

Campus Times

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Pennsylvania Gov.-elect Josh Shapiro '95 first jumped into politics at UR



Josh Shapiro



COMPILATION COURTESY OF NEWS EDITOR JUSTIN O'CONNOR, RIGHT IMAGE COURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR TOM WOLF

By Justin O'Connor
NEWS EDITOR

Democrat and alum Josh Shapiro '95 defeated Republican Doug Mastriano in Pennsylvania's gubernatorial election Tuesday to become the first UR graduate elected governor of any state.

Shapiro, who has served as Pennsylvania's attorney general since 2017 and in the state's House of Representatives from 2005-2012, won with around 64% of the vote to succeed Democratic Governor Tom Wolf.

Running on a platform that centered abortion access and criminal justice reform, he successfully countered Mastriano's far-right messaging against vaccine requirements, "critical race theory," and mail-in voting, amid a host of other topics that came up during the campaigns. Shapiro was also aided by a funding mismatch, setting a state campaign spending record of \$44 million — more than 10 times the amount spent by Mastriano.

But before Shapiro became Pennsylvania's governor-elect, or even the state's attorney general, he boasted two (arguably) humbler titles — UR Students' Association senator and president.

According to an interview conducted with the Campus Times during his attorney general reelection bid, Shapiro

did not come into college with any intention of studying Political Science or serving in the SA. He was a pre-med student vying for a spot on the men's varsity basketball team.

But then he decided against the pre-med track. And he was cut from the basketball team. So Shapiro opted to spend his first year at UR as an SA senator.

'Running on a platform that centered abortion access and criminal justice reform, he successfully countered Mastriano's far-right messaging

It was in this position that Shapiro first earned himself some oh-so-valuable column inches in the CT. As a senator, he led the opposition to the administration's attempt to split Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) funding between UR Security and the SA fund, arguing that it would open the opportunity for the administration to cut all support to MERT and force SA to fund the organization. The position ran against that of MERT Chairman Bob Dorman, who argued funding MERT would save students ambulance money and allow MERT to pay for equipment

and certification classes.

Ultimately, the funding was struck down in a contentious 10-9 vote on Nov. 11, 1991, marking Shapiro's first highly-publicized political victory.

Later in his senatorial term, Shapiro and the entire senate would become embroiled in controversy due to a resolution announcing that the SA would "derecognize all currently SA-recognized groups if a 50 percent voter turnout is not achieved during normal election periods." At the time, voter turnout in SA elections hovered between 20-33%. Shapiro spoke in favor of the resolution, which passed by a 14-4 vote on Feb. 3, 1992 but was later struck down by a unanimous All Campus Judicial Council (ACJC) vote despite Shapiro serving on the four-man team representing the SA Senate at the hearing.

Later that spring, Shapiro ran for SA president on a pro-club sports, pro-varsity lacrosse, and anti-faculty cuts platform published in the CT on April 16, 1992. In that appeal to the student body, he leveraged his senatorial experience creating and serving on the Club Sports Council as the SA navigated the constitutional complexities of extending SA budget funding to gender-divided and performance-discriminatory club sports. He even tossed in a Bobby Kennedy quote.

SEE SHAPIRO PAGE 2

Orange Line Service Increases Amid Student Dissatisfaction



HENRY LITSKY / PHOTO EDITOR

By Henry Litsky
NEWS EDITOR

UR Transportation added service to the Orange Line for the second time in the semester this week, running buses all day and closing the previous five hour gap in service.

At the start of the semester, only five trips ran on weekday mornings — 10 after 4:30 p.m. — connecting students residing in downtown Rochester to campus. Now, 27 trips run from 7 a.m. until after midnight, giving Innovation Square residents a consistent connection to River Campus.

The service increase comes as students have faced challenges using the bus to get from off-campus locations to UR.

The Orange Line covers Rochester's southeast quadrant, swinging out towards the Park Ave. neighborhood before stopping downtown and then returning to campus. The route has been around for some time with a commuter focus, but starting Nov. 7 the afternoon gap in service was filled, making the Orange Line run all day.

Before all-day Orange Line service, students would often ride the Red Line to Eastman and then walk to Innovation Square. Transportation officially added an Orange Line stop at Innovation Square during the fall of 2021 after some UR students moved into the building.

The University began

leasing floor space within Innovation Square for the 2022-23 academic year, filling two floors with roughly 50 students. Students on the UR floors are in "on-campus" residential life contracts despite living downtown. The housing contract guarantees transportation for students to move between Innovation and the River Campus.

'The bus often filled beyond capacity, frequently leaving students behind downtown.'

However, the start of the fall 2022 semester saw the Orange Line overwhelmed, as five morning buses were not enough to match the demand of students heading to campus. The bus often filled beyond capacity, frequently leaving students behind downtown creating what one student called a "Hunger Games-esque situation."

"I call it Hunger Games-esque because, I guess, I just get anxious about missing the bus or like it being full, and I don't get on," senior Daniel Semphere said in October after the first service increase. "As the bus is getting closer, you can clearly see a shift in people's body language. They're scanning the intersection to see if it's turning in or not. And then you see people significantly crowding towards the curb to get on the bus."

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BUS FROM PAGE 1

Even after nearly doubling the morning bus schedule from five trips to nine, multiple people told the CT that students were still occasionally left behind at Innovation.

“They have the bigger buses that they send during the night when nobody uses them and they don’t send them in the mornings for the Orange Line, which is insane to me because there’s always consistently like 50 people waiting for the bus,” junior Mila Bologna told the CT in late October. “And then they’ll bring out the tiny little baby bus that they have, and it’ll be, like, standing room only. And then, you know, five people will be left without a way to get to campus, which I feel like if you have a mandatory class isn’t good for you.”

“It’s really frustrating that the 9:15 a.m. bus that drives by Erie Harbor is full every single day because a lot of students have 9:40 [a.m.] classes,” said Senior Andrei Blanton. “And so there’s always a crowd of students out there standing and waiting and it just drives by and it says full bus.,” senior Andrei Blanton said. “Why do they even have that stop listed if it literally never comes?”

Some students, including

petition author junior Sebastian Xu — who created a change.org petition asking for increased morning shuttle capacity and increased service throughout the day — even occasionally Ubered to campus in order to go to class on time. Students at Erie Harbor, another popular off-campus residential area, were often left without bus service since buses filled before arriving at Erie Harbor.

Xu’s petition garnered over 200 signatures and was forwarded to Dean Runner and other administrators.

“Once learning of the issue, I communicated with Anne-Marie Algier (WCSA), Dan Watts (ResLife), Jim Chodak (Parking) and John Hain (Eastman) to discuss options,” Runner told the CT over email. “Ultimately, I reached out to David Figlio (Provost) and Joan Saab (Dean of the Faculty of AS&E) to get their support for adding a bus line. The funding will come from the College. Once we complete a review of all the routes, with improved information about ridership, we can do a better job of understanding how the costs might be distributed in the future.”

On Oct. 10, UR transportation launched a second morning shuttle on the Orange

Line which operates between 7:30 a.m. and 10:45 p.m., giving the route increased morning capacity. The extra morning shuttle increases frequency on the Orange Line to 10 morning trips before 11:15 a.m., opposed to only five which ran at the start of the semester.

Moving forward, Runner said he hopes to further examine bus usage and see if any other changes should be made to UR’s shuttle system.

“I’d like to see us review all the routes, to better meet the needs of both the College students living off-campus and the Eastman and College students who need to travel between campuses for classes and other activities,” Dean Runner said. “In the meantime, this additional bus line will hopefully relieve some congestion in the system.”

The Orange Line will now operate:

- Monday through Friday: nonstop from 7:30 a.m. until 12:45 a.m.
- Saturdays: 9 a.m. until 1:25 a.m.
- Sundays: 9 a.m. until 10:35 p.m.

Litsky is a member of the Class of 2023.

SHAPIRO FROM PAGE 1

The appeal worked. Pennsylvania Gov.-elect Shapiro became SA President-elect Shapiro on April 23, 1992, beating out five juniors and becoming, to this day, the youngest person and only first-year ever elected to the position.

“I put my whole heart into this, and I’m glad that the student body saw that,” Shapiro told the CT in 1992. “Being a freshman was to my advantage. [...] I was honest with the people.”

And, by all accounts, the young Shapiro was a respected student advocate during his tenure. He pushed for increased lighting on campus and laid the groundwork for the opening of Common Ground, a coffee shop in The Pit that operated until 2007. He even worked with University and Rochester city officials in an attempt to negotiate student access to 130 metered parking spaces along Wilson Boulevard, though the plan was ultimately struck down.

On April 12, 1993, Shapiro announced during his State of the University address that he would not seek reelection, as reported on April 15, 1993 in the CT. The article detailed how Shapiro improved com-

munication with students and between administrators and ran through other accomplishments of his tenure. Administrators also lauded Shapiro’s handling of the role.

“Josh Shapiro virtually has set a new standard for student leadership,” former Vice President and Dean of Students Paul Burgett told the CT in 1993. “He wove together a coalition of student leaders that integrated enormously successfully with the administration and with his principal constituency, the students. He’s done his university a great service.”

In that 2020 interview with the CT, Shapiro said he left the SA to spend his junior year interning in Washington, D.C. as part of the University’s Washington Semester Program, an experience that “became a springboard to his work on Capitol Hill after graduating,” according to an email sent out Wednesday by Professor of Political Science and History Dr. Gerald Gamm.

Gamm ended the email by quoting a message he said Shapiro wrote hours after he was elected governor.

“Not sure I’m here if not for UR.”

O’Connor is a member of the Class of 2024.

Latin American Studies Department Resolution Passes SA

By Justin O’Connor
NEWS EDITOR

On Monday, SA deliberated over a resolution supporting the creation of a Latin American Studies department and major at UR, a measure that was drafted in response to a petition created by senior and president of the Spanish and Latino Students’ Association (SALSA) Elvis Vasquez that has garnered over 370 signatures on the SA petitions website.

The resolution passed by a unanimous 13-0 vote after Vasquez and six fellow students gave speeches supporting the statement. Holding a colorful promotional poster for a full month’s worth of SALSA events, Vasquez spoke first.

“This is a poster from the fall of 2011 of what [SALSA] did for Hispanic Heritage Month,” Vasquez said. “They tried to create an event for almost every day of the month just to make a statement, just to make it known that we exist on this campus. [...] And for anyone who has experienced planning big events on this campus, then you know that this process is exhausting. But it was necessary because, before 2013, two years af-

ter this Hispanic Heritage Month demonstration, there weren’t any courses that effectively centered Latin America despite the effort of students. In 2007, an undergraduate student tried to create this major, but it was shut down by the school. This cannot happen again.”

Senior Diego Encinas also spoke. He went through the Interdepartmental Studies program to create a Latin American Studies major, and he had nothing positive to say about the process.

“I can only say that it was overly complicated and very stressful. There are several times I would go weeks, sometimes months — and I’m not saying that to be dramatic — that I wouldn’t hear back from my department advisors. [...] Nothing about the process incentivizes students to partake in it.”

Alongside calling for the department’s establishment, the students critiqued the treatment of topics relating to Latin America, particularly in classes outside the History Department. Junior Andrés Arocho, the president of the Student Organization for Caribbean Awareness (SOCA), said these

classes usually discuss Latin America through the lens of the United States.

“This excludes the essential local perspectives on things,” he said. “We learn about colonization through the eyes of the colonizer but don’t get a holistic representation of the Latin American story.”

“We learn about colonization through the eyes of the colonizer but don’t get a holistic representation of the Latin American story.”

Arocho also said the establishment of the department would provide

all students with a space to discuss Latin America while helping Latin American students “reconnect” with their identities and histories, echoing a call made in an earlier speech by first-year Paola Almendarez.

“Latin American Studies as a major is necessary within a diverse and culturally-aware institution like the [UR],” Almendarez said. “Though I’ve not been here for long, I’ve learned that many first year Latino students, including myself, have noted a lack of representation with the curriculum. This representation is necessary to not only connect Latino students with their histories, which have been historically sup-

pressed, but to further educate other members of the [UR] community.”

While the resolution passed, it is only a statement of support. The major will have to be proposed to and approved by the College Curriculum Committee and pass checks by the New York State Education Department, and the department’s creation will have to be approved and facilitated by administration with the School of Arts and Sciences. This end of the advocacy is being spearheaded by History Lecturer Molly Ball, who is the coordinator of the Latin American Studies minor.

O’Connor is a member of the Class of 2024.

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Burton’s Chimneys Are Coming Loose



BY NATALIE OPDAHL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The words “What’s happening to Burton Hall?” appear on several flyers throughout the residence hall. And walking by the machinery and plywood out front, you might have asked yourself the same question.

The posters also include a diagram of the roof of the hall, with labels detailing ongoing construction on the roof and, more specifically, the chimneys.

“Unfortunately, the building’s original chimneys are coming loose,” the flyers read. “They’re leaning and have become a safety hazard, so they need to be removed.”

“‘Unfortunately, the building’s original chimneys are coming loose,’ the flyers read.”

Contractors have begun the work of removing the chimneys, said Alan McNiff, the director of River Campus Facilities and University Properties. The construction, which began on Halloween, aims to decrease the structural weight on the lower sections of the chimneys by removing the top sections, McNiff wrote in an email. Such reconstruction is needed because of the building’s old age, he continued. Burton was originally built and opened in 1930, making the hall almost a century old, according to the University Facilities and Services website.

The project has caused five students and one RA to be temporarily relocated. They will be able to move back into their rooms as soon as the construction is finished, a date which McNiff predicted will be before Thanksgiving weekend.

These students are not

the only ones who have been impacted by the construction, however. Marie Kane, a sophomore living in Burton, spoke negatively about the noise of the construction.

“Sometimes in the mornings it can get really loud and very repetitive,” she said. “I’d say that’s the only problem I’m having with the construction.”

Despite her irritation, Kane said that the renovations are good because the buildings need to be kept up.

Falisha Hola, a senior living in Burton, agreed that the construction is important but wished that management would look at other repairs in the dorms as well. She pointed to alleged bug infestations and malfunctioning washers and dryers as problems that impact students’ everyday life in the dorms.

‘Falisha Hola, a senior living in Burton, agreed that the construction is important but wished that management would look at other repairs in the dorms as well.’

Although the construction on Burton is set to end before Thanksgiving, it will resume in the summer, at which point the contractor will completely remove and rebuild the chimneys, McNiff said.

“But, don’t worry,” the flyers on Burton’s walls read. “Although most people won’t be able to see any difference, Burton Hall’s new chimneys will [...] last for many years to come.”

Opdahl is a member of the Class of 2024

Veteran Talks Violence, Masculinity, and Capitalism in New Book

BY TRENELL HOLMES
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Dr. Lyle Jeremy Rubin ‘20, a PhD alum and former marine, visited the Humanities Center last Tuesday to discuss his new book, “Pain is Weakness Leaving the Body,” detailing his experiences during the Afghanistan War.

Both faculty and students attended the talk, which lasted for about an hour and a half. The event was organized by Tanya Bakhmetyeva, associate academic director of the Susan B. Anthony Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies.

After an introduction by Bakhmetyeva, Rubin started off by saying that the talk wouldn’t be academic and that the book involved many rough topics.

“I write about imperialism, and violence, and masculinity, and a lot of horrible things,” Rubin said. “It’s kind of hard to avoid sensitive subject matter.”

Rubin expressed that he would not be offended if anyone felt the need to leave the room and asked the audience to bear with him as he read three excerpts from the book, each taking place at a different stage in his life. The passages explored the intersections between a range of different topics, including mass shooters and their proximity to the military, how the wealthiest counties in the United States profit from war, and how

repressed anger affected him and his fellow marines.

After Rubin finished reading, the audience gave a round of applause and he opened up the floor for questions.

‘I write about imperialism, and violence, and masculinity, and a lot of horrible things.’

One audience member asked about how the childhood memories and sexual experiences Rubin wrote about in the first chapter influenced him in his creation of the book.

Rubin replied that he initially had no intention of mentioning his childhood in the book. However, his childhood, in particular the sexual and gendered elements of it, became front and center when he actually sat down to write it.

Rubin said that the writing process forced him to realize he was a very insecure kid and that he had been sexually bullied and violated during his childhood.

“I actually came to believe that one of the reasons [...] that so many aspiring men end up being so violent [...] is because of these experiences that they aren’t able to talk about, and because of a society that discourages them from talking about these things,” he said.

Rubin explained that it was important for him to use these

experiences to talk about the broader themes of masculinity, aggression, and insecurity in the rest of the book.

Another audience member asked Rubin about the hierarchy and class divide within the marines. Rubin responded by saying that the resentment felt by lower-ranking marines, who often come from lower class backgrounds, against upper-class, high-ranking officials is often used by the military to maintain the status quo.

“Enlisted guys, a lot of times they do not have the ability to punch out their officer. [...] They do have the possibility to aim [...] at a complete stranger 300 or 600 yards away,” Rubin said.

‘Rubin said that the writing process forced him to realize he was a very insecure kid [...].’

Rubin began writing “Pain is Weakness Leaving the Body” alongside his PhD dissertation in 2020. It was published on Nov. 1, 2022. When asked about his next move as an author, Rubin says he hopes to get his PhD dissertation on anti-capitalist readings of Adam Smith published as an academic text.

Holmes is a member of the Class of 2026

SA Solicits Input on Race-Related Trainings for Faculty

BY JUSTIN O’CONNOR
NEWS EDITOR

SA has released a new survey seeking student input on both the racial climate being cultivated by UR faculty and a potential mandatory race-related training curriculum for faculty.

‘SA President Adrija Bhattacharjee has spearheaded efforts to design a more in-depth race-related training curriculum[...].’

Since her time as Minority Student Affairs Liaison during the last academic year, SA President Adrija Bhattacharjee has spearheaded efforts to design a more in-depth race-related training curriculum for faculty and to make those trainings mandatory. Currently, faculty are offered optional sessions that Bhattacharjee argues do not require

serious engagement.

On Oct. 3, Faculty Senate Co-Chair and Professor of Education Joanne Larson gave a presentation to the SA Senate announcing that the Faculty Senate had made it clear that they would not support making race-related training sessions mandatory, a policy that would have to be instituted by the University administration. Larson said she and faculty members nonetheless began work with the Institutional Office of Equity and Inclusion to create non-mandatory educational race-related curricula and expand the visibility of existing offerings.

‘[...] Faculty Senate had made it clear that they would not support making race-related training session mandatory.’

Since then, Bhattacharjee has also refocused her advocacy on expanding the training curriculum,

though she has not compromised her overall end goal of making the sessions mandatory. The survey feedback will be used to guide this advocacy and demonstrate student support to faculty and administrators, Bhattacharjee said.

“Last spring, I brought forward a proposal to the Faculty Senate to mandate at least one race-related training course for all faculty at the UoR,” she wrote in the Nov. 11 email announcing the survey. “While faculty strongly opposed the mandatory aspect, they still voted to approve that the previous training structure, which was just a plethora of ‘strongly encouraged’ sessions, be reformed. While SA will still push for mandatory trainings going forward, our first priority is ensuring that the race-related training structure for faculty becomes more effective.”

O’Connor is a member of the Class of 2024

Where to Shop for Small Business Saturday

BY SARAH WOODAMS
PRESENTATIONS CHIEF

Holiday shopping season often conjures up visions of hordes of people stampeding into a Best Buy to get the best deal on a new TV on Black Friday or a lifestyle YouTuber vlog showing off all of their new Bath and Body Works candles. In 2021, consumers spent an astounding \$886.7 billion on Black Friday.

‘In 2021, consumers spent an astounding \$886.7 billion on Black Friday. Did you know that the day following this explosion of mass consumerism is Small Business Saturday?’

Did you know that the day following this explosion of mass consumerism is Small Business Saturday? This relatively new shopping holiday was founded by American Express in 2010 and has been officially cosponsored by the United States Small Business Administration since 2011. Shopping from small and local businesses is a great way to support the owners and their staff. They are often home to more unique gifts than you may find at a national retail chain — and we have an abundance of Rochester artisans to shop from this holiday season.

‘Shopping from small and local businesses is a great way to support the owners and their staff - and we have an abundance of Rochester artisans to shop from this holiday season.’

THEMATA

The Market at the Armory (THEMATA) holds juried pop up markets featuring makers from across Upstate New York throughout the summer, along with a few winter dates inside the Culver Road Armory. Their first indoor holiday market this year takes place Nov. 25 and 26. THEMATA was founded in 2016 by the owners of Peppermint Boutique, which is another great gift-finding spot with many Rochester themed items made by small local businesses.

The Op Shop

The Op Shop, located downtown at 89 Charlotte Street, features 32 different vintage and handmade vendors, making it a great spot to find some truly unique gifts. They will be hosting their annual holiday market, Secondhand Wonderland, on Saturday Dec. 3, at the Nazareth College Field House. I went

last year and found two great winter sweaters and some fun vintage ornaments.

Parkleigh

Parkleigh is a gift shopping staple in Rochester located on Park Ave. They feature a wide variety of items from skin care and candles, novelty socks and oven mitts, Rochester-themed items, fudge, and my personal favorite: Jellycat food plushies. The store features a mix of large and small businesses and is always a fun place to check out.

Buffalo Bleached

If you are in need of any cute and fun Buffalo Bills gear, stop by Buffalo Bleached in Greece. Started by Hali Rockow, a SUNY Brockport student, and Rochester native, the store features many local vendors, many of whom are women. Despite the name, the store doesn’t exclusively sell Bills items; there’s also a selection of boutique women’s clothing and other giftable items, such as candles and glasses.

The Lucky Flea Market

I can’t write an article about shopping local and small without mentioning The Lucky Flea. This year they are hosting indoor markets throughout the colder months at Radio Social every Sunday, featuring dozens of local vendors. Many of the vendors sell thrifted clothing but there are also jewelry makers, sticker shops, crochet artists, and specialty foods. Check out their first indoor market of the season on Sunday, Nov. 20!

Record Archive

Look no further than Record Archive for your music and video needs. They host a massive collection of vinyl records, CDs, DVDs, and even VHS tapes along with a selection of kitschy items.

The Pasta Shoppe

Recommended by CT’s resident foodie, Illustrations Editor Rachel Kamata, The Pasta Shoppe sells fresh handmade pastas and sauces, making a great gift for any pasta lovers in your life.

Central Rock Gym

Looking for an experience gift versus a material object? Buy a gift card from Central Rock Gym for a day pass with all climbing gear included. My friends and I went last year (thanks to free day-passes handed out at Roc Holiday Village) and it was a lot of fun learning how to rock climb and bouldering. This can also be an option for any fitness class at a local gym or speciality fitness center, such as Vault.

Woodams is a member of the Class of 2024 (T5).

iGEM Team Saptasense Finds Sustainable Solutions for Maple Sap

BY ALYSSA KOH
MANAGING EDITOR

Sometimes, it’s easy to forget that we’re not children anymore.

Sure, we come to college as “adults,” and sure, we happen to be at a Tier I research university where undergraduates are able to conduct research, but to what extent are they able to pursue their own experimental endeavors? iGEM (International Genetically Engineered Machine)’s Team Saptasense certainly found out over the course of this past summer and fall semester.

Saptasense came up with their project — focusing around New York State’s maple syrup industry — by way of happenstance. One research article ping turned into a semester-plus-long deep-dive into how to make the sap-tapping and syrup-making process more sustainable and garnered multiple awards at a Paris conference.

‘Sure, we happen to be at a Tier I research university where undergraduates are able to conduct research, but to what extent are they able to pursue their own experimental endeavors?’

“A lot of the guidance that we received said that iGEM likes local problems being solved with global solutions,” said junior and team leader Mackenzie Dillenbeck.

‘One research article ping turned into a semester-plus-long deep dive into how to make the sap-tapping and syrup-making process more sustainable and garnered multiple awards at a Paris conference.’

“First, we will be developing a test for buddy sap by creating novel detection systems for three key molecules that exist in high concentrations within this type of off-flavor sap: asparagine, choline, and sarcosine,” they say in their team brochure. “Second, we will be harnessing the sucrose-rich ropy syrup to produce dextran, a molecule valued for its industrial versatility. We will use this dextran to create hydrogels for enhanced seedling germination and additional farmer revenues.”

For the layperson — like myself — what this means is that Saptasense worked in order to create a highly sensitive glucometer (glucose detector) that could detect buddy sap in as small amounts

as possible (in comparison to current commercially available detectors) and then, with the determinedly-buddy syrup, made hydrogels that could contribute back to the farming environments positively. In essence, Saptasense sought to find a way to minimize the amount of energy syrup manufacturers would put into making batches of sap that would just turn out to be buddy as well as attempting to create a positive feedback loop between the sap being produced and its unmarketable portion, of which would likely just be discarded otherwise.

‘Saptasense worked in order to create a highly sensitive glucose detector that could detect buddy sap in as small amounts as possible and then made hydrogels that could contribute back to the farming environments positively.’

This sounds nearly unapproachable — but Saptasense was able to come up with and follow through on this idea with mainly financial and physical aid in the form of lab equipment from other Biology labs on campus. However, they didn’t receive a ton of help — these students were managing their own team on their own time and serving as both scientists and leaders.

“Being a part of this team and knowing there were a lot of people who went through COVID and didn’t have a lot of hands-on lab experience, so I wanted to be there for help and to learn about how the science side of a PI (principal investigator) worked,” said junior Aashee Budhwani, who took on the role of Lab and Safety Manager.

‘These students were managing their own team on their own time and serving as both scientists and leaders.’

However, a lab experience has no way to solely consist of doing the research and the experimentation. Saptasense had to stay afloat financially, which included finding a way to Paris for their conference, which they did by creating a virtual art fair. They also put concentrated efforts into local education, working with the Rochester Museum and Science Center (RMSC) to teach about their work and products.

“After an initial brainstorming period [...] there’s a bunch of different manager

positions, so we all indicated our top three,” said senior and education and outreach manager Shalaka Natu. “For me, I’ve always enjoyed education and teaching, and with iGEM, I knew we were here for the summer, so I wanted to get involved with my community.”

By the end, Saptasense received a gold medal and was nominated for three special awards at 2022’s iGEM Grand Jamboree, making Team Rochester the second most awarded team in North America.

‘A lab experience has no way to solely consist of doing the research and the experimentation. Saptasense had to stay afloat financially, which they did by creating a virtual art fair. They also put concentrated efforts into local education.’

When asked about advice for students looking to apply to iGEM, many of the recent participants noted that the project requires students to rapidly improve their communication skills, and that it helped them in projects down the road.

‘Saptasense received a gold medal and was nominated for three special awards at 2022’s iGEM Grand Jamboree.’

“I think it’s important to know what you know. It’s even more important to know what you don’t know, and through this iterative process you can learn from it and affect others more effectively,” said sophomore and Saptasense hardware manager Sudarshan Raman.

“‘I think it’s important to know what you know. It’s even more important to know what you don’t know.’”

For those interested in iGEM in the future, the UR iGEM page notes this: “Application for enrollment into BIO 228A&B to participate in Team Rochester is required. The application period is from September 1 to October 31. Contact biology professor Anne Meyer at anne.meyer@rochester.edu or (585) 275-9290 for more information about the application process.”

Koh is a member of the Class of 2024.

OPINIONS

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

Speaking up

BY MELANIE EARLE
MANAGING EDITOR

One of the goals I have held for myself during my time writing for the Campus Times is to speak up, because I deeply regret the time I didn't.

Sports were my everything growing up. I was able to exercise my thoughts, frustrations and emotions; the field was my sanctuary. But the safe pocket I had scraped out for myself was corrupted during my junior year of high school. It felt as if I was tied to a cement block and thrown into the ocean, and I was thrashing to stay afloat. I thought it was best to stay quiet about my agony at the time and the weight became an unwelcome presence everyday. Against the advice of family and friends to tell the administration at my high school what was happening, I didn't. I told my family, my friends, and my support system not to do anything. I didn't want to cause more drama in an already drama-filled season. I thought I could get through it. That's what sportsmanship was all about, wasn't it? Putting yourself aside for the betterment of the team?

'That's what sportsmanship was all about, wasn't it? Putting yourself aside for the betterment of the team?'

Until I couldn't get through it. The soda pop was shaken, and it burst out of the bottle in the fall of my senior year on Nov. 11, 2018. It was the day of my admissions interview for MIT,

but before it in the morning, basketball practice. The memory is branded into my head — the walk home to get changed for my interview trying to force myself, tears and sweat stinging my face in the cold, nausea creeping up as I tried to force myself to stop crying so my eyes wouldn't be red. The weight pulsed in my stomach as the MIT alum delved into my life, and all I could remember was how my life was torn apart an hour before. That was the point I knew that I wasn't going to be able to continue doing the thing I loved, because it wasn't healthy for me to be there. I left the team because I thought it would be better for everyone.

Teachers and adults at my school were astounded when I quit. But no one really asked why. I think the reason was because everyone knew the answer wouldn't be good.

And I thought the problem was fixed. Until it bubbled back up in the spring.

I couldn't avoid talking to anyone this time, because it was pretty out of character for me to be involved in a tumultuous argument in and outside of the girls locker room. I was crushed by this point, and I wanted help. Until the help I got was a pat on the back and a general "that sucks." I asked myself, why fight? You're going to be out of this school in a month, would it be worth it?

My hands are pretty shaky and my eyes are burning as I write this, because every bone in my body wishes I fought tooth and nail. I want to go back and hug 16 year-old Melanie for thinking that she had a responsibility to go through what she did to not make things worse. I want to rain hell on the high school

for not doing anything. I am furious that what was 16-year-old Melanie's security blanket became a nest of thorns.

But it's not the main reason I wish I decided to stand up for myself. By choosing not to fight, I allowed the problem to continue. Because what happens to the next Melanie Earle? What happens when they are backed against the wall and feel alone? Who is going to help them? It's terrifying to stand up and say something, but it's dismaying to think about who could be suffering because I didn't. By taking action could have I created change?

'That is the power of journalism. That's why I am so passionate about it — you can create change and stand up.'

The *Campus Times* has become a way for me to speak up. Not only for myself, but to be a microphone for students who feel silenced, who feel alone, and are searching for the support I wish I had from my high school when I was 16 years old. That is the power of journalism. That's why I am so passionate about it — you can create change and stand up. You can highlight the hard efforts of a student body that feels overlooked. You can speak for what you believe in, share your experiences, hoping someone learns a lesson you wish you learned sooner. And that's what I want the *Campus Times* to be moving forward — a representation of the UR community, for better or worse.

Earle is a member of the Class of 2023.



BY JUSTIN O'CONNOR
NEWS EDITOR

If this week's midterm elections solidified anything, it's the fact that Republican election denialism is now just another strategic tool that's here to stay.

'But hearing it from people I've been in the same room with, that I've interacted with at events and on Twitter, just solidifies how worrying this moment really is.'

But there's something markedly different, and more eerie, about seeing outright anti-democratic rhetoric come out of the mouths of local candidates rather than, well, Donald Trump. One opportunist who will go to any length to keep his base fired up is rationalizable. Hell, even a whole group of opportunistic, power-hungry politicians willing to sell out democracy makes sense to me.

But hearing it from people I've been in the same room with, that I've interacted with at events and on Twitter, just solidifies how worrying this moment really is.

'Certainly concerning, but we can't just accept this newly-forced idea that late results equal malfeasance.'

Monroe County's election results came out much later than usual this week. The county Board of Elections said it was due to connectivity problems with the public results website, and things were cleared up relatively quickly when compared with some other districts that are still counting ballots to this day. Certainly concerning, but we can't just accept this newly-forced idea that late results equal malfeasance.

But that's what NY-25 Republican challenger La'Ron Singletary jumped to when results came out that he lost to Democratic incumbent

Joe Morelle. He called for an investigation into "unprecedented irregularities" with the election process, which is perhaps a fair request given the situation, but, on election night, he also sent out a statement saying "several issues came into question regarding the validity of ballots and how they were accounted for and recorded."

Like a reflex, he jumped to the idea that votes were invalid or unaccounted for or unrecorded. I don't think I need to point out again how this is an immense and dangerous jump in logic. And this is far from the most egregious example of local election denialism in the wake of the midterms — at least Singletary had the sense to concede once explanations were made public.

'These midterms jarred me, and I think this feeling is going to become a regular occurrence.'

Maybe he released the statements out of genuine concern, maybe he just wanted to cast doubts — whatever the case, none of this bodes well. He wasn't the only local candidate to veer down the path either. The State Assembly District 137 race saw Working Families Party incumbent Demond Meeks unsuccessfully challenged by Marcus Williams of the Conservative Party, who took to Twitter to decry "this year's election results & malfeasance surrounding it." Williams lost by over 35 points. Do they make enough paper to fake that many ballots?

Maybe things will be okay, and maybe I'm naive for expecting more from political opportunists, but these midterms jarred me, and I think this feeling is going to become a regular occurrence.

O'Connor is a member of the Class of 2024.

Campus Times

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BY JAMES ZAMPETTI
STAFF WRITER

It happened while I was sitting in Dougie. Nursing a stale cup of coffee while staring at nothing in particular, my thoughts wandered to a memory once forgotten.

I was sitting on the carpet of my living room with my grandma at the age of seven, struggling to conceal the smirk on my face. She knew what was coming next.

“Go fish!” I said triumphantly, forcing her to dig through the pile of tattered playing cards that lay in the space between us. We played this game every time she came to visit, and every time she let me win. At the time, however, I just thought I had a good poker face.

“Your guardian angel must be watching over you!” she reminded me as she sifted gently through the pile. The thought of having a guardian angel always made me feel safer.

‘We played this game every time she came to visit, and every time she let me win. At the time, however, I just thought I had a good poker face.’

Suddenly, I’m back in the dining hall, and all I can see is this single sheet of paper right behind the workers’ counter. It’s just hiding there in plain sight, resigned to the bustling employees who only offer it a subtle breeze as they rush to feed the ever-growing line of hungry students. I didn’t dare look away from it. I couldn’t because I knew the second I did, I would burst into tears.

By the time my grandma passed away, we had drifted apart. Yet the tears flowing down my face as I rushed back to my dorm room betrayed my assumption that this pain had been processed. Why was this coming up now? I knew it wasn’t

the memory in isolation that evoked these feelings. It was as though my memory had smuggled with it a thought that recontextualized my perspective of the experience. That the person with whom I shared it — someone I suddenly and consciously recognized I loved unconditionally — had drifted from my life a long time ago, and was now gone forever.

‘By the time my grandma passed away, we had drifted apart. Yet the tears flowing down my face as I rushed back to my dorm room betrayed my assumption that this pain had been processed.’

By the time I made it back to my dorm room I was a puddle on the floor. I remembered the time my grandma let me arm wrestle her when I was 10. I remembered making her omelets in the morning when she came to visit. I remembered naively asking her if people “back in her day” could only see things in black and white like the old movies. I remembered how that made her laugh. But then I remembered avoiding her after I got into a fight with my mom because I thought she was mad at me too. I remembered declining her invitation to watch a movie because I didn’t want her to know I was under the influence. I remembered faking a smile while making small talk with her the day I realized I hated myself. I remembered it all.

I couldn’t escape reflection as I processed my grief. To me the concept of loving myself was always foreign because I had always implicitly believed self-worth to be a commodity I needed to earn. We live in a society that doesn’t teach us the vital need for self-compassion and the role that close relationships play in a fulfilling life. Instead, we are taught that overworking

and career-building are central to the human experience. We are a culture that encourages self-criticism and ostracizes self-love, manifested in our compulsive need to measure ourselves relative to our peers. Generation Z is operating as a litmus test for these increasingly normalized trends.

Upwards of 70% of teenagers 13-17 view depression and anxiety as a “major problem”, according to Pew Research Center. Suicide is the second leading cause of death for individuals between 10-14 according to the National Institute of Mental Health. 79% of Generation Z reports feeling lonely, double that of seniors aged 66 or older. This is not normal. These climbing rates of disorder are operating within a broader, rapidly changing social context. We yell at each other in 280 characters. We compare ourselves to others’ social media feeds. We feel pressured to present ourselves perfectly online and in our professional and academic lives. We’re inundated with media that fetishizes unrealistic ideals of a “good life”. The average member of Gen Z watches 7.2 hours of video per day. That’s 2628 hours per year.

‘We yell at each other in 280 characters. We compare ourselves to others’ social media feeds. We’re inundated with media that fetishizes unrealistic ideas of a ‘good life.’

I sat down at my desk and wiped the tears away as they ran down my face. I knew I had to do something. The thought of not acting — not reaching for my grandma — was too painful to bear. With time interminably dragging me farther from her living body, I figured the closest thing to seeing her again was to write her a letter.

My hands hovered above

the keyboard. “This is ridiculous,” I thought to myself. I felt like a madman about to engage in conversation with a wall. I clattered the first two words, “Dear Grandma.” I started writing about how much I loved her, how much I missed her, and how I wished we could be together again. I stopped to consider the words on the page. They could have been printed on a Hallmark card. My soul was wailing, but my fingers were on the other side of the abyss, barely hearing a whisper. I had to make the jump. I had to be honest with myself.

‘With time interminably dragging me farther from her living body, I figured the closest thing to seeing her again was to write her a letter.’

“As I got older, I lost myself. I felt that when you came to visit, I had to prove to you that I was becoming a strong and mature young man. That somehow your love for me was conditional. I wish I would have opened up to you. I wish I would have told you how terrified I was of the world, of my family, of the people I went to school with. I wish we could have stayed friends as I grew up.” Cool tears trailed my cheeks as the words flowed onto the page.

“At times like these I really wish that there was a God. That somehow, some way, you’re looking down on me now as I write this in a puddle of my own tears and you’re feeling the same sense of connection that I feel to you now. If I have a guardian angel, I know it’s you. I never really got to say goodbye to you. In many ways I never had the opportunity to say hello. Words can’t describe how badly I want to hug you right now. Wherever you are right now, even if that place is nowhere, I want you to know that I love you so much. I never got to say that to you in the way that I mean it now.”

The dull rattle of my box fan reminded me that the world was still spinning. I read the words over and over, as if to retell myself their contents were true. The desire to see my grandma once more, to hear her voice, was only strengthened through writing and with it the torment of knowing I couldn’t. But my feelings of loss were no longer shapeless. I was now overwhelmed with a profound sense that there was tragic beauty — a necessity — to my pain. Something that makes us inescapably human.

Grief is a fickle thing. One second, you feel fine, and the next it pierces the fibers of your soul with such precision you don’t know if you’re terrified or grateful of the feelings it elicits. It’s when we lose those we love that we feel the most connected to them. This sense of connection defines grief’s heavy touch. But it’s through this same pain that we find depths of gratitude for the opportunities we have to experience and share love. Our time on this Earth is finite. How we spend it, and with whom we spend it, are ultimately the only things that matter.

‘This sense of connection defines grief’s heavy touch.’

Now more than ever our personal narratives are being conditioned by the opinions and beliefs of others. Nobody is born disliking themselves. Nobody wants to feel like they aren’t good enough. These beliefs are learned, taught to us by a broken culture. To fight against this isn’t a function of external battle; it is a matter of internal reflection. We don’t have to be the co-authors in the stories others write about us. We can learn to love ourselves unconditionally, and we can forge deeper bonds because of it. This is where our power lies, if only we choose to search for it.

Zampetti is a member of the Class of 2024.



Confronting Colorism is More Complicated Than We Think



BY HELENA FENG
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I grew up in the sunny state of California, where spring is defined by the sweet scent of blooming flowers and pure blue skies without a single blemish, where rarely a summer day goes by without sunshine bathing every object the eye can see in a warm, comfortingly orange-hued light. Yet, I remember my childhood days playing outside were always supervised by a figure who stood in stark, shadowy contrast to the bright levity and carefreeness around her — my mother, who always donned her huge straw sun hat each

SUNAHRA TANVIR / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

time we left the house and sought solace in the shade as I played, treating the sun as if even a glancing touch would threaten her perpetually pale skin. Even now, I remember thinking if such an extreme degree of caution was worth it, if paleness truly was enough to sacrifice the plain, irreplaceable pleasure of sunlight on bare skin.

‘Colorism, defined as prejudice against individuals on the basis of darker skin tone, is an often unrecognized extension of racism.’

Of course, at that time I had little clue of the concept

of colorism, let alone of its pervasive, continuous influence at a global scale.

Colorism, defined as prejudice against individuals on the basis of darker skin tone, is an often unrecognized extension of racism. Both are systematic products of deeply rooted institutions of colonialism and social hierarchy that continue to impact aesthetic, ideological, and cultural facets of modern society, though colorism in separate ethnic communities has slight variation in their historical origins and cultural association. Broadly speaking, colorism present in African American communities is most directly linked to the European colonial project and slavery, while colorism for Asian communities is best understood by first distinguishing between countries included and excluded in European colonialism efforts. In colonized countries such as Vietnam or the Philippines, whiteness as a cultural ideal is derived from Western communities who came to value whiteness as a sign of high social status. In East Asian countries without such direct association with the Western world,

colorism can be more directly attributed to the gradual association of pale skin with the leisure class, as manual labor demanded of the working class necessitated a greater amount of time spent outdoors and a subsequent darker complexion.

‘Even now, I remember thinking if such an extreme degree of caution was worth it, if paleness truly was enough to sacrifice the plain, irreplaceable pleasure of sunlight on bare skin.’

Regardless of its origins, it is important to recognize that the maintenance of this divide is predicated on notions that extend far beyond white skin as simply an indicator of higher social status. Rather, it is also based on the notion that comparatively whiter skin represents beauty and composure, while darker skin represents the exact opposite: ugliness, savagery, and inferiority. The implication of this — that those of a minority group are of greater value

if they have a lighter complexion — introduces arguably the most reprehensible aspect of colorism: that it pits people of the same ethnic minority against each other. Though racism can similarly be internalized and practiced within a community, colorism has much more overt impacts on the way members of an ethnic group compete for positions of proximity to whiteness.

The internalization of a white aesthetic ideal is so deeply rooted, in fact, that many of us are unaware of the extent to which it is constantly reinforced. One of the most glaring examples of this can be understood with a careful consideration of what we collectively consider to be the physical “default.” Say, when a character in a book is of unspecified ethnic origin, how do we picture them in our heads until they are more concretely described?

Read the full article online at campustimes.org/opinions.

Feng is a member of the Class of 2026.

Hard work can’t beat talent... or can it?

BY ANAND IDRIS
STAFF WRITER

I recently got back into playing “Super Smash Bros.” As many esports players can relate, I spend a lot of time playing with others, and yet I, as the Smash lingo goes, “get bodied” each time. While definitely not the highest paying esports, “Super Smash Bros” has its fair share of high and top level players fluent in the game to place relatively well at tournaments. I recently asked one of my friends — who is certainly not a professional-level player but is miles ahead of me — what it takes to be a top level player in Smash. His response:

“Maybe to be like, top five in the world, you need some kind of innate talent on top of hard work. But putting in your hours of deliberate practice into the game will get you way farther than any natural talent, and almost every top player practices the game for hours on end. I’d say the talent here is more the patience to do those hours of practice, not innate skill.”

While talking about talent by analyzing an esports may be silly to some, I would say that my friend’s advice about “Super Smash Bros” applies to most of life in general. Talent is not what most people think it is. The good news is that most

of the people we think are talented are actually just really well-disciplined, and we can learn to do the same.

‘Talent is not what most people think it is. The good news is that most of the people we think are talented are actually just really well-disciplined, and we can learn to do the same.’

First, let’s talk about why it seems like others around get things faster than you do. How is it that she can balance her three eboard positions and be a straight-A BME major? There just can’t be enough hours in a day for that! I might be playing basketball against others for hours on end, and yet I see no improvement. My friend doesn’t seem to put in nearly as many hours as I do, yet he is way better. How can that be? While there certainly is such a thing as an innate ability to learn and inherent skill, it’s more likely that that smart BME major or your friend who’s better at games than you does this thing called deliberate practice. If you’ve never heard of this before, it could be a life changer: not

all hours spent practicing are equal. While you were playing basketball games with your friends and not putting much thought into what you were doing wrong, your friend was spending an equal amount of time focusing on his weaknesses: layups, shots from a 45-degree angle, or whatever weaknesses they notice. While you pulled an all-nighter looking through your textbook and doing every single practice problem, that girl who scored an A on the exam spent an hour every day a week before the exam working specifically on the topics that she knew she was having trouble with, rather than every single problem.

Deliberate practice is when you devote your practice hours toward finding what areas you’re weak in and targeting them specifically. It will definitely be a lot less fun than what you were doing before, but your hours will be better spent. If my problem in basketball is mainly shooting from far away, why would I practice just by playing basketball games? Sure, that will involve some shooting hoops, but that will only be a portion of the time you spend. What if, instead of playing for an hour, you just spent 10 minutes every day

working on the things you know you’re bad at? This is the talk about talent that we mistake for innate ability. Some people seem to improve at magical paces, and you might sit there wondering how they can be so talented. There are definitely people who can pick up on things easily, but that isn’t nearly enough to compensate for the work you need to put in. Hard work will always triumph over innate ability.

‘That’s what we would call a prodigious person, and there’s a reason why we have a “Gifted Kid to Burnout Pipeline” problem in our society.’

The best chess players, the smartest mathematicians, and the greatest athletes, while certainly talented, perhaps even prodigious, are mainly where they are because they have taken the time to sit down and realize what they need to work on. Top chess players like Magnus Carlsen, for instance, spend nearly five to six hours per day practicing chess. What do they do? They work on things that cost them games previously,

and work on tactics and ways to work around them. That’s deliberate practice!

The question does not lie in if hard work can pass natural talent — it’s about how long it will take for hard work to pass natural talent. The answer, it turns out, is not very long. Truly talented people are those who can learn quickly from their mistakes during their deliberate practice sessions and improve upon them. Talented people are not those who can pick up a pen and instantly solve a hard math problem. That’s what we would call a prodigious person, and there’s a reason why we have a “Gifted Kid to Burnout Pipeline” problem in our society. Those who can do things with relatively little effort will find themselves beaten by those who put in the hard work. So, next time you do poorly on your exam and wonder how that other student did so much better than you with what looked like no effort, it might just be that they knew what they were doing wrong and focused solely on that. Maybe you could try to do the same thing and see where it leads you.

Idris is a member of the Class of 2023.

CULTURE

The Return of Indie Sleaze

BY JANE OLIVER
COLUMNIST

Thanks to TikTok, the cycle of fashion trends is moving faster than ever.

In past decades, trends typically lasted for the entire decade (or even two), and it was easy to match a type of style with when it was most popular. Just think of the 70s or the Y2K era. The trends during these decades lasted the entire decade and would be recycled in later decades. Now it seems like there is a new trend or popular style every year, even every month.

Last year Y2K fashion was all the rage, but the times are changing and fashion is moving towards indie sleaze.

You may be asking yourself, “WTF is indie sleaze?”

Indie sleaze is essentially a Gen Z term for the hipster aesthetic. Think skinny scarves, metallics, and grunge. When I think of indie sleaze, the first things that come to mind are the TV shows “Skins” and “Gossip Girl.” Both shows emerged during the indie sleaze party scene, demonstrating the fashion and the angst of the time. Celebrities who embodied indie sleaze during the early 2000s, were M.I.A., Santigold, and Karen

O. Some of my favorite musicians to date.

The indie sleaze era initially spanned from 2008 - 2014. Trends from this era include smudged makeup, excessive jewelry, thigh-high socks, and Jeffrey Campbell platforms. In her video “the disaster that bred the indie sleaze era,” Youtuber Kristen Leo describes indie sleaze as a reaction to the economic recession. The Great Recession of 2008 occurred following the U.S. housing crisis. It was the worst economic crisis to happen in the U.S. since the Great Depression. During this time many of us were too young to understand or care what was going on.

Those who could understand rebelled by forming a counter culture known as indie sleaze. Marked by extreme partying, anger toward excessive wealth, and a desire for simpler times, indie sleaze pumped through the veins of the rebellious, topped off by mismatched patterns and messy hairstyles. Indie sleaze is the antithesis of perfection, and in the hyper-filtered world we live in today, it makes sense why this anti-beauty aesthetic is back.

Fashion trends and the state of society go hand and

hand. We dress in reaction to our emotions, and our emotions often reflect our societal situations. Due to the pandemic, people are “socially starved;” they have a desire to escape and party hard. Indie sleaze gives people that escapism they so desire.

‘Fashion trends and the state of society go hand and hand. We dress in reaction to our emotions, and our emotions often reflect our societal situations.’

We are also in the midst of a recession ourselves and we want to be free from economic stress. We were trapped indoors for months. Everything is extremely unaffordable — gas, housing, groceries, etc. Many of our loved ones died and sometimes it seems we are on the brink of war. With all of this, many of us feel these past two years have sucked and we just want to have a good time. The way we dress expresses that.

Oliver is a member of the Class of 2026.



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‘Gimme All Your Love’ is better than a passionate love affair

BY MELANIE EARLE
MANAGING EDITOR

One of my favorite songs of all time is “Gimme All Your Love” by the Alabama Shakes. It’s what love sounds like to me. The highs and lows, twists and turns. It is a rollercoaster. “Gimme All Your Love” is ageless, as if it could take up a smoky room in a detective 1960s film, late 80s coming-of-age romance montage, or a glance that leads to a passionate fire and the inevitable extinguishing of the flame.

The song encapsulates soul. Rests are weaponized to deliver the quiet and emptiness that naturally happen in relationships. The keyboard surrounds you, so you are always accompanied throughout the song — except for the beats, which make the silence powerful. But when the sound kicks back in, you are grasped by the electric guitar and pulled into the depths of loneliness that only comes from love. The bass is soothing but vociferous, a tender touch. The drums rock the boat to a soulful tap.

‘Rests are weaponized to deliver the quiet and emptiness that naturally happen in relationships.’

Lead singer Brittney Howard pulls you into her embrace. The prowess of this song is impossible without her, there’s not another singer out there right now who meets her on her level. She’s a physical but uneasy comfort. Howard is crying out — if love had a voice, she is a woman possessed. It’s booming with passion and as fragile as glass. She encompasses the intensity of love at first sight and the gut wrenching pressure when you lose them.

‘Howard is crying out - if love had a voice, she is a woman possessed.’

The groove is sexy and long-ing, and plays out like a flirty conversation. As Howard reaches the chorus, she leans into the emotion, almost like a desperate, longing, passionate,

kiss. The verses are the slow moments, smoothing out the creases. An easy look across the table. Holding hands in the cold. A calm Sunday morning. The

‘As Howard reaches the chorus, she leans into the emotion, almost like a desperate, longing, passionate kiss.’

lyrics hit at tension pulling on strings of this relationship being spun out, and you can lose yourself in them easily until you are sucked back into the ardent chorus, demanding your attention.

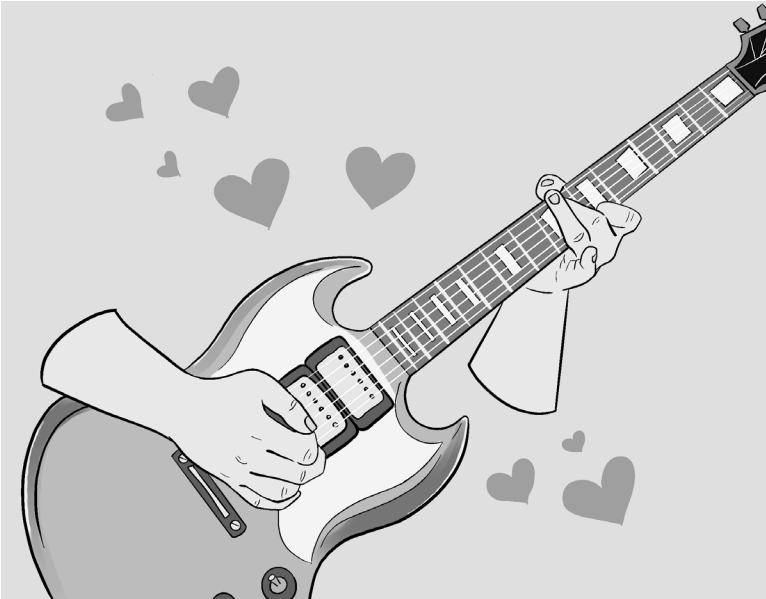
But then you hit the bridge, where slow guitar lulls you in. The bass guides you through the racing emotions and thoughts in the background. I’m a sucker for a bass solo, and out of all songs to have a killer one, this isn’t the one I would guess. The bass solo is the definition of funk. The guitars play off of each other, mimicking a couple diving into the undying argument that only ends in silence. And then the guitar solo is the blow-up, screaming for change. Brittany bursts open the dam with a ravenous “Gimme All Your Love.”

‘I’m a sucker for a bass solo, and out of all the songs to have a killer one, this isn’t the one I would guess.’

The song then settles back into its beginning tempo. It’s either the acceptance of a failed love or remembrance of how it started.

It’s, quite frankly, the perfect song. It’s otherworldly but roots your feet to the ground at the same time. The studio version of this track is one thing, but the performance Alabama Shakes delivered on Saturday Night Live is a whole other beast. I wouldn’t call this a love song, because it’s not the song you fall into love to. It describes the painful passion of love. You don’t hear many like it.

Earle is a member of the Class of 2023.



SUNAHRA TANVIR / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

The Pawsitive Cafe, downtown Rochester’s first cat cafe

BY EMMELY ELI TEXCUCANO
STAFF WRITER

At a time when the PAWS (Peers for Animal Wellness and Safety) club is hard at work scheduling at least three sessions per semester where therapy dogs are invited onto campus to serve as emotional support for college students, the demand for stress relief from a grueling onslaught of responsibilities as a young adult is high. College students everywhere are seeking furry companions or not-so-furry companions to comfort them (see: the fish in a small aquarium that residential life policies allow). The school boasts a number of student-run Instagram pages like @ur-groundhogs, @squirrels_of_uofr_, and several dedicated towards the infamous quad fox. There’s a demand to see and interact with animals as a way of seeking comfort. These animals serve as an emotional support for students pulling their hair out over midterms.

‘The demand for stress relief from a grueling onslaught of responsibilities as a young adult is high. College students everywhere are seeking furry companions or not-so-furry companions to comfort them.’

There lies a safe haven just a quick trip away on the red line bus. Around the corner from the Eastman Theatre is Pawsitive Cafe, downtown Rochester’s first cat cafe. The Pawsitive Cafe opened its doors a little over 4 months ago. You enter the cafe to find snacks locally sourced from the Red Fern, a vegan and gluten-free restaurant in Rochester, and a selection of beverages including coffee and assorted teas.

Chester, the house cat with his signature red bowtie, greets you at the door. He was obtained from one of the first batches of adoption cats that came to the cafe and is their only noted ‘foster fail.’ He bonded with Suzanne

Peters and Johnny Denman, the owners of Pawsitive Cafe and a happily married couple. After working for Petco for several years, Suzanne noticed the amount of college students that would come in missing their pets from home and hoping to play with some of the animals. This is where the idea for the cat cafe came to fruition.

‘Chester, the house cat with his signature red bowtie, greets you at the door.’

You can pay for a half hour or an hour-long session and make your way through the double doors to the packed playroom, usually containing an average of 15 to 20 foster cats, an assortment of couches, and cat toys to destress with a furry friend. These cats are outsourced from the Rescued Treasure Pet Adoptions, a local rescue group that has a network of fosters as well as adoption rooms at pet stores in the area. The cats in the cafe are usually trap and release kittens, abandoned cats, or come from homes that can’t take care of them. Most cats that you interact with in the cafe are up for adoption — with a few exceptions, such as Chester.

‘You can pay for a half hour or an hour-long session in the packed playroom, usually containing an average of 15 to 20 foster cats.’

Peters and Denman are determined to find the best home for these foster cats. Together, they thoroughly review applicants through Rescued Treasures Pet Adoptions. Denman lives by the mantra, “We don’t want to find cats a home, we want to find them the home.” They’ve been successful in this mission and have coordinated 15 adoptions so far, including to a UR student, in the short four months they’ve been operating the cafe.

People are able to visit to play with the cats, snuggle up with them, or offer them snacks. At the front of the playroom, the cafe sells cat treats and commodities from local artists and vendors. This includes local homemade soap, prints, bookmarks, pins, and jewelry, all from local vendors. The owners’ goal was to keep their operations as “local as possible,” which is why they offer artisans a place to sell their goods. This extends to the snacks they sell from the Red Fern and the cafe’s own merch and logo, which come from a local artist and print shop in the area.

‘People are able to visit to play with the cats, snuggle up with them, or offer them snacks.’

The cat cafe has also started expanding past playtime in the cat lounge by offering local community events, including art, yoga, and movie nights with the cats. They are planning to make these events a permanent fixture.

The cafe’s clientele consists mostly of locals and welcomes people of all ages. Similar to other adoption rooms, volunteers sometimes come to help out with the cats. Potential volunteers that want to work in the cat cafe can apply through Rescued Treasures Pet Adoptions’ website.

I’ve visited the cafe several times, and each time, it’s been bustling with college students rotating in and out of the door hoping to catch a break. Friends wander in and spend time playing with the kittens, petting them, or just relaxing and chatting with the owners. The Pawsitive Cafe offers an easy and affordable way to destress and have some fun in Rochester. I know it’s where I’m headed the next time I need a moment to relax, and believe me, with finals looming and the Rochester snow approaching, we all need a little break and a kitten to pet.

Texcucano is a member of the Class of 2026.



EMMELY ELI TEXCUCANO / STAFF WRITER

HUMOR

Quiz: Should You Overload Next Semester?

BY ALLIE TAY
OPINIONS EDITOR

If you're like me and like finding ways to make your life harder than it already is, you might be thinking about overloading next semester. Per the University's new policy starting Spring 2023, students may enroll in up to 19.99 credits, but why do the bare minimum? Lucky for you, if you're still on the fence, take the short and simple quiz below. Beware, however, that personal results may vary depending on your current mental, emotional, and physical state. So, refrain from taking this quiz after completely acing — or bombing — the three midterms you had last week, because overconfidence is usually a recipe for disaster and underestimating your ability to suffer would be such a waste when there's so much academic misery ahead.

1. Do you attend lecture?

- a. Yes, because how could I miss out on the most fascinating aspect of collegiate life?
- b. I do attend. It's fun if you actually understand what's going on. It's also nice to see my friends in lecture (assuming they actually go).
- c. I go sometimes, but it's not the end of the world if I skip a couple here and there. (Organic Chemistry Tutor is my real professor anyways.)
- d. No, attending lecture is for nerds. I'd rather pay \$60k to teach myself physics (smh).

2. Do you enjoy studying?

- a. Yes, studying is my life's purpose! I also have nothing better to do *blows kiss*.
- b. Studying is alright, I guess. I grind it out and hope for the best.
- c. No, I'm not a psychopath, but I'm also not a genius. I do what I have to, but nothing more.
- d. No, and I don't study. I rely on my natural intelligence and photographic memory, or I just fail and I'm okay with that.

3. Do you usually take the weekends off?

- a. Never! Weekends are perfect for juggling my cancer therapy research, managing my three jobs, working out, and getting ahead on studying for the upcoming week.
- b. I rarely leave campus except for my monthly grocery run. It's so sad but true.
- c. I have to take at least one day off to stay sane, otherwise I'd seriously have no life. Why live your life fulfilling the

expectations of others?
d. YOLO. Why is this even a question?

4. It's midnight, and you have a paper due at 6 a.m. that counts for 25% of your grade, and for some reason you haven't started. What do you do?

- a. Trick question. I'd never be in this situation because I would have finished it three weeks ago.
- b. I'd pull my once-in-a-while all-nighter because how could I not, but still try to get a couple hours of sleep.
- c. I'll write what I can, but call it quits after an hour or so because sleep is more important.
- d. I'd give up in the name of health and happiness. Grades are just a social construct anyways.

5. Lastly, do you have friends/a social life?

- a. If my laptop, iPad, and three-foot stack of biology notes count, then yes.
- b. Yes, but I don't really need to see them too often when I'm busy. They're used to me disappearing for weeks on end.
- c. Yes, and I need human interaction (even if it's occasional) to stay sane.
- d. Grades are temporary; friendships are forever.

If you answered mostly "A," overloading is for you. You're way beyond up for the challenge, and overloading will probably be a breeze.

If you chose mostly "B," overloading might be for you too — you also might not have a choice, anyways — with a caveat. Just make sure to not accidentally turn into the robots that those who answered "A" are.

If you got mostly "C," you probably shouldn't because of quality of life reasons, but then again, maybe you just took this quiz at the wrong time. Take it when you're feeling better, and you'll get the right answer.

If you answered "D," most of the time, you probably took this quiz as a joke so don't even bother with overloading. It's not worth the hype.

All that said, remember overloading is never something you should be pressured into by friends but only forced into by your own excessively lofty academic expectations. And if you do decide to overload, make sure you brag about it to as many people as possible, because why else would it be worth it?

Tay is a member of the Class of 2025.

BY BRYAN BURKE
STAFF WRITER

As Mangelsdorf peered over the derelict student body, a wave of disappointment washed over her. Spooky season is no more, leaving a power vacuum which only stress and seasonal depression could fill. Students were simply dragging themselves through the days, not enjoying all Rochester has to offer, from the bipolar weather to the strictly mediocre dining. Something had to be done. Something in equal parts immediate and cheap.

‘Spooky season is no more, leaving a power vacuum which only stress and seasonal depression could fill.’

After a brief meeting with the environmental sustainability club, the faculty swiftly ignored their pleas, pushing on with their half assed plan with absolutely no second thought, as usual.

Coordinating with facilities, Mangelsdorf amassed materials from farms all over the greater Brighton area. On the third Sunday of November, she opened the floodgates, quoting Howard Garnish in 1925 with the proclamation, “Go you yellow jackets!”

With a flash of yellow and black across the sky and a deafening buzz, which could be heard from Riverview to Southside, the swarm of bees was released. Eastman Quad was soon enveloped, forcing everyone into the perceived safety of the tunnel system, via Morey, Lattimore, Dewey,

Buzz-buzz

and even Bausch & Lomb. Unfortunately for all, the tunnels are ventilated, allowing for the flow of fresh air — and apparently small insects — into the subterranean after just a few short minutes.

‘On the third Sunday of November, Mangelsdorf opened the floodgates, quoting Howard Gamish in 1925 with the proclamation, “Go you yellow jackets!”’

Chaos was the only thing uniting the student body, due to the ratio of five mascots per student. The insects, despite their miniscule size, were quite speedy and efficient predators. They moved in packs, resembling clouds of yellow pain. Their intent: to drive students into buildings, away from campus center, and just generally insane. A few students of the aquatic persuasion even took solace in the mighty Genesee, where no bug dared to venture. It's a shame, really, given the strong current and bone-chilling temperatures. Hopefully they could take inspiration from the streamline beaver before it was too late.

‘With a flash of yellow and black across the sky and a deafening buzz, which could be heard from Riverview to Southside, the swarm of bees was released.’

It was no more than 24

minutes into the disaster before the bees found Starbucks. If you are not familiar with the franchise, they are a corporate chain which pedals sugar water to children operating under the false pretense of selling coffee to adults.

“Buzz buzz!” said the busy bees, as they made their way to the home of the grande strawberry açai refresher with light ice. Fueled by only the finest cane sugar, the swarm went into overdrive.

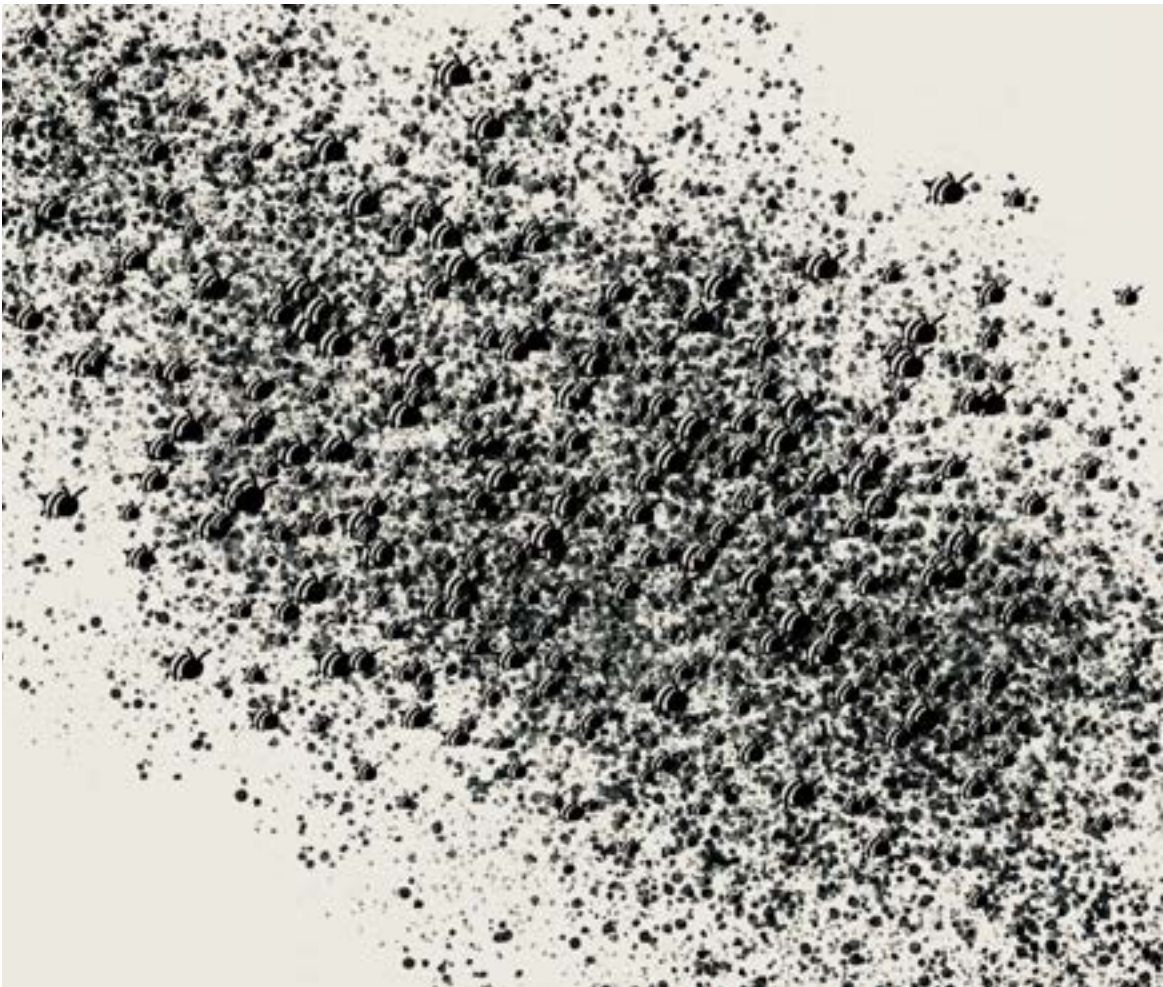
‘They moved in packs, resembling clouds of yellow pain.’

Greed soon took over, as the bees spread out to capture every square inch of campus. On any other day of the week, this would be more bearable. But this was Sunday, which means the weekly display of our D3 football strength! Dearest Rocky saw the impending threat and sprung into action. The bees recognized Rocky's superior stature and bowed down to their six-legged overlord. They obeyed the commands of the plushy and jovial insect, swiftly buzzing back into their respective bee boxes.

‘Fueled by only the finest of cane sugar, the swarm went into overdrive.’

At long last, the onslaught was over, leaving only a slightly above average annoyance of the student body at the administrative staff.

Burke is a member of the Class of 2025.



BRIDGET TOKIWA / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

Rating the Cults on Campus

BY MELANIE EARLE
MANAGING EDITOR

Cult is admittedly a strong word, but these groups on campus bring the umph into cult. But the question has to be asked: which cult is the best? As I dive into these troubling waters and caves of secrets, please remember to tell my wives and kids I love them just in case I don't come back.

‘As I dive into these troubling waters and caves of secrets, please remember to tell my wives and kids I love them just in case I don’t come back.’

Student Association: You think they would have better things to do with their time instead of larping House of Cards. Yet as we, the student body, have sadly seen time and time again, they do not. 5/10 only-doing-it-for-their-law-school-applications boosters.

Football: What happens in the locker room stays in the locker room. Their drama is their own and good luck trying to get into their circle of trust. It is impressive the amount of confidence they hold when both Ultimate Frisbee and Quidditch

are better than them. 3/8 Snitches.

ROTC: Basically football with guns. Points off for being unoriginal. Do better. 2/7 Eagles.

Starbucks employees: ‘Nuff said. If you talk they’ll waterboard you in the sweet cream foam. I’ve already said too much. 4/10 frappuccinos ordered at 11 a.m.

Student Ambassadors: I get draining the alumni, but why hit the current seniors up for cash? Am I making a livable income I didn’t know about? Dark magic must be afoot. I’m impressed with the hustle from this mafia, and that they have student enforcers on the street. 5/6 \$20 t-shirts that are actually worth \$5.

Physics: The cream of the crop. Do you ever see these elusive adherents on campus? No, because they hide in their ritual room, the POA (Physics, Optics, and Astronomy) Library. They must be brainwashed because how can someone love torture (aka the homework) that much? These people speak their own language and write in the secret texts (Latex). This cult is up there with such legends as Scientology. 10/10 apples falling out of a tree.

Earle is a member of the Class of 2023.

BY LILLI TAMM
HUMOR EDITOR

UR’s finest, the Tun-Tunney Scary Dark Tunneling Tun-Tun Club, unveiled the first section of their work this semester in a grandiose ceremony in the junction between the Wilco tunnel, the Morey entrance that also goes to the First-Year Quad and the painted tunnels, and the carpeted fake tunnel that we show families on tours. Many were delayed by this 30-second fake-out event, which only further proves that the tunneling club has become an essential provider for our ever-better, ever-growing student body.

The Tunneling Tun-Tun Club was an initiative of hangry engineering students upset about having to go all the way from the depths of Georgen into the blinding daylight of the outside world. This arduous trek took them across the Hajim lawn, complete with a walk of shame past Wegmans, a journey through Hoyt and the hot tunnels, the daily stumble on that one raised part of Morey 2, and a continual scowl at the Starbucks stragglers who never learned to walk past the speed per hour of ‘slow,’ all to get to the Pit and wait in line, then do it all over again and be late to class. Imagine going to a school that not only doesn’t want to feed you, but actively creates corners where there should not be to prevent you from accessing edible species on time for your next eight

hours of suffering. I’m not bitter or anything. But yeah, tunnels.

‘Many were delayed by this 30-second fake-out event, which only proves that the tunneling club has become an essential provider for our ever-better, ever-growing student body.’

Members of the tunneling club (now an official affiliate of one of Elon Musk’s lesser terrible money-laundering schemes, The Boring Company) take it upon themselves to improve the University’s abysmal foot traffic by tunneling between existing tunnels to create more tunnels. This can be done by digging with spoons below weak spots in the existing infrastructure (which is all of them) or stealing power tools from the machine shop and blasting through walls in the Meliora Hall basement.

‘But yeah, tunnels.’

One new “tunnel” involves students crawling through a hole in the lectern in Hubbell, which intrepid subterranean innovator John Lowe told me was “smashing, top of the hill, a whole new age of pedestrian transportation really.” I’ll take him at his word. With increased tunnel acreage, the campus groundbois are, in a word, proliferating. Our beloved furry companions have

identified an ecological niche to fill and they are doing. Their. Best. If you hear frantic squeaks in the dark, turn away while you still can.

Tunnels come in many shapes and sizes, primarily tunnel-like and fuckery-like. The University has seen fit to endow the group with unlimited shovels, resulting in massive exportation to freedom fighter groups railing against the tyrannical oppression of Big Tunnel, and a whole lot of hard cash filling money holes which are definitely not hidden around campus anywhere, jk jk unless... Anyway, the tunnels are popping off (the dynamite was a welcome aid), and will surely be useful to crawl away and hide when SA is Once Again Asking for monetary compensation, as my work-study was intended to fund the senior class’s “Bench on the Quad” t-shirt, or whatever.

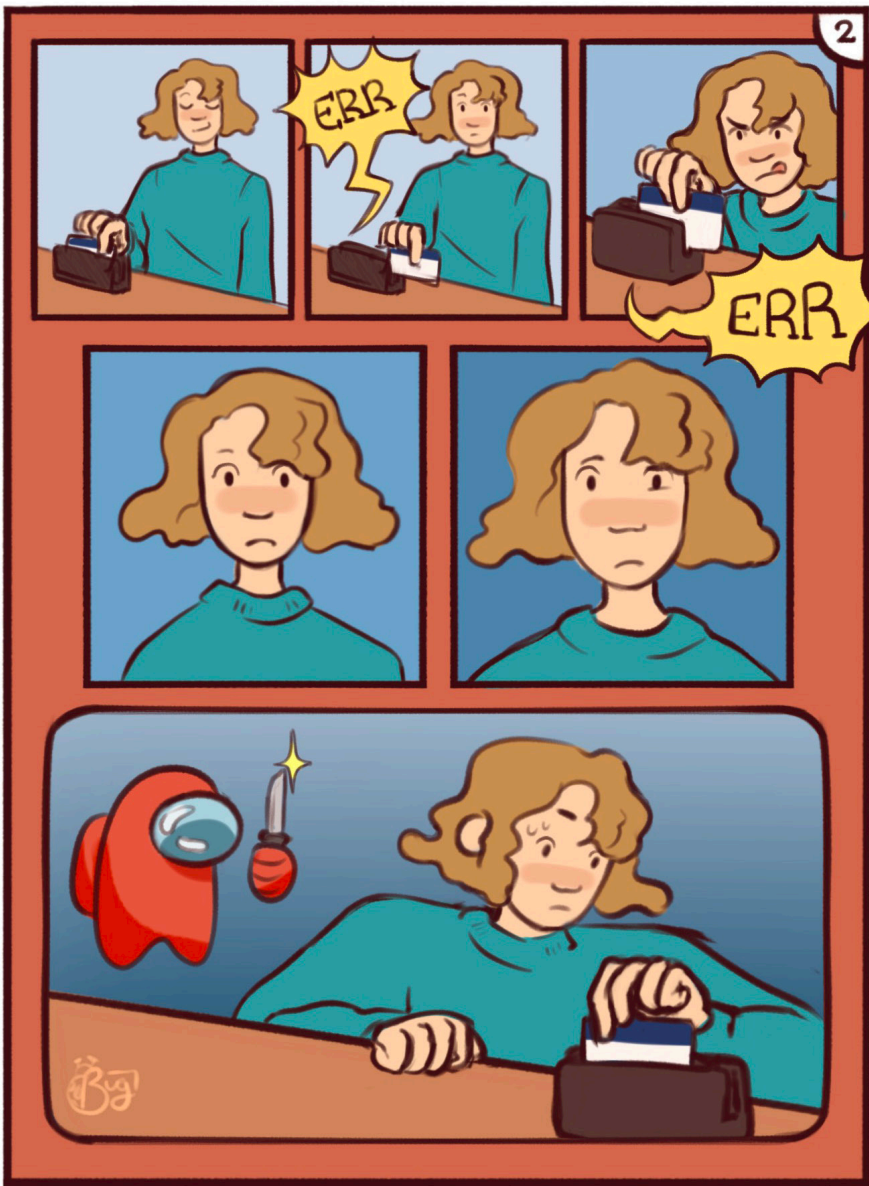
‘With increased tunnel acreage, the campus groundbois are, in a word, proliferating.’

If you’ve got wrists in working condition and a will to play-act as working-class to better cleanse your spirit for the revolution, these tunnels aren’t going to dig themselves. Join today for the low, low price of your will to evade carpal tunnel syndrome, and dig yourself into a whole new you!

Tamm is a member of the Class of 2025.

UR Sus

BY BUG CARTWRIGHT
CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATOR



SPORTS

A Mid-Season Recap of UR’s Most Middling Sport — A Cappella

BY ALEX ELCHEV
SPORTS EDITOR

BY ALYSSA KOH
MANAGING EDITOR

A cappella season has reached a fever pitch, and you can’t tell us it’s not a sport, dad.

If you haven’t experienced the triumphs and defeats, the epic highs and lows of collegiate a cappella, now is the time. All five contemporary Rochester a cappella groups are hosting performances, gunning for the honor of having the most culturally relevant show theme and the most impressive vocals. Preparations started as early as August for these groups, and now it’s game day.

‘If you haven’t experienced the triumphs and defeats, the epic highs and lows of collegiate a cappella, now is the time.’

‘Preparations started as early as August for these groups, and now it’s game day.’

The season kicked off with Mean Girls, performed by the YellowJackets on Nov. 5. Sophomore and assistant music director Đức Nguyễn was a showstopper on the field, hitting a record high 300 riffs per minute (rpm), and junior Jack Petrarca put in a classic Tony Snell performance in his three solo performances. In a rare turn of events, junior Nick Jiang employed the “get another group to make your show better” play at the top of the third quarter, bringing the Ballet Performance Group (BPG) out of the sidelines for a drive down the field complete with pirouettes and the forever crowd-pleasing attire of white button-up shirts with the sleeves rolled up.

Theme selection has taken the forefront this semester, with four out of five shows having movie themes. While

regular Rochester sports all share a theme of sucking ass, a cappella thrives on the ability to adapt, while also benefiting from everyone in the crowd being incessantly drunk and annoying about it.

‘Sophomore and assistant music director Đức Nguyễn was a showstopper on the field, hitting a record high 300 riffs per minute (rpm).’

Hecklers are commonplace in all sports, and a cappella is no different — in fact, it wouldn’t be an a cappella game without the screams of “okay choreo” and “oh my god, they’re doing THIS song?!?!” rivaling the vocal ability of the performers. While most people watch a UR football game and say “yeah, I could probably do that,” they could definitely make the mouth sounds that half of the players on an a cappella pitch do, and yet

they still pay money to watch them do it! Truly, a testament to the low self esteem and lack of financial prioritization of UR students. They don’t even offer season tickets.

‘While regular Rochester sports all share a theme of sucking ass, a cappella thrives on the ability to adapt, while also benefiting from everyone in the crowd being incessant drunk.’

If you’re not already blacked out at 8 p.m. on a Saturday and have a hankering to sit in Strong Auditorium or Feldman Ballroom and listen to some minor-leaguers who are “just trying their best, man,” maybe the next couple games are for you. After Hours is up next on prime-time, playing an “Avengers” home game on Nov. 18. The

Midnight Ramblers, who will be in the ICCAs (International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella; yes, it is unfortunately exactly like Pitch Perfect, it’s literally so funny) during the spring season, are doing “Twilight” the following night, and Trebellious caps off the season on Dec. 4 with “Acapocalypse.”

‘If you’re not already blacked out at 8 p.m. on a Saturday night and have a hankering to listen to some minor-leaguers who are ‘just trying their best, man,’ maybe the next couple games are for you.’

Shut up, dad, for the last time, it IS a sport.

Elchev is a member of the Class of 2023.

Koh is a member of the Class of 2024.

This Month in Photos

“This Month in Photos” is a column to document daily life on campus each month. You can submit your photos to mbettenh@u.rochester.edu and hlitsky@u.rochester.edu with the subject line “This Month in Photos.”



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