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ESSAY

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"I threw it to him as his partner watched over me, and the guy, you know, he strapped his rifle to his back before he tried to make the catch, and he missed it," he said.

Walker said the guard ran to the Frisbee, picked it up and, with a smile on his face, handed it back to him. Years later, Walker, 32, recounted his experience in an essay written for a nationwide contest held by National Geographic Traveler magazine. Participants were asked to write about their "Experience of a Lifetime," and Walker, who had traveled to China as an undergraduate, thought back to his moment in the square.

In his essay, Walker wrote that the guard hadn't missed the point although he had missed the catch.

"We were two strangers from worlds apart taking a chance on one another," he wrote in his essay. "We were each at risk in our own way. But we sensed then, if only for an instant, that the most rigid orders, the most brutal history, cannot withstand the power of human connection and freedom, or the desire to have a bit of fun."

Walker imagined writing an essay that symbolized freedom and that connected with students today.

"I was about the age that, you know, those students would have been when they were laying down their lives in the name of freedom," he said.

Walker entered the contest fall term, and his essay will be published in the first edition of National

Geographic Traveler On Campus, which will be distributed in various campus newspapers around the country.

On Campus's Managing Editor Kathie Gartrell said Walker's essay,

"We were two strangers from worlds apart taking a chance on one another. We were each at risk in our own way. But we sensed then, if only for an instant, that the most rigid orders, the most brutal history, cannot withstand the power of human connection and freedom, or the desire to have a bit of fun."

Seth Walker,
Graduate student
An excerpt from his essay
"Experience of a Lifetime"

which is expected to be published in the fall, stood out from the nearly 120 other entries because his experience is something many people can identify with.

"It was very compelling; it was well-written," she said. "It was hands down the first-place winner."

She added that the 500-word limit made it a challenge to write about an experience of a lifetime, but Walker's conciseness and his story made everyone who read it love it.

Along with being published,

Walker won a 13-day, all-expenses-paid trip to Eastern Europe, which he said he plans to take in June.

When he returns from his trip, Walker said he plans to spend the summer researching for a nonfiction book he is writing about a World War II army division.

"I love stories about adventure," he said. "That's what I like to write about."

Walker said he never expected to win because this was his first writing contest, and he is new to the literary nonfiction genre. He said his essay was a good opportunity to practice his writing and to gain more experience in the University's Literary Nonfiction program in which he is a first-year master's candidate.

"When I saw the poster (for the contest) on the wall, I knew it was a perfect fit," he said.

Journalism Professor Lauren Kessler, who teaches in the Literary Nonfiction program, said Walker's essay was successful because it "made the moment come to life."

"It is a phenomenal thing to win a national essay contest, period," she said, adding that it is even more phenomenal considering Walker is fairly new to the program.

"It was a lively narrative of a moment that had a deeper meaning behind it," she said.

Walker said he credits his win to entering the program and working with Kessler, who he considers his mentor.

"I really feel like I wouldn't have won this contest had I not taken the risk to come back to school," he said.

Contact the higher education/
student life/student affairs reporter
at chelseaduncan@dailyemerald.com.

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ELECTION

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ground floor.

If voters reject the measure, the state will implement \$544.6 million in scheduled cuts to education, public safety and social services.

If voters approve Measure 30, the state will temporarily raise income taxes, reduce certain corporate tax benefits and extend the cigarette tax. It will also permanently raise some business taxes, reduce seniors' medical deductions and change discounts for early payment of property taxes. The total tax package will raise about \$1.2 billion from 2003 to 2007 and prevent a \$258.1 million predicted shortfall in the state budget for the 2003-2005 biennium.

The income tax is progressive, meaning people who earn more money will pay more taxes. The average Oregonian will pay \$24 to \$36 in additional tax, according to an argument in favor of the measure printed in the Secretary of State's voter's guide pamphlet. People making less than \$10,000 won't pay any extra taxes.

Campaigners on each side say the stakes are high.

Reed urged students to make sure their voices are counted.

"I would really encourage any students who haven't voted yet to get out and vote yes on Measure 30," he said.

Reed said state support for higher education dropped last year and tuition increased.

"A no vote is really just going to make things worse," he said.

However, the Libertarian Party of Oregon, which has been instrumental in the push against Measure 30, thinks a yes vote will make things worse.

"The tax increase itself is unnecessary," party chairman Thomas Cox said. "You do not need to raise taxes to protect necessary services."

Cox said legislators have been spending at an unsustainable and

BALLOT LOCATIONS

Ballots must be turned in by 8 p.m. today in order to be counted for the Measure 30 special election. Drop boxes are located in the following locations around Eugene:

- Lane County Elections
135 E. Sixth Ave.
- University of Oregon
EMU Suite 4, EMU East Wing, outside ASUO
- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box
East side of Pearl Street between East Seventh and Eighth Avenues
- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box
Between City Hall and County Public Service Building
- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box
Parking lot behind State of Oregon Building
165 East Seventh Ave.
- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box

Juvenile Justice Center, in front of the center's west side entrance
2727 Centennial Blvd.

- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box

Amazon Pool

2600 Hilyard St.

- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box

Bethel Library

Echo Hollow Plaza

1990 Echo Hollow Rd.

- DRIVE-BY Ballot Drop Box

Sheldon Library (In Sheldon Plaza next to Rite Aid)

1566 Coburg Rd.

ASUO is running a van service that will pick up ballots or take voters to a drop box location. Pick-ups can be arranged by calling 346-0628.

SOURCE: Lane County Elections and ASUO

wasteful level, and they need to go back to the capitol to reprioritize spending. He added that education needs to come before lower priorities, such as the computer upgrades the state has planned.

Cox said the Libertarians will be calling voters affiliated with the party to remind them to vote, but that at this point party officials are no longer trying to persuade anyone to change their vote. His message is simply that voters need to get their ballots in.

"Make sure you vote," he said. "A lot of people have been complacent."

ASUO President Maddy Melton said student government, as a non-partisan organization, doesn't take a stance on political issues. It does, however, try to get students involved, she said.

"We're just trying to get the last votes

in," Melton said.

ASUO is calling registered student voters to ask them if they have turned in their ballots. It is also running a van service that will pick up either voters or their ballots and drive them to the drop off stations. The ASUO van service can be reached at 346-0628.

"I just think people need to know that this is going to have a direct impact on their education and on their monetary situation, so they have a vested interest in getting out and letting it be known how they feel," Melton said.

As of Sunday, 92,634 out of 181,403 voters in Lane County — or 51 percent — had returned their ballots, according to the Lane County Elections office.

Contact the city/state politics reporter at nikacarlson@dailyemerald.com.

February Workshops

• Applying to Law School

Discover the best majors and courses, review the application process, LSAT preparation, letters of recommendation, and personal statements.

Wed., February 4, 3:30 p.m., 360 Oregon Hall

• Real World Experience for Credit

Come and learn how to earn UO credit for internships within the U.S. and internationally.

Thurs., February 5, 3:30 p.m., 360 Oregon Hall

• Choosing a Major

This workshop will help you devise concrete decision-making strategies in selecting a major.

Wed., February 11, 3:30 p.m., 360 Oregon Hall

• How to Graduate on Time

How to plan and calculate your graduation time.

Wed., February 18, 3:30 p.m., 360 Oregon Hall

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