



**Emerald** Media

**SEPTEMBER 19, 2022**

*Monday Edition*



**O** UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES

**MONKEYPOX STRIKES LANE COUNTY**

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The virus can spread to anyone, officials say.

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# Duck Fest



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# Daily Emerald

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## THE DAILY EMERALD

The Daily Emerald is published by Emerald Media Group, Inc., the independent nonprofit media company at the University of Oregon. Formerly the Oregon Daily Emerald, the news organization was founded in 1900.

## ON THE COVER

*The University Health Services on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene, Ore. on September 26, 2021. (Isaac Wasserman/Emerald)*



# NEWS

## GROWING CEDAR CREEK WILDFIRE DISPLACES OAKRIDGE AREA RESIDENTS

BY CALEB BARBER

Lane County, Red Cross, Greenhill work to provide services to folks affected by the blaze.

The sky over Oakridge was orange on Sept. 9 when officials issued a level three evacuation order for the city. Martin Nelson, who's lived in Oakridge for 18 years, evacuated his home the same day. Unsure of how long the wildfire would be blazing, Nelson slept in his car for two nights on the S. Pioneer Street bridge parking lot in Lowell.

On the morning of Sept. 11, he finally decided to drive to the evacuation center at the Lane County Fairgrounds.

"I figured maybe the thing would blow over, or they'd finally at the last minute get it snuffed out," said Nelson. "I thought, 'I don't want to go unless I have to.' And I kind of had to."

Officials issued a Level 3 evacuation order to the cities of Oakridge and Westfir on Sept. 9, according to Cedar Creek Fire public information officer Bud Sexton.

The area has since moved to a Level 2 evacuation status, the "Be Set" stage, meaning residents may return to Oakridge but should be ready to leave their homes again in a moment's notice if nearby fire danger escalates.

Cedar Creek Fire public information officer Bud Sexton said the extremely low relative humidity in the area along with dry fuels and challenging topography have made the fire especially difficult to contain.

As of Sept. 13, the wildfire covered over 92,000 acres, and 1,260 fire personnel from across the country have been assigned to fight it.

Cris Marsh, a painter, sat in his truck while his girlfriend bought provisions inside the corner store. They had stopped at the Bridge Town Market in Lowell while evacuating their home in Oakridge on Sept. 10.

"A couple neighbors, families, haven't left yet," Marsh said. They've lived there a long time, and they had a lot of history there, he said.

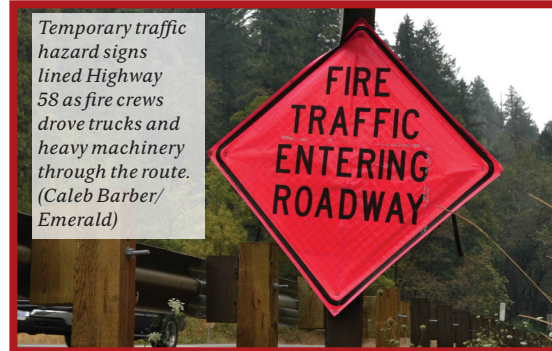
His girlfriend's family has lived on property in the Oakridge area since the 1960s. He said he can understand why some refuse to leave.

"This is an old town," Marsh said. "A lot of fourth and fifth generation people live here."

Many of those who evacuated the fire danger areas came to the Lane County Fairgrounds where Red Cross worked alongside Greenhill Humane Society to provide care and shelter for evacuees and their animals.

Cary Lieberman, Greenhill Humane Society's executive director, was at the fairground shelter coordinating efforts to temporarily house evacuated pets. The number of animals sheltered at Lane County Fairgrounds on Sept. 11 nearly matched the number of humans, Lieberman said.

According to Lieberman, as of Sept. 11, almost 100 animals were sheltered at the Fairgrounds, and 45 more were sheltered at



Greenhill facilities. This isn't counting the large livestock animals being sheltered by Lane County Animal Services.

Lieberman said it's been a relief for many of the evacuees that there is a space on site to safely keep their pets.

"So many people are coming in and snuggling with their animals," Lieberman said. "I've heard people say that their purring cat on their chest is what eases all of their fears in this situation."

Laurie Klein is a licensed clinical social worker who volunteered as a Red Cross disaster mental health provider at Lane County Fairgrounds on Sept 11.

"It can be sitting across the lunch table and chatting with them, listening to their stories, allowing them to vent," Klein said. "Somebody could be having a panic attack, need some grounding, and it helps if they have someone who can listen to them and validate their experience."

As of Sunday morning, everyone who wanted to evacuate Oakridge did so safely, Lane County Sheriff's department public information officer Sergeant Tom Speldrich said. Since Sept. 11, Highway 58 was unbarricaded at Lowell, and a new barricade was set up at Oakridge's easternmost boundary.

"We don't take these evacuation level changes lightly," Speldrich said. "There's a ton of planning and coordination with fire behavior experts, incident management teams and meteorologists that goes into effect before we make any of those changes."

The Cedar Creek Fire is still growing, and it is possible that the city of Oakridge could return to a Level 3, Speldrich said.

"We're not encouraging people to drop their guard by any means," Speldrich said.

Speldrich said that residents who have evacuated because of the wildfire should check the Cedar Creek Fire Facebook page and fire incident maps for updates before returning home. Predictions are only so accurate, and those with mobility issues or large livestock should also consider their personal safety before making the choice to pack up and drive home, he said.

# LOOK ONLINE

## Instagram poll:

Are you a cat or dog person?  
Dog: 52%  
Cat: 48%

## Related opinion story:

"Byrd: Dog people are codependent"  
by Beatrice Byrd



(Beatrice Byrd/Emerald)

## Most read new story in the past week:

"Oregon football's color schedule brings excitement to team and fanbase"  
by Brady Ruth



(Serei Hendrie/Emerald)

## Voices of UO

Scan here or visit the Emerald's social media to participate in our next Voices of UO. "If you traveled this summer, what was your experience like?"



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(Maisie Plew/Emerald)

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# IVERSON: QUIET QUITTING IS TOO SOFT

Opinion: The trend of quiet quitting concerns me. We should have the conversation about what your work actually requires for your salary, but it feels like people aren't pushing their job away from their life enough. **BY BRAYDON IVERSON**

Two days ago, I was deep in the coal mines and my unpaid overtime shift of digging out rocks and ducking collapsing debris for \$2 a day. Abruptly, my co-worker handed me the daily paper. It talked about “quiet quitting,” some avant-garde trend of uppity workers wanting to actually have a life. I scoffed – coughed – then scolded my co-worker for reading while they were on the clock. “People just don’t want to work these days,” I said. “I hope my foreman doesn’t think I’m only doing my job and not someone else’s, too.”

If I understand this concept correctly, quiet quitting is exclusively doing your job in what fits your job description and only what you are paid to do. This could look like leaving work immediately after clocking out, only communicating with co-workers about the job when on the clock or not helping out on a task if it isn’t your position.

So, the trend is... just doing your job? It’s only doing the things you’re paid for? You know, like what a job is?

I’m struggling to believe this is the absurd concept that is frightening bosses and causing older generations to worry about the work ethic of the youths.

The idea is to further isolate your work behavior to your job, to disassociate with your profession just enough. Work essentially is a necessity in today’s climate. The money garnered from a job is used for the actual bare necessities like water, shelter, food and Wizard101 subscriptions. Even so, that doesn’t mean your source of life is that job. We cannot allow ourselves to get caught in a cycle of living to work. Working to live is already bad enough.

Still, rich CEOs and their children (inheritance beneficiaries) will agree (because they have to) that quiet quitting is a bad idea. Even renowned-Shark Kevin O’Leary called people who do this “losers.” That quote seems a bit harsh, but it may be out of personal vendetta. After all, he had to experience his hair quietly quitting from being on the top of his head for years.

That stance is also hypocritical from O’Leary, who stated in May of this year, “If all you do is worry about your job and where you are on the pecking order, spend 25 hours a day working, you will be a less productive person.” In the same interview he also claims: “Great entrepreneurs, great managers, great employees have balance in their life. Those are the people I want to hire.” He then, like an honest and whimsical millionaire, states the exact opposite when his grip over workers is threatened.

This sounds like the exact point quiet quitting

is making and is quite fraudulent from O’Leary. Almost like that one time he said he had never heard of two companies investigated for a predatory fraud scheme, even though he had mentioned both of them by name in multiple promotional videos. He quietly quit that lawsuit, but I digress.

I do take an issue with this movement -- not in its motives or goals, but in its tepidness. My issue is that it had to be a movement in the first place for people to realize there were things they didn’t have to put up with at work.

I quit my seasonal job the day before writing this. I felt my co-workers and I were repeatedly disrespected and misused. I didn’t cut back hours or my effort; one day I had enough and told them I was done. I knew what our labor was worth, and my paycheck didn’t reflect that. Perhaps if this was a career job I would be more eager to go above my station, but not for this company and this time.

Of course, I had thought it through and was in a firm enough position to quit when I did, and I’m not telling you to quit at the first inconvenience. I’m telling you to do what you’re paid to do and ignore what you’re not being paid for on the job. If your job interferes with your time and livelihood, go find another job, not another life.

At some point, the onus is on the workers to force employers into suitable conditions and financial agreements or to otherwise be met with

resignations. I recognize that not all workers have this freedom of expression; some people need any job they can land. That’s why it’s even more essential for those that can find work elsewhere to leverage themselves for the benefits of the job so that their co-workers receive a fair reward as well.

If you choose to help off the clock, that’s your call, but consider whether or not your employers would help you.

Still, my grief with this trend is how superficial and subdued it is. If the workplace isn’t treating you right or invading your personal time, just quit. These passive-aggressive, petty gestures aren’t sending the message as strongly as you think. Not cleaning your desk isn’t going to get your boss to actually pay you overtime when you work past your shift.

You have to think of bolder, more surefire ways to gain respect at work. Luckily for you, I already thought of some, and they’re all completely ethical. Say you have a dentist appointment, and they’re only open during your shifts. Do that twice a month; your gums really need a lookover. Wear your coolest clothes instead of your uniform: get a fit pic off while on the clock. Date your boss’s ex. In the middle of your next shift, go home. Say you quit. Clock in the next day pretending you have amnesia.

There’s my final stance: quiet quitting isn’t enough. Gaslight your employer.





# MONKEYPOX SPREADS IN LANE COUNTY

Prevention, vaccination and testing resources for monkeypox become available as cases increase in Lane County.

BY: SIMON SCANNELL • TWITTER: @SJSCANNELL

In May, a monkeypox outbreak hit the United States, which is still reeling from the COVID-19 pandemic.

With 21 cases, Lane County has the second highest number of cases out of Oregon's counties as of Sept. 7.

People with the disease often experience a painful rash and flu-like symptoms. The illness can last up to a month.

The outbreak has sparked concerns over stigmas associated with the disease, similar to those present during the AIDS epidemic.

Some scientists and officials have been calling for the virus to be referred to by an acronym, MPX, and believe the name "monkeypox" is a misnomer that perpetuates racism, stigma and misinformation about the outbreak's origin.

Although the outbreak has largely affected men who have sex with men, officials warn against thinking of MPX as a disease that only occurs among this population.

"There's nothing about the virus where it's looking at someone's demographics and choosing between people and targeting folks. It has to do with the habits and behaviors of the first case," Lane County Public Health Public Information Officer Jason Davis said. "So yes, we have seen many of our initial cases with men who have sex with men, but only by virtue of the fact that some of the initial cases were individuals who are men who have sex with men. That's the only reason. It's 2022, and we have no reason to believe that this won't spread to the general population, or if it already has – it probably has. We probably have cases in every sexual preference

and in every ethnicity and every demographic category."

Davis said people cannot dismiss MPX as a problem that only occurs between men who have sex with men.

"We can't get into this rut that we got into in the 80s and 90s of trying to say a disease is one people's problem and not a different group of people's problem. This is a Lane County problem; it is all of our problems. And it's all of our responsibility to help solve by preventing transmission," Davis said.

#### How it spreads

MPX is spread through close skin-to-skin contact with a rash or body fluids from a person infected with the virus, according to Dr. Anna Hejinian, medical director for University Health Services.

"That's the kind of contact we have through kissing, hugging and cuddling, massaging and sexual activity, not through incidental contact," Hejinian said.

A second but much less common mode of transmission is handling with bare hands objects recently used by a person with the virus like sheets, clothing, towels or sex toys, she said.

The likelihood that someone can spread MPX before they have developed sores on their skin is low compared to someone that has them, she said. The virus can also spread through respiratory droplets in the air, but it's highly unlikely and occurs in confined spaces with exposure for over three hours, according to Davis. As a result, much of the messaging and discussions about the virus has focused on skin-to-skin contact transmission.

Some people are conflating MPX with a sexually transmitted infection or disease due to skin-to-skin contact being guaranteed in most sexual situations, Davis said.

"But it's not the the act of sex that is the isolated incident here that's transmitting the disease; it's actually just the skin-to-skin contact," Davis said. "So I think that's really important for folks to know, first of all, just for a correct view of the illness. Also to make sure that we're correctly typing it to not assume that only sexual intercourse is going to transmit this. It's absolutely not true. You can get it just from that skin-to-skin contact."

For sexually active individuals or individuals with prolonged exposure to someone else's skin, the best way to prevent transmission is to limit skin-to-skin contact with other people, Davis said. If someone

does have that skin-to-skin contact with someone, they should evaluate themselves and the other person for sores or other symptoms of the disease. This should be done with any form of physical contact someone has, Davis said.

People should evaluate the risk of going to certain events such as parties and consider how much skin-to-skin contact there will be, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Events where attendees are fully clothed are less likely to spread MPX. People should regularly wash their hands, especially before eating or after using the bathroom, to avoid the virus.

Anyone who experiences symptoms should self-isolate and call a medical professional, Hejinian said. Students experiencing symptoms should call the University

The University Health Services on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene, Ore. on September 26, 2021 (Isaac Wasserman/ Emerald)





Students are seen at Lillis Hall on the University of Oregon campus in Eugene, Ore. on September 30, 2021. Students, staff and faculty at the University of Oregon navigate what in-person classes and events look like in the time of the COVID-19 and the new dangers of navigating the Delta Variant. (Isaac Wasserman/ Emerald)



“

This is a community problem, and we have one group of people in our community right now who has some cases, but that doesn't mean that it doesn't affect all of us,”

JASON DAVIS Lane County Public Health Public Information Officer

Health Services.

“We would want to see the student and evaluate them, test them if it's felt like that was needed and coordinate their care from there,” she said.

Hejinian said people must isolate during the entire time they are infectious, which often lasts from the beginning viral symptoms like fever, sore throat and swollen lymph nodes, all the way through until the rash is crusted over and a new fresh layer of skin is developing underneath.

According to the CDC, the illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks.

UHS has already helped some students determine whether they have MPX; none of which have been positive so far, Hejinian said.

“Even one student with a preventable infection would be one too many in my book,” she said. “Also this isn't COVID-19. It does not spread nearly as efficiently

because of its mode of transmission. And so my hope is if we all do our part we can contain it, box it in so to speak, and reduce the outbreak.”

#### **Vaccination**

Vaccines can help prevent the virus. However, there are limited vaccines available right now, so only certain people are eligible. Information about eligibility can be found through the CDC.

“Certain individuals may be candidates for vaccination even without a known viral exposure – this is called PEP+ or expanded PEP,” Hejinian said.

According to the Oregon Health Authority case tracker, this primarily includes men who have sex with men who have had more than one sexual partner in the last 14 days as of early September.

For those with an exposure to MPX, vaccination is still an option.

“It's most effective if given within four days post-exposure. The vaccination can also be given four to 14 days post-exposure, but this may not prevent infection but may reduce symptoms and risks for complications,” Hejinian said.

People who have been exposed to MPX can reach out to public health officials or their primary care provider to talk about testing and vaccination.

As more vaccines become available in Lane County, people who are not included in the eligible groups can be vaccinated, according to Hejinian.

Founded in 1994 to provide resources to people living with HIV and AIDS, HIV Alliance has been helping people to get information about MPX.

The organization has developed a strong relationship with the LGBTQ community, Executive Director Renee Yandel said. After distributing the COVID-19 vaccine, HIV Alliance's county partners and OHA reached out to the organization to help distribute vaccines for MPX.

“Initially, it was very much smaller amounts,” Yandel said. “And that has gone up over the last few weeks.”

Many of the initial vaccines came from the Strategic National Stockpile, which holds a supply of vaccines in case of an outbreak in the U.S.

Davis said vaccines from the stockpile are becoming needed more. But it's difficult to prevent a disease with the vaccines only being distributed at an at-need basis rather than going over that need to prevent more cases, he said.

Yandel said many high-risk people called HIV Alliance, wanting to get vaccinated, but they did not have the specific behaviors and timelines needed to be eligible.

“And that's confusing to everybody, too, because they want to do their part to get vaccinated to protect themselves and their partners, and then they're told, 'no, you didn't meet this criteria,’” Yandel said.

In the past, public health would

often bear much of the burden of responding to a communicable disease outbreak, Yandel said.

“In some ways, it's easier because part of what the pandemic did was help make partnerships with community based organizations stronger,” Davis said.

Distributing the vaccines has been easier in some ways because the pandemic helped make partnerships with community organizations stronger.

Davis said MPX has created a template for future disease outbreaks and an opportunity for improvement.

“Because we're talking about equity. We're talking about sensitivity. We're talking about things that can alienate whole groups of people unnecessarily,” he said. “So I hope that we take some of the lessons that we've already learned from the things that we're actively learning about MPX, and we see how they affect the outcomes; and we make the adjustments needed, especially when it comes to how we talk about these things and how we label them, just referring back to the fact that this is not a men who have sex with men problem.”

For up-to-date information about monkeypox check out resources from UHS, LCPH, HIV Alliance's website and social media, OHA and the CDC.



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# MOVIN' AND GROOVIN'

A college junior offers a few tips on moving into your first apartment.

BY KEYRY HERNANDEZ

Through grade school, we often hear about how different the college experience is, but it also rings true in ways outside of the classroom. College is all about trying new things that, hopefully, let us grow into who we want to be.

As an upcoming junior at the UO, I've had my fair share of new and wild experiences – but my favorite so far has been living in an apartment with three other girls. However, as great as living with your buddies can be, it's not all sunshine and rainbows. So, here I will be sharing some of the obstacles I've encountered over the past year and how my roommates and I got through them.

## FINDING ROOMMATES

Honestly, the people you live with dictate your experience. Even though it seems like a lot of pressure to find the perfect roommate, accepting that no such thing exists definitely makes the whole process a lot easier. The real goal is finding people you are compatible with and the rest falls into place.

In my experience, social media has been my best friend when it comes to meeting potential roommates. Apps like Instagram and Facebook are active spaces for college communities. Tons of social media outlets have pages for specific graduating classes, which helps you build connections with people in your grade.

I thank the universe every day for the goofy DM one of my peers sent one random night last year. Back then, I had no idea it would lead me to living in an apartment with some of the raddest people in my life. Don't be afraid to let people know you are on a roommate hunt through a Facebook post or even through a message. The worst thing that can happen is a dry conversation, but the best thing that can happen is finding the people you admire most in this world.

## TIDYING UP

With busy schedules, relationships sprouting and party nights awaiting, keeping a tidy home can get difficult. Something that worked out for my girls and me is hanging up a whiteboard on the fridge.

This acts as a canvas for our weekly tasks and chores list. Each week, the chores alternate so that one person isn't stuck mopping the floors every week. A chores list is an overall guide to a clean common space, but cleaning up after yourself, makes most of the impact. It's considerate to wash your own dishes, wipe down counters after handling food and sweep away your crumbs. Cleaning in small steps helps avoid having major clean days multiple times a week.

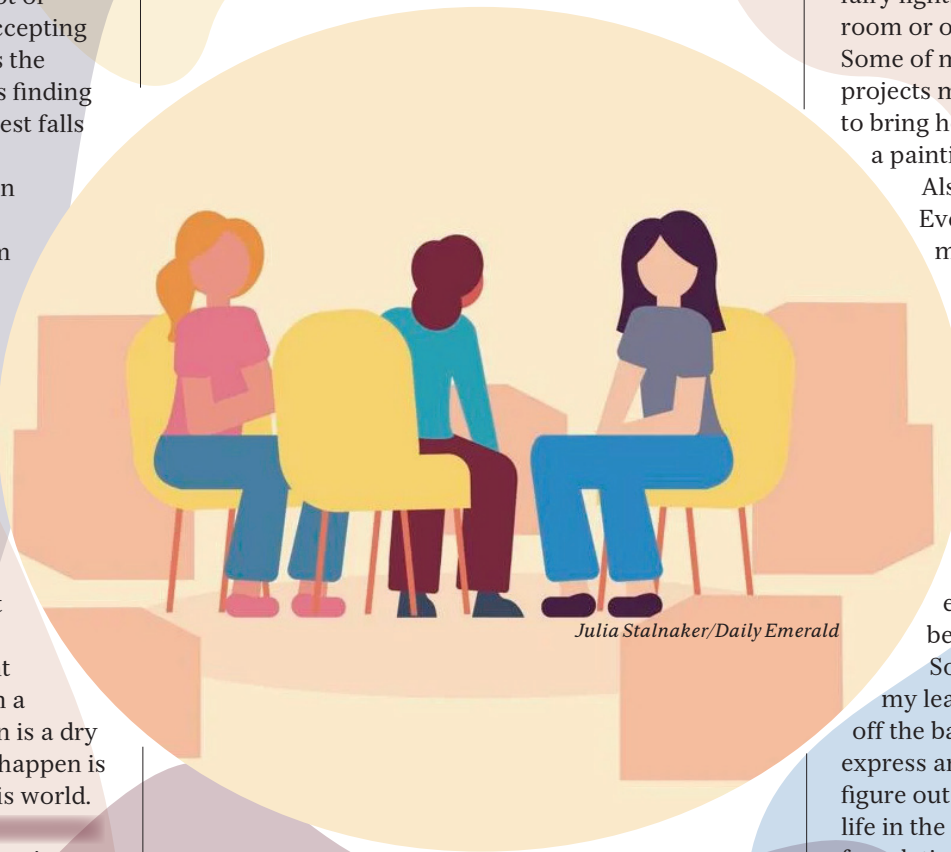
However, my roommates and I made it a habit to deep clean the apartment once a month, which looks like dusting, organizing closets and mopping the floors. Cleaning is a drag, but you'd be surprised at how fun it can be with others.

I'm used to the three of us blasting Bad Bunny and sipping Red Bulls while scrubbing down the counters, and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

## FURNITURE

Although many college apartments come furnished such as Arena District and The 515, some don't. You may have to consider how long your roommates and you are okay with eating dinner on the floor together.

Furnishing an apartment can get expensive and



Julia Stalaker/Daily Emerald

with a college student's budget, you'll definitely have to get creative. I managed to score a couch, coffee table and rug from family friends. While I've been super lucky, it doesn't hurt to ask people around you if they have any items stuck in their garage. Moreover, people are constantly moving out, so places like Facebook Marketplace or Craigslist are a great way to find free or cheap apartment necessities that people need to get rid of as soon as possible.

One valuable tip I learned is that thrift stores like Goodwill and St. Vincent de Paul are packed with unique kitchenware. I would know since I have a habit of thrifting more mugs than I can fit.

## DECORATIONS

Generation Z really knows what's up when it comes to making their spaces funky. Although you'll probably end up hanging random manifestos around your apartment that will make you laugh each time you walk by, it's good to start with some basics.

Posters are a great way to take up some blank space. Websites like Society6 and Redbubble often have deals on their poster designs that are created by small artists. Even though frames don't look as edgy, I've realized they do look really nice in common spaces.

One decor idea is lining up numerous polaroids inside a frame. You can also never go wrong with fairy lights. Try hanging some up in your living room or out on your balcony if you have one. Some of my best wall decor pieces are creative projects my roommates have made. Don't hesitate to bring home one of your creations or even have a painting night together with your friends.

Also, I am a firm believer in disco balls. Everyone should have a disco ball. No matter what vibe you have going on, a disco ball will make things far more interesting.

## ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

When people say "communication is key," they aren't lying. Throughout the school year, my roommates and I have had numerous check-ins. We usually meet and go over anything we need to work on. Normalizing these conversations creates a safe environment for all ideas and opinions to be included without any awkwardness.

Something I wish I did at the beginning of my lease is create a roommate agreement right off the bat. In this discussion, everyone would express any boundaries and preferences and figure out how they can mold them into everyday life in the apartment. This would provide a solid foundation and help your roommates navigate living with new people.

It can be scary going from a home you've known for years to living on your own with new people. Trust me, I had no idea what to expect, but I wouldn't have it any other way. Anything from having 3 a.m. conversations on the couch to telling my roommate she needs to take out the trash more often is all part of this unique experience. You don't have to become best friends with your roommates, but communicating consistently and being considerate helps create a place that you enjoy coming home to!



# OREGON VOLLEYBALL'S PUZZLE TO SUCCESS IS ONE STEP CLOSER TO COMPLETE

Hannah Pukis, a transfer from Washington State, is a key piece the Ducks have been looking for.

BY NINA-GRACE MONTES

To start the final game of the Oregon Invitational against Rice, the lights in Matthew Knight Arena dimmed and the hype video started playing on the scoreboard. While the speakers shook the entire arena, the starters sat on the bench waiting for their names to be called.

"Five-foot-eleven setter from Tacoma, Washington, Hannah Pukis" rings over the sound system as she runs out of the player-made tunnel while high-fiving her teammates with a poised look in her eye. She's ready to compete. Despite wearing an "O" across her chest for only four games, she looks like she's been in Eugene her entire career.

"She commands the floor really well," Oregon head coach Matt Ulmer said. "She likes to be offensive. She's a great teammate and a really easy fit."

She finished the game with 52 assists to take her total on the season to 144. Who had the second-most assists by a Duck this season? Elise Ferreira did with 43.

Now, as a setter, it's expected that she'll lead the team in assists. A setter is expected to touch the ball every play to prepare the kill. But with Pukis, she makes herself a linchpin – a vital cog to the machine that is the Oregon volleyball team.

Early on in the second set against Rice, the Ducks received the ball and prepared for a typical return. As Rice's middle hitter went to spike the ball, middle blocker Colby Neal went up for the block, but the ball ricocheted off of her hands and ended up behind her. Brooke Nuneviller went to recover, but the pass went off the court. Pukis sprinted across the floor and dove to get the ball to the other side.

When the ball made it to the opposite side of the net, Rice's front row was immediately ready to block the ball, but Pukis made it back to the net just in time to stop that from happening. Oregon ended up scoring after the rally.



Ducks volleyball join in a huddle and cheer before the start of a set. Oregon Ducks take on Colorado Buffaloes at Matthew Knight Arena in Eugene, Ore., on Feb. 28, 2021. (Maddie Stellingwerf/Emerald)

"She's fearless, dynamic and creative in her play," Caroline Meines, Pukis' high school coach, said. "She plays with confidence and assuredness, emboldening her teammates to compete with energy and passion. Her desire to compete in challenging and intense, high level matches was a factor that sets her apart."

It's been a part of her arsenal before she set foot in Eugene. In high school, she was a four-year letter winner at Bellarmine Prep in Tacoma, Washington. She earned two all-state selections in 2015 and 2016, an MVP award in 2016 and led her team to a state championship in 2014.

During her time at Washington State, she dished out 40 or more assists in 12 matches in the 2021 season. She finished her time in Pullman with 2,876 assists, 741 digs and 266 kills, which led to an AVCA All-American honorable mention, two All-Pac-12 team selections and a U.S. Women's Collegiate National team selection.

"Hannah has a lot of distinctive qualities, such as her range in distributing the ball, her energy -- and her ability to transform the on-court flow of the game, and the non-setting pursuit plays," Meines said. "I think she has always had a penchant for taking risks and pushing her team to play at the edge of their ability, which can yield tremendous growth and thrilling victories."

Since her arrival, expectations for the Ducks have risen. In the Pac-12 preseason rankings, Oregon was written into the number four spot, and Pukis was named to the preseason All-Pac-12 team.

"Pressure is just a part of playing volleyball at this level," Pukis said. "This team environment couldn't be better to handle pressure. Although we have high expectations, we are putting in the work everyday, so it doesn't seem that far off from us."

In 2012, Oregon was a runner-up in the NCAA tournament after a three-set sweep by Texas to win a national title. Since then, the furthest the Ducks have gone is the Regional Semi-Final in 2020.

With All-American hitters Brooke Nuneviller, Gloria Mutiri, Karson Bacon and freshman standout Mimi Colyer, Pukis and Oregon's front row will be hard to stop.

"I'm excited to get into a flow," Pukis said in a phone interview. "I haven't played with these girls for very long, but when it clicks, it clicks. We have so much talent, and to be able to be a part of that, I feel like we are going to be unstoppable -- especially in the Pac-12."

Oregon Volleyball has never won a Pac-12 title. But with Pukis, it's one step closer.

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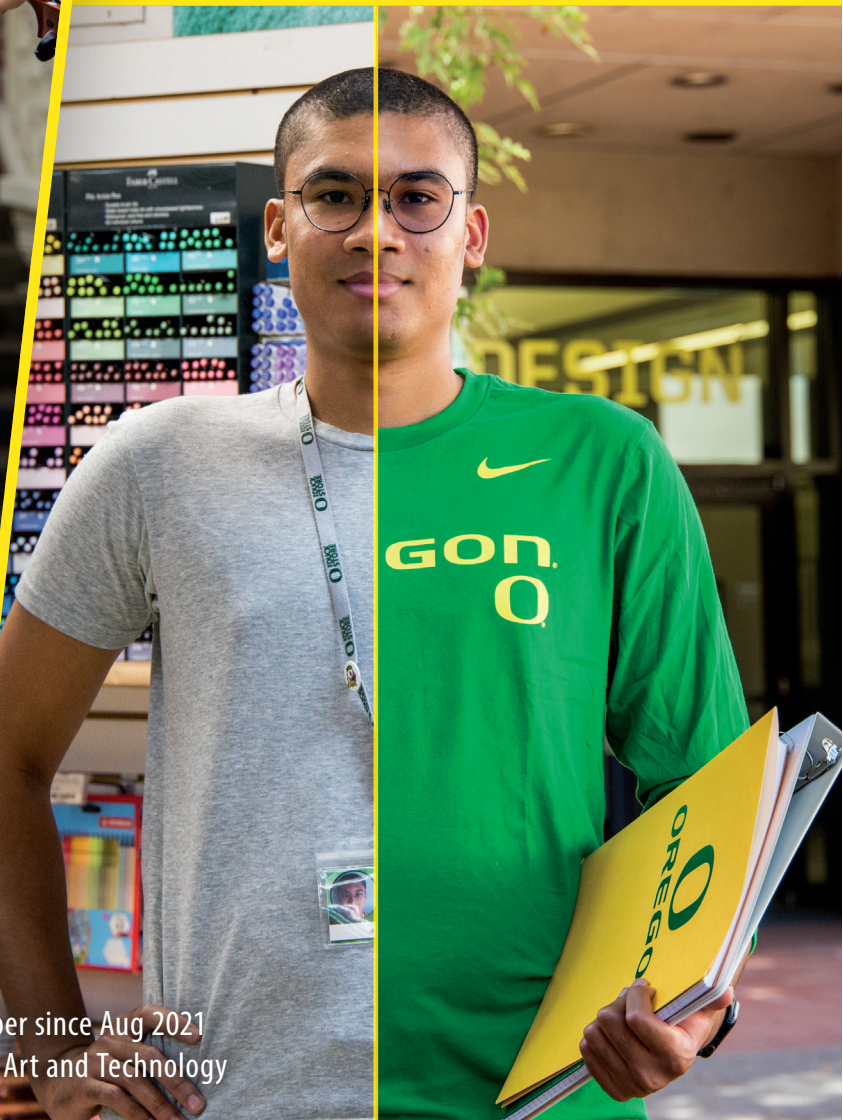


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