

KD MAGAZINE

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One thing I have learned is that "business as usual" is no more. House cleaning became my goal for this issue. When I assumed the position of Editor in Chief this past summer, I discovered that the business side of the magazine was in a mess. I gave Managing Editor Molly McHugh and Assignment Editor Lisa Anderson all editorial duties while I organized the magazine's business.

Our passwords were lost and our original website had expired, and no one on staff knew how to get them back. We didn't have invoices to send to advertisers for the previous issue. KD had an office in the EMU that we never used. And we had to submit our budget proposal for the 2009-2010 school year to the ASUO.

Amidst my efforts, the economic crisis gripped the world. It still is. The state of journalism is in flux. The industry is grappling with the shift to online media. It wants to embrace the Internet, but it won't let go of its printed format. No publication, no matter how small, can escape the industry's transformation.

On December 3rd, I met with the Director of the UO Printing and Mailing Services office, J.R. Gaddis, in a last ditch effort to cut costs and have this issue printed. The meeting lasted for an hour, and when it ended, I felt horrible. Every printer in Eugene that could produce our magazine had gone out of business. The economic crisis wiped out already-struggling printers. One printer had survived the Great Depression, but was not so fortunate in the 21st century.

We were going to have to go just online. KD Magazine is, and will always remain an educational experience for its staff. It's an opportunity to gain experience and build a portfolio. We now have a new website that will never expire, which allows KD to thrive as a campus publication as long as its staff is passionate about it. I believe that because of this passion, KD will soon be back in print.

In the meantime, please enjoy this issue of KD Magazine. Time, sweat, and energy went into making this a reality. So much work was done by those at my side, therefore I do not feel right posing for the photo (at right) alone. Credit and praise must be given to the senior staff. These smart, capable, and dedicated journalists are the reason this issue of KD Magazine exists at all. Thank you.



From left to right: Stuart Mayberry, Roger Bong, Peter Barna, Lisa Anderson, Dave Martinez, and Molly McHugh.

Peter Barna
Editor in Chief

Roger Bong
Chief Copy Editor

Molly McHugh
Managing Editor

Stuart Mayberry
Art Director

Lisa Anderson
Assignment Editor

Dave Martinez
Photo Editor

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Peter Barna

MANAGING EDITOR

Molly McHugh

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Lisa Anderson

CHIEF COPY EDITOR

Roger Bong

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PHOTO EDITOR

Dave Martinez

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Rebecca Ames, Ashley Baer, Christine Bourke, Leticia Castro-Shockley, Nick Cote, Lauren Easby, Maren Fawkes, Courtney Hendricks, Janelle Ho, Jarod Opperman, Jason Reed

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Kelcey Friend

ACCOUNTING

Gina Lee

MARKETING CONSULTANT

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Kerri Anderson, Shannon August, Anna Helland, Robert Hribernick, Seiga Ohtani

CONTACT

Mail: KD Magazine
Executive Office EMU, Suite 4
Eugene, OR 97403
Email: kdmagazine@gmail.com

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A Taqueria Treat

Horchata, though not indigenous to Mexico, refreshes all who indulge in its sweet flavor

Mexican horchata, in its most basic form, uses the least amount of ingredients. In a typical Mexican recipe, rice is soaked, ground, and then dissolved in water. Cinnamon is usually added, with some recipes calling for vanilla and ground almonds. Some recipes add milk.

The rice-based drink is served in taquerias across Mexico and California, and is the perfect beverage for any time of day. The cloudy, milky, cinnamon-flavored drink is also sold at grocery stores, although

freshly-made versions are almost always the most refreshing.

Spanish horchata recipes use chufa, or earth nut, a plant indigenous to the Middle East and Spain. But Mexican horchata is made with rice, not chufa, perhaps from a lack of chufa in Central America.

Muslims brought an early form of *horchata de chufa* to Spain during the Moorish conquest. Eight hundred years later, Spanish conquistadors introduced their version of the drink to the Americas.

- Roger Bong and Colette Crouse



Horchata

(makes about 6 servings)

- 1 cup long grain white rice
- 1 cup skinless almonds
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions

Wash, drain, then finely grind the rice—a coffee grinder will do it. Combine with cinnamon. Add 3 1/2 cups hot water. Cover and let soak for eight hours or overnight.

Blend mixture with almonds until smooth. Add 2 1/2 cups of water and blend. Add remaining ingredients.

Strain with metal strainer into a bowl, and again using two layers of cheesecloth. Add up to 2 cups of water, to taste. Serve over ice.

Recipe adapted from Gale Gand and Eileen Rivers.

Don't like recipes?

Grocery stores, especially Latin American marketplaces, often sell ready-to-drink horchata.



PHOTOS BY ROGER BONG

A Celebration of Womanhood

One of Mexico's most cherished celebrations is the Quinceanera, a Catholic tradition that occurs when a girl turns 15. The celebration acts as a rite of passage ceremony, the young girl transitioning to womanhood, and is an introduction to the community as a young woman.

The religious ceremony is reminiscent of a traditional Catholic wedding, where the soon-to-be woman wears an elaborate gown, long gloves, and a tiara. She chooses 15 young men and women as her attendants, also called *damas* and *caballeros*, who wear simpler, matching dresses and tuxedos.

The ceremony traditionally takes place in a Catholic Church. The *damas* and *caballeros* enter first. They proceed down the aisle, and shortly after, the girl follows and takes her place at the front of the church, next to the priest. A short ritual ensues, ending with a blessing for the girl's future and journey into womanhood.

Once the church is empty, the party begins.

A group dance that the newly-blessed woman, her *damas*, and *caballeros* have rehearsed for weeks begins the party. It's a complex type of waltz, called a *vals*. After the dance, the focus shifts to the ongoing party and, of course, the food.

Massive amounts of various dishes, catered and prepared by the family of the girl, are served. Traditionally, this consists of Mexican foods and beverages such as *flautas*, *quesadillas*, *horchata*, and *enchiladas*.

Members of the girl's family often give speeches about her, another element that makes the Quinceanera similar to a



traditional wedding. The father usually offers memories of his daughter's childhood and encourages her to make good choices as a young woman. Gifts are given, many of them religious in nature, such as rosaries, personal bibles, and prayer books. Others, however, are monetary gifts, as the Quinceanera is also a type of graduation for Mexican girls. - Molly McHugh



At the southernmost tip of the Baja California peninsula, Cabo San Lucas, a relatively small resort town with a population of roughly 56,000, is no longer the remote destination it used to be.

Surrounded by brilliant azure waters with postcard-perfect white sand beaches, Cabo San Lucas offers a variety of activities and interests for every traveler. It's here at the land's end that the desert, sun, and sea meet to make one of the most beautiful resort areas in the world.

Famous for its sport fishing and world-class golf, Cabo San Lucas is also known for its picturesque architecture, luxury hotels,

million dollar yachts, funky street stands, tequila shots, and parties until dawn.

With a year-round average temperature of 78 degrees Fahrenheit, Cabo San Lucas has everything a tropical destination can offer: glass-bottom boat tours, sea kayaking, surfing, snorkeling, whale watching, and scuba diving.

As an anchor port frequented by cruise ships, Cabo San Lucas has a seemingly endless supply of classy shops and local artisan markets with handmade gifts. Horseback riding and ATV tours also offer tourists a thrilling, unforgettable experience.

Cabo San Lucas has just as much to offer

at night as it does during the day. Clubs and lounges located on the boardwalk, or *malecon*, are within walking distance of most hotels. The *malecon* is near the marina, where more options for entertainment are down the street.

El Squid Roe, a *malecon* landmark, operates as a fun, family restaurant during the day and a packed dance club at night. The Nowhere Bar is a low-key hangout where tourists and locals alike gather for drinks to start the night. Equally famous are the Giggling Marlin Club and the Cabo Wabo Cantina, which offer music and live bands for all ages. - Maren Fawkes

TOP: PHOTO BY CHRIS DIEERS, FLICKR.COM/SENIOR_CODD; BOTTOM: PHOTO BY VOX EFX, FLICKR.COM/VOX_EFX

From Student to Savior

STORY JESSICA RUNYAN-GLESS PHOTO COURTESY BLAKE COLE



ABOVE: Blake Cole and Averisto pose for the camera in Costa Rica. Cole traveled to Costa Rica and Panama after his graduation from the University of Oregon in fall 2008.

“We were their saviors as far as medicine goes,” Cole recalls of his trip to Central America, where he gave people access to much needed healthcare.

When Blake Cole, a pre-med student at the University of Oregon, signed up for International Service Learning he thought it would be an opportunity to be guided through basic medical procedures while seeing a different part of the world. His volunteering took him to remote villages in Costa Rica and Panama, where fresh running water and new clothes were considered a luxury, not a necessity.

What 23-year-old Cole didn't know was that over the course of two weeks he would see a woman throw up a four-inch worm, give a Pap smear on a lunch table and spend time in a hospital—as the patient.

Immediately after arriving in Costa Rica, Blake and 18 others realized they were going to have a rigorous and frighteningly unfamiliar experience. They would work long hours with little free time. It didn't

matter to Cole because he loved the work he was doing and the people he was helping. He quickly learned how to diagnose scabies, lice, and cataracts, but it took him a bit longer to recognize less common medical issues such as deep vein thrombosis, heart murmurs, and tumors.

Following his graduation in fall 2008, Cole now works as an assistant of an orthopedic surgeon in Tualatin, Oregon. He hopes the experience will make him a competitive candidate for the Oregon Health and Science University. He plans to apply for the incoming class of 2010.

What inspired you to want to become a doctor?

I've always had a deep interest in science, but my senior year of high school was the major turning point. My father passed away due to a myocardial infarction, otherwise known as a heart attack, and I felt that there could have been more preventative measures at the time. [This] interested me and made me want to change lives.

How do you think your experience was overall?

Life-changing. Honestly. It inspired me to see the opportunity that I have in front of me. I got to be hands-on and do a lot of things I wouldn't be able to in the United States. We provided underprivileged, impoverished areas with healthcare. Most of these people didn't have access to healthcare, let alone cars or shoes. We were their saviors as far as medicine goes. Going through the process of being a doctor is something I have been hesitant on doing because it is such a long process. But when I was put into this situation of helping others, it made me realize that this is what I want to do and that the opportunity is alive.

When you went to Costa Rica what were the biggest cultural differences you encountered?

Definitely the quality of life. The living conditions and things of that nature were nothing like how I grew up. That was definitely the biggest culture shock for me.

What were the living conditions of Costa Ricans and Panamanians that you were giving medical attention to like?

Most of the villages we worked in had no electricity. They didn't have professionals come in and build their houses. It was a big change from what I am used to. Here we have all these nice luxury homes. The houses were small, one room, almost shacks, built out of scrap metal or scrap wood, pretty much anything they could find. The sanitation was obviously not good. People didn't have fresh running water, and as I said, most of the people we saw had no access to healthcare. Almost nobody had automobiles, and it looked like what the people were wearing had been donated [to them]. It was a huge change.

What parts of each country did you go to?

We started in San Jose [Costa Rica], and traveled over to the Atlantic coast to a town

called Cahuita, then we went down into Panama. I got food poisoning right before we crossed the border. It was a culture shock because I saw how their hospitals were. We were in a tiny, tiny town where there was one hospital for probably 100 miles. The operating room was one doctor and two nurses. Then we went down into Panama to Changuinola and then to Bocas del Toro. It is the most beautiful part of Panama. We made the trip back to San Jose and then my [buddies and I] went to the Nicoya Peninsula. One place that was stunning was Montezuma. It was this diamond in the rough. We had to drive down these crazy dirt roads and then came up on paradise. It was this little town in the middle of nowhere. Best food I've ever had, and the most beautiful beaches.

How is a doctor's office in Costa Rica different than a doctor's office in the United States?

In Costa Rica we definitely didn't have all the tools that a normal doctor would have. An example is the access to surgical equipment. We couldn't do any surgeries in our clinics. We also had a shortage of medicine. Here we have so many different types available to us. I would say sanitation as well because we were working in a school as opposed to a sanitary doctor's office. We didn't have examination tables—we saw [patients] in chairs. We had the basic equipment, but no anesthesia or anything that would be required to do more complicated procedures. I got food poisoning right before we crossed the border. It was a culture shock because I saw how their hospitals were. We were in a tiny, tiny town where there was one hospital for probably 100 miles. The operating room was one doctor and two nurses.

So for any given examination the patient would have to sit in a chair?

It was tough at the times when we needed to palpate the stomach or feel for things in the lower regions of the body. There were no curtains, and everyone sat in an open room. When I gave a pap smear, I went to a separate building in the school where they had a makeshift lunch table as an examination table. It was a separate room to give the patient privacy, but it wasn't better by any means.

What was the most common medical issue you encountered and why do you think that was?

We saw a lot of children. Rashes, scabies, lice, and parasites were common. Parasitic

infections were common from bug bites. We also saw a lot of unusual things I would have never had the chance to see in the United States, like deep vein thrombosis. There were quite a few people who had goiters on their neck. I saw a couple of tumors; there was quite a bit going on. Eye diseases were very prevalent, such as pterygium and cataracts. People live with them. In order to get pterygium removed you [need] surgery, and these people can't afford surgery and we weren't able to do surgery. There were many things, I could keep going: chagas, leishmaniasis, ringworm and intestinal parasites. I saw a woman throw-up a worm four inches long.

I'm assuming you met a lot of different people during your time abroad. Who made the biggest impact on you and why?

I have a picture with this boy named Averisto, and he was my second patient. [He] and I clicked. He understood everything I was saying. I diagnosed him with headaches and gave him some acetaminophen. He was the first patient that built up my confidence because I was out of my comfort zone. There was an older gentleman who came in and was very adamant about having only one problem. He kept saying, “Nothing else is wrong with me, nothing else is wrong with me!” It turns out that he had a heart attack about a month before we saw him, and he was suffering from heart murmurs following the attack. He was [a] stubborn guy and he sticks out in my mind as an example of the type of people they were. They didn't want to feel they were losing worth, in a sense.

Were there any differences between what you thought you were getting into and what actually took place once you arrived?

Yes. I thought we were going to be with a team of doctors and babied through the whole experience; it wasn't like that at all. We had one doctor for 19 people, and we were kind of thrown into the lion's den and learned. That was probably the biggest shock to me. I didn't think that it would be so hands-on so quickly.

What have you gained from this experience?

I feel like I have gained some independence. I [will] never complain about money again. Seeing how other people are living around the world really opened my eyes to how fortunate I really am. **KD**

A Belief in Harm Reduction

STORY WHITNEY MOUNTAIN PHOTOS NICK COTE



ABOVE A box of syringes stacked in the office of the HIV Alliance. As of 2007, the Sana Needle Exchange Program, offered by the HIV Alliance, has distributed 7,500 clean needles.

The Sana Needle Exchange Program offers clean needles to those who need them to prevent HIV and AIDS.

A man waits under a bridge on the edge of Springfield, Oregon. It is dark outside and almost freezing, but still he waits. He fidgets with a few pieces of change that clatter in his pocket as a white van crackles to a halt on the gravel road. He stands under a "No Trespassing" sign and watches carefully from the shadows. His dark, tattered clothes cling to his body, but they're thick so he can fight the night's chill when he sleeps. He shakes in anticipation. Tonight he will empty his bag of used syringes and fill it with new, clean ones supplied by the white van. After this exchange, the man will be better prepared when he finds his next fix. Using clean needles to shoot drugs will help protect him from contracting diseases linked to his addiction.

He is not the only one who awaits the van, run by the Sana Needle Exchange Program in Eugene. As of 2007, about 7,500 drug users had taken advantage of the services it distributed, according to the HIV

Alliance, which is the office that offers the exchange program locally on behalf of the nationwide effort to supply clean needles to intravenous drug users. The program's objective is to make sure people who choose to inject drugs, such as heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine can protect themselves from blood-borne illnesses, including HIV, AIDS, and hepatitis C.

The purpose for this exchange is not to promote drug use, but to prevent the spread of drug-related illnesses in the community. This goal is within reach according to studies conducted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Medical Association, the American Public Health Association, and the National Commission on AIDS. Each of these studies has found that needle exchange programs like the Sana Needle Exchange reduce disease transmission without increasing the amount of substance abuse in their communities.

Having a preventative program in Lane County is beneficial considering that an estimated 10,000 injecting drug users live in the area. The exchange is part of a comprehensive HIV-prevention strategy that also provides services such as clean tools, first-aid kits, treatment options, testing, and counseling.

"They hooked me up with housing and medical," says Rebecca, a tall, thin client with a dark brown mullet that flips around her face when she speaks while pacing in carpenter jeans, white men's tennis shoes, and a big red wind-breaker. The program directors wish to keep Rebecca's real name confidential.

"I'm gay. No, I'm not. I don't know what I am," she says. "Only God knows what I really am."

Rebecca watches Christian sermons on television to pass her time when she is at home at her sister's house. She engages everyone around her in energetic conversation, not hesitating to offer her perspective to anyone who will listen.

"Is this guy scaring you?" Rebecca says of the inflatable punch doll sitting in a corner of the office at the Alliance that seems to be intimidating a little girl being held by her mother during the interview. When the girl doesn't respond, Rebecca attacks the doll, wrestling it to the ground.

"I love kids," Rebecca says, brushing herself off after her victory over the plastic man. "My niece is strung out on OxyContin. It hurts to see her use. We have always been tight."

When she finally sits, Rebecca spins in the office chair. Keeping her attention during a discussion proves to be a difficult task, but when she focuses, she delivers her statements honestly and with confidence.

"I've been clean for two days," says Rebecca, who has started a recovery process facilitated by the Alliance.

At the time of the interview, she had been placed on a waiting list to enter the Alliance's inpatient rehabilitation service for people who wish to become sober. Until a space becomes available, she will participate in outpatient drug treatment that provides resources such as counseling and support groups.

"I have been HIV positive for 18 years," Rebecca says. "But once I'm sober for a while, I want to help people who are newly HIV positive or children of addicts; I have a son who I had in prison who is HIV positive."

She may have an opportunity to help others. The program is primarily run by volunteers and interns, many of whom are students at the University of Oregon majoring in drug-related fields such as pre-medical studies and sociology.

Although there are not many professional staff members, the Sana Needle Exchange is credited as a leading representation for the approximately 200 programs like it nationwide. The programs operate on funds provided by private organizations including an anonymous donor from the community who gives the program \$20,000 annually.

Needle exchange Project Coordinator Jeff Nichols has managed the program since March 2007.

"It humbles me," Nichols says, adding that he found his career path through his father's struggle with substance abuse. "I see situations that I couldn't imagine. It gives me perspective. I learn to work for what I want or stop complaining."

When he operates the exchanges, Nichols is accompanied by a varying number of volunteers who help him stock the van with supplies. After they have all of the equipment, they drive to the site of the exchange, which changes depending on the day of the week. The volunteers chatter and giggle as they file out of the van. They set up the supplies while clients wait patiently in the shadows. The volunteers turn on the bright lights that pierce the darkness under the bridge.

"I got involved because I really want to do this for the rest of my life," says Maija Teppola, University of Oregon sophomore

"It's not only about how people use, but about how they live and make choices to improve their lives."

and needle exchange volunteer. "It's not only about how people use, but about how they live and make choices to improve their lives."

The staff sets up a tent and two tables, each with its own purpose. One table is used to facilitate the exchange, the other for hepatitis testing and vaccinations. A doctor, who attends the exchange on Thursdays, uses the tent to treat abscesses that develop at infected injection sites. In the van, trained volunteers confidentially test clients for HIV.

As the clients arrive, the staff smiles and speaks to the clients approaching the exchange table. Some of the clients merely dump their needles quietly into biohazard containers. Others are talkative and wearing wedding rings. A few answer cell phones and drive away in Ford Explorers. Most of the faces smile, their cheeks pink and their breath visible in the cold night air.

"We are out there for an hour and a half, and we are freezing and complaining; but that is when I realize that some people have to experience the cold and hardships all the time," Nichols says of his job. "I like to see

clients work through the process. Whether [they have] smaller goals or bigger, they are achieving more than they thought they could."

During the exchange, the Eugene Police Department gives the van and the clients a two block radius of privacy. And although the department does not condone the use of illegal drugs, Station Manager Lupe Thompson says the department wants to keep people safe, which means preventing disease.

"We are certainly not going to allow people to break the law, but [exchanging needles] is not illegal and it is benefiting the community," Thompson says. "The number of needles we are able to eliminate is huge."

According to the HIV Alliance, eliminating needles is important because the syringes should not be used more than once. Multiple uses can create microscopic splits that can damage the veins, which may then develop abscesses.

"Wound care incision and drainage of abscesses reduce the impact of this population on local hospitals," says Dr. Ananda Stiegler, a naturopathic physician who treats clients during the exchanges. On-site care at the exchanges eases the impact of drug use on local hospitals, freeing time and money for patients whose medical needs are not related to drug use.

Although the program's strengths are highly esteemed in Lane County, it's not unanimously supported. Even Rebecca finds some fault with exchange programs.

"I believe that it's promoting addiction," she says. "But I believe

in the harm reduction." Whether or not people believe the program is a benefit to society, harm reduction is a well-acknowledged asset to the program's services. Working to improve the conditions of drug-related activities is widely supported in Lane County, which helps the exchange program continue toward its goal—preventing the spread of disease.

The man under the bridge is one of many people who have both benefited from the Alliance and helped the Alliance work toward its goal. He zips up his bag now filled with sterile syringes and nods to the volunteers. He walks into the darkness, away from the bright lights and the tent's welcoming shelter that will soon draw him back for another exchange. No one sees where he goes, but no one minds. His decisions from that point on rest on his shoulders alone. Neither the staff, nor anyone else for that matter, can force the clients to make different decisions regarding drug use, but they make safer options available to those who wish to use more responsibly. **KD**

Letting Nature Paint Itself

Physics Professor Richard Taylor discovers the secret to Jackson Pollock's Drip Paintings

STORY **MINDY COOPER** PHOTOS **JAROD OPPERMAN**



On a snowy day at the Yorkshire Moors in a small town in England, Richard Taylor arrived with a college class assignment to create still life paintings of nature. With freezing fingers and increasingly intense weather conditions, he and his classmates faced more obstacles than planned for.

As the class gave up and retreated to the nearest dry coffee shop, Taylor had the grand idea of attaching a bucket of paint to a pendulum built from fallen trees. His goal was to let the bucket spill paint onto the canvas below and let nature essentially paint itself.

When returning to the canvas the next day, Taylor realized the shocking similarities of his painting to those of Jackson Pollock's abstract painting style.

"When we looked at the canvas, we knew it was an epic moment," Taylor says. "We knew we discovered the secret to Pollock."



For years the mystery behind the wonder of Pollock's organic drip paintings remained unanswered. His paintings, made with seemingly abstract drippings of household paints, were respected for their originality, but since their creation in the 1940s there had yet to be any understanding of why observers worldwide were left with such emotional responses.

The mystery of Pollock's work lingered on until Taylor, now a physics professor at the University of Oregon, used his background in both art and science to analyze the work of the renowned expressionist painter. Taylor declared Pollock's paintings to contain fractal patterns.

Fractal patterns are fragmented shapes that can be split into identical parts to produce smaller copies of the whole they formed from. Each part of a fractal can be any size or go in any direction, yet it will still maintain the same structure from the smallest to the largest scale.

"A lot of people get frightened by the word fractal. They see it as something exotic, but it isn't; it is very simple," Taylor explains.

"A lot of people get frightened by the word fractal. They see it as something exotic, but it isn't; it is very simple."

"We are naturally at home with patterns that repeat at different magnifications, which is essentially what fractals are."

Natural examples of such patterns include mountain ranges, lightning bolts, tree branches, and ocean waves, all of which repeat at different magnifications that are similar from the original state from which they began. Consider the makeup of fractal snowflakes. Whether you look at the tiniest part of its formation or view the formation as a whole, the structure remains visually the same.

There has long been a common notion that art and science have nothing in common, yet for centuries both artists and scientists have been fascinated with naturally occurring patterns found in nature and how they can be reproduced.

By using his love for both fractals and art, Taylor discovered a way to bridge the existing "gap" between both of his passions—science and art. Consequently, Taylor created a new art movement known, as Fractal Expressionism.

"The art and science divide is created artificially," Taylor says. "The idea that artists and scientists think in different ways is not true."

As an art movement, Fractal Expressionism did not come into existence until Taylor was studying at The Manchester School of Art, which was six years after receiving his PhD in physics from Nottingham University in the United Kingdom.

Taylor's discovery of a way to naturally produce fractal properties by using merely paint, canvas and the blowing of the wind were featured in *Nature Magazine* and *Scientific American*. "This was the moment the term Fractal Expressionism came into existence," Taylor explains.

To Taylor, the importance of Fractal Expressionism as a movement is that the artwork is created through human expression as opposed to computer generated formulations.

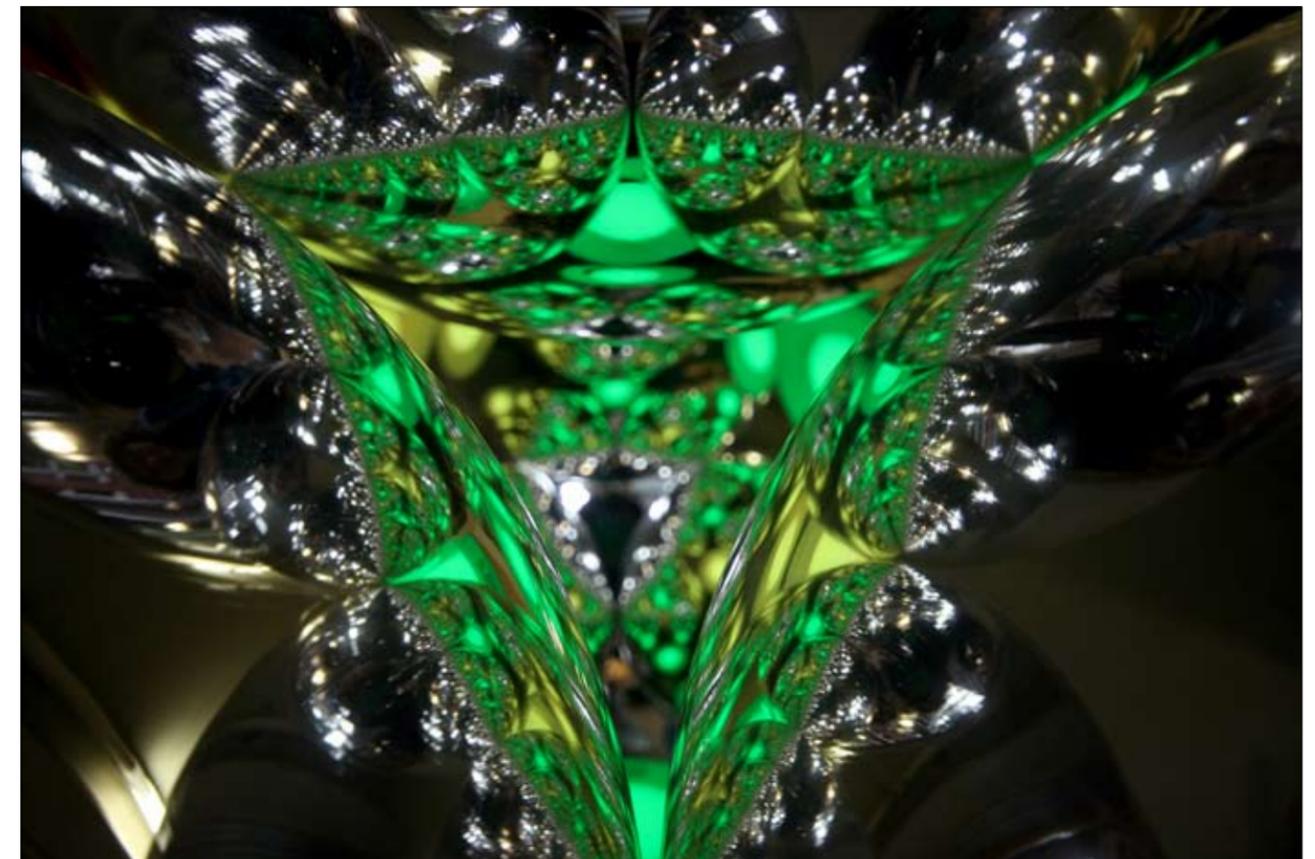
"It requires a lot of human input [from people] like Pollock who rose to the challenge and found a process that could do it," Taylor says.

Taylor said he has always felt a gravitational pull towards Pollock's work because of the artist's intricate drips that created such original work. "It was as if he captured the art of nature," Taylor says.

In order to test the paintings for fractal properties, Taylor scanned Pollock's work into high-powered computers and separated the colors into different layers, sending each through its own fractal analysis.

"The computer looks for patterns at different magnifications,"

OPPOSITE LEFT: Taylor finds fractal properties in almost all parts of nature, including trees. BELOW: The fractal generator in Willamette Hall at UO. (Photo by Mindy Cooper)





ABOVE: How many faces do you see? Taylor and the fractal generator in Willamette Hall.

Taylor explains. "Essentially, it compares patterns and checks to see if they have different statistics."

Taylor found fractal patterns present in Pollock's paintings. In 1999, Taylor published the results of his long-term analysis of Pollock's drip paintings, immediately capturing international attention from both the art and science realms.

"A long time ago, I couldn't decide between art and physics. Now, I have oscillated between the two using science to analyze art," Taylor says.

The birth of a new art movement has captured the attention of both scientists and artists alike. Recently, Taylor has received various e-mails from artists exploring fractal expressionism themselves, desiring to capture nature's pattern into their own work.

"Fractal Expressionism is when the artist has the innate ability to paint or create fractals compared to if they mathematically generated them with a computer," Taylor says. "To generate fractals as a human endeavor, that's where the expressionism comes in."

Taylor believes the future of Fractal Expressionism is destined to be considered a serious artform because of the exponential growth of computer technology, yet he worries that artists will consequently be stuck in the realm of a hobby.

"At the computer there is creative input, but it is only expressionism if it outweighs the crunching numbers," he says. "If someone picked up the paintbrush and use[d] a traditional technique you wouldn't be able to create the patterns and art that Pollock created."

According to Taylor, what separates Pollock from other artists was his ability to capture the rhythms of nature that had a large-scale effect.

Like Taylor, Ken O'Connell, an art historian, artist, and professor emeritus at the UO also believes in the undeniable relationship between art and science.

"Often artists and scientists seem to be at opposite ends of the spectrum, but, in fact, we are much closer in our fascination

and exploration of the world around us than most people think," O'Connell says.

He explains that patterns are a part of art in the most fundamental way, and it is through art that people react to the surrounding world. "There are all sorts of ways to analyze the patterns of nature and create a model for it," he says.

O'Connell explains that patterns in art grow out of simple elements like dots, lines, and shapes, and it is from them that artists build.

"[Pollock] built imagery by the power of nature, which is why it is so hard to duplicate a Pollock piece," O'Connell says. "He was nature."

"Scientists and artists are all using patterns," Taylor agrees. "Even though artists are using paint, they are all trying to understand and capture the same experience."

O'Connell explains that artists have been fascinated for centuries with reproducing patterns. "In painting cloth, hair, and clouds, artists had to analyze the complex interaction of light, color, surface, and reflection," he says.

"A lot of artists were actually ahead of the game," Taylor says. "If you look at Japanese painters, the painting 'The Great Wave' from 1846, there are many fractal elements."

Mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot introduced the term "fractal" in the 1970s, yet mathematicians have been studying the idea of repetitive patterns in nature since the late 19th century.

In the 1920s, mathematicians began looking at different natural images, coming up with equations to mirror them.

"It [was] a new way of looking at things, or perhaps it is an old way of looking at things," Taylor says.

"There are two different types of generated fractals: exact and statistical fractals," Taylor says.

Exact fractals are repetitive patterns generated by equations mathematically driven to be completely fractal. In contrast, statistical fractals have randomized patterns, much like the way a tree's branches appear.

Taylor explains the most famous fractal pattern to be the Mandelbrot set, which has appeared on T-shirts, posters, and as computer screensavers. However, despite its pervasive qualities, most people don't recognize it.

"You know it's not natural but it looks natural, almost as if nature had planned to create it but ran out of time and so Mandelbrot generated it instead," Taylor says. "That's okay because nature is pretty busy."

O'Connell explains that certain patterns in art forms, such as music, can cause a person to relax in the same way mellow jazz music can.

"There is a certain kind of reaction we have to pattern geometry," O'Connell says.

but instead how are they aren't."

Currently, Taylor is working on generating different types of patterns to see how human stress levels might be affected. Taylor believes by putting fractal patterns on walls of a classroom, or by the bed of a baby's cradle, stress levels can be inherently reduced through the way humans react to looking at these patterns.

"It is not discovering the new, just pinpointing what it is about nature that makes us like it so much," Taylor remarks. "They don't know how they were doing it, but for a long time people assumed that fractals were aesthetically pleasing."

Taylor, along with professors from the physiology, psychology, and art departments at the UO, tests people of all ages, from babies to adults, using computer technology in hopes to see how

"The brain could well be set up to see these patterns, so why not give it what it's set up to do?"

"By giving an idea or observation its form, and the form is the art, you begin to understand it and form a relationship to it," O'Connell says.

"It is possible for us to look at fractal images, but we can't tell because it is so small," O'Connell says. "This is why some people find some portion of the geometry and move in and zoom in and out with them."

However, O'Connell explains it's impossible to determine the expressionism by geometry and shape alone, but all elements lead to the quality of the expressionism within the art. "Color, music—it all relates to the mood," he says. "The artist shows what the onlooker didn't experience, but wants to realize."

Fractals are also being used in a variety of other fields.

"Fractal is one concept that applies to so many different areas of life," Taylor says. "The question isn't how fractals are used today,

the patterns affect the human condition.

Taylor explains there are two dominant ways of measuring the different stress levels. One method, which is similar to those used for lie detector testing, compares statistics of skin conductants that change when a person becomes more stressed. By sending electricity through the tip of a person's finger, the professors are able to measure electrical currents—the higher the current, the higher the person's anxiety.

Another way to measure the patterns fluctuations of anxiety patterns is by looking at brain waves, which increase when relaxed. Taylor's research has found that a person's brain waves increase when shown fractal patterns, therefore decreasing stress.

"That means that the brain might actually be wired to see fractals," Taylor says. "The brain could well be set up to see these patterns, so why not give it what it's set up to do?" KD

BELOW: Because of Pollock's ability to mimic nature, Taylor is unsure whether the painting below is Pollock's or is from Taylor's experiments with wind. (Photo courtesy of Richard Taylor)





Trailin'g the Irish Tradition

STORY RICK OLSON PHOTOS REBECCA AMES & LAUREN EASBY



Pints of Guinness dot the tables surrounding musicians, who fill the room with Irish folk tunes. A woman nearby stands and begins dancing.

It's Wednesday evening at Mac's, on 16th and Willamette, and an informal music session takes place as it does most weeks. Fiddlers, guitarists, harpers, and mandolin players from various backgrounds collaborate on one accord: their love of Irish folk music.

Typically, Irish folk musicians gather in a circle and follow the direction of a leader. However, Eugene musicians approach the Irish music with a less structured, more expressive approach.

"Here, anyone can begin a song and we play at their pace," says Peggy Hinsman, a fiddler in the group.

Patrick O'Kelly gazes through his coke-bottle glasses, enchanted by the traditional songs of his childhood in Skibbereen, Ireland.

Another song finishes and the circle begins haggling O'Kelly to join the festivities. After a quick swig of his Guinness, he moves a chair over to the circle. Two fiddlers make room as he leads into "The Moonshiner."

"I'm a rambler, I'm a gambler, I'm a long way from home," he begins to sing. Soon the rest of the group sings along and other bar patrons eventually join in. The singing resonates throughout the dimly lit restaurant. The musicians sway with grins across their faces.

"I'll eat when I'm hungry, I'll drink when I'm dry, and if moonshine don't kill me I'll drink till I die," O'Kelly finishes singing. He returns to his pint and chuckles as he watches the fiddler with long hair and a bristled, gray beard.

"This guy is playing the fiddle with his face as much as the bow," O'Kelly says. A fiddler for 25 years, Gary Brittain contorts his face as he jerks his bow across the strings. O'Kelly says violinists hold the bow delicately and perform with a refinement unfit for the flexibility of Irish folk sessions. Brittain is one of four fiddlers in the circle. Two women play to his left and directly across him is Milton Takei, who bows the melody.

"Violinists have to know what they're doing before they start," Takei explains. "Fiddle players got to figure it out pretty much when it's over."

Mac's is not the only place in town the music resides. It travels to other establishments around town throughout the week. A veteran of the sessions, Takei recalls the group's beginnings. The sessions originally took place at The Blarney Stone (now McShane's) near Lane Community College. However, cigarette smoke circulating in the bar overwhelmed the musicians and the group decided to move elsewhere, settling at Mac's.

On Tuesdays, musicians gather at Brittain's studio to play until their fingers are raw. Located in the basement of a home in Eugene's Whiteaker neighborhood, the sessions attract a collection of good-humored people. The musicians play a less traditional song selection at Brittain's studio.

"We don't just play Irish music," Brittain says, comparing the session to those at Mac's. "Something like Pink Floyd will get mixed in sometimes."



ABOVE: Dan and Eve King-Lehman, glass blowers from Marcola, Oregon, drive to Eugene every Wednesday to play at Mac's for the Irish sessions. The guitarist is playing what once belonged to Jackson Browne.



ABOVE: Fiddler Gary Brittain hosts the same musicians at his studio in the Whiteaker District of Eugene.

BELOW: Milton Takei and Seve Johnston, both fiddlers, at Mac's.



While the transition from Irish folk to rock or bluegrass may seem odd, cultural variety is the root of Irish folk. In the 17th century, intermarriage with Scots and English expanded the repertoire of Irish music. As a result, the musicians at Brittain's often intertwine Scottish and other foreign tunes in the song rotation.

While the songs are different, the atmosphere at Brittain's still reflects the mood of the Wednesday jams at Mac's. Gary Brittain's brother, Robin, doesn't claim to be a musician, but the group lets him play anyway. "They tolerate me. That's it. Probably because I'm the brother," he jokes.

The circle welcomes anyone with the desire to learn and play Irish folk. "The sessions kind of doubles as a class," Takei says.

An onlooker intrigued by the music can't help but participate. Audience members usually contribute by playing makeshift objects such as spoons or upended wastebaskets.

As Robin glances over his shoulder and smiles, he doesn't break his rhythm. "It's more fun than scorin' some tadpoles," Robin says of the gatherings. "And that's pretty fun too." Although he may have considered himself a tenderfoot, Robin has become a talented drummer and integral part of the group after years of participating in the sessions.

Despite the presence of familiar faces in the group, the composition of the circle changes on a weekly basis. There might be five fiddlers one week, but only two the next. With the ever-changing mix of musicians and instruments, every session is unique. A flute can add a new degree to the harmony. But the unpredictability of the sessions makes it tough to grasp the essence of the music after listening only once. Robin therefore advises listeners to follow his rule of thumb: "Three times to justify."

O'Kelly is particularly fond of a harper named Mary Grace, who occasionally shows up to the sessions. At the session, Grace begins to pluck the notes of "Faerie Queen." Everyone stops to listen, as if in a trance. With only the soft melody filling the room, the onlookers are transfixed with calmness. Grace volunteers with Sounds for Healing to play soothing music for hospital patients at Sacred Heart Medical Center.

There is a harper in every generation of Grace's family. "I hoped it would be me," Grace says. Seven years ago, her dream came true. She has been playing ever since.

Eve King-Lehman's musical passion was also guided by family influence. King-Lehman's mother encouraged her to become a flautist. The flute has proved valuable in her life, as it has introduced her to friends she's made through musical gatherings.

"I feel like I'm in a journey of spiritual discovery," King-Lehman says.

While the musicians play, their instruments tell stories. A floor tom drum once belonging to Don Beckett sits in front of mandolin player Kevin Rothaar. Beckett, Rothaar's musical mentor, passed away in September.

"Since he is not with us anymore, and since I inherited his drum, I have been studying even more, using the tappie stick style, which was undoubtedly a style created by Don," Rothaar says.

Though no longer physically part of the music, Beckett's presence is not forgotten.

"I FEEL LIKE I'M IN A JOURNEY OF SPIRITUAL DISCOVERY."

Across the circle, King-Lehman's husband, Dan, moves his finger along a dark fretboard inlaid with pearl. Dan's hands are not the first to grace this guitar: Jackson Browne once owned the instrument. It's impossible to know the history behind each instrument in the circle, but learning about Dan's guitar makes it easy for the musicians to wonder.

On Sundays, the Irish folk music thrives at Sam Bond's Garage. Takei is one of the regulars at Mac's who also attends the Sam Bond's sessions.

On the third Wednesday of each month, the musicians gather at O'Kelly's home. On this night, O'Kelly is once again encouraged to lead a song. He flips through a yellow notebook full of handwritten song lyrics that he's carried with him since leaving his homeland. He begins a song, and everyone attempts to sing along.

A few songs later, Hinsman sets her fiddle aside and tallies the number of empty beer bottles scattered about the room. "Judging by all the bottles, we need to sing a [drinking] song," she says. And so she begins: "We all got drunk in Dublin City, fall down me Billy." After a few verses, everyone sings the drinking song and the room resonates with laughter. **KD**



ABOVE: Celtic harper Mary Grace, also plays for patients at Sacred Heart Hospital as part of Sounds for Healing.

BELOW: Takei has been in playing in the sessions since the musicians first started gathering at the Blarney Stone.



THE HOUSE OF COFFEE

STORY REBECCA WOOLINGTON PHOTOS MAREN FAWKES

Despite its youth, the Wandering Goat Coffee Company has already become an important fixture in the Whiteaker neighborhood. Brightly colored, abstract art hangs on cherry red, raven black, and cream-colored walls. Employees and customers dance, clap, and sing along to Creedence Clearwater Revival tunes and tracks from *Abbey Road*. Two women in their twenties sit outside, sharing steaming beverages in small, white cups amidst the blowing brown and yellow leaves, laughing and discussing what the “Word of the day” was on Dictionary.com.

The wings of a hand-painted butterfly spread the width of the backside of a woman’s black leather jacket. Underneath the butterfly, “love” is written in orange, capital letters. Sparkling green leaves cover the vines that run down the sleeves of her jacket, which she takes off as she pulls out a tray of oil pastels and a sheet of paper. The woman makes broad red strokes across the sheet as she converses with an elderly man.



The two sing along to “Proud Mary” as they share marble-topped mochas in large, rust-colored cups and an oatmeal cookie.

Wandering Goat was founded four years ago when it began a roasting company. The coffeehouse itself was founded two years later. Since then it has provided Eugene with a taste of coffee culture from its “Free Shot Fridays” where customers can enjoy free shots of espresso to its role as a music venue for local bands.

“People are here living their life,” says Michael Nixon, a co-owner of Wandering Goat. “People do everything here they would do in their life. They study, bring toys in and play with their kids, argue, talk to other people—and not talk to other people.”

For hundreds of years, coffeehouses have served as forums for socialization and intellectual conversation and thought. Since the development of the first coffeehouses

in Constantinople, Cairo, and Mecca in the mid-16th century, coffee culture has evolved with them. The unique aura of each coffeehouse, from the music played to the beverages served, has traditionally created a counterculture haven.

Throughout history, intellectuals and revolutionists alike have sipped the black, bitter beverage as they studied, strategized, and socialized with friends or strangers. The French Revolution was hatched in coffeehouses, according to the documentary “Black Coffee.” In the United States, rebellious colonists planned the Boston Tea Party inside a Boston coffeehouse, which helped make coffee, rather than tea, America’s beverage of choice.

“Coffeehouses are overwhelmingly left of center,” says William Weston, a sociology professor at Centre College

in Danville, Kentucky. “It could be because coffeehouses in history have traditionally been associated with critical thinking about society. If you are conservative, you generally don’t want things to change: You want them to be conserved.”

In each city or state Weston visits, he tries to go to as many independent coffeehouses as possible. During his travels, never has he sipped a mocha containing a flavor of conservative ideology, although he knows conservative coffeehouses do exist.

Weston teaches a sociology course about coffee, “Cafés and Public Life,” which focuses on the coffee industry, how caffeine affects café life, and how cafés create a thriving social atmosphere. The class puts the importance of coffee

“In coffeehouses people talk about things that can lead to their establishing further and deeper connections.”

and coffeehouses in context for students, as they visit all the coffeehouses in Central Kentucky.

“Students learn how coffeehouses are places where strangers can be

acquainted,” Weston says. “In coffeehouses people talk about things that can lead to their establishing further and deeper connections.”

The connection between coffeehouses and students, Weston says, goes far beyond the scope of his course. Many coffeehouses start and thrive in college towns. England’s first coffeehouse, now known as The Grand Café, opened in 1650 in Oxford. A popular place for students to study and socialize regularly, coffeehouses became one of the first English social clubs. Two years after The Grand Café opened in Oxford, the first London coffeehouse was introduced. After its introduction, popularity of coffeehouses exploded into England’s public scene with 2,000 coffeehouses existing in London by 1715.



Weston says the success of the coffeehouse likely stems from its ability to create “third places.” In sociology, the term “third place” describes a social place separate from both work and home where people can come together. Such a place, he says, is critical for avoiding isolation and forming new relationships.

Coffeehouses are appealing places to host social events or meetings in part because of the nature of the beverage itself. “The fact that coffee is hot plays a big role in the ability of coffeehouses to create a third place,” he says. “You can nurture coffee for hours. If the drink were cold it would get watered-down, people would drink it more quickly and then have no reason to stay at the coffeehouse.”

Bryant Simon, a history professor at Temple University in Philadelphia, says in today’s post-Starbucks society, the concept of coffeehouses forming third places has taken a different turn. “Starbucks teaches us to act in non-third place ways in places that could be third places,” he says. “So, we are robbed of the opportunity to create the community we want to create.”

Simon is writing a book about the Starbucks phenomenon. In it, he will explore the meaning behind the mass consumption of the company’s caffeinated commodity. “I was intrigued with how Starbucks is so everywhere,” he says. “The idea that we would spend this much on coffee is quite remarkable, and I wanted to examine what that says about us.”

A common feature in Starbucks locations, round tables arranged fairly far apart, makes interaction between strangers less likely, Simon says.

“Starbucks is really like our classroom teaching us about what a coffeehouse is,” he says. “Starbucks has taught us that it is OK to be alone in a public space.”

The way people behave at Starbucks, Simon says, has also influenced the way people behave and interact with others at independent coffeehouses.

During his research, Simon visited about 425 Starbucks locations in 20 states and nine different countries. At the pinnacle of his data gathering, Simon says he spent a total of about 12 hours a week at different Starbucks locations. From his observations, he learned what consumers value in a brand and product. When people go to Starbucks, Simon explains, they are not going for the coffee itself. Rather, he says they go to convey a certain message about themselves, a process he calls, “affordable status making.”

Customers pay for a space in Starbucks each time they purchase a cup of coffee, he says. Although Starbucks doesn’t possess the dynamic of 17th or 18th century coffeehouse culture with strangers discussing politics and forming a community, Simon says it provides a clean, predictable environment for people to work in—something many people enjoy.

Although Nixon, an owner of Wandering Goat, disagrees with many of Starbucks’ business practices, there are many qualities he admires about the company, such as its ability to revive the popularity of the coffeehouse. Nixon says he generally finds independent coffeehouses more interesting, but he believes Starbucks can also serve as a third place.

“If someone prefers a Big Mac to a homemade hamburger, who’s to say that is wrong?” he asks.

Because people meet and go to Starbucks to talk, he says, it is still a third place. People all have their own ideas of what constitutes a third place, he says, and no one else can judge whether the place is good or bad.

“Relationships are developed in coffeehouses,” Nixon says. “Seeing those relationships makes you want to give that opportunity to other people.”

It was the dynamic of coffeehouse culture that inspired Nixon and his partner, Heather Jones Nixon, to begin the Wandering Goat. Nixon, who began drinking coffee when he was 12, says his desire to go into the coffee business was triggered by his experiences in coffee shops during high school and college.

“I was always intrigued by coffee and the culture that developed around coffeehouses, especially juxtaposed to the culture that developed around bars,” he says. “The places are quite similar. The drug is really the distinguishing factor.”



Historically, Weston says, until coffeehouses were created, the only social places people frequented were taverns. “Because of the caffeine instead of alcohol in coffee, coffeehouses have huge advantages over taverns,” he says. “Coffeehouses are places where conversation gets better after the first drink.”

As the first coffeehouses in Europe were built, much to the distaste of tavern owners, people began noticing the advantage. At the time, European society faced a problem with public drunkenness, according to “The Coffee Book.” Alcohol, mainly beer, was served at every meal, and as a result, people were too drunk to perform well and concentrate at their jobs. Once coffeehouses became popular, the caffeine stimulated people and helped them excel at their work.

Such stimulation, Weston says, could be one of the reasons why revolutionary thinking has historically taken place in coffeehouses. In their early existence, coffeehouses were banned by various rulers.

In 1675, King Charles II ordered all London coffeehouses be closed because they were places of “sedition.” However, such attempts to close the coffeehouses failed, as people continued drinking coffee and engaging in conversation.

As the popularity of coffeehouses and the intellectual conversation stimulated by the exotic black beverage grew exponentially, Weston says people in Europe began referring to coffeehouses as “penny universities.” For a penny, people could purchase a bottomless cup of coffee that they would nurse for hours while they talked about current affairs.



It was in coffeehouses that news first became a commodity. Owners of coffeehouses would also place newspapers and news sheets out on tables for customers to read. Weston said literate people would read the sheets aloud to the illiterate, so that they too could be informed of the day's news. Coffeehouses quickly became known as free-speech quarters, gaining notoriety for their facilitation of both news and sedition.

Beyond disseminating news, Weston says, coffeehouses inspired poets and encouraged literary as well as political discussion. Le Procope, located in Paris, proved to be France's first lasting coffeehouse. It is also the city's oldest restaurant. From its opening in 1686, the café was popular among actors, writers, dramatists, and musicians. It is still in operation today.

“Coffee houses are a launching point for people to better themselves.”

With time, the development of open-microphone poetry readings and other musical events gained popularity in coffeehouses. Coffeehouses in the United States during the late-1950s Beat era were a sanctuary for poets, folksingers, and philosophers, according to “Music on the Cusp: From Folk to Acid Rock in Portland Coffeehouses, 1967-1970,” an article published in Oregon Historical Quarterly. Coffeehouses began incorporating acoustic and electric music groups, with styles ranging from surf to rhythm and blues, and from jazz and girl group music to sounds similar to those brought in by the British Invasion.

With the incorporation of the music groups and the messages they conveyed in their work, coffeehouses continued to exemplify their role as part of the counterculture. In the 1950s, Portland beatniks diverged from the mainstream and found solace in the

exotic music that coffeehouses offered.

Coffeehouses continue to serve as places that offer musical entertainment. In coffeehouses, everything from what Weston refers to as “coffeehouse rock” to the sounds of Yehudi Menuhin’s classic violin and the smooth saxophone riffs of urban jazz to psychedelic Beatles tunes can be heard. Whether classic records are playing or local bands are performing, music and the third-place atmosphere of coffeehouses go hand-in-hand.

The first coffeehouses were similar to their modern equivalents. Walking into a coffeehouse often reveals a familiar scene: people sitting at small tables with steaming beverages, scattered newspapers, books, and miscellaneous papers before them. People hold deep, intellectual debates with friends, classmates, or strangers. Friends share a few laughs as they discuss The New York Times headlines and indulge in sweet pastries—perfect complements to the bitter beverage.

Because of coffeehouses’ ability to create open communities, Nixon says it is easy for people to make new friends and accept one another—a phenomenon he believes naturally occurs in coffeehouses. At Wandering Goat, Nixon says people can come into a new environment and meet people who have no prior judgments about them.

When Wandering Goat first opened, Nixon says a woman in the last stages of cancer came in each day before she died. “It was like a fresh start for her because the place had nothing to do with everyone who was sad for her,” he says. “Her relationship with the place had nothing to do with her past, only the present. She didn’t have to deal with people saying ‘Oh, you look so bad’ because no one here had ever seen her before.”

Nixon says coffeehouses can be a refuge in a society where things aren’t always that great. “Coffeehouses are a launching point for people to better themselves,” he says. “In a coffeehouse, it is natural for everything to come together.” **KD**

Braving Gravity

The fluidity, the rush, the freedom of skydiving



ABOVE: Devin Williams free falls above the coast of the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii. Williams, 22 years old, has logged more than 340 jumps and is finishing school at the University of Oregon. (Photo courtesy of Devin Williams) OPPOSITE: Williams participates in a more extreme form of skydiving known as free flying, during which flyers dive completely vertical, hurtling toward the Earth like lawn darts at speeds of 300-plus mph.

Why not jump out of a plane? Why not tumble toward the Earth at 300 miles per hour in a frivolous attempt to battle gravity for 60 seconds? Devin Williams doesn't ask why.

When he was 16 years old, Williams had his first skydiving experience during a tandem dive with his stepfather, David Wright, who at the time owned Wright Brothers Skydiving in Eugene, Oregon.

"There was that first instance of rocking and going out the door and realizing, 'There's nothing suspending me, I'm just falling now,'" Williams recounts of his first jump.

Williams, now a fifth-year senior at the University of Oregon, spent three years packing parachutes for Wright Brothers Skydiving before being sold on the sport. Barreling out of a plane with his stepfather for the first time, Williams realized he loved skydiving. The wind ripping open his

lips and encompassing his body as he fell through the sky convinced him skydiving was the rush his life demanded. At 22, he has more than 340 jumps under his belt.

His stepfather's skydiving company made the sport accessible to Williams and gave him the opportunity to jump on a regular basis. Unfortunately, due to complications with insurance, land agreements, political issues, and pilot grudges, Wright Brothers Skydiving was shut down. Eugene Skydivers, Wright Brothers' former main competitor and currently one of the only operating skydiving companies in the Willamette Valley area, is struggling with the same barriers that led to the demise of Wright Brothers.

"[My stepfather] isn't skydiving anymore. It really frazzled him," Williams says. "The dude has just been completely changed by the whole process of having his business taken away."

Although the status of his stepfather's business makes it more difficult for Williams to dive, those who were a part of the company still maintain a passion for the sport. Many employees of Wright Brothers moved to Skydive Oregon in Molalla, Oregon, after Wright Brothers shut down.

The fear of dying is what keeps people from skydiving, but as insane as jumping out of a plane may seem, Williams sees the risks of injury or death as calculated and, for the most part, preventable.

"There really is no rush to it anymore; it's just another action. But you do recognize that something could go wrong," Williams says. According to Dropzone.com, which calls itself "The best source for skydiving information," 61 people died of causes related to skydiving in 2007. Most of these deaths were from landing problems, not from failing to pull the ripcord on time, equipment malfunctions, reserve problems,

or mid-air collisions, as most people assume.

"Most fatalities and injuries happen under a perfectly good chute. It's people turning [with their parachutes] too low to the ground," Williams explains.

Williams acknowledges that risk is part of skydiving; he doesn't believe death should be.

"A lot of people don't get nervous anymore and they skip steps. They should be nervous. I have a few friends that have seen people die," Williams says.

The technology available to skydivers allows for maximum safety precautions. For about \$1,000, divers can purchase an Automatic Activation Device (AAD). An AAD is a sensor that automatically deploys the reserve chute after a pre-set elevation has been passed. Essentially, the diver could be unconscious and the chute would still open.

"The equipment is so good these days, [it will] take care of you even when you don't do anything," Williams says.

Williams hasn't witnessed any fatalities, but he has seen some brutal injuries. He once saw a videographer's canopy collapse under turbulence at 200 feet. The videographer free fell nearly 150 feet before his canopy re-inflated, which instead of helping him, actually whipped him harder to the ground. His helmet, heavily weighted with video and photography equipment, caused his head to hit the ground first. He broke nearly every bone in his face. He also shattered his foot and broke his hip, knee, and arm. But he survived.

Witnessing such injuries encourages Williams to be alert every time he jumps but doesn't deter him from the sport. In fact, Williams participates in a slightly riskier kind of skydiving: free flying.

Traditional skydivers freefall horizontally with their stomachs facing the ground, while free flyers position themselves vertically, sometimes with their heads down to accelerate their freefall speed. Diving horizontally limits skydivers to speeds of 150 mph; free flyers reach speeds up to 300 mph.

Free flying evolved from traditional skydiving. It allows divers to position themselves in a sitting position, a standing position or even head first, an experience Williams compares to being like a lawn dart.

"We can go a lot faster, and we can do a lot cooler stuff if you're not on your belly," Williams says. Williams feels everybody should at least freefall once.

The nature of free flying increases the risk of mid-air collisions that often result in fatalities. Skydivers must make calculated movements to avoid potential tragedies.

Because Oregon's climate is bad for skydiving throughout most of the year, people prefer to skydive in the summer when there are clear skies and warm

weather. Warmer states offer comfortable, safe dives year round.

Evan Whitlock, a good friend of Williams and former Wright Brothers employee, transferred to Skydive Oregon and then to Hawaii in the summer of 2007 for year-round employment with Skydive Hawaii. Shortly after, Williams also moved to the North Shore of Oahu.

"I packed parachutes, lived on the beach, and skydived everyday. It was pretty awesome," Williams says.

However, pressure from his mom and his desire to finish school brought him back to Oregon after four months in Hawaii.

"If you would have asked me last

summer when I was there if I wanted to go back to school I would have said, 'dude, this is the life right here,'" Williams says. "The people I worked with were crazy, but they're all really nice."

The fluidity, rush, and freedom of skydiving are what keep Williams going back to it. He thinks one day he may want to be a tandem skydive instructor.

"It would be really cool to share that first jump with somebody. I've seen Evan walking around town and somebody recognizes him, 'Hey you're the guy that took me skydiving!'" Williams says. "And they just have that connection." - Kevin Bronk



PHOTO BY JASON REED

On Stage and Online

Comedians are transforming stand-up on the net



ABOVE: Comedian Chris Castles out for a laugh in the Eugene area. Castles' experience in the local comedy scene gives him confidence in performing live.

Finding a good laugh is getting easier as people create new ways to discover and distribute comedy. Black Forest in downtown Eugene started hosting comedy nights in the past year. Comedy television shows are constantly released on DVD. Online mediums such as MySpace and YouTube give comedians access to audiences worldwide.

The Eugene comedy scene is full of young comics with ambition for the big time. When he is not at one of his three jobs or working on several movie scripts he hopes to one day sell, 26-year-old Chris Castles does stand-up at the Black Forest, located at 50 E. 11th Avenue in downtown Eugene. His stage presence and desire to make people laugh has landed him gigs in Portland as well as Eugene.

"I always loved to see my family laugh,"

Castles says. "I liked entertaining people. I liked the attention."

The interaction between a comedian and an audience is something the world of YouTube comedy is without. If a joke falls flat, Castles can play off of it to get the audience laughing again. He might point to audience members and mock their reactions

"Other stand-up comics are territorial. They are like jealous divas."

to his jokes. If they sound disgusted at a joke, he apologizes with sarcasm in his voice that says, "Oh, just get over it."

Sometimes being on YouTube is unavoidable. Castles found a ten-minute video of him performing in Portland. The video, posted by an audience member who used a cell phone video camera, shows

Castles on stage responding to hecklers, mostly Portland area comics.

"Other stand-up comics are territorial. They are like jealous divas," Castles says. "Sometimes they sit with the audience while you are performing and talk the entire time."

The incident hasn't deterred him from performing, nor has it kept him from acknowledging YouTube exposure as beneficial for comedians. "It's very effective for some people. It's a good way to make new fans," Castles says. "I can only look at it as a positive." He respects those who have achieved stardom through the online comedy medium.

YouTube gives comedians the ability to measure the amount of attention they receive from fans. Since it was founded in 2005, YouTube has become the most-visited video Web site in the world. In November

of 2008, YouTube had over 60 million different visitors, according to CrunchBase.com, a company profiling website.

In 2006, YouTube launched accounts designed specifically for comedians. A YouTube comic uses this account to post pictures and videos, promote events, and correspond with fans. Like normal YouTube accounts, these can be set up quickly and are user friendly. Within minutes, videos are posted online for millions of viewers to see.

With this type of instant exposure, YouTube comedians can generate fast-growing popularity among an audience they couldn't reach before

One of these YouTube comedy stars is Montreal native Jon Lajoie. Lajoie started his YouTube comedian account in June of 2007. As of December 2008, his videos have been viewed nearly 2.5 million times and he has over 110,000 official fans, the most of any Canadian comic on YouTube.

"I've quickly learned that musical comedy on the web travels everywhere. It has a self-contained context that doesn't need translation," Lajoie told the *Edmonton Journal* in a March 2008.

Lajoie's quirky comedy, along with his songwriting ability translates best in his video skit, "Everyday Normal Guy," which had been viewed over 6.5 million times as of December 2008. The sequel, "Everyday Normal Guy 2," had almost 3 million views during that time.

The songs parody rap music by using lyrics about mundane tasks. "I don't have a car, I use public transportation. It's OK—I read until I reach my destination," Lajoie raps. In the videos, Lajoie appears in the streets of Montreal with a fitted cap, designer hoodie, and sunglasses, a look that mirrors the fashion of many rap celebrities today.

Ironically, Lajoie is not as much of an everyday normal guy now that he has signed with the online unit of top Hollywood talent agency United Talent. The unit is devoted to finding YouTube stars that show potential for success. The agency wants Lajoie to perform live as well as work on a pilot for a television sitcom.

"Jon's got a lot of people excited," manager Trevor Engelson told *USA Today* in March 2008.

Most people who post videos on YouTube do not become stars, but are true everyday, normal people. YouTube can be used by anyone, including aspiring professional comics and students looking to have a good time.

A group of graduates from the University of Oregon posted several videos on YouTube last year under the screenname CRYBART, branding their humor as eclectic. Their motivation for creating the videos was not fame or publicity, but simply to avoid boredom.



ABOVE: Castles performing at the Black Forest Tavern in Eugene, Oregon. Castles is the host of a weekly comedy show at the bar. He began the weekly show in November 2007.

"It was something to kill the time between class and homework," says Jake Speicher, a graduate from the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication. "It gave us the chance to

"YouTube is weird. We have this whole new list of viral video celebrities."

throw things like staplers at one another," Speicher adds.

"It was [also] a chance to be creative in a different way than we were used to," Speicher says. "Creativity plus objects to the face equals good, clean American fun."

Speicher and his friends called their videos pointless and even stupid, but said making them is entertaining and provides an escape from school, work, and the responsibilities of everyday life.

As far as Internet celebrity goes, some, including Speicher, are not impressed with the idea of being a YouTube star.

"YouTube is weird. We have this whole new list of viral video celebrities. Where do they rank on hierarchy of celebrities? Somewhere between Ken Jennings and that girl who spit on New York on Flavor of Love,"

Speicher says.

Castles' experience in live stand-up comedy venues certainly gives him an edge over those without the same experience.

"It's important to know how to write, but it's ninety percent confidence and ten percent material, or maybe even less than that," Castles says. "If you can do stand-up comedy, you can do anything." - *Daniel Johnson*

Steak, Cowboy Style

The western-themed Bates Steakhouse is more than just a hole-in-the-wall restaurant



ABOVE: Bates' steak specialties include the Triple Crown Filet. Topped with lobster tail, crab meat, or jumbo prawn, the Triple Crown is served with asparagus and Hollandaise sauce. OPPOSITE: Allen Bates and his wife Sandra have owned and operated Bates Steakhouse for almost two years.

Despite its central location beneath a billboard proclaiming its existence along one of Downtown Eugene's busiest streets, Bates Steakhouse still feels like one of those hidden, amazing hole-in-the-wall restaurants.

Perhaps it's the blinding yellow roof of Todd's Place across the street, which monopolizes attention near the Coburg road exit on Franklin Boulevard, making Bates feel out-of-the-way. Maybe it's the quiet incongruity of the steakhouse itself, hidden in plain sight before a backdrop of brighter, squarer, more obvious stores.

"The hardest thing is getting people here, but once they're here they'll generally come back," owner Allen Bates says.

However, the meek exterior belies a brazen cowboy character of the dining room. Cowbells clank upon entering the foyer, where a hostess in black leather cowboy boots and a dark blue jean skirt greets patrons. The deep maroon walls are lined with spittoons and lassoes, and the cramped-looking tables are lit by small lamps.

Bates serves its meals in four courses, family-style. The first course is a soup served in a cast iron pot, placed upon a cross section slab from a tree, with sides of tequila black beans and salsa fresca to thicken and spice up the soup. Next comes a salad to provide a small, refreshing break between the hearty soup and the onslaught to follow.

The next two courses are served simultaneously. The third involves rice and potatoes. The fourth is what's worth waiting for—steak, from marinated tri-tip to rib eye. For those disinclined to large slabs of meat, Bates also offers a few crab and lobster dishes and pasta or chicken meals.

The most popular dessert choice is the root beer float, served in cups shaped like cowboy boots. Liqueurs, a chocolate lava cake, and seasonal pies are also available.

Large dinners aren't the only thing Bates offers hungry customers. For those who want smaller meals and less dessert, the bar offers sandwich specials and a flat screen television to catch the latest ball game. The sandwich specials include a burger and beer and the "Bates Tri-tip Sandwich and Brew."

Most of the dishes are old family recipes, although the chef has made a few additions. "We always had family-style dinners," Allen says. "We wanted to bring the closeness of family to the restaurant."

Bates co-owns the restaurant with his wife, Sandra. They are a jovial couple with infectious laughter and quick smiles. Allen is a former carpenter who put his skills to use in building the restaurant's outdoor patio and bar. Sandra has opened six different restaurants in the central coast area of California before moving to Oregon. She handles the business side of the steakhouse's operation.

Bates was built on the site of Moreno's, a Mexican restaurant that had been there over 40 years before the Bates' bought it in March 2007.

Most restaurants are forced to contend with high employee turnover rates, but Bates has had the same people since day one, from the waitresses to the chefs.

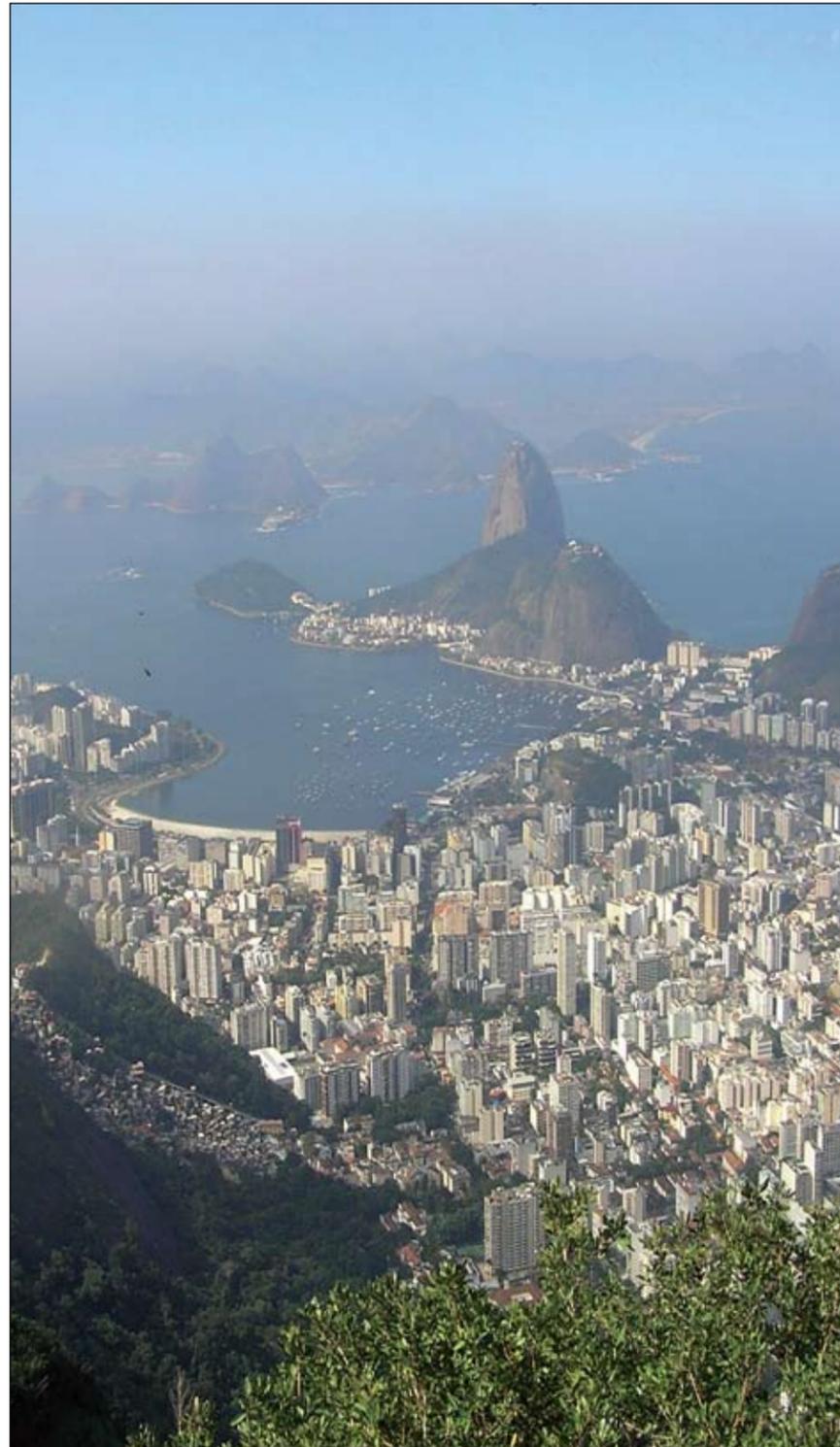
"We've got a great team here," Sandra says. - *Scott Younker*



PHOTOS BY LAUREN EASBY AND JANELLE HO

Teaching English in Brazil

Brian Ward, not knowing how to speak Portuguese, goes to Brazil and tries to make a living



ABOVE: A view of Rio de Janeiro from Corcovado mountain, where the iconic Christ the Redeemer statue stands.

Who thought up Brazil? Probably God and the Devil in a dark basement having a chat. Around them are huge plates of mashed potatoes and workers in flowing gowns. God leans over and whispers into Satan's ear, "Satan, now that we have completed Asia, North America, Europe, Africa, South America and Iceland, I want to make a country in South America which will have a massive rainforest, great weather, and the most beautiful women, the best soccer players and the biggest parties in the world." "Oh yeah, great idea," Satan responds, "In the same place, let's set the poverty rate at 28%, 50,000 homicides a year, a corrupt police force, and a class system that locks people into multi-generational poverty based on their race?"

God replies, "So, will this South American country speak Spanish?" "No, let's make it a language that sounds like Spanish but is very difficult for Spanish speakers to learn," Satan replies. "Done."

The "River of January," or Rio de Janeiro, is not a river. When Portuguese explorers first arrived in Rio de Janeiro on January 1, 1502, they mistook the Guanabara Bay for the mouth of a huge river. Since its founding, Rio has been a city of contradictions. Rugged mountains bookend smooth powdery beaches and extreme poverty huddles on the doorstep of immeasurable wealth. The city is half Lagos and half Lisbon. The city stones of the sidewalks, like the 11.5 million people who reside in Rio, are black and white stones.

I wasn't looking to experience Brazil through extreme poverty like some of the people who live here do. I wanted to live in one of the most vivacious cultures in South America, the one Portuguese-speaking country in the Spanish-speaking continent. Three years before planning my trip to Brazil I had an internship in Portugal, working as a pastry chef in a Portuguese Casino. While in Portugal I'd watch news stories taking place in Brazil and felt I could understand Brazilian Portuguese much better than Portuguese from Portugal.

I could have taught English in Colombia or Venezuela, where Spanish is spoken, but English teachers in these countries usually earn less than \$10 an hour and the official US exchange rate at banks in Venezuela is about a fifth of its actual value. So if I went to Venezuela I'd have to walk around with \$2,000 in my shoe and exchange it on the black market. If I went to Colombia,



ABOVE: Brian Ward teaches English to a Brazilian student at his apartment in Rio de Janeiro.

I pictured myself getting hitched with a local girl in exchange for a couple thousand dollars to cover my travel expenses. If I went to either country, I would at least have understood the language. I speak Spanish fluently.

I knew that upon my arrival in Brazil, being able to pass as an English teacher would be easier than passing as a blackjack dealer or samba instructor. My experience teaching English is limited to a few classes I taught in an elementary school in Mexico City. I don't have many marketable job skills. My most successful endeavors have been jobs which stress the willingness to do others consider beneath them. For somebody like me, with no health insurance, job, or girlfriend, staying in the United States was harder than leaving it.

Teaching a few hours of English a week in Rio isn't enough to make a living, so I placed two ads in local newspapers: *Posto Seis* and *O Globo*. After a few days I realized my lack of Portuguese is a problem. I sent a frantic email to a Portuguese-speaking friend to help me translate some basic phrases:

- 1) When can you start classes?
- 2) If you come to Copacabana my hourly rate is \$35 reals per hour (\$20 US), if I come to your house my rate is \$45 reals per hour (\$28 US).

Even with these basic phrases, I still couldn't understand most of the phone calls I received. I could give basic directions

on how to get to my apartment, but after giving directions I didn't know whether the student was coming in an hour or a week.

Along with the classified ads, I printed dozens of fliers and posted them in every pet store, Internet café, coffeehouse, and bookstore in the Copa Cabana neighborhood. Most provided me with tape.

After three weeks, I had only one student and I was spending more money in a week than I've spent in a month in other Latin American countries I've visited. If I didn't pay the rent, I could end up being a bottle collector in the subway. I had to make money teaching English.

If I went to Venezuela I'd have to walk around with \$2,000 in my shoe and exchange it on the black market.

When I arrived in Rio, most public universities in Rio were still on winter break, but there was a private school that resumed classes a week earlier. I printed out 50 fliers took a bus to Pontificia Universidade Católica in Rio de Janeiro, and I went to the offices of the school newspaper, to place an ad for English lessons.

Later I tried the Federal University. After a half hour of arguing with a secretary, who seemed abnormally resistant to letting me put up my fliers, she asked me to talk to her English-speaking boss. I tried to explain to her boss my dilemma.

"I still don't know why you want to post

fliers for English classes in a hospital," the boss responded.

"Isn't this the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro?" I asked.

"No, this is a hospital. The Federal University is next door."

I still left a flier at the counter and headed next door.

The Federal University staff was more than willing to help me. They posted the fliers for me and I started getting emails and calls within a few days. The rate I charged per hour varied to a great degree. Whenever I got emails from students who identified themselves as graduates from foreign

universities, I charge them \$50 reals an hour (\$29 US) and asked them to pay a month in advance. When I got calls from students, they usually asked for my lowest price and then knocked that price down another \$5 reals. To them, I ended up charging them around \$14.50 US an hour.

Most of my students preferred having a conversation with me instead of doing a bunch of practice tests. Classes usually went over the allotted time, but no one noticed because we had so much fun just chatting. I could feel their genuine interest in not only learning the language, but knowing more about my life in the United States.

Since the exchange rate is tilted in the Real's favor, ten hours of English lessons a week were enough to pay my bills and still have enough to go out on the weekends.

-Brian Ward

Southern Vibes

The Water Tower Bucket Boys play their take on folk music



ABOVE: Left to right: Cory Goldman, Kenny Feinstein, Josh Rabie, and Leo Lober-Tracy warm up before a private jam session in the EMU.

Inside a makeshift lounge on the University of Oregon campus, the Water Tower Bucket Boys push a conference table aside, pull out their instruments and began tuning. It isn't long before the melody erupts and the chords flow. They don't play because they have to. They play because they love to.

The private jam session replaces a scheduled show that was spoiled by poor planning. The event coordinator booked another band for the same time slot.

Fiddler Josh Rabie bows an upbeat melody to begin the tune. Then, Kenny Feinstein strums the guitar as he mouths the harmonica. Cory Goldman, the musician with the mustache, picks the banjo with

precision in unison with Leo Lober-Tracy, who tussles with the upright bass.

It's a traditional sound that mixes bluegrass with blues and jazz. Hearing their tune fills the mind with images of the band floating down the Mississippi on a steam engine in the early 1800s.

Their tune fills the mind with images of floating down the Mississippi on a steam engine in the early 1800s.

These down-to-earth local boys play with passion, enthusiasm, and heart.

"It's the people's music," Rabie says, wearing a distinctive bright orange mesh cap. "Every culture has their folk music, and

this is ours."

Over the summer, Feinstein and Rabie flew to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with just enough money for food and gas. Feinstein's grandmother had an old Hyundai for them that set them on a journey that strengthened their passion for music.

"We just wanted to get as far away from Eugene as possible," Feinstein says. "And Florida was about as far as we could have gone and still be able to drive home, while making our way through the South."

They began their journey by playing two scheduled shows, first in Fort Lauderdale, then in Tallahassee. After that, it was up to them to freelance on the street.

In North Carolina, Gil Landry of The Kitchen Syncopators, a jazz/blues band from

Louisiana, spied them playing a street show. He hid from across the street to gauge their skills. If they were less than amazing, he could leave freely. Landry liked their sound

and clapping energizes them to sing, play, and dance.

"We are approachable, friendly people," Rabie says. "We want the people to play

"We can be professionally poor, it doesn't matter, just as long as we can do what we love doing"

and befriended the band members.

Later that evening, in the mountains of North Carolina, they stayed with a woman who was a "true redneck," Feinstein says. She was a legendary fiddler they had met years ago but didn't know of her true nature then.

"She lived on a dirty lot in the hills; you could barely see her house because of the giant mound of trash that she had been hoarding," Feinstein says. "Her dogs were vicious. She told us that if we went near them they would surely bite our genitals off."

For dinner, they ate hot dogs in Velveeta cheese next to cockroaches that roamed all over the house. They slept in the car that night because there was only one bed—hers. "We were starving and had no choice," Feinstein says.

"We learned a lot about ourselves on that trip," Rabie says. "We were able to make it across the country by just playing our music on the street for the people."

Their tour took them from North Carolina through West Virginia, on to Tennessee, Alabama and Louisiana, and then Texas. "We played music in every city we stopped at," Rabie says.

They drove for 20 hours, from Texas to New Mexico, and didn't stop until 5 a.m. The drive wore on them, but the Southwest heat recharged their will and spirits.

"We parked the car in the desert and just laid down with the windows open next to piles of cacti and the rising sun," Feinstein says.

The two were low on funds until they reached Madrid, New Mexico, where they earned \$300 playing in a renovated mineshaft turned tavern. The room was dimly lit and built with large stones, and the stage was set at the mouth of the entrance.

"The daytime crowd was mostly families and tourists, but the twilight crowd was a completely different scene. They were drinkers who knew their music and were really digging our music," Rabie says.

The crowd even offered gifts. "The bar got rowdier as the night went on and when we finished, the locals tried to give us moonshine," Feinstein says.

At last they made it to Sedona, Arizona. "It was probably my favorite stop because the people were so friendly," Rabie says.

Back in Oregon, playing impromptu sets on the street is where they find the most enjoyment. The vigor from the crowd jiving

with us; it's three and four chords that are really simple."

Feinstein and Goldman used to be in a punk band before getting into folk music.

Goldman now lives in Portland and works part time while commuting to

Eugene for practice sessions and shows.

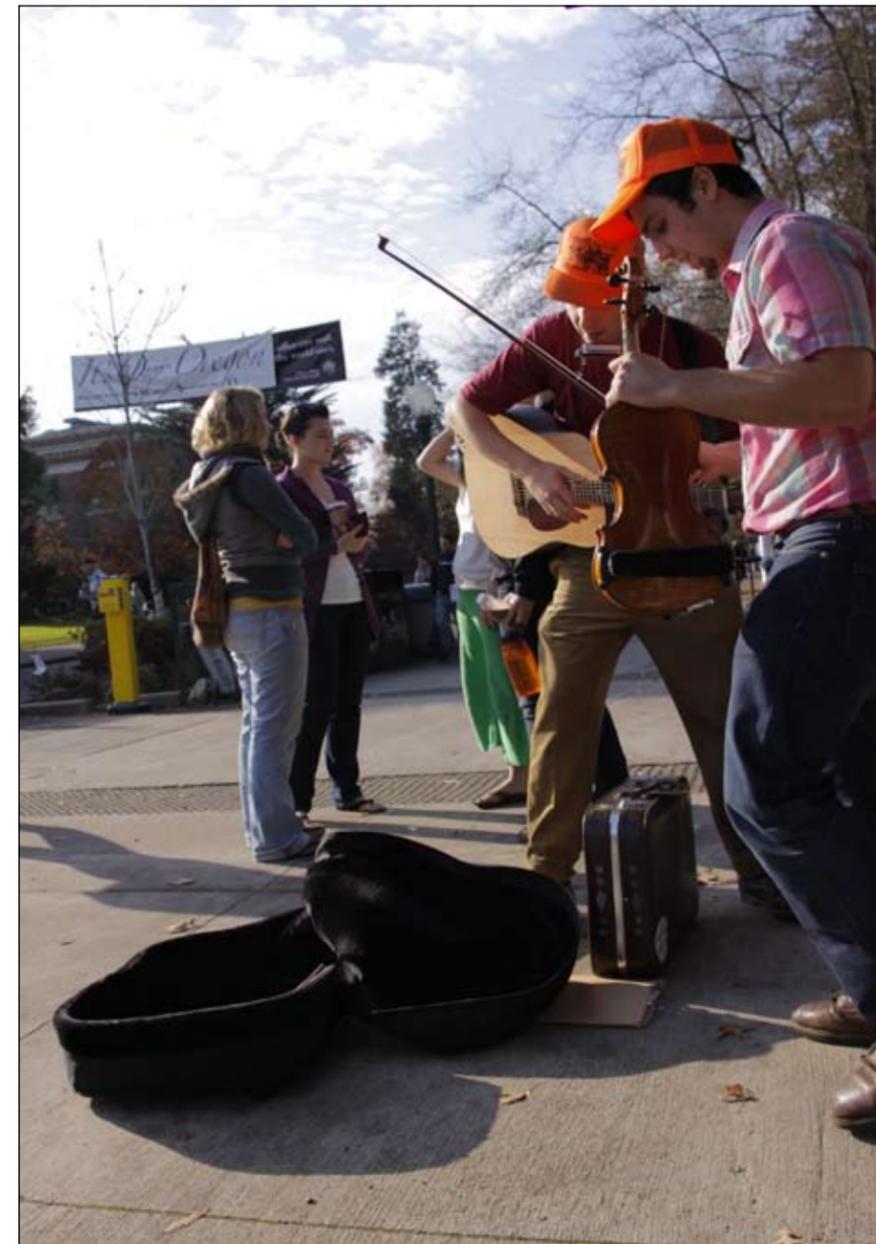
Square dances venues are a favorite of theirs. The massive turnouts bring people from different generations together for a good time.

"We have fans that are 8 and we have fans that are 80," Rabie says. "Our music just makes people get up and dance."

After completing undergraduate studies at the University of Oregon, the band members plan to focus entirely on their music.

"We can be professionally poor, it doesn't matter, just as long as we can do what we love," Rabie says, speaking for the band. "It's definitely our passion." - *Rekha Luy*

BELOW: Feinstein and Rabie playing at the University of Oregon on 13th and University. The impromptu performance is where the Water Tower Bucket Boys get most of their enjoyment.



PHOTOS BY REBECCA AMES

Lost Childhood IN Kathmandu

STORY AND ART LEAH OLSON

I had seen the boys many times before on the city streets.

The first time we spoke, I was sitting on the steps near a street vendor cart, eating doughy chapatis in the tourist district of Thamel, in Kathmandu, Nepal. The city's hectic nightlife pulsed around me as he and his friend approached, shuffling bare feet under the glum lights of late night restaurants and bars. They quickly cram small plastic bags down the back of their pants.

"20 rupees?" they ask me in broken English, pointing to the street cart.

I refuse.

"We're hungry!" they persist.

"No," I reply. "If I give you money, you'll use it to buy glue, not food."

"We don't do that!" they retort, glaring at me. "That's bad."

I stare at their protruding cheek-bones and wonder if giving them a few rupees would really hurt? But I know that it could hurt because I've witnessed it before: tourists give them money for food and they spend it on inhalants.

When I first moved to Kathmandu, the homeless children alarmed me. They gaze with hollow faces. Their hair comes out in chunks. They wear no shoes, only ripped pants and once-white T-shirts now heavy with dirt from picking through garbage dumps. Now, I'm accustomed to their ragged state. Gangs of them swarm the darkest corners of the city, surviving on garbage scraps and sleeping under cardboard tents.

The duo continues to deny my claims as absurdities. I scan them up and down, and judging by their stature, guess they are between 7 and 9. I ask them how old they are. They say they are 13 and 15.

Their small size is a result of

malnourishment and inhalant abuse from an early age. I work in a Kathmandu city hospital where the street boys are regulars. They hardly come in of their own accord though. Frequently, foreign tourists drag them to the ER after witnessing their appalling physical condition. The children suffer from pneumonia, skin abscesses, and pink eye as a result of their glue addiction.

After asking me again for money, the boys deem it a lost cause. As they walk away from me the plastic glue bags appear from their back pockets, and taking a few pulls, the boys quickly forget my existence altogether. A cloud of hash smoke floats past me as the boys dissolve into the crowd.

The street boys of Kathmandu stand in huddles, playing cards and telling jokes, like I did when I was a child. But after I notice the crumpled plastic bag in each boy's grip, I know that their lives are nothing like my own childhood. A shock jolts through me when one young gang leader squeezes a tube of glue into the bags of his cohorts. When I realize that these children are

He has nothing but a brick, a ragged T-shirt, and a bag for huffing.

inhaling fumes, I feel bewildered, angry, and depressed at the same time. A cheap and easy high never even crossed my mind when I was a child. I used glue for art projects. They use glue to subdue their hunger pangs.

As months pass, I see the same routine everyday: The street boys with glue bags pressed to cracked and dry lips, small chests heaving in and out as the bags expand and contract over their mouths like lungs. Soon, their eyes glaze over as they stumble around the dark streets with heads full of glue vapors. No longer able to walk straight or speak coherently, they momentarily forget their homelessness, hunger, and poor health.

Huffing glue is their escape from life on the street.

A week later, as I walk to work, I see the 15-year-old boy I had met near the street vendor cart. He lies on a piece of cardboard, tucked away between two stores. Another boy, curled into a ball, shares his cardboard bed. The boy I met appears to be sleeping until I look a little closer. He lies on his back, staring up into the hazy sky. His eyes are halfway open, glazed over and glassy. A look of pure desperation paints his face. It's a look of raging anger at the world, yet, at the same time, a look of submission to his fate. Never before had I seen such a hardened look on such a young person.



Later that afternoon, I spot the same boy again. The Kathmandu streets buzz with more fortunate school children in crisp white uniforms, street vendors frying fresh batches of samosas, and business people running to catch the mini-bus. I wait on the corner of the busiest traffic intersection in the city, where the roads are paved and have fully functioning, but largely ignored, traffic lights. The sidewalks pulse with the flowing crowd as the streets teem with cars, taxis, and rickshaws.

The boy stands on the corner next to me, wailing uncontrollably as tears stream down his face. He holds a brick by his

head, looking as if he aches to throw it at someone. I shrink away a little, unsure of what to do.

He just holds the brick, ready to hurl it, but doesn't. I glance around to see if there's someone he might be aiming at. There is nobody.

He stands on the street corner, holding the brick, tears streaming down his growth-stunted face. They forge clean rivers down his dirty cheeks. Twin waterfalls of yellow mucus connect his nose and mouth. No one notices him.

Kathmandu's residents hurry past him through the approaching evening. Dogs stop to lick their mangy fur. The boy with the brick continues his tantrum, watching the

people go home to their families. He has nothing but a brick, a ragged T-shirt, and a bag for huffing. This boy, like hundreds of others in Kathmandu, has lost his childhood to a tube of glue. His eyes burn with hopelessness. As he decides whether or not to throw the brick it looks as if he wavers on whether or not he can make it through another day on the streets.

As the sun disappears and night spreads over Kathmandu, he won't go home; he'll go to his piece of cardboard on the sidewalk. He won't go to his family; he'll go to his street gang. Garbage scraps from the back of tourist restaurants will be his dinner, and his solace: the crumpled plastic bag. Another huff and none of it will matter anymore. **KD**

