

Campus Times

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CHI HUANG / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

DANCERS PERFORM AT CELEBRATION OF CHINESE NEW YEAR

China Night, in Strong Auditorium on Saturday, Feb. 14 featured skits, cultural dances, and student performances.

SA passes resolution for better funding of counseling services

BY ANGELA REMUS
PUBLISHER

After representatives on the Student Advisory Committee learned of lengthy waits to receive a weekly appointment schedule with the University Counseling Center (UCC), the Students Association (SA) took action and passed the "Resolution Urging the Expansion and Improvement of UCC Resources" on Feb. 9.

Class of 2016 Senator and Wellness Coordinator Melissa Holloway was involved in bringing the matter before the SA Senate.

"I was hearing from students that there was a long wait list at the counseling center," Holloway said. "I met with Paula Reynolds at UCC and had a conversation with her to ask about the process and see where the problem might lie."

SA President and senior Antoinette Esce also met with Director of University Health Service Dr. Ralph Manchester.

They discovered that the root

of the problem lay in a lack of funding: with the current level of funding, which affects staffing, only a limited number of cases can be handled. While all students are given a preliminary appointment within a week of contact with UCC, they may have to wait to schedule a regular weekly appointment.

When the problem was brought before Senate, they created a resolution calling on University Health Service, the Office of the President, the Board of Trustees and other relevant parties "to increase funding for UCC to allow for the betterment of [UR's] counseling services."

In the upcoming weeks, members of the SA, including Esce, will reach out to administrators to ensure that they are aware of the resolution and its contents. While the resolution itself will not alter funding, it may encourage administrators and other parties to put the matter on their agendas and perhaps encourage

increased funding for UCC.

"We're hoping that the relevant parties will see the resolution as a cry for help," Holloway said.

In the event that UCC does receive increased funding, the resolution also requests that such funding be used "to expand the hours available for appointments to better accommodate students' academic schedules, and to increase staffing for the purpose of expanding student access to individual and group counseling sessions."

Ultimately, the SA resolved to support expanding the resources allocated to students' mental well-being.

"Hopefully we can increase the resources for students on campus who need this support," Holloway said. "You don't want to be one of those kids who are moderate priorities. Having the resources to get all students support when they want them will create a safe environment for all students."

Remus is a member of the class of 2016.

UR enters virtual reality system in Microsoft competition

BY RACHEL KAPLAN
SENIOR STAFF

Last week, the Computer Science HapTech Research Team worked to become one of four teams to make it to the U.S. finals round of the Microsoft Imagine Cup, a worldwide competition of technological innovations among student teams.

Seniors Lucian Copeland, Jordan Brooks and Alexander Matthers; juniors Morgan Sinko, Christian Freitas, Gary Ge and Minsoo Lee; and sophomores Kian Jones and Casey Waldren have been working in the field of haptics since the fall of 2013. Haptics is a field involving the science of touch, which can be modeled using a variety of sensors and other devices to cause vibrations, which in turn produces a feedback response.

The team has been working on a major technological project they call HapTech, a virtual system that aims to combine sensing and feedback to facilitate the relationship between a

person's movement and the virtual response of a gaming system in order to create a lifelike and accurate portrayal of physical activity on a television screen.

HapTech was originally created as a competitive entry to the Intel-Cornell Cup competition, an intercollegiate event hosted by Intel in Florida for robotics and embedded systems teams across the United States.

Head of Hardware for the HapTech team Jordan Brooks said, "our system is a virtual-and augmented-reality suite that aims to change how we interact with data, virtual environments, and even each other by allowing free motion unbound by the range of a camera and providing haptic, or touch feedback, to its users."

HapTech users wear a suit composed of gloves, elbow pads and a vest lined with tiny feedback actuators that allow a person's physical movement to be detected and thus projected

SEE HAPTECH PAGE 4



PHOTO COURTESY OF HAPTECH RESEARCH TEAM

A member of the HapTech team demonstrates the virtual reality suit.

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CHRISTIAN CIERI / ILLUSTRATOR

JUMP BACK, YIK YAK

Is the anonymous social media app overused on college campuses?

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YALE UNIVERSITY ON EUROPE

Kate Tepper '15, back from the European Student Conference at Yale, talks politics and law.

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FOOD, FILM AND CULTURE

The Department of Modern Languages & Cultures screens international films in a new series.

PAGE 12 A&E



BRIAN CAPUTO / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

PANEL DISCUSSES POLAND'S TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

A panel discussion on Feb. 16 commemorated the 25th anniversary of the transition to democracy in Poland as part of 1989: The End of the System, which also featured an exhibition in Rettner Hall.

THIS WEEK ON CAMPUS

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 19

RACHEL MADAN: CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

SCHLEGEL HALL EISENBERG ROTUNDA, 4:45 P.M. - 5:45 P.M.
Rachel Madan '99, sustainability officer at International Finance Corp., will discuss corporate responsibility as a career path. A reception will follow the talk.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES SPEAKER

MOREY HALL 321, 5:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Laura Mandell, director of the Initiative for Digital Humanities, Media and Culture at Texas A&M University, will give the talk, "Scaling Up: Search as Research." This talk is free and open to the public.

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 20

HIP-HOP DANCE CLASS

SPURRIER DANCE STUDIO, 3:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
An accomplished teacher and choreographer, Rodney Hill has taught in universities and dance studios locally, nationally and internationally. Admission is free.

A NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

WILSON COMMONS MAY ROOM, 8:00 P.M. - 10:15 P.M.
No Jackets Required will present "A Night at the Movies," featuring music from popular movies such as "The Graduate," "Footloose" and "Titanic." Admission is \$5 for the general public.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 21

BENEFIT DINNER: HOPE IN HEALTH

MEDICAL CENTER FLAUM ATRIUM, 6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
GlobeMed will host its 4th annual benefit dinner to advocate for healthy relationships for youth in the Rochester area and the communities of Iquitos, Peru. Tickets can be bought online.

ROYAL RAAT: A NIGHT OF ROYALTY

WILSON COMMONS MAY ROOM, 7:00 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.
ADITI presents the 5th Annual Formal Dinner, Royal Raat: A Night of Royalty! Tickets are available at the Common Market for \$12 and at the door for \$15. This event is open to UR students only.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 22

BLACK HISTORY MONTH FAMILY DAY

MEMORIAL ART GALLERY, NOON - 5:00 P.M.
All ages are invited to celebrate Black History Month with hands-on art activities, storytelling, guided tours, music and dance performances, family tours, international cultural displays and more. The suggested donation is \$5 per family.

CHORAL EXTRAVAGANZA

OFF CAMPUS, 5:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.
The event features a choral concert by UR's Men's Glee Club, Chamber Singers, Gospel Choir and Trebellicious at First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford, 21 Church Street. Contact UR's Department of Music at (585) 275-2828 for more information.

If you are sponsoring an event that you wish to submit for the calendar, please email news@campustimes.org with a brief summary, including: the date, time, location and cost of admission.

Campus Times

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WEATHER FORECAST

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FRIDAY



A.M. Snow Showers
High 8, Low -4
Chance of snow: 50%

SATURDAY



A.M. Snow Showers
High 33, Low 27
Chance of snow: 40%

SUNDAY



Snow Showers/Wind
High 36, Low 6
Chance of snow: 90%

PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

Student flies drone above Eastman Quad

BY ANGELA LAI
NEWS EDITOR

1. On Feb. 13 at 2:12 p.m., a Department of Public Safety (DPS) officer responded to the report of a person flying a drone in the Eastman Quadrangle area. The officer made contact with a student who was flying a drone on the quad. The student was advised that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has restricted the use of drones or other model-type aircraft. The FAA states they cannot be flown within five miles of any airport. The student did not realize he was within five miles of the airport. The student was cooperative and said he would not fly the drone in the area again.

Burning wires set off fire alarm in Strong

2. On Feb. 11 at 3:03 p.m., DPS officers responded to the fire alarm in Strong Auditorium. Upon arrival, officers encountered a strong burning odor coming from an electrical breaker box in the lower level auditorium area. There was no actual smoke or

fire coming from the box. The Rochester Fire Department (RFD) and University Facilities staff responded to the alarm. The cause for the alarm was burned wires in the box. The panel was taken out of service until it could be repaired. The RFD confirmed there were no other issues in the building. There were no injuries and the fire alarm was reset.

Taxi sideswipes bus

3. On Feb. 13 at 5:29 p.m., DPS officers responded to the report of a motor vehicle accident between a UR bus (operated by First Transit) and a car on Wilson Boulevard near Ford Street. Officers found that the bus had been sideswiped by a taxi trying to pass it. There was minor damage to the bus and the taxi lost its passenger side mirror. The bus had UR students and staff onboard at the time of the accident. There were no reported injuries and Rochester Police responded to take an accident report.

Lai is a member of the class of 2018. Information provided by UR Public Safety.

Want to make the headlines?

Join the *Campus Times*.

Contact news@campustimes.org for details.

Medieval Academy recognizes UR English professor



PHOTO COURTESY OF UR COMMUNICATIONS

Professor of English Russell Peck was awarded the 2015 Robert L. Kindrick-CARA Award for Outstanding Service to Medieval Studies.

BY ANGELA LAI
NEWS EDITOR

The Medieval Academy of America recently chose Russell Peck, John Hall Deane Professor of English, as the recipient of the 2015 Robert L. Kindrick-CARA Award for Outstanding Service to Medieval Studies. Peck will be sending Susanna Fein, who is the head of The Chaucer Review, to receive the award in his place at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana on March 13, as he will be in London teaching a theater course and unable to come himself.

Upon learning that he had received the award, Peck said that he “was very surprised” and that “it came out of the blue,” especially as he is “on the verge of retirement” after 54 years of teaching at UR.

Of his passion for the medieval, Peck explained, “It is a subject which interests me in terms of the literature itself,” which has “a lot of romance and adventure.”

“Studying medieval literature has enabled me to branch out and do about anything that I would

want to do in literary studies or historical studies,” he said. “And as a medievalist, it seems to me very important that you continue to be a modernist as well. It’s an area that the 20th and 21st century writers are perpetually going back to for allusions and entertainment.”

Peck has been instrumental in expanding the accessibility of medieval texts at UR and elsewhere.

In the 1980s, he met Rossell Hope Robbins, a book collector who was looking to give the collection to a university which would keep it all together and name it after him. Peck convinced him to bring it to UR, and Robbins’ donation in 1986 then became the Robbins Library of Medieval Studies in 1987.

Around 1988, the Consortium for the Teaching of the Middle Ages (TEAMS) was just getting organized. TEAMS’ founders knew of the Robbins Library and asked Peck if he would be the chairman of an editorial board.

“We needed a project to start with, so I wrote to 250 medieval

SEE **MEDIEVAL** PAGE 4

Study suggests toxic effects of e-cigarette flavor chemicals

BY AUREK RANSOM
COPY EDITOR

A URM research team led by professor of Environmental Medicine Dr. Irfan Rahman released a study on the health hazards of e-cigarette vapors that suggests that their inhalation can lead to lung damage.

The study, published on Feb. 6 in the scientific journal PLOS ONE, shows that e-vapors can cause damage to lung cells in humans and mice, especially by dripping the flavored liquids (known as e-juices) directly onto the heating element of the e-cigarette.

“URMC is the first to yield results on the specific area of e-vapors inducing toxicity, oxidative stress, and inflammation,” Dr. Rahman said in an interview conducted through URM Public Relations and Communications. “We were the first to discover that ‘dripping’ of e-juices onto the heating element generates free radicals and oxidative stress that leads to lung damage.”

According to the study, certain flavors of e-juices cause

more stress and subsequent damage on lung tissue than others. When asked if he believed that the study would prompt regulation within the e-cigarette industry, Dr. Rahman was unsure but added that “if regulation does occur it will probably focus initially on flavorings and e-juices such as candy and cinnamon.”

Continued reassurances of safety from manufacturers, widespread belief that e-cigarettes are benign (particularly when compared to regular cigarettes) and a lack of regulation around e-cigarettes has led many institutions to research the long-term health effects of these devices. Johns Hopkins University previously linked the toxic chemicals generated in e-vapors to immune system problems.

The impetus for UR to conduct research in this area stemmed from a question regarding the environmental impacts of e-cigarette disposal. The toxins and metals in e-cigarette vapors and waste are a safety concern, according to Dr. Rahman, prompting an earlier study into the effects of

pollution from the disposal of the devices.

Inspiration for the recent study also came from outside URM faculty. “Two summers ago an undergraduate student working with us discovered there was no product information, government regulations or guidelines on how to recycle or dispose of the e-cig components,” Dr. Rahman said. “This student’s astute observation raised a big concern about the potential environmental hazards and the lack of research into the topic.”

The e-vapor study began in 2012. According to Dr. Rahman, research will continue beyond this study “to further explore the hazardous health effects of e-cigarette vaping and secondhand exposures to children, teenagers and individuals who are susceptible to allergens and irritants.”

The study was funded by a grant awarded to RIT. Collaborators on the study include RIT’s Risa Robinson and URM’s Chad Lerner, Scott McIntosh, Deborah J. Ossip and Alison Elder.

Ransom is a member of the class of 2017.

New shape-shifting polymer could be used in medical, robotics fields

BY SAM PASSANISI
NEWS EDITOR

Researchers in UR’s Department of Chemical Engineering recently developed a new type of synthetic, shape-shifting material that exhibits many improvements over existing technology. Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering Mitchell Anthamatten worked with Chemical Engineering graduate student Yuan Meng and senior Jisu Jiang to design and synthesize the new polymer, a material consisting of long, intertwined chains of molecules.

When asked about possible applications of the new polymer, Anthamatten said in an email, “Shape-memory polymers have been considered for many roles in biomedical science [...] Artificial muscles must actuate in a two-way mode, and many technologies demand that materials are electrically wired for power or triggering. Our technology is based only on a thermal stimulus and would require no wiring.”

Anthamatten added that the material could also have applications in robotics, where the polymers could serve as

a soft interface between the robot and its surroundings.

“We’ve been studying shape-memory polymers for years now,” Anthamatten said. “More recently, we’ve been working with crystallizable shape memory polymers, whereby crystallization upon cooling is used to stabilize a temporary deformed shape.”

Generally speaking, shape-shifting materials are networks of polymers connected by linking chains of molecules. The shape-shifting properties can be induced by a change in temperature or by the

SEE **POLYMER** PAGE 4

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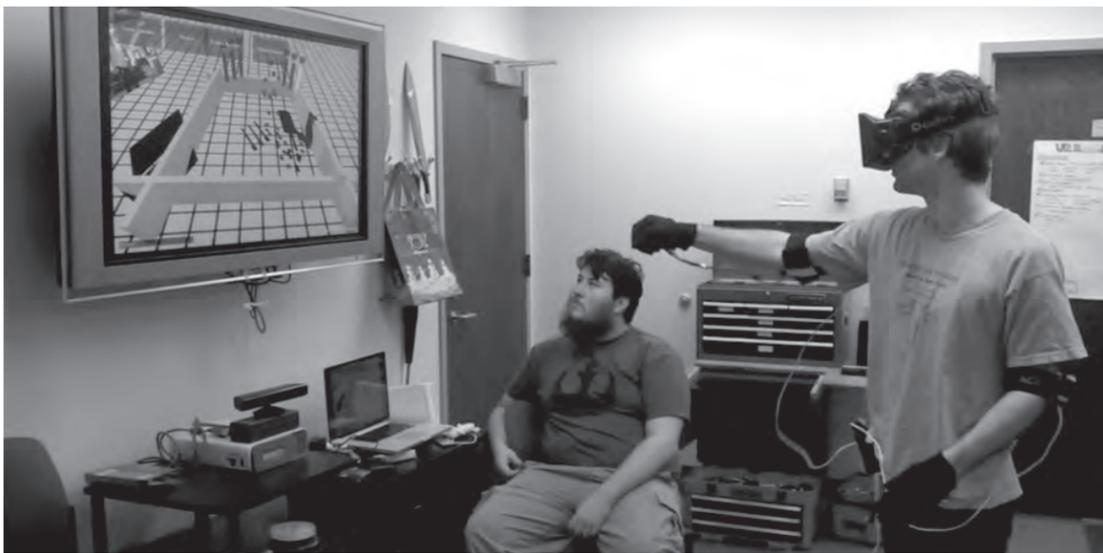


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Undergraduate virtual reality project presented at Intel-Cornell Competition



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HAPTECH RESEARCH TEAM

Top: The members of the Computer Science HapTech Research Team pose for a group picture in Goergen Hall.
Above: Senior Lucian Copeland interacts with a virtual reality environment.

HAPTECH FROM PAGE 1

into a virtual world. Unlike other gaming systems that combine the physical and virtual worlds, HapTech may be sold at a relatively cheap price. It also combines sensing and feedback processes.

HapTech began through UR Robotics club, and has since evolved since to become perhaps one of the most prestigious and advanced technological endeavors UR students have ever taken on. The team, advised by professor of Computer Science Randal Nelson, and led by Sinko, is currently in the process of

constructing and polishing their current model, as well as looking for a media supervisor to manage their digital presence.

The project, initially a pair of gloves and a basic motion sensor television set, has expanded to include full upper body coverage, providing kinetic feedback to the chest and arms, as well as high-resolution service to the hands.

For the future, the HapTech team “envisions a dramatic expansion of their product line to capitalize on the current lack of competition in the virtual reality market. To hit as many potential

markets as possible, this lineup will include a stripped-down version for computer users such as digital sculptors and CAD designers, an exo-skeleton model for gamers that will include impact simulation through weight shifts, and a low-impact athletic model for fitness users.”

Sinko said, “The team is very hopeful for the future of virtual reality, and looks forward to establishing HapTech’s place in this exciting and innovative marketplace.”

Kaplan is a member of the class of 2018.

Peck wins award for work with medieval texts at UR, elsewhere

MEDIEVAL FROM PAGE 3

literary scholars around the world, asking if they thought the creation of a series would be of interest to them,” he recalled.

Peck said he remembers that at the time, the selection of texts with which one could teach medieval literature was severely limited. The idea for the Middle English Text Series (METS), a non-profit organization, was to make individual and inexpensive texts with the original Middle English text, glosses, detailed notes and more so that it would be possible for a person—an undergraduate, for example—to study and read a text with considerable ease.

After the first five years, METS published six volumes. Then, after getting support from the National

Endowment for the Humanities, METS began publishing five volumes each year.

“They have been very generous,” Peck said. “It’s been sustained by the U.S. government, the National Endowment, for over 20 years now. We have our proposal out for one further extension that would run until 2018.”

At present, METS has published 78 volumes in print and electronically and currently has four more at the printers.

“It’s completely revolutionized the teaching of medieval literature,” Peck said. “You may have a particular slant, you may be in women’s studies or feminist literature or in the sciences in some form of critical theory, and you could put together a syllabus

with texts for all of those things which you never would have been able to do otherwise,” Peck said.

Peck’s office personally oversees the editing process for each text. In receiving the award, therefore, he said he feels happy not just for himself but for the “dozens and dozens of people” involved in making METS possible, including “very involved graduate students.”

Additionally, if there were a single book in the METS that he would recommend to everyone, he suggests “Robin Hood and Other Outlaw Tales,” edited by Stephen Knight and Thomas Ohlgren.

Lai is a member of the class of 2018.

Polymer changes shape with heating, cooling

POLYMER FROM PAGE 3

application of stresses to the material, depending on how the polymer was designed. Most shape-memory polymers need to be “programmed” in order to work. During programming, the material is contorted into a temporary shape and then cooled to a low temperature in order to maintain that shape. When the polymer is heated, it reverts to its original shape. In the past, this has limited the application of shape-shifting materials.

Anthamatten’s polymer, on

‘Due to its unique construction, the polymer can switch between two different shapes solely by heating or cooling.’

the other hand, is a “two-way shape memory polymer.” Due to its unique construction, the polymer can switch between two different shapes solely by heating or cooling, without needing manually contortion or programming.

The unique behavior of Anthamatten’s polymer is due to the way it was made: during the synthesis of the material, the researchers added crosslinks to the material to form what Anthamatten described as a “soft, rubber-like network.” They then stretched this network and added more cross-linking chains. This technique creates internal stresses in the polymer, which can then be manipulated with temperature changes to make the polymer

change shape.

Anthamatten described the shape-shifting mechanism, saying it involves the formation of crystalline patterns within the material. “The forces involved in forming crystalline domains are large enough to significantly stretch the material by over 15 percent,” Anthamatten said. He explained that when the material is cooled below about 50°C, it forms crystalline structures known as lamellae. “By biasing the chain configuration, we have established the direction that the lamellae will stack into.”

In the laboratory, the researchers worked with square films of the polymer, about three inches on a side and between 100 and 300 micrometers thick. Anthamatten noted that the crystallization occurs on a very small scale, with the polymer chains packing together in nanometer-scale structures. “I would guess the behavior could be shown for length scales as small as a micron, but we’ve never tried anything that small,” Anthamatten said.

Anthamatten, Meng and Jiang published their research in the journal ACS Macro Letters, and plan to attend the March meeting of the American Physical Society. There, Anthamatten said, they will “share the results to the polymer physics community. Furthermore, we have submitted a grant application to the National Science Foundation to further study this phenomenon.”

Passanisi is a member of the class of 2017.



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OPINIONS

EDITORIAL CARTOON



It almost feels like summer!

CHRISTIAN CIERI / ILLUSTRATOR

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

Yak in moderation



BY ANGELA LAI
NEWS EDITOR

Yik Yak, a popular, anonymous social media application that lets users post and vote on “yaks” within a ten mile radius, allows people to share and detach themselves from their thoughts. Since downloading it last semester, I sometimes feel a faint sense of shame when I open it, whether it’s while I’m waiting in line for food at Danforth or sitting with a group of people enjoying each others’ company in dead silence and tapping away at their phones. It’s an easy and thoughtless way to pass the time.

While it makes the University community more accessible, and it’s usually filled with jokes, the “yakarma” system means popular yaks are regularly recycled, and the app’s anonymity encourages its users to harass others or air offensive thoughts without fear of backlash. This effect is so pervasive that Rochester area school districts have expressed concerns over Yik Yak’s popularity among their students.

For instance, Timothy McArdle, principal of Le Roy Junior-Senior High School, told the Democrat & Chronicle about the anti-bullying awareness campaign he recently waged against Yik Yak in response to reports from students being bullied through the app. Yik Yak’s rules tell its users to “not bully or specifically target other yakkers,” but this is hard to regulate—McArdle and other

principals in Monroe County asked students to pledge that they would delete the app entirely.

It’s true that college students are (hopefully) more mature and less inclined to misuse the app, but Yik Yak’s effects at high schools highlight how a platform where users don’t worry about the repercussions of their posts perpetuates “the online disinhibition effect.” Dr. John Suler’s study by the same name describes this in its abstract: “While online, some people self-disclose or act out more frequently or intensely than they would in person.”

Rather than giving users a chance to reveal their “true selves,” the study writes that this disinhibition creates a different environment for users to interact in and that neither in-person nor online interactions reveal more of our “true” identities. Judging by some of the yaks on our area’s feed, Yik Yak creates an environment where people are more open about sexuality, drug use, bodily functions, grievances against student groups and the occasional racist or sexist thought. This crudeness can get old quickly.

On the plus side, however, Yik Yak provides a free forum that’s accessible to most UR students. Where else is it so easy and perhaps even therapeutic to complain about the weather, our workloads, professors and other students, or to share witty comments the minute they come to us? Even some officers in the Department of Public Safety like to check Yik Yak.

So, while Yik Yak’s anonymity can foster a cruder and sometimes demoralizing environment, it also creates an odd sort of community. I say: enjoy in moderation.

Lai is a member of the class of 2018.

EDITORIAL BOARD

When it comes to SA, every minute counts

In trying to achieve a greater good, people often overlook the bigger picture and neglect to address crucial issues. Governments often fall into this category, and, in the case of its minutes, SA is no exception. With this in mind, we would like to sincerely remind Senate of its obligation to be transparent to the student body.

Transparency is a key ingredient in any effective democracy. In order to have a government truly for the people and by the people, constituents need to know what goes on within the halls of their legislatures and behind the doors of their councils.

Individuals have the right to know how their elected representatives feel about certain issues and, critically, how they vote on them. How else would one know if his or her interests were actually being represented?

The first answer that comes to mind is simple: individuals should attend meetings of their government. Luckily, Senate has lived up to this basic tenant of transparency; usually, the body meets on Monday nights in Wilson Commons’ Gowen Room. But, this is not the most convenient option for many students, yet alone the most practical.

Senate makes its meeting

minutes available online for public viewing. This policy is excellent in every way—except for the fact that the most recent minutes uploaded to the Senate website were from its Nov. 4, 2013 meeting. When you do the math, that adds up to a gap of over 15 months without publically available and accessible minutes—something that is unacceptable.

We acknowledge that the problem of Senate minutes not being systematically uploaded is a very specific one, and we don’t want to blame one particular individual. But, it is inexcusable for an organization in Senate’s position to disregard its duty to the people who give it power in the first place. In doing so, Senate is hurting not only the student body, but also itself. Minutes effectively represent all members of Senate, and therefore all Senate members have a stake in wanting to see their publication.

It’s worth noting that Senate’s Communications & Public Relations Committee is working on mitigating the problem—their plan to revamp the website would include the archiving and uploading of minutes. The project is expected to be completed by the end of the month. Though this is certainly a step

forward in making the process of accessing this important information more streamlined, it should not excuse the fact that minutes will not be accessible for students and the UR community for another few weeks on top of the past 15 months. All members of Senate are accountable to their constituents—the student body. It goes without saying that students should know what happens at Senate meetings. Minutes are the easiest way for students to get this information; accordingly, they should be easy to find, not shrouded behind cloaks of bureaucracy or hidden within mazes of links. We appreciate that Senate’s Communications & Public Relations Committee is working to make it easier to view the archive. But, in our opinion, the real issue here is even more basic than the issue of organization itself—the minutes are simply unavailable.

It’s also important to recognize the responsibility of the student body in this situation. Students need to take an active role in their government and should be diligent about both reading minutes and keeping their representatives in check. If that was the case, perhaps this issue would have been picked up immediately, rather than months later.

Driving for safety

Since last Thursday, two separate accidents have occurred involving UR shuttle buses—one this past Friday and one this past Monday. Though the accidents themselves were unfortunate, what was more troubling was the fact that, during this week’s Senate meeting, Director of Parking and Transportation Services Hugh Kierig admitted that he had little knowledge of whether and how the Monday night accident had happened.

While it’s worth noting that he said that this instance was exceptional, the lack of communication between all parties involved is problematic. With the bus stalled, many students were left waiting for shuttles that never came, and students were left in the cold as they waited for shuttles to be redirected to their locations. Admirably, Director Kierig acknowledged these mishaps in handling the issue, saying that Parking and Transportation Services would look to avoid future incidents of this nature

and similar breakdowns in communication.

The *Campus Times* urges Parking and Transportation Services to move forward with these improvements and offers up a few ideas to include in any upgrade plans.

Some of the suggestions were aired at this week’s Senate meeting, but we would like to reiterate their importance.

First, we think it would be useful for Parking and Transportation Services to collaborate more closely with SA in order to better provide the student body with options for input and suggestions. There should be a clear outlet for students to give feedback regarding their transportation needs, and students should be informed about how they can voice their thoughts and things they feel parking should be concerned about or checking.

An easy way this could be done would be through the inclusion of a submission form or link on SA’s laudable new Student Essentials website. At this past week’s Senate meeting, numerous Senators

expressed interest in working with Parking and Transportation Services, an action we applaud. We urge them to work more closely in the future.

Second, an opt-in alert system to let students know of accidents, incidents or delays would go a long way in soothing student discontent and letting students know about incidents that affect them.

Third, as was expressed during this week’s SA meeting, it is also the responsibility of drivers to ensure that students are promptly and safely transported to their destinations. Time spent on a slow or delayed shuttle can prove detrimental to a student’s schedule, particularly if they end up late to a job, class, quiz or test.

We commend UR’s drivers for their dedication to helping our community thrive, but we urge them to strive for greater heights.

In conjunction with existing solutions that Parking and Transportation Services have in stock, these suggestions could help make our shuttle system both safer and more effective.

The above editorial is published with the consent of a majority of the editorial board: Aaron Schaffer (Editor-in-Chief), Adam Kadir (Managing Editor), Justin Trombly (Opinions Editor) and Jeff Howard (A&E Editor). The Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board make themselves available to the UR community’s ideas and concerns. Email editor@campustimes.org.

War-weary America doesn't deserve another fight

President Obama is asking Congress to approve a new plan to fight the Islamic State

BY C.J. VAN HUBEN

This past Wednesday, President Obama sent a draft joint resolution to Congress. For the first time in almost 13 years, Congress will have the ability to approve an Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF). This AUMF will allow President Obama to continue his campaign against the Islamic State (IS), also known as ISIL and ISIS, in Iraq, Syria and other countries in the region.

American forces have been engaging IS targets in Iraq using airstrikes since August. In September, the deployment of airstrikes broadened into Syria. President Obama has been relying on the AUMF resolutions that Former President Bush passed in 2001 and 2002.

There has been some concern about President Obama overstepping his constitutional boundaries with his actions against IS. President Obama maintains that he has done nothing illegal, and that this new resolution is to show “the world that we are united in our resolve to counter” the IS

threat.

The new AUMF is much more limited in scope than the ones from 2001 and 2002. It sets a three-year time limit for military operations against IS before the president would need a congressionally approved extension. In contrast, the 2002 resolution had no time restriction, and it also authorized the president to “use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001.” The resolution also promises that the United States will not be dragged into another ground war in the Middle East. US troops will be limited to rescue operations, special ops missions to take out IS leaders and the training of allied troops.

Certainly, this AUMF does seem to do a better job of limiting the *carte blanche* antics that plagued Bush's war on terrorism. While America is wary of sending more soldiers to die in the Middle East, it is widely

accepted that something needs to be done to combat IS and help those under its reign of terror. The Iraqi death toll

But, while there needs to be a sense of urgency in moving forward, it is important to not let our emotions get the best of us.

from war related violence in 2014 is estimated between 21,000 and 47,000 persons. IS is guilty of carrying out the systematic murder of civilians from nearly every religion and background. Many fear that with Western citizens joining IS forces, its campaign can spread out of the Middle East and into Europe and America. But, while there needs to be a sense of urgency in moving forward, it is important to not let our emotions get the best of us. It is easy to forget some of the actions of the United States that were committed in

the name of “freedom.”

Part of President Obama's plan includes the further equipping of “moderate” Syrian rebels to fight IS. Though it seems like the best alternative to having American boots on the ground, let us not forget how we provided arms to Mujahideen freedom fighters in their fight against the Soviets, and how we directly aided Osama bin Laden. By providing arms to these Syrian rebels, we are only making it less costly for continued aggression in the region, possibly keeping it as unstable as it already is. There is also the issue of continuing the training of Iraqi troops to help combat IS.

The reliance on local troops has been one of the key factors in the lengthening of the War on Terror. Iraqi troops do not have the skill, discipline or resources to match the strength of American armed forces. The fight against IS could begin to have striking similarities with the Vietnam War. All it would take would be a future president to request further ground support to “hasten” the defeat of the enemy.

Sadly, this is a narrative that America has heard many times since the end of World War II. However, President Obama's plan still needs to get approval from Congress. Democrats are worried about the vagueness of the AUMF, fearing another post-9/11 Patriot Act nightmare. Surprisingly, in a twisted act of irony, many Republicans do not think that President Obama is giving himself enough power: the restrictions that President Obama is trying to place on himself to prevent the mistakes of his predecessor may lead to a less desired outcome than if he were to let loose America's military might.

America has its hands tied, facing a barbaric group whose total destruction is necessary and needs to come quickly. Yet after a decade-long military campaign, which has allowed for the dismantling of many of the personal freedoms that we used to take for granted, another war in the Middle East just does not sound appealing regardless of the consequences of inaction.

Van Huben is a member of the class of 2018.

United States should stand its ground on GMOs

BY ZACHARY TAYLOR

Arguably, the most underreported story in the media these days is the ongoing negotiations over the proposed United States-European Union Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). This massive free trade deal would increase U.S. and EU gross domestic product (GDP) by about 0.4% and 0.5% a year—a \$100 billion annual windfall for the United States, compounded. Politically, the deal is interesting because the primary trade barriers between the U.S. and EU are not tariffs but redundant regulations. Companies that wish to participate in both markets have to wrangle with two regulatory systems, which could be streamlined (much as the EU has done between European countries).

Although trade policy puts people to sleep, the issue of biotechnology regulation has struck an emotional chord, especially among the European far left. Publics on neither side of the Atlantic have a particularly rational relationship with genetically modified food. For example, one recent poll showed 82% of Americans support mandatory labeling of genetically modified food, but 80% of Americans also support mandatory labeling of food containing DNA—i.e., all plants, animals, bacteria and fungi!

Americans and Europeans often fear that genetic

modification can lead to unintended health and environmental consequences. However, millennia-old conventional breeding techniques change many more genes than transgenic technology, in an inherently less predictable way. It is widely believed that genetically modified organisms (GMOs) are untested, but there have been thousands of independent studies on the safety of genetically modified foods. Moreover, every country that permits genetically modified foods approves them on a case-by-case basis with more hurdles than newly bred conventional foods. There are also environmental concerns and concerns about the alleged unethical behavior of biotech corporations. I lack the space to address them here, but most of these (especially the “Monsanto randomly sues farmers for trace contamination” myth)

Moreover, anti-GM hysteria has spread from the developed world to the developing world, in an ironic and tragic form of left-wing neo-imperialism.

fall apart under scrutiny. The legitimate environmental worries about GM crops concern their relationship to

pesticide and herbicide use. But that is a reason to regulate chemical inputs, not GMOs, which can also reduce pesticide and herbicide use in many contexts.

Many commentators believe that the U.S. will cede ground on the mandatory labeling of GMOs, since few consumers vocally defend GMOs. This would be a mistake. Many people, even those who are not afraid of biotechnology, mistakenly believe that mandatory labeling has a minimal impact. However, studies have shown that labeling can significantly increase the price of food, because labeling requires the separating of GM and non-GM ingredients at every stage in a supply chain. Moreover, it adds nutritionally-irrelevant information to food labels, misleading consumers into believing that there is a scientific basis for fear of GM crops. There is precedent for this sort of problem: when the FDA removed thimerosal from vaccines in response to scientifically baseless public fears that the additive caused autism, the move backfired and increased the public's irrational fear of vaccines—despite the FDA's assurances that this was a purely precautionary measure.

Europe itself is the best evidence that mandatory labeling of GMOs is crippling. The entire continent grows about 0.2% of the GM crops the United States does. This can be primarily attributed to the European Union's decision to enforce mandatory labeling,

a political decision that the EU's scientific bodies now

Until genetically modified foods gain greater acceptance in the countries where they were first developed, it will be impossible to stop the export of lethal ignorance.

oppose. (One could argue that European consumers have different preferences, but for reasons I lack the space to elaborate on, this hypothesis is unlikely.)

If you've borne with me so far, you might be wondering what the big deal is if TTIP impedes the growth of GM technology. Surely the impacts of biotech science denial pale in comparison to anti-vaccination and climate change denial, right? Wrong. Conservatively, GM technology increases global farmer productivity by about \$20 billion a year, driving down food prices. Moreover, anti-GM hysteria has spread from the developed world to the developing world, in an ironic and tragic form of left-wing neo-imperialism. Out of 54 African U.N. members, only four countries have approved GM crops. Beginning with

Zambia in 2002, numerous countries have refused food aid containing GM crops during lethal famines, driven by pressure from environmental groups based in the developing world.

Over half a million children die each year from Vitamin A deficiency, and even more go blind. The deficiency is common where rice is the staple crop. Monsanto, Syngenta, smaller companies and several charities, including the Gates Foundation, have funded versions of a crop called golden rice, which contains the precursor to Vitamin A. All of these companies offered to waive license fees so that farmers can grow it for free.

The crop was first developed in 2000, then substantially improved in 2005 and could have saved thousands of lives by now. (A bowl of Golden Rice 2 provides 60% the daily recommended value of Vitamin A.) Its introduction has been delayed by Western activists who have fought its approval and even destroyed test crops.

Until genetically modified foods gain a greater acceptance in the countries where they were first developed, it will be impossible to stop the export of lethal ignorance. It is important that socially conscious and scientifically aware citizens speak up for GMOs, just as they have for vaccines and climate change mitigation.

Taylor is a member of the class of 2015.

FEATURES

Engineers Without Borders travel to Don Juan for first assessment trip

BY RACHEL KAPLAN
SENIOR STAFF

Engineers Without Borders is a worldwide collection of 14,700 students representing 39 countries who use their knowledge of science and mathematics to improve the lives of millions of people around the world.

As a top-tier engineering school, the University of Rochester has its own chapter within Engineers Without Borders.

The UR team is comprised of 35 members who hail from many different disciplines, ranging from engineering to psychology, to violin performance to film.

junior Christian Freitas, former President and current Vice President.

The program aims to build a relationship between what students learn in lectures and how to apply those skills to improve communities around the world that perhaps do not have the capabilities or resources to do so.

Beyond engineering, the program teaches students to manage their budget, deposit checks and decide on the appropriate allocation of materials and plan for fundraising.

Through money management and engineering planning, students are taught to work as a

conquered perhaps one of their biggest endeavors just two weeks ago, when they went on their first ever assessment trip—a trip

crisis of water sanitation.

The school is a public institution of over 400 students, ranging from pre-K to 8th grade.

and Friends of the School), as well as the Santo Domingo Rotario Bella Vista Club (an international Rotary community



PHOTO COURTESY OF UR ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS

A UR Engineers Without Borders member works.

They meet weekly on Tuesdays at 8:00 p.m. to “try to tackle the next steps for the program and for our member development, including planning workshops and events, documenting and planning the current step of the project and securing funds for our endeavors,” according to

cohesive unit in order to design and build sustainable systems.

Since 2009, UR’s Engineers Without Borders team has been working relentlessly on multiple projects to improve the lives of 2.5 million people around the world.

Engineers Without Borders



UR's group poses with others working on the project.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UR ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS

that allows members of a specific Engineers Without Borders chapter to assess the economic, social and environmental risk factors in a community. Using these factors, they decide what type of sustainable design to implement in order to solve these problems.

These programs must be approved by the national Engineers Without Borders board, and entail a five-year commitment to a specific community.

From Jan 3–12, the Rochester chapter ventured to Escuela Taller Santa Maria Josefa Rossello, a school in the town of Don Juan, located in the Monte Plata Province of the Dominican Republic, in order to solve a

Rochester’s Engineers Without Borders stepped into the community after learning about the school’s inability to distribute clean water to its students, which stemmed from a deficiency of electrical durability and water maintenance technologies.

The students spent ten days testing the water’s sanitation and chemical properties, bacteria content and contamination levels and then went to local plumbing stores to seek out resources that they could use to develop sanitation systems.

The team also met with local organizations, including Asociación de Padres, Madres y Amigos de la Escuela (the Association of Fathers, Mothers

service organization).

Engineers Without Borders finally signed the official program contract with Asociación de Padres, Madres y Amigos de la Escuela and two non-government sponsored organizations, Father Ron Faesser Projects and Daughters of Our Lady Mercy.

“We are helping communities achieve the level of life they want by the means they see fit,” said Grace Caza, one of two project chairs for the Don Juan trip. “It’s a learning process, and just being part of that process has motivated my desire to study engineering and pursue a career in community driven development programs.”

In addition to meetings with SEE **ENGINEERS** PAGE 8

Guest athletes play during halftime at women’s basketball game

BY MICHAEL GULSTON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This past Spirit Week, UR came out on top with electrifying victories against NYU from both the Men and Women’s Basketball teams.

Their victories were inspired by their supporters, covered in face paint and spirit merchandise.

During halftime of the Women’s game, free t-shirts were flung into the crowd while a group of girls came onto the court to play.

These girls are members of a fourth grade team from Penfield Youth Basketball.

This youth league based in Penfield, a suburb of Rochester, aims to develop the skills of youth in the local town by conducting clinics, training sessions and competitive league games. The teams consist of girls ranging from third grade

to fifth grade.

UR Women’s Basketball Head Coach Jim Scheible was excited to have these girls working with the University team.

“Our team did a clinic at the Eastside YMCA on Jan. 4 and they were in attendance,” Scheible said. “They wanted to come see the team play after we conducted the clinic. Several of them also come to the [UR] camp in the summer.”

What does their appearance mean to the UR campus community? For one, they brought their spirit and passion for the game of basketball to our campus for a short period of time.

Small gestures like this can create an ongoing network with the Penfield community and the University of Rochester Athletic Department, according to Scheible.

Coach Scheible commented,



NATHANIEL POTREPKA/ ILLUSTRATOR

“We are excited to have local kids at games as they bring a lot of energy and support. In addition, it is fun for our players to get out into the community to promote UR and our team. These are some pretty good players for their age and you never know if they might want to play at UR someday.”

All told, who would’ve imagined that a fifteen-minute appearance could have such an impact on our campus spirit?

Moving forward, the UR Women’s basketball team hopes to continue to make an impact on the Rochester community by supporting youth programs to help develop young girls into athletes and to foster a community that encourages them to stay physically active.

Gulston is a member of the class of 2016.

UR Tech: The power of squee

BY LUCIAN COPELAND
STAFF WRITER

Google's smart car looks a bit like a marshmallow. It's round, puffy and aggressively unaerodynamic. The lights in the front and back look like slightly crossed eyes, giving the whole car an air of comic buffoonery, despite the deeply complex hardware and algorithms that dictate its motion and steering.

But despite being perhaps a bit embarrassing to climb into, the poofy-cute look might be one of the best tools for keeping you safe on the road—a look specifically designed to charm and pacify other drivers as they navigate around the slow speeds and sluggish reaction times of the smartcar.

As it turns out, the more adorable the vehicle, the less it gets in accidents with other drivers.

This leveraging of our penchant for the cute and lifelike within everyday technology is hardly new.

Humans anthropomorphize practically everything they can project a face onto—even images as simple as an electrical socket have been proven to elicit positive reactions from viewers.

But use of the power of squee in robotics is relatively new,

and has serious implications for how the future of human-computer interaction can play out.

On the one hand, it makes the use of pervasive robotics much easier to pitch to the

designing a human-driven system can overcome some significant psychological hurdles. Simple additions such as rounded physical shapes, pervasive use of faces, voice responses and spontaneous

driving car, users were more likely to rate their experience positively when the experience was narrated by a robotic voice rather than when they were driven silently, even though both groups experienced the same virtual accident.

Relating with the user can help too. IT researchers have discovered that if a piece of software self-deprecates on occasion, or takes the user's side, it can assist in offsetting user anger at software bugs or technical failures.

When Clippy the Microsoft Office Assistant is programmed to politely remind you to submit an error report, users can't stand him; but when researchers programmed the same icon to chew his own company out a bit ("Let's tell Microsoft how bad their help system is!"), user reactions soared.

Spontaneity is surprisingly critical to these interactions—it's only when we feel we can't fully expect what a robot or program is going to do next that our brains start to respond as if it is a real person. But making robots seem human can come with risks as well.

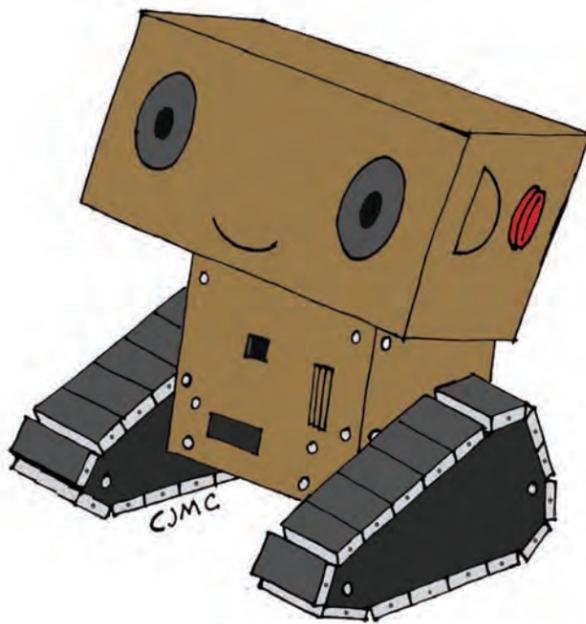
Giving a machine too wide a breadth of social options can end up being frustrating, as users can begin to expect more humanity than it's

capable of, and become frustrated by its inevitable limitations. Over-empathizing with an unthinking system can cause real problems with replacements and repairs as well, since users often end up keeping anthropomorphized technology long after it becomes broken or obsolete out of sentiment alone.

Like it or not, we can build real bonds with our lifelike little robots, and the idea of tossing one for a new model could be heartbreaking for some users—not exactly the attitude a company wants when trying to launch their new product line. It's a philosophy that requires restraint, leveraging just enough affection that you can reap the positive benefits, but leaving enough emotional breathing room for the user to feel comfortable tossing an old system.

So, while the dawn of cute robots might not sound all that threatening or unpleasant, at least try to at least understand what you're getting into. A system's babylike features and chirping voice might be good for improving your mood, but keep your sympathy in check—no matter how cute and cuddly, it's still just lights and clockwork underneath.

Copeland is a member of the class of 2015.



CHRISTIAN CIERI/ILLUSTRATOR

consumer public. Nobody wants a Terminator vacuuming their house after they've left for work, but a puppy-sized Roomba making happy chirping noises and clumsily bumping around is a much easier sell.

And when considered for more advanced applications, using the power of cute when

actions are all ways to make a machine seem lifelike, and in doing so, change our expectations and behaviors while using it.

Anthropomorphized robots are easier to trust, harder to get frustrated at and more inclined to be regarded well in hindsight. When put through a simulation of crashing in a self-

EWB travels to Don Juan

ENGINEERS FROM PAGE 7

official organizations, Engineers Without Borders further interviewed and administered surveys to faculty and students of the school.

While in the Dominican

Gaesser and the Marcellus Rotary Club Representative Jim Gascon to discuss future fundraising plans, program design and budgeting.

Junior Emily Kwan, a member since her freshman year, former Secretary, Vice President, Publicity



PHOTO COURTESY OF UR ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS

A UR Engineers Without Borders member plays with kids from school.

Republic, the Engineers Without Borders students were housed and fed by families of the Las Casitas neighborhood.

The trip, however, did not come easy. The students worked relentlessly to develop design plans, submit project proposal forms regarding their plans to improve water sanitation facilities in Don Juan and to fundraise enough money to execute the trip.

One year and \$7,000 later, the students traveled to Don Juan for a life-changing ten days.

However, Engineers Without Borders isn't stopping here.

Last week, the students met with their community advocate P. Ron

Coordinator and current President, discuss her hopes for the future of Engineers Without Borders.

"Having seen many facets of this organization, one of the visions I have as President is to instill the belief that all the work we do is important to UR Engineers Without Borders," Kwan commented.

"Whether a member is designing a flyer for an upcoming event, researching possible grants or filling out official program documents, that member should feel ownership and pride in what we are doing as a whole organization."

Kaplan is a member of the class of 2018.

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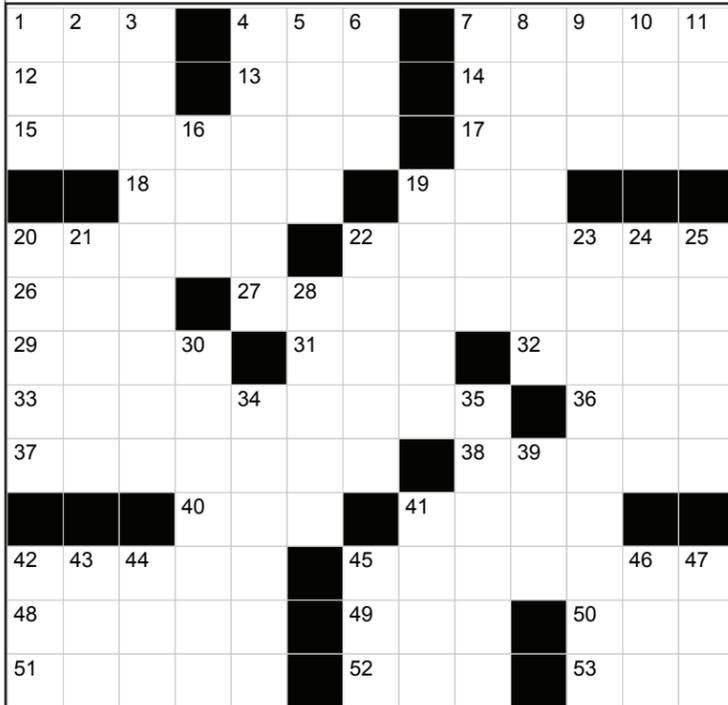
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Crossword

BY JOSEPH LINDEN '17
DIFFICULTY HARD



- Across**
- 1 Lehigh Valley International Airport
 - 4 President with Jan. 30th birthday
 - 7 Doohickey
 - 12 Thrash
 - 13 River in Southern England
 - 14 Islamic head of state
 - 15 Univalent radicals
 - 17 President with Aug. 4th birthday
 - 18 Organization that fights against body prejudices
 - 19 Shivering sound
 - 20 More mocking
 - 22 Flowers
 - 26 ___ a great guy
 - 27 Digging
 - 29 Lowest part of the small intestine
 - 31 President with Feb. 12th birthday
 - 32 Bomb or Microwave
 - 33 Approximate date range
 - 36 Category including gold and silver
 - 37 Game of cards pl.
 - 38 North African Governors
 - 40 Choices
 - 41 Possessed by that woman
 - 42 With 20 down, President's abode
 - 45 Mystery about Jesus and his deeds on earth
 - 48 Flemish tapestry
 - 49 Italian Airforce
 - 50 Australian big bird
 - 51 Death and taxes are the ___ all men pay
 - 52 Green gas station's stock abbreviation
 - 53 Remove dirt

- Down**
- 1 Non-profit organization that promotes libraries
 - 2 You need to drive under a certain ___
 - 3 Lung disease
 - 4 Planes and Helicopters
 - 5 Gradients
 - 6 Medieval Bulgarian city
 - 7 President with Feb. 22 birthday
 - 8 What a UPS employee might say
 - 9 Ocean
 - 10 Thirteenth letter of a Semitic abjad
 - 11 Rita Sahatçiu ___
 - 16 Genetic disorder characterized by spontaneous swelling
 - 19 European dean
 - 20 See 42 across
 - 21 Artifact
 - 22 Dads
 - 23 Fed
 - 24 Annoyed
 - 25 Tropical fruit tree
 - 28 Walks back and forth
 - 30 Internet on airplanes innovator
 - 34 "I need to de-___ after that test"
 - 35 Establishment of a plant in a new habitat
 - 39 Part of circle
 - 41 Scottish home
 - 42 Used to own
 - 43 Stuff that is mined
 - 44 City area, slang
 - 45 Barkley Regional Airport
 - 46 Friend in Madrid
 - 47 Tow

LAST WEEK'S ANSWER:



Jodi Says: Blown away with pleasure

BY JODI ARMSTRONG
STAFF WRITER

The first step to giving a good blowjob is to desire to please your penis-possessing partner.

I can't emphasize this idea enough. There are plenty of mistaken reasons to give head.

For many, oral sex seems like the natural precursor to vaginal sex.

Oral sex uses an orifice of your body that wasn't built for putting dicks in, making it all the more intimate. More importantly, and unlike many other sexual acts, it's one directional. In order to enjoy it, you have to enjoy giving pleasure.

Do it to delight your partner, not because they expect you to or you expect yourself to, but because you want to give him a special treat. Wanting it is the first step.

Deciding you want to give someone head, however important, doesn't really come with a sudden understanding of how to approach a penis with your mouth.

When going down on someone, it's helpful to think of their genitals as a toy.

Not a toy to be used, thrown in a trunk and soon forgotten, but a cherished new toy – that you happen to only be allowed to play with using your mouth.

Now let's move on to some more tangible advice. First: start slow.

You don't have to immediately

plop it in your mouth like a lollipop. Take it one step at a time.

The idea of simply stuffing your mouth with cock is of course intimidating, so don't treat it that way. Build up to it by kissing it all around, first at the base, then up the shaft then the head.

In time, you'll put it in your mouth. From here, there are a few things to keep in mind.

"Sex & the CT"

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People call it a "blow job," but don't actually blow it. People also call it "sucking dick," but you don't really want to do that either.

A little suction will help to keep some control, and that's totally fine, but the action should be more like holding it in your mouth than pulling it.

One more big "don't": no biting!

Hopefully, you could have figured that you shouldn't just chomp down on it (Cue universal cringe from the penis-possessing population).

But, more than just that, you should be aware of your teeth and actively protecting your penis-friend from their wrath.

If you aren't used to this yet, it can be helpful to wrap your lips

over your teeth.

Be warned though: keeping your lips like that will tire out your jaw pretty quick.

From there, it's about two things: using your neck to bob your head, and using your lips and tongue to do some more subtle massaging.

It's easy to forget about your tongue, but it's a powerful and flexible tool, so use it. Remember that you can use your hands to assist you too.

Even just holding any part you can't reach with your mouth can be nice. If you're new to this, you probably shouldn't let him do any thrusting. It can throw off your rhythm, and it could make you gag if you're not ready for it.

You can largely avoid gagging by only taking a comfortable length into your mouth.

Rhythm will help too, especially if you align your breathing with your actions.

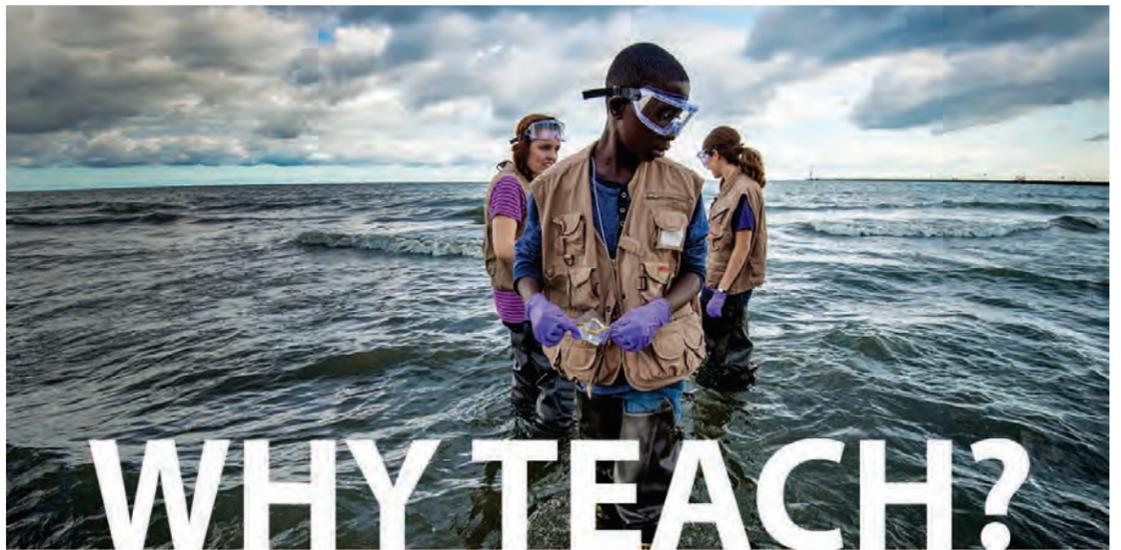
If you still struggle, try protecting your throat by keeping the back of your tongue pressed up against the roof of your mouth.

It'll limit your range of motion, but it's better than booting!

One last thing: practice makes perfect!

If you have any questions for me or have an idea for an article, you can message me anonymously at sex-theft.tumblr.com/ask.

Armstrong is a member of the class of 2016.



THE CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES OF CAREERS IN TEACHING

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**IF YOU THINK YOU'RE SMART,
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Student attends first European Student Conference



Left: The Transatlantic Relations workshop at the ESC (Tepper is third from right). Right: Tepper poses with colleagues at the end of conference.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PHILIPP ARNDT

BY CARLY GORDON
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This past weekend, 80 undergraduate, business and law students from across Europe and the United States attended the European Student Conference (ESC) at Yale University.

Among them was junior Kate Tepper, a dual-degree senior studying International Relations as well as Voice at the Eastman School of Music.

Tepper was selected to attend the conference from among hundreds of applicants.

"I was super honored, because there were five applicants for every available spot," she said.

The conference, held at the Yale School of Management, was entirely student-run. Workshops, guest speakers and collaborative projects allowed participants to engage with political and economic issues facing the European Union (EU).

"There hasn't been a conference with this particular focus before," ESC Logistics Director Alex Co, an undergraduate at Yale, said. "The idea was born out of discussions about the future of the E.U. and the role that we as students can play in shaping that."

ESC President and Yale senior Igor Mitschka told the Yale Daily News, "The impact of the conference lies in the fact that students around the United States of America... will start a debate on their campuses about which kind of

Europe they would like to live in, and which kind of Europe they would like to contribute to."

Tepper said that "A lot of the reason I am so engaged in European politics is because of my opera training, and studying French, German and Italian. That's why I'm so interested in those cultures."

According to Tepper, "It was interesting because I was the only person there from a conservatory. I live in the music world 24/7, and this gave me a chance to step out of it a little bit, and be in my other academic realm."

Tepper was part of the Transatlantic Relations workshop.

The other workshops covered a range of EU policy issues, including borders, democracy, economy and identity. Students in each workshop worked together to compose policy papers, which were presented at three workshop sessions and two plenary sessions.

"In the Transatlantic Relations workshop, we concentrated on the upcoming Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), which is a trade partnership between the U.S. and EU that is going to make trade between the two much easier and much cheaper," Tepper explained.

Tepper was assigned a theme on which to focus the policy paper, which she wrote in collaboration with a Stanford University senior and a student

at Columbia Law entitled "Harmonizing Standards and Regulations of the TTIP." The paper will be published alongside other papers from the conference in a forthcoming academic journal.

Tepper said, "In our policy paper, we had to make observations about the current state of regulation, and then come up with our own policy proposals for the EU to execute, or in this case, for negotiations between the U.S. and the EU."

Work on the policy paper began well before the conference, with Skype sessions allowing the team to brainstorm and coordinate.

"I ended up actually getting really close to the two people that I wrote my policy paper with, because we had to cooperate a lot before the conference and then during it," Tepper noted. "Sharing ideas was really great and productive."

The team then presented their paper to the Transatlantic Relations workshop, receiving feedback from Ignacio Garcia Bercero, Director General for Trade of the European Commission and the chief negotiator for the impending partnership on which the paper was focused.

Bercero was one of many illustrious guests at the ESC. The conference hosted a number of EU policy leaders, including Pascal Lamy, former Director General of the World Trade Organization; David O'Sullivan, Ambassador of the

EU to the United States; and Karel Schwarzenberg, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic.

Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, provided a video message to conference participants.

Tepper drew inspiration from the speakers.

"David O'Sullivan said to us that diplomatic success is more about the process and opening up networks than it is about landmarks or single successes. I loved that," she said.

The conference was an eye-opening experience for Tepper, encouraging her to explore possibilities for her future.

"It definitely made me think a lot harder about the idea of getting a master's in public policy or global affairs," she said. "I loved engaging with other people to come up with policy visions, and it felt like something I could actually be good at."

Though her background as a music student made her stand out from her peers, Tepper enjoyed the rigorous environment of the conference.

"With all these Ivy Leaguers and people in law school, I felt really special to be around them" she said. "I was around a lot of people who are in law school or business school, and I loved the way they thought about things."

Throughout the conference, Tepper befriended other students, from Yale and other U.S. universities to those from places like Austria, Germany,

Russia and Sweden alike.

"I made friends a lot more easily than I thought I would—people who could in the future be my colleagues, or people who I look up to in the world of foreign politics," she said.

The conference culminated with plans surrounding an emerging student-run think-tank, European Horizons, which aims "to foster discourse in the United States of America on the future of a united Europe," according to the ESC website.

By connecting students, scholars, young professionals and EU policy leaders, the think-tank will organize an annual conference and maintain a network of forward-thinking members from universities across the United States.

Conference participants were encouraged to return to their home universities and establish their own European Horizons chapter. "I'll try and make a chapter of the think-tank at U of R," Tepper said. "So if you're interested in European politics, watch out."

"With the founding of the new student-led think-tank, the work that was done before and during the conference does not have to stop," Co added. "In many ways, I see the conference as a symbolic mediator and bridge," he said.

"I hope to see this dialogue continue in the future, both through the think-tank and the future of the conference."

Gordon is a member of the class of 2015.

UR OPINION

BY TANIMA PODDAR & PARSA LOTFI
FEATURES EDITOR & PHOTO EDITOR

"CRAZY MAD LIBS! GIVE US A WORD!"

"THE _____."



STEVEN TAU '16

"...creepy..."
(adjective)



KATIE WARD '17

"...sock..."
(noun)



JOEL HOWARD '16

"...vaulted..."
(verb)



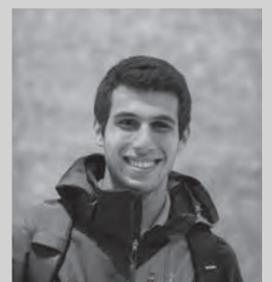
JACKIE ALBRIGHT '17

"...over..."
(preposition)



MARY ASKHAM '15

"...orange..."
(adjective)



TYLER WEISS '18

"...crocodiles..."
(noun)

HUMOR

Let's play on words

BY CHRIS HORGAN
HUMOR EDITOR

1. Every now and then, I stop and become concerned that my brain is missing, but then I realize that it's all in my head.
2. Right before his nap, my golden retriever ate my favorite pair of argyle socks but won't admit it. Then again, it's probably best to let a sleeping dog lie.
3. A picture paints a thousand words, so all you need to reach that 1,000 word requirement for your big paper is one picture.
4. My friend Mike told me that he found the greatest french fry on the planet. It would be best to take that with a grain of salt.
5. I went out into the ocean with some friends, but our ship capsized, and we were left stranded swimming in the middle of ocean. And yet, we found ourselves all in the same boat.
6. I had to do laundry so badly it was as if the washer was screaming my name. So I put a sock in it.
7. My pal is a walking dictionary, but he wouldn't let this define him.

8. You drive me crazy, but you will always be my sunshine, which is why I can't look at you for more than three seconds.

9. Never play a game of "She loves me, she loves me not" with a four-leaf clover.

10. Cannibals are what they eat.

11. I went to bed freezing, wishing that it would become warmer. So when I learned that Rochester was covered in a blanket, I was happy, until I realized it was of snow.

12. If oil could marry their kind it wouldn't last because there couldn't be a spark in the relationship.

13. Show some more compassion for horses. We always seem to be getting on their back.

14. Take small steps to achieve your goals, unless you are a long-jumper.

15. Pride cometh before the fall. Fall cometh before the winter. Pride cometh before the winter.

16. Bringing attention to a dangerous bee is as easy as "A bee, see?"

Horgan is a member of the class of 2017.

Poking fun at the news

BY CHRIS HORGAN
HUMOR EDITOR

1. The Utah House of Representatives has voted to restore the use of execution by firing squad.

Although this leaves convicted criminals on the wrong end of things, it most importantly gives aspiring executioners a shot.

2. An Ohio man pleaded guilty to selling fake urine for drug tests.

That's what you get when your career entails watching your hard work go down the drain.

3. An Australian woman won the annual race up the Empire State Building with a time of just 12 minutes.

When asked how she felt after the race, she replied, "It feels good to be on top."

4. A gigantic sign reading, "Keep your eyes on the road" is being put up on a highway in the Midwest.

Again, a big, distracting sign is being put up to ensure that drivers keep their eyes on the road.

5. A crash on an interstate in Alabama was caused by a trucker

pulling a tooth.

"I was out of money for the toll and there was a pillow in the passenger seat," said the driver.

6. Former Knicks guard JR Smith participated in the NBA's first fashion show in New York this past weekend.

This marks the first time in a while that JR gave a solid performance in Madison Square Garden.

7. A gun found inside of a book was donated to a Maine Goodwill store.

This was the book's attempt to scare off anyone who tried to judge it by its cover.

8. Police in New Hampshire have issued an arrest warrant for Punxsutawney Phil for not predicting the "mountainous" amounts of snow.

For Punxsutawney Phil, we can expect at least six more weeks of prison.

9. An angry owl in an Oregon park attacked its fourth victim.

Witnesses claimed that the owl proclaimed, "filthy muggles," after the unexpected attack.

Horgan is a member of the class of 2017.

CT scratch and sniff

Scratch the image and see if your nose can detect the aroma.

BY SAM PASSANISI



Winter parking: UR's commitment to student fitness

BY KARAN ARUL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

They say that Rochester has two seasons: winter and construction. Well, the architects who constructed the University of Rochester parking system definitely had winter on their minds. Although the parking lots were created for students to park their cars, they also have a health-conscious motive. Winter parking was designed to help students become fit through intense workout sessions. Think about the outrageously far Park Lot—ice-covered sidewalks, and mounds of snow covering your car. These facts are summed up in one purpose: a commitment to fitness. Why else would there be no indoor parking options?

Few know this, but parking is actually President Seligman's code word for "Georgen Athletic Center #2." The parking system was designed in the best interest of students. Thanks to the workouts of winter parking, you will have personal trainers wanting to know your secret or wanting to kill you. In fact, they may want to do both. You may be used to certain workout routines to work out each muscle group. Well, the University has actually constructed the parking lots with workouts in mind! So, be sure to drink your pre-workout smoothie before driving to school, because your trek to class will be a testament to the University's dedication to student fitness.

Monday and Wednesday — Don't forget about Leg Day!

The school week starts out with Leg Day—the most important, yet neglected, day of the week. As a result, it is advised that students park their cars in the University's largest and most distant lot, Park Lot. As you can tell, school officials are very creative when it comes to names. Leg Day begins with a brisk walk through endless fields of snow-covered concrete. According to officials at Rochester, too many

students skip Leg Day. Whether you are isolating your hamstrings, calves or thighs, Park Lot is the place to park. As students descend from their cars, they are advised to start out slow and quickly build their speed. Eventually, they will be greeted with an unexpected sensation during the cold Rochester morning—warmth! Unfortunately, this warmth is the burning sensation of lactic acid building up in the muscles as the body trudges through several feet of snow. Anyway, just remember that you will have the legs of an Olympic track star because of this.

The leaders of the University of Rochester are experts at fitness, so they know how to tempt students with shortcuts to weed out the weaklings—whether they are in the classroom or in the parking lots. Take a look at President Seligman—145 pounds of pure Rochester muscle. President Seligman is a dedicated athlete, so he has added a few buses around Park Lot to take less-determined students from their cars to their classes. Don't give in to his trickery! If you are interested in joining the University of Rochester's elite core of gold-star athletes, run away from these buses. Why else would they name this bus route the "Silver Line?"

Tuesday and Thursday — Time for Bicep Day!

After an exhaustive day of classes, labs and recitations, students will have the pleasure of moving their focus toward their arms. In fact, Bicep Day is unique in that it can take place at any student parking lot. At the University of Rochester, Bicep Day consists of brushing and shoveling your car out of unbelievable piles of snow. Yes, the University has the option to build an indoor parking lot with its exorbitant amount of funds, but then you would be embarrassed to wear short sleeve shirts. Bicep Day is especially rigorous in the middle of February, when students are encouraged to bring a shovel to class. So, next time you are faced

with a white pile of compact snow that used to be your car, remember that the school is only thinking about your health.

Wednesday and Friday — It's all about the cardio!

For those students who park on the other side of the Genesee and walk to campus, there is still hope to become a fit Yellowjacket. The parking system was designed to provide every student an option to become a dedicated athlete, whether they live on campus or across the river. During the winter months, when the snow might deter students from walking to class, the Genesee serves as an exiting ultimatum. Why not work out all of the muscle groups and swim to class? How else do you think Seligman obtained the body of an Olympic God?

On the other hand, students also have the privilege of an intense session of dry-cardio if they live near the 19th Ward. By using this scenic passageway to reach campus, students will have the chance to run at blazingly fast speeds amidst gunfire and bloodthirsty murderers. In fact, the University actually encourages students to wear their Rochester apparel whenever they use the "19th Ward shortcut" in order to attract potential chasers. After all, the more people chasing you, the faster you will run!

Saturday and Sunday — Rest Days

After an eventful winter week of trucking through endless snow, digging your car out and swimming across the Genesee, your body will be quite sore. The University advises students to spend the weekend away from the frosty conditions in order to have adequate rest and to complete endless amounts of homework. But, don't worry if you end up putting your fitness before your schoolwork. After all, the University's main goal is student health. Why else would they have such terrible parking?

Arul is a member of the class of 2017.

If nature could interact with humans

BY CHRIS HORGAN
HUMOR EDITOR

Certainly, if trees could talk, you would never be able to win an argument against them because they would only stand their ground. All around the world, the sky would look down upon us but would have enough compassion to give us some occasional snow days. Rain would rub in our face that it gets to sky dive every day. Lakes would probably be that friend who always wants people to go for a swim.

Yellow snow would do its best to make us think of something other than a white Christmas. Yetis would tell their children stories of strange mythological creatures who worked in building and spent their free time staring at boxes

displaying other mythological creatures working in buildings. Oranges, if juiced, would be hard to keep a conversation with, depending on whether they're concentrated or not. Ultimately, orange juice would clarify that O.J. Simpson gave them a bad name.

Rainbows would wonder why they make everyone smile despite always being in the shape of a frown. Blue whales would facetiously thank whoever came up with their creative name. Icebergs would have a few complaints, and they'd know just how to break the ice. Grass would be horrified of humans; or, more specifically, humans' lawnmowers. Lily pads could be good friends, on the surface at least.

Octopi would be no fun at a parties because they'd win every game of Twister. Volcanoes would have tense friendships because at any moment they could blow. Elephants would be able to pick out good cars because they know a lot about trunk space. Sloths would take forever to text back.

Years and years will go by before humans devise a way to faultlessly communicate with animals.

On the bright side, though, some scientists have created a computer program that can almost translate what a dog is thinking. Until scientists perfect this, however, we can only speculate what animals' or nature's first words to humans would be.

Horgan is a member of the class of 2017.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Festival of Food, Film and Culture delights the senses

BY SAM PASSANISI
NEWS EDITOR

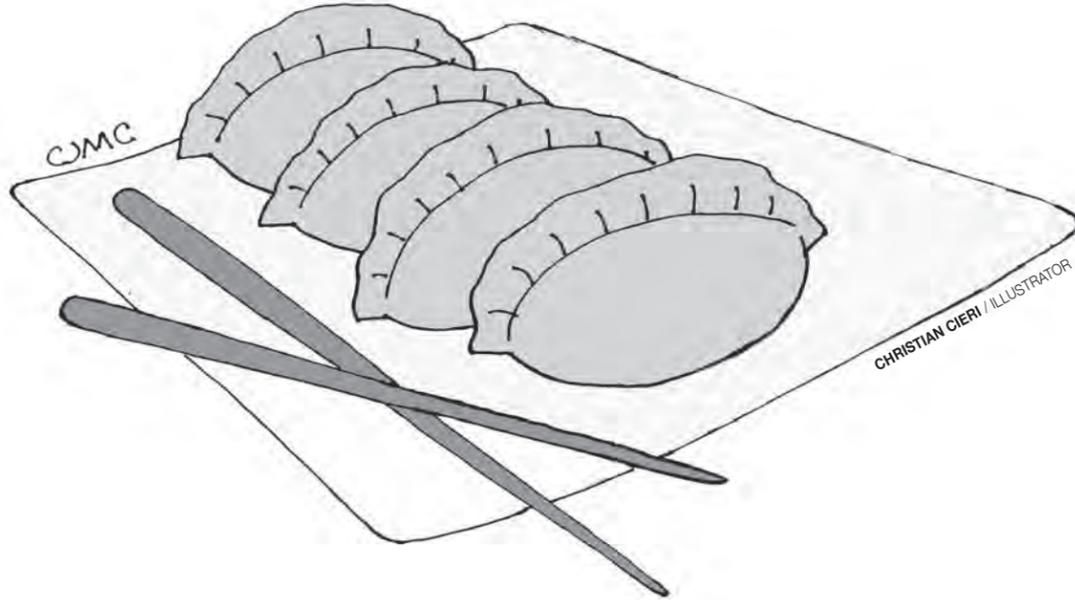
After fifteen years, the Festival of Food, Film and Culture has returned to UR—and it was worth the wait. Delicious, authentic food from around the world is paired with foreign movies in the four-week series presented by the Department of Modern Languages & Cultures.

Spanish professor Claudia Schaefer said that the department first tried to start the festival fifteen years ago, but the program died due to lack of interest. Recently, UR Language Coordinator Teresa Valdez joined the project and the festival was re-inaugurated. This semester features a foreign film and free food every Friday in February. The series kicked off on Feb. 6 with Mexican dishes and a screening of the 1992 film “Como Agua para Chocolate.”

On Feb. 13, the theme country was Japan. Delicious udon (Japanese noodle soup), pork and chicken dumplings, eggplants and rice were on the menu, served by off-campus caterer Susan Plunkett’s Fabulous Foods. The film was “Udon,” a 2006 Japanese drama-comedy. Visual & Cultural Studies (VCS) graduate student Joel Neville Anderson introduced the film.

Anderson described “Udon” as a “food-centric” film; specifically, one that focuses on the importance of food in society. When it first came out, rather than being reviewed in the U.S. by a movie critic, the film received attention from food critic Jonathan Gould, who complained that the film offered too many shots of noodles and soup at the expense of the story. Anderson noted that the film depicts a fictionalized account of a real-life “udon-craze” in Japan, in which citizens became obsessed with what the film calls Japan’s “soul food.”

“Udon” begins with an ending: the main character, a



struggling Japanese comedian named Kosuke Matsui, is forced by mounting debt to leave New York City and return to his rural hometown in Kagawa Prefecture on Japan’s southern island, Shikoku. There, he is reunited with old friends and relatives, but fails to impress his gruff father, the owner and sole operator of a small noodle factory in town. One of Kosuke’s friends finds him a job at a local magazine, where he elaborates on the udon craze by sending the magazine’s readers on a scavenger hunt for the best local purveyors of the dish.

Rarely does a movie in the “dramedy” genre actually fit into that dubious category—but “Udon” does. It’s funny, campy at times, and a little bit nonsensical, like when the movie stops in its tracks halfway through and launches into a bizarre ten-minute tangent in which Kosuke is reimagined as a Power Ranger-type superhero named “Captain Udon.” On the dramatic side the film is powerful and poignant. One of the reasons Kosuke’s father won’t talk to him is because Kosuke’s mother died while he was away in New York City.

This is mentioned offhand in the beginning of the film, in between two slapstick gags, but it doesn’t feel strained or insincere, because that’s how life really works. The tragic and the comic exist side by side, and the characters of “Udon” are a little more real because they know that.

So, if you check out “Udon,” make the effort to suspend your disbelief. Pretend, for a moment, that there could be a nation-wide craze over noodle soup, and you will realize that there actually could be a nation-wide craze over noodle soup. There have been stranger fads. There have also been weirder comedies and sadder tragedies than “Udon,” but the movie holds its ground and the audience’s attention with believable, three-dimensional characters and just the right amount of humor.

If you missed the first two installments of the Film, Food and Culture series, don’t worry—you can still catch up. On Friday, Feb. 20, stop by the Gowen Room at 6:00pm for some delicious French dinner and a screening of the 2012 film “Haute Cuisine: Les saveurs du Palais.” On Friday, Feb. 27, the series will conclude with a Brazilian/Portuguese-themed event.

Passanisi is a member of the class of 2017.

Oscar Predictions: Everything you should know

BY SCOTT ABRAMS
COPY EDITOR

Ok, y’all, Oscar Sunday is coming. Get your ballots out, your bets drawn, and let’s win (lose?) you some money!

Best Picture

Nominees: “American Sniper;” “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance);” “Boyhood;” “The Grand Budapest Hotel;” “The Imitation Game;” “Selma;” “The Theory of Everything;” “Whiplash”

Will Win: “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)”

Should Win: “Selma”

This all comes down to “Boyhood” vs. “Birdman.” Will the Academy go for the former, the critics’ favorite, or the latter, a favorite of the industry? “Boyhood” won the Golden Globe and BAFTA Awards, but “Birdman” won the Producers Guild, Screen Actors Guild, and Directors Awards, suggesting widespread support.

I’m going to go with “Birdman,” but this is the closest of the major races.

Best Director

Nominees: Alejandro G. Inarritu, “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance);” Richard Linklater, “Boyhood;” Bennett Miller, “Foxcatcher;” Wes Anderson, “The Grand Budapest Hotel;” Morten Tyldum, “The Imitation Game”

Will Win: Richard Linklater, “Boyhood”

Should Win: Alejandro G. Inarritu, “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)”

Despite Inarritu’s visionary style, Linklater’s massive accomplishment (filming over twelve consecutive years) will not go unnoticed. There has been divergence between Best Picture and Best Director for the last two years, and I expect this trend to continue.

Best Actor

Nominees: Steve Carell, “Foxcatcher;” Bradley Cooper, “American Sniper;” Benedict Cumberbatch, “The Imitation Game;” Michael Keaton, “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance);” Eddie Redmayne, “The Theory of

Will Win: Michael Keaton, “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)”

Should Win: Michael Keaton, “Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)”

Eddie Redmayne’s been sweeping the awards for his transformative work, but I think that the Academy will go for Keaton, who, at 63, has never been nominated before and may never again. If Keaton does not win, look for “Boyhood” to take Best Picture over “Birdman.”

Best Actress

Nominees: Marion Cotillard, “Two Days, One Night;” Felicity Jones, “The Theory of Everything;” Julianne Moore, “Still Alice;” Rosamund Pike, “Gone Girl;” Reese Witherspoon, “Wild”

Will Win: Julianne Moore, “Still Alice”

Should Win: Rosamund Pike, “Gone Girl”

Julianne Moore is great as a woman with early-onset Alzheimer’s, but the film surrounding her never rises to the same level; this is just an excuse to finally allow Moore, a four-time



87th Academy Award predictions

OSCARs FROM PAGE 12

nominee, to win. There was a time when Rosamund Pike looked like a challenger, but, with "Gone Girl"'s near-shutout in nominations, that ship has sailed. Too bad, as Pike's given one of the most complex performances I've ever seen: easily the best of the year.

Best Supporting Actor:

Nominees: Robert Duvall, "The Judge;" Ethan Hawke, "Boyhood;" Edward Norton, "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance);" Mark Ruffalo, "Foxcatcher;" J.K. Simmons, "Whiplash"

Will Win: J.K. Simmons, "Whiplash"

Should Win: J.K. Simmons, "Whiplash"

J.K. Simmons, a veteran character actor, is finally getting his due with Damien Chazelle's exquisite "Whiplash." If there is a surprise, it's Edward Norton for his hilarious portrayal of a narcissistic actor, but that isn't happening. This is the easiest category to call of the night.

Best Supporting Actress:

Nominees: Patricia Arquette, "Boyhood;" Laura Dern, "Wild;" Keira Knightley, "The Imitation Game;" Emma Stone, "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance);" Meryl Streep, "Into the Woods"

Will Win: Patricia Arquette, "Boyhood"

Should Win: Emma Stone, "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)"

Another win that's as much for a career as it is for a performance, Patricia Arquette's heartbreaking work in "Boyhood" (well, her last scene in "Boyhood," at least), will add a deserved Oscar to her trophy mantle. Emma Stone has so many great moments in "Birdman," though.

Best Adapted Screenplay:

Nominees: Jason Hall, "American Sniper;" Graham Moore, "The Imitation Game;" Paul Thomas Anderson, "Inherent Vice;" Anthony McCarten, "The Theory of Everything;" Damien Chazelle, "Whiplash"

Will Win: Damien Chazelle, "Whiplash"

Should Win: Damien Chazelle, "Whiplash"

I'm going out on a limb here: while "The Theory of Everything" took the BAFTA Award in this category last week, and "The Imitation Game" (which, it should be noted, is a favorite film that many will want to win somewhere) won the Writers Guild Award, I'm thinking "Whiplash," which should really be in the Original Screenplay category, takes it.

"The Imitation Game" is the most obvious choice here, but its shocking BAFTA loss makes me wonder if the two British films ("Imitation Game" and "The Theory of Everything") cancel each other out.

Best Original Screenplay:

Nominees: Alejandro G. Inarritu, Nicolas Giacobone, Alexander Dinelaris Jr. and Armando Bo, "Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance);" Richard Linklater, "Boyhood;" E. Max Frye and Dan Futterman, "Foxcatcher;" Wes Anderson (screenplay) and story by Wes Anderson and Hugo Guinness, "The Grand Budapest Hotel;" Dan Gilroy, "Nightcrawler"

Will Win: Wes Anderson, Hugo Guinness, "The Grand Budapest Hotel"

Should Win: Wes Anderson, Hugo Guinness, "The Grand Budapest Hotel"

Wes Anderson's wondrous, profoundly weird film has inexplicably struck a nerve this awards season, garnering nine Oscar nominations. Anderson, a three-time nominee in this category, is due for a win—it also helps that approximately half of the nearly 1,200 person Acting Branch of the Academy seem to appear in the film.

Abrams is a member of the class of 2017.

'I'll Be Your Pilot Tonight:' 'Better Call Saul'

BY SAM GILBOARD
STAFF WRITER

It starts where it left off in the pilot episode of "Better Call Saul." A Cinnabon. In fact, it is the Cinnabon that Saul Goodman imagined he'd be managing in the penultimate episode of "Breaking Bad." Behind the counter is the sad, drone-like shell of what used to be Saul (now Gene, according to his plastic nametag), kneading the gooey dough for which Cinnabon has built its empire upon. The scene plays out in a dreary black and white that contrasts the searing brightness of his previous life. What was once a life filled with corruption, drugs and greed has been watered down to making Caramel Pecanbons. At night, he drinks in front of a flickering screen in his home while watching his old commercials.

Then we are transported to a world of color, but no sound. A courtroom. The judge is waiting. The jurors are waiting. The prosecution is waiting. But waiting for whom? Practicing his defense in the bathroom is a dainty brown haired Irishman named James McGill. He looks about

five years younger than fans might remember, and with considerably more hair. As a public defense attorney, he is at the court's whim, a slave to the judicial system. Due to financial concerns, we play witness to the events that create the titular character.

"Better Call Saul" is a godsend for Easter egg lovers. In the premiere episode, the viewer is treated to at least two "Breaking Bad" alumni appearances, while there are dozens of other nods to the sequel series. These are the kinds of goodies that define a successful spinoff series. Saul Goodman, aka James McGill, aka Gene, aka your friendly neighborhood sleaze-ball lawyer, is a strong enough character on his own, but the fact remains that people miss Walter White and Jesse. Whatever can reanimate their essence is the top expectation of the fans.

Bob Odenkirk delivers a solid performance as Saul Goodman. A reliably funny guy and single-season "Saturday Night Live" writer, Odenkirk knows how to present the package of Saul. We were first introduced to him in "Breaking Bad" as a man all about the money—but a confident one at that. Now, we are reintroduced to

him as a man still all about

'Better Call Saul' is a godsend for Easter egg lovers. In the premiere episode, the viewer is treated to at least two 'Breaking Bad' alumni appearances.

the money, but quite lousy at it. Odenkirk does a standup job detaching from the Saul we know to the Saul we never knew.

"Better Call Saul" will be an exceptional series because, for all the tributes it pays to its successor series, viewers can still watch this show with fresh eyes having never seen "Breaking Bad." Sure, it will stir emotions seeing a familiar face now and then, but the story progresses whether you know who Mike Ehrmantraut is or not. It is tough living up to the success of such a power show, but "Better Call Saul" will be the spinoff series that stands out as a confident, comedic, contemporary powerhouse.

Gilboard is a member of the class of 2015.

'Student artists speak:' Yang Yang

BY JEFF HOWARD
A&E EDITOR

Jeff Howard: So, you recently performed with your new project, "Asian Fusion," at Montage Music Hall this past Saturday. I find the band name very intriguing. What inspired the project and where are hoping to go with it?

Yang Yang: Well, that's actually a very temporary name because I was asked if I wanted to do the montage show but it was [...] super short notice. I was in an Asian fusion restaurant off campus when I said yes to Dan.

I was in Parallax last year, but somehow music studies in depth during these past years in college had a huge impact in the way I look up music, so I wanted to do something new.

JH: That's awesome. I love how school can do that to you. How did music studies open you up?

YY: I had no music studies background prior to college. No singing class, no theory class, nothing. Classes here made me see what music does to society, how it was progressed in response to politics, art, literature, religion...etc. I really feel like I can get a sense of the world by studying music deeply. It also makes me aspire [to make] better music because I know how much it can do.

JH: Nice. I noticed that you guys heavily drew from a jazz and soul vibe at the show, with some rock tendencies in there too. Do you have a stylistic direction you want to take the group in, or are you just going to see where the project goes?

YY: We definitely wanna infuse jazz into it. It's the "new" of music, like a prospering business where [the] best musicians gather. But we're attracted to all kinds of music, like Brazilian, Australian, may be even Asian...I like the rhythmic variety of progressive rock music, so I definitely wanna incorporate that as well. I guess that's where the fusion idea comes from, literally fusing everything that feels inspiring.

JH: Interesting that you liken it to a business.

YY: I mean, don't get me wrong, I'm cynical for bad music being good business, but economy teaches you that best human resources are usually gathered among the newest filed.

JH: So it sounds to me like Asian Fusion is a collective made up of UR's best.

YY: We try.

JH: So, in addition to singing, you play the harp, and I'm pretty sure you're the only UR student to play the harp...

YY: That's possibly true. I only picked it up last year.

JH: What was it like to pick up the harp? When did you start?

YY: The decision was made last summer; [...] because harps are extremely expensive, plus, I wanna utilize it in contemporary music, [so] I went for an electric harp. It's really exciting because it's like I'm a kindergarten kid again, everything is so exciting. But because I knew theory and everything now, communicating with teachers is very efficient and I've been moving fast as a beginner.

JH: Are the strings on a harp laid out similarly to keys on a piano?

YY: Yes...or no. It does make a lot of sense to me because I play the piano. But, first of all, it's a lever harp, so assuming it's tuned in F (it is, with all levers down), you have to set a key prior to playing but lefting up certain levers. Also, the texture of harp music is completely different.

JH: Different instruments lend themselves to being played differently. I learned that when I switched from guitar to bass. A killer guitar line could sound stupid on the bass, and vice versa.

YY: Yeah, I totally agree.

JH: I see you'll be busting the harp out for the next No Jackets Required (NJR) show. Sounds like it could make for some real majestic, cinematic moments.

YY: Yeah, I'm excited for that. "Moon River" is one of my all time favorite girly songs. So cool, just I-vi chords.

JH: The first two chords of "Earth Angel." My "comfort food" chord progression, if you will, is I-IV.

YY: So many classical, romantic pieces man, VI is like the revelation key or chords. My history teacher now is obsessed with the subdominant. I like it more as a key area.

SEE YANG PAGE 14

'Student artists speak'



YANG FROM PAGE 13

CHRISTIAN CIERI / ILLUSTRATOR

JH: So, is this gonna be your first time playing with NJR?

YY: Oh no, I've done plenty of shows with NJR in the past, but only not last semester.

JH: Gotcha. Also, I noticed you had the Chinese flag on your Nord keyboard at montage. Does your Chinese descent play an important role in your music?

YY: Not so much the music, but more of the spirit with which I approach things.

wisdom that I grew up with. The food, the architecture, the philosophy. Everything makes me access ideas a different way. Languages make certain ideas more accessible, I believe.

Classes here made me see what music does to society, how it has progressed in response to politics, art, literature, etc. I really feel like I can get a sense of the world by studying music deeply.

JH: Sounds like you stay true to your roots. And absolutely, it's amazing how different ideas and mindsets are conveyed through different languages.

YY: If I give my roots up, I'm lofty in the air!

JH: That's all on my end. Anything you want to add?

YY: Nope. Thank you for the opportunity!

Howard is a member of the class of 2017.

It's really exciting (to learn harp) because it's like I'm a kindergarten kid all over again.

JH: Interesting... how so?

YY: I see my difference and see how it's unique, how it gives me confidence because there's thousands of years of

'Year Walk:' dark mythology redux

BY NICOLAS BROWN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"Year Walk" (Simogo, 2013) is one of those games that completely passed me by on its release. When a friend recommended it to me early this year, I assumed it to be relatively new, and only later did I discover just how late I was to the party. It's precisely because I only recently discovered "Year Walk" that I've chosen to write about it, as I'm sure there are many people who, just like me, entirely missed this fantastic game.

If I had to narrow this game down to a few common genres, I would call it a puzzle-based horror game. But, that doesn't do the game much justice. Really, it's an exploratory, puzzle-based adventure into dark (and sometimes horrifying) Swedish folklore. The gameplay involves walking through a snowy landscape and solving puzzles. What drives the action, though, is the folkloric foundation of the game. The player's character has embarked on a mysterious occult ritual known as a "year walk," which involves, among other things, carrying out a solitary night walk on New Year's Eve in order to earn mystical knowledge of the future. The player sets

out on this journey with two accessible items: a map and an encyclopedia, both of which are essential to the game experience. The map guides the player and makes note of particular landmarks useful in puzzle solving, and the encyclopedia provides information about the key forces in the game, including a folklore professor, a bloodsucking forest goddess and a monster in the form of a horse that drowns its victims, to name a few.

All of the game's mythological figures seem to be, at least in part, rooted in genuine Swedish folklore. The real origins of these figures, when combined with the gorgeous and imaginative art style, give the game a very mystical quality. The eerie but beautiful atmosphere and clever writing work together to create a haunting atmosphere that serves to remind us why so much horror fiction originates from folklore and myth. I highly recommend this game to any players interested in the origins of horror, in game narrative, or in interesting visual style. As of now, the game can be picked up for between \$4 and \$6 on iOS (that's right, this is a mobile game) and Steam (both PC and Mac).

Brown is a member of the class of 2015.

CT RECOMMENDS

BLADEE - 'GLUEE'

BY JEFF HOWARD
A&E EDITOR

"GLUEE," the debut mixtape from Bladee, a member of the Swedish rap/electronic music collective Gravity Boys, is a tough pill to swallow. The mixtape's opening track, "deletee," is a 3-minute long iced-out autotune casserole where Bladee moans, "Gucci lenses on my eyes / Bank account match my clothing size." Much of "GLUEE" is moaning—that's the point. Part of the mixtape's allure is in its otherworldly presence, which comes across both musically and lyrically. On "GLUEE," Bladee is light-years away from reality, existing within a matrix of ice, clothing brands and internet culture — a world where his heartbreak is expressed through eternally frozen apathy. While it's not entirely consistent, "GLUEE"'s highlights make the mixtape one of the most futuristic, original and intriguing musical recordings I've ever heard.

Admittedly, "GLUEE"'s front half contains its strongest material. On "eBay," one of the best, if not the best track on the album, reverbed-out 808 snares and woodblocks create a cold, dystopian and claustrophobic setting—this is what music from the year 2199 sounds like. "Pulling up in electric cars / Sailor moon, falling stars / All I see is my avatars," spits guest rapper Ecco2k on the track, sounding like a straight-up humanoid with layers of autotune and vocal processing. Another highlight is in the track "Spellbound," a melancholy electro ballad which is more of a tortured ode to capitalism than to a human lover. It's hard to tell whether Bladee is trapped or empowered by money, rapping "Snowboard on my MasterCard / I shine like a star / Coast guard, surf in Hollister / I'm in money world." The track has a beautiful chord progression and some seriously poetic lyrics, making it one of the most chilling moments on the album.

While "GLUEE"'s back half is more of a hit-or-miss affair (the aimless "Freeze" could have been scrapped), it ends on a strong note with "Unreal," the most human and vulnerable moment on the mixtape, yet also the hardest to understand Bladee on, with its layers of reverb and delay. Like the comedown from a massive high, "Unreal" is a return to cold, hard, confusing reality, and it hurts. Bladee's vocal delivery on the track is righteously tortured, bringing to mind John Frusciante while still feeling entirely original. Hopefully "Unreal" is a sign of authenticity to come on Bladee's upcoming follow-up mixtape, slated to come out this year.

Howard is a member of the class of 2017.

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Becky Galasso - Track and Field

BY MAX EBER

SPORTS EDITOR

1. How did you first get involved with running?

I've always done sports, but I honestly started running because my older brother enjoyed it, so I figured it might be fun. I soon fell in love with track and field.

2. What has been your proudest moment in the sport?

I don't know that I can pick one moment. Any time I get to help my team win an event or score points (particularly at NYSCTC Championship meets) is pretty awesome. My favorite race is coming from behind in the 4x400m relay, when I get to chase down the other team's anchor leg—especially if she's from a rival team!



PHOTO COURTESY OF UR ATHLETICS

Becky Galasso '15 strides toward a double record-setting performance.

3. Who do you look up to most? Why?

I probably look up to Claire Crowther the most. She was the previous UR record holder in the 500m, a great athlete, a wonderful captain, and an all-around amazing person. Even after 2 years, I still miss running with her every week.

4. How did it feel to break two records at a single meet?

I don't think it has sunk in yet. I'm still trying to wrap my head around that 500m time... I'm just glad I had enough strength left to make my teammates' efforts worthwhile and help them break our previous 4x400

record from that meet last year. **5. How does it feel to be the top 500 meter runner in Division III?**

I honestly cannot believe I've gotten to this point. It's taken a lot of hard work, but I never thought I would get anywhere near this, no matter how hard I worked. I was good but not anything special in high school, then at UR a knee injury prevented me from running (or even really walking) all freshman year. After surgery, I wasn't even sure I would be able to run again. I came back sophomore year and was suddenly faster than I had thought possible, and I've gotten stronger and faster every year since. That knee injury gave me eligibility for my Take Five year, so I guess it was a blessing in disguise! I'm just trying to enjoy

myself and make the most of my last year of competitive running. Since the 500 isn't an event in the NCAA Championship meet, I guess it's time to see if I can make Nationals in the 400 now! **6. Do you have any rituals prior to running?**

I don't do a dance like Michelle Jenneke or anything. I always try to eat pasta the night before a meet. Other than that, I just try to visualize the race, do a normal warm-up and focus on getting out fast.

7. Would you rather roast marshmallows with Dr. Seuss or Harry Houdini?

Definitely Dr. Seuss, his books were some of my favorites growing up!

Eber is a member of the class of 2017.

Swim team competes in UAA championship

BY EMILY LEWIS

STAFF WRITER

With the four-day-long UAA championship events taking place in Atlanta, it has been an exciting week for the Rochester Swimming and Diving Team. The Yellowjackets performed extremely well, earning one NCAA qualifying score as well as breaking a school record.

Overall, the Women's team ended the weekend placed sixth

out of eight teams, while Emory, the host of the championships, finished first. All-American senior Lauren Bailey excelled in the 200-yard butterfly, coming in seventh with a time of 2:05:56.

Additionally, the Rochester Women broke the school record in the 400-yard freestyle. With contributions from Bailey, junior Vicky Luan and sophomores Khamai Simpson and Emily Simon, the women earned a fifth

place finish in the 400-freestyle.

The 'Jackets also excelled on the diving front. Sophomore Danielle Neu came in third place, while seniors Joanna Wallace and Carrie DeMoulin ended eighth and tenth, respectively.

Successes were not only limited to the women's side, however. The Men's Swimming and Diving team, who finished seventh out of eight teams, had exceptional accomplishments as well, breaking

a school record and obtaining two NCAA provisional qualifying results.

Freshman sensation Gunnar Zemerling surpassed the school record in the 100 yard freestyle—that he originally set at the Liberty League championships in December—by nearly a full second, and finished fourth place in the race itself. Zemerling's rookie season has been exceptional and only continues to improve.

Adding to the list of achievements,

senior James Frauen also qualified for UAAs, finishing in tenth place in the 200-yard backstroke. As a result of these stellar performances, both Frauen and Zemerling received Liberty League honors including Swimmer of the Week and Rookie of the Week, respectively.

The Yellowjackets look to continue their success in the upcoming NCAA tournament.

Lewis is a member of the class of 2016.

LAST WEEK'S SCORES

FRIDAY, FEB. 13

- Men's Squash vs University of Western Ontario W 9-0
- Women's Basketball vs University of Chicago L 66-76
- Men's Basketball vs University of Chicago L 63-72

SATURDAY, FEB. 14

- Men's Tennis vs Rochester Institute of Technology W 9-0

SUNDAY, FEB. 15

- Women's Tennis vs Colgate University L 1-8
- Men's Basketball vs Washington University in St. Louis L 87-94
- Women's Basketball vs Washington University in St. Louis W 76-75
- Men's Tennis vs Colgate University L 2-7

THIS WEEK'S SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, FEB. 20

- Men's Squash vs Harvard University (Quarterfinals) - Hartford, CT - 5:30 P.M.
- Women's Basketball vs Carnegie Mellon University - 6:00 P.M.*
- Men's Basketball vs Carnegie Mellon University - 8:00 P.M.*
- Men's Swimming and Diving at University of Chicago Midwest Invitational - Chicago, IL - 7:00 P.M.
- Women's Swimming and Diving at University of Chicago Midwest Invitational - Chicago, IL - 7:00 P.M.

SATURDAY, FEB. 21

- Men's Track and Field vs College at Brockport - Brockport, NY - 10:00 A.M.
- Men's Track and Field vs College at Brockport - Brockport, NY - 10:00 A.M.
- Women's Tennis vs Ithaca College - 10:00 A.M.*
- Men's Diving at Kenyon College Invitational - Gambier, OH - 1:30 P.M.
- Women's Diving at Kenyon College Invitational - Gambier, OH - 1:30 P.M.
- Men's Tennis vs Ithaca College - 2:00 P.M.*
- Men's Squash vs CSA Potter Cup (Second Round) - Hartford, CT - 2:30 P.M.
- Men's Swimming and Diving at University of Chicago Midwest Invitational - Chicago, IL - 12:00 P.M.
- Women's Swimming and Diving at University of Chicago Midwest Invitational - Chicago, IL - 12:00 P.M.

SUNDAY, FEB. 22

- Men's Basketball vs Case Western Reserve - 12:00 P.M.*
- Men's Squash vs CSA Potter Cup (Third Round) - Hartford, CT - 1:30 P.M.
- Women's Basketball vs Case Western Reserve - 2:00 P.M.*

*DENOTES HOME GAME

Men's Squash looks to playoffs

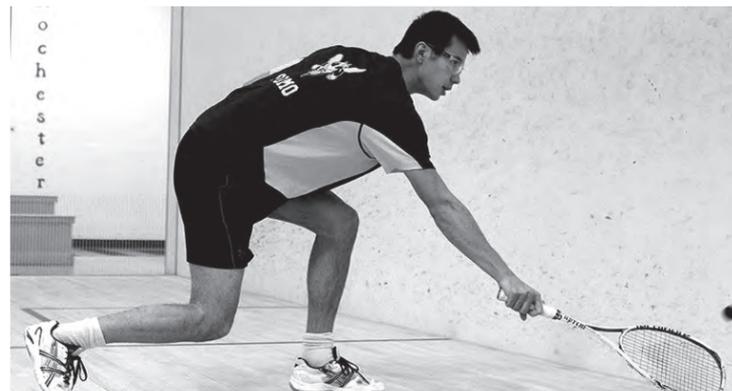


PHOTO COURTESY OF UR ATHLETICS

Meng Xiaomin reaches to backhand the ball during Saturday's match.

BY NATE KUHRT

STAFF WRITER

This past week, the University of Rochester Men's squash team was back in action after a nearly two-week break from matches. They took on Cornell and University of Western Ontario after a tough, hard fought loss to Franklin & Marshall College.

The team clearly demonstrated that one loss was not going to impact the continuation of a great season, as they showed their depth with dominant victories over both opponents. The team won by a score of 8-1 against Cornell, with the only loss coming from the one position. Cornell's top-ranked player, Aditya Jagtap, who is in the top 10 individual rankings in the College Squash Association, was able to overcome Rochester reigning All-American Mario Yañez in Cornell's only win of the day.

The 'Jackets added a second win to their streak after taking down Western Ontario with a score of 9-0. Rochester also won the exhibition game in both matches.

Against Western Ontario, the team dropped just three games in total,

winning the majority of matches 3-0.

This past week concluded the final matches of the regular season, giving the Rochester Men's squash team a final record of 10-4. This season's performance was strong enough to qualify the Yellowjackets for the Potter Cup, the College Squash Association's National Team Championships.

UR is seeded sixth entering the tournament and has its first match scheduled for Friday against third-ranked Harvard University.

Although the team is positioned in the lower half of the bracket, they have the potential to pull off a few upsets and make a great run. In the past, they have beaten both the number one and three seeds in the tournament and should be entering confident that they have the potential to take down any team in the nation.

Rallying behind the team's three former All-Americans and great play from freshman Tomotaka Endo throughout the season at the number four position, the Yellowjackets are potentially set up to make their best run yet at a national championship.

Kuhrt is a member of the class of 2017.

SPORTS

FROM THE ATHLETE'S PERSPECTIVE

UR athletes give back to Rochester community



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UR TENNIS

Left: Members of the UR Men's Tennis team work at the telethon to benefit the Golisano Children's Hospital. Right: Julian Danko converses with Bob Lonsberry, the host of WHAM 1180.

BY BEN SHAPIRO
SENIOR STAFF

As varsity athletes at the University of Rochester, we often find that we lose sight of exactly what we represent when we compete. Beyond ourselves and our teammates, we are also playing for the UR community as a whole.

This connection between varsity athletics and the rest of UR is not always felt as a close bond, which is why we cherish any opportunity to give back to the

community and form a stronger bond with the rest of campus.

With this in mind, on Friday, Feb. 13, the Men's and Women's Varsity Tennis teams, joined by the Women's Varsity Lacrosse team, took part in Strong Memorial Hospital's Drive for Miracles Radiothon for the second consecutive year.

With 100.5 The Drive and News Radio WHAM 1180 broadcasting the event live from the hospital, radio hosts encouraged their listeners to donate to Golisano Children's Hospital by calling

in to the donation hotline, where we were waiting at the phones ready to answer.

By the end of the two day event, the stations had raised almost \$250,000.

Many of the athletes were also given the chance to engage in conversation live over the airwaves with the hosts, a unique and fun experience for us that hopefully was amusing for listeners as well. While there was certainly no shortage of playful banter between the hosts and athletes—including

a last second search for some Valentine's Day dates—we also had the chance to explain in our own words exactly why we were participating in such an event.

"This is one of the best hospitals anywhere," senior Men's Tennis captain Julian Danko said. "And it's great to be able to help out."

Echoing Danko's sentiments, sophomore Matt Golub told WHAM 1180 host Bob Lonsberry that the team is glad to give back to the local community, especially for a cause as special as the Golisano Children's Hospital.

The fundraiser was only the beginning of a busy weekend for Men's Tennis, as we took on crosstown rival RIT the next day to begin our spring season with a 9-0 win, before falling to Division I Colgate University 7-2 on Sunday. Despite the mixed results on court, any weekend where we can help raise almost a quarter of a million dollars for a children's hospital in our own community is an undisputed success.

Shapiro is a member of the class of 2016.

NBA award frontrunners at the mid-season

BY JESSE BERNSTEIN
STAFF WRITER

It's hard to believe, but we're about to enter the home stretch of the NBA season, and awards-wise, there's a lot left up in the air. It's now time to pretend that I was "just kidding" about my early season predictions and make some new ones.

Sixth Man of the Year: Isaiah Thomas, PG, Phoenix Suns

This past offseason, the diminutive former Sacramento starter found himself traded to a team with two of the most exciting young point guards in the league, Goran Dragic and Eric Bledsoe. Thomas seemed to be the odd man out, doomed by the prospect of being "trade bait" and having a permanent "disgruntled" status.

However, Thomas's play has been one of the most important factors in Phoenix, staying in front of Oklahoma City and New Orleans in the West playoff race. In just 25.7 minutes of play a night, he's chipping in 15.2 points, dishing out 3.7 assists and getting to the line almost five times per game. His per-36 numbers are comparable to his starting numbers back in Sacramento, and he continues to improve passing the ball and slowing down enough for his own teammates to catch up to him.

Though he ultimately may get squeezed out of Phoenix in a deadline trade, whoever gets him will be receiving an absolute offensive sparkplug.

Most Improved Player: Jimmy Butler,

SG, Chicago Bulls

It's really not even close. Butler, who was known for so long as a guy who played great perimeter D but didn't do much more on the offensive side of the floor, has broken out of his shell this year.

While playing the most minutes per game in the league, he's averaging over 20 points per game, the highest number of his career, while continuing to play his usual suffocating defense. He's getting to the line more than ever, and shooting at around 46% percent and taking the most shots per game of his career.

Although he's had some shooting issues lately, resulting from a sore shoulder and general fatigue, Butler has proven himself to be a central tool for the Chicago Bulls.

Coach of the Year: Mike Budenholzer, Atlanta Hawks

It's been said a thousand times already, but that's only because it's true: what Mike Budenholzer has managed to do in Atlanta is a modern basketball miracle. This roster isn't much different than last year's, yet they've already surpassed last season's win total and are on pace for the best season in team history.

Budenholzer has molded the already talented Hawks roster into something more, incorporating the Spurs' brand of motion offense and staggered minutes in Atlanta with stellar results.

While Steve Kerr certainly has an argument to be made for the success of his squad, he has the benefit of having a much stronger top-to-bottom roster than Budenholzer has.

Defensive Player of the Year: Tony Allen, SG, Memphis Grizzlies

There are a host of players who could lay claim to this award. Draymond Green, Anthony Davis, Tim Duncan and DeAndre Jordan have all put

together dominating seasons on the defensive side of the ball, and it wouldn't be an egregious mistake if any of them were rewarded for their successes. However, it's Allen who plays for the number one defense in the league in Memphis,

bringing his particular brand of insanity every second of every night he's on the floor. Trick-or-Treat Tony has been doing this for years now, and it's time for him to be officially recognized.

Rookie of the Year: Andrew Wiggins, SG, Minnesota Timberwolves

No rookie has shown the improvement and flashes of brilliance that Wiggins has. He has gotten better with each passing game and is the only

rookie averaging

above 10 points per game.

His defense, though a little frenetic at times, has been pretty much as advertised, and he's displayed a strong shooting game. If he could eliminate some of the tougher shots that

are customarily taken by rookies, he could really become a real threat by this time next year.

Most Valuable Player: James Harden, SG, Houston Rockets

In my mind, besides Harden, there's really only one other possible candidate. He plays for Golden State, and his name's Steph Curry.

Let's play a little game: pick the MVP out of these two stat lines.

Player A: 27.4 ppg/5.7 rpg/6.8

Player B: 23.6 ppg/4.7 rpg/7.9

Player A: .455/.383/.870, 27.3 PER

Player B: .481/.399/.900, 27.4 PER

You can't right? Player A is Harden, and player B is Curry. Both are having absolutely otherworldly seasons, and each has a legitimate claim to the MVP title. When you consider that Curry plays for the best team in the NBA this year, you might even be inclined to give him the award.

But let's take a second to compare the teams that each player leads. Curry's cast includes All-Star starter Klay Thompson, DPOY candidate Draymond Green, Andrew Bogut, super-sub Mareese Speights, Harrison Barnes, Andre Iguodala and Shaun Livingston. Meanwhile, Harden has played largely without his best teammate — a hobbled Dwight Howard — spending the majority of his time on the floor with Josh Smith, Donatas Motiejunas, Trevor Ariza and Joey Dorsey. If both Curry and Harden went down with injuries today, whose team would be in better shape? Golden State might even still make the playoffs without Curry, whereas Houston would be lottery-bound without Harden's Herculean effort. For that reason, this year's MVP has been James Harden.

Bernstein is a member of the class of 2018.

CHRISTIAN CIERI / ILLUSTRATOR



MVP Award