

RAs Voice Concerns About the Office of Residence Life



The Office of Residence Life is located in the Lower Level of the Barone Campus Center. Resident Assistants have recently come forward to express frustration with the treatment they have received while working for the Office of ResLife at Fairfield University.

By Molly Lamendola
Editor-in-Chief

By Tobenna Ugwu
Managing Editor

On the cover of the 2019-2020, "Residence Life Assistant & Commuter Peer Assistance Guide Book" is the picture of a phoenix rising from the ashes. The text towards the top left states "Together We RISE" and towards the bottom is a scroll of words reading, "Resilient", "Impactful", "Self-Aware" and "Empowered."

In the 2021-2022 guidebook, Niquita Dietrich, associate director for leadership & formation in the Office of Residence Life states in her opening letter, "You, in your leadership serve as a reminder of Fairfield's highest ideals because in your role, you are an influencer of change and you live out the Jesuit Mission of Men and Women for others. Through this journey, you will be required to uphold the highest standards of ethical behavior. This is not always easy, but as a student leader, you are not alone in your leadership journey."

She continues that "Along with your team in the Office of Residence Life, you will find numerous partners to work with across campus who are cheering and supporting you." Yet, for many of the RAs that have now graduated from Fairfield, or those that still work for the Office of Residence Life, they don't feel that support Dietrich mentions. Alumna Allison Smolinsky was an RA from 2018 until she decided to do her final semester remotely before

graduating in December of 2020.

"It's incredibly difficult to understand the RA role from the outside perspective because you are under constant scrutiny by the Office of Residence Life, the University and your peers, while still maintaining a strict GPA, trying to have your own college experience and handling any distractions that come from home," Smolinsky states.

She adds that "The financial compensation of the RA role comes at the price of your own well-being and mental health."

"There are countless hours spent on meaningless meetings and trainings that take away from study-

"The financial compensation of the RA role comes at the price of your own well-being and mental health."

- Allison Smolinsky '20

ing for next day midterms, sleep or getting general assignments done," Smolinsky states, adding that, "The office has a clear lack of accountability and time management and often deflects blame onto the RAs - like they forget we're students."

The RA Guidebook from 2021-2022 highlights this point, "While you are a Resident Assistant, don't forget that you are also a student first! Some staff members may experience fluctuation in their academic

performance after starting the position. If you find yourself having trouble in some of your courses, you may need to adjust your course load and other time commitments so that you can balance your staff responsibilities and your academic responsibilities."

Senior Sam Santos, an RA in Dolan Hall, said that despite the challenges involved with going back to in-person classes after the many asynchronous classes last year, ResLife expects the same level of engagement from pre-pandemic times, "They're expecting the same amount of programs and community engagement, whether or not that's a good thing is a personal debate."

He adds that he doesn't think it makes sense to require RAs that work with underclassmen and those that work with upperclassmen to have the same program requirements. "For example, I did a 'Freshman Area' Sophomore year and this year I'm doing an Upperclassmen area, but they still expect us to do the same number of events even though no one comes to events in upperclassmen areas."

When asked if he thinks he's supported as an RA, Santos replied, "Oh God, no. They leave a lot of things up to us and that usually doesn't work out too well because not only do we have to plan programs, we also have to make time to buy stuff for programs."

He adds that they're no longer able to use the designated Residence Life vans and they don't get reimbursed for gas if

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Pandemic Continues with No Virtual Learning Option

By Julia Lanzillotta
Executive Editor

Since Fairfield University has shifted back to fully in-person learning for undergraduate students as of the Fall 2021 semester, the University has changed their procedures, should students test positive for COVID-19. Weekly surveillance testing is no longer mandated for vaccinated students, though unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated students must continue to get tested.

Should a student test positive in an off campus facility, they are to submit documentation of their positive test to covidhealth@fairfield.edu.

As per the Frequently Asked Questions page of Fairfield's official website, "The University will not be offering isolation or quarantine [housing] during the semester," and students have been directed to develop a plan prior to returning to campus in the fall, should they need to go into isolation or quarantine. Fairfield has left rooms open in the old Charles F. Dolan School of Business, now known as the Conference Center, should students need quarantine/isolation housing. However, The Mirror reported in late October that after the first 24 hours of testing positive or being contact-traced, students must pay \$200 a night to use these on-campus

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Covered Triples and the Possible "Sophomore Squeeze"

By Madison Gallo
News Editor

By Molly Lamendola
Editor-in-Chief

In June of 2021, a letter was sent to all incoming first-year students announcing that "converted triples" would be utilized for the class of 2025, as it was the largest incoming class in Fairfield's history.

In June it was reported by The Mirror that the Office of Residence Life projected, "that at most, 10 percent of the class, or 150 students" will be housed in converted triples. By September, ResLife reported that nearly 16 percent of first years living on campus are in rooms converted from the standard doubles to triples.

Part of the compensation for placing students into these converted triple rooms was financial. In September, students placed in converted triples received a \$750 room credit, with efforts by the ResLife office to "detriple" and remove as many students from these converted triples as possible. Students who remained in a converted triple by Oct. 12, were to receive an additional \$750 room credit.

In that June letter, ResLife stated, "our experience shows many students decline to be 'detripled' when offered, as they like the experience and friendships they have built."

Charles Sousa, the senior
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Kyler Erezuma/The Mirror



Tobenna Ugwu/The Mirror

Top: A long line to the Dunkin' located in the Barone Campus Center.

Left: Mobile Order Pick-up location. A new addition to the dining services on campus this year has been the availability to order Dunkin' using the Transact Mobile Ordering app available on the appstore. Students can also use this app to order from the Stag Diner and bypass any long lines or if they are in a rush between classes. Coming soon to the app will be the opportunity for mobile ordering from The Levee.

Students Remain in Triples and Concerns Raised on the Future of Housing

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associate director of housing operations in ResLife stated in an interview with The Mirror that they have been de-tripling students since before the start of the school year and have continued to do so into the school year.

He adds that certain students were placed at the top of the list to be “detripled” due to a medical or psychological need that they indicated on a housing policy exemption form handled by the Office of Accessibility.

He states that they started the year with 75 triple rooms. Thus, they would need 75 students to leave to get all of those spaces back to double rooms.

He continues that it’s a slow process, and though they were able to “detriple” a big wave at the start of the semester, the process has slowed down.

First-year Andrew Caslin lives in a converted triple in Jogues Hall and expressed disappointment about the de-tripling process to The Mirror.

“I understand that it is a growing pain, and a major issue the university is dealing with to the best of their ability,” Caslin said. “However, on multiple occasions throughout the summer webinars, we were told a number of students in forced triples would be either de-tripled or approached regarding de-tripling by November and I personally have not

“However, on multiple occasions throughout the summer webinars, we were told a number of students in forced triples would be either de-tripled or approached regarding de-tripling by November and I personally have not received any communication regarding this process this entire semester.”

- Andrew Caslin ‘25

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Photo contributed by Andrew Caslin
Pictured above is First-Year student Andrew Caslin’s converted triple room in Jogues Hall. Caslin raised concerns regarding the future of a continued housing shortage for his year.

Sousa adds that spaces need to open up first before the University can move people, and thus the priority went to those who went through the Office of Accessibility. ResLife is now at the point of working with students just asking to be “detripled.”

When asked if ResLife has received any comments or feedback from students or parents regarding the converted triples, Sousa stated that the ResLife Office did a few things over the summer to try and help mitigate the number of students in triples.

To accommodate for the Class of 2025, Sousa stated that they converted four lounges in 70 McCormick Hall to rooms, and another lounge in Loyola Hall and utilized “emergency spaces” for 23 additional beds. Sousa did mention that when roommate assignments were sent out over the summer, people were initially upset and were asking the ResLife Office, “Why my student?,” but Sousa emphasized that it was all a random placement and thus everyone had an equal

chance of being placed in a triple.

Caslin found out over the summer that he would be one of the students to live in a converted triple in Jogues Hall.

“Naturally I was a bit disappointed to see that I had been selected to live with two other roommates in a room usually meant for two students,” Caslin said. “But, I figured it would be a temporary situation and would be resolved in a somewhat timely fashion.”

After Fall Break, Sousa mentioned that students were calling and saying they have been waiting eight weeks to be detripled. He adds that they’ve been very open with the people that call and say their student is on the detriple list and at this point, they’re just waiting for spaces to open up.

When asked how next year might look for housing and the future housing for the class of 2025, Sousa states that one of his major roles in the Office of Residence Life is to look at housing projections.

He continues that he creates a model with the projected enrollment, but it’s an “inexact science” because it’s hard to determine which housing area will be more popular with upperclassmen.

He takes the largest first-year class size and the typical projected percentage of students that live on campus, around 94%, and starts adding those into first-year spaces.

Though his living situation being that of a converted triple is not ideal, Caslin said it has “not been terrible.”

“Me and my roommates have all been working hard to make our situation work and I feel that, while it’s still not optimal, we’ve made our conditions as comfortable as we can,” Caslin said.

He added that he “appreciated that the university sought out the largest rooms to best accommodate the forced triples.”

In planning for next year, Sousa is aware that this current class of 2025, Fairfield’s largest First-Year class will eventually be Fairfield’s largest sophomore class and thus adjustments might have to be made next year.

He continues that the sophomore year is typically a year where the students “get squeezed a little bit” and this trend is why 42 Langguth was built. Caslin hopes that he and others “affected by the forced triples will have priority in [the] sophomore housing [lottery].”

Sousa states that they hope study abroad will return to close to, if not to, pre-pandemic numbers.

He adds that when study abroad was canceled two years ago due to COVID-19, 85 juniors and seniors were without housing that needed to be housed.

They currently have about 60 students abroad and are anticipating roughly the same number in the spring, if not more.

Sousa states this would be a huge help on the housing model as it’d put them back to less than 100% full to give them some flexibility for movement.

He added that their projection for the First-Year class was very different from what came and thus ResLife moved sophomore students that had selected the traditionally sophomore housing options, McCormick or Loyola Hall, to typically upperclassmen apartment-style housing, like Mahan Hall.

Sophomore Matt Delaney was one of those students who

moved from a traditional sophomore building to an upperclassmen apartment-style building.

“As someone that was supposed to live in McCormick, it is one thousand percent better to live in Mahan because it feels like you’re living in an apartment with real adult responsibilities, like cooking and cleaning. It teaches you how to be an adult.”

When asked if he feels separated from other sophomore students at all the states, “Not at all, most of the sophomores are in the village anyway,” and that, “I was ecstatic to find out that we were living in Mahan as opposed to McCormick.”

ResLife reached out to them in July stating it was a possibility and then confirmed his group had been moved in August.

When asked if there are any current plans to build new housing, Sousa said “nothing is set in stone” as they continue to monitor trends.

He adds that one thing they talk about a lot in higher education is this “Enrollment Cliff.”

According to Inside Higher Ed, this “Enrollment Cliff” was the belief that the decline in the birth

“I do have concerns going forward that there will be a housing shortage each year. As someone who has witnessed first hand the effects of having more students than you can accommodate, I am worried.”

- Andrew Caslin ‘25

rate during the 2008 recession would lead to a 15 percent decline in freshman enrollment beginning in 2025.

Sousa mentions that this hasn’t happened at Fairfield and instead they’ve seen a continued increase and thus they’re expecting a large class in 2026 as well.

Regarding the future for the Class of 2025, Caslin stated, “I do have concerns going forward that there will be a housing shortage each year. As someone who has witnessed first hand the effects of having more students than you can accommodate, I am worried.”



Kyler Erezuma/The Mirror
Pictured above is one of the converted triples located in Gonzaga Hall. The Office of Residence Life started the year with 75 triples across the Freshmen Quad. They have since begun the de-tripling process, however, some students have stated that they have not been approached by the Office of ResLife about de-tripling yet.





Compiled by Madeline West
Information contributed by the
Department of Public Safety.

11/2
10:12 a.m.
There was a theft in the Barone Campus Center. An Apple television was taken and it is currently under investigation.

11/2
12:23 p.m.
A harassment case was filed between a student against another student. They were referred to student conduct.

11/2
6:34 p.m.
There was a suspicious individual who was reported loitering around a vehicle in the Dolan Hall parking lot. The incident is currently under investigation.

11/2
11:36 p.m.
There was a narcotics possession in the townhouses. Students were referred to student conduct.

11/3
1:58 p.m.
Another harassment case was reported by a female student. The other party was identified and they were referred to student conduct.

11/3
12:31 p.m.
The piano in the Gonzaga Auditorium was vandalized and anyone with information is asked to report to DPS.

THE MIRROR

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Contraceptives, Degrees for Double-Majors and the Court at the General Senate Meeting

By Ryan Murphy
Contributing Writer

By Molly Lamendola
Editor-in-Chief

Distribution of condoms, degree policies for double-major students, and the confirmation of two Associate Justices to the FUSA Court dominated the discussion at the Fairfield University Student Association’s fourth General Senate Meeting, held on Wednesday, Nov. 3 in the Barone Campus Center.

The meeting started with Department of Public Safety Sergeant Byrd, who discussed new security policies with FUSA’s senators during the public comment section of the meeting.

At the beginning of the semester, anyone who wished to enter campus had to present their StagCard upon entry. Now, traffic will flow freely through all the gates, preventing the back-up of cars often seen during peak times, especially before classes.

The meeting then shifted into committee reports where the Chair of Academic Affairs Committee, Vincent Rotondo ‘23, discussed his meeting with University leadership regarding academic policies.

One issue of contention amongst faculty and administrators was the University’s longstanding policy of issuing a single diploma for double-major students.

Some other colleges in the area, such as the University of Connecticut, issue two separate diplomas for students who choose to have two majors. According to Rotondo, faculty members were in support of a change in policy because some students expected to receive two degrees upon graduation.

“There are some [faculty members] who are in support of [awarding two diplomas to double-major students] because in terms of how it’s been communicated in the past, students ask ‘Where’s my second diploma?’ and then they’re upset that they don’t have one,” said Rotondo.

“It’s definitely a communication issue.” He went on to explain that many other selective universities in the Northeast, including Fordham University and Boston College have a policy similar to Fairfield.

Rotondo also updated the senators about the proposed Bellarmine College Program, a 2-year community college program designed to serve lower-income communities in the area.

While administrators and faculty intended to make a decision about the proposal, they ran out of time during the meeting, and chose to table discussion until their December meeting.

Next to report on his committee’s work was FUSA Senator Jack McGlinchy ‘24 chair of the community safety & relations committee . He reported on the information he got after meeting with Dean of Students, Dr. William Johnson, regarding the potential distribution of condoms on campus.

While McGlinchy expressed support for creating and passing a resolution in the FUSA Senate expressing support for the distribution of condoms, Speaker of the Senate Jack Stalzer ‘22 suggested that the Senate must take a delicate approach with these sensitive issues.

Stalzer brought attention to an inconsistency with the school’s handbook, which states that students have freedom of speech, while simultaneously prohibiting campus organizations like FUSA from distributing condoms.

Both McGlinchy and Stalzer agree that this prohibition is a restriction on their freedom of speech. In reference to this restriction, Stalzer said “our freedom of speech is restricted. That should make us angry.”

The University administration has rejected past attempts to increase access to condoms on campus. In a 2017 article published in the Fairfield Citizen, University administration said “We are Catholic Jesuits. We don’t hand out condoms on campus. It’s just not something that we as an institution choose to openly hand out on a college campus.”

The meeting ended with the confirmation of Dylan McDermott ‘25 and Caroline Cody ‘25 to the Associate Justice positions on the FUSA Court. As running the FUSA elections is a large part of the justices role, both nominees were asked how they would engage voters.

McDermott stated he wants to host more meet the candidate events and utilize marketing to engage students. Cody seemed to agree and added that she wants to use social media and building advertisements to engage with voters.

Both were confirmed unanimously by the Senate, leaving two spots still open for associate justices.

Students Express Need for Health Related Virtual Learning

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facilities. In terms of academics, students who test positive are left with limited options.

Although the University relied heavily on Zoom and other video-conferencing software in the past, this summer it was announced that Fairfield would be planning for in-person learning experiences, therefore remote learning would not be available to students. “As is the case when students must miss class for medical/health-related reasons, students are responsible for making up missed work and should consult with their instructor(s) on how best to get caught up in their course(s),” reads fairfield.edu.

Vice President of Marketing and Communication, Jennifer Anderson, justifies this decision saying, “Fairfield University heard from students, families and

Professor of religious studies at Fairfield, Ellen M. Umansky, Ph. D., disapproves of the administration’s policy.

“I strongly believe that students who test positive for COVID, as well as students who are too sick to go to class because of a cold, flu etc., should be able to attend class on Zoom,” said Umansky.

“Given the fact that students who are sick for any number of reasons (including COVID-19) are told by the Health Center that they shouldn’t attend class until they’re well, why shouldn’t they, if they feel well enough, be able to attend classes virtually?” Umansky continued, “We learned a great deal pedagogically last year about the opportunities that Zoom creates. We also learned that students who test positive for COVID may be well enough, and want to, attend classes virtually. Why not continue to put that which we have learned since March of 2020 into practice?”

Associate professor of communication, Adam Rugg Ph. D., understands the University’s hesitancy to return to remote learning, as someone who researches and teaches on the relationship between technology and society.

“I support the policy of preserving our courses as in-person only environments as I believe it maximizes the educational value that students will receive,” Rugg said. There is one caveat to his standpoint, however.

Rugg continues to say, “At the same time, I believe instructors must be flexible and accommodating with their students who are unable to attend class due to a positive Covid-19 test.”

Students who test positive with COVID-19 are advised by Anderson to treat it consistently “with Fairfield’s policy on extended absences,” meaning that, “students who are required to isolate or quarantine due to Covid-19 this fall are advised to work with their faculty members on a specific plan to meet the needs of the student until their return to in-person instruction is possible.”

Anderson then went on to cite Fairfield’s high vaccination rate, with 93.3 percent of students, faculty and staff vaccinated, though she did not mention the fact that breakthrough cases are still a concern.

“I believe that a zoom option is beneficial to everyone as it prevents students from falling behind or going to class while sick.”

- Stephanie Prado ‘22

“Although the majority of the university is vaccinated, COVID is still affecting many students,” said Stephanie Prado ‘22. Prado also advocates for remote learning options for students that may need it.

“Even though students should not be going to class if they feel sick, if there is no online option, there is a higher chance that sick students will go to class to prevent falling behind,” Prado said. “I believe that a zoom option is beneficial to everyone as it prevents students from falling behind or going to class while sick.”

Sophomore Myles Gorski echoes these sentiments. “It’s very hard to make up work after missing classes, but with the virtual option there is not a reason to miss class,” Gorski said. “With remote classes it is a lot easier to still learn the coursework while you’re sick, or even if there is a period when you need to go home.”

As of right now, it is unclear how the University will deal with cases of students who may test positive and may miss final exams.

Anderson did not respond to The Mirror’s question of how the University will handle students who test positive during finals week.

Per guidance from the Health Center, within 90 days of being infected with COVID-19, students should not receive a Coronavirus test, in the event that they are selected for surveillance testing or otherwise. This is because the student can still yield a positive test up to 90 days after contracting COVID-19. By submitting a copy of a positive test to the school, students will be exempted from testing.

Masks are still mandated in all indoor facilities on campus and students must still abide by the University’s COVID-19 directives.

faculty a strong desire to return to full in-person learning for the 21-22 academic year.”

Though this may be the case, professors have voiced their opinions regarding faculty being barred from utilizing Zoom technology for COVID-positive students.

A Return to Study Abroad With New Restrictions

Erica Schindler
Contributing Writer



Pictured above is Claire Brown ‘23 who is currently studying abroad in Florence, Italy. Though Study Abroad has resumed, there are new restrictions to traveling outside host countries and health checks in public spaces.

COVID-19 testing, vaccination cards and face masks are probably not what come to mind when thinking about Florence, Italy. But in the age of the COVID-19, these measures are what allow for students to have study abroad experiences in the city.

Like many other Fairfield students, Claire Brown ‘23 had always planned to study abroad. She says that she knew studying abroad was something she wanted to experience long before she signed up for her trip.

“I really wanted to study abroad like my whole time at Fairfield, even before going to college,” Brown said. “So it was something I knew I had to do.” Today, Brown is living and studying in Florence. Her plan to study abroad came to fruition as she had hoped, but the process to study abroad was uncertain. She applied to go to Florence last December, when COVID-19 was less under control.

“This was before even the vaccine came out so I was like, who knows how the next few months are going to go,” Brown said. “But lucky enough, it did happen and I’m so happy I’m here.”

According to Global Fairfield, all Fairfield students must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to study abroad. They also need to take other precautions while abroad. For the time being, students cannot leave their host country to visit nearby countries.

In Italy, Brown carries around a green pass. This card proves that she is vaccinated and gives her access to restaurants and stores. She says that many of the safety measures in Italy are more strict than what the US has in place; for example, she gets her temperature taken whenever she enters new public places.

For a while, Brown didn’t

know whether she would be going to Florence at all. After an unsettling process of being unsure about how her plans would unfold, she is now enjoying her time in Italy. She says that the restrictions in place have not greatly impacted her experience.

“COVID has changed a lot,” Brown said. “But in the moment, it doesn’t really process. We’re so used to it now it doesn’t seem like that big of a difference.”

Unfortunately, this type of study abroad experience was impossible for students last year. Students from across the world were sent back home early from studying abroad in March of 2020 when the pandemic began.

As the pandemic continued on, studying abroad was not feasible last school year. Senior Caroline Kent remembers how it felt when her friends who planned to study abroad last year learned

that they could not do so.

“Once it got canceled, it was pretty upsetting,” Kent said. “Once COVID hit, everyone kind of saw that it was going to get cancelled.”

For many in this year’s senior class, this was a devastating setback to their plans. Many students who planned to study abroad during their junior year last year have chosen to stay on campus this year after past years were disrupted by the pandemic.

Kent says that the sense of community on campus was different last year than usual, since everyone was on campus rather than many people being abroad like in pre-pandemic years. Despite the challenges, she noticed that her class grew closer during the year.

“I definitely think it helped our class kind of just get closer, leading up to senior year, because we were all together,” Kent said.

RAs Call on the Office of ResLife for Additional Support

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they use their own vehicle.

Santos adds that it’s hard to get your hands on the Procurement Card ResLife wants the RAs to use.

“They tend to say, ‘Oh yeah we have RA support groups and you’re students first’, but when it comes to programs and duties, they don’t practice what they preach.”

- Sam Santos ‘22

Santos continues that, “The only events that they will support you with are big scale events, events they’re using for advertisements.”

When his event was designated as a First-Year Experience “Thrive Event”, one of the types of events that first-year students have to attend in the fall of their first-year, only then did he have support.

The support came from the Dean of Students, William Johnson Ph.D., who helped with a speech on toxic masculinity. Santos was asked if there’s any support in making sure the RA’s aren’t overwhelmed and are mentally and physically well, Santos states it depends on the staff member.

Though it depends on the staff member, his Graduate Residential Coordinator has been largely helpful this year due to her “open conversation policy.”

But, Santos adds that when it comes to “higher-up aid” the support is “kind of lack-luster.”

“They tend to say, ‘Oh yeah we have RA support groups and you’re students first’, but when it comes to programs and duties, they don’t practice what they preach.”

Smolinsky adds that there was one time she felt specifically not supported by the ResLife office.

“One time specifically, I broke up a townhouse party and a student slapped me on the back of the neck while he was leaving. Instead of reprimanding the students



The SRAs for the 2018-2019 academic year pose for a photo together. The Mirror spoke to RAs, both past and current, that state there’s a lack of support from the Office of Residence Life.

for laying a hand on me, I was told that reporting the student was aggressive and that he ‘did it by accident.’”

She adds, “I know this situation would’ve been drastically different if I was just viewed as a student and not the RA that broke up the party, which is pretty concerning.”

Senior Jakob Matala is the third President of the Resident Assistant and Commuter Peer Assistant Council and RA in 42 Langguth Hall.

He states that the RACC is an advisory board to the Office of Residence Life, providing an advocacy channel for RAs and Commuter Peer Assistants.

“To be frank,” Matala says, “When taking up this position and being the 3rd RACC President, I found it difficult to see how RACC can have an impact for the role of RA/CPA.”

He adds that “I have found that we are able to make some changes as well as have a seat at the table in the decision-making process

it participates in and oversees.

“In my capacity as a third year RA, former SRA, and the current President of RACC, I frankly feel overwhelmed at points with this role for tasks that did not seem so overwhelming in the past.”

Matala states, adding that there seem to be organizational-culture issues, “that stems from RAs/CPAs being unhappy and not supported.”

He adds that he wants to use his job as RACC President to push for things the RA/CPAs staff need to keep doing the role.

“We have been afforded a lot of opportunity to have a voice at the table in the office of residence life, however the way the Professional Staff and Central Staff disseminate the information and feedback we give will show how much respect we have as employees of the university, as employees of Residence Life, and even as students of the University.”

Santos states that the introduction of RACC has helped a lot in having the RA’s voices heard on campus.

But even now it takes a

“We’re treated like staff, we’re expected to reach the same rules and regulations as employees, yet we don’t get the same benefits.”

- Sam Santos ‘22

regulations as employees, yet we don’t get the same benefits.”

He adds that he thinks this is reasonable because it’s not like they’re getting a stipend, they’re just not getting charged for housing.

Santos notes that one thing he wants to add is that he wants ResLife to treat the ACs and GRCs better.

He mentions that there’s a better way because “...it doesn’t make sense, the turnaround time that they have for pro-staff.”

He points out that the longest-running Area Coordinator has served in that position for just a year, and there’s a possibility that the lack of longevity and quick turnaround time means ResLife isn’t investing enough into their pro-staff.

Matala added that with regard to the Area Coordinators, “... [they] are deeply understaffed so it is difficult for them to take on the extra work like extra duty, committees, one on ones, etc.” and adds that they don’t feel supported.

The Mirror reached out to Charles Sousa, the senior associate director of housing operations in ResLife regarding the RA issue and he stated he had no comment.

The Mirror also reached out to Dietrich who didn’t comment in time for publication.



Pictured above is a bulletin board created by an RA in their Residence Hall. The RAs are calling upon the Office of Residence Life to provide them with more support.

Opinion

Editor Peyton Perry » peyton.perry@student.fairfield.edu

Senior Shares Mixed Feelings Toward Course Registration

By Rebecca Quigley
Contributing Writer

For three years now course registration has been simple, checking off the required core classes while fulfilling my major and minor requirements. Now heading into my second semester of senior year I've found that I have more flexibility in taking classes in other subjects, which I didn't have the opportunity to take before.

While the idea of expanding my horizons and taking advantage of the different courses Fairfield has to offer may sound intriguing, I have found it rather difficult to narrow down my options. Will I regret taking this course over another? Should I venture outside my comfort zone or stick to what I know best?

One of the things I like about Fairfield's curriculum is that it incorporates a wide range of interests from creative and visual arts, to cognitive and natural sciences, to languages and business and beyond. Students can make the most out of their time at Fairfield by taking courses best suited to their strengths.

I've found that the registration process has been made easier with the help of my academic advisor, who has helped guide me through finding the best classes suited towards my major, as well as to offer me advice

when I am stuck between classes. With my advisor's help, I have been able to enroll in the Communication Internship Course offered during the summer, and I have received academic credit while working with the non-profit organization, American Friends of Jamaica, in a virtual communications internship.

This internship was valuable because it provided me with first-hand experience in the non-profit field of public relations and helped affirm that this is what I wanted to do for a career.

Even with these positive aspects, there are areas of the course registration process that can be frustrating. Most notably is the risk of the website crashing when all of us students log on at 7:00 a.m. There is also the slow processing of the schedule once you hit submit since there are so many of us submitting our schedules all at once. I've also noticed a glitch when registering for courses, that states there is a restriction or a prerequisite error and prevents you from registering for the class despite there being no restriction.

As the incoming class numbers continue to rise on campus, the registration process becomes more competitive, with students attempting to register for the same classes either for their major or part of the core. As I was looking through the course offerings I

noticed that there were numerous interesting courses however there was no section available to take for it. This could lead to a problem where there are more students than there are classes.

Another issue occurs when a class only has one section, making it even more competitive to register for, or when a class conflicts with a student's schedule whether it is at the same time as another class or interferes with work or other obligations.

As Fairfield's student body continues to grow, there becomes a greater need to ensure that all students have the opportunity to take advantage of the courses that are being offered; a potential solution could be having an open dialogue where students and faculty can address concerns regarding registration and ways it can improve.

Heading into my final semester of course registration is bittersweet as it will be the last time waiting for professors to send out the syllabus, picking up my textbooks from the campus bookstore, and sitting down with my iced coffee in the library or the Barone Campus Center, studying my notes for an upcoming quiz.

I can honestly say that many of the courses I've taken at Fairfield

have been a good experience, and much of it is attributed to the professors I've had who go out of their way to make their class engaging and accessible, who want to see their students succeed.

As the fall semester is starting to wrap up I'm excited for what lies ahead in the spring semester, and I hope that course registration goes well for all students next week and best of luck with the rest of the fall semester!

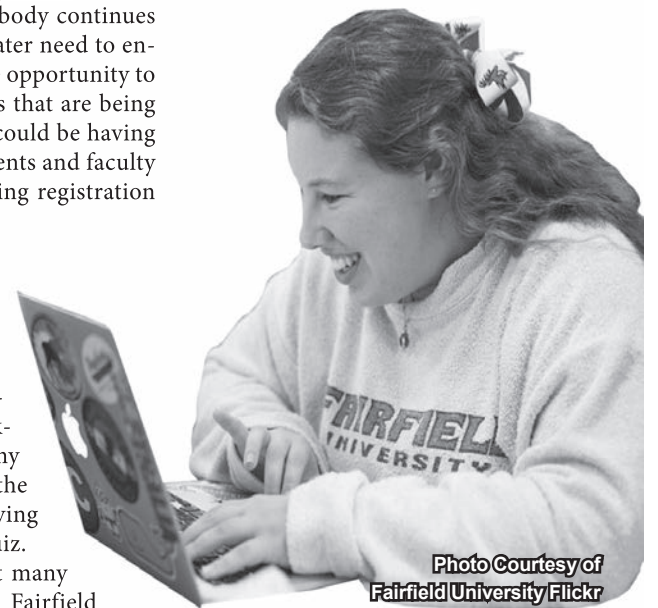


Photo Courtesy of
Fairfield University/Flickr

Love is a Choice We Make and Not an Emotion

By Peyton Perry
Opinion Editor



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I have always felt quite strongly that love is a choice and not merely an emotion. There are emotions attached to love, of course, and that often accompany it; one can feel joy, safety, comfort, butterflies, attraction and so on. But those emotions themselves are separate from the entity of love, and love does not function the same.

What I think many individuals of our current generation fail to understand is that although emotions such as the ones previously listed often accompany love, so often do heartache, disappointment, frustration and sometimes even anger.

This makes sense if you stop and think about it. Although negative emotions only arise when we have cared for whatever or whoever is causing them.

Without care, one wouldn't feel disappointed or frustrated, they simply would not care. When you love someone, you care for them as well, and so when your loved spouse makes a mistake it is valid to feel negative.

We are all human and we all make mistakes that leave us in a position to ask forgiveness. This happens frequently, es-

pecially with young adults; we are all still learning. We are learning how to love, how to find ourselves and our purpose, our likes and dislikes, level of independence, and so on. We are swarmed with stressors, work and challenges while in this very transition.

I think oftentimes what generally happens when young adults nowadays enter relationships in this phase of their life, is that they wrongfully attribute unavoidable stressors to their girlfriend, boyfriend or partner. At the first sign of frustration, anger or disappointment, rather than get through it and put in the effort, the relationship ends.

What I hear most frequently is "I just fell out of love." In my opinion, there is no such thing as falling out of love. Instead, this is a modern excuse to tie our boredom and discomfort to people, rather than the way of life.

Love is a decision to keep caring for and supporting another person, one cannot "fall out" of deciding this. This is a way for one to avoid responsibility, basically saying it was out of their control and somehow escaped.

The positive emotions may have escaped; the excitement, eagerness, butterflies, adrenaline rush, leaving one feeling uncontrollably disinterested or bored, but love cannot escape because it's a choice we make. It's okay to make this decision for your reasons, of course, each person should pursue what makes them uniquely happy, but recognize it's a decision you're making.

I also want to be clear that I'm not suggesting one choose to continue loving someone else in every case of feeling negative emotions. The positive should always outweigh the negative and if a loved one is causing more mental distress than happiness, it is most likely the right decision to choose to stop loving someone or even if choosing to still love someone, choosing to leave the relationship and care from a distance.

I'm not trying to shame those who leave relationships and choose to stop caring and supporting someone because they are bored, either. Some people aren't striving for marriage in the long-run, enjoying a more sporadic and changing lifestyle without the same level of attachment to someone else.

My understanding is that as humans, we need to feel cared for and supported. We need to feel secure and comforted, without the pressures of being excited all of the time and pleasurable to be around.

We need to be loved even on our bad days, our grumpy moods, our ugly moments; and I just think that it's sad that so many people now seem to choose to stop loving someone as soon as it gets tough, rather than pushing through it and strengthening the relationship.

My grandparents have been together for over sixty years and married for over fifty. My grandpa looks at my grandma, not completely infatuated and I'm sure there are no longer the same butterflies that accompanied him their first few months of dating all those years ago, but with care in his eyes and security in his heart.

I've met a lot of people, throughout my life, and never did I hear stories of divorced grandparents. Instead, I heard stories of grandparents who decided to get

married two weeks into dating, and are now still together forty to fifty years later. I heard of magical first date stories with big bouquets of flowers and the excitement of hearing the knock on the door signaling the romantic endeavor was about to begin.

As a little girl, I didn't witness this type of love firsthand. And the older I get, the more far out of reach it seems to become.

My parents divorced when I was five and I remember being the only one in my grade at that time to have divorced parents. It wasn't common, at least from where I grew up. Now, I know more adult figures who are divorced than married.

According to Wilkinson & Finkbeiner Family Law Attorney's study, which took place in 2020 and encompassed the effects of COVID-19, about 50 percent of marriages will end in divorce or separation. Furthermore, from that same study it was determined that a couple divorces every 13 seconds in the United States and that over a 40 year period, 67 percent of first marriages will end.

With all the technologies we have, the presence of hookup culture and the wrongful assumption that love is an emotion, it seems as though it is becoming harder to find relationships where both individuals choose to support each other even through the tougher and unlikeable times.

I'm one of those rare people who honestly believes you can love someone you don't like at the moment and that love comes with waves of good and bad just like life as a whole.

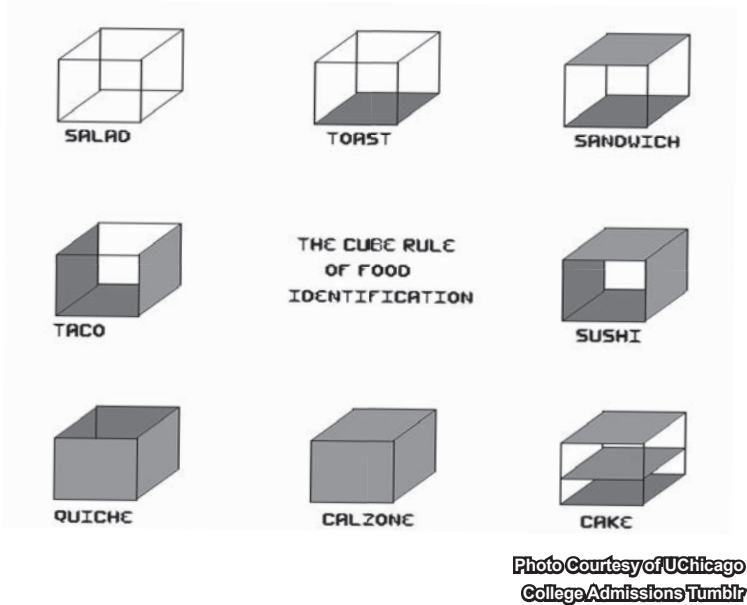
Very few people I have encountered my age question the enduring love of their grandparents but yet are pleasantly surprised to hear of young adult relationships lasting three years or longer. Why is this?

I think it's because love is often confused as an emotion rather than a choice. If we choose to accept love as a choice and embrace the occasional bad emotions with the great ones, a lot more strong and lasting relationships could be cultivated.

It's not about always having butterflies in your stomach all of the time, but rather is chosen over and over again by the same person.

A Hotdog is a Type of Taco and Here's Why:

By Joseph Westhoff
Contributing Writer



As I grew up, I was often confronted with the question: Is a hot dog a sandwich? My immediate answer to this question was no, on the grounds that it isn't between two pieces of bread. However, my confidence in this answer was shaken by my friend bringing to my attention that there are sandwiches where the two pieces of bread are attached. Yet,

after a brief consideration, I countered with the fact that while yes, the two pieces of bread are connected, the roll itself is designed to be broken into two pieces of bread forming a top layer and a bottom layer; they just sometimes stick together from an unfinished slice.

This then brought me to the question, if not a sandwich, then

what is it? After much deliberation, I concluded that a hot dog is a taco. This is because of the shape of the bun, the intention and makeup of the bun, and the contents of the hotdog.

Firstly, the shape of a hot dog bun is the most crucial piece of information as to why a hot dog is a taco. The hot dog bun is accurately described as an ellipsoid, "a surface all plane sections of which are ellipses or circles" (Merriam-Webster). This is then sliced down the middle of the bun, keeping the bottom intact.

Now that the hot dog bun has been examined and geometrically classified, we can explore a taco shell. A taco shell can also be classified as ellipsoidal since all surfaces of a taco shell are circular or ellipses. Furthermore, the taco shell remains intact on the bottom of the taco. While a taco shell may be thinner due to the ingredients used, it has the same shape as a hot dog bun; a hot dog is most closely defined as a taco.

This similarity is further shown in "The Cube Rule of Food" diagram, in the image labeled as "Taco." Now, this image isn't just a picture that was randomly created on the internet. It holds a significant amount of reliability and was cited in The Washington Post, used in Mary-

land Courts and nominated for a Webby in 2019.

Though some may argue that this difference in thickness of the hotdog bun is enough to disqualify it from being a taco, take a moment to examine other foods. Is Chicago deep-dish pizza not a pizza because it is significantly thicker than a brick oven pizza? Is a sandwich on a bun not a sandwich because it is thicker than a sandwich on sliced bread? The shape of the bread is the defining feature, not the thickness.

Secondly, the intention and form of the bun are crucial to its identity as a taco. Many buns are sold connected on a particular side. Yet, these buns are sold to be separated into two pieces. The hot dog bun, on the other hand, is sold with the intent to keep its shell-like shape.

Many people who go against my claim often refer to the type of bun that a hotdog differs from that of a taco shell. I argue that a taco shell doesn't have an exact definition. While the average taco shell is made with a soft or hard tortilla, several other shell substitutes exist. These include shells made of cheese, lettuce and just recently, at taco bell, a shell made of chicken. If a taco shell can be formed by something that's not even

a type of bread, then a hot dog bun could undoubtedly be classified as a type of taco shell.

In drawing things to a close, let's discuss the contents of a hot dog. A taco can essentially have anything in it. A breakfast taco has eggs, usually meat (ham, bacon, or sausage), and cheese. Some tacos include fish, beef, chorizo or chicken, and some may not have any meat (i.e. veggie tacos). Considering the fact that tacos can consist of nearly anything, the contents of a hot dog can't be a disqualifying factor of it being a type of taco.

I'd argue that the contents of a hot dog help to classify it as a taco. A taco usually contains a form of meat, cheese, salsa and beans, among other things. A hot dog also contains such ingredients: the meat being a hot dog, some people add a slice of cheese to a hot dog, relish, which by definition is essentially a salsa, and many people add baked beans to their hot dogs.

Not only can the contents of a hot dog not be a disqualifying factor, if anything, but they also support the argument that a hot dog is, in fact, a taco. All in all, due to a hot dog's bun shape, functionality, and ingredients, as well as the hotdogs contents, a hot dog is a type of taco.

When Should Christmas Music be Played? Before Thanksgiving or After Thanksgiving

By Madison Gallo
News Editor

Halloween is over, so you know what that means...Mariah Carey and Michael Bublé have re-emerged and the Christmas season has commenced.

Christmas music is so much more than just about the Christmas holiday. Though not everyone celebrates the holiday, the music associated with the season and the ever-familiar background sound of jingling bells evokes strong feelings of nostalgia in all those who listen. Christmas music is not exclusive to those who celebrate Christmas, too!

I don't know of any emotions that Thanksgiving evokes, and to me, it honestly just seems like a roadblock on the way to Christmas, or even moreso, like a precursor to Christmas. And even if you feel like it's too soon for Christmas music, it is not a debate about what America's favorite holiday is.

According to a poll by CBSDetroit, Americans' favorite holiday is Christmas with Thanksgiving following it in second place. Though Christmas is a Christian holiday, nowadays, Christmas has shed much of its religious tie for a lot of people and instead people associate Christmas with a unique winter holiday feeling and not that of Jesus' birth.

Due to the strong affinity for Christmas Americans have, why should we be subjected to only getting into the spirit of the holiday after Thanksgiving. I am not going to argue for the complete disregard of the Thanksgiving holiday, but instead that the Christmas spirit can and should be un-

leashed before Thanksgiving.

Every tradition associated with Thanksgiving is frankly something that can be done any single day of the year, but for Christmas, any activity associated with it has such a tight time frame of the year when doing such activities just feels right. For example, when it comes to Christmas movies, you need the air outside to be crisp and the fireplace going; it just makes sense!

A tradition that automatically comes to mind with Thanksgiving is football. Football, however, is on all the time throughout the fall and into the winter. I don't see why it is such a point of importance for the holiday that Christmas festivities need to be held up until the singular day of Thanksgiving passes.

After Thanksgiving, there is just not enough time to give Christmas the time it deserves to be celebrated and to experience the feeling of the holiday and even more so, that specific season.

Further, let me know when you have heard of a Thanksgiving song because I certainly can't think of any.

The unique smile that Christmas music brings to the faces of those who hear it should not be prevented from happening just because of some holiday that, to me, focuses on eating turkey.

Playing Christmas music ahead of the holiday will not tire anyone of the holiday because there is such a variety of songs to listen to and because it will only enhance everyone's holiday mood. It is physically impossible to have any negative feelings while listening to Christmas music.

I'm not suggesting something crazy, like to listen to Christmas music in the summer or anything like that, but rather, to listen to it at the appropriate time — as it nears the holiday. It just so happens that Thanksgiving also nears Christmas. You can still celebrate Thanksgiving and give that holiday its moment without having to entirely prevent yourself from listening to Christmas and other holiday songs.

By Maximus Berryman
Contributing Writer

I think that Christmas and other holiday festivities start way too early in America. We are incredibly unfair to Thanksgiving, which is a holiday that has grown on me over the years.

To clarify, I understand that other countries do not celebrate Thanksgiving, so I will try to exclude them from the slander.

I have also spoken with people who say Christmas music can be for any time of the year, so I will exclude them from the conversation because they are unwell.

As a young lad, I always grew up with an unspoken rule in the house that we would always switch the radio station in the car if Christmas music was playing too early.

Obviously, Christmas music brings great joy to my life. It gives a sense of nostalgia that very few songs could ever do. I just think the timing of Christmas music emphasizes two big problems in our society.

The first deals with instant gratification or always looking towards the future.

Playing Christmas music before we are truly in the 'Christmas season' is an example of not being in the present.

This melancholic feeling that is experienced when people say "I'm growing up too fast," all has to do with the issue that looking towards the future presents.

Time flies when you're having fun, and that's what the Christmas season does. I would much rather have the last 4-5 weeks fly by than a whole 1/6 of the year.

This issue can further be seen throughout many holidays.

For example, Halloween is advertised as early as August now, yet I would never want the joys of Halloween to start before going back to school.

Christmas, for some reason, does not get this same treatment.

Starting on time still gives around five weeks and allows you to cherish every single day among those. This starts to lead into the next problem, which is burnout and having too much of a good thing.



According to Deutsche Welle, Christmas music "...deactivates brain receptors for fear, while simultaneously releasing neurotransmitters associated with joy."

It seems to me however that just like all things that cause sensations of happiness, those feelings can be dulled when too much of it is given.

I like ice cream, but if you were to give me ice cream every day, I'd be sick of it and probably wouldn't see it as a fun reward or desert.

When you let Christmas music dominate for 1/6 of the year as some would want, it gets you so worn out by the time the day comes that you won't want to feel the 'Christmas spirit,' but rather push ahead to New Year.

Playing music early also stops the Christmas season from starting with a bang, rather it creates a dull and unexciting climb.

When I hear the music, I want to see the trees and the lights, I want to smell the gingerbread cookies and I want to touch the ornaments as they are hung up.

Instead, the music would be greeted with the smell of dry turkey and the uninspired sights of the orange and brown decorations.

I believe that Christmas music is part of the season of festivities and that playing it too early is a disservice to December as a whole.

My stance springs out of my love and respect for my favorite holiday of the year.



The Vine



Arts, Entertainment, Features
Editor: Brooke Lathe



The "Robert Gerhardt: Mic Check" Exhibit Beautifully Captures A Historic Moment

By Abigail White
Contributing Writer

I was recently able to visit the Fairfield University Art Museum, where I was especially drawn to a particular exhibition: “Robert Gerhardt: Mic Check.”

This exhibition is a photography project by photojournalist Robert Gerhardt, in which he documents the past seven years of the Black Lives Matter movement. From 2014 to 2021, Gerhardt captured candid scenes of New York City’s Black Lives Matter protests in his incredible body of work. The title of this work is born from the shouts “mic check!” that could be heard among the crowds of protestors. One person would call this phrase and it would prompt others to respond, creating unity among the crowd and enabling the spread of a speaker’s message.

Gerhardt’s project began in late November of 2014, following the killing of a black teenager, Michael Brown, by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Just a few weeks later, white police officers were cleared of wrongdoing in the killing of an unarmed black man named Eric Garner. These are only two of the countless number of African Americans who have been killed at the hands of police brutality. People took to the streets in outrage over these killings and in opposition to the police brutality and racism that persists in this country today.

Some of these protests received great media coverage while others were smaller and not as well-known. Gerhardt, himself, claims that it was his mission to follow the Black

Lives Matter Movement to provide coverage of and shed light on both the large and the small protests in his body of work.

Before visiting Gerhardt’s exhibit, I had done some research on this photojournalism project and I had seen some examples of his

wall of images. Walking through this exhibit, I felt as though I were stepping onto the streets of New York City myself. I witnessed the protests as they came to life in the photographs. I could feel the pain, the frustration and the anger of the protestors. I could hear the shouts



The "Robert Gerhardt: Mic Check" exhibit in the Fairfield University Art Museum.

work in online galleries. However, after visiting, I can confidently say that my online research pales in comparison to the experience of viewing this body of work in its physical form.

This exhibition is truly an emotional experience. The photographs are placed in chronological order so I was taken through eight years of protests as I walked along the

and the cries for justice and equality.

I was particularly struck by the way in which Gerhardt’s photography placed great emphasis on the signs held by the protestors. They seemed to be the primary focus of much of his work. Some of the signs read “Black Lives Matter.” Some of them pictured the faces of those who have been killed. Some of them held striking statements such as “Stop killing

our children” or “No Justice, No Peace!”

These images, faces and messages depicted in Gerhardt’s photography are not staged scenes. They are real people facing real injustice. I believe that Gerhardt does an excellent job at honestly capturing the pain, the struggle and the determination of the Black Lives Matter protests in his work.

We can look back at these photographs from 2014 and recognize that the Black Lives Matter protests have brought and are still bringing about change. In more recent years, after the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, we have seen some attempts to reform police departments and rethink the handling of incidents that do not involve violence.

However, this progress does not erase the heart-breaking fact that we continue to see the list of names grow as more black Americans fall victim to police brutality. Gerhardt recognizes that the Black Lives Matter Movement has not reached its end and he plans to continue documenting its progress through his photography.

“Robert Gerhardt: Mic Check” is not a body of work that I can serve justice to in simply reviewing. This is an exhibit that you must experience for yourself. It is a body of work that captures a historic movement in our nation’s history; a movement that we are still experiencing and living through today.

Gerhardt’s exhibition is here at the Fairfield University Art Museum until Dec. 18, 2021, and admission is free to all! I would highly recommend stopping by to experience this exhibition yourself.

A WALLABY, A GOAT AND MORE AT PEQUOT’S FALL FESTIVAL!



By Molly Lamendola
Editor-In-Chief

If any of you had a desperate need to see a wallaby and a goat in the same cage, then you just missed out on the Pequot Library’s Autumn Festival.

The Festival was held this past weekend, on Saturday, Nov. 6, from 2 - 4 p.m. It featured a petting zoo, a small children’s book sale, a fire truck and



A goat smiles for the camera at the Pequot Fall Festival!

many fun games and crafts for kids of all ages to roll up their sleeves and get into! Oh... and did I mention they had free apple cider and apple cider donuts?

My roommates and I started our festival experience at Sono Bakery in downtown Southport. We weren’t sure what we were getting into, so any caffeine boost was a needed accessory to a day of mystery. With a dirty chai in hand, we drove just a bit up the street to the Pequot Library in Southport.

We walked up and were already surprised by the crowds. It was to be expected on a surprisingly warm day in early November, but it felt like every family with small children within a ten-mile radius showed up to the festival.

There was a volleyball net in the middle of the library’s “Great Lawn”, with children running around with balls and hula hoops and different athletic activities. We walked up a bit further and started to hear the live band, Merwin Mountain Band, play on the library’s steps. That with all the chattering of adults and children running around set the mood around us. There was a firetruck with some children checking it out and a little “Proof Pizza Van.”

We didn’t grab any pizza but

walked over to the table of volunteers handing out glasses of apple cider and apple cider donuts. Past that table was a whole collection of crafts for children to get involved in, a paper bag monster you could fill with popcorn, some pencil bat toppers and a trend full of fake tattoos.

It was around this time that I ran into a favorite Fairfield staff member of mine, librarian Lisa Thornell. Thornell was there with her two young daughters and we stood chatting for a bit as my roommates kindly waited in the donut line. With warm donuts in hand, we walked over and met Thornell’s seven-month-old daughter.

After all greetings were completed, we found our way over to the petting zoo portion of the festivities. One thing I’ll mention, before I get to the wallaby, is that there was a guessing game with pies that we decided not to participate in.

The animals were the real stars of the show. I wasn’t aware that wallabies could live in Connecticut, but here we were looking at one in a cage you’d train puppies in. It’d hop around the cage, disturbing the rabbits and goats shoved in the cage along with it.

It was quite fun though, we didn’t

wait in line to get in the cage, but we stood next to it to take some pictures and were lucky enough that a volunteer lifted up the goat with bad behavior (he was using his horns against the other animals) and kindly allowed us to pet it. I didn’t pet it, but my roommate basically stuck her fingers in his mouth, so there was something for everyone to do there.

We had our fill at that point, but I caught a look at a table filled with books around the corner. They were all like-new children’s books that the library was selling to keep up with the cost of running the library. I chatted with one of the volunteers who told me events like this were important to keep the library running. She mentions that for Black Friday they’ll be hosting a book sale that features all of their “like-new” or “gently used” books that are perfect for gift-giving. It will be held Nov. 26 and Nov. 27 and the specific hours and pricing will be found later on their website, as the date gets closer.

We left, with our stomachs full of apple cider donuts, hands in desperate need of hand sanitizer and pure excitement over the fact that maybe the autumn season wasn’t over yet.

Super Cool Saints In Time For All Saint's Day

By Anne Tomosivitch
Contributing Writer

In honor of All Saints Day last week, Nov. 1, I'd like to take a moment to celebrate some of my favorite saints. As the feast day makes clear, there are a lot of saints! Some are "big saints," and some are totally unheard of. We can learn from all of their stories in unique ways, but here is my personal line up:

The Blessed Mother / The Virgin Mary -

She is theologically considered the Queen of Heaven. She is quite literally appraised as the most holy human being to have ever walked the earth (besides Jesus, who is both human and divine), so she is number one on my list. But more than that, her story is beautiful. She said yes to a totally crazy plan of taking on the responsibility of bearing and raising the Son of God. Her life changed the world, and as a Catholic, I love to celebrate her and receive her motherly guidance and love. In my opinion, Mary is the best of the best.

St. Anne -

I may be biased in my love for St. Anne as an Anne myself, but I really look up to her as the patron saint of mothers. She is a role model for mothers and parents among oth-

ers, and she raised Mary, who I have established as the best. So, it's safe to say that there is a lot to celebrate about St. Anne.

Pope St. John Paul II -

Let's look at St. Pope JP II. I have a lot of love for him for several reasons. I connect with JP II a lot on the basis of my own Polish heritage; I love learning about his upbringing and background and connecting it with my own ancestry. But more than this, I love how outspoken JP II was. I absolutely adore his connection to Our Lady of Fatima. Plus, the fact that he survived what would have been a fatal gun wound on the anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady of Fatima is pretty amazing, and I don't think it's a coincidence. If you do some reading on this miracle, it's pretty cool.

St. Teresa of Calcutta/ Mother Teresa -

I think Mother Teresa, who was just recently canonized, is such a wonderful example of radical love. Her gentle and beautiful love and service toward communities in Calcutta India is absolutely breathtaking. Beyond that, her words are so inspiring. This is one of my favorite of her quotes: "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin." How true is that?

St. Josemaría de Escrivá -

My pastor from home always mentions St. Josemaria in his homilies. As I've learned about his life, however, I totally understand why. St. Josemaria had an excellent amount of wisdom. One of the most memorable and important of his many sayings, in my opinion, is this: "a saint is a sinner who keeps

trying." Wow. St. Josemaria reminds us that anyone and everyone can be a saint.

Hopefully, in memory and in light of these saints and many others, as we celebrate All Saints Day, we can gather inspiration. In the words of St. Ignatius, "go forth and set the world on fire!"



MUST-READS FOR NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

By Molly Lamendola
Editor-In-Chief

Last year I wrote an essay on the Native American Cinderella story. In its most recent rendition, it was published as a children's picture book called "The Rough Faced Girl" by Rafe Martin. In the introduction to the book, Martin claims that he's simply retelling a true native tale.

But, throughout my ridiculously long paper, I was able to prove he indeed wasn't and that the story having any similarities to "Cinderella" was largely due to missionary and colonizer influence. This should be at the core of nearly every conversation we have about Indigenous stories. If you're looking for true Native American stories, you should always only be looking for books written by Native American authors.

One great source for this is Debbie Reese, Ph. D. Though the importance of members of a group telling their own story, and diversity in children's literature has now gotten into the mainstream, Reese has been operating her website "American Indians in Children's Literature" since 2006. As a Nambé Pueblo, she critically reads young adult

and children's literature books and releases a list of the best books each year. So I'll be using her as a source for this list, as well as many of the author's websites.

With that introduction, I want to get in to my list. So without further ado, here is my list of must-read books by Native American authors, just in time for Native American heritage month:

"Jingle Dancer" by Cynthia Leitich:

Even though this is a children's book, it's just incredibly cute, so it gets a spot on the list. And, since it's told by Cynthia Leitich, a Muscogee (Creek) author, we know it's an accurate retelling of the Jingle Dancer tradition.

The book follows Jenna, who sees a video of her grandmother performing in a jingle dress, which is a dress with metal cones that jingle when the wearer dances. Jenna desperately wants these metal cones for her dress and goes and asks the women in her life to borrow a few here and there.

She doesn't ask for too many from each, as she doesn't want to stop their dress from jingling. Along the way she hears some Creek stories and the story shows how contemporary Creek people live, and how important it is for the next

generation to carry on the traditions that were silenced for so long.

"There, There" by Tommy Orange:

Tommy Orange opens his novel with a letter to the reader. He states how the book came to him, and how hard it was to figure out how to get all the characters to the end of the novel. He notes that he had to figure out how to carry the reader through the book through all the interconnected stories. It's the interconnectedness that makes "There, There" stand out.

Orange, a Cheyenne and Arapaho author, tells the story of 12 characters from Native American communities traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow. The first section of the novel is an essay from Orange, highlighting the brutal and horrific treatment of the Native American people throughout history. He highlights how days of thanks, or Thanksgivings were often held in honor of a "successful massacre" of Native Americans.

The rest of the novel follows 12 interwoven and separate stories about people discovering what being Native American is, what it means to be human and the impact generational trauma and culture has on us as people.

It's just an unbelievably fantastic novel. I'm someone who annotates, highlights and writes all over books I love, so this book is completely covered with my thoughts and feelings about the writing and how Orange unveils a story to us. I can not recommend it enough!

"The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee" by David Treuer:

I'm going to be honest, I haven't finished this book. But, I was looking for something to continue my research into Native American history after my reading of "The People's History of the United States" by Howard Zinn. I do recommend Zinn's book as well, despite some of the controversy surrounding it.

Critics say it paints history as too black and white, that there's always a villain and a victim in Zinn's retelling, but I liked it just because it highlighted so much of history missing from my education.

The same can be said about "The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee," as it tells the true history of the Native American people, after the massacre in 1890 at Wounded Knee. There's a tentative belief in history that Native American history largely stopped at this point until we get into the contemporary people. Treuer, who grew up Ojibwe on

a reservation in Minnesota, trained as an anthropologist and spent his career researching Native American life in the past and present proves that this was in no way the case.

Treuer highlights the struggle of the different groups to preserve their language, culture and way of life in an attempt to pass it on to future generations.

Throughout all of it, he proves how resilient the Native American groups were in their effort against those who wanted to take their land, their children and even their lives. It's a phenomenal book that teaches us all the true history that has been hidden for so long.

Honestly, there's not really a wrong choice when it comes to reading a book from a Native American author regarding their histories, their stories and their experiences.

If there's anything you do this month, instead of counting down the days until Thanksgiving, make sure you not only educate yourself on the true history of what the Indigenous people went through during the centuries of American history but also keep in mind what they continue to go through, the fight is not yet through.





EIGHT AUTUMN TREATS THAT WILL SPICE UP YOUR RECIPE BOOK



By Brooke Lathe
Vine Editor

Autumn is not only the model season for beautiful foliage and social holidays, but also for it's well-known delicious treats! As someone with an overflowing love for baking, I know all the wonderful treats to pair with a nice, crimson fall day. Therefore, here are my personal favorite delectables that will be undoubtedly loved by all who try them!



Photo Contributed by @bigger-bolderbaking Instagram

Pumpkin Bread - My absolute favorite fall goodie is pumpkin bread, especially my mom's mouth-watering loaf she perfects every year (except the time she forgot the baking soda). This moist, spiced loaf seems to cure you of any anxieties that may be lingering, as it wraps you in a warm embrace with each bite. It truly is my comfort food, which you can probably tell if you ever get the unlucky pleasure of watching me devour it!

Apple Turnovers - Waking up to a warm, gooey bite of an apple turnover might have enough power to ascend one to heaven. While I'm sure a homemade pastry from scratch is even tastier than a frozen, do-it-yourself package, Pepperidge Farm turnovers are still an easy and cheap alternative if you don't have the time to bake a fresh one; and trust me, they are just as good!

Carrot Cake - I am most definitely an old soul at heart, which means I am obsessed with carrot cake, and I'm not ashamed to announce it is superior to any other! There is just something so soothing about this thick, spiced cake that makes the flavor stand out. And of course, the heavy cream

cheese frosting pairs so well with it as well, making it truly unbeatable!

Pumpkin Whoopie Pies - Regular whoopie pies are an obvious tasty dessert on any day, but a pumpkin flavored pie? Sign me up. A pumpkin whoopie is just as light as it is fluffy, making it easy to digest and enjoy on a nice, chilly autumn afternoon. I certainly wouldn't recommend eating more than two at one sitting, though it may be hard to refrain yourself.

Cinnamon Rolls - A warm, doughy, icing-covered roll is just what any person needs on a fall day. Though it is scarily sugar filled, the following stomach ache is worth every bite. Well, at least for me.

Maple Syrup Fudge - I feel like anything maple is a perfect fall flavor, though of course, not as popular as pumpkin. Nevertheless, a chewy hunk of maple fudge is just the right taste you need when watching a spooky movie, drinking coffee or admiring the deep red leaves from your porch.

Apple Crisp - What kind of fall treats list would this be if I didn't include apple crisp? This bowl of goodness is super nostalgic for me, bringing back childhood

memories of fall fairs and home-made baking sessions. But overall, the two drastic temperatures, the warm apple batter and the cold vanilla ice cream, come together to create a delicious duo.

Pecan Pie - While apple and pumpkin pies are usually Thanksgiving dessert staples, pecan pie is often forgotten as the final addition. To me, this is crazy, since pecan pie is the ultimate slice of fall. It's rich, sweet tang may be overwhelming, but it is unquestionably something you can not forget. There is nothing wrong with too much pie, so make sure to bake this next holiday feast!

Fall is not only a season to admire earth's beauty and spread thankfulness to those that surround us, but also to indulge in some freshly baked goodies.

So, whatever you choose to bake this autumn, be sure to pair it with a tall glass of apple cider and a bright smile!



Photo Contributed by @thehseofficial Instagram

Sip, Sip, Nooray: Starbucks Released Their 2021 Winter Menu!

By Julia Lanzillotta
Executive Editor

The most prominent indicator that the holiday season is just around the corner has to be when Starbucks releases their seasonal holiday menu. Not until I see red, green and gold branding, do I begin to feel the excitement for what festivities winter has in store. Though the start to the season is arguable, depending on who you ask, I appreciate how early Starbucks chooses to celebrate. This year, starting on Nov. 4, six drinks and four food items will be added to the menu while supplies last.

The food selection is most interesting in this holiday drop, and these pastries and desserts are perfect companions for every Starbucks drink. The most unique is the Cranberry Bliss Bar. Cranberries are a hallmark of the winter time, and the coffee chain incorporates them beautifully in this snack. It is a blondie cake with cream cheese icing and dried cranberries on top, finished off with a drizzle of white-orange chocolate.

The best way to start one's day is with the Sugar Plum Cheese Danish, which is fluffy and sweet. In the center is a cream cheese filling and sugar plum jam, with hints of spice.

What I always most looked forward to was the little goody I would get when I accompanied my mom on her daily coffee run as a young girl. The Snowman Cookie and the Reindeer Cake Pop are adorable options for the little kid in everyone. The snowman is a classic shortbread cookie with white choco-

late icing and adorable flakey sprinkles while the cake pop is made of vanilla cake, covered in chocolate icing.

First on the drinks list is the fan-favorite "Peppermint Mocha," making its return for the 19th year. It is made using espresso, steamed milk, mocha sauce and peppermint syrup. It is topped with whipped cream and

back in the lineup. Espresso, steamed milk and white chocolate mocha sauce work together to make Christmas in a cup. A staple for all holiday drinks is whipped cream, and an added feature of this drink is a sprinkle mix combining sugary crystals and mini pearls.

The "Caramel Brulee Latte" is another returning caffeine-filled feature. Its con-

flakes on top.

Irish Cream Cold Brew is perfect for those who love smooth coffee. Though it seems strikingly similar to a generic cold brew, this holiday option features Irish Cream flavored syrup. Vanilla Sweet Cream Foam floats on top to lighten up the drink, and is garnished with cocoa powder.

Nothing says "Christmas" like chestnuts roasting on an open fire, and the taste of the "Chestnut Praline Latte" is as rich as Nat King Cole's voice in "The Christmas Song". Spiced praline crumbs and caramelized chestnuts come together in harmony in this espresso drink to make the most merry pick on the menu.

Baking Christmas cookies is a sweet tradition for many people around the holidays, and Starbucks' brand new addition is perfect for those with a sweet tooth. The "Iced Sugar Cookie Almondmilk Latte" is made with a blonde espresso roast as the base. Included is sugar cookie syrup. What's unique about this option is that it's dairy free, made with almond milk.

Of course, this can be easily substituted with dairy, if you so prefer. You can order it either hot or iced, and it's adorned with festive red and green sprinkles on top.

No matter what your preferences might be, this winter's Starbucks menu has an option for everyone. After yet another hectic year, we all deserve a little bit of holiday cheer in the form of delicious coffee and delectable sweet treats.



Photo Contributed by @Starbucks Instagram

Starbucks released their limited-time only winter menu on Nov. 4,

dark chocolate shavings, and can be served iced, hot or as a frappuccino. It's a holiday classic, and a must-have for all Starbucks lovers.

Chocolate fans have a variety of options, with the "Toasted White Chocolate Mocha"

tents include an espresso base, steamed milk and Caramel Brulee sauce, which emulate the sweet/smoky flavors of a crème brûlée. The latte, which can be made hot, iced or as a frappuccino, has the most beautiful presentation, with a whipped cream swirl and caramel



Is "LAST NIGHT IN SOHO"
ANOTHER HIT FROM EDGAR WRIGHT?

By John Bizub
Contributing Writer

One of the most popular filmmakers of our generation has got to be the United Kingdom's own Edgar Wright. With films such as "Baby Driver," "Scott Pilgrim vs. The World" and "The Cornetto Trilogy," Wright has established himself as a household name and with every new release, as fans eagerly anticipate a new vision.

However, this is his first film that breaks away from the action and comedy genres and instead, it dives into horror. Wright has been very vocal about his love for the horror genre, which can be inferred after he name drops some iconic classics that influenced his new feature.

Wright's new film, "Last Night in Soho," tells the story of Eloise, a young, up and coming fashion designer who dreams big in London, but is soon involved with time traveling back to the past where she is a young singer named Sandy. The film stars Thomasin McKenzie, Anya Taylor Joy and Matt Smith.

Like many, I am a big fan of Wright's previous work. Growing up, I used to worship his style and still look forward to new projects from him; even if his protagonist's character writing comes off as red-flaggy (I'm looking at you, Scott Pilgrim). After I heard he was planning to dive into my favorite genre while

also playing with the giallo horror subgenre, I was already signed up from the moment filming began.

I wish I could write endless praises like I do with Wright's other works, but I could not be more disappointed with "Last Night in Soho." Trust me, this pains me to say it.

story and is more focused on attempting to say something. It's attempt to tell themes of femininity and nostalgia feel so shallow and unsubstantial, this coming from a white male who embodies the same personality as one of his lead characters.

Yes, Thomasin McKenzie and Anya Tay-

ly as the film unravels itself, there are more questions left open and less answered. This makes the storytelling a total mess.

It's one thing if a filmmaker had no familiarity with a new genre, but from a vocal standpoint, his attempt at scaring the audience and engaging with them, only makes me roll my eyes and yawn. This is surprising since Wright has shown an undying love for horror.

For many that are not aware, the Italian horror subgenre known as "giallos," is mainly about whimsical stories that are done by actors in an off-kilter way to provide a sense of unease. It also includes some dark humor acting intentionally, as ways to creep out audiences. Yes, some giallos have colorful lighting, but that should not be the main takeaway.

However, Wright saw that as such and sure it is nice to look at but for what purpose. Wright's fast paced editing feels so off here, in his other films it provides a sense of comedic relief, but in "Last Night in Soho" it feels more like a headache.

It really pains me to call "Last Night in Soho" my most disappointing film I have seen all year, it really does. With shallow themes, questionable intentions, unfocused storytelling and unclear motivations for its existence, Edgar Wright should just stick to comedy movies. He really succeeds at those.

D-



Anya Taylor-Joy, Thomasin McKenzie, Matt Smith and Michael Ajao in the "Last Night In Soho" movie poster.

Edgar Wright just does not understand how to make a horror film with a compelling

lor Joy are very good in the film, maybe even by far the best part, but it feels strange. Slow-

ED SHEERAN'S "EQUALS"
IS GOOD, BUT NOT HIS BEST

By Tatiana Ryan
Contributing Writer

After four and a half years since his last studio album, Ed Sheeran is finally back with new music. His new

album "=" (Equals), was released on Oct. 29, 2021 and has already been streamed over one billion times on Spotify.

This album details new milestones and experiences that the

megastar has gone through over the past few years including getting married, becoming a father and losing a close friend.

"Equals" is Ed Sheeran from a place we've never heard before, with a sound that is somehow completely different from anything he's done while being eerily familiar at the same time.

What Sheeran does and has always done best, is the specifics. Whether it be in his soft, sweet love songs or his fast-paced, rhythmic tracks, Sheeran's songwriting has always been at the forefront. The best songs on "Equals" are where this rings true.

The album's opener "Tides" recaps his past years and has the listener meet him where he is now with a melodic sound, reminiscent of "Castle on the Hill".

It's clear that Sheeran has taken quite a liking to dance beats, with the two singles from the album "Bad Habits" and "Shivers" being upbeat, chart-topping hits as was the case with 2017's "Shape of You".

However, it is this upbeat sound that drowns out much of the album. "Overpass Graffiti" is track five on "Equals" and it's beautiful lyrics depict

a feeling of alleviation when thinking back on a past breakup, but the beat of the song is all you're hearing.

The album's closer "Be Right Now" seems like an easy, simple final song that is much too similar to track ten "Stop the Rain". When compared to his past album closers ("Give Me Love", "Afire Love" and "Save Myself"), "Be Right Now" doesn't even come close.

"Divide" was released a full three years after "Multiply" and the wait was worth it, but "Equals" feels like the four years wait wasn't paid off in the ways you hoped.

"First Times" is by far the best song on the album, followed by "Visiting Hours". "First Times" has every single thing that Ed Sheeran does best. After selling out a record number of nights for a solo artist at Wembley Stadium back in 2015, Sheeran felt like he had reached his peak.

His career had been building to a point that he has now achieved, so what's next? The song is an ode to his wife and his realization that there are always things in life that you will do for the first time. The point of this song is to remember you are never out of first times.

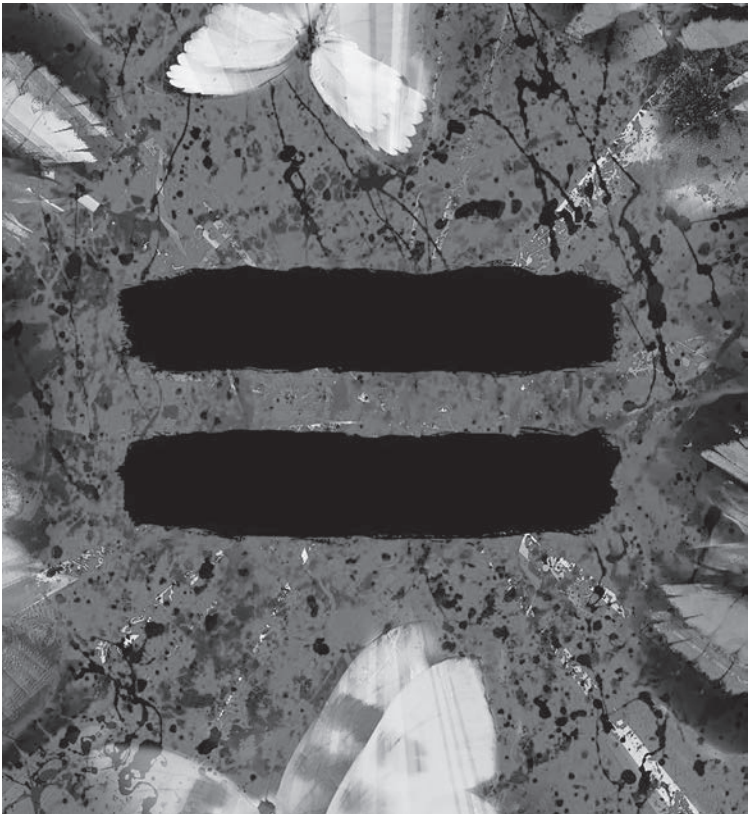
His eloquent songwriting here

is at an all time high, in his perfect simplicity during the second verse when he sings, "The greatest thing that I have achieved/Was four little words, down on one knee/You said, 'Darling, are you joking?'/And I just said, 'Please'".

No matter what kind of album Ed Sheeran would've put out, the comparisons to his previous work would've been immediate and endless, but it's nearly impossible not to compare when his discography is as truly great as it is.

Ed Sheeran is at a new point in his life, and it's only natural that his music grows and changes with him. If what you love most is the new-age beats and quick lyrics present on "+", will you find everything you're looking for on "="? Probably not. But that doesn't mean you won't find something.

"=" is full of love and loss and songs big enough to fill stadiums, but it also encompasses a level of growth that is new for Sheeran. So no, when compared to "Multiply" and "Divide", "Equals" does not stack up in the same way. But when compared to most other music put out by artists today, Ed Sheeran is still at the top of his game.



The butterflies on Sheeran's album cover signifies his big life events.





COFFEE BREAK

SATIRE, GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE

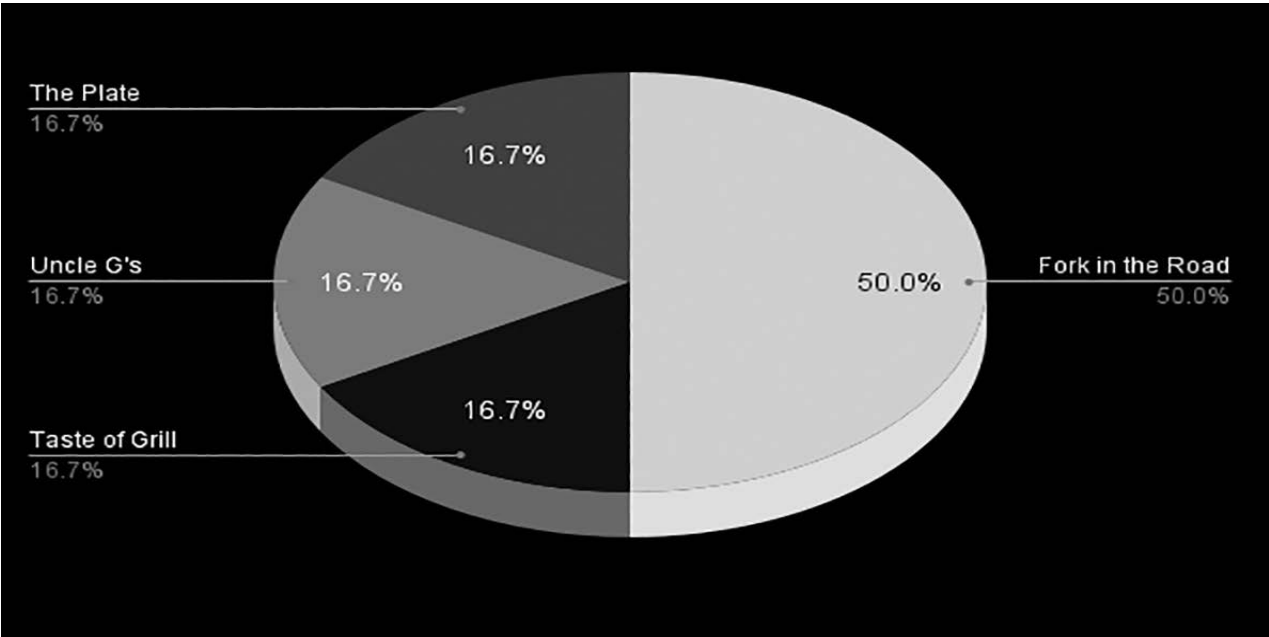
Editor: Tristan Cruz
tristan.cruz@student.fairfield.edu



The Mirror's Takes

Coffee Break has been running a section this semester called “The Mirror’s Takes”! Every week, we will put out The Mirror team’s opinion on a new topic and we encourage you to carry these debates on with your friends, roommates and classmates!

This week’s poll was: **Best Food Truck on Campus?**



Do you agree or disagree? Let us know what you think!

If you have any interesting things you would like to hear The Mirror’s take on, DM us on Twitter @FairfieldMirror to let us know, and keep an eye out for your suggestion in the Coffee Break section!

Harry Potter Word Search

- Harry Potter

Ron Weasley

Hermoine Granger

Draco Malfoy

Lord Voldemort

Albus Dumbledore

Severus Snape

Dobby

Rubeus Hagrid

Hedwig

Gryffindor

Hufflepuff

Ravenclaw

Slytherin
- Hogwarts

Azkaban

Diagon Alley

Hogsmeade

Remus Lupin

Sorting Hat

Lucius Malfoy

Neville Longbottom



Creative Commons / Pixabay

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C X R V D S T Y J G P L E A I S B I E G G N K W O

SPORTS

Sports Editor: Tommy Coppola
>>thomas.coppola@student.fairfield.edu



WE ARE
STAGS



Nov. 10	Nov. 11	Nov. 12	Nov. 13	Nov. 14	Nov. 15	Nov. 16
Field Hockey at University of Delaware 2021 National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship 1:00 p.m.	Men's Soccer at Rider University 2021 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Championship Lawrenceville, N.J. 7:00 p.m.	Men's and Women's Cross Country National Collegiate Athletic Association Northeast Regional Championship Boston, M.A. 11:00 AM Volleyball at Iona College New Rochelle, N.Y. 8:00 p.m.	FAIRFIELD	Men's and Women's Rowing Overpeck Invitational Teaneck, N. J. All Day Volleyball at Manhattan College Riverdale, N.Y. Women's Basketball at Rutgers University Piscataway, N.Y. 2:00 p.m. Men's Basketball at Boston College Chestnut Hill, M.A. 4:00 p.m.	FAIRFIELD	Men's Basketball vs. Medgar Evers College Bridgeport, Conn. 7:00 p.m.



Photos Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

The Fairfield University men's soccer team, the volleyball team and the field hockey team all found success this past weekend, each taking home big wins in their respective sports.

Stags Soar Across-The-Board on Sunday

By Thomas Coppola
Sports Editor

On Sunday, Nov. 7, multiple Fairfield University teams won in their respective sports. The men's soccer team was able to move on to the Metro Atlantic Athletic Association Semifinals with a win over Niagara University, the volleyball team secured the MAAC regular season championship as the best team in the conference and confirmed themselves as the top seed in the MAAC playoffs, and finally, the field hockey team was able to take home the Northeast Conference Championship with a 3-1 win over Long Island University.

The Stags were able to blank Niagara University in the MAAC men's soccer playoff by a score of 2-0. With goals from Rasmus

Sorensen Rejnhold '25 and Santiago Gonzalez '22, the team was able to push past the Purple Eagles into the MAAC semifinals, where their opponent is to be determined.

Unfortunately, the women's soccer team was thwarted by Monmouth University in the MAAC semifinals this past week by a score of 4-0, which would have propelled them to the MAAC Championship. However, the team will be back in no time for next season.

Another key win for Fairfield University athletics came from the RecPlex, where the volleyball team was able to take down Marist in just three sets. With this win, they clinched the top seed in the MAAC playoffs and secured the title of regular season champions in MAAC play. They currently have two more matches left, which are away games at Iona College and Manhattan College. Later this

month, they will travel up to Siena College who is hosting the MAAC Championship for a chance at glory.

Last but not least, the Fairfield University field hockey team was able to take home the North East Conference Championship this past Sunday, Nov. 7 in a 3-1 win over Long Island University, with all three goals coming in the final quarter of the game. To get to that final round, however, they were able to edge out Rider University in a 2-1 game last Friday. With a perfect 7-0 record in NEC play, they were undoubtedly the best team of the regular season, and they were able to prove that on Sunday by taking home the championship. This is the team's second NEC championship in three years.

Clearly, the Stags were able to secure success in many different facets this past weekend, and will look to continue this momentum moving into the spring season.

In this week's issue...

- Your Guide to the 2021-22 Basketball Season (Page 14)
- Opinion: The NFL Season Has Been Full of Surprises (Page 15)
- Men's Soccer Makes Waves In MAAC (Page 15)
- Women's Rugby Crushes Competition in Comeback Season (Page 16)

Your Guide to the 2021-22 Basketball Season

By Thomas Coppola
Sports Editor

The men's and women's basketball teams will begin their respective regular seasons this upcoming week. The men's team will travel to Providence College for a Tuesday Night tilt against the Friars at 7 p.m. on November 9, whereas the women's team will make their way over to Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport, Conn. for a home matchup against the Brown University Bears, also at 7 p.m. on November 9.

The last time that the Stags were able to outlast the Friars was 1968. Since then, the Fairfield University men's basketball team has unfortu-

nately lost 13 straight games to Providence. On Tuesday, however, they are looking to change that.

Fairfield University's men's basketball has a rough history with Providence College; in 24 games against them, they have only won one and lost 23. The last time the two faced each other was almost a year ago on Nov. 25, 2020, where the Stags fell 56-97 in Providence. The Stags and Friars will only get this once chance at each other this season; the first half of Fairfield's season will consist of mostly out-of-conference games, with the second half being entirely populated with Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference standoffs.

On the home front, however,

the women's basketball team looks to extend their winning record over Brown University, where they have won five games and lost three. Most recently, however, on Dec. 22, 2019, the Stags lost to the Bears by a score of 44-58. However, they were last able to beat Brown in November of 2012 with a 49-34 win.

The women's basketball schedule is broken down into nine out-of-conference games at the very beginning of the season, with the rest of the season being MAAC matchups.

The women's team this year will also be participating in the 2021 MAAC/ASUN Challenge at ESPN's Wide World of Sports Complex in

Lake Buena Vista, FL. The Atlantic Sun conference, abbreviated as ASUN, is a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I conference that hosts Southeastern US schools.

Representing the MAAC is Fairfield University, Iona College and Manhattan College, with Manhattan bringing both their men's and women's squads, and Iona bringing only their men's team. In the ASUN conference, Florida Gulf Coast University and Stetson University will be bringing their women's teams, with Liberty University and the University of North Alabama using only their men's teams.

Later into November, the Fairfield University women's team will be

facing off against Stetson University and Florida Gulf Coast University, which are both teams the Stags have never faced off against.

After the two teams' respective games on Tuesday, they will both go their separate ways again on the upcoming Sunday, where the men's team will take on Boston College on the road and the women's team will face off against Rutgers University, also taking on the role of the away team.

You can watch both of Tuesday's events live if you cannot make the games; the men's basketball game will be broadcasted on Fox Sports 1 and the women's basketball game can be watched on ESPN3.



The Fairfield University men's basketball team will tip off at Providence College on November 9 at 7pm, and the women's basketball team will face Brown University at home on November 9 at 7pm.

Weekly 5x4

Your 2021-2022 5x4 Columnists:
Tommy Coppola, Molly Lamendola, Julia Lanzillotta, Tobenna Ugwu and Sheila McCombs

Because we have witty things to say ...

What is the most useless object laying around in the Mirror office?

Has club rugby surprised you this season?

Weigh in: when does the holiday season start for you?

Use this as a free space to give a shoutout.



Tommy Coppola
Sports Editor

If anyone needs a crock pot, we have one for some reason.

Absolutely. I can't believe they recruited so many players, but I'm so glad to see them doing well!

The season begins as soon as I finish Thanksgiving dinner, but no earlier.

Shoutout to my family, they've been asking for one for a while so I had to deliver! And Madison Gallo because she asked.



Molly Lamendola
Editor-in-Chief

This question feels like a personal attack, as most of the "useless" stuff is from my dorm room. I do have a clothing steamer in the office and yes... the crock pot is also mine.

I've only ever watched the All Blacks.

February 2nd.

Shout out to the elves that make Yorkshire British Blend tea and the entire cast of "Love Actually."



Julia Lanzillotta
Executive Editor

There are too many to pick one, but maybe the projector that hasn't been turned on since the early 2000's.

I know how enthusiastic their athletes are, but I am a bit surprised to see how well they've done, especially as a club sport.

Usually after Thanksgiving, but this year I need some holiday cheer earlier.

Shout out to my Mom and Dad who read every issue. I miss you!



Tobenna Ugwu
Managing Editor

The broken keurig, and the unbalanced coffee table that we all use as a chair.

I'm definitely surprised!

After my last final, because up until that point it's Nightmares on North Benson Road.

Shout out to my roommate Tim, who reads The Mirror religiously.



Sheila McCombs
Managing Editor

The oldest copies of the AP Stylebook, which are literally no longer used.

I have been a club rugby fan for the last four years, so their success doesn't surprise me at all! I am so proud of them!

My Christmas season begins right about now toward the middle of November. Let's extend the magic people.

As I always do when I get the chance, I have to shout out my twin sister, Casey! She's perfect and I love her so much!

Opinion: The NFL Season Has Been Full of Surprises

By Sheila McCombs
Managing Editor

Can you believe that we are already halfway through the 2021 season for the National Football League? I feel like just yesterday I was turning on my TV to watch the kickoff between the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Dallas Cowboys. This season has been filled with twists and turns, and it already looks so different from when we started two months ago. Though it is so upsetting to even think about the season winding down, this is the perfect time to reevaluate my predictions for the season. It makes so much sense to see where all of the teams are at, now and looking toward going forward!

Let's start with the pleasant surprises. Of course, I have to shamelessly plug my wonderful, amazing, show-stopping Dallas Cowboys. Let me make it clear, I am a huge Cowboys fan so this may be biased, but I am amazed by their success this season. Dak Prescott at quarterback has been the comeback player of the year for me, and their last six wins in a row have been amazing to watch.

From Micah Parsons and Trevon Diggs on defense, they look perfect on both sides of the ball. Even though I was disappointed in how they performed against the Denver Broncos, I am choosing to believe that is a blip on the radar. I have absolutely no doubt that they are going to win their conference, and go to the playoffs for sure (Honestly, part of me wants to say the Super Bowl is in their future even though that feels like a big stretch, but

we can dream). My other surprise success story is Cooper Kupp, who plays wide receiver

for the Los Angeles Rams. Kupp was picked 69th overall in the NFL draft and he is playing like one of the first picked WRs in the league right now. He has vastly outperformed his reputation this season, and he is a huge part of the Los Angeles Rams' success this season in my eyes. Kupp currently leads the league in receiving yards and touchdowns and is one of the best in the National Football Conference West in terms of receptions this

year. The Rams have a terrific offense already, and they have an amazing record at 7-1 so far in the season. To me, Kupp has been making the offense look like it is perfectly planned every time. He has great ball awareness and energy

Moving onto the things I hoped for that have let me down: the Kansas City Chiefs have truly struggled throughout this season. They have been winning, but really only by small margins that display none of the dominance they had over the league last season. I am still really disappointed in the fact that they only had a 4-4 record going into this week, and now they have to play the top three teams in their league over the next three weeks (the Green Bay Packers, the Las Vegas Raiders and the Cowboys).

I just don't think that they can keep up with the rest of their division and after the spectacular season they had last year, I wanted to see so much more from them. For them to have a chance of coming out of the playoffs on top or even making it to the playoffs, they really need to start turning things around.

Now, in my most controversial opinion yet. I am shocked by the performance of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers this season, especially after they lost to The New Orleans Saints during week eight. Their record isn't spectacular to begin with, and then for Tom Brady to have four turnovers in one game was the last straw for me. I am sure that Brady will pull it together as playoff season gets closer, and I will be forced to eat my words, but as of right now I am saying this just doesn't look like the Buccaneers that I remember.

As I said at the beginning of the article, this will all look completely different in a couple of weeks or even by the end of this weekend, but that is why we love the NFL!



Trevon Diggs, Patrick Mahomes and Cooper Kupp have been three key players to watch this season.

that really comes in clutch for the Rams when they need him. He is the reason that I am 100 percent calling for the Rams to be in the Super Bowl this year.

Men's Soccer Makes Waves In MAAC

By Peyton Perry
Opinion Editor

Fairfield University men's soccer is headed for the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference semi-finals, with a 2-0 win against Niagara University, which took place on Sunday, Nov. 7.

This week's spotlight goes to Jonathan Filipe '22, who assisted the second goal of the game, scored by Santiago Gonzalez '22, and has served as a vital player for men's soccer during his four years at Fairfield.

Filipe is a renowned forward for the team and in the 2020-2021 season was ranked as the team's top scorer, with three goals and two assists. This season, that reputation seems to surely proceed with three goals being scored against Canisius College at Demske Sports Complex in Buffalo, NY, on October 30, in a 4-1 win.

After a tough loss against Marist College on November 3, Filipe said, "After the game, I felt a little disappointed that I wasn't able to impact the game enough to help my team get the victory but regardless, I was also very proud of the team for fighting throughout the entire season, this game included." HE also stated that "The result may have not gone our way but we are moving forward to achieve our team goal of winning the MAAC tournament."

According to a press release published on Fairfield University Stags, Filipe is one of the "four Fairfield University men's soccer student-athletes" who earned recognition from the MAAC this past week, placing second among MAAC scoring leaders; throughout this season, he has had ten goals and five assists, totaling 25 points through the 16-game regular season. These awards were announced on Nov. 8 by the MAAC and the selection of recipients was voted upon by MAAC scoring

leaders.

Filipe, along with fellow forward Thomas Drillien '24, took All-MAAC second-team accolades. The other two recipients were forward Rasmus Sorensen Rejnhold '25, who received a designated spot on the MAAC All-Rookie team, and defender Cormac Pike '22 who was granted a spot on the All-MAAC first team.

Filipe was the team's "most accurate shooter," having 28 attempts on the net throughout the 2021 season thus far, out of the total 56 attempts taken by the team as a whole.

"This has been my best season so far but it would never have been possible without the support from my teammates," says Filipe. "They have put in many extra hours with me, some even individually, which has strengthened our chemistry within the team and thankfully reflected on my performance this year."

Looking back at the other three recipients, Pike has done an exceptional job of controlling the Stags' defense on the field, which is only further shown in his receipt of All-MAAC honors in the 2020-21 spring season and MAAC All-Rookie laurels in 2018. Throughout his four years on the team, the defensive line has only allowed 1.31 goals per game, a significantly low number. Not only has Pike been of great help on defense, but he has also scored four goals and has had seven assists for a total of 15 points on the season.

The other recipient of the same award of Filipe is Drillien, who also was granted MAAC Co-Rookie of the Year and All-Rookie honors in 2020-2021. He is ranked as the second-best scorer on the team, with six goals and five assists for 17 points in total. He has played in every one of the 17 games thus far.

The last of the four recipients, Sorensen Rejnhold has put together one of the best first-

year seasons in Fairfield's history, scoring seven goals and two assists for 16 points. He was named MAAC Rookie of the Week on October 18 after scoring both goals in a win over Manhattan College and the third goal in a 2-0 decision over Iona College. "The forward led the team with three game-winning goals and scored on seven of his 13 shots on goal" according to the same press release.

All in all, Fairfield's Men's Soccer has had an incredible season, which will only continue as they head to the MAAC Tournament semifinals

with a 2-0 win over Niagara in a quarterfinal match on November 7. The team will head off to Rider University to play in a semifinal match on Nov. 11 with kick-off starting at 7 p.m.

"I do believe that the team is prepared to go into this tournament and we have progressively been developing as a team over the season," says Filipe. "The team has put a lot of effort into the season and we have bounced back from many games that didn't go our way, I do believe that we will be able to do it again."



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Senior Jonathan Filipe was able to lead the men's soccer team to a win over Niagara University.

Women's Rugby Crushes Competition in Comeback Season

By Thomas Coppola
Sports Editor

The Fairfield University women's club rugby team has been dominant all throughout the Tri-State Conference this year, earning themselves a bid in the conference championship.

With a recent double-overtime 29-24 victory over Montclair State University, the Division II-classified team has also punched their ticket into the national tournament which involves 16 of the nation's best teams. This "come-from-behind" win saw our Stags covered head to toe in mud, since rugby is a sport played entirely on grass fields. "It makes the game a bit harder to play, but winning a game like that proves the chemistry of the team," co-captain Delaney Hall '22 stated.

While everyone began moving back onto campus and the rugby season began peeking over the horizon, returning players on the team began to worry about the number of players they had. However, thanks to a massive recruiting campaign, the team was able to rally 15 new players who were taught the ins and outs of rugby. "We planned a bunch of fun events during our pre-season because we knew recruiting was crucial," co-captain Caitlin Wood '22 commented.

Before the season even started, the team was already tackling adversity; like Wood, her teammates were anxious about recruiting players. "We were nervous we were going to have to play down numbers," said Kieran McAllister '23. "The club fair and reaching out to first-years was a huge success and now we have over 15 new girls learning the sport."

Other upperclassmen understood how out-of-the-ordinary the sport may have seemed, but are grateful that their new players took the leap. "Rugby is not the typical sport girls come into college planning to play so we try and encourage girls to just take a chance and try it," senior co-captain Susan Cerulle said. "It is not as scary as

many girls think and the friends you make on the team are ones that will last a lifetime."

As most of the newcomers began to try out the sport for the first time, the squad traveled up to Vassar College for their first away game, which was the first time the team was allowed to play in over two years. Rugby, from the youth level up to international play, was put on pause during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this late September matchup, the Brewers beat the Stags 39-14.

Knowing what we know about this game, the women's club rugby team has been taking the season to gear up for their second battle with Vassar in the Tri-State Conference championship on Nov. 6. "Vassar is a very good team and to keep up with them we will need to make sure that our foundational-level skills are at their best, and then we can start to implement more detailed skill sets," Hall explained.

Head coach Jane Kim echoed a similar sentiment as her captains and players. "I can't speak to the changes this season because I am new to the team, but I would like to think that we have raised our level of talent and developed deeper skills and higher rugby IQ to make Vassar worry about us more than they used to," Kim stated. Although the team has seen a great deal of changes made over the last few years, they are adapting very well to the hand they were dealt.

Falling to Vassar early on in the season was just another step in building the chemistry of the team. With other very exciting moments throughout the season, the team has been able to have fun and create lasting memories while also playing their hardest on the field. In this season, most players felt as though the game against Montclair State University was the highlight of their season thus far. "Our last three games have been very memorable. I mean we just played Montclair State, and we were losing the entire second half, but managed to tie them up with ten minutes to go and hold them up twice. We then

tied it again in the first overtime, and won in the second overtime with a minute to go," Wood explained.

After finding a great amount of success during the regular season with an overall record of 5-1, the next steps are clear for the club. "After this weekend, one loss will be the end of our season," Hall said. "I want to go as far as possible in the tournament, but staying grounded in winning each game first will push us further, rather than focusing on the end goal of making it to North Carolina, where the semi-final and championship game of Nationals is held." The best eight teams will make the playoffs, but eight more will play in wildcard games to make the tournament.

After competing in both the conference championship against Vassar and the national tournament, there will be a brief break in the winter, where the team will be able to rest up for "Sevens", which is a league that takes place in the spring. "Sevens is a bunch of tournaments that we play in with seven girls as compared to 15," McAllister confirmed. "It gives a chance for the rookies to learn and play the sport before our major season in the fall."

Captains Wood and Hall, alongside co-captain Cerulle, have all expressed their gratitude for being able to lead the team this year and are thankful for the lifelong friendships they made through their time with the team. "I think being a captain of the team for me personally is about setting an example for the new girls and being a role model for how to act on and off the field," Cerulle said.

Hall feels a similar way, and acknowledges the fact that it is important to create relationships off the pitch. "The balance between fun and serious

is extremely important because while we want to win and stay competitive, we also want our time spent together to have meaning beyond rugby," Hall stated.

Looking beyond this season, this season has set a precedent for the future of Fairfield University women's club rugby. "The future looks bright as we continue to build out the team and add more talented athletes to the roster," Kim said. "We have the potential to sustain a national-playoff level team every year, and our success will hopefully continue to attract students to come out and try rugby."

In the conference championship, the Stags were stopped in their tracks in a 75-7 loss to Vassar College. "It was a tough loss but all the girls who played were able to learn a lot about the sport and grow as players in those 80 minutes," Emily Raia '24 stated.

The team has been very successful this season and has shown serious promise for the upcoming spring seasons as well as the future fall season coming up next school year, where the current rookies on the team will move up to a larger role for their team.



Photo Contributed by Chelsey Wright



Photo Contributed by Chelsey Wright

The Fairfield University women's club rugby team was able to secure a spot in the national tournament as well as the conference championship this season after a two-year pause in play.