

Campus Times



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URMC Labor Unions Vote Overwhelmingly to Strike

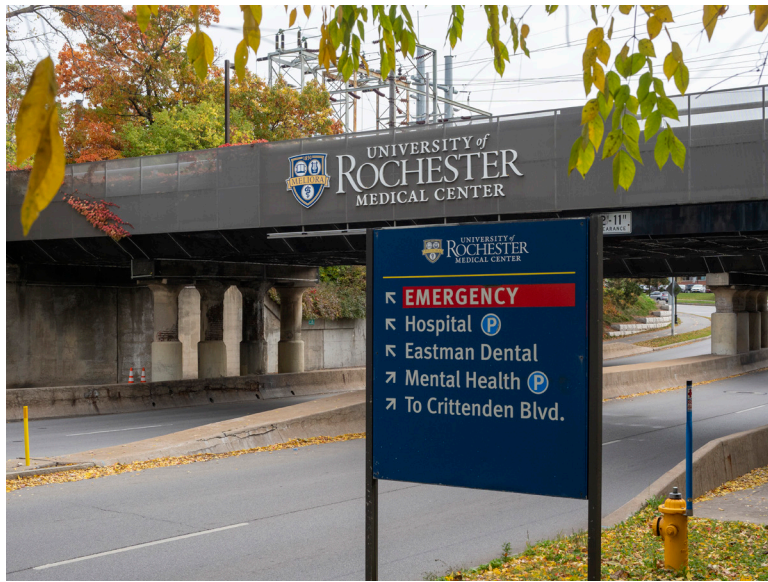
BY JUSTIN O'CONNOR
MANAGING EDITOR

After a nearly-unanimous decision by their voting members, the unions representing URMC caregivers and service workers issued on Nov. 30 a 10-day notice for a strike.

1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East (1199SEIU UHWE) represents bedside caregivers and patient service workers at Strong Memorial Hospital, and service workers across the River Campus are represented by SEIU Local 200 United. 99% of voters from the two unions fell in favor of the strike scheduled for Dec. 13.

'99% of voters from the two unions fell in favor of the strike scheduled for Dec. 13.'

Their contract, which covers roughly 1,800 workers, expired on Oct. 31 after several extensions. The unions are bargaining for a living wage and comprehensive benefits to help recruit and retain staff, according to 1199SEIU UHWE's press release. Both unions say Strong Memorial



HENRY LITSKY / SENIOR STAFF

Hospital faces staffing problems that inhibit the Level 1 trauma center's ability to provide quality care and timely services for patients.

"It feels like they want us to work more for less money," Dana Allison, patient care technician at Strong Memorial Hospital, said in the press release. "My job requires patience and understanding to provide care for the patients as they recover from surgery. Many people come in and they are nervous about their procedure, and I reassure them and their family, but sometimes if we are short that special attention can't

be given because we have so many other tasks to complete to keep surgeries flowing for the day."

URMC and the unions have only agreed on non-economic aspects of the contract after 30 days of negotiations, the press release also stated. On behalf of both unions involved, 1199SEIU UHWE filed two unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board alleging URMC violated the National Labor Relations Act by failing to bargain in good faith and by refusing to furnish information.

SEE **URMC** PAGE 2

MERT: Don't be Afraid to Call

BY MAYA BROSINICK
STAFF WRITER

The River Campus Medical Emergency Response Team (RC MERT) has been back in business since 2022 following a year-long pause, but cannot operate to their fullest extent while students remain unaware of their existence.

MERT was called by students only a few times in 2022 — a drastic decline in use in comparison to responding to 300 calls per year pre-pause. This year, they're still operating at a fraction of their original engagement.

"It's still small," said MERT Director of Operations and senior Caroline Murnane. "We've only had like 20-something calls, but from where we were to where we are now is definitely building."

Founded in 1972, MERT has served the campus community by providing first aid to students in need since its inception.

The University put into place a medical amnesty policy in 2012, which protects students who actively seek medical assistance from RC MERT in cases

regarding drugs or alcohol. The amnesty policy allows students to receive care without worrying about disciplinary actions.

MERT also works with the Rochester community to promote health education both on and off campus, as well as co-sponsors other health related events.

In order for MERT to be fully effective in the UR community, people need to know about its existence. Their goal, Assistant Director of Operations and junior Ahani Murthy said, is to "provide care to our campus community, and be a friendly face in a time of need for students."

'[MERT] cannot operate to their fullest extent while students remain unaware of their existence.'

In order to do that, MERT trainees take part in an on-campus EMT training program to learn how to better support students suffering a medical emergency.

SEE **MERT** PAGE 3

Brooks Crossing Apartments Barbershop: CutzbyOzzy

BY EMMELY ELI TEXCUCANO
STAFF WRITER

Brooks Crossing Apartments is home to a beautiful waterfront view, the UR Rowing team's facility, air-conditioned rooms, and now a barbershop run by senior Oswald "Ozzy" Alexander Garcia joins its long list of amenities.

Walking into the 'barbershop,' you'll be greeted by Garcia with an apron on and clippers in hand, a barber chair, a full professional clipping set, and customers chatting with Ozzy's latest DJ set in the background.

Garcia started cutting hair during his junior year of high school after his sister gave him a pair of clippers she had lying around. He spent his time learning from barber videos by 360Jeezy on YouTube about different

hair textures and styles. That learning took trial and error, and he spent his time practicing on his younger cousin, much to both of their detriment, but he never intended it to be a business.

He came into college as an Electrical and Computer Engineering Major and spent his time in the Spanish and Latino Students' Association (SALSA), where he's currently their Social Media Manager, at the Kearns Center as a student worker, and working as a part-time DJ.

His journey cutting hair on campus began sophomore year, with mainly roommates and close friends coming in for a trim and a chat, but his hobby fully developed into CutzbyOzzy earlier this year. Barbers in Rochester are expensive, he noticed, especially for college students, which incentivized him to expand

his hobby to a fully-fledged business.

Garcia was invited to promote his business at SALSA's Latin Week Business Expo, which features student businesses showcasing their work in Hirst Lounge. He ended up cutting hair right there in Wilson Commons and gained a couple of customers as a result.

'His hobby fully developed into CutzbyOzzy earlier this year.'

Garcia is busy, with appointments booked usually a week in advance on Calendly. Customers can pay \$18 for a full haircut and \$5 for a line-up. His business grows mostly through the word-of-mouth of his clients, who are mainly first-years.

SEE **OZZY** PAGE 2



EMMELY ELI TEXCUCANO / STAFF WRITER

INSIDE THIS CT

CLIMATE CATASTROPHE?
PAGE 3 CAMPUS

THE END OF UR PINK SOAP
PAGE 4 OPINIONS

"CAROUSEL" REVIEW
PAGE 8 CULTURE

CROSSWORD & PHOTOS
PAGE 12

CAMPUS

URMC FROM PAGE 1

“This employer failed its workers and our community by not returning with a counter proposal today. Their failure to bargain in good faith has forced us to issue the 10-day notice,” 1199SEIU Vice-President Tracey Harrison said in the Nov. 30 press release. “Beyond the money, it’s a matter of respect for the workers who provide healthcare and student services to this community.”

In a statement, URMC contested the charges. They said they have been negotiating in good faith with both unions for a “competitive, fair, and equitable” contract renewal.

The unions say the fight for a fair contract is also about lifting some workers out of poverty. UR is the sixth largest private sector employer in the state and the leading private sector employer based in upstate New York, according to the URMC website. As of 2018, Rochester had the third highest poverty rate of the country’s 75 largest metropolitan areas, according to the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative.

“Our largest employers have the responsibility to take the lead on providing living wages for our residents and families.”

“The rents in the city are so high. I went from paying \$800 per month to \$1,200 per month and it takes a full month’s worth of paychecks,” Julie Clough, courier for clinical labs at URMC, said in the 1199SEIU UHWE press release. “After rent is paid, I have only a little left to pay other bills and to eat. Right now, I work full-time but I live paycheck to paycheck, and I worry if I have enough food to eat.”

The contract dispute has also garnered political atten-

tion.

“Amid growing shortages and consistently full capacities at hospitals, our community cannot afford to lose these crucial team members due to insufficient wages and benefits,” Rochester City Council members said in a signed letter to UR President Sarah Mangelsdorf.

State Assemblymember Demond Meeks said in his own statement that front-line employees deserve a wage that reflects the rising cost of living.

“I continue to urge the University of Rochester Medical Center, 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East and 200United SEIU to work collaboratively to settle a fair contract that recognizes the invaluable service of its many essential workers,” Meeks said in the press release. “Our largest employers have the responsibility to take the lead on providing living wages for our residents and families.”

URMC issued the following statement on the contract negotiations:

Despite our extensive efforts, SEIU submitted an intent to strike notice on Thursday, Nov. 30, with a one-day strike action scheduled to take place on Wednesday, Dec. 13. Contingency plans are in place that will ensure that all University operations and activities, including patient care at the Medical Center, will continue without disruption. University officials are confident that in the event of a prolonged strike, campus operations will continue as normal without interruption, however they are always willing and prepared to meet at the bargaining table to continue to negotiate a fair and equitable contract. The University recognizes and respects 1199SEIU and 200United SEIU’s right to engage in a strike, which is a legally protected union activity.

1199SEIU and SEIU Local 200 United’s concerns about alleged staffing problems at Strong Memorial Hospital are reflective of a nationwide problem.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing issues

have come to plague the entire healthcare industry, and local healthcare institutions have become prominent sites of labor organizing and disputes in turn.

Nurses at Rochester General Hospital recently ratified a 42-month contract after threatening a second strike over compensation and benefit disagreements. They voted for their union — the Rochester Union of Nurses and Allied Professionals — in July 2022, and improving compensation and benefits to boost nurse-to-patient ratios has been central to their campaign.

‘In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, staffing issues have come to plague the entire healthcare industry.’

In June, homecare providers at Community Care Companions statewide voted to join 1199SEIU UHWE, and that figure included over 400 workers based in Buffalo and Rochester, according to a press release. The union said strain-inducing staff turnover caused by low wages also factored into workers’ concerns at the company.

Workers at the Rochester Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing, also represented by 1199SEIU UHWE, picketed last summer over similar concerns during their own contract negotiations.

And now many URMC workers say Strong Memorial Hospital faces the same challenges — including Arleata Robin White, a patient care technician at the hospital that 1199SEIU UHWE quoted in their press release.

“Working short in our department causes a lot of tension because we can’t do our jobs providing the quality care we want to give,” White said.

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

friendship to his clients. He’s found over time that clients start breaking out of their shells and coming to him with their problems.

“Seeing as most of the clients are freshmen, I like to give them advice ... try to explain my own experience and promote student organizations because I felt that enhanced my experience,” he said. “I led them through things I encountered on the way — internships, scholarships, job opportunities, and questions.”

He is currently planning to upgrade his barbershop with a newer chair and pro-

vide snacks and drinks to clients, but other than preparing for his switch from school to the workforce, he recently accepted a full-time offer at Arm, a technology provider of processor IP, where he interned over the summer.

“I can just never stay put,” he said. “I always like to do things and be versatile in different domains ... Apart from being an engineer, [the barbershop] is truly me.”

Texcucano is a member of the Class of 2025.

Climate Catastrophe? No, Says University Professor

BY ELENA BACHMANN
STAFF WRITER

A GIF of the Wicked Witch of the West from “The Wizard of Oz” saying “I’ll get you, my pretty, and your little dog too!” played behind Economics Professor Michael Rizzo as students gathered in Wegmans Hall on Oct. 30 to hear him argue against the notion that the Earth is undergoing a climate catastrophe.

“I’m curious to see how many people will misunderstand the point of my talk, which is about addressing the issue of catastrophe and not at all the issue of whether climate change is happening, or even the mechanics of it,” he said in an interview with the Campus Times.

The talk included Rizzo stating his biggest fear — that he doesn’t know what he doesn’t know about climate change. The talk, he said, was assembled from everything he’s read, and, to him, things don’t look so bad, but he knows he hasn’t read everything.

“I maybe don’t know what to do about it,” Rizzo said, referring to climate change, in an interview with the Campus Times. “That’s part of it. Whether my presentation was what I believe or what I tell you I’m reading, those are two different things.”

Rizzo’s assembled resources were constrained to a 12-point presentation for concision’s sake — though he still ended up with 155 slides — which argued for why society should be less concerned about climate change.

His arguments, which utilized graphs and expert sources, were wide-ranging — touching on population and income growth, migration, green energy, extreme weather resilience, to more outlandish ideas he lumped onto one slide and called “batshit crazy.”

The hour-long talk was a noticeable time crunch for Rizzo, who mentioned at least 10 times throughout the lecture that he didn’t have enough time for his slides, for the details, or for the audience to read even the axes of the graphs he quickly flipped through — if those graphs had axes at all to begin with.

First-year Aidan Lieberman, who attended the talk after hearing about it in Rizzo’s Principles of Economics class, thought the professor tried to fit too much into his time, but he agreed with the points that he could follow,



COURTESY MICHAEL RIZZO

saying “they seemed to make sense.”

“I was only able to follow a few of the points he was making,” Lieberman said. “My biggest takeaway is that humans will be able to manage the effects of climate change as they become more severe.”

Rizzo said he wanted students to leave the talk understanding that the rhetoric around climate “catastrophe” often comes more from how information is reported rather than the science itself.

Addressing issues of climate change, he said, requires a nuanced understanding that takes lots of research to achieve — research that he found students weren’t doing before coming to him with disagreements.

Rizzo felt like his message was lost, though he said that he thought everyone in the room heard something they hadn’t before. Even just sparking conversation is healthy, he said. However, that requires people to be in the room in the first place.

Rizzo mentioned to the Campus Times that he noticed a lack of faculty or climate experts at his talk and was disappointed. The CT reached out to several Environmental Science professors, who declined to comment on either the content of the talk or Rizzo himself.

In retrospect, Rizzo didn’t believe that his event went all that well. One student walked out after about 15 minutes — she was fed up with the talk, according to her friend, first-year Matthew Repetsky. The CT got in touch with her, but she declined to comment, choosing instead to email Rizzo and start a conversation at her friend’s suggestion.

He was glad she got in touch rather than just dismissing him.

“The other thing that did go well is, to the extent that kids did comment back to me, they seem to have been respectful,” Rizzo said. “No one’s called me a dick yet. People who disagree have been like, ‘Wow, I still think it’s bad. That was interesting. Here’s why I disagree.’ Which I think is healthy.”

Bachmann is a member of the Class of 2027.

OZZY FROM PAGE 1

“I fell in love with transformation,” Garcia said. “Like makeup, haircuts are a full transformation for people, and seeing that is what got me interested in cutting hair.”

‘Garcia is busy, with appointments booked usually a week in advance on Calendly.’

To Garcia, it’s about creating the feel of walking into an actual barbershop, it’s about offering camaraderie, mentorship, and

Hearing Bells? UR Not Crazy — it's the Carillon!

BY MAYA BROSNICK
STAFF WRITER

The carillon is a part of every UR student's daily life, but it plays a more important role for some. Each year, 12 students take part in a class where they learn how to play the Hopeman Memorial carillon located at the very top of Rush Rhee Library.

It's easy to let the carillon's sounds sit in the background, but with a closer listen, the music's beauty shines through. A carillon consists of keys at the hand level, called batons, and pedals at the feet. Each is connected to a wire that, when pulled, causes a clapper to hit the inner wall of a bell. Both sections play notes, so playing the instrument requires a lot of coordination.

"It's very difficult actually, there's so much to think about. It's like being a very athletic octopus," said first-year Ella Powers. "There's nuance to it."

Most students have little to no experience playing the carillon before starting lessons. Experience with another instrument helps, but the only requirement to audition is being able to sight read treble and bass clef. The program holds auditions at the end of every semester which take place on the carillon itself. "The audition was pretty nerve wracking because it was like 'oh, everyone can hear me,'" said sophomore Harvest Aquino.

More than just auditions, some practice happens on the instrument itself as well — but before a student can start playing, some setup has to be completed



MAYA BROSNICK / STAFF WRITER

first.

"Whenever we come in the room, we always have to turn off the chime's bells, because if you happen to hit a note at the same time the 5 o'clock bell goes off, it could cause damage," said junior Darren King, who has been playing the carillon for two semesters.

'It's like being a very athletic octopus.'

The carillon makes sound through a clapper hitting the inside wall of the bells, but the automatic chimes come from hammers hitting the outside of the bells. If both were to happen at the same time, it would damage or possibly break the bells. After that, students must adjust the tightness of the wire linking the batons to the bells. Similar to tuning, if the wire isn't tight enough then the bells will not ring as effectively.

Before practicing on

the real instrument, students start by learning on practice ones. Donated by alumni, UR has two practice instruments located in Dewey and Spurrier, but open towers, the carillon practice version of office hours, are held on the real instrument.

The carillon was placed into the Rush Rhee bell tower in 1973, but the current program did not start until 2008. In the early 2000s, the carillon was not played at all. It took Eastman student Tiffany Ng '08 MM — who was already proficient in the carillon — to start teaching others in order for the carillon to become the part of campus life that it is today.

'The current program did not start until 2008.'

One of Ng's students, Jeffrey Le '08, popularized the carillon by playing recognizable tunes for stu-

dents to enjoy. He posted a video of the Harry Potter theme that has nearly 150 thousand views. When Ng and Le left the University, they asked current program director Doris Aman to take over. The Music department started a pilot program to see if students were interested in learning to play the instrument, and from there the class was born.

'The program holds auditions at the end of every semester which take place on the carillon itself.'

Now, students can choose from an enormous library of music to learn to play.

"[Aman] is really nice in that she lets us play whatever we want to play," Aquino said. "We can also arrange our own pieces of music. Like last year I arranged some Taylor Swift songs for carillon, and I

played them."

Learning a new song starts on the practice instruments, and then moves into rehearsal at open towers until the piece is ready to perform. "Once you've prepared it for enough time, we do it for our weekly Sunday concerts, which are at 5 p.m.," Aquino said.

Participation in carillon classes is limited to just a few students, but the annual Carillon Composition contest is available to anyone associated with the River Campus or Eastman. Whether students, faculty, or alumni, anyone is welcome to submit a carillon composition, meaning a new arrangement or original composition, for a chance to win a \$500 prize. The final day to submit a composition is Jan. 30, and judging will occur in February.

Until then, the best way to be involved with the carillon is just to listen. Performance schedules and more details about the program are available on their Instagram @hopemancarillon, and those involved with the program appreciate every listener.

Carillon players sit isolated 12 floors above their audience, but, as Aman puts it, the bell only rings if they're connected to the instrument, which is connected to the air, which is connected to people.

"We love our audience," King said. "And we thank them for coming."

Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.



KEVINHU / PHOTO EDITOR

MERT FROM PAGE 1

"So far, the training has been stuff that would indicate a level of comfort just in taking vitals and doing a lot of the basics of care under someone more experienced," shared first-year trainee So-

phie Black.

After completing the training course, students become Medic Assistants and join response crews to calls in order to provide support to more experienced members. A Medic Assistant, along with

two higher-leveled students in the program — a Crew Chief Trainee and a Crew Chief — make up a full crew.

In order to level up in the program, Crew Chief Trainees are required to have completed their EMT certifica-

tion, and become Crew Chiefs after further experience in the MERT program. However, due to the pause, MERT lacks enough experienced members to make up enough full crews to run every night.

"We're in service right now consistently Monday through Thursday, 8 p.m. to 7 a.m.," Murnane said. "Historically, MERT's been a seven-days-a-week kind of thing, so that's what we're working towards."

As new members gain more experience, MERT will be able to return to its original model and be able to help more students. MERT is also working to make sure RAs know about their organization and how to contact them.

"If you're an RA, but you joined and didn't know what MERT was when you were a freshman, and now you're an RA, you won't be able to share with your residents," Murnane explained. "This is a resource that's available if you need it."

By attacking the problem

from both ends, MERT's leadership feels that they have made headways in fixing it.

"I think people are starting to know about us more, I think definitely the rebuilding is working," Murthy said.

"We're in service right now consistently Monday through Thursday, 8 p.m. to 7 a.m.."

Once UR students are informed about MERT's capabilities, they will be able to take advantage of everything the service can provide. Every medic has EMT training, and can help students to make decisions on how to handle a medical emergency.

"Just having that extra person there can really help," Murthy said. "Don't be afraid to call."

Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.

OPINIONS

On the Burdens of Student Leadership

EDITORIAL OBSERVER

BY SUNAHRA TANVIR
OPINIONS EDITOR

Suppose that Carrie and Isaac are in the same student organization. They meet through that organization. Isaac develops feelings for Carrie but she does not reciprocate. Isaac begins to harass Carrie. He repeatedly shows up inebriated at her doorstep. He threatens to harm himself if Carrie does not spend time with him. He exposes himself to her.

The student organization that they are both in catches wind of this. Isaac is not kicked out. Instead, the eboard decides to implement a probationary period. For half a semester, Isaac is not allowed to pursue any leadership roles within the organization and cannot drink at events hosted by the organization. The probationary period will end if the organization deems that he has “gotten better.” Eventually, they decide that he has.

He has not.

The following year, Taylor joins a new club. She is in desperate need of new friends. She meets Isaac through this club. It is at a club event where she first speaks to Isaac. She has heard some rumors about him but never the full story. Taylor is nosy and asks him for the details.

Isaac is charming as he twists the truth. Taylor believes in the good in people. Taylor believes him when he downplays the story. Taylor believes him when he tells her that he has taken accountability. Taylor believes him when he says he has changed.

He has not.

Isaac gets inebriated and blows up Taylor’s phone. He yells at Taylor and threatens to self-harm if she attempts to put up distance. He rapes her.

Taylor would not have met him if not for their shared student organization. There are no other circumstances in which their paths would have ever crossed. A small part of Taylor blames the student organization. Clubs should not provide a hunting ground for known predators, right? Why did they not kick him out? But then, again, that eboard was simply a group of 18 to 22-year-olds. How much can we expect from them? How much do student organizations owe to their members?

At the University, student organizations are entirely

student-run. Aside from brief check-ins with our faculty advisors, decisions are made and acted upon by the student-controlled executive boards. We as student leaders should not have to make difficult decisions, right? We signed up to run a club’s Instagram or to coordinate a fundraiser, not deal with interpersonal conflict, right?

No. Regardless of the role we ran for, we did sign up for a leadership position. Even if it is student leadership, it is still real leadership with real leadership responsibilities. All leaders are expected to make decisions and deal with conflict. Our student-run executive boards bear the same responsibility as our employers. We are owed safety and security by our student organizations.

I know many of us think of how nice a position will look on our resume and do not consider anything beyond that. I know many of us don’t consider the weighty responsibility of becoming a student leader. I certainly did not. My freshman year, I joined an eboard to sell bubble tea and stickers. I did not anticipate having to deal with issues of racism and classism.

I did not think I, as an eboard member, would have to host difficult conversations with my friends about complaints about their behavior. I did not think I would have to deal with members getting harassed and determining the consequences for the harasser. Yet, I was in a position in which I had to do everything I did not anticipate.

It felt unfair. I was just 19. I felt as if I was in over my head. The decisions I was making had real, tangible consequences. I wish I had known the burdens of student leadership before I decided to jump in without a thought.

Student leadership is difficult. We should be aware of this before we decide to run. And once we do become student leaders, we need to take our jobs seriously. We need to protect those that we are leading. We have major responsibilities and we cannot cause harm.

I do not ever want my decision to be the reason someone gets hurt.

Tanvir is a member of the Class of 2025.

No More Pink Soap: Why the University’s Decision to Implement Fragrance-Free Soap is a Move in the Right Direction

BY SOPHIA SAMANTAROY
STAFF WRITER

You may have noticed that the ubiquitous pink soap in University bathrooms is gone, replaced with Purell “Fragrance-Free” dispensers. Why the change?

According to Alan McNiff, the Director of River Campus Facilities and University Properties, this change was not entirely intentional.

“Initially, [the] previous product was being discontinued and we were reviewing alternatives for replacement.” The product they chose happened to be fragrance-free, which McNiff noted “a priority when evaluating the product options, but not the only factor.”

Despite the University’s monetary and logistic-targeted rationale for the change, implementing a fragrance-free product marks a stride in improving student health.

But we need intention in a decision like this.

The chemicals responsible for giving products a nice smell — say, the pleasant loamy scent of the previous UR soap — are known to harm the reproductive system and the brain, and can even cause cancer. Fragrance additives often contain hormone-disrupting phthalates and cancer-linked styrenes. Dubbed “forever

chemicals,” phthalates wind up in a multitude of products — we’re exposed to them everywhere, but especially through cosmetic and personal care items.

“The chemicals responsible for giving products a nice smell — say, the pleasant loamy scent of the previous UR soap — are known to harm the reproductive system and the brain, and can even cause cancer.”

Current FDA regulations simply require companies to label phthalates and styrenes as “fragrance.” So, that pink soap you used in any University bathroom probably contained “fragrance,” just like many other scented products. Thus, the move to replace dispensers with fragrance-free soap lowers at least one route of phthalate exposure for students. Of course, we can be exposed elsewhere, but at least students have a safer option on campus.

Research into how we are exposed (and the health effects post-exposure) is evolving. In fact, URMC’s Department of Environmental Medicine leads some of the cutting-edge research into the toxicity effects of chemicals

like phthalates.

Connecting this research into actionable policy promotes a healthier environment, but it’s a circuitous path from a basic science lab in the Medical Center to removing fragranced soap on the River Campus. The University has the means to implement large-scale changes — like replacing its soap dispensers with fragrance-free soap — to improve student, staff, and faculty health. But it shouldn’t wait until a product is discontinued to find a better alternative.

“The University has the means to implement large-scale changes...But it shouldn’t wait until a product is discontinued to find a better alternative.”

Other environmental health concerns still abound on campus. Grounds uses herbicides for campus landscaping, buses idle outside of Rush Rhees increasing pollutants, and aging dorms harbor mold and pests. The University should continue addressing environmental hazards — with intention — to improve the health of students.

Samantaroy is a member of the Class of 2024.

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Note for Nadia: I Love Being Socialized

BY ELENA BACHMANN
STAFF WRITER

I came across an article in the Campus Times' most recent print edition on Oct. 25, and I haven't stopped thinking about it since. I found myself repelled by the first-wave feminism and toxic positivity that oozed from Columnist Nadia Pentolino's poorly generalized take on womanhood, and I wanted to address it.

'As someone who is genderqueer but grew up as a woman, my perspective on this article is certainly biased.'

As someone who is genderqueer but grew up as a woman, my perspective on this article is certainly biased. I've thought about gender more than the average individual, and was raised in an environment that not only allowed for discussions on gender and sexuality, but encouraged self-exploration and questioning. That is all to say, my opinion may not be the same as yours — nor should it be — so I welcome you to form your own as you follow along through some choice excerpts of Pentolino's "I love being a woman" with me.

"I love being able to get dolled up when I feel like it. I love wearing make-up, skirts, heels, or anything that makes me feel feminine."

Getting "dolled up" isn't innately feminine. Can't men get dolled up? Can't anyone? I understand that it's empowering that we've taken it back from the patriarchy, but this doesn't belong solely to women.

Why must we associate womanhood with make-up, skirts, or heels? This notion plays into the

stereotypes already forced on us. There's no nuance here. This article confuses tools used to feel feminine with what makes a woman.

'This article confuses tools used to feel feminine with what makes a woman.'

Pentolino associates womanhood throughout this piece with accolades and labels that juxtapose women against men: "feminine" colors (pinks, purples, and pastels), the ability to menstruate and give birth, and the sense of community and support she finds as a result of her womanhood, to name a few.

But I would argue that color doesn't have a gender. This is a narrative that the feminist movement is trying to push away from. These colors aren't inherently feminine, we've just been told they are.

"I love being a woman" is a complete contrast from Pentolino's other work, where she writes, "Women have fought so hard to be seen as more than birthing machines." In "I love being a woman" however, she falls back on stereotypes.

Besides any strength that might come from experiencing physical pain such as giving birth or menstruation, women are valuable. Full stop. This also glosses completely over the perspectives of transgender women, of whom may not have these exact experiences.

"Women are stunning. We come in all shapes, sizes, and races. And no matter what, we are always beautiful. We don't have to listen to the stereotypes society has laid out for us, because we're gorgeous just the way we are."

Women's bodies are too often viewed as the only

valuable thing about them — either sexualized, beautified, or as human incubators. Beauty is neither imperative nor exclusive to womanhood, and it is neither a requirement for existence nor indicative of worth.

While Pentolino's words can be comforting for boosting self-esteem, equating womanhood to beauty, even in supposedly inclusive ways, is harmful and perpetuates stereotypes. It's totally chill to enjoy being beautiful, but it's not cool to apply it to all women as an intrinsic part of womanhood.

'Beauty is neither imperative nor exclusive to womanhood.'

"I love our mannerisms — our 'girl dinners,' how we 'slay,' and when we 'mother.' I love the nicknames that we give each other, like 'girl boss' and 'queen.'"

This line enrages me. "Girl dinner" is a problematic term that has drawn criticism for making light of eating disorders. I would refrain from supporting the fad since it seems to be yet another manifestation of the way diet culture creeps into women's lives.

The term "slay" has been appropriated from AAVE. It originated from Black and Latino LGBTQ+ ballroom culture in the 1970s and '80s, and only recently moved into mainstream use through its use in "Paris is Burning," RuPaul's Drag Race, and Beyoncé's "Formation." Slaying isn't an inherently "woman" thing.

For me, the mention of "mother" lacks context. Which definition is being used here? I think that Pentolino is referring to the slang term, as in "mother is Madonna," and again, this is not our

culture. According to The NYT, "it derives from the Black and Latino LGBTQ. ballroom scene, a queer subculture in which members are organized into so-called houses often led by a 'mother.'"

"Queen" derives from drag queens and "girlboss," while something Pentolino may perceive as positive, has been used as a way to put women down. It's a patriarchal conceit. Women don't need a special category of achievement, and the phrase is a symbol of toxicity.

Pentolino's surface-level take on sisterhood, as noted in the quote below, also presumes that the female experience is universal.

"And I especially enjoy the sense of sisterhood that we all share... The world may be against us, but as long as we have each other, we will always come out victorious. Because women are strong, beautiful, and amazing human beings."

The "all" in "sense of sisterhood we all share" exasperates me. If Pentolino is talking about her lived experiences, then I am genuinely so happy that she has found a community she loves and trusts and fits in with. However, the more I read, the more I feel that this is just one person's experience being polished and applied to women as a whole.

'Although women have historically come together to fight for our rights, we haven't always been united.'

These generalizations of the female perspective continue as Pentolino approaches the fight for abortion rights, equal pay, and other concerns.

Although women have

historically come together to fight for our rights, we haven't always been united. It took hundreds of years for the suffrage movement to bear fruit. However much progress has been made, women still aren't treated the same throughout society.

Also, women don't (and didn't) always unite behind the same causes simply by virtue of being a woman. There is infighting. The continued devaluation of black and brown women, for example. The epidemic of missing and unreported indigenous women for another. Trans and gay women aren't supported by all women. Even unconventionally attractive and overweight women aren't treated the same as other women. Even if she is writing from a lived experience of only receiving support from other women, it's important to acknowledge that there are still groups of women everywhere with conflicting opinions. In the repeal of Roe v. Wade, female legislators voted to take away our right to an abortion. Women's initiatives get backtracked and roadblocked by women, too.

I would also argue that women don't always receive support from other women. There are women who have it out for you. While Pentolino may enjoy a sense of camaraderie from other women, I think that she is mistaking a few assumed shared experiences with close woman friends for a universal alliance that extends to all women. Female connection and bonding is lovely, but it is not absolute across the entire demographic.

SEE **NADIA** PAGE 7

A Note for Elena: I Love Having My Words Twisted

BY NADIA PENTOLINO
COLUMNIST

It recently came to my attention that someone was very furious with my article "I love being a woman." So furious, in fact, that they wrote an essay on why my opinion was wrong.

The reason why we women are not allowed to express how much we love our femininity is because society constantly says, "What about men?" This is the reality of the patriarchy — we women can't even appreciate what we love about ourselves without being criticized.

Nowhere in my article did I say men couldn't be feminine, wear pastel colors, or dresses. But the article wasn't about men. It was

about why I loved being a woman. It was an article to appreciate the beauty of being a woman because we are constantly pressured to change and restrict ourselves.

'The article wasn't about men. It was about why I loved being a woman.'

We should be allowed to freely discuss womanhood without people crying that we are misandrists for not including men in the conversation. And it infuriates me, a feminist, when someone tells me that my appreciation of women is flawed.

In my article, I appreciate women's bodies, and how we come in all shapes, sizes,

and races. The writer of the response to my article, Elena Bachmann, argued that I was stereotyping and sexualizing women by associating them with beauty. I fail to see how appreciating the beauty of women is sexualizing the female body. Women are constantly picked apart by society. There is nothing wrong with trying to take back our power and see the beauty that lies in being a woman.

I am disappointed, yet not surprised, that someone has such a strong opinion about my love for womanhood. Bachmann taking my words and twisting them negatively sheds light on the stereotype that uplifting women somehow tears men down.

If you don't agree with what I said in the article, that's fine, because the article isn't about you. It's about what I, Nadia Pentolino, love about being a woman. You may not love heels, dresses, or make-up. You may not love pastel colors or calling each other "queen." That's perfectly fine. These are aspects of my own womanhood that I love, and there's nothing wrong with that.

'These are aspects of my own womanhood that I love.'

Bachmann has done nothing but act as though femininity is a terrible thing, just because not all women portray themselves as

feminine. There are many expressions of womanhood, and all of them are valid. One of these expressions is femininity, and women should not be shamed for liking it.

I'm sorry if anyone felt offended by my little article about loving women. I would like to remind Bachmann and everyone reading this that the article is my personal opinion, and therefore you do not have to agree with it. But it doesn't mean that my opinion is wrong.

Pentolino is a member of the Class of 2025.

Technology, Humanity, and the Death of Death

BY ENANA JACOBS
STAFF WRITER

I have long felt that the most human phrase of all time is a simple and short one: “I was here.”

You can find it anywhere and at any time: etched into a desk in the library, spray-painted on the side of a building, scrawled on the walls of Pompeii (no, seriously, the oldest graffiti known to man is in Pompeii, reading “Gaius was here”), painted in nail polish on the shelf of your local dollar store (another true story, from a middle-school version of yours truly).

Sometimes the sentiment is expressed without words, too: Footprints in the shape of a heart at the beach, fingerprints of paint in the tunnels of our school, and handprints stamped over 200,000 years ago on the walls of ancient caves.

It is a fundamentally human impulse to not only want to be heard but to want to be heard forever. To be, in one way or another, immortal.

In today’s world, we have incredible cameras in our pockets at all times, lodged into devices armed to the teeth with social media platforms to send content off to. We have ways to encase any and every moment in amber, to sign them with our names, to send them into orbit and to tell everyone, until the Internet burns and disintegrates — that we were here, we were here, we were here.



JOYLU / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

We feel a need to prove, not just to ourselves but to the world, that we saw and touched and felt — that we exist. This is the reason that at any tourist destination, everyone there is taking photos despite the surplus already in existence. No one wants a stock photo of the Eiffel Tower; they want their own, horribly overexposed, slightly off-center iPhone photo. They want proof that they were there, that for the briefest moment, for the millisecond of the aperture shutting and opening again, the Eiffel Tower was theirs, and only theirs.

However, I don’t think we were ever meant to remember forever, let alone exist forever. It’s the subject of a

hundred stories, and within them, immortality becomes a burden, a curse, an inescapable evil. Finality — of our lives, our impacts, our memories — is not a tragedy, but a relief.

We are the first generation to not remember a time without the Internet and social media; the first to be able to conjure every facet of our lives through photographic evidence. This has made us all too aware of the importance of impermanence.

Past generations were allowed to have much of their lives fade into the blurry, fluorescent filters of memory. But for us, so many moments in time are almost eerily preserved. We can look back on our memories, our words, and our voices in perfect

crystalline recreations, rather than through the merciful distortion of nostalgia. And while it’s a blessing that I have shaky cassette-tape footage of my brother and me, four and seven years old, eating popsicles on our fold-out Elmo chair in the living room, it is a curse that I have Snapchat videos from middle school with some of the most cringe-inducing content I’ve ever had the (dis)pleasure to view.

As this way of life becomes more and more ingrained in us, it scares me what this will do to the way we experience our own lives. We see it already. We see it in toddlers trained for the camera, whose childhoods are documented for the entire world to see

by fame-obsessed parents. We see it in young kids with YouTube channels, who are just trying to have fun but are unable to grasp the permanence of what they are putting out to the world.

In the age of social media and omnipresent cameras, we are unable to escape the embarrassments and mistakes of our pasts. The past is constantly coming up to meet us, packaged in perfect resolution and stellar audio quality, available at the touch of a smooth LCD screen. All because we want to remember, and to be remembered.

‘We are unable to escape the embarrassments and mistakes of our pasts.’

But I have to say it again: While the methods may be new, the pursuit is certainly not. Where handprints fade over time, our videos and posts won’t go away until the Internet itself does (which feels as equivalent to the end of time as the death of our sun). Maybe it’s the terrified optimist in me, but I have to believe that if humanity disintegrates and society collapses because of social media and terrifying technology, it will somehow still be in the most endearing of pursuits: To tell the universe, however long it stands, that we, in all of our imperfect, selfish glory, were here.

Jacobs is a member of the Class of 2025.

Defending Orange Chicken

BY ELAINE WU
STAFF WRITER

My mom is an immigrant from China. She speaks Mandarin. She is culturally and ethnically Chinese. She cooks Chinese food every night. She even complains when the local restaurants are not authentic — according to her, most of them suck.

But weirdly enough, she also enjoys American Chinese food. When she wants to meet with her friends, who are also Chinese immigrants, she likes to have lunch with

them at P.F. Chang’s. She likes Panda Express, and she is quick to point it out whenever we are at a food court with one.

Why, then, does American Chinese food seem to have a bad reputation among Chinese Americans? I see this kind of sentiment on the Internet: how American Chinese food, like Panda Express, isn’t “real” Chinese food, how it’s so much worse than actual Chinese food, how it’s “fake” and “unauthentic,” or when people joke

about how eating it would be a disgrace to their family. While a lot of these things are technically true — I can’t deny that it’s not as good as authentic Chinese food — they give American Chinese food too much flack.

American Chinese food deserves to be seen as its own legitimate cuisine. It’s important to distinguish American Chinese food from authentic Chinese food. They are not the same cuisine and should not be treated the same. That’s why my

mom complains when local Chinese restaurants aren’t authentic, but still enjoys Panda Express; on some level, she regards these cuisines as entirely distinct. American Chinese food isn’t trying to be like authentic Chinese food — it’s its own thing.

Like American Chinese food, many foods are borrowed from different cultures. Ramen originated from China, but we associate it with Japan because Japanese people made their own version of the dish. Japan also has its own form of curry. Should we shun Japanese ramen and Japanese curry, then? Of course not. And American Chinese cuisine isn’t even the only variation of Chinese cuisine that exists: Indian Chinese cuisine is a popular fusion spin-off, for example.

In fact, American Chinese food is often created by Chinese immigrants themselves adapting their cuisine to cater to the American taste palette. It’s not necessarily a bad thing to have to adapt, as people from different countries will always have differences in taste; that’s just how it is. So there’s nothing wrong with going out to an American Chinese restaurant, because

chances are that you’re supporting a “real” Chinese business. In this way, American Chinese food actually is real Chinese food.

‘There’s nothing wrong with going out to an American Chinese restaurant.’

I find that Chinese Americans themselves, especially second-generation people like me, are the most likely to shun American Chinese food. At least, that’s where I hear most of the complaints coming from. I can understand that sentiment — perhaps in seeking a closer connection to their culture and the food they grew up with, they get annoyed with the American alternatives. And perhaps disparaging American Chinese food makes them feel as if they’re closer to their Chinese roots, although putting down Panda Express doesn’t accomplish that.

I’m always going to be an orange chicken defender. If only they could get a Panda Express on campus rather than just The Wok...

Wu is a member of the Class of 2027.



JOYLU / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

NADIA FROM PAGE 5

Women are people, and sometimes people are scared of being vulnerable. Women can't always understand each other's struggles just by virtue of being a woman; different women have entirely different experiences. That's the whole point of intersectional feminism.

'Different women have entirely different experiences.'

I take issue in how Pentolino equates female empowerment with success over men, as denoted in:

"Women are smart — we are more likely to attend college and graduate with a four year degree than men. This is despite numerous historic educational barriers. We are now doing something that would've

been unheard of so many years ago. But then again, women are always breaking boundaries."

For gender equality to be successful, women must see our accomplishments for what they are and not how they measure up to what others are doing. We have to value the differences we bring to the table, and support the steps being taken to increase women's participation in education and historically male-dominated fields. I'd encourage a feminist attitude that promotes equality between the genders without using one as an example to either meet or surpass. We are stronger together than divided over how many X-chromosomes we have.

This article paints a grandiose and empowering picture of two-dimensional women, those who advocate for themselves in a

perfectly passive, palatable way. To me, it reads like a man wrote it as propaganda to get women to stop asking to be doctors. This article, meant to portray a love for womanhood, totally missed the mark — we can be cunning. We can be clever. We can be cutthroat — characteristics all necessary for the progress that we have made. I love that about us.

'We are stronger together than divided over how many X-chromosomes we have.'

I wish that Pentolino had given more weight to our adaptability: our ease and flexibility, our compassion and our thoughtfulness that come from years of being socialized as a woman. Society has forced us to

time and time again prove ourselves as equals: just as smart, strong, and capable as anyone else. Women deal with special pressure to carry the mental and emotional burdens of their loved ones. I think that talking about the trauma associated with womanhood is just as important as talking about our successes, if not more so.

I am so happy that Pentolino loves being a woman, I truly am, but this article made me hate being socialized as a woman. It brought up so many things that I hate have been associated with womanhood, and I want people to see that we are more than just pretty clothes and makeup. We're more than an emotional support pillar for everyone else in our lives. We are not just a resource for everyone else, and we are not the entertainment.

We have thoughts, lives, dreams — hell, we're at college. We have careers to make happen. I want to feel empowered as a woman through the way I see the world and how I can use that. I want to love women not because of how supportive other women are, but by our capacity to have and show emotion.

'We have thoughts, lives, dreams — hell, we're at college.'

I know that this is an op-ed with a focus on uniting and uplifting for women across campus, but I find myself angered, excluded, and frankly, tired.

Bachmann is a member of the Class of 2027.

Losing a Love That Was Never Yours



SUBAAH SYED/ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

BY MARIAH LANSING
STAFF WRITER

There's a common old magick ritual where you write the name of another who has been plaguing your mind on the inside of a shell, and once you toss it into a body of water, the person will leave your mind.

I've been a spiritual person for a while. *You* would know. *You* would understand why I sit at the dock on the edge of the Genesee, running the small, smooth shell between my fingers. *You* should know why *your* name is scribbled on the inside.

'It has been a long time since we last spoke, since I last thought that I truly knew you.'

You texted me yesterday, and I can't even bring myself to open the message. I can only stare at the preview: "Hey, I'm sorry it's been so long..."

And you're right. It has been so long. It has been a long time since we last spoke, since I last thought that I truly knew you, since we sat together on my bed,

watching our show as the electricity cracked like lightning between us in silence. It has been so long since my dorm room had our fireworks bouncing off the walls.

In the beginning, I thought I could outwit my way into your heart. If I played enough games, sent enough subtle signals, and showed you enough unconditional support, you'd turn to me and say you felt the same way for me. I've learned since then that you were the one who was winning games. You kept me in this precarious limbo between platonic friendship and an unreciprocated crush for the entertainment of you and everyone else around us.

Once you caught onto my pining, you liked the attention. It was a nice change from the cold, calculated, robotic relationships you encountered day to day. You liked how I was careful of your feelings and gave you room to explore them, while setting aside my own.

I began to feel crazy. Like in a straitjacket, screeching-at-the-top-of-my-lungs-sort-of insane. Was that your goal? Every time I mentioned being upset or hurt, our friends

treated me like I was pathetic — delusional, even. I have cried to a wall, begging for it to see me as a real person with valid feelings. I guess that's why they call them "situationships."

'I guess that's why they call them "situationships."'

It has been a while since we spoke.

That's because I repeatedly stressed to you how much I appreciated and required communication. And you never communicated one crucial thing to me: that you knew about my feelings for you. You told all our friends, acquaintances, and even strangers that you knew my dirty little secret. I'm sure you ate every bit of it up, didn't you?

I know because people still tell me about how you all laugh at me. Because for some reason, my little crush was the worst thing that could have happened in the incestuous love web going on in our little group. How dare I?

You know I hear it all, right? Despite how little you

and the rest of them thought of me, I actually do have people who care about me, who tell me because they value my trust.

Before I could wear away the ridges on the shell in my sweaty palm, I opened your text.

For a moment, I wanted to run back and tell you all about what I'm up to — as friends. I wanted to confront you and tell you that what I thought you did to me was really disrespectful. (It was more than disrespectful — it was calculated and manipulative.) I'd say I appreciate you reaching out, but I needed to keep you at an arm's distance, for my own sake.

'I wanted to confront you.'

But then I remembered the only reason you remembered my existence was because you were bored, yet again. So I put my phone back in my bag, and with all my strength, I hurled that shell into the Genesee.

Lansing is a member of the Class of 2025.

Good luck on finals!

xoxo, the CT

CULTURE

Joey Stempien Starts Small With His Big Band

BY ELENA BACHMANN
STAFF WRITER

BY BRENNAN PRICE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every Thursday of this semester, you can hunt down sophomore Joey Stempien and his friends at the East Avenue restaurant (and well-known college student sustenance staple) Stromboli's. Amidst bites of greasy Italian grub and company from a tank of lazily-drifting fish, Stempien and Eastman School of Music sophomore Dan Atkinson jam out with their friends to every jazz standard under the sun.

The weekly gig is something the two have established to grow the collegiate jazz community in Rochester — with improvised performances from students on the River Campus, Eastman, and other universities such as Nazareth. However, this is only one facet of Stempien's push to strengthen the connections of the jazz scene on campus.

Stempien, a big band jazz composer and pianist, is set to release his debut album, "Wherever We Go," on Dec. 15. The album mainly entertains the stylings of contemporary jazz, but also experiments with "funk, Afro-Cuban, and other types of genres," according to Stempien.

In an interview with the Campus Times, Stempien revealed a great deal of information regarding his musical journey and creative process, as well as the process of working with a diverse big band.

A big band has at least 19 players, but Stempien said his album involves over 50 people as musicians and crew across all of his songs — with him headlining as the pianist on every track. He jammed with a more diverse group of musicians than his earlier EP, released on Jan. 1 of this year, with the hopes of creating something special.

"Everyone involved had their background. Everybody on this album is a musician that I admire and respect," he said. "I just let them do their thing."

Stempien was excited he could convince Isaac Romagosa, an Eastman graduate student and guitarist from Spain, to lay down a track for the group. For Stempien, his ability as a River Campus student to interface with the community at Eastman has given him the valuable opportunity to network and learn from other musicians — an opportunity which led to many of the collaborations on his upcoming album.

The collaborations on "Wherever We Go," however, aren't limited to the Rochester collegiate sphere. One of Stempien's favorite YouTubers from his youth, composer "insaneintherainmusic" who is best known for his jazz covers of video game music, is playing on his album. It was a dream of his, he told the CT, after

having begun listening to the artist, who boasts over 400,000 YouTube subscribers, in the sixth or seventh grade.

Stempien started writing music in fifth grade. His mom, a local saxophonist, kickstarted his love of jazz. He recalls fooling around on the family computer at a young age and stumbling upon Sibelius, a music composition software program. He's stuck with the craft ever since.

Taking inspiration from various artists like Bill Evans, Steven Feifke, and Thelonious Monk, Stempien penned five tunes before coming to college that would later make up his EP, "Life Out Here."

Significant factors in Stempien's musical growth were his involvement in the Eastman Youth Jazz Orchestra, as well as the River Campus Jazz Ensemble. During his time in the ensemble freshman year, Stempien got his first taste of recording in a studio thanks to the help of a senior in the Audio and Music Engineering program.

"I put together the band, and he booked the session, and then we just made it happen," Stempien said. "And the band that I formed kind of stayed together."

Stempien played his first gig earlier this year at the annual Rochester Jazz Fest, where he performed alongside The Pat Metheny Group — one of his long-time inspirations that played a part in his desire to write jazz music.

"It was a really big full-circle moment," he said.

Stempien's growing popularity hasn't been without its own set of challenges. Sometimes, he said, he's been discredited as an artist because he's not an Eastman student. He hopes his new album will smash the stigma.

"I mean, this album has brought together a lot of River Campus and Eastman students in a way that has built a lot of relationships and friendships," he said. "So I think that that has been rewarding for me and also the people involved."

Stempien's debut album is just around the corner. Upon listening to the tracks, you might notice a weather motif throughout. That's because, although Stempien is reaching for the clouds with his music too, he's actually gunning professionally to become a meteorologist — and it's clear that even in his passion projects, the sky is his limit.

Stempien's album concert at the UUU Art Collective in Rochester will be on Dec. 18 at 8 p.m.

Bachmann is a member of the Class of 2027.

Price is a member of the Class of 2027.

Around the ROC Players "Carousel": Reframing Theater to a New Age and Stage

BY ALEX HOLLY
STAFF WRITER

Trigger Warning: "Carousel" is a show which contains themes of violence, suicide, and domestic abuse, which this review touches on and discusses throughout.

To pull it together in a single word, Roger and Hammerstein's "Carousel" is one thing: intense.

The show features both the themes and technicality of a Golden Age musical: A plot complex with matters of domestic abuse and suicide, a score rich with soaring vocals and a sweeping orchestra, and the creative floor to reinvent the musical to a new age, stage, and social scene. For senior and "Carousel" director Rey Hankinson, this was exactly the challenge they wanted to take on.

"It was through this show that I fell in love with the craft [of musical theater] ... and I am beyond grateful and excited to tell this story through my own lens," said the program's director's statement. Particularly for a show staged so far in the past (originally released in 1945, for reference), their adaptation worked to challenge the actors, production team, and the original themes of the show. "The subject matter clearly demands our actors to think deeply about their characters, and [...] each challenge represents a new skill that our organization has the privilege to ... tackle."

Following the story of carousel barker Billy Bigelow (senior Chris Riveros) and his relationship with local millworker Julie Jordan (sophomore Isabella Briggs), "Carousel" presents a fascinating turning wheel between moments of high gravity and high camp. While the show's primary storyline grapples with the descent of Bigelow's character into the cycle of paternal abuse and absenteeism, the town that the story wraps around is full of life, love, and seaside splendor.

"Carousel" presents a fascinating turning wheel between moments of high gravity and high camp.

From the get-go, it's evident that "Carousel" boasts of a strong ensemble with crystal clear talent. Played by sophomore Annika Almquist, a young Carrie Pepperidge opens the show with the vocal sanctity of Snow White, introducing the audience

to the much-needed thread of her and Julie Jordan's friendship. Making her ROC Players debut this semester, Briggs and her portrayal of Jordan are also quick to shine on the May Room stage. In an arc subject with both the romance and wrongdoings with Billy Bigelow, her character and interpretation are powerful, and neededly so. Throughout the performance, she floats from sweet soprano highs of songs like "If I Loved You" to the emotional drain of Act II following Bigelow's abuse and suicide — a daunting and incredibly moving feat to perform.

An overarching presence in the production as a whole, Billy Bigelow's character is tough to nail, yet one that Riveros performs with great precision and intensity. Bigelow is a man ridden with grief and deep self-loathing, which is reflected in his abuse towards peers and family both on Earth and beyond the grave. While he's a person wrapped in layers of hatred and hurt that he takes out on the world around him, he still is a person — and Riveros conveyed this in his rich, refined performance. While the audience can't fully understand Bigelow's actions, they can resonate with his character, a harrowing and emotional challenge for any actor taking on the part. In an interview with Campus Times, Riveros cited "Soliquicy" as a song which reflected his journey in playing Billy Bigelow. "Soliquicy" was Act I's closing number, which proved just as moving as it was petrifying to watch, and was a solo which greatly showcased Riveros' vocal and emotional prowess as he dug deep into the character onstage.

While original productions end Bigelow's arc with a one-way ticket to heaven upon redeeming his abuse to the angels after death, ROC Players worked to readapt this ending to give consequence to his abusive behavior and lack of change. While his final destination is unspecified, there's no glorification or quick forgiveness for any of his actions — all that's needed to respin the ending in a new light.

"In the year of 2023 it just doesn't reflect," says Riveros on Bigelow's intended symbolism to the children lost to WWII only offered redemption in the eyes of blessings above. "It's important to re-evaluate art under [a] fluid guise instead of trying to keep [it] as it is."

To Briggs, Julie's decision to stick with Bigelow despite her knowledge of his abusive past and present is an act of

rebellion, a stand against the patriarchal world around her which attempts to dictate her life and love. "She picks the wrong hill to die on, that hill being Billy," she says, reflecting on the character's motives. While Jordan understands her mistakes and the hardships of living a life with the shadow of her late-husband, she strives to live without regret and without remorse, the final act of her unbreakable spirit.

As much as "Carousel" circles around this heavier storyline, the production maintained a playfulness that kept a flow of energy even in the most still of times. Townswoman Arminy (sophomore Sasha Lifchez) flirts with and floats between the sailors of the town with each new scene, professors and production team members make cameos just before the Final Ultimo, and the ensemble's chemistry works to give the town a heartbeat that pulses from the first notes to final bows.

"The production maintained a playfulness that kept a flow of energy even in the most still of times."

The cast welcomed players new and old, and offered a space for community both on and off the stage. Reflecting on his debut to ROC Players, senior Jack Moore says he has loved "being involved in a production of a show that embraced the camp of musical theater," particularly as it encouraged viewers to think more critically about the show itself. As an ensemble, the cast worked as a machine to break down this dichotomy. Led by vocal powerhouse and junior Angelina Severino in her depiction of Nettie Fowler, Act II opener "A Real Nice Clambake" proved a testament to their harmony both in vocal and troupe technique before delving into the more jarring branches of Act II. Meanwhile, more individual moments, particularly the humor in senior Dominique Neveu's Jigger Craigin (to which I quote with such sincerity and contemplation: "My mother had a baby once"), reflected the precision in bringing moments of light to the darker storyline.

See the rest of the article online at campustimes.org.

Holly is a member of the Class of 2025.

The Beatles Release Their Final Song, Bringing the 1960s Into 2023

BY JULIA DUBEY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Despite the band's mere 10-year lifespan, The Beatles are widely considered to be some of the greatest figures of the 1960s, having defined the decade's music and shaped the cultural and political attitudes of the mid to late 20th century. On Nov. 2, over 50 years after the group's dissolution, the band completed its discography with the release of their final song, "Now & Then."

John Lennon recorded the song as a demo on a cassette tape in the late 1970s along with two others: "Real Love" and "Free As a Bird." Lennon's second wife, Yoko Ono, gave the recordings to George Harrison, Ringo Starr, and Paul McCartney in 1994. The latter two songs were completed and released in 1995. However, the music technology of the time could not isolate Lennon's vocals from his piano playing on "Now & Then," and hopes of completing the song were lost.

The 2021 documentary "The Beatles: Get Back" featured audio restoration and vocal isolation technology to clarify video recordings from over five decades ago. The mechanisms used in the restoration of the documentary isolated the band members' instruments and voices. The remaining two Beatles returned to the demo of "Now & Then" where they successfully isolated Lennon's vocals using the same mechanisms

that restored the audio in the documentary.

What truly makes this song revolutionary is that it features all four musicians, despite the fact that only two are still living. The two living Beatles recorded new parts for the song, with McCartney on bass, piano, and slide guitar (a tribute to Harrison, who often utilized this technique); Starr on drums; and both singing backup vocals. Although Harrison passed away in 2001, McCartney and Starr drew upon one of his old guitar recordings to use in the song.

'It features all four musicians, despite the fact that only two are still living.'

The song begins with McCartney counting off, likely a reference to his counting

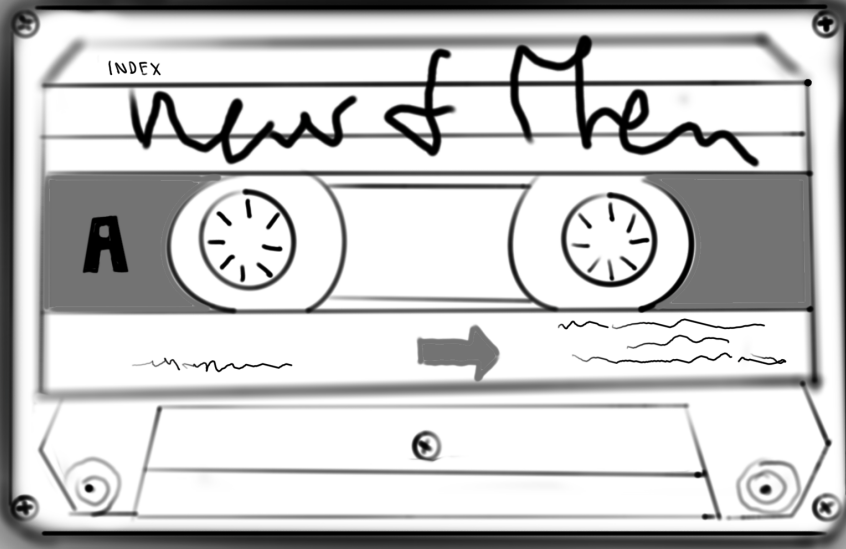
off of their first song on their first released album, "I Saw Her Standing There." The first chord of the song is bone-rattling, jarring, and sudden, yet somehow familiarly calm. After a moment or two, Lennon's voice joins the beautiful medley of piano and guitar. Hearing Lennon's vocals is nothing short of an out-of-body experience; his clear voice pierces through and rises above the accompanying instrumentation. His voice is soul-crushingly beautiful and astonishingly clear compared to his somewhat fuzzy vocals on the demo.

Lennon had the incredible ability to describe the intangible; to acutely put into words the most complex and unidentifiable emotions. One would need a similar ability to fully encapsulate how hauntingly beautiful it is to listen to Lennon and McCartney sing

with one another through recordings taken 50 years apart. The two musicians arguably make the most powerful duo that the music industry has ever seen, and to hear their voices intertwine one final time is nothing short of a blessing.

It is unclear whether Lennon was alluding to his fellow bandmates when writing the song, but one can't help to imagine that this is the case when he and McCartney sing together, "Now and then, I miss you, now and then, I want you to be there for me, always to return to me." The song takes on a new meaning when sung together by Lennon and McCartney. Rather than the somewhat eerie piano ballad it had been on the demo, the reworked version feels like a soulful goodbye between McCartney to his dear friend.

JOYLU / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR



This song is not just the end of the Beatles' discography; it is the closure of a 40-year-old wound between the two main songwriters of the most influential band of our time.

The song lyrics, speaking of longing for one another and enduring love through adversity, seem to be a sentimental acknowledgment of the impenetrable relationships fostered between the band's four members, despite the hardships and deep-rooted disagreements they faced. When the Beatles play this song together, it feels like a final testament to everything the band endured and the unbreakable bond that they share — even 50 years later and with two members deceased.

The title of the song is fitting for the role it plays in the Beatles anthology, presenting the modern world with the wonders of the band from over half a century ago. This song acts as a means to bridge the gap between "Now" and "Then," bringing Lennon and Harrison back to life and the Beatles back together to share their light with the world one final time. The release of a new Beatles song almost 60 years after the band gained popularity is a testament to the strong and everlasting impact they have had on the world. Though Nov. 2 marks the official end of the Beatles' career, it also marks the start of a new age of appreciation and love for their genius, innovative, and timeless music.

Dubey is a member of the Class of 2027.

Off Broadway On Campus Presents: Class Act!

BY BONES JACQUES
STAFF WRITER

Off Broadway On Campus hosted its semesterly show, "OBOC Presents: Class Act," on Friday, Nov. 10, performing a revue of musical numbers ranging from a Romeo-and-Juliet-inspired French musical, to a story about a mysterious phantom that haunts the theater. OBOC does and has it all, and I was lucky enough to not only attend the show but sit down and talk with OBOC's current eboard members about their experiences.

OBOC is the longest running musical theater group on campus, and it shows. Throughout the entire performance, the audience cheered, clapped, laughed, and screamed the names of different cast members as they hit the stage. "I feel like I have so much support backing me up," says senior and OBOC President Kerri Golden. "There have been these bumps before. There have been these amazing, talented people for so long... It makes it almost easier to get through."

I've had the privilege of attending three performances from this club now. Each

show has its own theme — this year, it was "Class Act." Junior Andy Vu, the Publicity Chair of the club, was responsible for choosing iconographies and art for the show. Vu also put together one of the numbers in the show as well: "The Story of the Phantom" from "Goosebumps The Musical." Concerning the inspirations for this semester's show, he recounted to me the convergence of many ideas and themes that seemed to come together beautifully.

"Class Act," he says, has a few different meanings. "This is a class act. This is what OBOC has to show. And with the talent that I've seen, I think that can be said [...] You see class act where there's high schoolers, like in 'Stick It to the Man,' or you're at a high class party." It's clear that Vu has spent a long time thinking about the themes running through all of their numbers, and is very passionate about what he does.

The night opened with "Fascinating Rhythm" from "Nice Work If You Can Get It." This was the perfect song to open the show — high energy, loud, and full of movement. This song featured many short solos that truly prepared you for all the talent

that followed in the next two hours. Around halfway through, there was an amazing dance break that got you excited and wanting to get out of your seat and dance too. My favorite part about the number, however, was the palpable energy in the audience. The room was electric and it put me on the edge of my seat for the next numbers.

'The room was electric and it put me on the edge of my seat for the next numbers.'

There were many amazing numbers that followed to the end of Act I. I wish I could give each and every one of them the time they deserve, but you'll just have to watch them yourself to find out! When I talked with the eboard, I asked each of them what their personal favorites from the show were. To my surprise, their answers greatly varied.

To recap a couple of the responses I received: Golden's favorite song was "Meet the Plastics" from "Mean Girls." "My lifelong dream is to just play Regina George until I die," she said. Sophomore and OBOC Social Chair Hannah Zavalkoff and junior and

OBOC Secretary Samantha Tong were both fans of the title track from "Footloose." "I really liked the choreo!" Tong said. "Whoever did the choreo is really talented." (Spoiler alert, it was her.)

Junior Luna Trumble, who serves as OBOC's Music Director, told me that her favorite was "Lah Dee Dah Dah Day" from "The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals."

"The cast does a great job acting like creepy musical theater zombies," Trumble said, "enough to where I'm getting the heebie-jeebies even while I'm laughing and clapping along."

Personally, I'd say that my favorite performance of the night was "How to Wash a Check" from Kimberly Akimbo, which was the perfect amount of ridiculous to get the audience seriously laughing. That, or "The Room Where It Happens" from "Hamilton." This wonderful performance, by the newbies of the group, was a wonderful mix of great vocals, exciting choreo, and impressive character choices. This being their first show, I truly think the sky's the limit for them.

There were many people who made the performance possible — from the talented

people in the Pit Orchestra, to the ECM team, all of their wonderful co-sponsors, as well as everyone else who helped make this show a reality. The exciting thing is, next semester that could include you!

When it came to the commitment level for all club members, Vice President of OBOC, junior Sasha Lifchez, said that commitment is as flexible as members want it to be. "If you want to be in the whole show, you can," they said. "But if you want to be in one number, or be in the Pit ... you can. It's really up to you."

OBOC also hosts fun events for members. "Our first event was OBrunch where E-Board cooks breakfast for the whole club," Zavalkoff said. They also host a yearly Maize Maze, where they invite alumni to join them in a corn maze and celebrate with apple cider treats after.

If you missed the show, check out the University's livestream website for a full recording. To learn more about joining, OBOC will be hosting a GIM early next semester, and Follow their Instagram @ur.oboc in the meantime.

Jacques is a member of the Class of 2025.

HUMOR

Moanin' About 'Mogus

BY ALYSSA KOH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

If someone had come up to me two months ago and said, "Hey, Alyssa, what do you think your new YouTube obsession will be for the entirety of October?" I don't think Among Us would have taken up any space on that list.

Rewatching all 200 episodes of CaptainSparklez' Minecraft series, Mianite? Sure. Korean café ASMR videos because I can't escape my workaholic tendencies (I work as a barista at a bubble tea place, shoutout Crave)? Understandable — and semi-concerning. Reviews of the best foreign language dubs for every Disney character known to man? Been there, done that. (Freshman year of high school was a time.) But Among Us? No, no. Never.

I'm not the "Mogus" type. Some may consider me a "casual gamer," sure, but that's limited to Animal Crossing, Slay the Spire, Pokémon, the Jackbox Party Packs, and the Wii version of Rhythm Heaven Fever (which I now play on my laptop via an emulator I downloaded only to play this exact game and no others). I never jumped on the Among Us bandwagon. I opted for standard mafia games with my friends, or a rousing round of One Night Ultimate Werewolf. There was something about those little backpacked space dudes that I just couldn't get into — until fall break hit this year.

'I'm not the "Mogus" type.'

I was feverish for the entirety of our five-day long weekend, which meant that

there was no catching up on homework or traveling for me. Instead, I spent each day oscillating between the same three stages of existence:

Waking up and checking the time.

Realizing it was time to take a dose of my extra-strength cold medicine.

Taking a dose of said cold medicine.

While I dozed, amidst this dreamless purgatory, my laptop's YouTube autoplay took control. Shot by Cupid's arrow, perhaps, fired from the quiver of some sad sap searching for a new viewer of this vent-filled video game. I'll never know. I was merely the victim. For when I awoke, all that remained on my homepage was Among Us — and among them, I was alone. Illuminated only by the light from my computer screen, I figured I'd passively watch the rest of the video that was currently playing. It was half-way done, and I was all comfy-cozy (and due for another dose of CVS brand cold syrup). So, watch I did.

It's been three weeks since and I haven't been able to shake the itch. I wake up and I watch a 5up video (for the luckily uninitiated, he's a "big brain" Among Us streamer). To accompany lunch, I'll sit down to a Disguised Toast highlights reel. And as my partner drifts off to dreamland next to me, I slowly untangle my limbs from him for the sole purpose of seeking out more Among Us content. I watch the modded games, too — the vanilla stuff just isn't enough anymore. You mustn't misunderstand me, not once during this seemingly endless phase of my existence have I actually played

this game. I can't decide if that makes it better or worse.

'It's been three weeks since and I haven't been able to shake the itch.'

I must survive in this hellscape until the next craze overtakes me. It's a caveat of living such a busy life — when I find something that I associate with comfort, it's hard to distance myself from it. It's not like I'll have to wait long, though. I can feel the tug — even with the new Among Us map that just dropped and an animated show in the works, the call of Just Dance 2024's story mode, and the backlog of every episode of Penn and Teller's Fool Us beckons to me. The day will come where my synapses fire away, in the neverending search for a new kick, and I won't have to be among this any longer. For now, though, I have to accept the positives of my position.

'I've learned to turn to Among Us.'

When running this paper drives me crazy, when singing my little cappella songs makes me sick, and when actually paying attention to my course load for once (shocker, I'm a student) jettisons me into yet another existential crisis, I've learned to turn to Among Us. It's self care. Sure, I'd rather de-stress by more normal means — like a good book or a relaxing bath — but my brain has trained itself to feel its best by watching people roleplay as murderous space monsters. So be it.

Koh is a member of the Class of 2024.

The Basement of Carlson Library is the Backrooms

BY BRYAN BURKE
HUMOR EDITOR

Where am I? Everything is colored a bluish gray and bathed in clinical fluorescent light. The silence is deafening. Only the occasional pencil or keyboard clicks can be heard, yet there's an unrelenting hum, probably from the HVAC system.

What time is it? I do not know. This cannot be known. There is no clock to be seen. This is a liminal space. No natural light can penetrate this bomb shelter of a library. The only perception of time can be derived from the urgency of the work that has to be done. No one comes here to hang out. Only to come close to a mental breakdown and hammer out the worst problem set known to man.

The "people" in Carlson should be avoided at all costs. Ever notice how you always see the same folk in the same seats without hearing a peep? They aren't real. They're a projection of the library itself to lull you into a false sense of security. You cannot fall for this. If you do, the librarians will add your mind to the laser lab's supercomputer. Did you think UR acquired the most powerful supercomputer through conventional methods? It's an amalgamation of gray matter harvested from unstable students. That's why it crashes so much. They haven't been able to harvest the minds of stable students, as they steer clear of the secluded locations prime for the mental breakdown.

Regardless of the validity of the mind-harvesting grift, Carlson is weird. It's an

exercise in self-preservation. Does one focus their efforts on saving their grade and forgo food, water, and sleep? I'd personally say so. The library introduces an uneasy sense of mental clarity, as well. It's never been so trivial to thumb through a textbook or litany of YouTube videos and teach yourself an entire class the night before a midterm. The wheely whiteboards lend themselves to this quite well. All your thoughts can be preserved, without compromising precious mental bandwidth and memory.

'Carlson is weird.'

I will refrain from name-dropping the specific class, but myself and a fellow student spend somewhere between four and 12 hours at the same godforsaken table. I only left because I hadn't had any food all day and we were pushing 6 p.m. She kept on truckin'.

I've seen friend groups dissolve, I've seen poorly defined mental breakdowns, and even people rethinking their entire major declaration. It's difficult to spot happiness in the basement of Carlson. If you look very closely, then you may just catch a glimpse of relief in the eyes of a junior, just now realizing a dreaded problem set was pushed back by 24 hours.

It's not for the faint of heart. Only strong minded individuals should venture to the depths. And be warned: Once you go Carlson, you can never go back.

Burke is a member of the Class of 2025.

Did You Hear a Bird Today?

BY BRIAN LY
STAFF WRITER

Every day, I wake up to the sound of birds chirping.

Their delightful chatter signals the rising of the sun, reminding me that the day has begun.

Today as well, I woke up to their morning song and, as always, I quickly jumped out of bed and rushed to open my window shade.

A blinding light entered my eyes, making me temporarily lose vision. As my eyes refocused, I quickly surveyed the surrounding trees and what remained of their foliage. There was not a single animal in sight.

Today as well, it seemed that the birds were gone.

I've gotten used to the cold silent mornings of Rochester now, but when the birds first disappeared,

I spent hours every morning trying to search for where they went.

On the first day of their disappearance, I woke up late. Without a melody of chirps to awaken me early, I nearly missed my first class of the day. I dashed outside intending to greet the sunrise, but I was met with a gloomy overcast of clouds. I spent the morning wondering why I didn't wake up earlier.

On the second day, I also woke up late. I began to sense that something was wrong. I ran out of my dorm and was met with a freezing cold breeze. I ran around for hours and hours, and yet still there was not a single bird in sight.

On the third day, I set an alarm to wake up early. At this point, I was at

my limit. If there weren't any birds chirping, then I would have to do their job for them.

And so, from then on, before the sun rose each morning, I would wake up early and go on a run. Starting from Gilbert Hall in the First-Year Quad, I ran past Dandelion Square and made my way to the Sue B. Residence. And yet still, I ran further to the Hill Court Residences.

'Without a melody of chirps to awaken me early, I nearly missed my first class of the day.'

Each time I came near a residence, I would run around it in a circle for exactly 30 minutes. You

might be questioning why I did this, but the answer will be clear soon enough. This was merely a test. An experiment for the next day.

And so, the fourth day arrived without any signs of birds. I wanted to believe that they would come back soon, but they never did. And perhaps they never would.

I couldn't sit still for this. If UR had no birds that chirped, then I would have to chirp for them.

On the fourth morning, I followed my designated path. In the early morning, I ran from the First-Year Quad to Sue B., and then all the way to Hill Court, chirping all the way.

I refused to allow Rochester's mornings to stay cold and silent.

Every morning, I would wake up early and run around campus, chirping loudly enough to ensure that people would be able to hear me, even deep in their sleep.

I've been doing it for more days than I've bothered to count, and I will continue to do so.

Now, I realize that you may have many questions for me, or perhaps you would like to condemn me, but that doesn't matter now. You cannot stop me. No one can.

For those of you who want to stop me, I have a question for you.

Did you hear a bird today?

Ly is a member of the Class of 2027.

SPORTS

The Race for the NBA Cup Has a New Twist, and It's Changing the Game for the Better

BY TREVOR SHOOSHAN
STAFF WRITER

Another December, another NBA season — except this time, it's different. This time, there's something to talk about other than load management and trade rumors. This time, we don't have to wonder why the season is so long or debate the MVP a week into the season. No, this time, we have the newly implemented NBA In-Season Tournament.

To those not well-versed in professional basketball, here's a general breakdown of how a typical NBA season is structured. The regular season stretches from October to April, during which each of the league's 30 teams play 82 games. Their win-loss records then dictate their positioning in the Playoffs, a high-stakes tournament among the best 16 teams all competing to become that year's champions.

For the dedicated fan, there isn't much of a problem with this format: an 82-game season for their favorite team is a joy to watch, not to mention the universal thrill of the playoff games. But for the casual fan, the regular season can be a bore starting at around the mid-way point. This hole should be filled in by the All-Star Weekend, with star studded events like the Slam Dunk contest, Three-point contest, and the All-Star game, but with the All-Star Weekend quickly waning in popularity, the need for a change has become increasingly clear.

Thus, the tournament is built to add intrigue during a normally boring part of the season where only die-hard fans watch their

favorite teams (while, deep down, knowing that none of the games' outcomes really matter until the spring). With this new implementation, however, more people than ever are tuning in across the whole spectrum of fandom engagement.

This single elimination knockout-style tournament is a new addition to this NBA season that tipped off on Nov. 3 and will end on Dec. 9. Every game counts towards the standings for the regular season (minus the championship).

Just like March Madness, the thrill and excitement of single elimination basketball is building interest in the league as a whole. Also, the introduction of a point differential tiebreaker adds a layer of complexity and increases competition in seemingly-meaningless games. This is why the Celtics needed to beat the Bulls by a lot in their final game to make the Final 8 over the Magic, who had the same tournament record.

Personally, as a huge fan of the league, I have loved every minute of the action. The courts, jerseys, and competition have quickly turned these early season Tuesday and Friday nights into must-watch events. It's provided an intensity to a normally dull time of the year where late season football dominates ESPN talk shows.

The courts and jerseys set tournament nights apart. Their thematic consistency and city individuality make the games special and bring in a wider audience to the games.

This tournament format is also a perfect place for coaches and organizations to experiment with their

rosters and styles of play. Ever since the efficiency of the drive and kick three took the league by storm after the 2015 Warriors Title run, the association has been shifting towards a homogenous style of play. Centers were pushed aside for sharpshooting guards, until recently, when the punishingly efficient playstyles of Nikola Jokic, Joel Embiid, and Giannis Antetokounpo brought about a swift change.

'The thrill and excitement of single elimination basketball is building interest in the league as a whole.'

Now, to win the Larry O'Brien Trophy, you need a seven-footer who can hold their own defensively against these overpowering centers. This leads into the next generation of players, including Paolo Banchemo, Franz Wagner, Chet Holmgren, Evan Mobley, and Victor Wembenyama, all a part of the big man resurgence. Even big guards like Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, Anthony Edwards, and Luka Doncic are using their length and size to control the pace of the game.

But while all the tall trees across the league battle in the post, the smaller guards find a way to make their impact known. Players like De'aaron Fox, Steph Curry, Jalen Brunson, Donovan Mitchell, and Tyresse Maxey are using their speed, playmaking, and shooting to dominate the court. While they have some defensive deficiencies, their physicality and

quickness makes them at least passable against the majority of their matchups.

This is where each team's unique flair is most visible. Playing against the lanky Thunder with their efficient back court and strong defense on the wings complimented by Rookie of the Year candidate Chet Holmgren is very different than facing off against the Magic with their overwhelming frontcourt scoring duo of Franz and Paolo and defensively minded backcourt of Jalen Suggs and Cole Anthony.

Within this new format, eight teams have staked their claim at a chance for the NBA Cup. Each of them has their own unique playstyle that has set them apart so far and will aid in their success as they shift into the playoffs.

In the West, the Lakers and Suns have dominated the game with their star power. This includes Lakers' veteran LeBron James (in his 21st season) and defensive player of the year candidate Anthony Davis. The Suns are led by the talents of growing playmaker and shooting guard Devin Booker and consistently stellar power forward Kevin Durant. However, their depth past the top five is questionable.

The Kings, Bucks, and Knicks have all played well to this point, controlling the game with their consistent style of play. The Kings have star guard De'aaron Fox — who is on pace for another All-NBA season with his quick driving ability and efficient shooting and playmaking. The Bucks, may have the most dynamic duo in the NBA in Damian Lillard and

Giannis Antetokoumpo, and the Knicks, piloted by Jalen Brunson (an undersized guard with a gigantic positive impact on the roster), both are ready to make some noise in the East.

Additionally, there's the Pelicans, who have one of the deepest teams in the league with paint beast power forward Zion Williamson and lanky three-level scorer Brandon Ingram, and the Celtics, who have the best starting five in the NBA thus far and the best defensive backcourt in the league.

'This tournament format is also a perfect place for coaches and organizations to experiment with their rosters and styles of play.'

One team stands out above the rest in my eyes: the Indiana Pacers. I think that this tournament was built for a team like them, who on any given night could score over 150 points. Their young, energetic playstyle sets them apart and especially in a single elimination tournament, they are extremely difficult to game plan against. They may not fare well in a normal seven game playoff series, but in the race for the NBA cup, they have as good a chance as anyone.

The Pacers' All-Star guard Tyresse Halliburton has openly talked about how the tournament is an excellent opportunity to showcase to the league his abilities as a player. "The in-season tournament is probably the first time that I'm really competing to win a championship on the NBA level," he said in an interview with ESPN. His competitive nature reflects the league consensus that the players care. They are so competitive that the chance to win anything brings out the best in them.

This is what the league has been searching for and lacking over the last decade. In the era of load management and player empowerment, November and December were months of empty stats, fake trades, and rest days as fans anxiously await the postseason. Now, we have another trophy to look forward to, and I can't wait to see where it goes next.



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*Shooshan is a member of
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Classics Themed Crossword

Caleb Oshinsky, Elena Bachmann

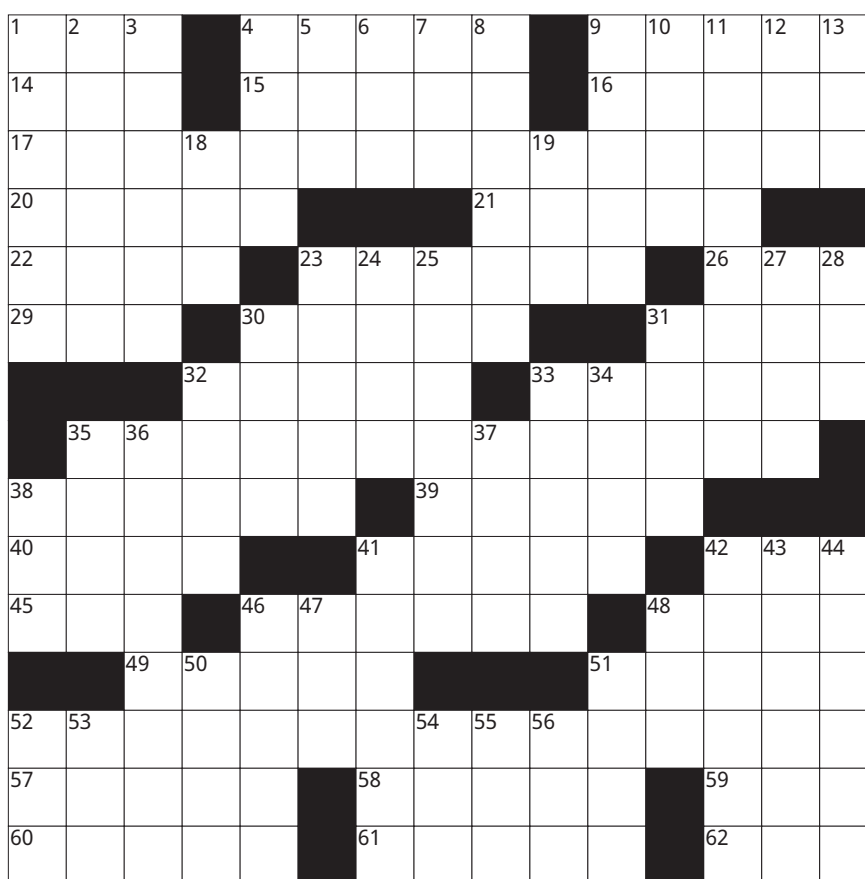
ACROSS

- 1 "___ NAUR CLEOAR! THE CONDENSATION"
- 4 You, before you were born
- 9 Knick ___
- 14 Cellular standard initials 4G ___
- 15 Hawaiian hello
- 16 2014 mashup meme's origin ___ circulation
- 17 *Disappeared via gust, or a book*
- 20 Choose to participate
- 21 There are 5 of these in most lines of Shakespeare sonnets
- 22 Nothing, in Normandy
- 23 *Actress Fisher, or a book*
- 26 Brand of spherical solution for soft lips
- 29 Acoustic appendage
- 30 Andrews of "The Sound of Music"
- 31 Countless millenia
- 32 Regarding birth
- 33 A seer does this with a crystal ball, or stones & bones
- 35 *"Let's make a [courageous fresh globe]!", or a book*
- 38 Victim of Brutus' brutality
- 39 "Danse Macabre" composer Saint-___
- 40 ___ Watson, or a book

- 41 South ___ (since 2011)
- 42 Gov. soldiers
- 45 Lao-Tzu's principle or "way"
- 46 Paging device, familiarly
- 48 *Sand structure, or a book*
- 49 Oklahoma city
- 51 Party-planning website
- 52 *Some hidden botanical ground, or a book*
- 57 Winter ailments
- 58 Newsman of yore, or a recent breakup-ee
- 59 Alfonso XIII's queen, familiarly
- 60 Yucatan Chichen Itza builders
- 61 *A t-shirt has three of these, or a book*
- 62 Nasty pesticide banned in 1972

DOWN

- 1 Author of "An Inconvenient Truth" who lost in 2000
- 2 *An ideal society, or a book*
- 3 Tenant
- 4 Baby deer
- 5 Cotton Gin inventor Whitney
- 6 Little 'un
- 7 "Lemme think..."
- 8 The Onion genre
- 9 ___ of the Krispy(TM) variety
- 10 Novice, in gaming lingo
- 11 Licorice flavored extract



- 12 Soda container
- 13 Baby goat
- 18 German "a"
- 19 "___!!!! :3"
- 23 Adorable-er
- 24 Turing of enigma
- 25 Agitates
- 27 Like a linear function
- 28 Speech of a snake
- 30 Caffeinated programming language?
- 31 Goofs
- 32 Apollo org.
- 33 Practice profanity
- 34 Mass. neighbor
- 35 ___ rush. "Roll tide!"
- 36 How one probably attended school 3 years ago
- 37 Walk in water
- 38 This, in French
- 41 Google
- 42 Showed the way
- 43 Aim (to)
- 44 Spotted attending
- 46 "___ yer heart"
- 47 Corner PC key
- 48 Device for taping shows
- 50 Meat-inspecting org.
- 51 Units of corn
- 52 Vintage film channel
- 53 Grp. that may make you mow your lawn
- 54 Hot n' sexy ___tic preceder
- 55 "Don't Stop ___ You Get Enough"
- 56 "Well golly ___!"

Want to check your answers? Scan the QR code below:

Happy finals season! Enjoy this crossword (hopefully) as a break from the study grindset.

love,
the Campus Times



Bachmann and Oshinsky are part of the Class of 2027.

This Month in Photos

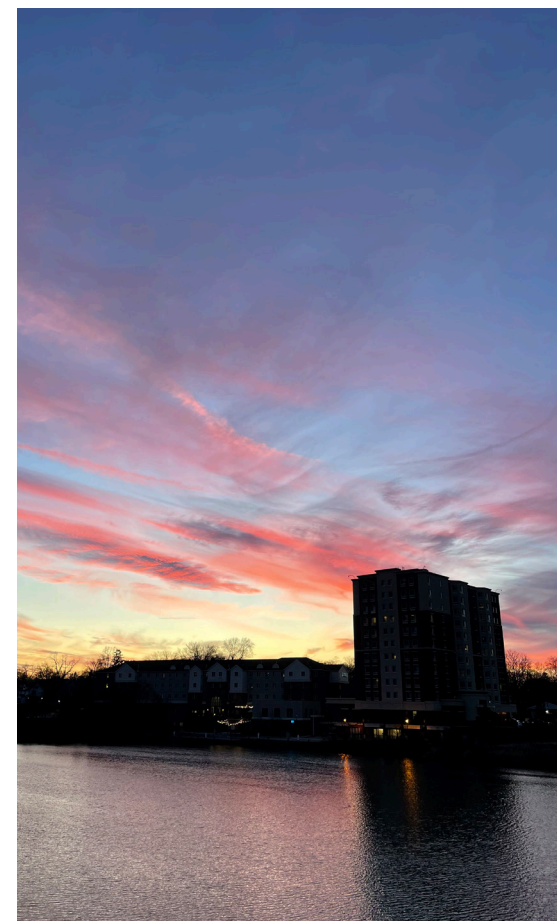
"This Month in Photos" is a column to document daily life on campus each month. You can submit your photos to ct_photo@u.rochester.edu with the subject line "This Month in Photos."



CHARLIE LU / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



KAYLIN HAN / STAFF WRITER



SARAH WOODAMS / PUBLISHER