WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2026 / VOLUME 153, ISSUE 9

Campus Times

SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SINCE 1873 / campustimes.org

First Section of Tunnels Open Just in Time for Winter Months

BY MAYA BROSNICK
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The River Campus tunnels will reopen in two waves this November following a closure that began in the summer. The tunnel under Eastman Quad, and its connections to Hoyt Hall and Bausch and Lomb Hall opened for use Nov. 2. The tunnel's connection to Dewey Hall will re-open Nov. 13.

> *The tunnel under Eastman Quad, and its connections to Hoyt Hall and Bausch and Lomb Hall opened for use Nov. 2.*

These tunnels are often essential for students and faculty looking to navigate campus while avoiding the harsh Rochester winter weather.

The construction work took place in the utility tunnel beneath the pedestrian tunnels, so the pedestrian tunnel is unchanged apart from a resurfaced floor. The walls of the tunnel, generally used for club and event promotion, are also reopened for painting.

> *The walls of the tunnel, generally used for club and event promotion, are also reopened for painting.*

Further utility work is planned for Summer 2027.

Brosnick is a member of the Class of 2027.

Annual Rochester Holiday Village to Continue Beloved Amenities for Ninth Year



The ice rink at Manhattan Square Park during the 2025 Holiday Village. TEDDY ALMOND / NEWS EDITOR

BY TEDDY ALMOND
NEWS EDITOR

Every year, Rochester's Manhattan Square Park transforms into a winter wonderland. Starting in late November, the ROC Holiday Village, which features various opportunities for locals and tourists alike to relax and unwind during the cold holiday season, takes over the downtown space.

The Village this year will once again feature its signature ice skating rink, selection of local vendors, and a series of special events for which patrons can purchase tickets.

The festival has frequently been named a top holiday destination in the country, according to a press release. This year, the event has secured a nomination for the 2026 USA TODAY 10BEST Readers' Choice Awards for Best Holiday Market and Best Ice Skating Rink.

> *The festival has frequently been named a top holiday destination in the country according to a press release.*

The idea for this holiday tradition came from Rochesterians Kelli Marsh and Jenna Knauf. "It started when I went to B[r]yant Park at the end of 2017. I saw the ice skating, big Christmas tree, shopping section and thought, 'we could do this in Rochester,'" Knauf told Visit Rochester in 2024.

> *I saw the ice skating, big Christmas tree, shopping section and thought, 'we could do this in Rochester,'" Knauf told Visit Rochester in 2024.*

Since the beginning, general admission and ice skating rentals have remained free, the latter thanks to a donation by the Wegman family, Amanda Antinore, a spokesperson for the event, explained in an email to the *Campus Times*.

While general admission is free for all, some of the special events require tickets. This year, patrons can experience a range of activities from wreath decorating to the adult-oriented "Paint and Sip."

Additionally, patrons looking to escape the cold while still taking in all the Village has to offer can rent a "Winter Igloo." "Each igloo features comfortable furnishings, warm blankets, a Bluetooth speaker and clear views of Roc Holiday Village," according to a press release. "Each reservation includes a dedicated server to assist with food and beverage service, including drinks available from the Triple-O Lodge Bar."

> *This year, patrons can experience a range of activities from wreath decorating to the adult-oriented "Paint and Sip."*

Tickets for these winter igloos start at $222 for 90-minutes.

> *Additionally, patrons looking to escape the cold while still taking in all the Village has to offer can rent a "Winter Igloo."*

The igloos are not the only experience some patrons found expensive. "It was very festive with a lot of options for all ages, but high prices and cramped indoor spaces made it difficult," junior Lucy Rivers said regarding her experience last year. "Despite the cold, I really liked the local vendors and the various things they were selling."

The village also offers free fire pit warming stations scattered through the space.

"The random fire posts were my favorite part because we met a few friends who were also freezing," Justin Umanzor Mejia ('28) said.

> *Expanded food and beverage options will be available, along with a new "Snowball Smash" competition.*

Some new additions are coming to the Holiday Village this season. Expanded food and beverage options will be available, along with a new "Snowball Smash" competition. The Shopping Village has also been expanded to 27 vendors, and is now sponsored by URochester Medicine, according to a press release.

> *"[URochester Medicine's] support helps make this popular holiday shopping experience possible while celebrating Rochester's small businesses, artisans, and entrepreneurs," Antinore said.*

"[URochester Medicine's] support helps make this popular holiday shopping experience possible while celebrating Rochester's small businesses, artisans, and entrepreneurs," Antinore said. "Partnerships like this are essential to bringing Roc Holiday Village to life."

Almond is a member of the Class of 2028.

INSIDE THIS CT

HORROR BOOKSHOP
PAGE 3 COMMUNITY

POLITICS POST-TRUMP
PAGE 5 OPINIONS

INVENTED CULTURES
PAGE 7 CULTURE

FIELD HOCKEY
PAGE 11 SPORTS

CAMPUS

Three URochester Stem Professors Awarded Prizes for Their Unique Approaches to Teaching

BY MANGO NORENBERG
STAFF WRITER

This past October, three professors in various fields of STEM were granted the Goergen Award in recognition of their teaching accomplishments and skills. Named after URochester Trustees Robert and Pamela Goergen, this award recognizes URochester faculty for their excellence in teaching. The Goergen Award is often awarded for top-quality classroom performance, but can also be granted for innovative approaches to teaching or creative use of classroom materials.

The Goergen Awards began in 1997, where three different categories, each with their own award, were presented to faculty and staff members who demonstrated various contributions to undergraduate education. Faculty and staff members could be nominated individually or as part of a group. In 2010, the program was redesigned to have larger awards that focused exclusively on individual faculty members' accomplishments in teaching. The prize includes a placard with the faculty member's name and $15,000 in cash. The Goergen Awards are given to three faculty members every year.

> *This award recognizes URochester faculty for their excellence in teaching.*

To determine who will receive the awards, URochester faculty department chairs or program directors within the School of Arts and Sciences, the Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and the Eastman School of Music submit award nominations to the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Excellence. Department chairs and program directors include nomination letters that summarize the highlights of their nominee's teaching achievements. They may also include supplemental material such as letters of support from faculty colleagues, teaching assistants, or students influenced by their teaching, and the nominee's teaching statement and resume. They are submitted in June, at the end of each academic year. In October, the program directors or department chairs of the winning faculty members will notify them of their award and the winners accept their awards at the annual Goergen Awards Ceremony.

URochester Chemistry Professor Benjamin Hafensteiner is one of three STEM professors awarded the Goergen Award this year. Hafensteiner was specifically acclaimed for his interactive, rigorous, and supportive teaching environment when lecturing a large number of chemistry students.

As an undergraduate, Hafensteiner ('03) developed an interest in organic chemistry. He began teaching in 2011, and currently teaches two classes here at the University: CHEM 132 and CHEM 203. His teaching style highlights the importance of students asking questions about the concepts in order to understand the "why" behind them rather than simply memorizing formulas.

For Hafensteiner, understanding the material translates to being comfortable asking questions in a crowded lecture hall.

"I want students to feel comfortable in a big class. That's usually very hard to do because it's very easy to feel anonymous in a 300-person lecture hall," Hafensteiner said. "Some of my approaches [are] to try to make people feel like they're seen and that they're real people, [and] not just a number. And I think that can keep people more engaged with the material."

URochester Biomedical Engineering and Neuroscience professor and awardee Laurel Carney's teaching style also emphasizes the importance of learning about her students as individuals. Though Carney is currently on leave, she usually teaches courses such as Electric Circuit Theory and Speech on the Brain. In many of her courses, she underscores how important it is for her and her students to know each other as individuals and ask questions about the material to become engaged with it.

"I try to get to know the students as scholars ... [and] try to understand what questions they have and get to know their names," Carney said. "I ask them a lot of questions [and] that helps me also know whether they are following what I am saying or if nobody's following me, I want to know that and stop."

Thomas Howard, who is a Professor of Computer Science and Electrical and Computer Engineering earned one of this year's Goergen Award for his teaching methods that prepare students for the real world. Howard graduated from URochester in 2004 with degrees in Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Computer Engineering. His passion for these fields along with robotics led him to return in 2015 as a robotics professor.

Knowing that robotics itself is a complicated subject, one that is constantly changing with the advancements in technology, Howard described that teaching this subject requires students to practice solving complicated problems.

"Robotics is one of the hardest things that humanity tries to do," Howard remarked. "It's embodied artificial intelligence. It's trying to deal with an uncertain, partially observed world and [making] decisions with a limited computing time. That is a super hard problem that is going to take a lot of people a lot of time to really solve."

Howard described that many of his courses such as Mechatronics involve a lab component for students to apply their knowledge of the content while working on hands-on lab experiments.

"It's important to deeply understand the theory, understand how things work at an analytical level, but at the same time, you have to get into the laboratory and actually do experiments, write code, do simulations," he expressed. "You really need practice trying to apply those things, and it's tricky to actually cover theory and practice in a single semester."

Professors Hafensteiner, Carney, and Howard have all expressed pride and honor to win the Goergen Award as they continue to further develop their research projects and teaching skills, acknowledging that their students' growth is the real reward of their work.

"I don't think about these awards as some crowning achievement. It's a recognition for effort put in and I'm happy to have it, and I'm honored to be in a long list of really great educators," Hafensteiner reflected. "But I think I'm already looking forward to [teaching] the next class ... I just want to thank all of the students ... I wouldn't be in a position for any recognition without the students that we have."

Norenberg is a member of the Class of 2028.

Hillside Market to Extend Their Hours, per Rochester Dining



Students shopping at Hillside Market. TEDDY ALMOND / NEWS EDITOR

BY NANA AFRIYIE OPOKU-WARE
STAFF WRITER

Hillside Market reduced their hours at the start of this semester to 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., though they have since been expanded to 8 a.m. to 12 a.m., according to the University's dining hours of operations page.

> *Hillside Market reduced their hours at the start of this semester to 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., though they have since been expanded to 8 a.m. to 12 a.m.*

When the *CT* asked a manager at Hillside about the proposed changes, they noted that they weren't consulted about the decision, and were just made aware of it. One manager at Hillside, David Lanpher, explained that the transition would be feasible, but underscored the challenges regarding staffing schedules.

The University did not immediately respond to comment on why these changes were made.

When asked how he believed students felt about the previously limited hours, he recalled that there were occasions where students would show up almost immediately after the store had closed, and wouldn't be able to come in. Thus, the changed hours could greatly benefit the student athletes and students who are studying for longer hours, as they may not be willing to interrupt a work session to get food before Hillside closes.

Current graduate student and former undergrad Colin Jones ('26) explained his grievances with the store's limited hours: "Even though I live off campus, I do think that the hour changes are inconvenient," he said. "Especially when I'm at radio [WRUR] and want a late night snack."

> *"Even though I live off campus, I do think that the hour changes are inconvenient," he said. "Especially when I'm at radio [WRUR] and want a late night snack."*

Lanpher speculated that eventually, the hours may end up expanding to the point where the market stays open till 2 a.m. again like it did last year. For future changes in hours, he wants Hillside staff to be included in the decision making process. "Maybe more consultation of those people who would actually be employed by the market," he said.

Opuku-Ware is a member of the Class of 2030.

COMMUNITY

The Crimson Quill Brings Horror and Dark Literature to Rochester

BY NICOLE "NJ" CHIE
STAFF WRITER

For Kenna Paige, the 28-year-old Rochester native behind The Crimson Quill, opening a bookstore has never been a mere passing interest — rather, it is a dream she has carried for years, one that she is finally preparing to turn into reality in Rochester's South Wedge neighborhood. Set to open shortly before Christmas 2026, The Crimson Quill will become Rochester's first horror and dark literature-themed bookstore.

> *Set to open shortly before Christmas 2026, The Crimson Quill will become Rochester's first horror and dark literature themed bookstore.*

Although Paige initially imagined owning a bookstore as a "retirement dream," personal circumstances in 2024 prompted her to reconsider waiting. At the time, she was pursuing a career in mortuary science, but health diagnoses would make that path particularly difficult to navigate. However, rather than letting those challenges put her ambitions on hold, Paige decided to take a chance on the business that she had been envisioning for years.

"I knew that opening a bookstore wasn't necessarily going to be 'easy' with my physical limitations ... but there was no way I was going to give up on my lifelong dream of owning one," Paige explained. Paige began developing her business plan in September 2024, setting in motion the process that would eventually bring The Crimson Quill to life.

Interestingly, Paige's relationship with books was not always quite so clear. Despite now preparing to open her own bookstore, she admits that she "actually wasn't much of a reader until high school," which was when she discovered her love for fantasy and romance novels.

Her interests grew after she took a job at the Barnes & Noble in Greece, New York approximately a year after graduating, which she said "[shaped] the direction of her life." Beyond literature, Paige has long been passionate about art and animals, having previously owned a commission-based pet portrait business and worked in the veterinary industry. She summarized the interests that are key to her identity simply yet passionately: "books, art, animals, and nature have played a huge role in shaping who I am today!"

However, the decision to finally pursue her dream did not come without its challenges. Paige described the moment when she realized that she wanted to open the shop as very closely related to the setbacks that she had experienced in her personal life.

> *However, the decision to finally pursue her dream did not come without its challenges.*



Site of the soon-to-open bookstore: The Crimson Quill LAURENHILL AMBE / PHOTO EDITOR

"I think the moment I was told that my physical limitations and disabilities might prevent me from pursuing my dreams really pushed me to prove otherwise," she said. "Maybe I'm just stubborn, but I've always believed in following your dreams regardless of the setbacks you might face." Paige underscored the importance of the people who supported her throughout the process, particularly her best friend and parents. "Having people who believe in you really makes all the difference," she said.

> *"Maybe I'm just stubborn, but I've always believed in following your dreams regardless of the setbacks you might face."*

The Crimson Quill will be Rochester's very first horror and dark literature-themed bookstore. From splatterpunk and gothic horror to dark romance and dark fantasy, the shop aims to provide a significantly wider range of darker literary genres than readers might typically encounter. "I feel like there simply aren't enough bookstores that offer a genuinely wide variety of horror books," Paige explained. "I'm so excited to bring that kind of selection to Rochester!"

In addition to books, The Crimson Quill will offer a variety of tchotchkes, including candles, quills and ink, tarot cards, stickers, bookmarks, bones and oddities, art prints, and other curiosities. Paige also believes in ethically-sourced products, supporting small and local businesses, and collaborating with independent artists.

She also makes a point of ensuring that everything sold in the shop is AI-free, reflecting her commitment to preserving the humanistic individuality and creativity behind the products that she carries.

Location was another factor to consider when Paige began searching for a permanent storefront. Starting her search in February 2026, she said she wanted somewhere with "plenty of foot traffic, a safe environment, and a thriving artsy community." After months of searching, she finally found her current space in October, in Rochester's South Wedge neighborhood. She described the building's "beautiful brick walls, historic charm, and character" as making it an ideal fit for the atmosphere that she has imagined over the years, allowing the space to feel like "stepping through a time portal from 2026 straight into Dracula's lair."

Furthermore, the Crimson Quill's prime location in the heart of Rochester's South Wedge means it's in walking distance to some of the area's favorites, such as Happy Earth Tea, Equal Grounds Community Cafe, Kovella Coffee, Hippocampo Books, and Siren & the Sea.

For Paige, the opportunity to become a part of the South Wedge's existing network of independent businesses was an especially appealing aspect of the location. "I genuinely couldn't have asked for a better location," she said, adding that she is ecstatic to be bringing "another artsy, bookish space to the South Wedge community!"

Beyond its expansive literary offerings, Paige hopes that The Crimson Quill will become a gathering place for Rochester's readers and creative community. As a woman-owned and queer-owned business, inclusivity is critical to the environment that she wants to establish.

"My number one priority is making sure that everyone feels welcome, first and foremost," she emphasized. "I want people to know that it's an inclusive space for EVERYBODY." Additionally, Paige envisions a space that is "gothic, vampiric, spooky, and atmospheric," while simultaneously remaining cozy and inviting. More than anything, she wants visitors to feel comfortable spending time there.

Running a small business takes a lot of work, and Paige is candid about the difficulties faced. Even after spending more than two years researching and developing her business plan, she says that opening a small business is "not only incredibly time-consuming, but far more expensive than you might expect." Over the past several months, she has navigated meetings with realtors, attorneys, accountants, financial advisors, landlords, and numerous other professionals. Nevertheless, despite the challenges, she said she "genuinely wouldn't trade any of it for the world." For the first time in a long time, Paige feels that she has truly found her purpose in life.

"Seeing something I've dreamed about for so long finally become a reality has made every difficult moment worth it," she reminisced. "I would go through every single challenge, past and future, a million times over."

There is still plenty of work ahead before The Crimson Quill can officially open its doors. Although the storefront already possesses much of the immersive atmosphere that Paige was drawn to, she plans to transform the interior through painting, assembling bookshelves and fixtures, decorating, and incorporating the many details necessary to bring her gothic vision to life. Her current goal is to open approximately one or two weeks before Christmas, although she expects to announce a more definite date closer to the time.

> *Her current goal is to open approximately one or two weeks before Christmas, although she expects to announce a more definite date closer to the time.*

Furthermore, the shop's opening is only the very beginning of what Paige hopes to offer. Among the events currently in development are a horror book club, author events, tarot readings, and witchy workshops. Having already experimented with pop-up events at local bars and community gatherings, Paige said she has been "absolutely blown away by the amount of love and support [she's] received from complete strangers." That experience has done nothing but amplify her excitement about establishing a permanent space where like-minded individuals can connect over their shared interests. "More than anything, I just can't wait to meet fellow horror lovers, bookworms, and like-minded people and create a space where we can all come together and share our love for all things spooky," she said.

Ultimately, The Crimson Quill represents more than just the opening of another independent bookstore. It is a long-held aspiration finding its place in the real world, shaped by years of personal growth and unwavering determination. While its selection of horror and dark literature may be what initially draws readers inside, Paige hopes that its atmosphere and sense of community will give them a reason to stay.

Chie is a member of the Class of 2030.

OPINIONS

The River Campus Feels a Bit Disconnected From the City. But That Can Be Changed!

BY NANA AFRIYIE OPOKU-WARE
STAFF WRITER

As a first-year at URochester, I have ventured into the city only once. I was in a desperate situation, having just taken out my braids and needing a silk press. So I took an Uber into downtown Rochester for my thus-far singular venture into Rochester.

One of my highest priorities for a university was that it be in a city. I wanted access to potential jobs or internships. As a Political Science major, half of the job is connections, and I felt a city was the best place to get those. The city of Rochester was described to me as "another Pittsburgh" by my APUSH teacher, and while that made me laugh, I can't even say if I can disagree or not, because I haven't had the opportunity to really visit, and I do not wish to pass judgment on a place that I've barely explored.

Now that I've been here for nearly a semester, I'm unsure if the University actually encourages ventures into the city, which creates a sense of detachment from the city entirely.

> *I'm unsure if the University actually encourages ventures into the city, which creates a sense of detachment from the city entirely.*

With the brief glance I was given, Rochester seems relatively quiet. It's not anything like Washington D.C., let alone New York City or Chicago. I didn't see that many people out, although those I did interact with at my appointment were kind.

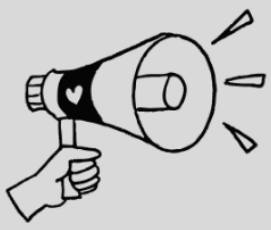
At the University, I feel quite far removed from Rochester, especially without a car. Ubers are costly, and the shuttles are confusing, irregular, and slow. Without easy casual access to most of the city (for instance, by a short walk, which at URochester only barely even gets you to College Town, let alone the rest of the city), I rarely find myself thinking about going off campus for anything but a major destination — something like a concert or a service that is not available on-campus (like my downtown silk press) — and such destinations themselves usually stack another sizeable charge on top of the taxi that was necessary to get there conveniently. The River Campus, bounded by the Genesee River and Mount Hope Cemetery, is practically an island, and the inconvenience and cost of leaving that island discourages many students from actually exploring the city in which we technically live.

> *With more convenient connections, a mutually beneficial exchange could be formed between the University ... and the city.*

I hope that this University makes greater efforts to deepen ties with the city, especially for first-years. It should not be the case that on-campus students at the University live almost completely isolated, geographically and socially, from the rest of the city. With more convenient connections, a mutually beneficial exchange could be formed between the University, whose students benefit from a wider variety of experiences and connections available in the city at-large than in the controlled environment of a campus, and the city, which benefits economically and socially from student excursions. The shuttles ought to be run significantly more frequently, and with less unexplained delays, to provide reliable and regular convenient travel to most of the major destinations in the city. The University ought to coordinate with the city to make safety and accessibility a priority for the shuttle system — no shuttle stop should be without a bus shelter, and at the bare minimum all stops must be clearly signed and have sidewalks and crosswalks. On campus, the University can do more to promote and provide access to events (for example, Red Wings or Amerks games), and the city should work to tie the River Campus better into its own RTS bus system.

Thinking about this subject has motivated me to find an excuse to leave campus and explore elsewhere. I hope I have encouraged you to do the same!

Opoku-Ware is a member of the Class of 2030.



Do you have an opinion you would like to share?

Write for Opinions!

Contact ct_opinions@u.rochester.edu

Campus Times

SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER COMMUNITY SINCE 1873

Wilson Commons 103A
University of Rochester, Rochester, NY 14627
Office: (585) 275-5942
campustimes.org / ct _ editor@u.rochester.edu

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF MAYA BROSNICK
PUBLISHER ELENA BACHMANN
MANAGING EDITOR EMILY ENGLISH
MANAGING EDITOR SUBAAH SYED
BUSINESS MANAGER MUHAMMAD DUNPHY

NEWS EDITORS TEDDY ALMOND, YENAH PARK
FEATURES EDITORS AUDREY LU, HANNAH SMITH
OPINIONS EDITORS ADDISON BAKER, BENNETT TRY
CULTURE EDITORS MCKAYLA JIO KIM, KATE STOUT
HUMOR EDITORS GABRIEL JIANG, LEN LAN
SPORTS EDITOR MADDIE UNRUH
PHOTO EDITORS LAURENHILL AMBE, HARRY LI
ILLUSTRATIONS EDITORS MARIS KELLY, ELIANA THOMPSON
PRESENTATIONS CHIEFS LAUREN BIGLEY, THOMAS RASCHILLA
COPY CHIEF BELLA NAVE
SOCIAL MEDIA EDITORS BEYZA EL, ADDIE JAREO
COLUMNIST MANGO NORENBERG
ENGAGEMENT COORDINATOR ALEX HOLLY

STAFF WRITERS BUG CARTWRIGHT, NICOLE "NJ" CHIE, BENJI CUTLER, MAEGHA GOEL, COLIN JONES, HALEIGH LAUD, NANA AFRIYIE OPOKU-WARE, LUKE SHERMAN
STAFF ILLUSTRATORS RIDA AL-ZAYAD, QUINLAN CARETTI, DORA WU
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER MANGO NORENBERG
STAFF PUZZLER CALEB OSHINSKY
PRESENTATIONS STAFF KAYLIN HAN, WEI WANG
COPY STAFF LAUREN BIGLEY, CYRUS DAMANI, OLIVIA GANDIN, MAEGHA GOEL, MYCHAYLA-LINH LEE, MANGO NORENBERG, THOMAS RASCHILLA, WEI WANG

Full responsibility for material appearing in this publication rests with the Editor-in-Chief. Opinions expressed in columns, letters, op-eds, or comics are not necessarily the views of the editors or the University of Rochester. *Campus Times* is printed monthly throughout the academic year, except around and during University holidays. All issues are free. *Campus Times* is published online at www.campustimes.org, and is updated Monday each week. *Campus Times* is SA funded. All materials herein are copyright © 2026 by *Campus Times*.

It is our policy to correct all erroneous information as quickly as possible. If you believe you have a correction, please email CT_editor@u.rochester.edu.

Editor's note: We misattributed URochester administration as offering a 50% yearly wage increase in contract negotiations with URochester workers rather than a 1.5% increase.

Politics in the Post-Trump Era

BY NANA AFRIYIE OPOKU-WARE
STAFF WRITER

Trump has been in American politics for over a decade now, and is halfway through his final term. Now that the midterms are nearly over, there are growing questions over the future of both parties, especially for the Republican party, in the wake of a so-called blue tsunami. On both sides, I have a few theories about the path forward for American politics. But first, we must set the context of the current American moment.

We are currently in a war in Iran that has closed the Strait of Hormuz, causing a global energy crisis. Soaring gas and diesel prices make everything here in the U.S. (and worldwide) extremely expensive, because fuel costs very directly shape the cost of everyday things. "Liberation Day" tariffs ended up turning allies against us, and have made things so much more expensive in addition to the war. Unpopular and brutal ICE operations and weird pet projects like the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting pool, ballrooms, renaming bodies of water, and triumphal arches make the administration look like its priorities aren't straight at all. This all contributed to the shellacking that we saw Tuesday.

> *Now that the midterms are nearly over, there are growing questions over the future of both parties, especially for the Republican party, in the wake of a so-called blue tsunami.*

First: the Republican party. There are three ways that this could go. The first way is a complete distancing from Trump — the most radical possibility being pressure from the Republican party for Trump to resign. Much of the post-election discourse suggests that Trump is toxic to Republican ambitions in 2028. At the extreme end, if elected, Republicans feel that Trump's hold over their core base of supporters has been largely broken, they may feel free to fully break with him, allying with Democrats to investigate and potentially impeach him and his allies. On the more moderate end, elected Republicans may simply feel free to vote against his priorities and publicly criticize his conduct. The second option is that Trump goes through the next two years as a lame duck, while maintaining his monolithic dominance over the party and its base, and the ensuing power vacuum after his departure creates massive friction and intra-party splintering.

> *No matter what happens, Trump's immense unpopularity and his legally-mandated exit from a decade dominating national Republican politics pose a major problem for GOP candidates in the immediate future.*

The last option is that the GOP quickly recovers, without explicitly ditching Trump, and rallies behind a new candidate; likely one capable of distancing themself from Trump's image. The 2028 primary season is almost guaranteed to start in earnest within the next few months, and J.D. Vance, Marco Rubio, and Ron DeSantis have already emerged as major contenders for the Republican nomination. No matter what happens, Trump's immense unpopularity and his legally-mandated exit from a decade dominating national Republican politics pose a major problem for GOP candidates in the immediate future.

> *The Democrats have a few options as well.*

The Democrats have a few options as well. They could attempt to put forth legislation in the new Congress that either Trump could veto (which, with the right messaging, could be used to contribute to the unpopularity of congressional Republicans come 2028), as he has been suggesting that he would. In the unlikely possibility that Trump becomes uncharacteristically cooperative, Democrats may pursue policy compromises with Trump, leveraging the immense legislative power they won in the midterms to win concessions on key issues like the Iran War. Another possibility is that the Democrats get bogged down in investigations and hearings, failing to produce anything meaningful by the 2028 election aside from a series of reports on various corrupt and scandalous members of the current administration. And of course, there is always the possibility of infighting between the establishment base of the party and the new class of incoming progressive populists, including an unprecedented eight Democratic Socialists of America-backed House representatives.

> *It's up to the voters to hold their respective parties accountable.*

Whatever happens to Trump over the next few years, it's up to the voters to hold their respective parties accountable. The 2028 presidential race to win over the American people, in effect, started the day after the midterms. May the best party win!

Opoku-Ware is a member of the Class of 2030.

Haley Stevens: Was It Worth It?

BY NANA AFRIYIE OPOKU-WARE
STAFF WRITER

Michigan is one of the most contested battleground states in the United States, making it extremely important for both parties to win. Disagreements and animosity between both parties are far from unheard of. But it is quite rare for there to be open, public infighting between party members, especially right before an important election. That's exactly what happened on Sunday, at an unprecedented level.

Democrat Haley Stevens, Senator-elect Abdul El-Sayed's primary opponent, met with Republican challenger Mike Rogers at the Perfecting Church early Sunday morning. At a press conference outside that church, she said "Abdul made it very clear that I was not welcome in his campaign, that he didn't need me there, that he didn't want me there." She also made a statement on Twitter/X reiterating this to her followers, and by extension, Michigan voters and Democrats as a whole. She went so far as to explicitly endorse Rogers just two days before the election.

> *When Cooper pressed her on the fact that this appears to be more of a personal issue than anything to do with the principles of her fellow Democrats, she was unable to give a coherent response.*

To me, this is a baffling decision. When Stevens went on "Anderson Cooper 360°," she was unable to answer a single question regarding why she decided to flip on her party two days before a midterm. She cast doubt on a midnight conversation she reportedly had with Michigan Democratic Party member Debbie Dingle, who was promised Stevens would be supporting El-Sayed. When Cooper pressed her on the fact that this appears to be more of a personal issue than anything to do with the principles of her fellow Democrats, she was unable to give a coherent response.

> *You cannot turn on your own party in the eleventh hour, over what appear to be primarily personal grievances.*

In the absence of any clear, believable, self-expressed explanation of Stevens' 180°, speculation has run rampant. Some have argued that Stevens was influenced by her fiancé, who was the cause of a minor scandal earlier in the midterms when it came out that he was planning to vote for Rogers over disagreements with El-Sayed on Israel. Stevens seems to primarily put the blame on a campaign event from which she claims she was uninvited after more public disagreements with El-Sayed (though she was not uninvited by El-Sayed himself, and this endorsement occurred at the tail end of several more significant policy disputes between the two). Some say this internal fracturing within the Democratic Party between establishment candidates and more progressive ones is due to differing stances on foreign policy concerning Israel. But again, Stevens did not meaningfully articulate her reasoning, so I am not comfortable claiming I know what happened. It could be none of these, or a combination of these and some unknown other factors.

But again, beyond the reasoning why she did what she did, the way she went about it confuses me. Haley Stevens is free to vote for whoever she'd choose, but why claim it's a personal choice, in the midst of a clear effort to get her endorsement as much political coverage as possible? Why say you are standing up against "hate" that El-Sayed has apparently endorsed — or at the very least, has insufficiently opposed — while backing a candidate who has used Islamophobic attacks against his opponent on the campaign trail? Simply not endorsing Rogers, while revoking her endorsement of El-Sayed (perhaps openly endorsing a third-party protest vote or not voting in the Senate race) was an option, if both candidates are unacceptably hateful. Rogers, to Stevens during the primary, was a "rubber stamp" for Trump. What has changed?

> *To turn against her principles and voters over something she herself cannot articulate is unacceptable as a congressperson, ostensibly a servant of the people of Michigan, and by extension, the United States.*

I'm not sure the answer to this. But what I do know is that Haley Stevens' political career is in the rearview mirror. Not just because she's on her way out of Washington D.C., but because of a very simple principle: loyalty. You cannot turn on your own party in the eleventh hour, over what appear to be primarily personal grievances. To turn against her principles and voters over something she herself cannot articulate is unacceptable as a congressperson, ostensibly a servant of the people of Michigan, and by extension, the United States. Governance ought to require honesty and straightforwardness, traits which Stevens has now revealed she lacks. On Tuesday, Abdul El-Sayed beat Mike Rogers by a dominant seven percentage points. So my question to Haley Stevens: was it worth it?

Opoku-Ware is a member of the Class of 2030.

How Do the STEM and Liberal Arts Majors Compare at URochester?

BY MADDIE UNRUH
SPORTS EDITOR



SUBAAH SYED / MANAGING EDITOR

There are many different approaches to how to give a lecture: between slides with words, slides with photos, a combination, or neither, every professor has their own way of teaching. I am in a double degree program with American Sign Language (ASL) and Brain and Cognitive Sciences (BCS), and I have experienced a variety of lectures. My BCS classes primarily use images and diagrams, supplemented by explanatory captions, and I feel like this style is the one that works for me. I know some of my friends in the BCS degree program dislike this and prefer slides to explain themselves more explicitly in words, using less images, and others are the opposite; solely wanting photos and very few words. The appeal of both sides is understandable.

Images are certainly useful in the moment, but they very easily become a tool only for the professor's verbal lecture: without sufficient explanation on the slides themselves, those who missed the verbal explanation will be left in a poor position to understand the material later on. Each student is different and approaches learning in their own way, and likewise professors have their own personal preferred teaching methods, but ultimately I think that, for the sake of review and studying, it is better for slides to only use images and diagrams that can be clearly explained within the slides themselves.

> *Each student is different and approaches learning in their own way.*

ASL is different though, because the majority of photos are a demonstration of vocabulary, used as a representation of the meaning of the sign we're learning based on the surface-level interpretation of the image. That makes the most sense for a signed language class, because you can point at the photo and sign it to the class, and they can respond with the appropriate sign or sign sequence. I don't know many schools with a BCS program, but I know that ASL programs differ significantly between schools. When I was doing my college applications, I was looking at the interpreting program at the University of Northern Colorado. I thought that's what I wanted to do, but I wasn't able to find classes I liked and their whole undergraduate program, for any major, wasn't what I was looking for. The interpreting program was cool, but most of their language classes were taught by hearing professors, and all of their other, non-language classes were taught by hearing professors as well.

> *URochester offers so many amazing and unique programs, as well as different tracks that the students can divulge into.*

At URochester, on the other hand, all of the language, linguistics, and history classes related to ASL are taught by deaf professors. There are a few classes that are cross listed, and taught by hearing professors, but these classes do not represent the primary experience in the department.

Our neighbors at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) share their campus with the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID), and so make even greater efforts towards the use of ASL in education, not just within the ASL and interpreting-related programs, but across degree programs that a wide variety of deaf students participate in. I don't know much about these programs, but from what my ASL professors have said about the RIT program, it is primarily deaf professors for all their degrees within the NTID school.

With all of this being said, I know a bunch of people enjoy their professors and how they teach, as well as some people who dislike the teaching style of their majors. URochester offers so many amazing and unique programs, as well as different tracks that the students can divulge into.

Which major is the right one for you?

Unruh is a member of the Class of 2029.

Crossword Answers

BY LEN LAN
HUMOR EDITOR

BY DORA WU
STAFF ILLUSTRATOR

BY CALEB OSHINSKY
STAFF PUZZLER

1 S	2 T	3 A	4 P	5 H	6 E	7 R	8 I	9 C	10 A	11 S	12 I	13 A	
14 L	A	U	R	A	■	C	O	D	A	I	B	S	
17 O	N	T	O	P	■	18 R	E	A	L	19 N	A	M	E	S
20 W	H	O	O	PIE	21 C	U	S	H	I	O	N			
22 F	S	H	■	■	23 O	B	L	■	■	24 F	25 E	26 R	
27 I	28 S	29 P	■	30 T	E	31 M	32 P	■	33 R	E	34 S	A	L	E
35 N	L	E	36 R	■	37 R	E	E	38 S	E	S	PIE	C	E	S
39 C	A	R	O	40 L	■	41 A	P	A	42 S	L	I	C	E	
43 O	P	I	N	I	44 O	N	PIE	C	45 E	46 S	A	T	E	
47 M	A	L	I	B	U	■	48 R	S	T	49 U	50 L	S	D	
51 E	T	S	■	52 R	T	53 S	■	■	54 T	S	55 A			
■	■	■	56 S	A	V	E	57 R	58 O	O	M	F	59 O	60 R	61 PIE
62 P	63 R	64 I	E	S	O	P	E	N	■	65 A	I	R	E	R
66 D	I	C	E	■	67 T	I	L	L	■	I	N	D	I	C
69 F	O	U	L	■	70 E	A	S	Y	■	L	E	O	N	E

This crossword can be found on page 12.

CULTURE

Invented Cultures in Popular Fiction: Successes and Failures

BY MILES MCCORTNEY
STAFF WRITER

A unique advantage of genres such as science fiction and fantasy is the possibility to invent and explore a fictional culture. Beyond simple entertainment, invented cultures in novels, series, and multimedia franchises investigate meaningful questions: What if people valued different things, acted in different ways, or related to each other by different world-views?

When done right, these storytelling devices encourage audiences to abandon their assumptions and biases linked to the real world, in turn permitting them to extract new perspectives that might otherwise be difficult to reach. On the other hand, cultural appropriation is a common risk of these devices. Real-life cultures, typically by the hands of authors from outside those cultures, end up as "inspiration" to create "fantastical" or "alien" stereotypical stand-ins for real-life groups.

Among the most thoroughly analyzed examples of cultural appropriation for use in a fictional culture is James Cameron's "Avatar" franchise. These films take several real-life Indigenous cultures and place them on a fictional species of aliens threatened with genocide and colonialism. Beyond the logical gaps of an "extraterrestrial" species mirroring human cultures, these films utilize cut-and-dry stereotypes about technologically simple "natives" who are in touch with nature, are peaceful and innocent (despite being honorable warriors), and grow to accept a White human as their leader. These narrative structures retell a time-worn story that romanticizes Indigenous peoples as idols who, by heroically resisting a colonial force, seemingly exist only to convince White Euro-Americans that extractivism and colonialism are evil. We can consider "Avatar" as the ultimate example of what not to do when composing a fictional culture: real-world stereotypes as plot dressing for a fantastical story.

In the television sphere, the original "Game of Thrones" series also had problems with racism. However, its prequel series "House of the Dragon" illustrates a different kind of fictional culture-building gone astray: the culture of worldview. Set in a medieval fantasy world, the plot surrounds a woman who is forbidden from ascending the ruling throne on grounds of gender, thus instigating a war of succession. The series alludes to the fact that this patriarchal law originates from a fictional polytheistic religion, but the audience is never told what this religion has against women in power. This leaves the audience to ascribe the biases and world-views of real people onto the characters; that is, to think: "it's just a drama story based on medieval Britain, nothing more to see here." The omission of a fictional culture where there should be one presents a missed opportunity. "House of the Dragon" spends a lot of time showing dragons burning things, but does little to seed deeper lessons about how morality and religion influence society beyond what is needed as a backdrop for raw entertainment.

The opposite is true in the television series "Dune: Prophecy." While the "Dune" films appropriate Arabian, Islamic, and Bedouin culture, the "Dune: Prophecy" series, centering on a different part of the franchise's sci-fi universe, does not repeat this failing. In "Dune: Prophecy," the Sisterhood is a sect of women who train to tell truth from lies, in turn asserting political agency in an otherwise authoritarian, oligarchic feudal empire. The Sisterhood draws moral authority from religious scriptures, which, following a war where humans wiped out AI "thinking machines" that had "enslaved" the human populace, venerate the authentic human mind and soul. Beyond fueling conflict in the plot, the Sisterhood's worldviews pose a radically different perspective about the role of religion and morality in a technologically advanced society like ours: one where humanity and authenticity are more important than any benefits gained from AI.

The award-winning novel series "The Kindom" by Bethany Jacobs is a strong modern example of a well-developed fictional culture in full. The titular society practices a fictional religion under a unique "kin" government where clerics, bureaucrats, and warriors share power. Notably, in "The Kindom," children are not assigned a gender at birth and only pick one when they are old enough to choose. This alternate vision is relevant given the real-life debates about traditional gender norms. At the same time, it fuels the plot (not without deeper questions): in an abusive religious school, children are objectified by the pronoun "it" until they come of age. Meanwhile, sectarian conflicts in the Kindom lead to ethno-religious discrimination and genocide — key themes in the novels.

Paradoxically, the fictional nature of the culture depicted in "The Kindom" deepens its impact. Instead of presenting a story about real-life ethno-religious conflict, these sci-fi novels separate the audience from Earthly headlines. The fictional culture forces the audience to relate differently to the characters; people cannot read a few words and immediately drop the book, up in arms about "crimes against _____ people." Through vivid characters divorced from stereotypes and real-life assumptions, the audience experiences a range of perspectives; as ought to be the goal of the fictional-culture device, biases dissolve in favor of windows into deeper understanding and meaning.

McCortney is a member of the Class of 2028.

'Poetry in Wartime'



Voltskaya signing a copy of "The Glass Peacock" MAEGHA GOEL / STAFF WRITER

BY MAEGHA GOEL
STAFF WRITER

The Department of Modern Languages and Culture held a poetry reading on Thursday for the Russian poet and journalist Tatiana Voltskaya called "Poetry in Wartime" during which she also promoted her new book "The Glass Peacock." This was an individual event facilitated by the Scholar in Residence Dmitri Bykov, who left Russia shortly before its invasion of Ukraine. Both Bykov and Voltskaya are prominent Russian poets who have actively challenged President Vladimir Putin.

There was a charcuterie board in the back of the room that various people helped themselves too, but everyone was seated shortly after 5 p.m. There was a brief waiting period as Bykov escorted Voltskaya to Rush Rhees Humanities Conference Room D.

> *Her voice was strong and clear, though while reading her poetry she appeared to get slightly teary once or twice.*

A handful of people entered after the reading had started and a few more left before it was over, but most stayed for the full time. The majority of people in the room appeared to speak Russian, and fell into one of three categories: students, professors, and older individuals, likely immigrants from the former Soviet Union that made up slightly more than 5% of the local Rochester population in 2024.

Voltskaya stood in the middle of the room, reading from her phone, held sideways in her left hand, and speaking into the microphone which she held with her right, occasionally lifting a couple fingers to scroll. Her voice was strong and clear, though while reading her poetry she appeared to get slightly teary once or twice. Bykov translated and summarized her words on the spot whenever she paused. However, active interpreting is a profession of its own and very few of these professionals are tasked with communicating an English approximation of Russian poetry, so understandably, it wasn't always easy to follow or comprehensive.

The opening poem was one of only a few of Voltskaya's poems which have an official translation, titled "There Will Be No Coffins." The first few poems mentioned Ukraine while the remainder revolved around Georgia, where she has been living in exile since 2022. She was forced to move there after being declared a "foreign agent" in October 2021, a month after she was detained in Moscow for protesting the use of the term foreign agent to describe independent journalists such as herself. One particularly poignant line as translated in the moment by Bykov was "all the world must watch as we are eating our salads from their skulls."

After an hour and a half of reading, Voltskaya took questions. The first one, from Bykov, who asked after her usage of rhyme-verse, which he teasingly pointed out has generally fallen out of favor.

She replied that the Russian language demands it because the words are longer. She also spoke of her older son who ran away from home a day before he was to be drafted, and now lives in Greece where she recently visited him. In regards to the differences between his generation and his mother's, he told her that, as Bykov translated, "you [old people] are unhappy everywhere and we are happy everywhere." This was one of several topics Voltskaya's work touched on. One of her poems distinguished people like her, in exile, from immigrants who move by choice and so cannot be happy because they want to go home.

Goel is a member of the Class of 2029.

'Godzilla: Minus Zero': A Worthy Successor in Every Regard

BY THOMAS RASCHILLA
PRESENTATIONS CHIEF

"Godzilla: Minus Zero" is the highly anticipated follow-up to the critically acclaimed "Godzilla: Minus One." As it is the sequel to my favorite movie of all time, I had extremely high expectations going into the theater. After watching it on opening night, I can say with full confidence that "Minus Zero" lives up to its predecessor in almost every area.

> *The CGI is beyond anything else I've ever seen, and it consistently looked as if Godzilla and King Ghidorah were as real as the human actors.*

"Minus One" followed a failed kamikaze pilot named Koichi Shikishima. After being too scared to take his life and a brief encounter with Godzilla, Koichi returned to a demolished home, full of shame and regret. He spent months haunted by his inaction and refused to believe that he deserved to live with the family he had found. With time, he was given a chance to defeat Godzilla and finally end his internal war. "Minus Zero" takes place in 1949, two years after these events. A new threat to Japan has taken Godzilla's place, which the public names "King Ghidorah." Days after Ghidorah appears, reports of Godzilla's return come to light. A plan is devised to force the two beasts to fight until only one remains. Rather than solely following Koichi, multiple new and returning characters are given their time in the spotlight, each with their own hidden agendas and ideas for what to do after the battle ends.

A major aspect of the first movie that plays into why I love it so much is its emotional core: The constant struggle of a man who attempts to overcome his survivor's guilt and learn to live again deeply moves me even on my fifth rewatch of the movie. The emotional core of "Minus Zero" is admittedly very different than "Minus One," as each character of the rather large cast has their own arcs throughout the movie. These character stories cover a wider range of concepts, such as vengeance, the weight of responsibility, and the fear of being abandoned. Even though each arc was excellently written and performed incredibly well, it was a bit harder to hone in on one character's struggles the same way one could in "Minus One." With that said, numerous scenes had me on the verge of tears due to the sheer weight present within them. In this regard, "Minus Zero" proved that it could reach the same heights as the first, even if the emotional narrative is not quite as laser-focused on one character throughout.

> *Taking inspiration from sequels such as "The Dark Knight," the villain of this movie steals the scene whenever he appears with an imposing and seemingly all powerful presence.*

With the sole exception of emotional appeal, everything else about this movie is near perfection and blows "Minus One" out of the water. For starters, the musical score for "Minus Zero" is almost flawless. Every piece perfectly suits the movie's tone — a few of the tracks are still stuck in my head days later. The cinematography of "Minus Zero" is also an absolute masterclass, with some of the most brutal and most heartfelt scenes I've ever seen. It's clear that director Takashi Yamazaki took the "R" rating and IMAX format (both firsts for the Godzilla franchise) and decided to walk the fine line of pushing the visuals as far as possible without the brutality becoming gratuitous.

> *Instead, it went above and beyond on adding and perfecting what made the first so enjoyable while adding onto the spectacle of it all.*

I've saved the best aspects of this movie for last: The CGI is beyond anything else I've ever seen. It consistently looked as if Godzilla and King Ghidorah were as real as the human actors, and as if the destruction they caused was truly happening. Speaking of Ghidorah, it's clear who the star of the movie is. Taking inspiration from sequels such as "The Dark Knight," the villain of this movie steals the scene whenever he appears with an imposing and seemingly all-powerful presence. His theme song is blood-chilling, every action sequence involving him had me utterly floored, and he felt like a natural addition to this movie. In general, the kaiju action present was spectacular, yet it was admittedly less frequent than I expected. Ultimately, though, I do believe it's worth sacrificing more action for the sake of building up tension for the fights that do occur.

The name of this movie perfectly encapsulates my feelings. "Minus Zero" did not lessen any features of "Minus One." Instead, it went above and beyond on adding and perfecting what made the first so enjoyable while adding onto the spectacle of it all, even if it has a less focused personal narrative. In time, there's a good chance that it can overtake "Minus One" as my favorite movie of all time, and I cannot think of a better movie to do so.

Raschilla is a member of the Class of 2030.

16 Years in the Making: Wildwood

BY STACIE OKUNSERI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

LAIKA released the most highly anticipated piece of stop-motion animation since "Kubo and the Two Strings" Oct. 23, entitled "Wildwood." With a runtime of 2 hours and 20 minutes, it's the longest stop-motion animation film to date. The theatrical experience of watching a stop-motion film is special as it's not humans on screen, but handcrafted, classic "Claymation" characters.

Set in a fictionalized version of Portland, Oregon, the environment around the characters is especially stunning. The thick, luscious, green trees, rich flora, and colorful fauna which surrounded main characters Prue and Curtis as they ventured into the "Impassable Wilderness," was especially memorable when watching in theaters. But a scene that seemed to have stolen everyone's hearts was Prue riding on the back of The General, a majestic golden eagle, through the forest.

> *The thick, luscious, green trees, rich flora, and colorful fauna which surrounded main characters Prue and Curtis as they ventured into the "Impassable Wilderness," was especially memorable.*

Every scene, even the less exciting ones, shows countless amounts of artistry that is even more impressive once you find out almost every scene is done by hand. Stop-motion is a special type of artistry because it can only be done out of passion and with a lot of money, particularly if you are ambitiously seeking to make a full Hollywood feature movie such as "Wildwood," directed and produced by Travis Knight. It is almost guaranteed the intensely laboring animation you're making won't be a box office success. "Wildwood," despite being in over 2,000 theaters domestically, is showing to be a box office failure. If some miracle doesn't happen, LAIKA likely won't make back its reported $100 million dollar budget. It's a sad but fitting end to the journey of the making of Wildwood. LAIKA hasn't seen a return on most of its investments since "Coraline" — something that only isn't an issue because Travis Knight is the son of Phil Knight who is the current CEO of Nike.

> *Stop-motion is a special type of artistry because it can only be done out of passion and with a lot of money, particularly if you are ambitiously seeking to make a full Hollywood feature movie.*

LAIKA is not going anywhere anytime soon. Knight's recent statements have been about LAIKA's next projects that will be "unlike anything" it's done before. With LAIKA now the only stop-motion animation studio investing money into the art form, I do find this loss blisteringly sobering than the others. As a child watching Coraline, I didn't realize the brutal limitations of making this distinctive form of art. Now I reflect on the very real possibility of not having stop-motion animation in the future. What are the lengths we would go for art and passion? There is a lot of buzz online pushing for a LAIKA win in the Oscars, and for people to support the film by buying a ticket for a showing in their local theater. "Art needs advocacy," Knight said in a statement to *Variety* — and that has never been more true than it is now.

Okunseri is a member of the Class of 2030.

Once Red, Now Blue: girl in red's Newest Musical Chapter

BY NICOLE "NJ" CHIE
STAFF WRITER

For years, red has been more than just a color to Norwegian singer-songwriter Marie Ulven, better known as "girl in red." It has become a significant part of her identity, intertwined with the imagery surrounding her music and, famously, the red sweater featured on the cover art for her 2018 hit "we fell in love in october." So, when that familiar sweater turned an unexpected blue in late September, fans noticed immediately. What initially appeared to be an apparent "glitch" soon became something much more deliberate: the beginning of a new chapter for the artist, one that would eventually introduce listeners to "BLUE," her latest four-track EP.

> *What initially appeared to be an apparent "glitch" soon became something much more deliberate: the beginning of a new chapter for the artist, one that would eventually introduce listeners to "BLUE", her latest four-track EP.*

The transformation began quietly — or rather, sneakily. On Sept. 30, Ulven addressed the changing artwork in a TikTok video, insisting that the sweater was still red on her end and suggesting that something had gone wrong.

"It's not blue for me," she insisted in the video, in an attempt to quell fans' concerns, suspicions, and excitement alike. "I don't know what the deal is, but I'm girl in red, so — it's red."

> *What could have easily been dismissed as a series of aesthetic adjustments very rapidly transformed into an increasingly convincing suggestion that something new was on the horizon.*

However, the cover remained blue, and the hints continued to accumulate. On Oct. 5, Ulven shared an Instagram photograph of herself dressed in a blue sweater and blue jeans against a blue background. The post was captioned "felt blue, might delete later." Soon afterward, her Instagram username changed from @girlinred to @girlinblue, the shirt in her profile picture was edited to be blue, and her old biography was replaced with a new one: "once red, now blue."

What could have easily been dismissed as a series of aesthetic adjustments very rapidly transformed into an increasingly convincing suggestion that something new was on the horizon. Both speculation and confusion quickly erupted among fans. Most seemed to understand by then that the alteration of the "we fell in love in october" cover art was intentional and more than just a technical glitch, but there still existed vast discrepancies between guesses about what exactly the shift from red to blue meant for Ulven's identity and music. Many fans took to TikTok to share their theories and thoughts about the unexpected changes, which ranged from somewhat plausible predictions to downright humorous speculation. Some half-jokingly wondered whether the rebrand signaled a change in her sexuality, with one commenter asking, "maybe she's straight now," while others interpreted the color change through a political lens, suggesting that the switch from red to blue could be a reference to the Democratic Party ahead of the U.S. elections. One user speculated, "November is voting time so maybe..?" Meanwhile, some fans associated the color blue with sadness, wondering whether the singer was hinting at a recent breakup or a shift in her personal life, as one commenter put it, "breakup so bad girl in red had to change her whole aesthetic." And, of course, there were those who were already reasonably convinced that the mysterious rebrand was building anticipation for a new album, with one fan predicting, "imagine if she changes her name on Spotify to girl in blue October 1st and drops a new album." Fans seemed determined to find meaning in every shade of blue.

> *Across its brief runtime, "BLUE" as a whole feels less concerned with presenting an entirely new verson of girl in red than with examining what it means to move forward.*

As it turned out, those anticipating new music were not far off. On Oct. 6, Ulven confirmed the suspicions by announcing her new single, "blue," which arrived just three days later on Oct. 9. The reveal did not end there, however: on Oct. 15, she announced that the "BLUE" EP would follow on Oct. 23, giving fans their first glimpse of what the artist's new era would have to offer.

Released on Oct. 23, "BLUE" marks Ulven's first collection of new music since her 2024 album "I'M DOING IT AGAIN BABY!" The four-song project consists of "blue," "missing person," "worst case" and "clean slate," and explores the emotional uncertainty that often accompanies change. Its songs linger on loss, reflection and the difficult process of finding one's footing when something familiar comes to an end.

The title track, released as a single two weeks before the EP, established much of this emotional direction. "blue" centers on the uncertainty and sense of loss that can follow the end of a relationship, approaching heartbreak with the candid, introspective songwriting that has long characterized Ulven's work. Its accompanying music video, filmed in Oslo, offers an intimate and poignant look at a relationship through the years, tracing the small moments and memories that shape a shared life.

Across its brief runtime, "BLUE" as a whole feels less concerned with presenting an entirely new version of girl in red than with examining what it means to move forward. In retrospect, the red-to-blue transformation was an especially fitting way to introduce the project. By altering the artwork for one of her most recognizable songs just as its annual October streaming surge approached, Ulven brought longtime listeners back to a familiar piece of her catalog while quietly directing their attention toward something new. The campaign was playful, but its symbolism carried a more personal weight. Red had become synonymous with girl in red; blue, meanwhile, offered an opportunity to explore what might come after it.

> *The red sweater may have turned blue, but the person behind it remains unmistakably girl in red.*

Ultimately, "BLUE" presents change as something that can be both disorienting and necessary, making room for a different perspective without abandoning the qualities that made Ulven's music resonate in the first place. The red sweater may have turned blue, but the person behind it remains unmistakably girl in red.

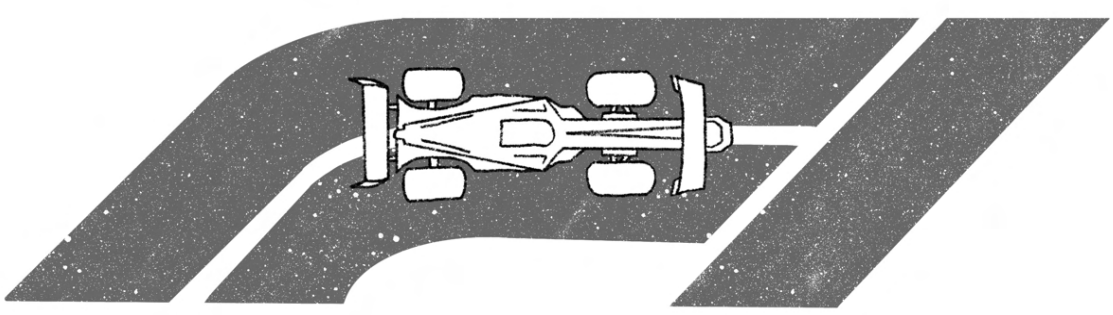
Chie is a member of the Class of 2030.



ELIANA THOMPSON / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

SPORTS

Final Few Races of the Season, Who Will Be Crowned Victorious?



ELIANA THOMPSON / ILLUSTRATIONS EDITOR

BY MADDIE UNRUH
SPORTS EDITOR

With three races left in the Formula 1 series, the World Champion has already been named. Finishing third at the Mexico City Grand Prix, Kimi Antonelli has claimed the title of World Champion. Despite the races left to go, it is mathematically impossible for Max Verstappen, the racer in second place, to catch up.

With his nine wins in the 2026 series driving for Mercedes, Antonelli has become the youngest World Champion winner at 20 years old. Verstappen, who held the championship title from 2021–2024, earned the next most points in the competition, though that 279 point total was a distant second to the 390 points Antonelli earned to win.

Antonelli wears number 12 to honor his childhood racing idol. The number belonged to Ayrton Senna, who died in a race in 1994, before Antonelli took it over in 2021. Antonelli has often recalled in interviews how he and his dad would watch old races together while wearing Senna apparel.

Now a racer himself, in wearing Senna's number, Antonelli has given himself a lot to live up to. This championship win, along with similar racing styles and strategies, has started him along that path.

But how did Antonelli become the youngest world champion? His nine Grand Prix wins (of a total 22 races this season), between March and October put him in the lead quickly. With 25 points a win, and nine wins, four early season wins meant that Antonelli had the lead over Verstappen fairly early.

Though it's not possible for Antonelli to lose the championship title now, the gap between him and Verstappen could become tighter. The current 111 point lead could change, but the leader board won't.

The final three races at Las Vegas, Qatar, and Abu Dhabi will happen over this month, the first in Las Vegas on Nov. 19.

Unruh is a member of the Class of 2029.

The Nashville Predators' Dolly Parton Tribute

BY MADDIE UNRUH
SPORTS EDITOR

The Nashville Predators played their Nov. 7 game against the St. Louis Blues in honor of the late Dolly Parton. The team changed the center logo on the ice to a butterfly to honor her, and also wore a butterfly patch on their jerseys.

> *The team changed the center logo on the ice to a butterfly to honor her, and also wore a butterfly patch on their jerseys.*

This game was a "Hometown Remix," meaning that the team wore alternate jerseys. The Predators wore jerseys with a "Dolly" nameplate for their warm-ups, and then switched to their usual uniforms with a golden butterfly on the upper left side of the chest. Even goalie Juuse Saros (74) had his own twist on the dedication night, as he wore a mask with Parton on the side of it.

> *This game was a "Hometown Remix," meaning that the team wore alternate jerseys.*

The team then auctioned their specialty jerseys for charity through the Nashville Predators Foundation. The proceeds of this event will go to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, a program that mails high-quality copies of books to children up to the age of five. The library was set up in 1995 and is now governed by the Dollywood Foundation.

> *The proceeds of this event will go to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, a program that mails high-quality copies of books to children up to the age of five.*

An appropriate tribute, the Predators won the game 3–1. Their next game is against the Los Angeles Kings on Nov. 10.

Unruh is a member of the Class of 2029.

Stay up to date with *CT*!

Follow us on social media!

@urcampustimes

@campustimes

Campus Times

Follow us on IG by scanning the code above!

First Week of the Field Hockey Liberty League Championship for the Yellowjackets

BY MADDIE UNRUH
SPORTS EDITOR

Following their 3–0 win against the William Smith College Herons in the regular season, the URochester Yellowjackets played them again in the first game of the Liberty League Field Hockey Playoffs. Once again, the 'Jackets beat the Herons 3–0, moving them to the next round of the playoffs.

> *Once again, the 'Jackets beat the Herons 3–0, moving them to the next round of the playoffs.*

The first period of the game was mostly calm, with just one shot-on-goal from Herons' third-year Forward Mia Batchelder (12) all period. The Jackets' first-year Goalie Riley Leeser (66) was able to block it, keeping the game scoreless.

The second period immediately brought more offensive action for URochester, with third-year Attack Erin Foley's (10) shot that went wide of the goal. Keeping that momentum, a few moments later, third-year Attack Hannah Mehta (2) scored the first goal of the game, assisted by third-year Defense/Midfield Kristina Fedorova (17). Toward the end of the period, second-year Attack Cassie Ward (19) took a shot, but it was saved by second-year Goalie Olivia Terranova (90). The Herons had three shots-on-goal as well, but they were all saved by Lesser.

Mehta scored another goal in the third period, bringing the game score to 2–0 and Mehta's season total to 14 goals scored.

Early into the fourth period, fourth-year Attack Greyson Honig (14) scored the final goal of the game, with an assist by Mehta. Minutes later, third-year Midfield Molly Newbold (7) took a shot but was blocked by Terranova. Foley had two back-to-back shots, both blocked by Terranova. Rounding out the period, Batchelder attempted a shot, though blocked by Leeser. And the final shot-on goal of the game was from Herons' first-year Forward Abigail Mantione (10), though her attempt went wide and the period ended soon after.

> *The 'Jackets' season ended one game further than last year, as they lost to the Herons in the first round of playoffs.*

Despite this shut out win to advance through the first round of the playoffs, the 'Jackets' season ended Nov. 5 after their second round 0–3 loss to the RPI Engineers. The 'Jackets' season ended one game further than last year, as they lost to the Herons in the first round of playoffs.

Unruh is a member of the Class of 2029.



A regular season game played by the URochester Yellowjackets. **MADDIE UNRUH / SPORTS EDITOR**





HUMOR

Anti-Anti-Suicide Chairs vs. My GPA

BY HALEIGH LAUD
STAFF WRITER

BY THOMAS RASCHILLA
PRESENTATIONS CHIEF

After moving in, I noticed that something was off about my URochester dormitory cubicle. I began to hear a voice every night during Welcome Week, but I initially wrote it off as my neighbors. It persisted, though, and the voice was far too positive to be any sensible URochester student. I'd hear whispers, telling me to "keep up the good work!" and "enjoy life to the fullest!" After doing some investigative work, I found out that these overly positive phrases were from the university-provided anti-suicide chair, and these specific chair models were designed to subliminally encourage students to remain happy and healthy.

As the months wore on and I sat on it more often, something in my chair began to shift. They stopped being so nice to me. Their language went from happy, encouraging, and a little funny, to creepy incessant whispers of evil and malice. The encouragement from the beginning of the semester slowly turned into digs at my character, and eventually into death threats. I recall the first instance quite clearly: I was lying in bed, contemplating my life after a particularly horrible art midterm, and on the edge of sleep, I heard a faint whisper: "You will never have a career." From there it only got worse. Soon my anti-suicide chair had completely shed their friendly demeanor and spent each night thinking of increasingly dehumanizing things to call me.

Somehow, I made it through to finals week. Months of berating had worn me down to almost nothing. My mental health has been on a steady decline, yet the demand for my brain to stay intact increases exponentially by the day. And to top it all off, the chair is still talking. The insults are the worst they've ever been: "Die, art major, die. You should end it allllllllllll" (picture the walls talking to Harry Potter in the Chamber of Secrets).

I'm fed up. Months of restless nights with a stupid chair whispering not-so-nice things into my ears. I've had it. I angrily kick the covers off of me at 2:37 in the morning. I walk over to the window of my sixth floor Susan B. Anthony dorm room, grab my illegal 13-inch machete from its carefully stored position in my illegal, too-large refrigerator, and slash open the screen. I then grab the chair of my nightmares, and push it onto the drain ledge. I climb out after the chair, hoist it over my hair, and throw it over the edge. I watch it descend: down, down, down — hey that's my RA — SPLAT. Flattened like Plankton from Spongebob. The first emotion I feel is not regret, but rather relief. Then, I feel joy: I have finally gotten rid of the stupid chair. Then, just a little bit more joy because room inspections will surely be canceled on Friday. I think about the juicy story the *Campus Times* will cook up, lie back down in my bed, and take my happy little self into dreamland, ready for my final on Sunday at 5 in the morning.

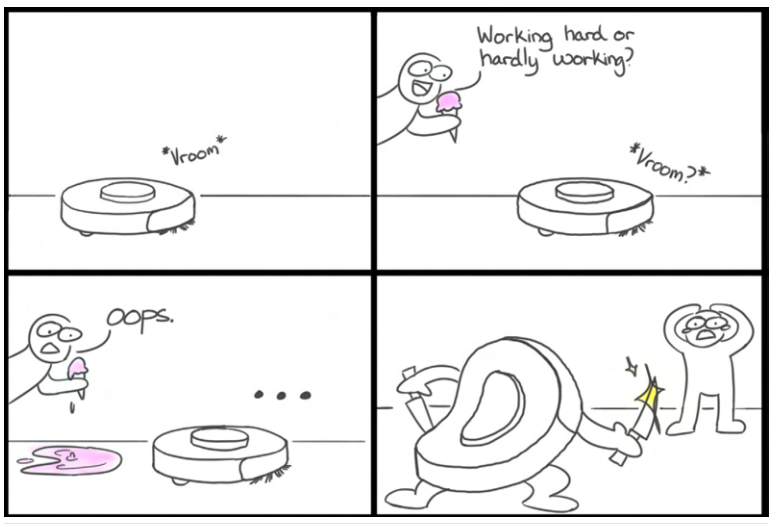
Wait — 5 A.M.???? What kind of psychopath schedules a test that early, and on a Sunday no less? Maybe the chair was right.

Laud is a member of the Class of 2030.

Raschilla is a member of the Class of 2030.

Roomba's Revenge

BY GABRIEL JIANG
HUMOR EDITOR



Support Student Journalism!

The *Campus Times* has been an institution at the University of Rochester for over 150 years. We need funding to afford new office equipment, professional photography and design software, trips to journalism conferences, and more.

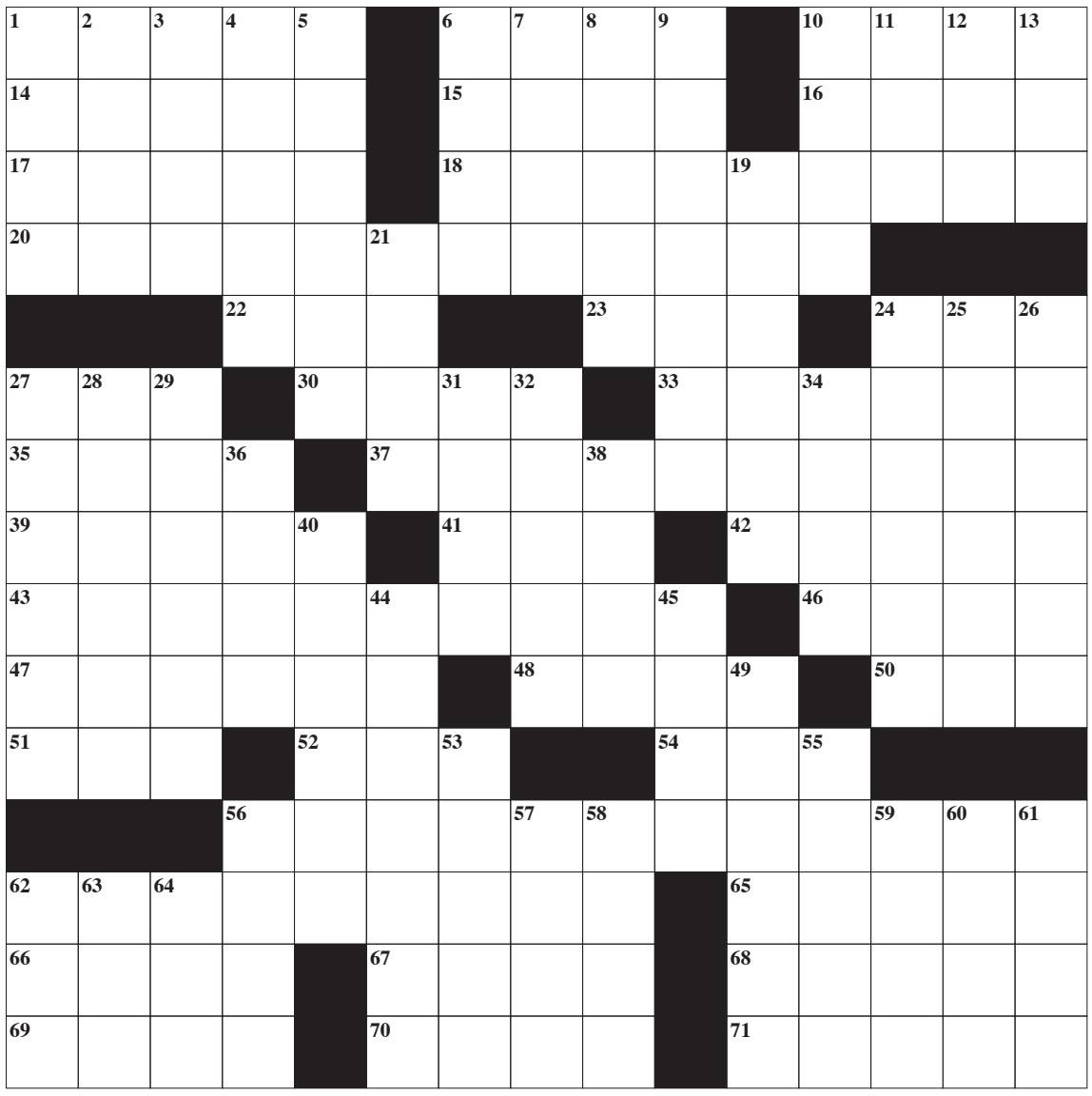
Scan the QR code to make a tax-deductible donation to the *Campus Times* today or navigate to the university's Alumni Relations Giving website and specifying you want the funds of your gift to go to the "Campus Times Fund."

Google Rebus

BY LEN LAN
HUMOR EDITOR

BY CALEB OSHINSKY
STAFF PUZZLER

BY DORA WU
STAFF ILLUSTRATOR



ACROSS

1 Kind of bacterial infection, for short
6 "South Park" kid
10 Largest continent
14 Mrs. Bush
15 Musical finale
16 "Ad-____" (improvises)
17 Dominant
18 Rappers rarely use them
20 Joker's inflatable seat
22 "What do you call a fish with no eye? A ___!"
23 At a not-right angle: Abbr.
24 "Oh! I ain't ___ it. I'm agin it!" The Simpsons (1989)
27 Spectrum, e.g.
30 Thermometer reading, for short
33 Thrift store transaction
35 NY Met, for example
37 Treats that look like M&M's
39 Christmas song
41 Counterpart of MLA, in citation styles
42 Piece of pizza
43 "Politics in the Post-Trump Era", for example
46 Fill up
47 Town on Santa Monica Bay or the name of a Miley Cyrus song
48 Queue after Q
50 Acid
51 Aliens, for short
52 Rochester bus org.
54 Airport screening org.
56 Advice before Thanksgiving dinner ... or a hint to 20-, 37-, 43-, and 56-Across
62 Forces with a crowbar
65 Broadcaster
66 Casino cubes
67 Work the land
68 Sanskrit's language group
69 Smell from the back of the fridge, perhaps
70 "Piece of cake!"
71 Sierra _____

DOWN

1 Sluggish
2 sinh/cosh
3 Not manual
4 Evidence
5 "This is the _____ day of my life!"
6 Neutral shade
7 Caviars
8 The Gem State
9 Measure of an English firearm
10 Mathematician Turing
11 ___City: computer game
12 "May ___ of service?"
13 Donkey
19 "No more, __ ____!"
21 "Moonstruck" Oscar winner
24 Spa treatment
25 Votes into office
26 Sow anew
27 Earnings
28 Try to hit, as a mosquito
29 Dangers
31 Average
32 More lively
34 Pitches
36 Rice-A-____
38 Egg pouches
40 Some October babies
44 Defeat by ballot
45 "I see a little silhou____ of a man" (Queen lyric)
49 FedEx alternative
53 Old photo tint
55 Walk ___ line
56 Seal Pokémon
57 Fam. members
58 Sole
59 Yoda's "Do __ __ not. There is no try"
60 Pull (in)
61 Puncture
62 Adobe file format
63 ___ de Janeiro
64 Post-OR area

The answers to this crossword can be found on page 6.