THE MIRAR AND THE TANK AND THE TAXABLE TO TAXABLE

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Independent student newspaper







Photo courtesy of @fuse47 on Instagram

FUSA's recent Instagram post following the announcement of the return of Siblings Weekend during the weekend of Feb. 23 to Feb. 25. The event will include activities such as BINGO and movie night.

FUSA Announces Return of Siblings Weekend

BY ERICA SCHINDLER Assistant News Editor

Fairfield University Student Association (FUSA) has announced the return of Siblings Weekend for the first time since 2020. Once an annual Fairfield tradition, Siblings Weekend was canceled for several years due to Covid-19 restrictions. Now, FUSA is gearing up for the event's return on Feb. 23, 24 and 25.

"Siblings Weekend was once a traditional FUSA event that occurred annually," FUSA President Aliyah Seenauth '24 said of the event. "We are hoping to bring the tradition back and keep it going from here!"

The announcement was made in an email sent to students on Tuesday, Jan. 23. Included in the email were the schedules of events for the weekend and some frequently asked questions. Students must register themselves and their guests on Life@Fairfield by Feb. 12.

Planned events for Siblings Weekend range from a Fairfield Flicks movie night on Friday to painting on Sunday. Stags and their siblings can also attend the women's basketball game against Niagara at 2 p.m. on Saturday and the men's basketball game against Siena at 2 p.m. on Sunday.

movie night, BINGO, sip and paint and much more," Seenauth said.

In addition to registration on Life@Fairfield, individual activities also require tickets. According to FUSA's recent email, these tickets can be purchased or reserved through the Fairfield University Box Office. The deadline for online ticket sales is Feb. 21. A limited number of remaining tickets will also be available to buy starting on Feb. 23 at the Tully Information Desk.

Since Fairfield's last Siblings Weekend was during the 2019-2020 school year, many current students have never experienced the event for themselves. A Mirror article from 2020 describes the event as one "where siblings of all ages came to campus and engaged in a variety of activities."

The article also detailed the tradition's events and noted that Fairfield Siblings Weekend is welcoming of siblings of various ages, with attendees ranging from young children to older teenagers. In fact, the event is also welcoming of "siblings" who may fall outside of the traditional definition of the word. Seenauth stated. "Siblings can also be interpreted as cousins or friends. Additionally, parents and guardians may attend but must also reserve tickets to events that are free."

Fairfield student. Per university policy, those ages 15 and older can stay on campus overnight in their sibling's dorm, townhouse or apartment.

Students and their families can find additional information and stay up-to-date on Siblings Weekend by following @fusa47 on Instagram. Email fusa@fairfield.edu or call the Office of Student Engagement at 203-254-4053 with questions.

Ahead of the event, Seenauth expresses her hopes for the upcoming weekend. "FUSA is hoping to bring smiles to our Stags and Stag siblings' faces and create memories that last a lifetime!" she said. "We feel that this weekend can unify our campus community with families, and really exemplify that Fairfield is home."

SIBLINGS WEEKEND SCHEDULE FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY / 2024



"Godfather of AI Ethics" Visits Fairfield

BY KATHLEEN MORRIS Managing Editor

An image of robots and humans lining up to board a bus labeled with the destination, "heaven," consumed the massive screen that backdropped Wendell Wallach as he began his Open VISIONS Forum presentation in the Dolan School of Business Event Hall on Jan. 24.

As an introduction to his lecture, entitled "Hype v. Reality: Navigating the Future of AI Ethics and Governance," Wallach described the mindset of technology optimists who believe "we are on a highway to heaven on Earth in a self-driving bus."

In startling contrast, the next slide presented a fiery hellscape with humans tucked inside a wicker bin. Wallach explained that techno-pessimists feel we are "going straight to hell in a handbasket."

Wallach, a bioethicist and author focused on the ethics and governance of emerging technologies, holds a belief system that sits between these two extremes. Humanity's fate hangs in the balance, as we have reached an "inflection point" in human history.

In his recent book, "A Dangerous Master: How to Keep Technology from Slipping Beyond Our Control," Wallach explores the potential of new technologies to shape our future. He is unclear, however, if the outcome will be positive or negative. Wallach advises his audience to rely on their inquisitive minds, pushing them to question both the practical and moral implications of emerging innovations.

After decades in the field, Wallach has earned a reputation as "the godfather" of AI ethics and governance. His lecture allowed him to showcase his vast knowledge, as well as his flair for subtle comedy.

Wallach shared a quote from Thomas Watson, the founder and chairman of IBM. In 1943, Watson said, "I think there's a world market for maybe five computers." intelligence may become as ubiquitous as computers.

In an interview with The Mirror, Wallach further reflected on the past. As an undergraduate at Wesleyan University, Wallach majored in the College of Social Studies. His interdisciplinary approach followed him to Harvard University. He had planned to pursue a career in law. But, he decided to accept enrollment in the Harvard Divinity School and later the Graduate School of Education.

In the 1970s, Wallach traveled to India. He noted that this was an unusual choice at the time, but felt invigorated by the ideologies behind meditation and self-reflection. While there, he discovered a story in a copy of "The Futurist" magazine a friend had brought along. The article examined the promise of wealth within the field of computing, an intriguing thought in a time when the personal computer had barely gained prominence.

Wallach attributed this article to his newfound interest in technology. Eventually, he purchased a word processor. His thoughts quickly materialized on the page, catalyzing his entrance into a lifetime of writing.

Wallach's awareness of social issues has laid the groundwork for his analysis of machine ethics. His discussion noted the complexities of AI as a "source of promise and productivity," coupled with a "considerable disquiet, disquiet about the overall trajectory of the scientific enterprise."

The lecture delved deeply into a dialogue about Chat GPT, an AI chatbot launched by OpenAI in November 2022. When Wendell asked for a show of hands from audience members who had used the application, nearly every hand flew in the air.

To exhibit the curiosity-inducing output the platform can provide, Wallach asked ChatGPT to write lyrics about the Russo-Ukrainian War in the style of Bob Dylan. As opposed to simply showing the lyrics, Wallach burst into a soulful rendition of the AI's prose.

The full list of planned activities for Siblings Weekend is available on FUSA's Instagram page and can be found as a PDF in the email announcement.

"We have a great lineup of events planned which include basketball pre-game programming, an obstacle course and bouncy house,

Guests attending the event must be accompanied by a current



... THESE EVENTS AND MORE! The keenly selected statement was met with laughter, which was amplified as Wallach waved his cell phone in the air and asked who else had the same device in their pocket. Watson's inaccurate prediction elicited chuckles, as it seems impossible to imagine a society free from technological dependence. It demonstrated the inability to foresee the future of technology, alluding to the idea that artificial

"Now, as bad as my imitation of Dylan was, you do recognize his style," Wallach quipped. "These large language models can produce very rich content in a matter of a few moments."

> Still, Wallach also continued on page 4

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Information contributed by the Department of Public Safety

1/31 9 p.m.

DPS received information about two men in a Townhouse who identified themselves as maintenance workers. The residents contacted DPS for confirmation of their legitimacy. It was determined that the men were, in fact, hired by the university to check fire alarms.

2/1

11:30 p.m.

There was a full building fire alarm in Sister Thea Bowman Hall. The Fairfield Fire Department arrived at the scene. The cause remains unknown.

2/2

5 p.m.

DPS assisted the Fairfield Police Department with a vehicle hit and run in the Kelley Center Parking Garage. No suspects have been identified.

2/4

1 p.m.

An exit sign on the third floor of Regis Hall was vandalized.

2/4 1 p.m.

The side entrance door of Loyola Hall was vandalized, resulting in broken glass.

DPS is reviewing video tape footage to identify suspects in both incidents of vandalism to Residence Halls.

2/5

9:40 a.m.

Criminal mischief was reported on the premises of Fairfield Prep. The rear outside staircase was damaged, which was likely inflicted by a vehicle. DPS is reviewing video footage to acquire further insight into the incident.

Fairfield Students Spring Into Another Club Activities Fair

BY BRIDGET KEOHANE

Assistant News Editor

The start of a new semester not only marks the beginning of new classes, but also a new opportunity to get involved in different clubs and activities on campus, which are presented at FUSA's annual Spring Activities Fair.

This year's Spring Activities Fair took place on Friday, Feb. 2 from 4-6 p.m. in the Dogwood and Oakwood rooms located in the BCC. This setting is a change from the Fall Activities Fair, which takes place outside The Quad and near the Stag Statue. The return of the Spring Activities Fair prompts the question of whether or not it has the same impact as the Fall Activities Fair.

The Fall Activities Fair is more marketed, and takes place during the annual First Fairfield Friday complemented by a welcome from President Nemec, T-shirt giveaways, a photo booth, snowcones, and, overall, more hype. In comparison, students are only reminded of the Spring Activities Fair in a few emails sent out during the preceding week.

When attending this year's Fair on Feb. 2, the crowd seemed to be lighter than the large crowd present at the Fall Activities Fair. Some students in charge of tabling for their clubs expressed dissatisfaction due to the lack of traffic passing by their sign-up sheets.

When asked about her club's success at the Fall Activities Fair in comparison to the Spring Activities Fair, Grace Willis '25, Vice President of the Management and Entrepreneurship club, expressed that her club wasn't as successful with sign-ups this time around: "I honestly think people aren't as interested in the Fair when the Spring comes around, as opposed to the Fall which marks the start of a new year. I also think the Fall Activities Fair is much more broadcasted and talked about."

Willis wasn't alone in this sentiment. Many of her peers commented that they were also struggling to get traction at their tables, and believed that the overall set-up in the two BCC rooms makes it difficult to sort through the many clubs present.

Junior Charlotte Kennedy, President of the Arthur's Club that reaches out to seniors in nursing homes, shared her thoughts on why the Spring Activities Fair tends to be less popular than the Fall: "At this point, I think a lot of first-year students have settled into clubs already and aren't necessarily looking for something to get involved in."

However, she adds that she believes the Spring Fair is necessary, "I think some type of event in the Spring is useful for people who want to get more involved. I found one of my favorite clubs on campus at a Spring Activities Fair." In terms of recommendations to improve the Spring Fair, Kennedy suggests moving the event to the LLBCC, where more students tend to pass by.

While the Spring Activities Fair isn't necessarily as marketed or popular as the Fall, it certainly holds significance for new clubs who are trying to get their name out there. This is the case for the Investment Banking Society, which just revamped itself after being inactive for a few years.

Junior Zack Maloy, Director of Private Equity for IB Society, expressed his excitement to have his club present at the Fair for the first time. He emphasized the opportunity the Fair gives him to get his club advertised in hopes of being able to teach more students ways to break into "high finance."

In addition to the remarks from club leaders, the overall sentiment from students who attended the Fair with hopes of getting more involved was very positive. Victoria Conrad '27 and Maddie Gross '27 both expressed their satisfaction with the Spring Fair, especially since the first Fall Activities Fair got rained out: "The Fall Activities Fair was a mess because of the weather. This one is much better and more contained, it seems like there are a lot more clubs here," they concluded.

Senior Kristin Scarfone, the Director of Club Operations and Student Organizations (COSO) also commented on the inconvenience of the rain at the Fall Fair, which made this year's Spring Fair more important: "I think it's exciting for people to come out a second time during the year, especially after it rained in the fall ...mand seeing everyone show up for their club." She also noted that this is the most clubs they've had present at an Activities Fair, with just over 100 clubs represented at different tables.

While the Fall Activities Fair may be showcased on a grander scale, students reaffirm that the Spring Activities Fair provides a great opportunity for new clubs to get exposure and for students to discover clubs they may originally have overlooked.



The Annual Spring Activities Fair took place on Feb. 2 in the BCC Oakwood and Dogwood rooms. Over 100 clubs were present hoping to further promote their clubs.

THE MIRROR RADIO SHOW to the max

THE MIRROR

Incorporated 197

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Wendell Wallach Weighs In On Possibilities of AI

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

acknowledged the flaws in the system. He revealed the implicit biases possessed by AI, as shown in images created by Open AI's DALL-E system. According to OpenAI, DALL-E can "create realistic images and art from a description in natural language." When asked to produce a photo of "toys in Afghanistan," the dolls and teddy bears were clad in military gear.

In addition to harmful stereotyping, Wallach explained that AI has opened new doors for increases in misinformation and scams.

"What will you do when you get a quick video in your text messages from a friend or relative saying they need \$5,000 within an hour?" Wallach inquired. "And, it sounds like them. It looks like them. We have no way of assuming whether it is them."

As scams become increasingly deceptive, Wallach underscored the immense value of studying AI ethics to "maximize the benefits [of AI] while mitigating harmful risks and undesired societal concerns." His goal is to discern which technologies should be embraced and regulated, and which must be rejected.

The concept of AI regulation has garnered attention within higher education institutions, including Fairfield University. Wallach jested that, "ChatGPT has thrown every university in the country into activity and every teacher into a tizzy."

Currently, the Academic Integrity Tutorial released by the Di-Menna-Nyselius Library relays an inconclusive message about AI policy. It reads, "Policies on AI will vary by professor. Some may be fine with you utilizing these tools, and some may punish their use with a failing grade and might report you for academic dishonesty.'

The lecture concluded with a panel discussion and Q&A, highlighting the direct impact of AI on the campus community. The panelists included Fredrickson Family Innovation Lab Director Lei (Tommy) Xie, Associate Vice Provost of Innovation & Effectiveness Jay Rozgonyi and Aidan Pickett '26.

Rozgonyi has played a pivotal role in formulating the narrative associated with AI at Fairfield. In Dec., a faculty was hosted to demonstrate how new technologies can be implemented into curriculums. Initially, he revealed that a significant number of people reacted with fear and horror. Rozgonyi has fielded questions, including, "How do we stop this? Will the university block it?"

Yet, he has no intention of prohibiting the use of AI. Instead, he wishes to promote a creative approach that will force students to grapple with the consequences of their decisions. Moreover, he thinks that the use of ChatGPT will heighten students' existing cheating habits.

"I think people cheat for certain reasons," he declared. "They're going to use ChatGPT to cheat in the same way that they wrote answers on their hand and then went into a test."

To combat these issues, Rozgonyi's students are not allowed to hand in written papers. He forces them to employ new strategies, using audio and visual techniques so "they cannot limit

themselves to just words."

Pickett provided a glimpse into the student perspective, drawn from his studies within the College of Arts and Sciences. Majoring in philosophy, he is concerned that AI may pose a threat to the humanities. He proclaimed that he has a "personal crusade against mediocrity and idleness" and is "reluctant to embrace technology simply for the sake of convenience."

Pickett's mentality informed his question to Wallach: "How do you embrace the excitement of this technology, while still carving out space to maintain our own creative capacities as human beings?"

Wallach, who spends his free time honing the craft of stained glass, balances his technological studies with an undeniable proclivity for the arts. Therefore, he is also resistant to the stifling effects of the technology. Still, his response alluded to his willingness to be open-minded.

"I think we can use these technologies to help students understand better what they want to get out of their education and how to own their own learning toward," Wallach said. "We can't pretend that these technologies don't exist. Perhaps, we can use this opportunity to confront the uncertainty rather than trying to keep it at bay."

During the Q&A portion of the evening, Philosophy Professor Jason Smith illustrated his own experience with AI usage in the classroom.

Smith asks students to fill out a questionnaire, with questions ranging from "Do you feel you deserve to be called the author of something you used ChatGPT to help produce?" to "Do you feel your professor would be fulfilling their professorial duties if you learned they were using ChatGPT to produce feedback on your papers?" and "Do you feel your religious authority figure would be fulfilling their duties if you learned they were using ChatGPT to guide their responses to, say, your confessions?"

To the first question, Smith was met with an overwhelming response of, "Yes!". But, the following questions were met with responses like, "I'd demand a tuition refund!" and "I'd report them to the local dioceses!"

When The Mirror asked for further insight into his informal study, Smith revealed that he takes "solace in the fact that students intuitively recognize that there are important lines to be drawn here, and thus that there is still the implicit recognition that certain human pursuits and interactions possess a special (dare I say sacred) value that cannot be duplicated by technology."Wallach's awareness of social issues has laid the groundwork for his analysis of machine ethics. His discussion noted the complexities of AI as a "source of promise and productivity," coupled with a "considerable disquiet, disquiet about the overall trajectory of the scientific enterprise."

The lecture delved deep into a dialogue about Chat GPT, an AI chatbot launched by OpenAI in November 2022. When Wendell asked for a show of hands from audience members who had used the

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The Open VISIONS Forum took place in the Event Hall in the Dolan School of Business. A panel accompanied Wallach.

New Food Truck Alert: At the Quad Quesadillas!

BY **SAMANTHA RUSSELL** Executive Editor

The start of the spring semester unveiled a crispy and cheesy new addition to Fairfield University's Food Truck Village. Stationed in the Sand Bar in Loyola Lot, "At the Quad Quesadillas" offers students four new menu options in exchange for meal swipes or dining dollars: options either wrapped in a flour tortilla or served over a bed of warm tater tots.

Accompanied with a seating area protected by a large, white tent, the university's Food Truck Village was only introduced last semester. In previous years, one rotating food truck was present Sunday through Friday. Director of Stags Hospitality Jay DeGioia reports the concept behind the village's creation. Spot Bowls was also inaugurated last semester. Serving students rice bowls with either chicken, shrimp, dumplings or tofu- and with a student's choice of sauce- the truck is currently experimenting with new menu items to potentially implement after spring break.

As a longtime partner of the university, DeGioia states that Sushi-Do was very excited to generate its new food truck concept. Furthermore, because Hot Spot Bowls and At the Quad Quesadillas share the same rolling kitchen, operating on consecutive days makes processes such as preparation, storage and staffing more efficient.

In an Instagram story posted on Sunday, Feb. 4, The Mirror asked Fairfield University students if they have tried the new campus quesadillas. If students had, they were encouraged to share their thoughts. Truck Village. According to DeGioia, the village provides Stags Hospitality with valuable data to consider a more permanent location as well as to learn who, where and at what times students are utilizing their meal swipes. This date is taken from their meal exchange system and is constantly analyzed, along with feedback from students and staff.

"This [data] is very helpful in seeing what food trucks and items are popular and what time frames are most popular," DeGioia confirmed. He continued to say that the decision to bring back Westchester Burger sprung directly from student feedback. "We also utilize our food truck partner who provides the same for their trucks and updates us on popular trucks throughout the region - especially in Fairfield County," informed DeGioia.

"The Food Truck village was designed to establish a diverse, convenient and on trend experience for the Fairfield Community," he said. "Adding additional concepts as well as creating a safer waiting area and an enclosed dining area has really helped with the student experience."

At the Quad Quesadillas replaced the fall semester's addition of Jack A** Burrito on Mondays and Tuesdays. Sat beside the consistently available Zuppardi's Pizza and a daily-rotating truck, these quick eats are open from 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.. Packaged as a meal swipe with a bottled water and bag of chips, the quesadillas come in a range of four flavors: Philly Cheesesteak, Veggie, Crispy Chicken Bacon Ranch and Crispy Buffalo Chicken.

"We introduced [At the] Quad Quesadillas to provide more variety for the campus community," attested DeGioia. "We look at local and national trends, as well as what is popular on other campuses, and quesadillas was a concept that we felt the students would respond to." He added that in its two weeks on campus, the truck has already become the third favorite village station next to Fork in the Road and Taste of Grill.

While the doors are closed for quesadillas Wednesday through Friday, Hot Spot Bowls takes over the Sand Bar on Wednesdays and Thursdays. An extension of Fairfield's sushi partner, Sushi-Do, Hot Of over 250 views, sixteen students responded and only four claimed they have tried the truck – despite DeGioia's statement that it has become a top three favorite. Emma Maselli commented: "They are really good and the staff is so nice!"

No comments were offered regarding Hot Spot Bowls or the removal of Jack A** Burrito.

DeGioia revealed that Stags Hospitality is always looking to add to its food truck rotation while maintaining student favorites. Sunday is typically the day in which new trucks are featured. "Our most important goal is to give students a safe and enjoyable experience, that includes food that is on trend and diverse," he explained. "We track the participation at the food trucks very closely and make a lot of decisions on who is busy on what days."

This semester, Stags Hospitality has added Fryborg, Burger Way and Blind Rhino to their rotation, and last semester introduced two barbeque joints: What the Truck BBQ and Joey C's Roadhouse. Additionally, the option for Jack A** Burrito to return is certainly feasible. Still, DeGioia disclosed that observations show that students "know what trucks are there and at what time." He continued that when the university stays consistent with these schedules, the trucks do better and students are not caught off guard with their food options.

New food trucks are certainly in the future for Fairfield's Food

"As Fairfield grows and student needs change it is important their on-campus experience evolves also," stated DeGioia.

At the end of each week, @StagsHospitality on Instagram posts the next week's food truck lineup to ensure consistency.



The "At the Quad Quesadillas" FoodTruck is accompanied by two other foodtrucks and has just started serving the student body.

Page 5

Opinion **Outrage Over Barbie: Women's Wins** and Losses at the Oscar's Nominations

By Christina Silvestri

Contributing Writer

I, along with countless others who reveled in the "summer of the girl", were absolutely gobsmacked when I awoke on Jan. 23 to "Barbie" director Greta Gerwig receiving zero Oscar nominations.

Or, I wanted to be. You see, I am not completely blindsided by her snub. Though "Barbie" had the "biggest opening weekend for a film directed by a woman", that is not what the Academy is looking for in a person to award "Best Director."

Though the Academy does not explicitly state its criteria for "Best Director" anywhere, it is universally understood that this Oscar is awarded based on a filmmaker's impact on a film.

The best list of criteria I found while scouring the internet for answers was found where all of the film buffs live: on Quora.

They claim the Academy pays attention to "the director's artistic vision, storytelling ability ... and overall impact on the film."

So let's use this working list of criteria and determine for ourselves if Gerwig's empty handedness is a result of a lacking film or blatant workplace misogyny.

Gerwig's artistic vision is impossible to ignore. In her interview with "Architectural Digest (AD)", she describes that she made the ceilings lower in Barbie's Dreamhouse to make the actors appear more like dolls to the audience.

In the same "AD" article, Gerwig goes on to explain "We were literally creating the alternate universe of Barbie Land." The interior design magazine says, "[She] aimed for 'authentic artificiality' at every opportunity. As a case in point, she cites the use of a hand-painted backdrop rather than CGI to capture the sky and the San Jacinto Mountains."

This director put thought into every aspect of set and character design with the help of Sarah Greenwood and Jacqueline Durran.

Gerwig went above and beyond to ensure that the magic that children have experienced in playtime with Barbie dolls for 65 years was present in the film. Gerwig finishes, "Everything needed to be tactile, because toys are, above all, things you touch."

In terms of storytelling, no one comes close to Gerwig in my book. Though I am fully aware that internet hype and trends can lead people to just go along with what the majority of people seem to like at a given time, I can say with full candor that I loved "Barbie".

I saw the film with my best friend. I belly laughed, I sobbed, embarrassingly hard, and I had to cover my mouth to stay quiet (thank you Billie Eilish). The story that Gerwig told was unexpected.

I, like many others, assumed this film would tell the story of one Barbie and one Ken.

I expected to see them get into trouble, wear fabulous outfits, and fall in love. Two of those three were

delivered.

Instead, Gerwig delivered a story of feminine strife and empowerment. In the simplest terms, she perfectly encapsulates what it is like to be a woman. I do not say that because of the fluorescent colors that take over the screen or the groovy yet emotional soundtrack.

For me, the perfect example of womanhood came when the infamously perfect and plastic doll became self-conscious and hit rock bottom. My tears fell soon after Barbieland was saved.

As soon as Ruth Handler took Barbie's hands and told her to feel ... I was a goner. Here, a montage of real home videos took over the screen, showing girlhood in every form it comes in.

Gerwig tells Wbur, "I want the movie to make people feel somewhat relieved of the tightrope.

We ask ourselves - not just as women, but men too - that we walk this impossible tightrope of being perfect.

Barbie has always been a symbol of this thing that you could never reach because she physically couldn't stand up if she were a human being. So I wanted it to almost invert that formula and find a way that it gave you permission to just be yourself and know that that's enough."

Greta Gerwig should have secured a nomination for Best Director. Her overall effect on the film was palpable. It is clear that this film would not have been as meaningful or as special if it were in the hands of another director.

Gerwig knows how to tell women's stories.

If the Academy believes that she did not meet their criteria, maybe it is time for some new perspectives in Hollywood.



Barbie took the box office by storm this summer, earning \$1.38 billion worldwide to become the highest grossing film in Warner Brothers history. Greta Gerwick was not nomiated for an Oscar, despite directing arguably the biggest film of the year.

Textbooks Should be Included: The College Textbook Cost Crisis

By ROISIN MCCARTHY

Opinion Editor

The most dreadful moment at the beginning of a semester is filling your bookstore cart with pricey textbooks. Although there are so many options in what type of textbook you can purchase (new, used, rent, online), the prices add up.

The average cost of a new college textbook in 2022, was \$105.37. A typical student at Fairfield University takes four to five classes a semester making that almost \$500

a professor decides to post readings online, rather than requiring the purchase of a textbook

Professors can create ways by using multimedia approaches to help students budget. It is quite unreasonable to ask Fairfield students to pay for textbooks.

There are strategies like online texts or scanning chapters to limit the costs for students. Higher education and private schools have sneaky ways of gaining a few extra dollars, and this is one of them.



The expensive nature of college texta semester.

For the past three years, I have spent more than \$500 each semester just on textbooks. Many courses require more than one text as well, doubling that price.

What frustrates me the most is that many classes only assign a couple of readings in a textbook, making them somewhat useless.

The U.S. Public Interest Research Group found that 65% of college students nationwide have decided not to purchase their textbook purchases despite concerns about their grades.

It is unfair and unreasonable to ask a student to pay for textbooks when there are more innovative and engaging ways to teach class material that don't burn a hole through students' wallets. I

n a digital era, it is essential to take advantage of the tools right at our fingertips.

A simple scan of a textbook page saves students money! I always am grateful when

books makes class material not accessible to every student. It's naive to think that all Fairfield students come from the same economic background.

Higher education tends to have a way of revealing privilege, and requiring the purchase of a textbook is one of them.

Class materials should not be a privilege. Fairfield University should cover costs for textbooks to help make all students feel welcome. Providing textbooks would also be a draw to many applying to college.

Many colleges and universities cover the costs of textbooks for their students. A private university in Nashville, Tennessee, Trevecca Nazarene University, covers textbook costs for students. It is asked that you return the textbook(s) by the end of the semester, but there are no upfront costs!

Although I have gone on about Fairfiled making us pay for textbook costs, The DiMenna-Nyselius Library does offer

College textbooks cost students a pretty penny, making it difficult for students to sustain a healthy realtionship with money. Colleges and Universities need to cover costs of textbooks.

donated textbooks to students. However, they do not have a large selection or options for all majors. This is a small step in helpinour university become a more costfriendly campus.

Are Post College Plans Essential?

By Luzia Sperling

Contributing Writer

My fingers tremble as I press submit to my third job application of the day. My email inbox is empty. There are zero responses from the various other jobs I've applied to. I sigh as I shut my computer, feeling defeated yet again. The question "What Are You Doing After College?" replays in my head. I guarantee every senior in college has been asked this question not just once but multiple times a day. Imagine seeing someone you haven't seen in over three years, and that's the first thing they say to you.

This is not a great feeling. While those asking the question mean well and are simply curious, it is exhausting to hear repeatedly.

Everything about leaving college and entering the real world is scary. Truthfully, it terrifies me. Do I know what I'm doing after I graduate?

No. Do I need to know? Also, no. I believe that colleges in the U.S. place a lot of pressure on students to have a job in the area as soon they graduate from university. I don't think this is reasonable or ideal for college students.

Maybe for business majors because their system seems to work like that, but that is not the case for me, an English Creative Writing major.

Until the second semester of my junior year, I thought college graduates had to have jobs once they left. I recently learned that this is not the case, and given this newfound information, I feel significantly less stressed upon nearing my graduation date.

Graduating and not having a job is okay, and we we must emphasize that for college students. It just has yet to be figured out. I, for one, am not going to grad school (not immediately after), nor do I have a job ready. What I want to do is wait for it to magically happen after college. Things take time and patience. I'm letting go of the question of what comes next.



The Class of 2023 graduated on Bellarmine Lawn, donning caps and gowns. Fairfield University has a 84% graduation rate with 99.4% employment rate or enrollment in graduate school.



Bellarmine Lawn hosts undergraduate graduation every May. It is a celebration of the hard work, time, effort, and skill that has gone into recieving a diploma and finishing four years at Fairfield University

After graduation, I want to travel around Europe, Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain. In Portugal, I want to visit my cousin who works at a publishing company and talk to her about her life and how she got into that world.

I want to discover a world outside Fairfield and my home, New York City. There is so much I want to see and learn before I settle down in my life. Eventually, you just figure out what you like/want to do and throw yourself at it. If it doesn't work out, that's okay! You move on. Life happens. That's the beauty of life; being young and 22, there is so much life to live and learn.

When COVID-19 hit, I realized that plans change, and because of that, we have to adapt. Sometimes, it can be hard to accept change, and life is not going as planned. I struggled to accept that I didn't have a post-graduation job like my friends. I felt overwhelmed with nerves and anxiety. I took a step back from this scenario and changed my outlook on life. I have big dreams and aspirations for my life.

For instance, I would love to get my master's degree in Creative Writing and Publishing at Columbia University in New York City. Just typing this out fills my body with butterflies. I used to say I wanted to do this but would never get into Columbia University; it's just impossible. I started to realize that talking about myself like this was highly harmful and unhealthy. I was putting myself before even knowing what my future would look like. I have put this negative attitude in the past and affirm the positives in my life. While unsure of what's next, I am excited and open to life's possibilities and opportunities.

My answer to the question: "What Are You Doing After College?" is I don't know, and I'm happy with that. College grads don't need to know what we are doing at 22. We should embrace the idea that sometimes, students still need to figure it out, and that's okay. While I understand the eventual need to secure a job and handle responsibilities like bills and rent, I'm choosing not to stress about it now. Instead, let's shift the focus to a more exciting question:

What do you envision for yourself after graduation? By asking this, we can ignite enthusiasm among students rather than instilling fear and anxiety. Graduating isn't solely about diving into the workforce or pursuing further education; a world of exploration awaits us.

Red Sea Madness Needs to Feature a Female Artist

By **ROISIN MCCARTHY** Opinion Editor

Every spring semester, Fairfield University puts on its spring concert for its students, and this year Taylor Swift should bring her Eras Tour to Stag Country – or realistically, another female artist. Her performance style catches all eyes in a way no other artist can. Fairfield University has a prime age demographic since many students grew up on her music.

Undeniably, everyone and their dog knows at

"Willow" and "Anti-Hero"... all can scream these lyrics. Swift doesn't just perform one of her albums, she goes back in time to highlight each era in her music career. She even performs two special surprise songs that aren't normally on her setlist. What a treat!

As someone one of the lucky ones who went to attend the Eras tour this summer, I can say firsthand that it's a show for all. Walking around the stadium so many different types of personalities were dressed up to experience her show. I sat next to a family of all ages, including a father who was an artist for our spring concert. As someone who has seen the Eras Tour in real life, Fairfield needs to invest their hard-earned money into getting Ms. Swift to be our spring concert.

Now, obviously, I know hosting Taylor Swift as the performer is an ambitious if not an impossible feat; however, dating back to 2016, Fairfield has only hosted male artists. The Red Sea has yet to see a female artist. It's time a woman makes their way to Fairifled and performs.

The Red Sea Madness concert has seen rap, hip-hop and R&B artists over the years. Therefore, bringing in a female artist would introduce new genres to the concert, for example pop, as it is a female dominated genre of music. Female artists also tend to prioritize their stage presence through the use of background dancers, visuals and choreography. Through such interactive and engaging sets, Fairfield students would be able enjoy the concert in a way they haven't in years before. Think back to Metro Boomin, whose stage presence consisted of standing behind a DJ booth occasionally shouting into the microphone. Metro Boomin is incredibly talented; but is he suited for a Spring Concert?

Whomever performs this year, needs to bring energy, visuals and excitement – all of which are present with pop singers. Taylor Swift is a perfect example of an engaging concert, and by choosing a female pop singer, we can breathe new life into the

least one Taylor Swift song and truly enjoys it. She appeals to all ages and genders. Her music touches every genre, so all Stags will be entertained. Songs like "You Belong With Me", "Love Song", "Mine",



The Eras Tour is a world wide event for all Swifties. It is a 3 hour long statdium show.

dancing and singing the entirety of the concert.

One of the best parts of attending the Eras tour is getting to dress up in one of Taylor Swift's eras. Since all her albums are versatile and no two are alike, there is an outfit voice for everyone. From country outfits, flowery dresses and intense black glitter eyeshadows, everyone can express themselves in their chosen way.

"Life-altering and mental spiral-inducing," Elliot Enriquez '25 states after imaging Taylor performing in the Leo D. Mahoney Arena. I know this feeling will be mutual for many more.

Taylor Swift's, The Eras Tour, brought 72,000 people in the United States together to watch the performer for a whopping three hours. It is estimated that her ticket sales were \$13 million. These extremely high numbers would help Fairfield bring in substantial revenue with their spring concert. Fairfield University would be put on the map, for being the first college to host the Eras Tour.

This concert would bring so much joy to many people, including myself. The memories our campus would have if we were able to obtain such



Red Sea madness is a spring concert for students and previously featured artists such as Fetty Wap and T-Pain. The spring concert has not seen a female artist since its inception in 2016.



Phil's Shadow Shuffle: 2 Unraveling the Charm of Groundhog Day

By FIONA WAGNER Assistant Vine Editor

one appreciates enough! Personally, I love the 1960s, Phil got his name as a nod to Groundhog Day because I'm a Pennsylvanian.

(who lives in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania) is adorable and the concept is so creative!

In case you are not too familiar with this tle Pig in Ohio. tradition, Groundhog Day happens once a year, every Feb. 2. when Punxsutawney Phil emerges from his burrow like a furry meteorologist ready to steal the spotlight.

It's the one day when a groundhog's up the wondershadow becomes the talk of the town, determining if we are stuck in winter for another six weeks or spring has finally sprung!

You may think this tradition sounds hill to see his shadow. stupid, but Phil has been weather reporting since the late nineteenth century.

Before Phil was the celebrity we all of winter. If he doesn't know and love, he was more known for be- see his shadow, Spring ing lunch.

The early celebrations of Groundhog Day involved eating Phil after he made his Club, Phil has a wife named Phyl-

hog Picnic."

Thankfully, groundhog meat left the Groundhog Day - a holiday that no menu and Phil became a public figure. In King Philip.

Phil is of course the original, What is not to love - Punxsutawney Phil however, he has actually inspired several imitators including Chuck in Staten Island and Thistle the Whis-

> There is a club called "Groundhog Club" and they are in charge of setting

fully quirky event. The group waits for Phil to reach the top of the

If he sees his shadow, we get six more weeks comes early!

According to the Groundhog

prediction. This was known as the "Ground- iss. It is so wonderful that he gets to share his never dies. fame with his wife!

They claim

that he has been

given the "elixir

of life" and that he

The Groundhog Club also claims that since 1886, there has only been one Punxsutawney Phil.

If you aren't too keen on the silly tradition, perhaps you would love the movie! "Groundhog Day" is a classic 1993 comedy starring Bill Murray. He finds himself living the same day over and over again -Groundhog Day. With Murray's brilliant performance and the film's clever premise, "Groundhog Day" is a classic that anyone could enjoy.

In terms of predictions, Phil is a hit or miss. Most of the time he does see his shadow, but that doesn't necessarily mean winter is here to stay.

Last year, Phil did see his shadow and some could say we had a longer winter. Obviously, a silly little groundhog cannot predict the weather, but we Pennsylvanians like to believe he can!

It's just a fun tradition that allows room for festivities and celebrations.

Even though Phil normally sees his shadow every year, I had a feeling that he wouldn't this year, and he didn't!

For the first time since 2020, Phil didn't see his shadow. This means spring is coming early, hooray!

Fight the Freeze: Seven Winter Fashion Trends

By Meghan Holt **Contributing Writer**

With all these low temperatures, ice and snow, it's tempting to just wear sweatpants every day. But some recent trends prove that fashion and comfort can coexist, while also being good for your wallet. Consider adding some of these to your wardrobe this semes-

gings:

More flattering than a traditional, straight-across waistline, these bottoms are perfect for the gym and so much more. Based on preference, they can be a softer cot-

ton or a

more athletic material that adjusts to the colors, but some lighter hues showcased durshape of the body.

Black Footwear:

Black leather boots are the perfect accessory to your winter outfit. Black-heeled boots, Doc Martens and even chunky Mary Jane's can elevate even the simplest look to the next level and are an easy way to upgrade your winter closet.

Dress Shirts:

ing the warmer months still have their place. Warm and bright, a cornflower blue or lavender sweater can be enhanced by simple jewelry or worn on its own.

Oversized Jeans:

While admittedly there's nothing like a perfect fit, a looser pair of jeans is a great way to add some uniqueness to your outfit. An ideal pair is almost as comfortable as

ter!

Any Kind of Cargo: Cargo pants, cargo jeans, cargo skirts and even cargo sweatpants are becoming popular. Once limited only to dads at a barbecue, this look is both functional and fashionable while breaking barriers, ignoring the ageold question of why women's clothing can never have pockets.

Leather Blazer:

A clean-cut leather blazer complements any plain-color top well while keeping you warm. Versatile and glamorous, it'll be tempting not to wear this signature piece every day.

Crossover Flare Leg-



Button-downs aren't just for the office. Experimentation with colors and fits can help to make it your own. Dress shirts may be loose or more fitted, flannel or plaid. You can even opt for a sheer fabric for an edgier look.

Thick Headbands:

These hair accessories help to keep your hair in place while tying it together and complement your outfit overall. Matching a headband to another part of your outfit can really elevate your appearance while maintaining a carefully curated vibe.

Graphic Tees:

Show off your personality with a band t-shirt or a top with a message close to your heart. Easily paired with an overcoat and a classic pair of your favorite jeans, this look has the best of both worlds: keeping it casual while assuring that other people envy your style.

Pastel Sweaters: Winter is definitely a time for darker sweatpants and pairs well with any top of your choice.

Mini-Skirts:

It may be hard to pull off as the weather gets colder, but a pair of thermal tights usually does the trick. Add some chunky boots and statement jewelry, and you'll have an unforgettable outfit.

Lastly, don't be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone! Finding your way in the world of fashion has always been a process of trial and error. Find new things that you like, and enjoy your winter!





By GIANA RUSSO Contributing Writer

As Groundhog Day soon approaches, the looming threat of six more weeks of winter stands strong.

We haven't had much snow, and if the

temperature drops below that special 32 degrees Fahrenheit, there aren't more than a couple of flurries.

Many are bored with the season, while others wish it could more like the feel snow-filled winter they dreamt of as kids.

To brighten up such gray skies (and bad moods), fill your days with some of the following winter activities!

Ice Skating:

Ice skating is not for everyone, but it certainly leads to a lot of laughs.

No matter your experience, this activity is bound to bring a friend group some fun. This is possible at Wonderland of Ice,

which is less than five miles from campus. There, you and your friends can attend a public skating session and keep the idea of an icy winter alive.

Bake Cookies:

Though it is traditionally viewed as more of a Christmas activity, Valentine's Day is on the horizon.

This is the perfect opportunity to get cozy inside and bake some cookies!

Stop by Dunkin Donuts or Starbucks to stock up on hot chocolate, and play some wintery jazz to truly set the mood.

If you have a TV, throw

up a video of a crackling fire. Your room will smell like fresh-baked cookies, and you and your friends can enjoy your warm drinks next to a fake fire.

Skiing:

Depending on your level of experience, like ice skating, this activity may vary in entertainment.

However, if you're a big skier, there are plenty of resorts nearby to slake your thirst for the slopes.

Gather up a group of friends and plan to go to Mount Southington or Powder Ridge for the day.

Not only will this provide you with fun, but you'll be si-

multaneously exercising enjoyably! Make Paper Snowflakes:

Though many people haven't done an activity like this since elementary school, it is the perfect way to keep the joy of winter alive while bringing out your inner child.

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Look up patterns to create a specific type of snowflake, or freehand it with scissors and a little faith.

Ask your friends for some help decorating a shared living space to immerse everyone in the joy of winter-with or without snow.

Crochet/Knit:

As previously mentioned, these activities aren't for anyone.

If you're more interested in being lazy than braving the cold to exercise, look no further than a ball of yarn and some tools you can purchase from Michael's.

Be warned: crocheting and knitting require a lot of concentration when first starting out.

However, once you've gotten the hang of it, you can create warm scarves and sweaters for yourself and all your friends.

Whether you take part in one or all of the following activities, you'll be sure to embrace the next few months of chilly weather with a smile.



By CAITLIN SHEA Head Vine Editor

Released on Dec. 15, Paul King's "Wonka" offers a refreshing and whimsical take on the origins of everyone's favorite Chocolatier, Willy Wonka.

A beloved yet wacky character from most of our childhoods, Wonka is transformed from the

character of Willy Wonka and expands upon his story, crafting a harrowing yet charming story about love and loss. Played by the adored Timothée Chalamet, who is more known for

his emotional roles in films such as, "Beautiful Boy" and "Little Women", the Academy Awardnominated actor assumes the role perfectly. Having to follow in the footsteps of masters such as Johnny Depp and Gene Wilder, Chalamet had some big suede shoes to fill.

Putting on an astonishing performance, the young actress showcased to little girls everywhere that their dreams can come true.

the audience laughing throughout, and appearances from Hugh Grant and Rowan Atkinson had the audience on the edge of their seats. As soon as the movie opened

"You've never had chocolate like this."

Each piece looked delectable and had each audience member's mouth-watering.

Costume design also delved into the fantastical atmosphere of Wonka's chocolate.

Willy dawned his magical top hat and velvet suitcoat, and do not forget his flashy cane!

eccentric chocolate maker we all know and love into a young man on a quest to find his life's purpose.

Grossing \$534.6 million in the box office alone, this magical tale is a sweet treat you can not miss out on.

Strapped with a bucket of buttery popcorn, a blue raspberry ICEE "and a hatful of dreams," I was ready to be taken on a grand adventure.

After paying my respects to Nicole Kidman, I watched in awe as the story unfolded in front of me on the big screen.

With a stacked cast, beautiful costuming, shocking set design and an earworm-inducing soundtrack what more could an audience member ask for?

Based on the prized Roald Dahl story, "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory", this film takes the

Going above and beyond in his performance, it is easy to say that Timothée danced and sang his way to the top.

Starring beside

Chalamet is the upcoming Calah Lane.

Taking on the role of Noodle, Wonka's precocious and outgoing sidekick, Lane stole the hearts of every audience member.



Timothee Chalamet stars in a whimsical new addapttation of the beloved classic

> Asserting that one day you will be able to "reach out, [and] touch what was once, in your imagination."

Keegan-Micheal Key utilized his expertise in comedy to keep

I found myself transported into the world of Wonka.

I was a little girl once more, wishing that I too could taste the chocolate on screen. Especially when the cast kept singing,

Each outfit brought a necessary vibrance to the screen that made the confidence of the cast "skyrockelet!"

A beautiful soundtrack accompanies the wonderful atmosphere.

Chalamet's voice adds a fresh twist to old classics such as "Pure Imagination", but also fills your head with originals such as "A Hatful of Dreams" and "You've Never Had Chocolate Like This" that are pure joy!

Each will stick with you and have you dancing for weeks to come.

Overall, if you are looking for an opportunity to transport back into your childhood, if only for a moment, this magical tale is one worth seeing.

Emmy Elegance: **An Award Show Fashion Review**

By NATALIE DRIPCHAK **Contributing Writer**

Every year people around the world anxiously await their favorite celebrities' award show outfits!

Recently, the annual Emmy Awards show took place which sparked a lot of conversation on certain fashion choices.

Some of these fashion choices

Photo Countesy of Clamour

Ayo Edebiri looks amazing in Louis Vuitton.

were the star of the show and some were very unfortunate looking ... One of my favorite looks of

the night is a Louis Vuitton leather strapless dress worn by Ayo Edebiri.

Her dress looked like a balloon in the best way possible and accentuated all of her features.

The dress was simple yet elegant with a modern twist!

> We all know Jeremy Allen White from his famous Calvin Klein underwear advertisement, but he can also rock a suit!

White strutted the red carpet in his Giorgio Armani suit.

I can't tell which look I like better: the white blazer or the white Calvins!

Of course, this list of favorites wouldn't be complete without mentioning Margot Robbie!

Robbie wore a dress inspired by Barbie because she is Barbie!

Her bright pink sequined dress stole the show and was quite liter-Her monochrome look was a crowd pleaser. ally the talk of the Emmys.



Margot Robbie stuns in beatiful Barbie pink. Her dress earned rave

reviews. Of course, at every award show, there is atrocious look or two.

I have to say I was not a fan of

Simona Tabasco's dress. The floral pattern was way too much and too bold.

It looked like a grocery bag one would buy at Stop & Shop.

To continue with the pattern of bold choice dresses, Alex Borstein sported one of the most unaesthetically pleasing dresses I have ever seen.

The dress itself was confusing to look at and was honestly just hard on the eye.

The dress looked like it was lingerie with the black lace exposed on the leg and chest.

This is an outfit that I personally would recommend to keep in the back of your closet.

I think the dress that takes the cake for my least favorite is Ali Wong's.

Her dress is also continuing on the bold pattern trend and is not pleasing to the eye.

The top part of the dress is sequined with a sheer lining on the top of it.

This paired with a blue floral pattern on the bottom of the dress was definitely a statement.

The floral skirt looks like a pattern of a couch you would find at your grandmother's house and the top part of the dress screams 2000s prom dress.

Award shows every year get a lot of media attention specifically for the fashion choices and I look forward to it every time.

Some outfits are definitely better than others but the bad outfits make it just as entertaining to watch!

Award season is in full swing right now with many upcoming shows to look forward to, but I know that everyone is anticipating the annual Met Gala, so until then keep your outfit-criticizing skills sharp!



Ali Wong disappoints in blue floral dress. All those patterns did not make the mark.



By NATHANAEL WILHELM **Contributing Writer**

tainment! Here are some of the hottest new top choice for viewers, taking home six Em-

ran Culkin and Sarah Snook "Succession" has won a total of 32 awards, including 19 Emmys and nine Golden Globes. Although A new year means new fun and enter- concluding in 2023, Succession remains a

original film. One of the biggest hits during the 2023 holiday season, "Wonka" is a must-see.

American Fiction

"American Fiction" (2023) is a drama-

with the establishment that profits from black stereotypes in entertainment. To rebel, he writes a ridiculous book with over-exaggerated stereotypes and offensive tropes using a pen name, unintentionally writing a bestseller. Monk is left to balance his stressful life and his false identity. Starring Jeffrey Wright, Sterling Brown, John Ortiz and Erika Alexander "American Fiction" is nominated for 5 Oscars.

TV shows/movies to get into this year. Three TV Shows

The Bear

Scoring an impressive 99% on Rotten Tomatoes, "The Bear" is a new Hulu series about a talented young chef, played by Jeremy Allen White ("Shameless", "Iron Claw") who finds himself back in his hometown of Chicago because of a death in the family. He is tasked with running his family's small sandwich shop while navigating the harsh realities of everyday life.

"The Bear" is a critically acclaimed series, dominating the Emmys and Golden Globes in both 2023 and 2024. With season one and season two now streaming on Hulu, season three is currently in the works.

Succession

"Succession" is an HBO series that tells the story of the Roy family, the owners of a multi-million dollar media conglomerate. The patriarch of the family's health is declining while his children fight for control of the company. Starring Jeremy Strong, Keimys in 2024.

Griselda

"Griselda" is a brand new limited series starring Sofia Vergara ("Modern Family"), as the real life crime boss, Griselda Blanco. Earning an impressive 87% on Rotten Tomatoes, "Griselda" is a must-watch if you're a fan of true crime. "Griselda" is currently streaming on Netflix.

Three Movies Wonka

"Wonka" (2023)is the second adaptation of the cult-classic children's film, "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (1971).

Starring Timothee Chamalet ("Dune", "Beauti-

ful Boy"), "Wonka," tells the story of Willy Wonka from his early life to the events of the



The Iron Claw

"The Iron Claw" (2023) tells the tragic story of the Von Erich brothers, one of the WWE's most prominent wrestling families.

It's a powerful film that shows the ugly side of a glamorous life in the limelight. With an A-list cast of Zac Efron, Jeremy Allen White, Holt McCallany and many others "The Iron Claw" was a huge success upon its release.

"The Iron Claw" is currently streaming on HBO Max and still playing in theaters.

So many new great shows and movies to check out this year. Better get started on your newest binge!

Frosky Melodies: Crafting The S O Perfect Winter Playlist

By **SOPHIA COSSITT-LEVY** Contributing Writer

Winter is slowly but surely coming to an end, and you may be looking for some new music to get you through the last weeks until spring.

Here are a few recommendations from the playlists I've been listening to lately.

Chicago

"Chicago" by Louis Tomlinson – This song has to be my favorite Louis song. I just love everything about it, from the guitar to the lyrics and vocals.

Lethal Woman

"Lethal Woman" by Dove Cameron – Spotify added this to one of my playlists a few weeks ago, and I'll be thanking them forever.

I'm absolutely obsessed with the song – it'll make you feel strong and powerful – and I've been listening to her new album, "Alchemical Volume 1" on repeat.

About You

"About You" by the 1975 – This song never fails to make my winter playlists.

I adore it, and I'm a firm believer that it should be played on a wintry drive through the woodsy backroads.

In Between

"In Between" by Gracie Abrams – Okay, so, this song technically isn't released by Gracie, but it's my favorite song by her. It's so wholesome and perfect, and I adore it.

Luckily, someone else put it up on Spotify to hold me over until Gracie actually releases it (she recently said she would, and I'm holding her to that!).

Coney Island

"coney island" by Taylor Swift - This may be unpopular,

but "coney island" is my favorite song from "evermore." The bridge is just too good, and I'm obsessed.

Anyway, like the rest of "evermore", this song is a perfect addition to any winter playlist.

Before I Fall Apart

"Before I Fall Apart" by Elle Coves – This song originally came to me via an ad on TikTok, and thank god for that.

wThis is one of my favorite songs. The music itself is upbeat, and I've been listening to it a lot lately.

History of Man

"History of Man" by Maisie Peters – Maisie understood the assignment when she wrote these lyrics. The song is incredible, and I'll be listening to it forever.

Emotions

"Emotions" by 5 Seconds of Summer – This is one of my top songs from 5SOS5. I love how raw the lyrics are and the slow music.

Rebel Child

"Rebel Child" by Dylan – I've been obsessed with this song lately. I love how upbeat and fun it is. Perfect if you need a pick-me-up.

16

"16" by Sadie Jean – This song is so cute, and I love it. It feels like a wintry drive with your friends when you first get your license, and I love those vibes.

High

"High" by Stephen Sanchez – This is another more fun and upbeat song. This one also popped up as an ad on TikTok, and I've been listening to it ever since.

Say Don't Go

"Say Don't Go" by Taylor

Swift – How could I not recommend another Taylor song? Out of all the vault songs from "1989 (Taylor's Version" (all of which I love so much), this seems to be the best suited for winter.

It also happens to be one of my favorite songs – as always, Taylor slayed with the lyrics and vocals.

I Know It Won't Work

"I know it won't work" by Gracie Abrams – When I listened to "Good Riddance", Gracie's latest album, I got totally stuck on this song. The music is beautiful, and I'm so in love with it.

Still

"Still" by Dove Cameron – Compared to "Lethal Woman", this song is much slower and quieter. Because of that, it feels perfectly suited for the last few weeks of winter. I highly recommend it.

Ghost of You

"Ghost of You (Live From the Royal Albert Hall)" by Five Seconds of Summer – A lot of winter recommendations from a band with 'summer' in their name, but hear me out.

> One of the greatest things Five Seconds of Summer did was record a live album with an orchestra and a choir.

> I firmly believe that the orchestra and the choir did incredible things for this song, and I would've sold my soul to be at this concert.

> Anyway, add it to your playlist ASAP; it's absolutely incredible.

I hope you find at least a few songs from this list to add to your playlists. If you want the full thing, it's on Spotify: Winter Songs for the Mirror.

The Coziest Winter Meal

By **ABBY WINEY** Contributing Writer

When the weather drops below 30 degrees and I'm snuggled up in my sweatpants and sweatshirt, the one meal I truly ever think about is grilled cheese and tomato soup.

You may be thinking, "but Abby, that's the most basic meal ever" and to that I'll say, sometimes going back to the basics simply satisfies every hankering for the comfiest comfort food. Since we are in college, buying some boujee cheese from a cheese shop isn't exactly in our budget. So, this recipe is quick and easy AND all from Trader Joes! but mayo gives a better toast than butter, trust me on this one.

Light your stove up and put on a low heat, place one piece of bread on the pan. Spread cream cheese on both the pieces of bread on the stove and the other piece of bread.

Then, take your shredded gruyere and shredded sharp cheddar and place it on the bread. Put your other piece of bread on top. Turn up the heat a bit and cover until the cheese melts.

softened

- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

What is a winter meal without warm chocolate chip cookies? It's just not a winter meal. Gooey chocolate chip cookies are everything and more. Though I'd say I am a chef most days, when it comes to chocolate chip cookies, I follow the recipe on the back of the chocolate chips so copied is the exact recipe from Tollhouse. per or greasing them lightly.

In a small bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, beat the softened butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar, and vanilla extract until creamy using an electric mixer or by hand with a whisk.

Add the eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Gradually add the flour mixture to the wet

The Perfect Grilled Cheese

Two slices of the San Francisco Style Sourdough Bread (it is a game changer) Raw Milk Cave Aged Le Gruyère Cream Cheese Shredded Sharp Cheddar Cheese Mayo

Start by shredding your gruyere, yes this seems extremely extra but I promise, this cheese will transport you to the melty goodness of fondue in Switzerland.

Then, spray your pan with any kind of oil. Take your two slices of bread and lightly coat each slice with mayo, okay so I know that sounds weird

Once melted, occasionally flip the sandwich from one side to the other until you meet your desired crunch.

The Perfect Tomato Soup Trader Joe's Organic Tomato & Roasted Red Pepper Soup

Yep. It's just that easy. I could bore you with an intricate recipe on a homemade tomato soup buttttt let's face it, we are busy college students with no time as it is. Pour your soup into a stove safe pot and heat it up. To add some greens sometimes I like to take baby spinach and wilt it into the soup.

Chocolate Chip Cookies 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour 1 teaspoon baking soda 1 teaspoon salt 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter,

Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). Prepare baking sheets by lining them with parchment pa-



ingredients, mixing until well combined.

Stir in the chocolate chips and chopped nuts (if using) until evenly distributed throughout the dough.

Drop rounded tablespoons of dough onto the prepared baking sheets, spacing them about 2 inches apart.

Bake in the preheated oven for 9 to 11 minutes, or until the cookies are golden brown around the edges but still slightly soft in the center.

Allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheets for a few minutes before transferring them to wire racks to cool completely.

Like I said, this is the perfect winter meal. So snuggle up, make your grilled cheese and soup, and enjoy the warmth winter meals can bring!

COFFEE BREAK \mathcal{W} **sss** GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE Editor: Matthew Robles Sudoku



Mirror Word Search

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DiMenna-Nyselius	Connecticut	Bellarmine	Stag
Fairfield	Ignatian	Jesuit	
Loyola	Barone	Dolan	

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Feb. 7	Feb. 8	Feb. 9	Feb. 10	Feb. 11	Feb. 12	Feb. 13
No games scheduled	Women's Basketball vs Marist College Fairfield, Conn. 11 a.m. Men's Basketball vs Rider University Fairfield, Conn. 7 p.m.	Men's Tennis at Army West Point West Point, N.Y. 12 p.m. vs Georgetown West Point, N.Y. 7 p.m.	Men's Lacrosse vs Lehigh University Fairfield, Conn. 12 p.m. Women's Lacrosse at College of the Holy Cross Worcester, Mass. 1 p.m.	No games scheduled	No games scheduled	No games scheduled

Stags Maintain Performance Despite Key Injuries

By CRYSTAL ARBELO Assistant Sports Editor

This past week, Fairfield University's men's basketball team played two games following a frustrating loss at home against Quinnipiac last Sunday. After this Sunday's game, the Stags' record moves to 13-9 and 7-4 in the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference after a loss away and a win at home.

Looking back on last Friday's game against Iona, the Stags were looking for redemption walking into the matchup against the Gaels that evening. Despite ultimately losing, the Stags put on a display of resilience and flexibility in a period of unfortunate injuries hurting the team.

Graduate student guard Caleb Fields scored 27 points, with an impressive six three-pointers. Senior guard Jalen Leach scored five three-pointers and collected 22 points.

On The Open Court Podcast's latest episode: Coach Casey commented on the game afterward, saying, "If you're a college basketball fan, that was a great game to watch." The action on the court was not lacking, as Fields stayed on the court for the duration of the game and guard Jasper Floyd '25 missed just 59 seconds of play. When discussing the level of play and possible disappointment around the loss, Casey added, "I thought we competed extremely, extremely hard." Against the solid stats put up by the Stags, including redshirt senior guard Brycen Goodine

adding 12 points off the bench, the Gaels' guard/forward Greg Gordon '25 put up 35 points and 12 rebounds.

In the grand scheme of the season, this loss hasn't deterred the Stags from competing for the top of the table. To Casey, this game just proved their level of competitiveness, "This just reaffirmed my thought that we're one of the top teams in the league and we have as good a shot as anybody to win this whole thing."

Casey's words were proven

this Sunday at the Leo D. Mahoney Arena, as the Stags fought their way back from a stagnant first half to send Manhattan home with a loss and a series sweep for the Stags.

Being down by 6 at the half, the Stags fell short of taking the lead during the entire first 20-minute duration. After halftime, the Stags started biting back and finally gained the lead within the first 2 minutes of play.

In a true display of grit and durability, Fields, Goodine and Leach accounted for 60 of Fairfield's 77 points, carrying a team affected by the absence of Louis Bleechmore '24 and Peyton Smith '27. Forward Birima Seck '25 showed strength after a recent injury with five rebounds and two fiery blocks in his first start for Fairfield. Along with Seck, Floyd impressed Mahoney Arena with eight points, 10 rebounds, four assists and six steals. The Stags picked up 26 points thanks to turnovers, as the Jaspers struggled to keep the ball during heated moments of the game; it was not a rare occurrence to see the ball roll

across the paint after a peculiar drive.

In a heated contention overall, the Jaspers were responsible for 13 fouls and the Stags 13. Some of these fouls were highly contested, with fans and players outraged at the calls and one technical for each team coming after long deliberation from officials in the first half.

Fairfield Men's Basketball returns to the Mahoney Arena this Thursday with a 7 p.m. matchup with Rider.



Senior guard Jalen Leach is averaging 8.3 points per game so far this season shooting roughly 48% from the field with 3.7 rebounds per game. Stag's continue to perform despite team injuries.

In this week's issue...

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- Opinion: Mahomes Outduels Purdy In Spectacular Showdown (Page 15)
- Opinion: Intramural Tennis Should be Offered at Fairfield (Page 15)
- Fairfield Football Survey (Page 16)
- Opinion: Football Belongs at Fairfield (Page 16)

Stags Stack Wins: Set New Win Streak Record

BY DANNY MCELROY Assistant Sports Editor

Fairfield women's basketball wrote a new chapter in the story of their dominant season last week, going on the road to take down Rider and Iona en route to their program record 17th win in a row.

The victories bring the Stags' total record on the season to 19-1, still good for the second best winning percentage in the country behind national number one South Carolina.

"It means a lot for our program and our university," head coach Carly Thibault-DuDonis said of the record-setting win streak. "I knew this could be a really special place for women's basketball... I'm really proud of each of our women both individually and collectively for how they continue to challenge each other to get better and not be satisfied."

To get to magic number 17, however, the Stags first needed to reach 16. Beginning their week on Thursday night at Rider, the team got off to an uncharacteristically slow start in the first quarter, leading by just one point after an opening frame of wobbly shooting and some minor defensive struggles.

Things turned around quickly in the second quarter, as the defensive intensity ramped up and the offense found its footing, thanks in large part to guard Janelle Brown '24 who scored or assisted on five straight baskets to help the Stags open up a 35-23 halftime lead.

"[Rider] runs a good amount of set plays and different actions on offense, so we weren't playing with the defensive intensity we normally have and we weren't pressuring the ball as much as we should have been," said road runner Lauren Beach '25. "When we really locked in on defense, that's when we were able to turn the game around."

That level of play persisted through the rest of the contest, as the Stags limited the

Broncs to just 21 second half points and finished the game scoring 23 of their own points off of Rider turnovers.

Brown led the final tally for Fairfield with 17 points, followed by road runner Emina Selimovic '25 with 15.

In what has become a trademark of the Stags' season, 11 different players saw minutes in the game, with eight getting into the scoring column, all culminating in a 67-44 win.

"We knew we were going to play at a very fast pace this year, and our defensive style is pretty demanding, so it's hard to do that for 40 minutes a game," Thibault-DuDonis said. "We have really good players in our program that we want to get on the court, and our pace allows us to keep that up."

Then, the pursuit of history brought the Stags to New Rochelle, New York for a battle with Iona on Saturday afternoon. Determined to avoid another slow start, the Stags blitzed the Gaels right from the opening tip and took a commanding 23-2 first quarter lead that was essentially never in doubt for the remainder of the game.

Not resting on their laurels however, the Stags continued to play hard and keep up the pressure well into the second half, with all twelve active players seeing the court and ten contributing to the scoring effort.

"I love this team because they respond to any challenge myself or our coaching staff throws at them," Thibault-DuDonis said. "We were not happy with our start against Rider, so I know our team was ready, and particularly I give credit to our captains for making sure we were ready, to start this game off in a better way."

"That's just a testament to our team being bought in and being able to be challenged regardless of the success we've had so far," she continued, "and not being satisfied with what we've done and continuing to find ways to get better."

Brown once again spearheaded the



Senior MacKenzie Daleba is averaing roughly seven minutes per game and 2.7 rebounds on about 46%

scoring effort with 15 points, supplemented by 10 from Selimovic and 12 from road runner Meghan Andersen '27, leading to a convincing 85-49 victory.

Despite their incredible success, the team understands the challenge ahead of them to maintain their historic winning streak, as they enter the final month of the regular season schedule with an extra target on their backs for opposing teams.

"You don't win 17 in a row without winning one 17 times," Thibault-DuDonis said, "so we have to show up every single day... people scout you better, and they decide what they're going to take away from you, and we

know the daily effort that's taken."

Ultimately, the Stags will rely on the same foundational ideas that have gotten them to this point in order to bring home a highly coveted conference championship.

"Our biggest principle is playing selfless basketball," Beach said. "I think the way that we play for each other and work hard for each other is huge for us, and that's really made the difference this season."

The Stags will return home to Leo D. Mahoney Arena to look for their 18th straight win on Thursday against Marist. Tip-off is at 11 a.m..

The Weekly 5x4

Five People. Four Questions. Because we have witty things to say.



Who's winning the



Max Limric Editor-in-Chief

I just learned KFC is in



Samantha Russell **Executive Editor**



Kathleen Morriss Managing Editor

The 49ers are favored,



Roisin Mccarthy Opinion Editor



Fiona Wagner Assistant Vine Editor

Who Supe	o's winning the er Bowl?	I just learned KFC is in it. So maybe Mahomes. Wait, I think I'm hun- gry, is it KCC, Kansas City Chiefs?	I don't really have a favorite team, but I'd definitely take the 49ers over the Chiefs.	The 49ers are favored, but my allegiance lies with Travis Kelce (read: Taylor Swift.)	Um The Chiefs.	Jason Kelce (still salty about last year)
What used	t's your most app?	Email recently, ugh.	Tik-Tok.	I am constantly refresh- ing my Gmail (Subcon- sciously, I'm hoping a mailroom notification	Probably Instagram.	TikTok, someone needs to delete the app from my phone
Wha scrib so fa	t song de- bes your 2024 r?	"Am I dreaming" by Metro Boomin and Roisee. Or maybe some U2, "40" is always a go- to. Or maybe it's "Lucky	Pink Friday Girls by Nicki Minaj!! Always a Barb	"Unwritten" by Natasha Bedingfield The pen's in my hand, ending unplanned.	"You're Gonna Go Far," by Noah Kahan.	Let It Go (from Fro- zen). Elsa is so real for that song
Fairf a foo (cheo vey c	you want field to have otball team? ck out the sur- on the last page ports!)	Yes, but sadly I don't think it will happen in my time here.	I think that would be so cool! I love football games.	Yes! I'll also be down to rep my Fairfield merch and indulge in tailgat- ing snacks.	Totallyyy.	Sure, why not

Opinion: Mahomes Outduels Purdy In Spectacular Showdown

By BRADY CARTER **Contributing Writer**

Super Bowl Sunday. It is when millions of Americans and viewers from around the world gather to watch the NFL season finale. Some may watch for the commercials, some for the halftime show, or in the case of this year, some may watch for Taylor Swift. Whatever reason you watch for it is always an amazing day filled with great food, friends, and of course football. This year's Super Bowl features the Kansas City Chiefs and the San Francisco 49ers. The Chiefs have won 3 Super Bowls in their team's history with the most recent coming after the 2022-23 season last year. The Chiefs will look to go back-to-back with a victory in this year's Super Bowl. As for the 49ers, they have won 5 Super Bowls in their team history with the last coming after the 1994-95 season. With a win in this year's Super Bowl, the 49ers franchise would tie the New England Patriots and Pittsburgh Steelers as the franchises with the most Super Bowl victories at six.

Super Bowl 58 will take place at Allegiant Stadium in Las Vegas, Nevada on February 11th, 2024. The current lines for this game give a slight edge to the 49ers as they are favored by (-2) on most sportsbooks. This game will be a showdown between the 2-time MVP Patrick Mahomes, and second-year player Brock Purdy. On paper, the 49ers look like the stronger team because they have few holes. On offense, they have stars like Brock Purdy, Christian McCaffery, Deebo Samuel, George Kittle, and Trent Williams. The 49ers offense had the second-highest-scoring offense in the NFL this season averaging 28.9 PPG throughout the regular season. On defense, the 49ers have stars like Nick Bosa, Fred Warner, and Chase Young. The 49ers were 3rd in the league this year in defensive PPG allowed with 17.5.

On the other hand, looking at the Chiefs there is no shortage of star power either. On offense, they have arguably the best player in the league in Patrick Mahomes, as well as other stars in Travis Kelce, Isaiah Pacheco, and rookie wide receiver Rashee Rice. During the regular season, the Chiefs offense wasn't

clicking as they led the league with 26 drops during the regular season. Their offensive ranking in terms of PPG was 15th as they only averaged 22.1 in the regular season. On defense, the Chiefs are led by all-pro defensive tackle Chris Jones along with other stars such as

L'Iarius Sneed and Nick Bolton. The Chiefs were second in PPG allowed with 16.8 per game on average.

With all this being said, anything can happen in the playoffs and the Chiefs are the best example of a team that should never be counted out. The Chiefs were underdogs against the Ravens and the Bills but they came out with victories against both teams. In Super Bowl 58, the Kansas City Chiefs will defeat the San Francisco 49ers with a score of 24-21 with Patrick Mahomes winning Super Bow MVP. While it would be fascinating to see Brock Purd aka "Mr. Irrelevant" win Super Bowl after being ...L Draft, ne just won't be able to come through hen it

matters

most.

This

Patrick Mahomes has 4,183 yards, 27 touchdowns and 14 interceptions in the 2023 regular season and is looking to win his third Super Bowl this weekend.

is the first Super Bowl Purdy has been to and it's just his second NFL season, therefore, his lack of experience will cause him to come up short against the great Patrick Mahomes.

The NFL Most Valuable Player award will go

to Lamar Jackson. I

don't think there is much debate on this as Jackson separated himself from the pack by closing out the regular season in spectacular fashion. Despite his latest postseason disappointment, Jackson led the Baltimore Ravens to the AFC's No. 1 with a leaguebest 13-4 regular season record. He finished with 3,678 passing yards and 24 passing touchdowns while running for 821 yards and five scores. The Defensive Player of the Year race is extremely tight, and it's likely to result in controversy no matter who wins. TJ Watt will take home the award as he had 48 solo tackles, 20 assists, 19.0 sacks, 3 fumble recoveries, and 1 interception in 17 games in 2023. Myles Garrett also had a great year and most certainly could win the award but I think Watt gets the edge over Garrett.

The Offensive Player of the Year award is going to San Francisco 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey. McCaffrey finished the 2023 season with 2,023 yards from scrimmage and 21 total touchdowns. After the unbelievable season he had he is sure to win the award.

Offensive Rookie of the Year is arguably the tightest of all the awards and much like Defensive Player of the Year will result in controversy either way. CJ Stroud will take home the hardware as he threw for 4,108 passing yards, and 23 passing touchdowns and took a team that was 3-13 in 2022 to a record of 10-7 this year which was good enough to win the AFC South. Puka Nacua broke the rookie receiving record in receptions, receiving yards, and receiving touchdowns, so he had an unbelievable year as well, but Stroud simply had too strong of a year to not win this award.

It will be a clean sweep of the Rookie of the Year Awards for the Houston Texans as the Defensive Rookie of the Year award will go to Will Anderson Jr. He had 29 tackles, 16 assists, and 7 sacks during the 2023 season which will put him in position to win the award.

Damar Hamlin will win Comeback Player of the Year for his incredible comeback story after suffering a cardiac arrest last season against the Cincinnati Bengals. Still, Joe Flacco deserves credit for coming off of the couch in Week 13 and leading the Cleveland Browns to the postseason with a 4-1 record in his five regular season starts.

NFL Coach of the Year is tricky because there are so many worthy candidates. Dan Campbell led the Detroit Lions to their first divisional title in 30 years and their first NFC Championship Game in franchise history. That deserves praise, as does DeMeco Ryans' incredible season with the Houston Texans. Stefanski, however, led the Cleveland Browns to an 11-5 record and a wild-card playoff berth in a competitive division. He did it despite losing quarterback Deshaun Watson and running back Nick Chubb for the season. The Browns are the first team in NFL history to win 10-plus games with four different starting quarterbacks. This is why Kevin Stefanski win will be the one to take home the award.

Opinion: Intramural Tennis Should be Offered at Fairfield

By NOELLE GORI CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Can you believe that Fairfield University does not offer tennis as an intramural sport? The only current options for tennis are competitive Division 1 (D1) women's and men's teams or a co-ed club team. The club team is also extremely competitive and requires students to try out. These teams all have limited spaces and are based on skill. Therefore, if you do not make one of those teams, there is no "just for fun" alternative to playing tennis. However, the university offers many other intramural sports. The university has limited courts which are reserved for D1 tennis teams and club teams to practice and play matches. When thinking about the D1 tennis team here at Fairfield, it is very competitive. Most people do not get a big opportunity to play on the team whether it's the D1 team or the club team. As someone who has tried out for the club team multiple times and still hasn't made it, it was very disappointing. When I first heard that there wasn't an intramural tennis team, I was very surprised because I thought that if I didn't make the club team I could just join the intramural team, but there wasn't even that option. I have spoken with many students who have an interest in tennis but just want to play

for fun and did not want to try out for the club team due to the time commitment or other constraints, yet have no other option to play tennis in a structured way.

When we look at other colleges, Quinnipiac comes to mind because they are very similar to Fairfield. Quinnipiac is a D1 college and just one of Fairfield's biggest rivals, but they have an intramural tennis team unlike us. It could be a funding issue, a scheduling issue, weather-related, or it could be that we just don't have enough courts. Either way, it would be awesome and really cool to have an intramural tennis team. Fairfield offers many intramural sports such as volleyball, basketball, badminton, flag football, cornhole, spikeball, soccer, floor hockey, softball, kickball, dodgeball, pickleball, table tennis, outdoor street hockey, and eGaming. In addition, several sports (basketball, soccer, volleyball) offer all three options -D1, club and intramural. So why not add tennis? Intramural tennis would provide an inclusive fun community as well as the ability to make new friends, de-stress, and get exercise all at the same time. This would be a great way to destress without the competitive pressures if you aren't super good at tennis. Having an intramural tennis team would be beneficial because



Pictured above are the tennis courts that are at the Walsh Athletic center next to Rafferty Stadium.

it would be a great way to communicate, meet new people and make new friends.

I also think that when school gets really difficult sometimes you just need a break and the best way to do that is to exercise and take care of yourself and your mental health. There would be no pressure or competition when playing tennis and overall it's an awesome way to just have fun. There are many health benefits combined with the social aspect that tennis can contribute to. Some of these health benefits include increasing aerobic capacities, lowering resting heart rate and blood pressure, improving metabolic function, increasing bone density, lowering body fat, improving muscle tone strength and flexibility, and increasing reaction times. Another benefit is that tennis is a life-long activity and a nonimpact sport with minimal risk of injury which can be played at any age or level.

The university should consider offering intramural tennis, as there is a significant amount of interest from the students and it would provide many benefits such as inclusivity, community, health, and of course - just fun.







Opinion: Football Belongs at Fairfield

By **TJ CRIARES** Contributing Writer

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Picture this: It's 70 degrees Fahrenheit on a Saturday afternoon in September. The parking lots outside Rafferty Stadium are filled with tailgating students and alumni, and the bleacher seats are packed just before kickoff. The vibrations of the crowd resonate throughout the venue as the starting offense trots onto the field for their first drive as a team in over 20 years.

Imagining this, I pose a question: What is preventing this vision from becoming a reality?

A significant aspect of a university's appeal in the admissions process is the influence of sports and how it fosters spirit among students. The Stags undeniably boast sports and school spirit, but could the introduction of a Division 1 (D1) football team elevate this experience even further?

There was a time when Stags football thrived at the university, culminating in a championship win in 1998. Despite their success, the program was discontinued.



In a 2003 edition of The Fairfield Mirror, the cancellation of the football team was attributed to a limited budget, where cutting on-campus programs became inevitable.

The university believed it made a prudent decision in discontinuing the program to save the \$170,747 allocated to team expenses.

However, fast forward 21 years, and with the university experiencing its largest applicant pool for the Class of 2027 (the Class of 2026 being the second largest), it might be worthwhile to reconsider reintroducing a football program.

With an expanding student population comes a broader range

Head Coach Joe Pernard talks to wide receiver Andrew Turf '03 on the sideline in the middle of a game during Fairfield footballs final season. Students express desire to bring back football and the school spirit that games bring.

of interests, many of which align with sports. As evidenced by recent applicant pools, having a football program could sway some prospective students in choosing Fairfield for their education.

Consider men's basketball and its total attendance of 33,239 during its 2022-2023 season. Compare this to a school with a similar attendance count in men's basketball, like Fordham with a 22,690 total count in the same season. For their football team, Fordham had a total attendance of 53,379 for their 2023 season. That is quite a large jump. While this is a small sample size that requires further research, it's a factor the university could examine when assessing the potential benefits of implementing a football team, including increased merchandise sales, revenue from concessions and ticket purchases.

Turning to the benefits for

students, it's crucial to examine the excitement a football program could bring to campus. The novelty of having such a program would likely lead to more tailgate events and significant turnouts at games, especially during fall weather and when everyone is eager to return to campus.

Introducing another sport, like D1 football, could make Fairfield an even more appealing option. Considering that some other universities in the MAAC conference do not have a football program, this move could position Fairfield as a prime location for sports enthusiasts, fostering even more school camaraderie and generating additional revenue, despite the increased spending it would demand.

It is time for Fairfield University to reinstate its D1 football program and make some noise on the gridiron like the Stags of old.