

Campus Times

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Dandelion Day Sucked, Students Say

By Haven Worley
NEWS EDITOR

On Friday, April 30, many students were looking forward to the Dandelion Day they never got. Given last year's pandemic-induced cancellation, sophomores hadn't experienced a D-Day before.

This year, Wilson Commons Student Activities had an array of activities planned, many of which were new in hopes of encouraging engagement and preventing off-campus parties from turning into superspreader events.

In an email to the Campus Times, Assistant Director of Programming Jill Wulfenstein said they tried to offer "the same traditional Dandelion Day events while adding some new and exciting things!" Activities included carnival rides, cosmic golf, laser tag, roller skating, yoga, student performances, bubble soccer, take-and-make crafts, tie-dye, lawn games, and more. One of the more exciting events happening this year would have been the hot air balloon, but it was cancelled due to wind.

"The hot air balloon was what I was looking forward to the most," first-year Lucy



HENRY LITSKY/PHOTO EDITOR

Keffler said, who participated in most of the activities. She added that the food trucks were "the only good thing about D-Day."

"But even that was a flop," she added, having stood in line for two hours before realizing that the truck was out of food.

The most noticeable addition to this year's D-Day was the accommodation of NYS COVID-19 guidelines. According to Wulfenstein, activities were much more

spread out across Fauver Stadium, Library Lot, and the Fraternity Quad. Another change was that there was no headlining concert, although there were featured student bands and DJ's on the quad.

Additionally, many events were virtual to allow for remote student participation. There was a remote giveaway and activities such as a virtual murder mystery and virtual late night bingo. Despite the effort to make

the day safe and exciting, many students expressed their disappointment due to the weather and impending finals season, made worse by only a two-day reading period over next weekend.

"I thought it sucked," sophomore Jason Salmanowitz said. "The weather was awful, and the food truck lines translated to lots of wasted money. But those are my only complaints. Overall,

I just did not feel a vibe."

Sophomore Rachel Rountree expressed a similar sentiment. "It was cold, but fine," she said.

Many students stayed home entirely. Junior Sichoe Tsethar said she didn't go to campus at all. "I spent D-Day in my room stressing about finals."

"D-Day is cursed, but at least I made a friend while freezing to death."

Despite the weather and COVID-19 restrictions, many students who waited in lines for the food trucks in wind and hail said that they made friends and were glad to see people.

"D-Day is cursed, but at least I made a friend while freezing to death," sophomore Jerome Daniels said.

"Yeah, can't wait until next year's D-Day. Maybe it won't feel like purgatory with better weather and without a pandemic," Keffler added with a wink. "It can only go up from here."

Worley is a member of the Class of 2024.

CT EATS

By Sarah Woodams
STAFF WRITER

I discovered Boxcar Donuts through a repost on the @rochesterny Instagram account displaying their Buffalo Bills themed donuts. As a lifelong Bills fan, this picture sold me, and I immediately made plans to head over to the Public Market District to fulfill my newfound donut craving.

The interior of the shop is

open and bright, with large windows facing the street and plenty of seating — all accompanied by an industrial/modern theme. Their speciality is gourmet (expensive) donuts, but they also serve coffee, beer, and cocktails, along with some breakfast and lunch options.

As we all know, only the best of the visually appealing best make it to Instagram pages, and Boxcar Donuts

'Only the best make it to Instagram pages, and Boxcar Donuts is no different.'

is no different. While the donut itself was delicious — dense and rich, but not to a point where it was overwhelming — the icing calligraphy of "Go Bills" was a bit disappointing after

the beautiful writing published on their social media. In the end though, icing is icing, and it tasted great — even if it may not have been beautiful enough for any online advertisement.

Impressed by the quality of the donuts (much better than Dunkin' or Tim Hortons), I followed their Instagram page to stay updated on their menu options, which they post

weekly. This was how I found out about their Easter pre-order donuts. My family decided to order the set of Easter-themed ones for our dessert. The dozen donuts included three chocolate "birds nests," three carrot cake-flavored ones, three square ones with a peep on top of the center hole, and three cream filled eggs.

SEE **DONUTS** PAGE 3.

A Two Way Street: UR's Adherence to and Influence on Public Policy

By Micah Greenberg
SPECIAL PROJECTS

It's difficult to browse the University's website for long before coming across a mention of regulation or legislation that mandates how the University runs.

Because the University is such a large institution, it is directly affected by many aspects of government policy — but it also wields a lot of influence on those policies.

There are two offices at

the University who most directly interact with these government policies: The Office of Government and Community Relations (OGCR) works to shape policy, and the Office of Counsel works to ensure legal compliance with policy or to represent the University in the judicial system.

These offices are important to the University. Donna Gooden Payne, the University's General

Counsel, and Peter Robinson, the head of OGCR, are two of the 10 members of President Sarah Mangelsdorf's Senior Leadership Team, and both have the title of Vice President.

'It is directly affected by many aspects of government policy.'

As a 501(c)(3) educational

nonprofit organization, the University is somewhat limited in its advocacy abilities. It is not allowed to donate to campaigns directly or to publicly tell people to support specific candidates. Nonprofits can conduct lobbying activities, but they can't be a "substantial part of its overall activities." All of these limitations come with the benefits of being a nonprofit, though. Namely, the University is tax-exempt

and does not have to publicly report its donors.

But the University is allowed to influence policy through lobbying. OGCR publishes its state and federal legislative priorities, and requires that all lobbying for the University be done through OGCR. In their reports, they advocate for specific legislation, but not for or against any candidates.

SEE **POLICY** PAGE 2.

INSIDE
THIS CT

CLASS OF 2025
INSTAGRAM

PAGE 4 CAMPUS

BUILD A LOG
CABIN

PAGE 5 CULTURE

JOURNALISM IS
IMPORTANT

PAGE 9 OPINIONS

A NEW SA
PRESIDENT?

PAGE 12 HUMOR

CAMPUS

UR Professor is Helping Steer Campus Towards Herd Immunity



HENRY LITSKY / PHOTO EDITOR

By Natalie Fullerman
STAFF WRITER

Not all heroes wear capes. Some just have driver's licenses and big hearts.

This is the case for Dr. Greg Savich (affectionately called "Greg" by his students), an adjunct professor for the Institute of Optics. All New Yorkers aged 16 and older have been eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine since April 6.

Following this announcement, Savich took time out of his class period to share with his students all the necessary information for vaccination sites and sign-ups, should they choose to receive the

shot. Embedded in this discussion was his offer to personally drive students to their vaccines if they need a ride.

In an interview with the Campus Times, Savich acknowledged that, as with many aspects of adulthood, the process of obtaining a vaccine contains many barriers. He offered some commentary on pieces he had read about perceptions and realities of increased vaccine hesitancy among college-aged individuals, noting that "one way to fight hesitancy is to remove excuses."

This philosophy and his goal of helping his students achieve a vaccine comfort

level with minimal hesitancy inspired his transportation offer. However, Savich was careful during his class periods to not impose his personal beliefs on his students. He rather provided as many resources as possible to them so that they can make an educated decision concerning the vaccination, and if they chose to be vaccinated, he would minimize the barriers in the way of receiving a dose.

With further regards to the "why" of his offer, Savich discussed how he was a residential undergraduate on the River Campus for eight semesters, and can relate to the sense of geographical isolation students face at times. For on-campus UR students, it is no secret that transportation is a bit of a puzzle once they leave the bubble of River Campus and College Town.

The bus system is convenient and free, but with it comes the uncertainty of its ever-changing apps and unreliable scheduling. Students also have access to Ubers and ZipCars, but these options can be costly and time-consuming. However, until URMCM began advertising

student vaccine appointments, Yellowjackets who were eligible early were forced to find a site in the greater Rochester area if they wanted to be vaccinated, with students driving as far as Syracuse.

Savich extended his ride offer to both his UR and Monroe Community College students, yet described himself as "flabbergasted" when UR first-year Zach Sobel-Pressman, actually took him up on the offer. The pleasant surprise gifted both involved parties with a chance to connect on a deeper level than their biweekly Zoom lectures. Savich was honored that Sobel-Pressman felt comfortable enough with him to reach out. Sobel-Pressman was eligible for the vaccine before April 6, and thus had to travel off campus for his shots, so Savich's assistance in driving him to his second dose was very much appreciated.

Sobel-Pressman was eager to express his gratitude, saying, "I'm really lucky to have a professor as caring and selfless as Greg. I'm also happy that the University is now providing vaccines on

campus and at the Medical Center so they are more accessible to students who aren't fortunate enough to have professors like Greg." Savich's generosity eased a burden for Sobel-Pressman at a time when we can all benefit from extra kindness.

Savich confessed that, aside from the completion of his Ph.D., receiving his second vaccine dose was the event that eased his stress the most in his life. Naturally, he wanted to pay this forward. He has a reputation within the Institute of Optics for being an instructor that prioritizes students' needs and mental health, and he upheld this once again.

By taking actions as small as sending registration links in the Zoom chat during class and driving a student to their shot, Savich made an impact. I echo Sobel-Pressman's thankfulness in attending a university where professors such as Savich go above and beyond their job description, and willingly give their free time to help those with less access to resources.

Fullerman is a member of the Class of 2024.

UR's Influence on Public Policy is a Two-way Street

FROM **POLICY** PAGE 1.

The Office of Counsel does less to directly influence politics, but it legally represents the University or hires outside counsel to do so. That means that sometimes it argues in favor of different interpretations of laws and regulations. More commonly, though, the Counsel's Office tries to prevent any issue from being raised by interpreting government policies and advising the University on the best course of action that is in compliance.

OGCR publishes a report on its community benefit, highlighting the ways it benefits society. It points to the University's major capital investments, its innovation through research and fostering of entrepreneurship, its economic role in purchasing millions of dollars of goods from local vendors, and its ability to draw visitors to the city who spend money at local restaurants and hotels.

City Councillors Malik Evans and Mitch Gruber both said in interviews with the Campus Times that the most basic source of the University's influence is its economic impact, especially its role as the region's top employer. This means that the University has a profound impact on the region's economy, as its staff members spend money and are taxed in the region. The report quantifies the tax revenue

it generates at \$140 million.

But some don't think that's enough. OGCR's published priorities only focus on state and federal priorities. Gruber, along with his former doctoral advisor and Professor of History Stewart Weaver, argued that the University too often sees itself as a national or even global institution, and doesn't engage enough in the community. To them, the University has not kept up with its responsibility to the city, and as a result, they think a payment in lieu of taxes is necessary.

'The report quantifies the tax revenue it generates at \$140 million.'

Healthcare policy is a major focus of OGCR. A substantial portion of the University's revenues and expenses flow through UR Medicine, making it particularly important to the University. Government policy around research funding, healthcare regulation, and more recently, telehealth, have direct impacts on the financial success of the University. It is not surprising that all but one of the staff members at OGCR have URMCM email addresses.

It's also important to note that UR Medicine is not just a focus of the University's political agenda, but a key source of its power. It is one of the top hospital systems in the

country, and the largest and highest-acclaimed hospital in the region. If the state government wants to affect public health policy, it needs to work with URMCM to implement it.

But healthcare isn't entirely positive for the University's political image. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) violations caused the University to pay a \$3 million fine in 2019. And Daniel Prude's quick discharge from Strong Memorial Hospital earlier on the day he died has drawn public scrutiny.

Though UR Medicine is a major focus of OGCR and the Office of Counsel, many issues apply to the whole University.

Immigration issues are vital for securing a full student body and a high-quality faculty. When U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) issued a guidance last July that international students taking fully remote classes could not remain in the United States, the University joined a lawsuit filed by Harvard and MIT and issued a public statement calling the decision "cruel to the international students at our University and at other universities across the nation." The ICE guidance was quickly revoked.

This year, COVID-19-related guidelines have been another major aspect of the University's advocacy. County-level precautions meant various capacity caps

at events and dining halls. Meanwhile, health-related education policies set by the state threatened to put the University on "pause" if cases surged high enough. State policies also governed vaccine eligibility, while federal decisions such as the recent pause of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine by the Food & Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control caused hurdles for immunization efforts.

'Healthcare policy is a major focus of OGCR.'

Payne pointed out that despite the University's best efforts, policies are sometimes imposed that go against their goals. Specifically, shifting Title IX regulations in recent years under the Trump administration both clashed with the University's preferences and were difficult to adapt to. "We look to be compliant with rules and regulations," Robinson added, "even if we don't fully agree with them."

Some of the policies governing the University impose hard-and-fast requirements. For example, the University is never allowed to lie on disclosure reports or violate educational privacy laws.

But many of the rules and regulations governing the University are conditional.

The University is unable to support or oppose specific candidates for office not because it can't, but because doing so would threaten its nonprofit status, and it considers its nonprofit status more important than supporting or opposing political candidates.

Similarly, Title IV education funding is used by the government to influence what universities do. Though marijuana was recently legalized by the New York State government, the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act prevents cannabis use on college campuses that receive federal funding. This use of conditional aid to influence what the University does even manifests itself in the annual Constitution Day program put on by SA.

"By far, where we spend the majority of our time is on compliance," Payne said.

This seems to highlight the importance of politics at the University. Complying with rules and regulations and influencing them to better fit the institution's goals requires that the University act strategically and prioritize which things matter most. It makes sense that Payne and Robinson report directly to the President, because government policy so directly impacts the University's decision making.

Greenberg is a member of the Class of 2021.

Burnout Was a Big Deal this Past Spring

By Michelle Shuai
FEATURES EDITORS

By Melanie Earle
FEATURES EDITOR

After two and a half semesters of Zoom-education, UR students are ready for a change of pace. The modified schedules for the fall and spring semesters left students without the typical fall or spring break. Sporadic mental health days, one during the fall semester and two during the spring semester, were ineffective in mitigating student stress and burnout. To be clear, UR students are no stranger to burnout, but it has been particularly different this past year due to the academic conditions, global pandemic, and a challenging social climate.

Sophomore Jules Stewart saw a change in this past semester compared to previous COVID-19-impacted semesters. “It’s also been different this semester versus the fall or even spring 2020, because there was a lot more leniency, because everything was new online,” she said. Stewart added that “this semester, professors were like, ‘you guys understand how to do everything online,’ and [they’re] not as lenient in giving extensions or [understanding].”

Echoing Stewart’s experiences, junior Kate Lindsey described her experience burning

out faster this past semester than ever before. “COVID[-19] has definitely made the burnout hit quicker,” Lindsey said. “I’d say normally it’s about halfway through the semester, and I feel like at the end of February, I was already done.”

For junior Sophia Stafford, the lack of breaks and excessive time isolated in her room augmented her burnout. “I think a combination of no spring break, being in the library all day doing classes, and not walking around campus and seeing people in class really accelerated it,” she said.

The lack of break translated into “many months of just straight work” for first-year Joel DeVries. He felt that the lack of traditional breaks during the semester did not provide students with apt time to decompress and recharge from the academic course load. Although mental health days were provided, there was no opportunity for an actual break. Instead, he “ended up doing work on those days anyways, just because it was only one day.” He felt that completely removing spring break from the 2021 schedule was a mistake, saying, “Spring break is very important just to give people a break [within] the semester.”

The challenges online courses brought persisted from previous semesters, but seemed especially difficult this semester.

“I’d say focus is probably one

of the hardest things, and the fact that [...] I’ve had experiences with professors thinking that because things are online, we have more time, which is definitely not the case [...] It’s just overwhelming,” Take-Five Scholar Toni Hahn said. “When you have more work and less focus, nothing gets done, and you’re just stressed and it’s an endless cycle.”

Sophomore Elaina Beittel had similar experiences with a never-ending workload. Beittel said, “I just don’t have the motivation to even begin any of my assignments, and it all just piles up and I get super stressed.”

Stewart found it hard to work over Zoom. “Usually when you meet in person to do either group projects or even to go to class, it’s a sense of togetherness that you get,” Stewart said. “When you’re just on the Zoom, it’s you alone and [so I] personally don’t feel as motivated. I think that meeting with people motivates me a lot to try harder and get my work done.”

However, Stewart did not know about available resources to address her burnout. “I know there’s UCC, [but then again] there’s also a huge wait time,” Stewart said. “It could just be that I don’t know what resources exist, because I ignore a lot of emails that I’ve gotten. There’s so many because of everything, so I’ve stopped reading them, so there could be events or other things that are offered that I’m just unaware of right now. This is even normal in normal times — I didn’t really think there were a lot of options for students.”

Students overwhelmingly looked forward to the summer and having a break from school. “I’m hopeful, but it’s almost over,” Lindsey said. “I think I have something to look forward to, because summer is almost here, and we only have about a week left.”

Earle and Shuai are members of the Class of 2023.

CT EATS

Delectable Delightful Donuts



COURTESY OF INSTAGRAM @BXC

Instagram’s donuts (above) were prettier than what I got, but mine were still delicious.

from **Donuts** Page 1

I personally ate about two-thirds of a cream filled egg and a quarter of a peep donut. The cream was very thick and custard-like and took up much more of the egg than I was expecting. I wanted more of the actual donut part, so I cut up one of the peep donuts. It also heated up great in the microwave the next day.

There’s not much to say about the carrot cake donuts (they tasted like carrot cake), and I was told the chocolate birds nest donuts tasted rather cake-like with some crunchy pieces that may have been

pretzels making up the “nest,” along with some chocolate candies for the eggs.

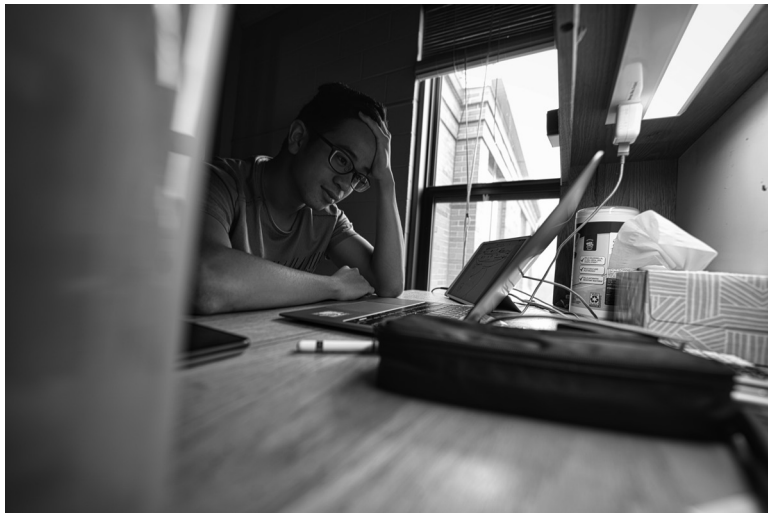
You can order from Boxcar Donuts on Grubhub, but after reading some of the reviews, I would recommend a visit in person, as you apparently can’t choose which flavors you get online.

Overall, I would recommend visiting Boxcar Donuts if you have a serious sweet tooth for donuts. Additionally, you can pair your trip with a visit to the Public Market, which is only a short walk up the street.

Woodams is a member of the Class of 2023.



SARAH WOODAMS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



COURTESY OF BANKRUPT PHOTOGRAPHER

A Review of the Spring Semester’s Mental Health Advocacy

By Haven Worley
NEWS EDITOR

Conversations about mental health have sprung up within the Rochester community, inspired by cruel incidences such as the murder of Daniel Prude. Similarly, the UR community has been significantly impacted by recent events surrounding mental health.

There are many resources for UR students, both remote and on-campus, although most have been entirely online due to the pandemic. Resources that support students who are struggling include the University Counseling Center (UCC), the UR CARE Network, UR Connected, the Health Promotion Office, and many more. Because of the critical nature of the pandemic and social justice issues that have occurred throughout the year, students have felt it important to review mental health advocacy for the Spring 2021 semester, and how it will continue

for the upcoming in-person Fall 2021 semester.

UR Connected coach and first-year Karenrose Kamala shared her thoughts on how the surrounding community impacts the institution’s approach to mental health: “UR tends to forget that they’re part of the Rochester community as a whole, and there’s definitely a responsibility to play their part, especially when people’s health is on the line. As for improvements, I think UR just needs to be more cognizant of their impact, and they also need to more actively listen to students.”

‘the UR community has been significantly impacted by recent events surrounding mental health.’

CARE Network Associate Director Kaitlin Legg told the Campus Times in an interview that as a part of their service,

the CARE Network works with students to “better understand what resources work for the [student’s] situation.” If a student doesn’t feel comfortable with an institutional resource, UCC or the CARE Network can direct them towards off-campus resources.

Senior Antoinette Nguyen, a core leader of the UR Abolition Coalition (URAC), agreed that students may feel uncomfortable with institutional resources because they “are made by people of higher power,” which makes students worry: “Is that really a safe space?”

Likewise, it can be a challenge to analyze how students have grown through mental health programs without direct feedback.

Associate Director for University Health Promotion Amy McDonald recognized the difficulty of evaluating the success of these programs. Despite the challenge, she says that UHS “creates measurable objectives

ahead of time, and then has an evaluation afterwards and is able to track if we met those objectives.”

According to Nguyen, race also plays a role in making mental health advocacy on campus more difficult. “Mental health is a very white concept in everybody’s head,” she said. “Some are allowed to have mental health problems, and some are not, because of all these other structures that exist.”

“Especially as an Asian person, my family has so many taboos around therapy and mental health resources. They’re refugees, so they’re like, ‘There’s bigger problems,’ and I think that’s a very pervasive thought in a lot of communities of color and ethnically non-white communities. So deconstructing that is something that I want to dedicate my life to,” Nguyen continued.

There are diverse on-campus spaces for students of color, first-generation/low-income students, LGBTQ+ students,

and students with disabilities. These spaces include the Kearns Center, the Womanist Club, and the Black Student Union, but Nguyen wishes that those spaces had more funding from the University.

Similarly, Kamala said that it’s the student coaches that makes UR Connected more approachable. “Sometimes you just need someone who can kind of relate more closely. I know a lot of the feedback we get, people mention that talking to coaches can feel like talking to a friend.”

Still, students like Nguyen have concerns for how the University is supporting student mental health advocates.

“We are creating space. We are carving out space to heal for specific racialized events, which I think is really good,” Nguyen said. “I just wish that the University gave more support, instead of always having it all on the students.”

Worley is a member of the Class of 2024.

Instant (IG) Community: An Insider’s Guide to @urochester.2025



By Alyssa Koh
HUMOR EDITOR

For the class of 2025, there are no accepted students’ days or on-campus meetups. As a result, most incoming first-years have been unable to interface with the University in any substantial way. To make up for it, students have taken it upon themselves to connect virtually through social media. Take the UR Class of 2025 Instagram account, similar to those for other colleges across the country. The premise of these accounts are pretty standard and straightforward — accepted students send in photos of themselves with a short bio, so future classmates can scope them out as potential friends or roommates. However, UR’s Class of 2025 account differs in a couple of ways. In order to provide students with information about campus life, the account admin set up collaborations with

various student organizations and on-campus residents. They’ve partnered with the UR representative for the custom clothing company UTees to make Class of 2025 shirts, and even set up Instagram takeovers with students on campus to give more personal accounts of life in Rochester. Because of its success, the *Campus Times* set up a Zoom interview with the account owner, who asked to be referred to as Maverick to maintain anonymity runs the account alone, coming to UR after a gap year. Initially, Maverick noticed the importance of similar Instagram accounts last year through friends who applied in the Class of 2024, who utilized social media to figure out the general vibes of the student body of each university they were considering. After they were accepted on March 24, they didn’t see

anything on Instagram for UR, which was surprising to them considering that early decisions applicants had already been yellowjackets months. Thus, they decided to make the account themselves as a way to help them understand the gist of UR from a different perspective. When questioned about other platforms for incoming students, they mentioned the existence of a Discord server and Facebook account. However, it was noted that both platforms have the issues of being more private and thus less open to browsing, which is a main benefit of a public Instagram account. To start advertising, they began following accounts through the UR Admissions Instagram page that interacted with the page and had a class year in their bio. After one hour, they had an incoming student reach out with a post for the account, and since then, they have accumulated over 800 followers and over 200 posts. Maverick stressed the importance of being a gap year student because the number of people reaching out to submit bios/photos renders the commitment of maintaining the account very time-consuming: they receive about 10 submissions a day, and post hourly. Despite the issue, they noted that “[the account] is giving [them] a really unique and fun experience

and getting [them] closer to the school in a very new way.” While most submissions are nice and polite, Maverick has had some bad experiences from trolls. As a way

‘For the class of 2025, there are no accepted students’ days or on-campus meetups.’

to combat this issue, the account requires some sort of proof that account submissions are coming from actually accepted 2025 students. When it comes to the posts chosen for their Instagram story, any UR organizations are welcome to send information to the account to advertise as a form of mutual support. For instance, group chats for the Class of 2025 and Discord servers have been promoted, as well as events for on-campus groups such as Vocal Point’s recent spring show livestream and HerCampus Rochester’s events. Interest floors such as MIF and Greenspace have also promoted through the 2025 account. In addition, the account was contacted by Patio, which is a new platform for college students that creates group chats where you match with students based on interests and can engage with others in a virtual group setting. They

signed a contract with Patio in order to promote their service to UR students, but there has been a low rate of engagement due to the preexisting Discord server and Facebook account, which already fill that niche. When it comes to the T-shirts that were made, the students who run UTees at UR decided to reach out to the 2025 account to ask about merch ideas. Since creating the page, the admin’s main push was to set up Q&As with current students. After initially reaching out to Class Council (to no avail), they continued to contact students who were engaging with the account in order to see if anyone was interested, which was how first-year Shamsul Chowdhury was the first student to participate in an Instagram takeover. Since then, all other takeovers have been students who have reached out to the account themselves. Currently, over 10 students have reached out to do a takeover, but others are encouraged to contact the account through Instagram DM. Although not an official UR organization, UR Admissions does follow the Class of 2025 Instagram (thus making it as legitimate as you can get). The account will continue throughout the summer, and Maverick plans to do an identity reveal before students get to campus in August.

Koh is a member of the Class of 2024.

CONGRATS SENIOR CT MEMBERS!

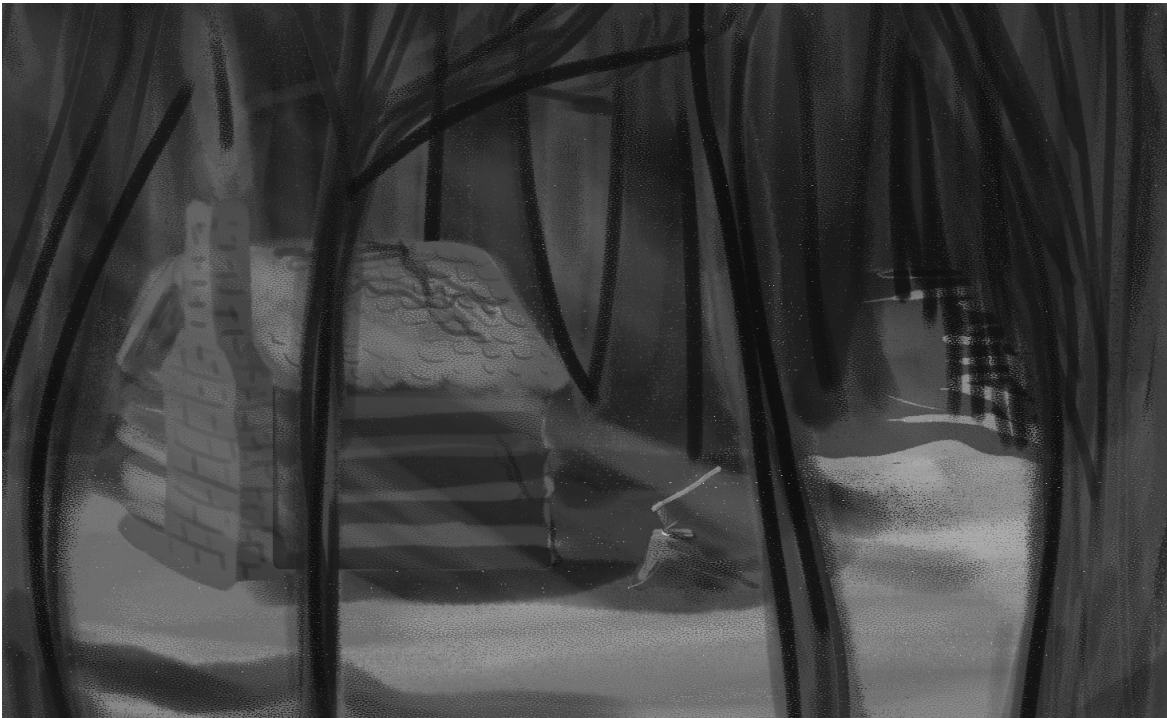
Thank you to our graduating seniors (and take-fives) for all your hard work and continued commitment to the CT. This paper, and all of us who work on it, would be worse without you. Long Sundays in the office will never be the same. We wish you the best.

Meliora,
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CULTURE

Go Off the Grid and Build a Log Cabin



RACHEL KAMATA/ILLUSTRATIONS STAFF

By Jacob Hanley
CULTURE EDITOR

That’s what 18-year-old Erik Grankvist did right after graduating high school in 2019. With only a few simple tools and no prior construction experience, Grankvist set out into the vast Swedish wilderness to realize his dream of building a secluded log cabin by hand — all by himself.

With no construction crew or complex machinery, Grankvist chopped down trees, built a stone foundation, and stacked logs on top of one another to create his humble off-the-grid home. The entire project is documented on Grankvist’s YouTube channel, where viewers can find several videos of his journey — from braving the Swedish winter to learning how to throw axes.

I must admit that when I first heard about Grankvist’s project, my initial thought was: “But what about college?” Did this man have any long-term plans for his future that didn’t involve building a log cabin? What about building a steady career path? Did he consider constructing a reliable retirement fund?

But as these questions were running through my mind, another one struck me: “Why does it matter?”

Why do we so often measure success by amount of schooling or the perceived longevity of a stable career path? If building a log cabin alone in the middle of a Swedish forest will make you happy, then why wouldn’t you pursue that over a 9-5, even if it might mean you make less money in the long run? Who’s telling you that pursuing such a project isn’t the “right” choice? Happiness, success, and what ultimately brings you peace is a deeply personal matter, and the pursuit of those things

shouldn’t be dictated or influenced by a money-minded, often greed-based world.

Now, I can’t say that I know the specifics of Grankvist’s personal life, financial situation, or career path; he could have a perfectly stable, well-paying job that he manages to work in conjunction with his off-the-grid project. But that’s besides the point. Even if he doesn’t, he is still completely dedicating himself to and actualizing his dream. How many of us can honestly say that we’re doing the same? What does the trivial acquisition of wealth matter if it stops you from fulfilling a lifelong goal? Why would you pursue a career for the money if it requires you to spend most of your time doing something you don’t like?

Obviously, I can’t overlook the fact that in our current society, some amount of money is needed for basic needs and comforts. It’s just the world we live in. But most people shoot for luxurious or comfortable lifestyles well above this minimum requirement. Of course, there is absolutely nothing wrong with this; it’s a personal decision. A lot of people are happy and comfortable in materialism. It’s just that far too often, this decision is seen as an unbreakable norm, or the only true career choice. But pursuit of a lucrative career shouldn’t come at the expense of sacrificing or diluting a dream — or even just weakening our dedication to something that is personally important.

We choose jobs or education paths that we think will make us happy in the long run, but in doing so, we overlook activities and passions that make us happy in the present. Having lots of money in retirement would make anybody happy, but if you spend decades miserable

to accrue that wealth, was it worth it? In fact, such activities don’t just constitute present-moment happiness. Commitment to a passion or even something that brings you peace is an invaluable long-term investment.

Grankvist will have that log cabin for the rest of his life. Even if his retirement fund is slightly smaller because he dedicated a great deal of time to this project — who cares? He’ll be an old man sitting by the fire in his cabin, enjoying the satisfaction that comes from years of hard work. He spent his time on something that he’s proud of. Even if the financial inheritance he passes down to his children is not as large as it would have been had he not pursued this dream, they’ll still be inheriting the fruits of their father’s labor in an arguably much more personal and meaningful manner.

Besides, the fulfillment of a dream and the acquisition of great wealth are obviously not always mutually exclusive — if you really want to become a famous movie star, that’s amazing. Go for it. But vast financial success shouldn’t determine whether or not you pursue that dream. If tapping trees on a maple farm for a living brings you peace, then that’s amazing, too.

I know it’s easy to talk a big game. It’s not as easy to drop out of school and pursue your wildest fantasy full-time. But regardless of your dream, you don’t necessarily have to. What matters is that you never lose sight of what is truly important to you and where your passions lie, even if you can’t put everything else on hold. So, in the midst of the rat race, tree by tree, don’t forget to build your log cabin.

Hanley is a member of the Class of 2023.

Becoming an Artist and Mixologist at Sip and Paint

By Sarah Woodams
STAFF WRITER

In dire need of a break from finals, I went to a “Sip and Paint Study Break” last thursday. Co-sponsored by the Creative Arts Club and the UHS Health Promotion Office I learned how to watercolor paint a cherry blossom branch and made a so-called “Yellow Jacket Mocktail.”

The event was led by student artist junior Naushin Khan, along with senior Alma Petras, the outgoing Creative Arts Club president. I was not one of the first 25 people to register, so I sadly didn’t get a free watercolor set and had hit Michael’s for the cheapest one I could find. I’ll admit — I was quite salty when not even 25 people showed up. However, once I got over it (after reminding myself it was only \$6), the event was quite relaxing, as I painted delicate pink cherry blossoms onto my thin branch.

Kahn and Petras gave us tips on how to make good sakura petals, such as adding a little bit of red to the center, along with some yellow dots to represent the stamen, and starting with a layer of light pink and adding a darker pink toward the middle. Kahn also shared some fun facts about sakura. She mentioned something about all the cherry trees in the U.S. originally coming from Japan, and the National Parks Service article detailing the over a century long timeline of the U.S. and Japan exchanging trees.

You know when you’re painting or drawing something and you reach an impasse? Do you add more, or do you leave the piece as it is? Most of the time when I add more, I ruin the entire thing. I can’t tell if I did that with my watercolor cherry blossom, but overall it came out looking better than the lilac I made with the Rochester Brainerd a few weeks ago.

After finishing my painting, I turned to making one of the mocktails from the recipes

sent to us before the event. I chose the 4-star difficulty rated Yellow Jacket mocktail over the 1-star Life’s a Beach (which was literally just pouring three drinks together).

I boiled an absurd amount of blueberries, sugar, and water, mashed it all together, and strained it to make blueberry syrup and juiced a half lemon. The instructions said to be “mindful not to mix the ingredients” in the glass, yet that was physically and seemingly scientifically impossible as my lemon juice immediately dissolved into the blueberry syrup.

Ideally, I’d imagine they would remain separate, forming blue-ish and yellow sections of liquid for our school colors. Instead, after adding the final ingredient, water (didn’t have sparkling), I got a raspberry colored drink that I garnished with a lemon wedge, tropical umbrella, and red straw. I felt like a real bartender using my parents’ mini measuring cup for the syrup. Also, like a bartender, I did not drink my own creation. I instead passed it on to my mom, who actually enjoys sugary drinks.

‘The event was quite relaxing, as I painted delicate pink cherry blossoms onto my thin branch.’

Her review? “Yum!” When asked for more details she responded that it was quite sweet and fruity, with a little tang.

Watercolors are such a fun and mostly stress-free medium that I’d like to get into more in the future. I mostly make digital art with photography and graphic design, so it’s fun to get more hands on with other kinds of projects. I have an extra 1.5 cups of blueberry syrup, so I will also need to find a way to use that soon. Blueberry syrup on the rocks, anyone?

Woodams is a member of the Class of 2023.



SARAHWOODAMS/STAFF WRITER

Working at the Moorings

By Fabian Halblander
STAFF WRITER

A light snow freckles the path at my feet. It's an aching kind of cold. I doubt any of the residents are outside right now — except maybe Joe, because no force of nature or weary healthcare worker could keep that old man from waddling about the complex as he pleased. He wasn't allowed sugar, but you could count on him to ask you for a soda on the down-low.

I work at a retirement home called The Moorings, where things operate at a walker-assisted hobble. Stroll around on any given day — there are residents gazing, some blissfully and others with a certain aura of disappointment, out at the pond. The swans that live there (nasty things) poke and bite at the ground-level picture windows like they want to speak to admin. Yet, from a different picture window overlooking the pond, these thick-necked Karen birds are pieces of fine china. Porcelain beasts are the marvels of the complex — they compete with the weather in terms of conversational relevance.

It's all very even-keel, obvious, often boring. But after a semester in the throes of college life at UR, in the type-A frenzy chamber, I savor that kind of boredom. Usually they have me pouring soda and scooping fruit cups in assisted living, the Highlands, the home to residents who live semi-independently. Many of them are in the earlier stages of dementia or otherwise semi-lucid.

Most of us wait staff are just a tiny bit, maybe begrudgingly, attached to the Highlands residents. It's the kind of attachment that surfaces when you, with an eye-roll, grab Mrs. Nitchall's prune juice for the thirty-seventh time. An outside observer might mistake it for exasperation.

When Mr. Becker bats at his wheat roll with a thick, veiny finger and insists sternly in his German accent that

he wants a "yellow one" instead, you complain out of obligation as a part-time food service worker. But, at least for me, it's hard not to get all smiley and misty-eyed on your way down to the kitchen for it. A typical shift in the Highlands is chock-full of these sorts of partly annoying, partly funny, and (in a way) serious interactions.

There's Laura and Rico. Their TV speaker is distorted beyond all reason, but they don't seem bothered, because the news is always cranked. Laura makes it her duty to get up and let us know which of the dishes we are allowed to clear and which ones we aren't, one by one. This one, but not that one; that one, but not this one. Rico doesn't say much. Four cranberry juices, two each, which often go unfinished.

There's Mrs. Stitt, who has an elementary school named after her. She once gushed to me about it over an order of fresh oranges that she'd asked for. She prefers NPR over television, and it smells like flowers and oatmeal-raisin cookies in her suite. Immaculate vibes. A glass of water for her.

There are the Lydons. Mr. Lydon is an open-hearted teddy bear of a man in a wheelchair with a slight memory problem. He likes to talk Chicago sports and seems to spend a lot of time waiting for his wife to get home. Mrs. Lydon is more guarded and calculated, with no memory issues of her own. She looks out for Mr. Lydon, but they need each other equally. Two cokes.

'After a semester at UR, I savor that kind of boredom.'

Mrs. Mackeever. Gone now, but you'd better get her exactly three dishes of ketchup, or who knows how she'd react? I do — she once threatened to "growl and bite" at me when I foolishly offered her two, which turned out not to be

an empty threat. A fabled exchange between a wait staff member and Mrs. Mackeever goes something like this:

"Nice walker Mrs. Mackeever."

"Thanks, I got it for my birthday."

"Oh? When was your birthday?"

"Seven years ago..."

I'd be lying if I said I remembered what she liked to drink. Cranberry juice is the default.

There's Sue Wilson. It's refreshing to deliver to her room, because otherwise I am subconsciously absorbing FOX news all day — her rare propensity for CNN is a detox from all the dog-whistling. This past winter, sometimes I'd stick around for a few minutes so we could shake our heads in mutual disappointment at the TV. Coffee.

There was Mrs. Sadler, gone now I think. Several times when I've offered her a drink — as in V8 or prune juice — she'd look up at me with a wry, unknowing smile and ask, "At this hour?" We once made uncomfortably intense eye-contact as she licked chocolate cream pie off of her (for some reason) knife. Wine?

I could go on. When I come back from college, I am comforted to see that not much has changed at The Moorings. Things go a bit too fast in college sometimes, and it's nice to be reminded that there are other paces to life. Less frenzied ones.

We'll all keep seeking internships and love and sex and clout and whatnot, as it should be, but I think it pays off to slow down every so often. While many of us are forced to the brink of insanity and driven to question our entire life direction on a weekly basis, Mr. Becker bats at his wheat roll, Mr. Lydon waits for Mrs. Lydon, and Mrs. Stitt sits happily at her radio with dinner and the evening traffic report.

Halblander is a member of the Class of 2023.

LIV ON THE EDGE

Have A Great Summer?



HENRY LITSKY / PHOTO EDITOR

By Olivia Alger
MANAGING EDITOR

It's finals season, which means we're final-ly near the end of the school year and summertime is fast approaching. Change is in the air: it's Taurus season, there was a supermoon last week, and I'm getting my second dose of the vaccine next week. Over the course of the next few months, things will only continue to change dramatically as people finish their vaccinations and we all return to campus in the fall, which has me feeling both excited and nervous.

Last week, I was nostalgically scrolling through my photo library and came across a picture of Eastman Quad I took in fall of 2019. It was completely unrecognizable — choked with people running to class, brushing against one another, out of breath, maskless.

'That time feels so distant I can barely remember it.'

That time, although only just over a year ago, feels so distant I can barely remember it. Now, the hallways are almost completely deserted. We're scattered all across the world. Of the few students who aren't remote, I don't recognize anyone underneath their masks. I haven't had an in-person class since March 2020. The college experience, as we once knew it, has completely transformed.

Going back to in-person class for my final year of college feels surreal. I've been looking at my computer for over a year nonstop, and my world has been almost entirely virtual. What's it going to feel

like to be in class face-to-face again? What's it going to feel like to sit in-person, side by side, with my peers?

The pandemic continues to rage onward, but things are not the same as they once were — slowly but surely, things in Rochester are crawling back to some semblance of normalcy. Concerts are returning. Restaurants are open again. Even movie theaters have begun holding showings. Come September, this city will feel entirely different.

'The pandemic continues to rage onward, but things are not the same as they once were.'

But what does "back to normal" even mean? Businesses are opening up again and society is returning to its old habits, but I'm not sure I ever will. The pandemic has affected my perception of the world indefinitely. I am not the same person I was in March 2020, and I'm not sure how my newfound perspective will adjust to in-person classes again.

'I am not the same person I was in March.'

But we have a whole three months of summer until we see each other again on campus. Until then, have a great summer (remember when we used to write H.A.G.S. in each other's yearbooks with a glitter gel pen?) and keep in touch. I'll see you soon.

Alger is a member of the Class of 2022.



JANE PRITCHARD / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

Write for the
Campus Times

editor@campustimes.org

CONGRATULATIONS

Class of 2021

Thank you for all you did during your time here at UR. It was our pleasure to cover you. We wish you luck in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,
The Campus Times



OPINIONS

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

Next Semester, Remember This Pandemic

By Ethan Busch
PUBLISHER



HENRY LITSKY/PHOTO EDITOR

Several Members of the *Campus Times* staff the night this paper was produced.

This year has been a year of figuring it out as you go for everyone, the *Campus Times* included. Next year will be, too. My Publisher predecessor, An Nguyen, wrote that the *Campus Times* would return to print, “Because the physical is not yet obsolete.” I think everyone has learned this at some point in the past year. Maybe it was when you zoned out of the 100th Zoom lecture, maybe it was being unable to perform music live, or maybe it was just not hugging your friends.

‘When we do our best work, we represent the memory of the student body.’

We’ve done our best to cover both the events that have continued through the pandemic, and the events of the pandemic itself. The University’s response to it (both in spring 2020 and throughout this past academic year). The toll it’s taken on the student body. We’ve covered the changes to life on campus, and what it’s like to be a college student right now. If I’ve learned anything about CT as Publisher, it’s that when we do our best work, we represent the memory of the student body. In a decade, anyone who was a student during this pandemic will be long gone. Hell, almost no one on campus will remember the University’s response to Trump being elected President next year. But our coverage of it will still be around. Want to know what UR students thought of Obama’s election? Or Reagan’s? Look at our archives. There are PDFs of *Campus Times* print issues going back decades. Next semester the school plans to return to normal as much as possible. Whatever normal is. The reality is that next year we will have to figure

out a new normal, as cliché as it sounds. Professors will have to relearn and replan their courses for the second time in two years, clubs will have to go back to figuring out how to run in-person events, students will have to readjust to studying together. As much as I welcome the return of a noisy iZone, I also recognize that it may be jarring for many who aren’t used to it. CT is going to have to figure out how to get back to normal, too. Normal weekly meetings, with a handful of college students trying to wrangle two dozen others into a coherent assembly. Normal production nights, with fun and distractions and a little bit of chaos in the Graphic Arts Suite. And normal reporting, with writers actually being able to go ask questions and observe events beyond what we can see through a screen. A lot of the new normals of next year will be newsworthy. Changes to academic, residential, dining, and other policies will need to be covered. New hires, new clubs, and new programs will pop up, and the *Campus Times* will be there to cover it.

‘The reality is that next year we will have to figure out a new normal, as cliché as it sounds.’

A lot is going to change next year, and we will spend a lot of time documenting it. If you’d like to help us do that by writing, taking pictures, illustrating, or editing, let us know. None of us are going to forget this year, but the students of the future won’t remember it. We can only leave them our notes through old copies of the student newspaper. Hopefully that’s enough for things to keep improving. *Busch is a member of the Class of 2023.*

EDITORIAL BOARD

Fun Ways to Ignore Your Problems

We all had our piece of emotional support media that helped get us through the quarantine. To celebrate what feels like the end of a year in isolation, the Editorial Board wanted to give a shout-out to the activities and entertainment that got us out of our heads while we were stuck in our homes. They might be tainted for us forever, but the list below was such legitimately good content that we can’t recommend it enough for your post-finals, pre-move out inevitable binge. **Cowboy Bebop (TV):** Bad news first, it’s an an*me. Now that only the cool kids are left reading, onto the good stuff. “Cowboy Bebop” is the quintessential ’90s anime. Set in the year 2070, and made in the year 1998, the show follows a young, charismatic, cocky bounty hunter, Spike, and his crotchety, seasoned veteran of a partner, Jet, through the galaxy on their spaceship (called the Bebop). Sure, the show can be a bit cheesy — everyone’s got a dark past, everyone’s got a love interest they lost, left, or learned from — but the creators more than make up for it with their attention to detail and sense of humor. **Bojack Horseman (TV):** Chances are, you’ve either watched this show before or heard way too

much about it for your liking. If you’re in the latter group, then I humbly invite myself to the chorus of voices telling you to watch this show already, goddammit. It follows BoJack, a narcissistic yet self-hating former TV star, as he tries to improve himself against his own instincts. This is a show that has a lot to say about abuse, glamorized mental illness, sexism, and basically any other staple of Hollywood(d), and it doesn’t pull its punches. **Jomboy Media (YouTube):** Enjoy watching baseball? No? Me neither. Jomboy Media somehow makes me enjoy it anyways. He doesn’t limit himself to baseball but he also spends a lot of time doing play-by-play for parts of baseball that mainstream media won’t. Like pitchers throwing up, or dugout clearing brawls. And somehow, in between all that, he makes you like baseball enough to pay attention when he breaks the story on how the Astros won a world series by cheating. **Yoga With Adriene (YouTube):** uring the shitshow that was 2020, I often found myself too sad or scared to do anything but lay down in bed. I’ve never been one for fitness, but after the first semester of online school ended almost a year ago, I found my little body was craving some more attention. Enter Yoga with Adriene, perhaps the gentlest, most

wholesome YouTube channel on the internet. Adriene has videos for people of all levels, from beginner yoga practitioners to seasoned masters. Her incredibly soothing voice will tell you that “it’s okay” if you can’t stretch that far and to “take a break” if you can’t touch your toes. If you’re afraid of intense physical activity but want something physical to relax your mind, body, and soul, this is the channel for you. **William Maranci’s Mashups (Music):** The self-declared “CEO of cursed mashups,” Maranci really knows how to pick combinations that are... memorable. Sometimes they flop, and other times you don’t know one of the songs being combined, but when it works, it SLAPS. **Fyre: The Greatest Party That Never Happened (Movie):** During quarantine, we were looking to distract ourselves from the clusterfuck that was the COVID-19 pandemic. A great way to do that was by focusing on a different clusterfuck entirely, and there’s none more entertaining than Fyre Festival. Remember Fyre Fest? The luxury music festival that went so horribly wrong? It’s the perfect combination of beautiful, sweeping drone shots of the Bahamas and rich kids getting scammed. There’s no greater schadenfreude than watching Fyre come crashing down in real time.

This editorial is published with the consent of a majority of the Editorial Board: Hailie Higgins (Editor-in-Chief), Ethan Busch (Publisher), Lucy Farnham (Opinions Editor), Micah Greenberg (Special Projects), Corey Miller-Williams (Managing Editor) and Olivia Alger (Managing Editor). The Editor-in-Chief and the Editorial Board make themselves available to the UR community’s ideas and concerns. Email editor@campustimes.org.

Campus Times

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WILSON COMMONS 103A
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER, ROCHESTER, NY 14627
OFFICE: (585) 275-5942 / FAX: (585) 273-5303
CAMPUSTIMES.ORG / EDITOR@CAMPUSTIMES.ORG

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The Equality Act Isn’t The Free-For-All Conservatives Claim

By Mattie Martin-Olenski
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR

As transgender individuals face mounting attacks on their basic rights, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Equality Act at the end of February 2021. Passage of the Equality Act would provide explicit anti-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people in workplaces, federally funded programs, housing, education, and other public spaces. Now in the Senate, the bill is being hotly debated. While the bill is designed to rectify longstanding and well documented transphobic discrimination, the bill’s opponents are aggressively scrutinizing the benefits trans individuals stand to gain. Specifically, their wrath has focused on the provision that would strengthen trans individuals’ right to gender-affirming healthcare. Ironically, the sweeping changes terrifying conservative lawmakers are unlikely to occur. The Equality Act will have more symbolic than tangible impacts on healthcare access. Since the bill lacks specific language which guarantees gender-affirming care to trans patients, trans individuals can still be denied care under the Equality Act, but now they have the law slightly more on their side should they take it to court.

Trans folks can be



BRIDGET TOKIWA/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

denied access to care if they’re Medicaid beneficiaries. This is because states can choose what services their Medicaid programs provide. Right now, 12 of 50 states have language denying Medicaid beneficiaries from accessing gender-affirming care by either explicitly or implicitly delineating those services under the category of “cosmetic and experimental surgery,” which isn’t covered by Medicaid. And while passing the Equality Act would require all healthcare providers to administer basic care to transgender patients, it wouldn’t explicitly guarantee transition-related care because these categories of treatment would still not be covered.

For comparison, even after the Affordable Care Act

(ACA) required states to provide gender-affirming services under Medicaid in 2016, most states were slow to adjust their Medicaid policies accordingly. In many states, explicit denial of care was replaced by underhanded categorization of many necessary surgeries as “cosmetic,” effectively circumventing that aspect of the ACA. In the absence of a clear requirement for coverage of gender-affirming care, it’s likely that many organizations will still try to discriminate against trans folks on the grounds of religious or moral objections as they did with the ACA.

However, this issue reaches beyond the 13% of trans individuals covered by Medicaid. The Equality Act would only guarantee access to care for

Medicaid beneficiaries, and other trans people — particularly those covered by private insurance — would still be at risk for discrimination. Private insurers aren’t held to the same standards as federally funded programs like Medicaid, so they can place exclusions (provisions that eliminate health-care coverage for particular services) on gender-affirming surgeries. Right now, private insurers categorize gender-affirming surgeries as experimental or aesthetic, which makes necessary healthcare unaffordable for most trans people.

UR students can count themselves lucky that the school-sponsored insurance, provided through Aetna, has covered transition-related surgery and some services since 2014. While the policy

could be improved to more accurately address transgender care, it’s still better than some other public or private insurance policies.

The importance of gender-affirming care for the health of transgender individuals cannot be overemphasized. Gender-affirming care, including hormone therapy and gender confirmation surgery (GCS), is agreed upon by professional medical societies as the recommended treatment to alleviate depression, anxiety, and stress brought on by improper gender expression and to improve quality of life for trans persons. Additionally, studies have shown GCS has an approximately equal rate of complications as similar surgeries, and patients post-surgery are highly satisfied, with regret rates hovering around 1%.

If the Equality Act is passed, trans and non-binary individuals would become more empowered advocates for their health, but contrary to its detractors’ concerns, it won’t necessarily lead to widespread access to gender-affirming care. Federal legislation guaranteeing access to gender-affirming therapies and surgeries for transgender patients is also necessary to ensure that transgender and gender non-conforming folks get the care they deserve.

Martin-Olenski is a member of the Class of 2022.

The Value of Journalism: A Senior’s Farewell

By Eddie Hock
STAFF WRITER

It’s hard for me to believe, but I’ve been writing for the Campus Times for almost four years now. Barring some seriously unexpected circumstances, this will be my last article for the paper, as I graduate in a month.

It feels strange. I’ve written dozens of pieces for the majority of the CT’s sections at this point, covering everything from politics to student theater to competitive Tetris, but there’s still so much more for me to talk about. I’m not a journalism major, and I certainly don’t have any plans to work directly in the field after I graduate, but there’s something about this job that keeps drawing me back. There’s



BRIDGET TOKIWA/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

something about journalism that feels extremely important. But what is it?

“Journalism” as a term defies easy definition. In a vacuum, it’s not super intuitive that opinion pieces, media criticism, the reporting of news, candid photography, and just about everything else that belongs in a newspaper really, truly belong in a newspaper of all things. Yet there’s a harmony to a well-organized and diverse paper, a balance between style and substance, and an assertion that everything is just where it needs to be. The job of a good presentations department is to ensure that balance, crafting a structure for the paper that makes navigating between sections easy for those only interested in some and fun for those who want to

take their time with the whole publication.

A completed unit of journalism — a newspaper — clearly has a reason for being, and is a great way to spend your morning, but providing entertainment over breakfast doesn’t really explain what journalism actually is. But the “what” doesn’t really matter; it’s easier to understand journalism if you consider not what it is, but what it does.

Unlike most writing, good journalism doesn’t justify itself; instead, it’s justified by its subject. A great opinions piece expresses, well, an insightful opinion about something. A news article talks about current events. A review, naturally, reviews something. Sports writing can accomplish all of the above. This drive — to comment, to explore, to investigate — is why satire feels so much more at home in newspaper humor sections than other varieties of comedy writing. Satire is to comedy as news coverage is to nonfiction.

Maybe all this isn’t some kind of groundbreaking realization, but I think it helps explain what it is about journalism that keeps me coming back. The process of journalism is to build a bridge of

words between the real world and the printed page, whatever form that takes. The reason it’s become the primary mode of writing about current events is that, when done properly, there’s nothing that surpasses it as a way to provide context and impart meaning to the events of people’s everyday lives. Bad and dishonest journalism is such a problem because, when believed, it can warp people’s sense of the world they live in and leave them ill-equipped to understand or respond to reality. Journalism is that important.

It’s also an incredible way to become a better writer. There’s nothing like short-term deadlines to make your prose snappier and more concise, and the responsibility of communicating complicated ideas to a broad audience means that anyone who sticks with a journalistic publication and schedule will see their writing grow more accessible and more intelligent. Working with editors, while it can be frustrating, is a tremendous boon to anyone interested in improving their style, and the back-and-forth process of refining journalism in the edit is the most productive kind of peer review I’ve

ever encountered.

I’ve almost come to the end of this opinions piece without really having expressed an opinion, or at least not an actionable one. I’ve told you about what I think journalism is, why I think it’s important, and how it’s helped me, but I haven’t explained what that means for you. If you’ve finished this article, or read anything else I’ve written for CT, first of all, thank you. It’s hard for me to express how grateful I am to have had the opportunity to do this throughout my entire college career. Since I don’t know when I’ll have a steady gig doing it again, I want to take this chance to tell you, the reader, to try it out for yourself.

CT is an amazing publication with a newsroom full of amazing people, and there’s nowhere better to get started with journalism, or to continue it if you’re already interested. It doesn’t matter what you want to write about. If you have an inquiring mind, or if there’s a message you feel the world needs to hear, or if you just care deeply about something, do it with journalism. There’s no better way to talk about what matters.

Hock is a member of the Class of 2021.

How My Allergies Made Me Free



BRIDGETOKIWA/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

By Kylah Rendell
CONTRIBUTING WRITER-

When I first heard from my doctor that I was allergic to timothy and orchard hay, it weighed pretty heavily on my mind.

I was a rambunctious kid growing up, running and tumbling around big, open fields and playing with the animals on my friend's farm. I never suffered from pollen or the outside in general, except for the sun freckling my skin at the slightest touch. There were no limits placed on me as a child.

After I learned about my allergy, I felt that a kind of curse had been placed on me. I could never get a rabbit or a guinea pig, since hay is the main component of their diets. I remember that sinking feeling in my stomach when I realized I was so seriously allergic to something that I'd always need to keep an EpiPen within reach.

Disappointment at this burden was the first feeling that sunk in, the sudden distancing from my younger, allergen-free self. But with time, I began to see my allergies as a gift instead.

I was the kid that tried never to complain. I was okay with enduring a six hour drive in a cramped car

with my knees to my chest. I was okay with eating burnt or undercooked food. I was okay with having to wear a jacket that was more dog hair than jacket. But this allergy finally let me feel comfortable saying "no." I finally felt free to refuse to go places or do things where my allergies would act up. I didn't have to apologize for or explain my nausea at the smell of grass clippings. I didn't have to be down on myself or justify not wanting to sit on the grass with my friends on summer days while I got bitten.

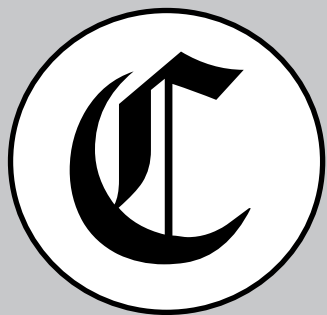
Yes, my hay allergy limits some activities, but it's also given me a broader appreciation for experiences I actually like and want more of. I'm happy and grateful to be getting a dog instead of a bunny (let's be honest — rabbits poop too much, anyway).

This allergy that was supposed to be "so dangerous" was actually letting me breathe, and break out of my bubble of what I thought was "normal." I now have a renewed sense of gratitude, and I rarely worry that I'm asking for too much.

I ought to thank this allergy for giving me the space to be free.

Rendell is a member of the Class of 2023.

Have an idea for a piece?



Write for us!

If you're interested, email our editor-in-chief:
editor@campustimes.org

Letter to the Editor: UR's Love-Hate Relationship With the 19th Ward

By Ashley Bardhan
ALUM AND SENIOR STAFF

My first memory of the pedestrian bridge is from my sophomore year, when I didn't know where I was going. "The 19th Ward," said the older student walking with me. "I'm going to live here."

He didn't say it out loud, but he didn't have to — I could tell he thought the area was dangerous, that he was being brave and gracious by choosing to live there anyway. Based on how UR and its students usually spoke about the 19th Ward, that wasn't surprising. My impression of the neighborhood was also negative, influenced by two years of Public Safety issuing campus-wide emails about another mugging, another armed robbery happening on the pedestrian bridge.

UR has made attempts to improve relations between the neighborhood and campus, to varying degrees of success. The Neighborhood Ambassador program describes itself as having been created for many reasons, but also (almost as an afterthought) to "assist in building better relations with long-term neighborhood residents."

There's the more service-focused Center for Community Engagement, which encourages social work, community leadership, and "breaking the bubble" that separates UR from surrounding neighborhoods.

"From a history perspective, [UR] has been very strategic, not transparent," Dorian Hall, a member and board leader of the PLEX Neighborhood Association, said. He attributed his optimism for the future of community-University relations to the newest University President, Sarah Mangelsdorf. "She seemed to be more inclusive and willing to work with folks," Hall said. But not every UR president has made him feel that way.

'I wish they would have spoke to [...] folks who were involved in community organization and told them, "Hey, we're looking to expand."

A resident of Plymouth-Exchange for the bulk of his life, Hall remembered playing in empty plots of land as a child, realizing as he got older that these plots were long-meditated areas for University construction. "I wish [UR] was more inclusive. I wish they would have spoke to [...] folks who were involved in community organization and told them, 'Hey,

we're looking to expand.'"

Sometimes, University presence in surrounding neighborhoods has even felt dangerous to residents. Hall explained how, while UR was grappling with whether or not to arm on-campus Public Safety officers, they were already driving "through my neighborhood with arms, which was terrible," Dorian said. "If something happens and UR security guards come, the cops are going to immediately side with the University. I would see community members having issues with security guards who started thinking they were cops. There's no need to have security guards with guns off-campus."

There isn't. UR students and community members have pushed back on the practice with a petition, but as of now, according to a Sept. 2020 Campus Times article, there are no plans from the school to disarm already armed officers. Having what's essentially a private police force patrol communities like PLEX or the 19th Ward is unignorable in its racism and underlying hope for violence.

In the 19th Ward specifically, racism has actively been an issue for the better part of the last two centuries. For about half of the 20th century, the Ward was a majority-white, middle class suburb. That changed with the Second Great Migration, when northern cities drew in Black workers from the south with industrial job opportunities, sparking an extant white panic and sense of mistrust about the neighborhood.

As one might expect of a time when Jim Crow laws were still very much in effect, the then-new diversity of the 19th Ward, for many white residents, felt like the beginning of the end. They began to move en masse.

Opportunistic real estate developers began blockbusting, getting paranoid white homeowners to sell their houses before they were "devalued" by Black residents. Hopeful Black residents were then sold those houses at unfair, inflated prices and forced into accepting them because of limited housing choices. The 19th Ward was also a focus of redlining efforts, a real estate practice in which majority-Black neighborhoods were indicated unfit for insured mortgages. Although racism in Rochester today isn't (always) as explicit as it was in the mid-to-late 20th century, it's extremely difficult to ignore that the Ward is a neighborhood with a median income of about \$31,000 while the average UR student has a median family income of \$126,000.

Both blockbusting and

redlining are underhanded forms of segregation, and in 1965, some residents formed the 19th Ward Community Association to push back against racist real estate practices and encourage a diverse Ward. Former Association staff member Roger Levy remembered when the Association first proposed the pedestrian bridge in 1991. "Both sides were opposed to it," he said. "The neighborhood thought that crazy drunken frat boys would come over by the dozen and break their windows, the people in the University thought the inner-city kids would come over the bridge and mug them."

'Understanding the Ward's history as a segregated neighborhood helps explain the way it exists today.'

Understanding the Ward's history as a segregated neighborhood helps explain the way it exists today, with racist bridge fears permeating the University campus while Rochester community members struggle simply for a loving, safe, and fun community. Every longtime resident that I spoke to for this article made it clear that they had no problems with students in the community. But they also felt that UR has a responsibility to the community that it hasn't really carried out yet. Maybe UR could help neighborhood businesses succeed or just allow for more community input in University decisions.

UR is a behemoth, and the 19th Ward is its smaller, softer neighbor. It's clear that their relationship has issues with trust and responsibility. "There's always resentment between the neighborhood and the University," Levy said. "The University is bureaucratic. On the other hand, the University is a huge employer. It's a love-hate relationship."

The mostly white campus' fear of the Ward, only for those same mostly white students to eventually live in it, can feel predatory. Most of the time, it isn't meant that way. But residents are sick of real estate developers and opaque University zoning decisions.

Until the University makes a bigger gesture to the community than those it's made in the past, residents will continue to fight for their beloved neighborhood. And students will sit in their dorm buildings or rented rooms, stressed, overworked, and only occasionally glancing outside.

Bardhan is a member of the Class of 2019.

HUMOR

A List of COVID-19-Friendly Pop-Up Requests

By Lukas Ladas
STAFF WRITER

After both our spring break and reading period were ripped away by the grubby hands of administration, they attempted to cover up their wrongdoings with the sticky-sweet syrup of handcrafted sodas and honey-glazed donuts from catering pop-ups. While there’s certainly a charm to free food that can easily entice us to overlook the simmering shitshow the University has become, it’s not enough. If UR administration really wants to right some wrongs, the least they can

do is start to take suggestions for the free handouts they’re choosing to provide. Otherwise, they’re no better than the cockroaches lurking around in our bathrooms. Thus, we here at Campus Times are issuing an ultimatum: Institute these pop-ups for our institution, or face the wrath of our exhausted, burnt-out puppy-dog eyes. It won’t look good for incoming students if everyone’s miserable, will it?

Pop-up financial aid:
Although a healthy amount of UR students can subsist off of the sole resource known as “daddy’s money,” not everyone is that lucky.

Case in point: the amount of students clamoring for a declining daddy. Maybe, as a result of this pop-up, there will be less students crowding outside ITS waiting for a shuttle driver’s slow reflexes to grant them that sweet, sweet settlement money. Bonus points for making the amount of aid you receive into a game of Plinko.

Pop-up sermon:
Hosted by the Interfaith Chapel, this could serve as a wonderful way for people to connect to their spiritual side as a last resort for passing their finals. Bring a small kitty pool with a priest in a hazmat suit for those willing

to go the extra step of getting baptized for their non-COVID-friendly sins this semester.

Pop-up puppy party:
Not only will puppies fulfill people’s lack of physical touch during these times, but also our universal love for oversized fluffy paws and small panting mouths. Sadly, these puppies would have to be changed out every 30 minutes to air out the mass amounts of bleach needed between each visitor to maintain COVID-19 guidelines. One upside: They could all start to resemble Guy Fieri with their new frosted tips.

Pop-up sloshed:
If you can’t relieve your stress in the old-fashioned ways (puppies or praying), the only thing there is left is to do is get absolutely fucking hammered. Case in point: D-Day. If WCSA can set up on-campus happy hours, why not just take it to another level? While it may seem like a bad thing that dangerous substances are one of the few reliable things getting us through this semester, this could be a ploy for admin to continue to push EverFi training while giving students what they really want.

Ladas is a member of the Class of 2024.

Students Must Test Positive for COVID-19 Before Returning to Campus

By Ben Schiffman
HUMOR EDITOR

Dear UR Community,
It has come to the administration’s attention that many University students are distraught about the COVID-19 vaccine requirement for the upcoming fall 2021 semester. While this policy was agreed upon and implemented with the goal of keeping our community and our students safe, it is becoming increasingly clear that the vaccine alone will not be enough to push our students toward a safe semester.

In light of this revelation, and instead of a vaccine, all students must show proof of a positive COVID-19 test result before returning to campus. We believe that this is the only way to ensure that Strong Hospital and the surrounding community will not be flooded with COVID-19 cases — if you all get sick at home.

For those of you who manage to make it back to campus, we believe that this policy will result in a safer, quieter campus environment.

We do understand that students who are already vaccinated and may have a hard time contracting the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In order to accommodate these students, we have decided to lock you all into Strong Auditorium and pump infected air through the vents. You will all be quarantined for 72 hours after your exposure.

As an administration, we want what is best for all of our students. This news may be hard for some, so starting next week, every Saturday at 4:30 a.m. there will be a UCC drop-in group for anyone concerned about the new COVID-19 requirements.

We look forward to seeing you all back on campus next semester!

Schiffman is a member of the Class of 2023.

Ideal To-Do List for a Depressing D-Day

By Philip Cavallo
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With this year’s Dandelion Day (D-Day) now over, some students may feel they didn’t get the most out of it. Many did, of course, get plastered in accordance with the time-honored Rochester tradition. However, for those of you who don’t feel like burying your pain under a deep layer of alcohol during future D-Days, here are some super depressing alternatives!

1: Check your bank account
Instead of getting drunk, raw-dog reality and find out how broke you are. Checking your bank account will not only instill a fear of spending money, but also impart an astonishing sense of guilt for all you’ve spent on alcohol, Starbucks, and UberEats. If you want something even more

soul crushing, check your student loan debt. Similar, but worse! So much worse!

2: Cry in the library
One possibly cathartic way to spend your D-Day is to attempt to do homework, but spiral into despair as you realize you’ll never be able to satisfy the expectations that this school has for you (and that you have for yourself). For more extroverted students having a D-Day existential crisis, crying in the library is also an activity that may be done with friends. Shared trauma is one of the best possible ways to strengthen bonds, and there are few things more traumatizing than Organic Chemistry, writing a two-page essay (for STEM majors), or basic math (if you’re a humanities/social science major).

3: Think about your pet
While you can call family members, you cannot call a

pet. Spending your D-Day thinking about the last time you were able to cuddle your beloved animal is a great way to shatter the last visage of mental strength you had left. Even alcohol won’t numb the pain.

4: Babysit your drunk friends
Be the designated sober friend of your group. This will involve chasing down your drunk friends to make sure they don’t do anything too stupid, like try to climb the carnival rides or go axe throwing. Wonder what you did to deserve this as you wait in the freezing cold for hours to buy some subpar poutine.

These are just a few alternatives to getting hammered. Ultimately, there are many other depressing options. Just find out what works best (read: worst) for you!

Cavallo is a member of the Class of 2022.

Wellness Wednesday Advice: If Going to be Sad? Don’t!

By Brianna Lindsey
STAFF WRITER

Dearest readers, this week, the one and only *Campus Times* brings you the most exclusive insider scoop: a look behind the scenes at the only thing holding up students’ rapidly decomposing will to open that godforsaken Zoom application.

The Wellness Wednesday emails that students receive on a weekly basis consist of updates to current campus goings-on, plans for the University’s future, and suggestions for students concerning their mental health.

Recently, one of our dedicated researchers came across a stash of emails, buried deep within the University’s drafts. Clearly,

someone had been trying to dispose of the evidence. These emails, after careful examination, found to be a collection of scrapped Wellness Wednesday concepts.

The following titles were among the most shocking discoveries:

- Tired? Try a new approach to beating insomnia? Drop by a lab and swipe some chloroform!
- Why meditate? Drugs are easier!
- Counselors available whenever you need (who will likely suggest revolutionary methods of coping such as: trying yoga, and talking about how your childhood is the reason you don’t understand, and the class Honors Quantum Physics 719, which

runs MWF 23:59 - 05:00)!

- Karen, I’m not going to tell the students to try essential oils; no, I will not bring them into your pyramid scheme
- Beat that burnout by buying! Student discount on coffins!
- Reject modernity; return to monkey

And finally, the one that stunned every editor in our office with its baffling brilliance:

- FEELING BAD? DON’T

These astonishing findings are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the insight that Wellness Wednesday brings. I myself as a student can say with full certainty that I have definitely, most likely, 100% probably noticed at least one of these

emails in my inbox this semester.

The mental health crisis among students is reaching a boiling point. However, when asked about this, admin denied this was the case by saying it’s still cold outside, therefore a boiling point could not have been reached.

Truly we are unmatched in this battle of intellect. The almighty figureheads know what is best for the students. With the pandemonium of the pandemic continuing into this semester, executive decisions were made to cater to the needs of the creatures known as “college students.” An entire two days were given for rest and recuperation. Not together, silly. Then they might have time to do

something, or rest, and we can’t have that, god.

The University sleeps soundly knowing they have exhausted every available resource to maintain the well-being of its students. That is, of course, the most important part of a human being. Wait, these are college students, not people. That’s why they don’t need sleep!

With the stellar outcomes of these never-before-heard-of techniques like telling students to “Keep Going!”, it’s a wonder every institution of higher education hasn’t adopted this approach. After all, what students need above all else is another voice telling them what to do.

Lindsey is a member of the Class of 2024.

D-Day Hot Air Balloon Hijacked by Pirate Ghost

By Micahel Riches
STAFF WRITER

The hotly anticipated tethered hot air balloon rides that were set to feature at this year's Dandelion Day (D-Day) were cancelled at the last minute, allegedly due to weather. However, eyewitness accounts suggest that the sole balloon the school had rented was in fact stolen by the ghost of deceased freshwater pirate, Barnabas "Bellowing Barney" Sykes. According to historical records found in a deep, nearly forgotten corner of Rush Rhees Library, Captain Sykes was ridiculed by his piratical peers for choosing to ply fresh waters. His crew sailed lakes, rivers, and tributaries to sidle up to ports as unintimidating as Milwaukee and Toronto, while the so-called "real" pirates frequented Tortuga and Santo Domingo in their oceangoing vessels. Sykes met his end on the

Genesee near today's River Campus, when his ship was attacked by a particularly belligerent flock of Canada geese. According to UR naval historian Pippin Reese, it was "kind of a Sully Sullenberger situation, except it was a boat and not a plane, and he did die." On D-Day, rising on an unholy tide from the dark and noxious depths of the river Sykes reportedly shook off a layer of typical Genesee riverbed (industrial sludge, Genny Light cans, bike parts, etc.) and loudly proclaimed his return, to the shock of a passing group of completely sober students. "At long last me hearties, I've been dredged out of this damn river!" Sykes allegedly said. "Now to plunder the world of the living!" The undead scourge of creeks and streams declined an intrepid Campus Times reporter's request for a statement. He chose instead to cackle wildly through paper-thin, watery

lungs as he set his moldering eye on the brightly colored canvas of the lone balloon, which had just been inflated for the day's activities. Almost immediately, Sykes leaped into the basket and began slicing away the tethers and weights. As he rose into the air, he was heard to cry, "Now I have a ship that sails the sky! Who's laughing now, Blackbeard!" After his brief ascent, however, Captain Sykes had to reckon with the unexpected hurricane-force winds that characterized this past D-Day. Unprepared for sailing a modern airship, the dread pirate quickly lost control and was whisked away to parts unknown. Meteorological data suggests he may have finally hit the ground in Quebec, with a bone-crunching impact that doubtlessly shattered his fragile skeletal form. It is currently unknown whether the pirate's awakening was caused by a new side effect of the Genesee's



JANEPITCHARD / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

potently polluted waters, a reanimation ritual performed by engineering students to keep themselves awake for finals, or if overcrowding among the many corpses in the river simply forced them to

evict someone, and Barney had been there the longest. Whatever the truth, rest assured that the CT will have the latest updates on the ongoing ship-tuation. *Riches is a member of the Class of 2023.*

The SA President We Needed: An Inside Interview with Megan Browne

By Alyssa Koh
HUMOR EDITOR

Only 803 undergraduates decided to vote in SA elections this year, and I understand why. It's hard to grow attached enough to candidacies in a virtual setting without choosing to engage in their platforms. However, out of those 803 votes, one thing I wish could have been tracked is the idea of "joke votes," or votes cast for candidates for a humorous reason. How many people chose to vote not for the platform, but for the meme? Personally, I know I'm one of them — instead of choosing either of the candidates on the virtual ballot, I wrote in the name of someone I thought was worth my vote: Megan Browne. Megan, while initially an unlikely candidate as an avid SA-unenthusiast, rose to take on the challenge of snagging the presidency on a whim. However, their platform spoke to me in a way that the Kazmi/Haque and Bothe/Sussman tickets didn't. Maybe it was their ability to treat SA in a light-hearted manner (their platform literally noted that SA is a joke), or maybe it was my knowledge of their background of advocating for causes that are important to me, like the cancellation of Lil Nosey. Whatever it was, I was compelled to throw my vote away into the Megan Browne Void. Megan's Unofficial Ticket: Experience President/VP of the D'Lions



COURTESY OF MEGAN BROWNE

President of Hall Council for the Hill Vice President of Lenape Middle School Being hilarious (see articles here and here) Their proposals include: Bring back partying on the quad. Force frats to have a full bar menu and pizza. Keep Starbucks Grubhub open all day. Reopen OptiKale and Peet's Coffee. When Megan didn't win the election, I felt something I thought I wouldn't be able to until I became a disgruntled parent: not sad, just disappointed. However, to bring further light to their short-lived run, I decided

to interview them about the process of establishing a platform and running for SA. What was the thought process behind running for SA? How did it come about? Honestly, my resume was looking a little dry. I'm known for talking a lot of shit about SA, but when the opportunity for clout/power comes about... What made you a candidate worth voting for (in your opinion)? I think that my lack of attachment to the administration really made me a great candidate. Obviously this year there's been a lot of demand for changes to

SA, from SA itself. The only person who could do that is someone from the outside, and I was the perfect candidate. How did you choose to advertise your ticket? Obviously, I went nontraditional with the write-in route. But I tried to take the quiz that you needed to complete to formally enroll in the race, and I didn't know any of the answers. I did, however, take the typical S A route in that I simply took the 30 seconds to put "Vote for Megan Browne" over a picture of me on Canva. Going a step further, I also chose to release a pretty extensive

platform (if I do say so myself) on my Instagram, which was further endorsed by my friends on Instagram after some mild amounts of begging and pleading (but it's not a popularity contest). I was also the first SA candidate in history to get an interview with Vogue. Who did you think was your biggest competition in the election and why? If anything, it was the fact that the administration refused to take me seriously. I was never invited to the debates; even CT didn't do a profile on me. This lack of connection to the elite allowed me to understand the typical student's needs, and connect with them. I was a president for the people, #draintheswamp. What is the thing you most wanted to change about SA? Honestly, I think that SA's biggest issue is that it doesn't put enough pressure on administration even though they have the platform to do it. They talk a lot about how the administration doesn't listen to them or kinda pushes them off, but they have the platform to let students know and have their voices heard. They should not be on the side of admin, but ultimately annoy them as much as possible. They even refused to put a write-in section for the vote until about an hour into the elections... What are your plans now post-election? Not super sure, might release an EP. I hear that's what people are doing now. *Koh is a member of the Class of 2024.*