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VOL. 33 MAY 2022 ISSUE 401



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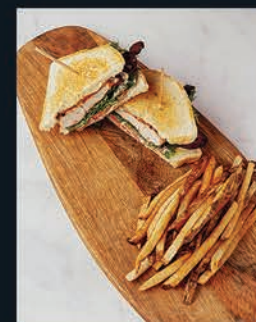


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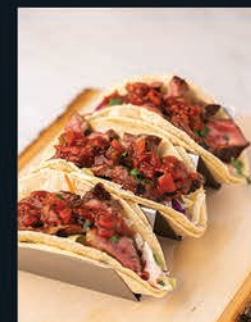


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ABOUT THE COVER: Our 10th Annual Bike Issue cover features the work of **Matt Crane** (@mattcrank), a bubblegum-tinted assemblage of iconic Utah imagery—jell-o, the *State Capitol*, the *Fun Time Kidz Care* building and more—cycling their way across the Utah red rocks.

KARA DEMPSEY

Contributor Limelight
Contributing Writer



Beginning her time with *SLUG* in 2021, Kara Dempsey has displayed her passion for our city's culinary offerings though her monthly local food features. "Reading the magazine makes me feel like I have a direct connection to like-minded people and endears me more to the city that I love," Dempsey says. Read her review on *Handlebar* and their food on page 24!

PAIAK JAYSWAL

Contributor Limelight
Contributing Writer



While Palak Jayswal is a talented journalist overall, her passion for writing is most prevalent in her music reviews for *SLUG*. Jayswal says, "At *SLUG*, I've always felt supported and free to love my favorite genre—and to write about it!" Outside of *SLUG*, Jayswal is the Culture Reporter at the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Catch any of Jayswal's music reviews on *SLUGMag.com*!

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SWEET STREETS

making movement safer for salt lake city

By Paige Zuckerman • paigez@redwillowcounseling.com



(L-R): Luke Garrot, Johnnae Nardon, Alex Cargun, Benjamin Wood and Shelby Stults of Sweet Streets, a people-first city planning advocacy group.

Every day, we interact with multiple means of conveyance around us, yet so infrequently do we consider how complex the culture and systems of movement really are. In late 2019, a few intrepid Salt Lake citizens built a “band” of roadside rebels to enact systemic changes in the ways we roam. This is the mission of *Sweet Streets*, a local people-first city planning advocacy group. I join founding member **Taylor Andersen**, alongside cohorts **Johnnae Nardone**, **Benjamin Wood** and **Alex Cragun**, to talk shop on the mobility-minded mission of the group.

“We realized we all care about what happens outside our front doors. Often people of color, low-income communities and people with disabilities are forgotten,” says Andersen. Unpacking the overdependence on single-operator motor vehicles is core to the *Sweet Streets*’ vision. “Mobility is a city issue; it makes everyone’s quality of life better,” says Nardone, herself a full-time member of the **UTA** staff. The trickle-down effects of better street design, accessibility and transit options affect more than most residents might imagine. Wood gets a streak of impassioned energy as he outlines the many tributaries affected: “If you want to decrease crime—better streets. Air quality? Better streets. Disability access ... Everything starts on the streets!” He exclaims.

The organization has several policy irons in the fire, including the robust “20 Is Plenty” and “200 South Corridor” projects. Driving through both Rose Park and Liberty Wells, there are green-and-white lawn signs for the “20 Is Plenty” project, currently the organization’s largest campaign. “We’ve been engaging the city in limiting neighborhood speed limits as those are the places wherein traffic violence happens. Adopting a 20 mph ordinance is both actionable and popular,” says Cragun in his academically hip tone. “There’s peer-reviewed evidence that 20 mph is effective, and it changes behavior. We need better design of our streets eventually, but this can happen now,” says Nardone. *Sweet Streets* is pushing for an eventual city-wide rollout of the 20 mph speed limit on certain local streets. Residents can sign a petition on the *Sweet Streets* website and request one of these charming signs, entreating automotive operators to slow down on residential roadways.

The “200 S. Corridor” project evolved as the city was resurfacing this major thoroughfare—one of Salt Lake’s famously wide streets. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime chance to redesign an entire street,” says Wood. This redesign would allow for a 15-minute turnaround at all adjacent bus stops, rapidly improving the timeliness and reliability of public transit for downtown access. “A lot

of cities have bus-only lanes. It’s time for us to have that, and no street is better. If the city thinks transit is important, we need one lane where it gets priority,” says Nardone.

The spirit of *Sweet Streets* feels large and even a bit overwhelming, yet the passion and dedication of its organizers is undeniable. “Everything you interact with when you leave your door is a policy choice,” says Andersen. Cragun chimes in with equivalent zeal: “A hundred years ago, Salt Lake was ‘the city’ when it came to public transit. Our trolley system had a seven-minute frequency across the city.”

Salt Lake residents will spot the *Sweet Streets* team tabling at upcoming events, offering new volunteer opportunities slated to arise this year. In the meantime, folks can fill out their petitions, surveys and lists to add their voice to the project. In May, *Sweet Streets* will be holding a neighborhood walk during bike month to celebrate the addition of numerous new wayfinding signs the project produced via a grant from the **AARP**. “Keep your eyes out for irritating street design [and] toss up a flare to those issues. Be loud about what could happen,” says Wood. Join *Sweet Streets* in the effort toward a more movement-accessible Salt Lake at sweetstreetssl.org.

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CATERS TO UTAH'S CYCLING COMMUNITY

For **Cris Pereira**, current owner of *Cranky's Bike Shop*, running a successful bike shop stems from a deep engagement with the sport and craft at hand. After over a decade of full-time, professional road racing, an injury forced Pereira to retire, at which point he took over *Cranky's*. "That seems like that's the progression of a lot of independently owned shops out here," he says, pointing to *Contender Bicycles* and *Flynn Cyclery* as other examples of shops run by ex-racers. This hands-on experience (a quality shared among Pereira and his staff) drives *Cranky's*' approach to shop curation and customer service. A sort of "by bikers, for bikers," the shop offers a wide array of top-quality bikes, gear and more, providing what you need whether you're venturing out for the mountain trail, the city street, the open plains or anything else.

As more and more independent shops give way to corporate ownership, Pereira and his team aim to keep *Cranky's* on the ground and servicing Utah's bike community. When larger, nonlocal businesses determine shop stock, Pereira says that they often inadequately read the needs of riders in Utah's specific terrain and climate. "We try to take care of everybody. We don't want to be [just] a mountain bike shop

By **Audrey Lockie** • audrey@slugmag.com

or a road bike shop," he says. With unique experiences among the staff relating to all kinds of biking, *Cranky's* can get you started with a commuter starter pack or outfit your mountain bike with the latest add-ons and parts.

This experience-based knowledge comes into special play with the customer-focused mindset held at *Cranky's*. Their independent ownership allows them to stock a range of high-quality products, offering customers a "something for everyone" selection. "It's good-quality stuff that's gonna do what it's designed to do," says Pereira. Speaking of the approach they take to helping customers navigate the shop, he says, "There's no one way of doing something. [A bike] has to suit your needs and abilities. We just ask a bunch of questions and try to steer the [customers] toward a product that's gonna suit their needs."

In describing his vision for the shop's interior at the relatively new 800 S. location, Pereira emphasizes the anti-corporate aesthetics of the decisions "I wanted people to come in ... [and not] feel like they were walking into a *Sharper Image* store," he says. Hundreds of bikes and bike accessories line walls of exposed brick and concrete, with a few velvet couches and an end table positioned at the front of the shop that provide a cozy, dive bar-green room aesthetic. Pereira plans to expand upon this environment in the future, hoping to knock out the shop's west wall for more shop space and an espresso bar.

(L-R) Kevin Hall, Owner Cris Pereira, Ethan Robinson and Shop Manager Luke Autry make up part of the community-minded team behind *Cranky's Bike Shop*.

In addition to the in-shop services, *Cranky's* also has a web store with options to order online and pick up in-store. When staff availability permits, the shop hosts group rides, including intro-to-bikepacking overnight trips across Utah to locations such as Francis Peak. After his injury prevented him from strenuous road racing, Pereira took up this type of long-distance, multi-day riding and expresses gratitude for the opportunity *Cranky's* provides him to shepherd others into this "intimidating" activity. Describing themselves as a "tree-hugger" bike shop, *Cranky's* openly advocates for a more bike-oriented approach to transportation all around. "We just wanna see more people on bikes in general, commuting, so [that] hopefully our air here will get better," Pereira says.

For more information on *Cranky's*, visit crankysutah.com or follow the shop on Instagram @crankysutah, where Pereira also documents his global bikepacking travels. Stop in and talk to Pereira and the team in person to best stay in touch with the shop's events, inventory and more.

Cranky's Bike Shop • 150 E. 800 South, Salt Lake City
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ALL SEASONS COMMUTER DIARY

Words by **Nkenna Onwuzuruoha** • kenna.o@gmail.com || Illustrations by [@brett.ferrin](#)

As you see cyclists grinding up a steep incline, retrieving an item from a bag or bumping music while riding with their crew, have you ever wondered what’s going through their minds? Here’s a glimpse into one cyclist’s thoughts and how they shift during the four seasons we experience here in Salt Lake. My name is Kenna, and I’m a Ph.D. student at *The University of Utah* and a bike enthusiast. For folks looking to navigate our streets better, I provide some tips and tricks at the end of each section.

Most people don’t start out as a winter commuter—they work themselves up to it. I have to convince myself that the cold I feel is in the moment and will only stay until body heat kicks in during the ride. The cold should not be a deterrent when I walk downstairs and feel the draft coming from underneath the door.

I shed layers at lights and I eventually decide to remove my gloves and rely on my bar mitts for the rest of the ride. I hear someone on the sidewalk waiting to cross at the corner

of the new luxury apartments near the *Salt Lake Public Library* yell, “Hey! Are those hand warm-er things any good?” I creek my head over to the left and respond, “Yeah, they are great.” Each winter, inquisitive folks ask me for an impromptu review of the mitts during my commute. I zip-tie them to my handlebars to prevent anyone from nicking them off my bike.

Now that the light is green, I continue thinking about what treats to buy at *Sprouts* as a reward.

TIPS —AND— TRICKS

Keep a solid pair of bike lights handy since it gets dark early. I have a rechargeable front light and a battery-powered backlight mounted to my bike. You’ll see a lot of hardcore commuters with dynamo lights—these battery-free bike lights work using the energy you generate by pedaling.

I’m missing the pleasures of winter biking that I took for granted in the winter. There are more cyclists on the road now, and I wish I had the bike lanes all to myself again. I hear the buzzing of an eBike motor approaching and I ride closer to the edge of the street to allow the cyclist to zip by. At least four cyclists of all shapes, bike set-ups and sizes pass me. Cycling year-round hasn’t made me speedy enough to set the pace. I blame my performance on age, an inconsistent exercise routine off the bike and hauling too much stuff in my pannier.

TIPS —AND— TRICKS

With cooler temps, spring is the perfect time to be adventurous and try out new bike trails. I always carry something to haul any unexpected purchases or nifty finds along the way. Right now, I use **ORTLIEB** panniers made specifically for commuters. They have a flat base perfect for carrying precarious items.

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ALL SEASONS COMMUTER DIARY

Words by Nkenna Onwuzuruoha • kenna.o@gmail.com || Illustrations by @brett.ferrin

Sweat and sunscreen combine into a salty grit on the exposed part of my skin during my rides. The stench of “outside” lingers when I’m inside. I carry a cool mist spray to spritz myself with before I enter an establishment, but perspiration leaves dark, damp patches on my shirt and a glow on my skin that gives away that I haven’t been near an AC in quite a bit of time.

My commutes have lessened, so I haul a far lighter load than other seasons. I become lazy and overconfident and don’t

TIPS
-AND-
TRICKS

Having cold water on rides is great but even better is easily accessible water. I’ve gifted friends water bottles when they’ve forgotten theirs at home or have one that’s too large to fit in the bike’s water bottle holder. You can buy a cage at the *Salt Lake City Bicycle Collective* for \$1. I use an insulated Polar Bottle which runs around \$12.

My commute up to *The University of Utah* reconvenes in fall. I started skiing last season, and now the signs indicating the difficulty of a route up to campus are helpful. I’ve taken the black diamond a few times, but my heart rate is going through the roof, and feeling like I’m going to die overshadows the thrill of completing the climb. When a friend who worked at *Cranky’s Bike Shop’s* old location across from Presidents’ Circle told me that mechanics would test out bikes by riding up and down the 200 South hill, I thought that was impressive but not up my alley. The bins and delivery vans lining the narrow bike lane and

the cars trudging up the hill every few minutes give me yet another reason to take the green route through Bueno Ave.

Fall sure is a lovely season, though. The leaves! The colors! The cool breeze! The laid-back vibes of summer hold strong for a while and try to steady your uneasiness at winter approaching.

Liberty Park is the ideal location for observing and participating in some sort of recreation. I do a lap around the park, sharing the pathway with rollerbladers, joggers, families on a stroll and my fellow cyclists before heading out on my way.

TIPS
-AND-
TRICKS

Often, local bike shops, like *Saturday Cycles*, will not charge for labor if you buy parts from them. You may want to leave it to professionals when installing tricky items. For example, you’ll be happy to have fenders that fit properly when rain, and shortly snow, appear in the forecast.



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ROLL ON

Wasatch Roller Derby's Crash Course

By Alexis Perno • alexis.perno1@gmail.com



Photo: John Barkiple

(L-R) Laura Benge, Yve Sojka and Jessica Ward at Wasatch Roller Derby's weekly crash courses.

A special kind of community forms when a sport is compared to playing chess while driving NASCAR and having bricks thrown at your windshield; **KT Buffington** of *Wasatch Roller Derby* knows it well. "[Roller derby] is not like any sport out there," Buffington says. "It is mentally and physically rewarding, and you gain a lot of new friends and skills! Plus, who doesn't like looking cool on roller skates?"

As the Director of Athletics for the *Wasatch Roller Derby*, Buffington manages a team of trainers that focuses on the complex physical and mental aspects of roller derby. While it may seem intimidating for some, Buffington assures that there's space for you. "It provides a safe place for literally all people," Buffington says. "If a person is willing to learn, experience new things, can play in a team and is open-minded, derby welcomes you."

Roller derby allows Buffington to "speak the language of an athlete," she says, something she had wanted to do since a scoliosis diagnosis in 7th grade kept her on the sidelines. In 2013, the *Coal Miner's Daughters*, a Wyoming derby team, drew Buffington in. "I wanted a new kind of workout and a place to be myself as a baby gay in a state that doesn't exactly support its LGBTQ+ community," she says.

Wasatch Roller Derby offers that safe space with a specially designed skating crash course tailored to beginners. **Kimber Gabryszak**, who recently graduated from the crash course, hadn't skated in roughly 20 years. Within the first lesson—centered around learning how to fall safely—her confidence quadrupled. "All the skaters were so encouraging," Gabryszak says. "I went from hardly [being] able to stand at the start of the class to trying fall drills confidently with the trainers."

That's the main goal of the crash course—self-confidence. While Buffington says new skaters can certainly expect aches and pains in places they'd never thought possible, learning to get up "regardless of the odds" makes the course worth it. "Self-confidence is the gold at the end of the derby rainbow," Buffington says.

It worked for Gabryszak, who says she's walking away with not only more confidence, but stronger legs, a cool nickname and amazing new friends. "I fell in love with skating, derby and, frankly, with all the skaters and coaches," Gabryszak says. "It's such a great community—encouraging, accepting, fun, supportive, welcoming."

Just weeks after her crash course graduation, Gabryszak is already signed up to skate within the league and wants to learn to ref. "Derby is going to be a large part of my life for physical fitness and recreation," she says. Her advice for new skaters? You won't know if you do or don't like it unless you try. "Give it a try! Don't be scared," Gabryszak says. "It's

such a great world to investigate and you'll be welcomed with open arms."

Wasatch Roller Derby was hit hard by the pandemic, but Buffington hopes to rebound with a building full of people who love the sport. Currently, the league is holding tryouts for their competitive travel team, and the nonprofit league is always looking for new sponsors and partners. "We would love to see the love of roller derby grow and expand so that skaters and spectators can find a safe place and a new passion," she says.

Keep up with the league via their Instagram and Facebook, @wasatchrollerderby. Games are about once a month, and you can sign up for the crash course through their socials. "Come and learn about our sport," Buffington says. "It is so important to have representation in the world and in sports of real people, and that is what derby does."

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THE BABES ARE BACK IN TOWN:

SLC SKATE BABES

By Parker Scott Mortensen
parker@slugmag.com

Of all the groups and hobbies that cropped up during 2020, Skate Babes has proven itself to be among the most resilient, fun and inclusive community-minded groups. Skate Babes meets most Mondays in Salt Lake, inviting anyone and everyone who wants to skate, organize or just hang out. The roller skate group turned collective comprises many, but in particular, **Paloma Young, Natalie Blanton, Eliza Mayer, Brecken Jones, Zachary Taylor, Joey Simpson, Travis Perish and Cherry Garcia** help organize Skate Babes into the community pillar it has become.

Skate Babes started with a group of friends who missed each other. “I think it came about naturally,” says Taylor, “in the way that a lot of people picked up hobbies during the pandemic.” The group would congregate with a tiny bluetooth speaker “anywhere we could find a smooth surface,” says Blanton. At first, this usually meant vacant parking lots. The group had their first true community meetup at the *Liberty Park* basketball courts. Eventually, **Beehive Bike Polo** offered their space at Jordan Park. “That’s our home court for now,” says Blanton. “We gather every other Monday over the summer, or the proper skate season.”

Those beginning months were important for establishing the tenor and gravity of what Skate Babes’ had the potential to be. “It happened to coincide with the protests that got big in Salt Lake two summers ago,” says Taylor. The chance to organize around these historic events inevitably lent the group a sense of activism that they later channeled as they cemented the collective’s



Photo: Nicholas Coletti

Skate Babes’ biggest goal has been to get as many people on skates as they can.

values. “Now that it is about skating, we still carried over that feeling of importance, purpose and community,” says Taylor. “We honor any demographic that wants to come out and get their groove on. We welcome newcomers and do not want anyone to feel timid or turned away.” Non-skaters are even welcome to bring a blanket and some friends and just enjoy the party.

Community fuels this activism. You see this in the way Skate Babes puts together events, which strive for inclusivity, collaboration and fun theming. “*Skate Prom* was really good,” Taylor says, “because not everyone had a good experience with prom. We were able to give everyone a little taste of what that should have been.” Last year, they did a bring-your-own merch night. Attendees could get custom printing done in collaboration with screen printing artist **Taylor Jackson**, known as *@gothslotch* on Instagram to most. The group has

collaborated with **People’s Energy Movement, Decarcerate Utah and Missing & Murdered Indigenous People**, to name a few. Their events are almost always free, with a few paid nights in every season to help pay for things like renting out *Classic Fun Center’s* skating rink during winter months. Keeping the events accessible is important because of skating’s roots in Black history and social justice. “We have worked to make sure most of our leadership decisions are headed by People of Color,” says Blanton, “honoring the legacy of roller skating.”

The group’s goals have expanded since becoming a more structured collective. “Our biggest goal has been to get as many people on skates as we can,” says Taylor. “I think we’ve done that a little too well—it certainly has changed into dreams of us having our own space.” Flat, skateable real estate is at a premium, especially during winter months. The collective has considered becoming a nonprofit, but as Blanton says, the fluidity afforded by a collective isn’t something they’re eager to let go.

It’s finally warming up, and 2022 has a lot in store for Skate Babes. In July, they’ll be partnering with the *Utah Film Center* for a screening of works that cover the history of skating and racial justice. The skate season will open May 9 with a 2000s theme and **DJ Key1** and will continue every Monday from there until Halloween. Follow Skate Babes on Instagram *@slcskatebabes* for info on upcoming events.



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WHEN 100 MILES ISN'T ENOUGH: RIDING WITH SALT LAKE RANDONNEURS

By McCall Mash
mccallmash@gmail.com



Photo courtesy of Ken Moss

Salt Lake Randonneurs is the perfect group for cyclists looking to bike over 100 miles!

If you're not tired after riding your bicycle 100 miles, "then randonneuring is the sport for you," says **Ken Moss**, Regional Brevet Administrator of Salt Lake Randonneurs (SLR). Randonneuring is a type of long-distance ultra-cycling that started in France in the late 1800s. It came to Salt Lake City in 2011 after **Richard Stum** participated in a few rides with a Southern Utah club, leading him to start SLR.

"The big difference between randonneuring and just riding your bike is the distance involved. [When most people] want to race or do recreational rides or charity rides ... their big goal is to make it to 100 miles. To somebody that's new to biking, 100 miles sounds like a big deal and a long distance," Moss says. The shortest distance in randonneuring is 200 kilometers (125 miles) and the longest is 1,200 kilometers (745 miles). Randonneurs participate in a series of timed rides called brevets: 200 kilometers, 300 kilometers (186 miles), 400 kilometers (248 miles) and 600 kilometers (775 miles). Upon successfully completing the series, riders can participate in 1,000-kilometer (620 miles) and 1,200-kilometer rides.

Moss—who has completed one 1,000 kilometer and three 1,200 kilometer rides—says the "granddaddy" of all races is the *Paris-Brest-Paris*, which has been held in France every four years

since 1891. "You're riding with about 6,000 people and it's just an amazing experience," Moss says. He also adds that over the course of 90 hours, you have the opportunity to create lifelong friendships with riders from around the world, as well as participate in a historical and cultural event like no other.

While 90 hours may seem short, Moss says, "the time limits are ... designed to encourage people to be successful." Each brevet has a designated timeframe and includes time-sensitive checkpoints every 30–60 miles to help keep riders on track. Moss adds that there is usually enough time for food, water, sleep and photos unless riders run into weather or gear complications—self-sustainability is a "hallmark" of randonneuring. "This is a part of the magic of randonneuring, again: People have been doing this for 130 years, so they've worked this out," he says.

Another valuable feature of randonneuring is affordability, with minimal fees for joining the national club (\$30) and administrative costs for every race (\$10). Moss notes that "any bike goes," and special gear is only needed for longer brevets. While he says the most expensive part is traveling to races, SLR will start along the Wasatch Front this year—featuring flat rides in the West Desert and mountain climbs similar to the *Tour de Utah*'s routes.

Moss also emphasizes that you don't need to be a talented athlete; in fact, he doesn't consider himself one. Ultimately, Moss says it comes down to training your body and mind. "It's 90% physical and the other 90% is mental—isn't that how it works?" he says with a laugh. "I think anybody that is interested in this can get trained to the point where you are physically able to do these long distances ... Once you've got your positioning and your comfort dialed in and you've got that base training, then it's a mental [game]."

For anyone interested in randonneuring, Moss suggests completing a "century ride" (100 miles) before starting with brevets. He recommends joining **Bonneville Cycling Club** because it operates similarly to brevets but with shorter distances. Additionally, Moss says anyone can reach out to the SLR riders for advice on equipment or training.

In the end, Moss' love for riding bikes is at the heart of randonneuring for him. "I just love getting up when it's dark and riding my bike for an hour or two and watching the sunrise ... ride all day and watch the sunset and ride two or three hours in the dark. Being able to spend three or four days doing that ... I just love doing that," he says.

For more information or to view the 2022 brevet schedule, visit saltlakerandos.org.



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HandleBar

HIPSTER HOTSPOT ON THE NORTH SIDE

By Kara Dempsey • karadempsey@karadwrites.com | Photos by @slc_bites

Bicycles, mustaches and beers galore—*HandleBar* stands apart with its casual-social atmosphere, eclectic interior and comfortable, year-round, pet-friendly patio featuring smokeless fire pits for the cooler months. It's centered as a gathering place for flannel-clad beer enthusiasts or those seeking a cool beverage or bite to eat after a long day at work. *HandleBar*'s menu boasts a variety of American cuisine options, including an extensive list of vegan alternatives.

Our server, Amanda "Amandalorian" Ouellette, nearly ran from table to table as the Friday evening crowd filled every available space inside and out. We started our evening with a (Deep Eddy Vodka) Peach Mule (\$10), an old-fashioned Dr. Pepper in a glass bottle (\$3) and a pint of draft Big Sky Moose Drool (\$5). The wait was extensive as more patrons filed in, but it was worth it in the long run. Our cheese curd appetizer (\$8) came with a tangy, red tomato marinara sauce on the side. The Wisconsin curds were breaded in a crunchy coating, which kept the gooey cheese contained until broken open, when it would ooze out in the most delectable way possible.

HandleBar's loaded mac & cheese comes with smoked shredded BBQ pork for a hearty meal.



HandleBar's Turkey BLAT is a light, surprisingly filling sandwich that's perfect to pair with a beer.

Next, I ordered a pint of *Salt Flats Brewery's* Handle Beer (\$3), a refreshing and very popular draft amber lager which paired well with my entrée, the Turkey BLAT (\$12). The light, surprisingly filling sandwich came on a soft, toasted brioche bun with in-house, hand-sliced hickory smoked turkey breast topped with crisp bacon, fresh lettuce, sliced tomatoes, avocado and a smear of mayonnaise. The tender, moist meat was roughly sliced in thick pieces, and the hint of hickory smoke added a savory element that made this turkey sandwich anything but ordinary. A handful of salted, kettle-cooked chips and a ramekin of in-house coleslaw accompanied the sandwich, the latter of which was lightly dressed and composed of crunchy, fresh vegetables. Diners have the option to upgrade the side to French fries, Wisconsin cheese curds, house-made mac & cheese (vegan or non-) or a side salad.

Another entrée for my party was the War Pigs Wrap (\$16). This normally comes with smoked pulled pork, but they were out of this meat addition, so we had it replaced with smoked chicken breast. While the smoked pulled pork would have been delicious, so was the marriage of the substituted chicken with the crispy fried onions, cheesy pasta and flour tortilla. Their house-made mac & cheese, much like their coleslaw, was not over-sauced and was covered with a reasonable amount of cheesy

béchamel. The side of steak fries was well seasoned with *HandleBar's* house seasoning and came with a ramekin of the Utah favorite, fry sauce. Our table's final entrée was an order of the Loaded Baked Mac & Cheese (\$9). As this is also supposed to come with smoked pulled pork, we substituted for the smoked chicken breast. The chicken, much like the turkey, was not dry or tough but was well-cooked and seasoned expertly. Chunks of green bell pepper were mixed with the cheesy pasta, which allowed for a touch of needed texture to the otherwise soft meal.

HandleBar is Salt Lake City's very own cycling-obsessed, mustachioed bar and restaurant. With a rough 50/50 split of omni and vegan food options, dozens of beer choices (draft and canned) and a full bar, there is plenty to choose from. From brunch to lunch to dinner to snacks, no one can patron this establishment and leave unsatisfied. A menu packed with comfort foods that won't leave guests overstuffed and lethargic is a menu everyone should try at least once. While they have the space, they do request that parties remain ten diners or less so as to not overwhelm the staff or kitchen. To accommodate for the current pandemic climate, they sanitized each table before and after its use. For more information and updates, follow @HandleBarSLC on Facebook and Instagram, or find *HandleBar* on Yelp and Untappd.

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JUST DON'T GIVE A FUCK SO MUCH: FORM OF ROCKET'S TAPE RELEASE

By Mary Culbertson • mlbculbertson@outlook.com • Photos courtesy of Form of Rocket

The early 2000s are here again. They're here in the clothes we're gonna wear, the music we're gonna cry about and the shows we're gonna wish we had seen. I found myself confronted with this while sitting in a coffee shop with guitarist and vocalist for Form of Rocket (FoR), **Peter Makowski**, talking about all the crazy-ass shows he and his bandmates played from 1999–2008(ish). Lucky for us, they're at it again with some new shows and an upcoming release.

After their hiatus of about 10 years, FoR picked up again around 2018. "I want to say we're more mature [now], but I don't think that's true. I think we are still just a bunch of big kids," Makowski says. Part of the beauty of early FoR shows were the antics and the rowdiness. Those shows were an outlet for them. "We were always sort of outsiders. We skipped school and would walk down to *Raunch Records* and get *SLUG*, and that's what we did."

Their shows now are still an outlet. Makowski's expression relayed that life is the same as it was before—whether you're a kid or you have kids, there are still everyday troubles. "We're all aware that we have other priorities. It's just nice because it's for fun with no pressure. We do it whenever we want and it makes the experience much more enjoyable," Makowski says. "If we don't want to practice, we don't practice, and if we don't want to play shows, we don't play shows."

Form of Rocket is booked for the highly anticipated *Kilby Block Party*

this year on May 13–14th. When asked what attendees should expect, Makowski laughed: "Well, I've dislocated my knees like four times playing Form of Rocket shows, so I need to pace myself." He gushed about what a cool city we live in and how people still come out to enjoy their hardcore sound 20 years later. "We just feel blessed that people even give a shit still. We just want people who are fans to come hang out with us. We think it's special and we want to share that"

SLUG partnered with FoR to release a tape of two of their songs originally released in the *Death by Salt I* and

II compilation albums. The two tracks, "Keep Smilin' Ed Smart" and "Dar un Luz," from the band's third album, *Men*, will be released again in a special tape presented by *SLUG* and sold at their booth at the *Kilby Block Party*. This time, they'll be released with album art created by prolific Salt Lake artist **Trent Call**. Makowski raved about his long-time artist friend: "The art that he did is so good; we're honored to have him work with us again. He is something we'll cherish [in] having him a part of our memory of the band."

The reason these tracks are special for this release is because they're the demos of the songs released on the album *Men*. "When we went into recording those, there was no pressure," Makowski says. "You can tell an artist is just letting go, which happens when it's just a demo. You capture that really cool energy of people that just don't give a fuck. That's one of the hardest things for everyone—if they just wouldn't give a fuck so much, some really cool shit would happen."

Form of Rocket's music is exactly that—some really cool shit from people who don't give a fuck so much. They'll be playing the *Kilby Block Party* at midday on May 13 with Makowski and some of the band's original members—**Ben Dodds** on bass, **Tyler Smith** on drums, **Curtis Jensen** on guitar and vocals and **Gentry Densley** on guitar and vocals. Follow Form of Rocket on Instagram for some blast from the past content and new exclusives @formofrocket and look out for their booth at the show to purchase the coveted new tape.



Top: *Keep Smilin' Ed Smart* designed by Trent Call.
Bottom: (L–R) Curtis Jensen, Tyler Smith, Peter Makowski and Ben Dodds of Form of Rocket.



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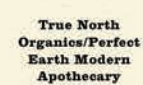
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