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Pumpkins sit on the bridge in the horticulture gardens at TRU.
Charles Rankin/The Omega

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the **Omega**

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Men's volleyball duo claim new championship

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Campus construction woes continue

As TRU moves towards sustainability, students raise concerns about accessibility

ADESIRE AJAYI-SMITH NEWS EDITOR

Beginning construction in March and continuing through the summer, TRU's new Low-Carbon District Energy System (LCDES) has been described as an "exceptional" and "cutting-edge" piece of infrastructure, which could push the university to its goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.

Installation of the LCDES is a campus-wide project, with construction taking place from the Arts and Education building to Old Main, and extending as far as the Ken Lepin Science building. The dedicated LCDES page on the university's website encourages students, faculty and staff to remain patient, as any inconveniences from construction will only be temporary and regular mobility around campus will resume as soon as relevant work has been completed.

But how soon that will be remains a mystery to students, many of whom have found the construction at best an inconvenience, and at worst a genuine hindrance to their on-campus experience.

"It's incredibly inconvenient," Luigi Guilles said. A second-year communications student, his classes this semester are mostly held at Old Main. "I'm struggling with being on time to things, and I have to run so much now."

For others, this disturbance in campus life presents itself more urgently.

"I have some physical disabilities," said interdisciplinary studies student Payton Parker. "So I don't have a regular

backpack; I have a bag that's on wheels. It might be a small thing, but walking to and from the different areas on campus, trying to pull my wheels on the dirt paths that are lumpy and awkward and in these weird spots is really difficult."

Students easily point to several other issues, like the blocking off of staircases, which affects people who need handrail support when on an incline; the poor air quality around construction areas that is problematic to those with respiratory issues; and the re-routing of regular paths to longer ones that present a serious challenge to people with disabilities.

The discomfort is worsened, many students believe, by their lack of awareness of what is even being built. When asked, most suggested a vague sustainability project, but were unfamiliar with any details beyond that.

The LCDES is one of the largest of its kind in North America, and will supply more than 90 per cent of heating energy requirements for all 13 academic buildings connected to it. The system aims to eliminate 100,000 tonnes of GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions over 30 years.

The first Canadian university to earn two platinum ratings in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), TRU has quickly become a leader in all things sustainability. This project is another step in its promise of a greener campus, country, and planet.

But does that make all the trouble on campus

worth it? Some students feel that it does.

"It's good that TRU is trying to put a more environmentally friendly foot forward," said fourth-year student Izzy Christensen. "It's a step in the right direction, which is all you can hope for right now. I think it's worth the hassle."

Yet others remain unmoved, suggesting that, despite the good cause, the execution was poorly managed.

"They need to be as focused on students today as they are on students in the future," Guilles added.

Many chalk it up to poor timing, insisting that the project, though worthwhile, should have been completed in August.

"When it was started, I expected it to be over before September," Dupinder Singh, a second year psychology student, said. "But now, it seems like it's going to take a whole semester to open up the regular paths."

Whether or not it will take that long is a toss-up for many. When asked to predict the timeline of construction, answers ranged widely.

"Hopefully the goal is to finish at the end of the month, or at the latest mid-October," biology major Larvine Osanya said. "But realistically, I think it'll end in January."

"I genuinely think it's like 40 per cent done," Guilles guessed. "Like, not even half."

A general trend was the lack of awareness about basic facts of the construction, which left many feeling disregarded and uninformed. One student, Charles Rankin, believes

communication was one of the university's biggest shortcomings on the issue.

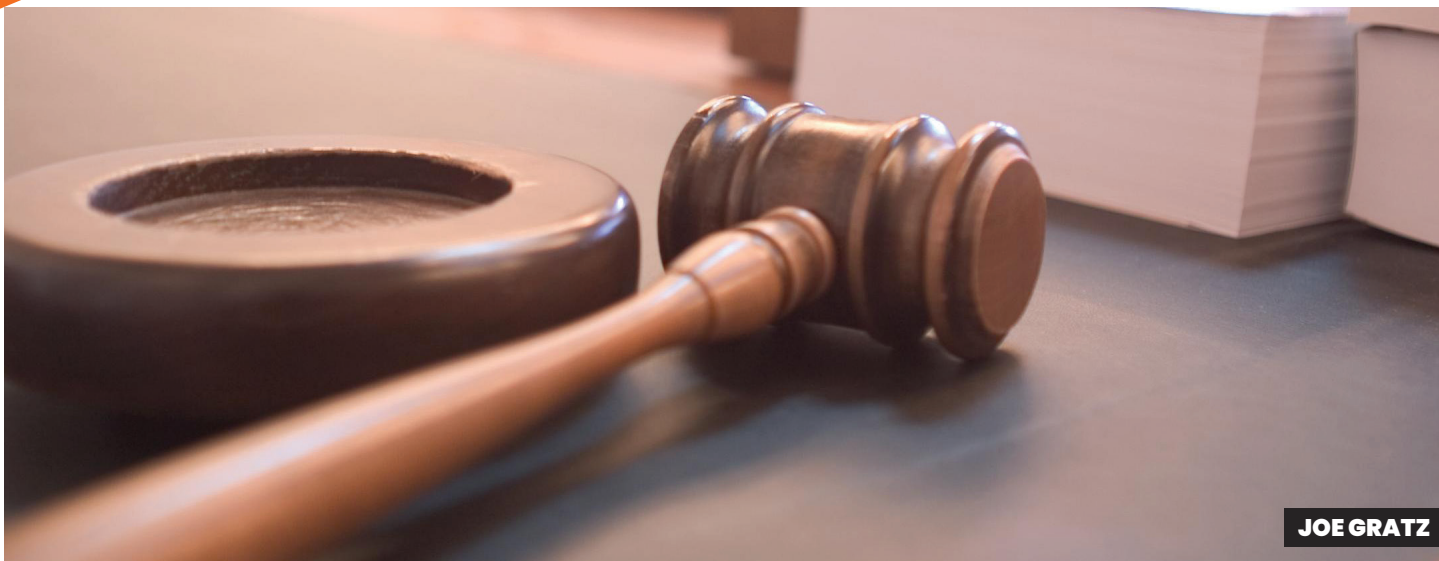
"The communication aspect with students could have been a little more obvious and thoughtful," he said. "There's been some acknowledgment, and a few odd articles here and there about their sustainability efforts, but it feels like there was an opportunity missed to provide a better explanation for what they're doing and why it's important."

Per the details on their website, several parts of the campus will begin opening up in September and October, from accessibility paths to parking lots and building entryways. Whether these plans are reflected in real time remains to be seen.

Regardless, many students consider the accessibility issue to be an urgent one and believe that solutions should be found immediately.

"There are ways to go about doing construction while ensuring accessibility for all on campus," Parker said. "There should have been an accessibility inspection before construction happened, to ensure that people with mobility aids or disabilities can actually access the campus comfortably."

"What is a pain for most people becomes an actual barrier for people with disabilities," Parker added. "Yes, I'm still disabled, but I have the privilege of not having to use a mobility aid every day. So I feel it's my responsibility to speak up for those who don't have that privilege."



JOE GRATZ

When students seek justice

ELLEN KAZEMBE STAFF WRITER

As we travel along our journey through post-secondary education, many will learn to accept that a certain amount of stress comes with the title. Most of the time, the stress is manageable, a byproduct of late night study sessions, midterm prep or perhaps juggling a part-time job. What many don't expect are the legal problems that may arise along the way, such as when disagreements with employers or landlords escalate beyond reason. For many students, such as international students, those with disabilities and others experiencing financial instability, these challenges can be confusing and intimidating.

Instead of trying to figure it out alone, students now have a place to turn. Through a partnership between the TRU Students' Union (TRUSU) and the TRU Community Legal Clinic (TRUCLC), free legal advice is available right on campus.

Once a month, TRUSU hosts legal pop-ups in the

Students' Union building. Students are invited to sign up, sit with a lawyer and hopefully walk away with a clearer picture of their rights and next steps. The appointments are short—about 15 minutes—but can make the difference between being stuck in a bad situation and knowing how to move forward.

TRUCLC first opened in 2016, thanks to a \$50,000 grant that tested whether the community needed such a service. Nine years later, it's not just a service—it's a staple in Kamloops. The clinic serves low-income residents while providing law students with hands-on training.

Professor Ted Murray, the clinic's executive director since 2017, says that balance has always been the goal.

"It's the best way for our law students to gain

experience, while making sure people who can't normally afford a lawyer still get help," Murray said.

The clinic's impact stretches beyond campus. In one case, Murray recalled, more than 40 families in Pineview

were told to vacate their townhouses for repairs, only to be informed that upon return their rent would increase. The clinic stepped in on behalf of five of those families, and the landlord backed down before the hearing,

Murray told the Omega.

For TRU students, the main issues remain housing and employment.

"Housing in Kamloops has been difficult since 2016," Murray said.

The clinic has also worked on human rights complaints, consumer disputes, and workplace

terminations.

TRUSU executive director Nathan Lane says accessibility is what makes the service so valuable.

"Most of the issues are around tenancy, but we also see employment problems. The good thing is, if a student requests to see a lawyer, they get one," Lane said.

The process is straightforward. Students are asked to fill out intake forms, which the lawyers then review before both sides meet to discuss the case. When the meeting is over, students ideally walk away with advice tailored to their situation.

Along with casework, both TRUSU and the clinic want to improve public legal education for students. International students, in particular, often hear misinformation about Canadian laws, leaving them more vulnerable.

Students who wish to participate but miss the pop-up may still reach out to the TRUCLC office downtown by calling 778-471-8490 to book an appointment.

"We see a lot of international students living in substandard conditions or being exploited by landlords. Employers, too [...] sometimes they'll underpay or ignore overtime laws because they assume students won't push back."

Ted Murray, TRUCLC Executive Director

Navigating the 'Red Zone'

ADESIRE AJAYI-SMITH NEWS EDITOR

This article contains content related to sexualized violence, including assault and harassment. If you are in need of support, you can call the Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre at 1-888-974-7278 or contact the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response office at svpr@tru.ca or 250-828-5023.

A new academic year brings new experiences, opportunities and discoveries. Yet for many on campus, the new year also brings challenges and risks to the forefront.

For colleges and universities across British Columbia, one such challenge involves the rate of sexualized violence in what is colloquially referred to as The Red Zone, the six-to-eight week period of a new semester, when the energy and excitement, parties, activities and the general bustle of campus life is exploited by those seeking to prey on others within the community.

Across North American universities, research shows that more than 50 per cent of all college sexual assaults are carried out within these Red Zones. Per the B.C. government, nearly two-thirds of all reported sexualized violence cases on campuses occur during the first eight weeks of the new semester.

The question then arises of how best to tackle these statistics in an effective and trauma-informed way. Though there has historically been undue pressure on survivors and those most at risk to bear the responsibility

of preventing said violence, recent attitudes are slowly shifting to stress consent, education and social advocacy, with an understanding that sexual violence survivors are never at fault. The Canadian Women's Foundation has suggested staying informed, raising awareness, supporting survivors and championing positive change as the most effective ways to take action.

The provincial government passed the Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act in 2017, necessitating that all public post-secondary institutions establish a sexual misconduct policy. TRU's policy, BRD-25, was an expansive collaborative effort between the university and the wider Kamloops community, centred around student, staff and faculty wellbeing. It was from this policy that the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response office (SVPR) was formed.

The SVPR can be found in Old Main, room 1486. The office receives students, faculty and staff who have either experienced or witnessed sexualized violence and would like to make a disclosure. They are equipped to support victims/survivors through the often retraumatizing process of disclosure and they also collect data for further statistical research.

As of September 2025, the SVPR has also implemented an anonymous disclosure and feedback service to protect the identities of survivors or witnesses during disclosures.

But this is just the response portion of their

work. As the office's name implies, the SVPR office also engages in a significant amount of prevention work.

Now firmly in The Red Zone, the community must remain conscious and educated on issues related to sexualized violence, including (but not limited to) consent, bystander intervention, sexual health, chauvinism and intersectionality. In the years since the SVPR's inception, the office has made several leaps in cultivating a more aware campus community. They have pushed for mandatory sexualized violence training for all staff, faculty and student leaders, as well as organized several workshops and campaigns to bring more eyes and ears to the ground.

At the start of this semester, the office also kicked off another year of their Red Zone Campaign, created to support the community as it navigates this period. Through social media, outreach and activities, the campaign, which runs from Aug. 31 to Oct. 12, will explore weekly themes related to sexualized violence. The goal is to ramp up education and awareness at a time when it is direly needed.

Alongside the SVPR, TRU's Wellness Centre also serves as an important resource for developing campus-wide knowledge on sexualized violence, while offering support to those in need.

The Centre's Consent Café meets with youths and young adults to improve their literacy on sexual health and well-being and to help build comfort and confidence in discussing these complex topics. Their pleasure-based

workshop series from the previous academic year taught students everything from sexual hormones to masturbation and gender-affirming care. Although many of these topics may seem rudimentary to some university students, research has shown that secondary schools across B.C. are often ineffective in teaching them.

The efforts of offices like the SVPR and the Wellness Centre help bridge the awareness gap across the entire campus and beyond. Still, there is no room for complacency. Though several steps have been taken to curtail the ever-present spectre of sexualized violence on college campuses, it remains a significant issue. This is because other factors like general ignorance, apathy and the historical failings of the justice system, as well as gendered stereotypes and social norms, have remained largely unchanged despite the urgency of the situation.

And, as we pay extra attention to The Red Zone in this period, it is essential to remember that sexualized violence does not have a timeline. It remains an issue through the rest of the academic year and every minute that follows. Though all other violent crimes across Canada declined over the years, sexual assault was the only one that remained relatively stable.

This means that the work is not temporal. It is constant and it needs as many hands, ears and eyes as possible.

To learn more about the SVPR and their resources, visit their website at tru.ca/current/wellness/sexual-violence.



JAKOB SCHMIETENKNOP/THE OMEGA

Students light candles during a vigil outside Old Main in early September, honouring the victims of the Nepal protests

Candles and prayers for Nepal

Remembering those who were injured or killed during the September protests

JAKOB SCHMIETENKNOP STAFF WRITER

Early in September, over the course of 48 hours, the people of Nepal felt their lives flip upside down, as allegations of corruption by the Nepali government kicked off massive and widespread protests.

The Nepalese community within Kamloops gathered outside of Old Main in the evening of Sept. 9 to organize a candlelight vigil, mourning the loss of the 19 people who died and the 340 who were badly injured during the so-called Gen-Z protests that began on Sept. 7.

Protesters, mainly aged 21-27, took to the streets of Kathmandu, igniting the aptly named Gen-Z protests. The movement was sparked after a social media ban took effect at

midnight on Sept. 5. All major social media apps were banned, except for TikTok. In their retaliation, the government responded with brute force, using water cannons, expired tear gas, and lethal rounds.

The vigil brought together over 100 people, united in solidarity and grief, to light candles in place of their fallen Nepali citizens.

"Originally, we were supposed to have a solidarity march with those who are protesting in Kathmandu and then the candlelight vigil after," Paudel told The Omega. However, with the rapid turn of events in 24 hours, Paudel was unable to obtain permission from the city of Kamloops, among other reasons.

"On top of that, we do

not stand for any violence that is happening in Nepal. To do a solidarity march would bring out high emotions that could lead to more chaos. I believe we can solve these problems with peace," Paudel said.

Before 1951, Nepal was ruled by the Rana dynasty through hereditary prime ministers until pro-democracy movements overthrew them, creating a parliamentary system. The leader at the time, King Mahendra, banned parties in 1961; however, the frustrations led to the 1990 People's Movement, which restored multi-party democracy. Later, in 1996, a civil war broke out between the Maoist party and the King, which lasted 10 years, resulting in more fatalities and destruction, causing strife

in the daily lives of citizens.

The people of Nepal have suffered generational trauma for far too long, and on Sept. 5, it was the point where their pot had boiled over, again.

"Social media plays a big role in our politics, and with the same government for the past forty years, Gen-Zers were getting tired of it. Once they banned social media, that was like our voice," Paudel said.

Following the protests, Sushila Karki, the first female Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nepal, was named interim Prime Minister of the country after former Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli stepped down. According to the New York Times, Nepal will hold elections in March to determine the country's next leader.

Victory at first spike

WolfPack volleyball duo makes history

ALEXA LIPTAK SPORTS EDITOR



ROBERT MCALASTER/THE OMEGA

This summer, fun, sun and sand met game, set and match when two WolfPack volleyball players brought home a new championship for TRU.

"It was a win for TRU, not so much as just [the two of us], even though it was just us two there, like the WolfPack won this," said WolfPack men's volleyball teammate Rylan Ibbetson. At the end of August, Ibbetson and fellow teammate Walker Sodaro won the Volleyball Canada University and College Beach Nationals, a first in WolfPack history.

Throughout the tournament, the pair dominated, completing the entire competition without dropping a set. The event featured 28 schools from across Canada. The duo opened their pool with a win over Seneca College (21-12, 21-8), setting the tone of their tournament early. Following this win, Ibbetson and Sodaro went on to defeat Collège La Cité (21-4, 21-4) and SAIT (21-14, 21-12), earning them the top seed in their group.

Carrying their momentum into the knockout stage in the quarterfinals, the 'Pack-mates made easy work of the University of the Fraser Valley (21-10, 21-11), utilizing a split-blocking strategy to conserve energy and disrupt opponents' rhythm, a tactical shift that kept teams guessing who to serve to. The strategy, Sodaro told the Omega, "hit another level once it

came into crunch time."

In the semifinals they faced the University of Guelph (21-16, 21-8), with another win securing their spot to compete for the national title.

The pair faced a tough opponent in Waterloo, who had pulled off multiple upsets in the tournament. However, the dynamic duo never wavered, playing with composure and intensity, fending off their opponents' rallies with precision. A pivotal moment in the match came during the technical timeout, where Ibbetson and Sodaro reset and reminded themselves to stay calm under pressure.

"We just said to each other, 'keep doing what we're doing, don't let the moment get to us,'" Ibbetson said.

That composure carried them through the closing points.

When the final point dropped, the pair embraced, celebrating TRU's first-ever national beach volleyball championship.

"I just kind of smiled and ran over to him and gave him a hug," Sodaro said. "We couldn't stop smiling that entire night."

Ibbetson said the

excitement carried on long into the night and even admitted to 'randomly screaming' out of pure joy.

The victory marked TRU's first-ever national beach volleyball title; however, the pair noted that the win was bigger than the two of them.

Both players emphasized that they continuously received encouraging and supportive texts from teammates, coaches and other TRU athletes throughout the tournament, adding fuel to their run.

The partnership between Ibbetson and Sodaro dates back a long time. The pair both grew up together in Kelowna as family friends and have played volleyball together as long as they can remember. "We've been family friends, like best

friends, since we were three years old," Ibbetson said.

The longtime connection the two share shows up on the court.

"We just have a brother bond," Ibbetson said. "I wanted to play the best I could for Walker, because I know how much he cared and wanted this. And I think it was the same, vice versa."

"It wasn't just us two...The WolfPack won this. It took the whole school to get us there, with all the support we felt."

Walker Sodaro, Men's WolfPack

Although the duo had played on many different courts, both stated that beach volleyball hadn't become a main focus until the last few years, the transition between the two types of volleyball requiring different skills and mindsets.

"In beach volleyball, you touch the ball every single time it's on your side... When [there are] six guys on the court indoors, you don't always touch it. On the sand, you have to be perfect every single time," Sodaro said. "If I make a mistake, I know he's going to be there right away to back me up. We almost know what each other's thinking."

Looking forward, both agreed that the championship had only added fuel to the hunger they both feel for the upcoming volleyball season. "I think for me, personally, it just made me [hungrier]," Ibbetson said. "We got that feeling of winning, and I don't want to stop. We've got a really good group of guys this year, and I think we could do really well."

Sodaro's sentiments echoed those of his teammate.

"I want to accomplish something with the team this year, take it one step at a time, one year at a time... It's probably the tightest group of guys I've had on the team since I've been here. I think we can actually make a run or accomplish something special."

Big fitness goals, tiny fitness habits

LINDSEE MUGFORD CONTRIBUTOR

Lindsee Mugford spent years helping clients get strong as a nutrition coach and trainer. She experimented with swimming, strongman, powerlifting, and even a little competitive arm wrestling over the years. While her focus may have changed to literature and writing, she still enjoys a competitive game of the floor is lava.

We talk a lot about goal setting in university, and usually, we overcomplicate the process. In my fitness coaching and tutoring practices, I've helped hundreds of people accomplish goals they never thought they could reach. It all comes down to one thing: tiny habits.

It starts with figuring out the bare minimum you can do to reach your goal and doing it. That's all. Tiny habits done successfully will make the biggest goal doable with enough time. Don't believe me? I once had a client lose their first 30 pounds by replacing their daily colas with water and tea. They could have lost weight faster if they did more at once, but why complicate things? Let me explain how this could work for you as well.

Goals are written down, this is what separates them from dreams. Goals are specific and measurable. For example, setting a

goal to squat double your bodyweight for five repetitions is a clear objective, whereas aiming for an epic squat is not. Goals are realistic. While it might be realistic for someone to complete their PhD thesis in a year, it would be an unrealistic goal for a first-year Bachelor of Arts student. All goals have a timeline. Completing a PhD thesis could be a realistic goal for all students, but the timeline will be different depending on previous experience.

Your timeline will vary depending on a few factors. Is there already a deadline set for you, like the due date your professor gave you for an assignment? Are there things you must learn before you can work on your actual goal? Lastly, all successful goals share a common element: significance. If you can't give yourself a solid reason for wanting to eat five servings of vegetables a day, you're never going to do it. Significance can be as powerful as "my mother died of diabetes complications, and I'm scared it will happen to me," or as simple as "I know I feel better when I eat healthier."

Once you've set your measurable goal and it meets the criteria above, what do you do? This is

where many people get stuck. All the goals listed above are outcome-based goals. There is an intended result to reaching the goal, for example, being able to squat 300 pounds. You must decide on the behaviour-based goals (or habits) that will achieve your lofty outcome-based goal; this requires honesty.

The more honest you are about your limits when creating your habits, the more successful you'll achieve. Ask yourself, how much time a day, or what amount of mental focus, do you honestly have to put towards a new habit? Are you already struggling to finish your mountain of homework for the week, or are things open for you right now? Do you already possess the skills required to meet your goal? Does reaching your goal require financial investment? If so, how long will it take you to raise the money? None of these factors will prevent you from achieving greatness, but they will affect how you decide to create your habits. They need to be manageable enough that you are confident you won't fail to perform them.

A habit is any behaviour you repeat long-term without consideration. It takes around two weeks to a month to solidify a

new habit successfully. So, figure out the smallest thing you can do to help you reach your goal in your timeline and do it for two weeks. For example, if you want to lose five pounds and decide your first goal is to walk for 20 minutes a day, all that matters is those 20 minutes. Anything else you do that could help you lose weight is a bonus. If you get to the end of two weeks and manage your walks more than 80 per cent of the time, you can keep the walks and pick a new habit to add.

The trick is to make the habit so small that it's nearly impossible to fail. Keep checking in on your progress and if you find you went too big with your habit, scale back. Knowing your limits is important.

If you do find yourself struggling with a habit, make it smaller and move on without beating yourself up. Show yourself the same grace you would show your best friend if they were struggling. Shame is the antithesis of success.

Every goal is achievable if you break it down into manageable steps.

Remember, the goals can be big, but the habits should always be the bare minimum you can get away with. Try it and I believe that you will accomplish more than you thought possible.

New club runs wild

One of TRUSU's newest clubs is all about staying active and creating a sense of community

ALEXA LIPTAK SPORTS EDITOR

Running doesn't have to be a solo sport, at least not anymore at TRU. Thanks to the launch of the TRUSU Run Club this fall, students now have the opportunity to lace up, build community and discover the joy of running together.

Club president Ayomide Maxwell said the idea to start the club came to him last year while on the service committee. Many students pointed out to him that there was a TRUSU Law Run club, but there wasn't a group that was for the general student population. That's when, over the summer, Maxwell decided to create the run club.

After creating an Instagram account to increase the club's exposure, Maxwell began recruiting student members. Once the fall semester started, he initiated the process to make the club official through TRUSU.

The club's main goal is to be welcoming to all students, regardless of their level of running experience. Whether students are seasoned runners or just trying to

stay active, there's space for everyone in the club. To accommodate both beginner and experienced runners, the club maps out two routes each session. One route is shorter, featuring a three-kilometre loop, while the other is much longer, taking participants on a five-kilometre route, allowing them to choose which suits them best.

"Quite often, people will even walk parts of the route and that's totally okay," Maxwell said. "We want this to be a [club] where beginners feel comfortable. A lot of members have started with three kilometres and eventually built up to five."

Leaders of the group also make a point of matching paces so no runner is ever left behind. The group also encourages bringing your friends along to the runs.

//Running kind of sucks when you do it by yourself. It's easier to get into a routine, push yourself and actually enjoy it when you're surrounded by other people.//

Ayomide Maxwell, Run Club president

The club currently meets twice a week: Wednesdays at 6:30 a.m. outside of the Stock Pot café on Laval Crescent and Saturdays at 6:30 p.m. across from campus at Bubble Time Tea & Waffles café on

McGill Road. But it isn't just about the runs, Maxwell told the Omega; the club is also trying to create a sense of belonging among participants, while making a positive impact in the community.

Earlier this month, the

Run Club participated in the Terry Fox Run, raising \$200 for charity. Looking ahead, organizers plan to host themed events, such as a glow-in-the-dark or Halloween run, as well as social nights and community dinners when the official club status is finalized.

"Once we get registration status, we'll be able to apply for grants,"

Maxwell said. "We'd love to host a dinner every couple of weeks for the people who come out consistently, as a way to motivate runners and build friendships."

Though the club is just getting started, Maxwell hopes it will become one of the largest student groups on campus and a go-to outlet for staying active during stressful semesters. With growth, he also sees the opportunity to participate in more community events and fundraisers.

"We see the Run Club as a really good medium to help people become runners," Maxwell said. "Running has so many health benefits, but it's also about building routine and accountability. If we can get more students to experience that in a fun, social way, then we've done our job."

Students interested in joining the group can check out the club's Instagram account, @TRURunClub, where updates and routes are posted, or connect with the group's Strava chat. Beginners are encouraged to come out, even if they're hesitant.



Creepy and cozy fall activities

Seven events around Kamloops to keep you entertained this spooky season

BILLIE GLADUE STAFF WRITER

Fall is here and it's time to get festive. Whether you're looking for the best Halloween-end parties or simply trying to embrace the coziest season, Kamloops offers plenty of opportunities to fill your schedule. Here are seven activities you won't want to miss.

Privato Pumpkin Patch

Need a break from the scares this season? Take a stroll through Privato Vineyard and Winery's pumpkin patch. From Sept. 27 to Oct. 26, the patch will be open Friday to Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets cost \$10 for a single adult (19+) walkthrough, \$15 for a single adult walkthrough with a take-home pumpkin and \$25 for a family pass, which includes two adults, up to four children (18 and under) and two take-home pumpkins.

Privato Vineyard & Winery is located at 5505 Westsyde Road.

Ghouls Night Out ceramic event

Kamloops Art Party invites you to a scary-fun Halloween ceramic hand-sculpting night on Oct. 2 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Craft a ceramic ghost or pumpkin tea light holder with guidance from artist Liz Thiessen. All materials provided. Tickets are \$89 and may be purchased here.

Kamloops Art Party is located at 177 Tranquille Road.

Harvest Hues Sip and Paint night

On Oct. 18, Kamloops

Art Party will host another spooky event, the Harvest Hues Sip and Paint night, at McCracken Station Pub from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Participants will each create a festive pumpkin painting guided by local artist Kelly Manson. All materials will be supplied and the entire McCracken menu will be available. This event is beginner-friendly, so no previous painting experience is required. You must be at least 19 years old to attend. Seating is limited, so participants are encouraged to reserve their spots in advance here. Tickets are \$55 per person.

McCracken Pub is located at 1626 Valleyview Drive.

Drag Queen Scary Story Hour

Join Haus of Misfit for a fabulous and Halloween-themed drag queen story hour on Oct. 19 from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. At this family-friendly event, parents and children are all welcome and encouraged to wear costumes. The two-hour event will feature two stories and a Halloween mask craft. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets are \$5 per child. To pre-register for tickets, click here.

Haus of Misfit is located at 275 Tranquille Road.

Glow Crazy Fun Run

On Oct. 24, Miles for Smiles Cancer Foundation is hosting a run for spooky season. Choose between a 3km or 5km walk/run through a glowstick-lit course. Festive Halloween tunes and sweet treats will be provided to boost your

energy. Participants are encouraged to wear their best Halloween costumes and bring extra glow sticks to help light up the course even more. All ages are welcome. The event goes from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at McArthur Island Park. Tickets are by donation. RSVP on their Instagram Miles For Smiles Cancer. All proceeds will go towards the Miles for Smiles Cancer Foundation.

McArthur Island Park is located at 1655 Island Parkway.

Rocky Horror Picture Show at the Paramount Theatre

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of The Rocky Horror Picture Show, the Kamloops Film Society (KFS) will screen the film on Oct. 25.

Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., followed by a costume contest at 7:00 p.m. with prizes provided by the KFS. The show itself will start at 8:00 p.m. Rocky Horror is known for its interactive audience participation, so come dressed as your favourite character and remember to purchase a prop bag when you arrive. General admission tickets are \$13.81, but student and senior tickets are \$10.95.

The Kamloops Film Society and Paramount Theatre are located at 503 Victoria Street.

Valley Markets Fall Market

Browse handmade crafts, festive treats and fall-themed decor at Valley Markets' fall market on Oct. 25 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sahali Mall.

Come out to support local vendors while you shop for unique and handcrafted items. Whether you're decorating for the season, shopping for the holidays, or just looking to enjoy the fall atmosphere, there's something for everyone.

Sahali Mall is located at 945 Columbia Street.

DreamHaus Sessions Halloween event

The Commodore Grande Cafe & Lounge presents DreamHaus Sessions Halloween party on Oct. 31. Come dressed in your favourite spooky, scary, or fabulous costume for a chance to win some great prizes! Doors open at 9 pm, and the entry cover is \$10. Attendees must be 19 years of age or older, so please remember to bring your ID.

Commodore Grande Cafe is located at 369 Victoria Street.

Kamloops Pumpkin Smash

Need a use for your Jack-O-Lanterns after Halloween? Bring them down to McArthur Island Park on Nov. 1 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the pumpkin smash. A wide range of activities will be provided so you can use up your old pumpkins. Enjoy games like bowling, cornhole and pumpkin piñata. If you didn't carve pumpkins this year, don't worry. Extra pumpkins will be provided. All pumpkins will be composted. No registration is required, and people of all ages are welcome to attend.

McArthur Island Park is located at 1655 Island Parkway.

Frightening, freaky and fun flicks

ROBERT MCALASTER EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It's a dark, stormy night. You're at home alone when your cellphone rings. Wondering why someone is calling you instead of sending you a text like a regular person, you cautiously answer. A voice speaks softly.

"Do you like scary movies?"

Unphased, you roll your eyes and hang up the phone because, of course, you like scary movies, duh.

Now that October is upon us, the spooky season has finally begun. With countless streaming services at our disposal, it can be hard to decide between a good classic slasher or a spooky indie flick.. With that in mind, I've compiled a list of six favourite films to watch in the lead-up to Halloween.

6. As Above, So Below (2014)

The first on my list is the John Erick Dowdle-directed *As Above, So Below*, a film with a similar cinematic quality as blockbusters such as *The Blair Witch Project* and *Paranormal Activity*. The majority of the action takes place in the infamous catacombs of Paris, as a group of urban explorers search for the fabled Philosopher's Stone.

With intense moments of suspense haunted by claustrophobic tension and a perfectly eerie score, *As Above, So Below* would be an excellent addition to your Halloween watch list.

5. The Conjuring 2 (2016)

In recent years, Australian film producer James Wan has emerged as one of my favourite horror/suspense filmmakers.

Although he has a vast film history, Wan is perhaps most well-known for his work on the hugely successful *Conjuring* horror movie universe.

Inspired by real-life events, the plot of *The Conjuring 2* follows the exploits of famed demonologists Ed and Lorraine Warren as they travel to the U.K. in hopes of helping a small family rid their home of the malevolent entity known as Valek.

With twists, turns and surprises around every corner, *The Conjuring 2* is sure to delight this Halloween season.

4. Critters (1986)

If you, like me, are the type of nerd who sincerely appreciates bad movies, then the 1986 creature-feature, *Critters*, may be for you.

The movie's plot centers around a group of alien monsters that crash-land a short distance outside a small midwestern town during the 1980s. Pursued by intergalactic bounty hunters, the "critters" immediately set off on a path of destruction and mayhem, killing and eating whatever warm bodies they come across along the way.

The premise is laughable, the acting is tragic and the special effects look dated, but that all adds to the eclectic charm of this hidden gem.

3. IT (2017)

IT was adapted from the 1986 Stephen King horror novel of the same name and takes place in the fictional

town of Derry, Maine.

For decades, children in Derry have steadily vanished under mysterious circumstances, abducted by a supernatural killer known as Pennywise the Dancing Clown (Bill Skarsgård).

Skarsgård's Pennywise is an evil, unrelenting, bloodthirsty pseudoparanormal killer; worthy of appearing in your worst nightmares. Everything about the character design, from his colour-changing eyes to his noodle-like limbs, possessive motions and menacing voice, fits perfectly with what you'd expect.

Despite having a genuine and sincere fear of clowns, *IT* will always be cinematic gold and a favourite of mine to watch during the spooky season.

2. Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992)

In terms of great, objectively successful Hollywood horror movies, few rise to the level of *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. This classic film sits atop my list for numerous reasons, including the quality of the script, its exceptional cinematography and superb directing. However, what sets the movie apart is its iconic cast starring Keanu Reeves, Gary Oldman and Winona Ryder.

The film follows Jonathan Harker (Reeves), a solicitor from London, England, who finds himself at the centre of a dark plot orchestrated by the dastardly Count Dracula (Oldman), whose sights are set on claiming both Harker's

fiancée, Mina (Ryder) and all of Western Europe.

Although *Dracula* wouldn't be considered scary by modern standards, it nonetheless stands out as one of the finest vampire movies of the 20th century.

1. Willy's Wonderland (2021)

Willy's Wonderland is a movie that defies easy classification. Sure, it has elements indicative of horror, slasher and supernatural films, but there's also a significant dose of dry humour throughout. Defining the movie as a horror-comedy is closer to being accurate, but still comes short of hitting the mark.

In many ways, *Willy's* is the perfect homage to the cheap B-roll horror flicks of the '70s and '80s, but featuring 21st-century special effects and stunning sets. With a script that pushes beyond the limits of being considered cheesy, the movie features Nicolas Cage as the unnamed, reluctant hero who must save the day when Willy the Weasel and his psychopathic cohorts set their sights on a group of categorically stereotypical teenagers.

Willy's is a bad movie; there's no denying that, but that's why it works. It doesn't try to be anything else. When the plot delves into the realm of cheesiness, it embraces the cheese without remorse, shame or apology, sticking the landing with precision.

The result is a pseudo-horror/comedy movie that you're going to either love or love to hate.

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