Instead, the highest levels of caffeine were detected near sites of quite lower populations, such as Cape Lookout and Carl Washburne State Park. States parks like this boast small bodies of people present (aside from occasional campers), however they do often require large septic tanks for waste removal.

According to Professor Granek, “The current hypothesis is that septic systems are a major source.” While levels of caffeine did not match up accordingly with population or all potential pollution sites off the coast, they did mark areas of septic waste disposal. “Septic systems in Oregon, and most states, do not require monitoring of septic tanks.” As a tank manager, you do need a permit, but once that is acquired, there is no further monitoring for septic waste overflow into the ocean. “It’s not the fault of the septic tank owner,” Granek says, “but we just don’t have any regulations.”

Caffeine affects human beings, so it could be assumed that the same chemical would affect other animals similarly. Granek and Rodriguez del Rey expected that caffeine would obviously have an effect on other organisms, yet Granek is quick to state that “there is very little published research on any of that.” Of course, there have been studies of caffeine levels in non-human animals before this, even marine life. But the studies often focused on lethal doses, whereas this study was primarily concerning smaller levels.

Any animal can be exposed to too much caffeine, to be sure. Caffeine can be terrible for most organisms, but it depends on the amount – if even a human took two hundred cups of coffee in one day, the results would not be pretty.

A study held a year ago at PSU (in our very own Science Building One) slowly exposed groups of mussels to smaller levels of caffeine. Once the experimental group was subjected to the chemical, analysis found abnormally heightened levels of proteins compared to those in the control group. “After ten days,” explains Granek, “the lowest dose of caffeine (just slightly above what was seen at Cape Lookout) produced a ramped up protein response that was significantly different from the control group.” With further dosing, the mussels took longer to mount a response – but the response of stress found from the high protein levels was even greater once it finally landed.

“At five hundred nanograms per liter, there was no response within thirty days,” reports Granek. Which begs the question: if the experiment had gone on for even forty days, how dire of a response would we have seen?

This “ramped up protein response,” known as a sub-cellular stress response, can affect growth rates and reproduction, if the organism is continually exposed. Granek and others at the Environmental Science community here at Portland State University are planning on attempting another study as soon as possible, to discover more about coastal organisms exposed to low-level caffeine, and their cellular stress responses.
The Sweetheart of the Road:
A LETTERPRESS PRINT SHOP ON-WHEELS
Alice Perez

The Cinderella story of a letterpress print shop on-wheels began once upon a time with a 1982 Chevy step van and was transformed from a raggedy old van to a beautiful letterpress print shop with the help of Kyle Durrie and a little bipity bobbidy boo magic. A dash of man power and a touch of elbow grease crafted today's only on-the-go letterpress truck in the country nicknamed the “Sweetheart of the Road.”

The Moveable Type Truck was a dream come true for Kyle Durrie, a letterpress printer and proprietor of Durrie. The Moveable Type Truck was a perfect fit to Portland, Oregon, which is popularly known as the “Small Press Capital of the World.”

Over the last decade, a renaissance of a do-it-yourself (DIY) attitude has materialized through a hand-made craft movement sweeping across major North American cities and abroad. The Moveable Type Truck is a perfect fit to Portland as it is well known as an urban epicenter of creative indie-entrepreneurship. “I’ve always been a hands-on girl, and had made a living as an artist (drawing) before getting into letterpress. But this renaissance has definitely created a welcoming community for me to get involved in,” explained Durrie.

Johannes Guttenberg was the Steve Jobs of his era created the first commercial form of printing for the past 500 years. Fast-forward to 2012, letterpress print making has seen a revival within cities of creative hubs across North America and abroad. “I’ve been letterpress printing since 2006 and have run my own shop, Power and Light Press, since 2009. This project is an extension of my full-time printing work,” said Durrie.

According to the Moveable Type website, the once upon a time story of the “Sweetheart of the Road,” whose origins were rooted as a fleet truck for American Linens with its ghost sign still quietly visible underneath the masquerade of white paint. The story began with a Washington man who was midway through an RV conversion. He had installed a shower, toilet, stove, fridge, water heater, a massive propane tank, and convertible sleeping bench.

“And so, on one sunny day in April, my brother and I tore everything out. Floors, walls, ceilings, ratty in...everything down to the metal skeleton...Turns out that diving right into demolition work and spending some time working under the truck is an incredibly empowering experience, and was just what I needed to feel like maybe, just maybe this was something I could actually pull off,” recounted the mother of the Moveable Type Truck.

Letterpress print making goes back to a pioneering spirit, in a time where if something broke a person would fix it and where folks made everything by hand. Living in the digital age where Facebook and Apple have been weaved within our culture we have lost this pioneering spirit with today everything being done at the touch of a button. “Yes! I mean, don’t abandon your computers; they’re amazing and important tools. But I think there’s a lot to be learned from using your hands, working with physical materials, and generally feeling more capable—you CAN make thing!” said Durrie.

Kyle’s letterpress print shop on-the-road appears to be the queen of the highways as the only truck bringing letterpress print making into the neighborhoods of folks of both rural and urban neighborhoods. “I don’t know of any other letterpress trucks that are out on the road-ready yet...And I met a lot of other mobile businesses/projects along the way, from a traveling zine library, to a vintage clothing store in a bus, and I recently heard about a letterpress bike set up, which sounds cool,” explained Durrie.

Durrie is currently enjoying a little R and R after nearly finishing a year around tour across the states and tapping into the country above us in the Great White North. Folks may find Durrie and her letterpress truck from August through October throughout the Pacific Northwest. “It sounds kind of cheesy, but most of my moments on the road were memorable. There were very few disappointing days or experiences. Mostly this was because every single day I got to share something with someone new. It never got old, seeing the expression of joy when someone who had never printed before peeled up their sheet of paper off the press...there was always a “Wow!” moment, and it felt really good being able to foster that,” recounted Durrie.

Touring outside of Portland, Durrie discovered the need to returning to the days of a forgotten pioneering spirit when everything was made by hand. “Overall people responded really positively to the whole project. I think people are hungry to use their hands and try something new, and I provided a novel and weird and easy way of doing that,” said Durrie.
Energy On Your Mind?

GOVERNOR JOHN KITZHABER RELEASES NEW PLAN

Dean Anthony

As our society moves from one driven by the gears and levers of "heavy metal" industry and more into the realm of the information age, a plan for our generation and wise use of energy is an important component of any responsible government. The continuing scientific examination of human-generated global climate change is raising the prospect that we will soon need to account for the possible impact of energy generation and use on the entirety of the planet instead of merely the borders of a state. In this context, although hardly perfect, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber's recently-released 10-year energy plan is a laudable and responsible act.

Kitzhaber proposes a combination of upgrading badly-outdated electrical infrastructure, using various government means to encourage development of advanced energy management solutions, and working towards converting at least 20% of the state fleet of large vehicles to alternative energy sources. It's clear that the governor's plan is, at bare minimum, ambitious and rational but the most pressing concern, especially during a time of economic difficulty and necessarily limited resources, is whether the plan's components are as plausible as they are praiseworthy. There really is no question that upgrading the electrical infrastructure of the state is an excellent idea: the grid is unreliable, incapable of handling either intermittent or large power flows, and still utilizes a nearly century-old model of stringing power lines in midair where ordinary weather can damage them. It's also a smart and laudable goal to encourage investment in more efficient technologies that give us greater bang for our buck, allowing more to be done with less energy.

The difficulty comes when the plan edges into the territory of 'green' energy and alternative energy sources. While these are theoretical ideals, even the most intelligent preparation (integrating battery systems into the electrical grid, another component of the Kitzhaber plan) causes them to suffer practicality problems. For example, the typical wind turbine can produce 1.5 megawatts per hour but it will only achieve this figure roughly 40% of the time. Of even greater concern is that its production can change on a minute-by-minute basis, dropping down to a few hundred kilowatts for most of the day then abruptly surging to its full capacity, causing a production spike that can cause real damage to the infrastructure. As such, these means of electrical production are suitable for cushioning peaks of increased energy usage but limits to battery technology mean that they cannot produce the steady, predictable, controllable stream of electricity that energy infrastructure is dependent on. Because of their random and relatively low individual output, they may be material-efficient and renewable, but they cannot produce the same amount of electricity per acre as less desirable but more reliable sources such as nuclear fission or even the much-maligned coal.

The problem becomes even greater with the other popular alternative, solar energy. Like wind, it is an intermittent source of electrical power that consumes immense swathes of land to replace "dirty" sources of energy, but it brings another serious issue to the forefront: A solar panel cannot withstand more than five years of elemental abuse before it becomes useless, effectively forcing a company or state that operates these panels
to have to entirely replace the most basic component of the generating facility every five years or so. This relatively constant need to replace solar panels causes the operator of the facility to incur major costs. This is especially true in light of recent events in which the government-subsidized American solar panel industry went to the federal government and demanded tariffs and other protectionist policies that increase the cost of otherwise-cheaper Chinese solar panels... because the Chinese government subsidizes their solar panel industry. This is a needless and unnecessary cost increase, but one that a state governor is obviously unable to do anything about; nevertheless I hold that any plan for increased "green" energy needs to take this into account.

The issue of generating more power, or generating cleaner "greener" power, becomes even greater when the conversion of some fleet vehicles to run on electricity is factored in: When increasing demand, a failure to increase supply triggers expensive shortages and major industrial disruptions, especially in an age increasingly dependent on electrical power to drive an information superhighway. It’s certainly possible to dodge the issue by doing the conversion from gasoline to liquefied natural gas, but even here, there is a very serious issue: As a general matter, Oregon communities want nothing to do with LNG terminals that would make this very clean-burning fuel alternative that is actually somewhat better gallon-for-gallon than gasoline readily available.

It’s worth emphasizing that Kitzhaber’s concept is quite meritorious, but reality undermines it. Alternative means of generating electricity bear crippling engineering obstacles, and even the very good idea of converting government fleet vehicles to a fuel that burns cleaner and produces more energy than gasoline (LNG) is hurt because community NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) tendencies get in the way of making the fuel readily available to Oregon. Encouraging investment in better efficiency and conversion is highly rational and working to modernize Oregon’s electrical grid is a brilliant initiative that Oregonians have deserved from their government for decades. In Kitzhaber’s plan, these initiatives are expected to compensate for all growth in demand for the next decade; there is no prospect for this being even remotely possible.

Finally, although the science of the issue is still up in the air, the investment in resources and opportunity costs to make a real dent in greenhouse gas emissions simply does not pencil out. The most efficient use of resources is compensating for the effects instead of a vain attempt to prevent the problem. As with most plans generated by a government, there is a certain Janus-like aspect to Kitzhaber’s 10-year energy plan, with one face set towards innovative and meritorious ideas that can produce real and positive improvements in Oregon’s energy situation, another face set towards well-intentioned but impractical ideas that can only waste limited resources without making Oregon better off. The governor should be applauded for his initiative - the courage to make a plan, publish it, and stand behind it is a heartbreakingly rare quality among politicians. However, it’s my hope that he will prove flexible and willing to revise his bold stance as circumstances - and facts - require.
IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW...
Fun Facts 2012 - 2013

ARE YOU NEW TO PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY? OR MAYBE YOU'RE JUST A RETURNING STUDENT, BUT YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL. THESE FUN FACTS WILL HELP YOU QUICKLY GET IN THE SWING OF THINGS, AND HOPEFULLY GIVE YOU MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK - AND WHO DOESN'T WANT THAT?

Jacob Stein

DID YOU KNOW...

PSU has a student-run radio station, called KPSU? They have student DJs, and aside from hearing the station in Smith Memorial Student Union, you can stream their music and talk shows live off their site, KSPU.org. No matter the genre, style, or outlandishness, chances are you'll hear KPSU play it! They also feature local, underground artists in-studio all the time, as well as run events and concerts for students at PSU. Keep an eye out for KSPU - they are always doing cool stuff. This summer, they even had a concert on a cruise ship!
DID YOU KNOW...

PSU ranks among the top ten “up and coming” national universities, according to U.S News And World Report’s Best Colleges 2013 Guidebook? “These rankings reflect a growing recognition among our peers,” says PSU President Wim Wiewel. “PSU is an urban research university on the rise. The word is out about our commitment to excellence, community engagement, and student success.”

DID YOU KNOW...

PSU has its own student-run sound company, called Portland State Professional Sound? They have top-of-the-line equipment at their disposal, and run concerts constantly all throughout the year, not to mention running sound for most musical events for student groups. Look for their Live At Lunch concert series, featuring both big name bands and local musicians, every Tuesday and Thursday from 12:00-1:00 in the Park Blocks.

You might not think PSU is a very sportive college, but in fact the university is going through great changes to both improve the popularity of their sports teams and help keep students active on campus. One such change is a remodeling of the Peter W. Stott center roof, resurfaced as a new practice facility for the Portland State tennis teams, both men and women. “We’re really excited about this project,” says head coach Jay Sterling. “We wanted to make this a first-class facility and give our players pride in what they’re doing.” And as far as other sporty rankings go, PSU Volleyball was bumped up to 2-0 in the Big Sky Conference recently, defeating Eastern Washington. This means Vikings took the first point in the Dan Cup 2012-2013, with Megan Ellis leading the team with 11 kills.
DID YOU KNOW...

Your student government, ASPSU (which stands for Associated Students of PSU), is under new management? President Tiffany Dollar was voted into office this year, popular for her work to make textbooks affordable to students. The entire executive staff and officers can be found on their site, ASPSU.pdx.edu, as well as their governing documents, agendas, resources, and ways you can get involved. The student government is always making decisions that affect every student on campus, so you might as well get to know them, and see what they’re all about.

FYI...

Do you have a band starting out, or do you just play an instrument for fun on the side? Whether you’re trying to start a new group of musicians, or you’re just looking to showcase your own side talents, keep an eye out for the Open Mic nights hosted in Smith Memorial Student Union’s Food for Thought lounge, downstairs in the basement, hosted by PSPS as well.
An Odd Herd

SPECTATOR PHOTOJOURNALIST STUMBLES ACROSS A MAN (AND HIS GOAT) ON A MISSION

Kat Caldera
PHOTOS TAKEN BY KAT CALDERA.
A man hiking along a highway in Oregon with a goat is a peculiar sight - a sight that had me slamming my brakes out of curiosity while on my way back to Portland from Bend. The human-goat hiking duo were wearing packs and matching neon orange safety gear, suggesting that they were walking this highway together deliberately. I first saw the pair as I was driving to Bend. On my way home I stopped; I just had to know their story.

His name is Steven Wescott, a city kid from Seattle who set out on May 2nd to walk from the Space Needle to Times Square. I found him in June walking the long, high desert highway through Warm Springs. He is walking America in hopes of raising money for an orphanage in Kenya that his friend, a Christian missionary, is working to develop. But that didn’t answer my question: why the goat?

Initially Steven had trained for his nationwide walk with his Rottweiler. But shortly before beginning their journey his pack dog tore a tendon in his knee while playing with other dogs at a park. Steven knew he would need a companion during the 3000 mile walk to Times Square. He would need a companion with packing abilities. So Wescott explained.

They took it as a chance to rest their weary feet and backs by sitting down the highway. When I interrupted their hiking to ask questions, Wescott reduced Steven's pack weight, by carrying some food, rain gear and sleeping pad. Even so, Steven estimated he carries around 125 lbs. One look at his shoes indicates just how much physical wear and tear Wescott has endured so far on trip, pounding the concrete for 15 miles a day, every day, with over one hundred pounds on his back. Steven was only a couple of months into his journey, that he estimated will last up to a year and a half, and the soles of his shoes were already smashed thin. If the rest of his journey were to continue on at the same rate he will end up going through about five or six pairs of shoes by the end of his epic walk.

Wescott may be traveling the lonesome highways every day, but he explained that he was able to stay in excellent communication with the world. Using a solar pad that hung on the outside of his pack, Wescott charged his cell phone, camera and iPad. He blogged very regularly, especially for a guy camping on the side of the road most nights. Wescott’s blog, “Needle 2 Square,” is full of detailed entries about his varied adventures on the road, the purpose of his journey, and well-done video blog entries.

Wescott has created a unique and well-thought out endeavor. His pack goat partner is able to give him companionship as well as protection. When I walked behind the pair, photographing them walking down the highway, Leroy suddenly turned around and reared up on his hind legs, kicking with his front feet at me. Steven settled Leroy down with no trouble at all and explained to me that goats are herd animals, and being followed sometimes makes them think that their herd is being intruded upon. Leroy was protecting his odd little herd from the threatening appearance of a person following quickly behind, aiming a camera at them. Steven seems to be in good hands - under the care of his tough and adorable goat.

You can watch Steven and Leroy’s progress through their epic journey by checking out their blog at www.needle2square.com
Vive La Hollande!
A NEW HOLLANDE PRESIDENCY
Romain Bonilla

Although election season isn't exactly over in the United States, France just emerged from its own presidential election, in which François Hollande emerged as the victor and the country's first socialist president since 1995.

The first round of elections, which occurred on April 22nd, saw ten candidates compete for the French electorate. Each represented one of the many political parties involved in French politics. These ranged from left-leaning parties, such as the New Anticapitalist Party (Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste) and the workers' Struggle (Lutte Ouvrière), to right-wing movements such as the National Front. With more than 35 million ballots cast (a 78% turnout), nearly all the qualified candidates received votes in the hundreds of thousands. Most votes, however, were shared between the election's two frontrunners, socialist François Hollande and the incumbent president Nicolas Sarkozy, who both qualified for the final run-off.

In contrast to the prolonged and highly mediatized election seasons in the United States, campaigning for the French election began in mid-March, two months before election day, and there was only a single televised debate between the final contenders. This debate, which occurred four days before the final election, gave the opportunity for Hollande and Sarkozy to address issues of interest to the French people. While Sarkozy criticized his opponent for his lack of leadership experience, Hollande expressed his focus on restoring social justice and reuniting the French as a people. His rhetoric appealed particularly to the country's urban youth, a demographic with which Sarkozy has had historical tensions.

During the second and final round of suffrage, Hollande gathered over 18 million votes, or 51.64% of the electorate. This was enough to earn him the title of eighth President of France's Fifth Republic.

On May 15, François Hollande was sworn in as the country's 24th President during a ceremony held at the Élysée Palace - the French equivalent to the White House. His behavior during the transition of power raised controversy when he broke some of the event's familiar traditions. For instance, a newly elected president traditionally walks the outgoing president to his car in the palace's court, as a sign of friendship. When the moment came for Sarkozy to make his final exit however, Hollande headed back...
inside the building. Although initially surprised, Sarkozy and his wife, Carla Bruni, walked each other to their vehicle at the other end of the red carpet. Moments later, during his inauguration speech, Hollande paid tribute to each former president of the Fifth Republic, as per French tradition during transfers of power. From Charles de Gaulle to Jacques Chirac, François Hollande spoke kind words on each of his predecessors; but when time came to speak of Sarkozy, Hollande's homage was remarkably concise: "I send him my wishes for the new life that opens itself to him." Several prominent politicians criticized Hollande for his lack of elegance during his inauguration ceremony.

While in Paris, I spoke with Pierre-Alexandre, a student in the prestigious Paris Institute of Political Studies. "People didn't really vote for Hollande as much as they voted against Sarkozy," he explained, "He's been elected to a 5-year term, but as far as we can tell he doesn't have much of a plan."

So what comes with a Hollande presidency?

Well, first off, no more Carla Bruni. First known as a model and singer-songwriter, then more recently as the museum guide in Woody Allen's Midnight in Paris, Carla Bruni was arguably France's most elegant first lady. She is replaced by the journalist Valerie Trierweiler, Hollande's current domestic partner. Before dating Trierweiler, François Hollande spent 25 years in the company of Ségolène Royal, another prominent socialist politician best known as Sarkozy's major opponent in the 2007 elections. Although she wasn't running for president this year, she ran for a seat in the National Assembly during the June legislative election. Throughout most of the legislative race, Royal was favored by the polls, earning 32% of the votes in the first round of suffrage – more than every other candidate. Shortly before the second round, however, Valérie Trierweiler tweeted her support for Royal's opponent, Olivier Falorni, a left-wing independent candidate. In a surprise victory, Falorni crushed Royal in the run-off elections, 62% to 37%. The Élysée has since attempted to distance itself from the Twitter incident by fear of dividing the political left.

This Affaire Trierweiler – which unfolded like a real-life, Franco-phone telenovela – has led many to question Hollande's character and leadership skills. Pierre-Alexandre had some insightful rhetorical questions on the subject: "If Hollande cannot create unity within his own household, how can he unite the French as a people?"

Though Hollande has led the Socialist Party for 11 years, his experience inside government seems a little faint in contrast to Sarkozy's extensive resumé. While Sarkozy has served in several ministerial positions (Minister of the Budget, Minister of Finance, then Minister of the Interior) since the early 1990s, some of Hollande's highest accomplishments prior to his ascension to presidency include being the mayor of Tulle (a town of 15,000 people) and presiding the general council of his local government for three years.

In these times of economic uncertainty, Hollande bears a lot of responsibility, particularly considering the fact that France is the world's 5th largest economy based on gross domestic product. While his predecessor was known for his slogan "Travailler plus pour gagner plus" ("Work more to earn more"), Hollande has promised to raise taxes for the rich – up to 75% on revenues exceeding a million euros yearly – in order to finance the development of underprivileged neighborhoods, the hiring of new teachers, and a lowering of the retirement age, all while reducing the national deficit to 0% of GDP by 2017. Unfortunately for Hollande, the "reducing the deficit" portion of his promises turned out trickier than originally thought. "I will only be able to keep my promise to balance the budget by 2017 if economic growth returns," he told France 2 in January. While we're waiting for the return of economic growth, Hollande's first budget revealed a €10 billion gap in the national economy. An audit of the French economy indicated that 2013 would be even harder, with €33 billion of savings to be made.

In his very first months of presidency, Hollande finds himself cornered on multiple fronts, from his personal life to his political promises. It is still unclear how the new French president will respond to the growing number of challenges coming his way, and many wonder if Hollande will succeed at reconciling his vision for budgetary balance and social welfare. "Either way, one thing is certain," Pierre-Alexandre tells me, "These next five years are going to be quite... interesting."
The Trouble with TriMet:
LIGHT RAIL EXPANSION IS A GOOD START, BUT MORE IS NEEDED.

Ron J. Rambo Jr.

Early in June, TriMet made the unpopular decision to cut their free-rail zone starting September 2012 in an effort to dig themselves out of the hole they’ve fallen into. Currently, the corporate/government municipality faces a $17 million deficit out of an operating budget of $400 million. With over 100 million trips logged in 2011, annual increases in ticket costs, and local expansions in light rail, TriMet is an organization that should be on the way up. There are two primary problems the company is addressing, and the solution to their financial woes is a simple one that should have been implemented years before: A partnership with Vancouver, Wash., to expand light rail across the Columbia River on both I5 and I205.

First, the problems. About half of TriMet’s funding (55 percent) comes from a payroll tax that employers pay to help avoid congestion around their businesses, as well as save the parking for the consumers. The tax is not overly invasive; employers pay about 70 cents per $100 in employee gross wages. The problem is, when there are fewer employees – due to, say, a seven-year recession – there are fewer employees to tax, which means fewer tax dollars as a means of revenue. Currently, Portland employment is at 1999 levels, while TriMet spending is about 15 years ahead of that. Revenue projections from the payroll tax are about $3 million less than their projected dollars. On top of that, federal funding (which makes up about 10 percent of TriMet’s operating budget) is likely to be cut by another $4 million.

For some incredibly bizarre reason, TriMet employee healthcare costs are about 50 percent higher than transit employees across the nation, and there is no premium contribution made by workers. Bravo to Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 for strong-arming TriMet into paying about $8,000 more than the national average, but this is simply unsustainable, and a compromise must be made. This stands to cost TriMet $5 to $10 million, depending on the labor arbitration.

TriMet has only prepared for the best case scenario, however. According to their website, between the $3 million in budget cuts and $9 million in additional funding they’ve raised (including $2.7 million from elimination of the free-rail zone), the organization still may face an additional $5 million in necessary cuts. Meanwhile, the current expansion plan – a correct one in order to reach economic equilibrium – connects Portland and Milwaukie, as well as extension of the Yellow Line to downtown Vancouver. It needs to be more aggressive than that.

According to columbiarivercrossing.org, 125,000 vehicles cross I5 daily, while I205 carries 140,000 per day. Both routes for Vancouver residents commuting to Portland and back for work are an absolute nightmare. While not all employed Vancouverites travel to Portland for work, it is not incomprehensible to imagine many people choosing to park-and-ride as a solution to avoid sitting at a stand-still. Consider that about 6.1 percent of Portland residents commute to work; it is not out of the question to expect half that to turn to public transit instead. While 3 percent is not an incredible number, it is significant in that it
represents nearly 8,000 vehicles per day whose carbon emissions will no longer spew into the air, and whose drivers may save themselves time and money.

Findings by the Brookings Institute suggest that only 30 percent of typical metropolitan residents are able to reach their jobs using public transit in 90 minutes or less. The numbers for middle and low-skill workers is less. Currently, bus service in Vancouver, while cheap, is not effective at joining workers who cross state lines with their places of employment. With increases in population and expected economic expansion in the coming years, public transportation is a tremendous necessity to ensure that citizens are able to work. Extending the Red Line from the airport to a transit center in Vancouver would not be exceptionally difficult for engineers who were already able to find a way to expand the Yellow Line along I-5.

Funding for the 15 crossing came from President Obama’s American Recovery Act ($3.5 billion), and it is unlikely that amount of money would be obtainable again. Washington state representatives might be wise to consider a measure that allows for creation of funding in some form, and the project is one that even Republicans can get behind. In 2011, Oregon Rep. Katie Eyre Brewer (R-Hillsboro) stated she would not support a tax increase unless increased frequency or expansion of services were on the table, and surely other blue-state elected conservatives can see the value in relieving congestion and helping the environment.

Infrastructure spending is often wasteful, and projects regularly go over-budget, which is why oversight and careful use of resources is particularly important. In a rare display of bipartisanship, Congress was just able to pass a new transportation bill – now is the time to reach for project funding! House Speaker John Boehner said of the bill that highway dollars would now go to highways, rather than planting flowers along the sides. Oregon and Washington representatives must make the case that expansion will be an effective measure, and that TriMet as a business will find a way to provide a service that Portland and Vancouver residents – and commuters – can both find useful.

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