

TOP 5 GAMES OF
SPRING BREAK
(3/4 - 3/12)

FRIDAY 3/4: WOMEN’S ICE HOCKEY ENDS SEASON ON A LOSS TO FRANKLIN PIERCE IN THE NEWHA SEMIFINALS

SUNDAY 3/6: WOMEN’S BOWLING CAPTURES THE NEC REGULAR SEASON TITLE AFTER THEIR WIN OVER LIU. THE PIONEERS WENT 16-5 AGAINST THE CONFERENCE

TUESDAY 3/8: MEN’S VOLLEYBALL SWEEPS AIC AS JACOB PETERSON AND IFE LOVERTON COMBINED FOR 12 KILLS

FRIDAY 3/11: WOMEN’S ROWING STARTED OFF THEIR SEASON AGAINST STETSON WITH A BEST TIME OF 6:47

SATURDAY 3/12 MEN’S GOLF WON THE SHU SPRING INVITATIONAL BEHIND TOP 5 FINISHES FOR MARCUS LIM AND NATHAN KIM

UPCOMING GAMES!

WEDNESDAY 3/16: MEN’S BASEBALL HEADS TO URI FOR A 3PM START

THURSDAY 3/17: WOMEN’S TENNIS TRAVELS TO RIVERSIDE, R.I. FOR A MATCH WITH PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

FRIDAY 3/18: MEN’S VOLLEYBALL TAKES ON THE BOYS OF CAMBRIDGE AS HARVARD COMES TO THE PITT CENTER FOR A 7PM START

SATURDAY 3/19: WOMEN’S SOFTBALL HOSTS A DOUBLE-HEADER AGAINST BRYANT IN THEIR FIRST NEC MATCHUP OF THE SEASON

SUNDAY 3/20: WOMEN’S LACROSSE GOES UP AGAINST THEIR CITY RIVALS AS THEY FACE THE FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY STAGS AT 5PM ON CAMPUS FIELD

Russia-Ukraine Conflict Update

BY SOPHIE CAMIZZI
News Editor



AP News

Moments caught on camera as the people of Ukraine continue to live through the nightmare of war.

With more than three weeks into the war in Ukraine, there have been many new developments as Russia continues to attack the war-stricken country.

“What’s happening in Ukraine is horrible,” said senior Shannon Tangel. “No one should have to ever live through war. People in Ukraine are dying, getting hurt or leaving everything to flee the country and it breaks my heart. I pray every day hoping for the war to stop because it’s just not okay.”

As of March 4 the Associated Press stated that Russian military forces have now doubled their efforts into capturing Ukraine’s capital, Kyiv, after an airstrike on a military base near the borders of Poland, a NATO-allied country, that killed at least 5 people and wounded 3.

“It’s very important for students to know about this because the war in Ukraine has the potential of expanding into other parts of Europe,” said Dr. Gary Rose, professor and chair in the Department of Government. “Once what Russia is doing starts affecting countries that are aligned with NATO, then the U.S., under treaty, will have an obligation to then become involved.”

“What is really frightening is that then we’re talking about two nuclear powers possibly at war with one another and God knows how something like that ends,” said Rose.

As the war in Ukraine continues, the U.S. has continued to impose more trade bans on Russian imports as a way to pressure Russia without direct involvement.

According to the Associated Press, some of these moves include revoking the “most favored nation” status for Russia, as well as banning imports of seafood, alcohol, diamonds and oil and gas products as a way to cripple the Russian economy. This economic retaliation has led to the Russian Ruble losing about half of its value and destructive inflation that could affect Putin’s ability to wage a prolonged war.

“Additionally, Congress approved a \$ billion emergency package of military aid for Ukraine and its European allies with around half the money for arming and equipping Ukraine and the cost of sending U.S. troops to other Eastern European nations. The rest includes humanitarian and economic assistance, strengthening allies’ defenses and protecting energy supplies and cybersecurity needs,” reported the Associated Press.

While this may seem like a positive thing, some have brought up concerns and issues about the timing of the aid.

“It takes a long time for military equipment to get to Ukraine and by the time it can get there, the whole city could be surrounded,” said Rose. “I think that NATO countries have responded pretty slowly to this. We had a lot more time to really arm the Ukrainians, but we should have done this three months ago. Not when they’re in the city when they’re having urban warfare breaking out. We’ve acted too slowly.”

Other members of the Sacred Heart community have raised concern for Ukrainian refugees who have fled their country in fear of the conflict.

“I incredibly sympathize with any nation who is trying to defend itself from any other threatening imperialist-minded leader or country,” said senior Daniele Doctor. “While the situation in Ukraine is worsening, the war is adding to the already known refugee crisis that is often ignored or rarely touched on.”

According to the Associated Press, “The U.N. has recorded at least 9 civilian deaths with at least 8 children among them, though it believes the true toll is much higher.”

“More than 2.6 million people have fled Ukraine since the start of the conflict. Many have been women and children, because men from 18-60 have stayed behind to fight and are forbidden from leaving the country,” reported the Associated Press.

While the events in Ukraine continue to unfold, many students hope for the safety of Ukrainian civilians and refugees who have been heavily affected by this crisis.

“I commend the strong patriotism and bravery of the people in Ukraine and hope that this war ends soon,” said Doctor.



AP News

A woman sits with her belongings in a makeshift home in a train station.

News

A Win for Women

BY COLLEEN SHAFFER
Staff Writer

According to the Associated Press, on Feb 2 the U.S. women’s soccer team reached a historic \$3 million settlement in a discrimination dispute, as well as a commitment to equalize pay and bonuses after years of battling for equal earnings.

“The \$3 million equal pay settlement was a huge win for the U.S women’s national team and their drive to win it brought people’s attention all over the world to see how prevalent this issue is,” said freshman Miriam Shomstein, center midfielder for the women’s soccer team. “Although it was a win, there still has to be a lot more exposure to women’s sports to truly reach gender equality.”

According to the Associated Press, “The legal battle began when five American stars sued three years after filing a complaint in April 2016 seeking damages under the federal Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.”

“However, the players will now split \$3 million as well as form an agreement with U.S. Soccer to establish \$2 million to benefit players in their post-soccer careers and charitable efforts aimed at growing the sport for women,” reported the Associated Press.

Some athletes at Sacred Heart feel that this settlement will set a new tone for gender equality for women involved in any sport, not only soccer.

“I honestly feel that it has taken a lot to get where we are today with the gender wage gap for women athletes and women in general,” said junior Nichol Green, midfielder for the women’s soccer team. “In society today, I think

that we are truly seeing change, and the settlement with the U.S. Women’s Soccer Team is a reflection of that.”

While many women’s teams continue to be paid less

Federation has until now benefited bonuses on payments from FIFA, which earmarked \$10 million for the men’s tournament and \$5 million for the women’s tournament. However, the U.S. women have won four World Cups since the program’s start in 1930 while the men haven’t reached a semifinal since 1930.”

“After growing up watching the U.S. team win year after year as well as out playing the men’s team, it was becoming frustrating to see women still fighting for their equal pay,” said Green. “I think that this will set the tone for others to manage their pay equality gaps between genders in a sports setting.”

The settlement was a victory for female athletes, but some say there are still many hurdles to overcome.

“This isn’t something that will be changed overnight, but there are small ‘wins’ happening daily,” said Kristen Habili, Assistant Director of Athletic Communications. “The settlement that the U.S. team came to is a very big win, but that didn’t happen without the smaller ones



AP NEWS

Alex Morgan (left) and Megan Rapinoe (right) attend press conference and express their opinions.

than their male counterparts, some have brought up comparisons of win-loss percentages between the two teams to question the wage gap.

According to the Associated Press, “The U.S. Soccer

A Glimpse of Ukraine

PHOTO AND CAPTIONS BY AP NEWS



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Residents prepare tea in basement being used as a bomb shelter(left). Debris scatters a kindergarten that was damaged in Kharkiv (right).



AP NEWS

Kate, who fled Ukraine, reads to her daughter in refugee center in Korczowa (left). An older woman who has fled Ukraine is reunited after crossing boarding in Medyka, Poland (right).

Mask Mandates Change: Good to See Your Face

BY ASHLIN HALEY & BROOKE SENDER
Perspectives Editor & Staff Writer

On Feb. 24, The Coronavirus Planning Team at Sacred Heart sent out a mass email detailing mask mandate changes on campus. In response to low numbers of positive cases on campus and in surrounding towns and cities, the university decided that the mandates can be updated, starting on March 1.

The Coronavirus Planning Team stated “At that time, you will no longer need to wear a mask indoors, except in the following places: Classrooms, student health services, labs and clinicals, varsity and club sports athletics training rooms, and shuttles.”

Similarly, Connecticut’s governor, Ned Lamont, has altered statewide mandates, leaving the mask mandates up to the local communities for schools, according to Connecticut Official State Website. These plans were effective starting on Feb. 28, with many other states following suit.

As the decision of whether to mandate masks in school was left up to the individual institutions, Sacred Heart University was one of many colleges to take advantage of this opportunity and modify their mask regulations.

“I’m glad to see Sacred Heart is taking steps to loosen mask regulations. I think it’s a step in the right direction, but with a topic as controversial as this it’s almost guaranteed that not everyone will be happy with the decision,” said junior Alyssa McNulty.

Other students say that walking around campus feels interesting due to loosened restrictions.

“It’s different being able to see people’s faces now in the dining halls, gyms, hallways, etc. Sometimes I forget that you are able to take it off because we have been wearing masks for so long,” said senior Abby Radwanski. “I think being able to see people’s faces now really changes the feeling on campus in a good way.”

On the other hand, with many people on both sides of the mask debate, will everyone respect each other’s decision to wear a mask or not to wear a mask?

“Personally, if I’m not required to, I won’t wear a mask because it does get annoying, but I won’t judge others for still wearing one. I don’t know who they live with or how



Instagram, @shu_relay4life
Chris Hughes (left) and Maura Dowd (right) in Linda’s mask-free.



Sara Anastasi, Staff Photographer
SHU students enjoying the ability to chat without masks in the hallways.

cloth on your face is not only annoying, but people are sensitive to sensory disruptions,” said senior Maggie Hope.

Many students have found it refreshing to be able to do everyday activities without a mask on.

“I go to the gym on campus every day and it’s much easier to workout without one on. I also play intramural basketball in the gym and it feels good to be able to be active with others without wearing a mask,” said senior Cory Hutchison.

Junior Brielle Furci said “Masks or no masks, the debate around it is like debating students’ mental health vs. their physical health and the likelihood of contracting COVID. They are trying to decide which ranks higher when the truth is that everything varies from person to person.”

Others say that they enjoy the ability to choose where they want to wear a mask.

“I like that Sacred Heart is leaving it up to the individual to make their decisions. If a person wants to wear a mask or doesn’t want to, their decisions should be respected,” said senior Sara Fagan. “It’s accommodating to all students’ personal choices for masks.”

they feel about the pandemic,” said junior Mike Courtney.

Some students have been shocked by the decision to loosen the mandate at this point in the semester.

“I’m very surprised by the timing of this update. I know my hometown and many surrounding towns just had winter break,” said sophomore Terrence Carey. “People were all over the place, flying and driving. With spring break coming up many kids are going to go home and there’s a possibility it could spread like wildfire again.”

Others comment on the possible distractions of masks.

“I feel that masks greatly affect a student’s learning.

Having this piece of

Spring Has Sprung

BY DEANNA DRAKOPOULOS & SYDNEY GIACALONE
Perspectives Editor & Staff Writer

What are you looking forward to during the Spring season?

“I am excited for the warm weather, watching the sunsets, seeing the flowers bloom and the grass get greener and the sunshine,” said sophomore Bridget Pfeifer.

March 20 officially marks the first day to kick off the spring season. Many students expressed their excitement of enjoying the upcoming season on campus and taking advantage of the warmer weather.

“Going on walks around campus with my friends during the springtime is one of the best parts of the season for me,” said freshman Blerta Lita.

While transitioning from the cold winter season to the warm spring season, some students have said that they are looking forward to spending more time outdoors and breathing the fresh air.

“I am most looking forward to not having to wear a huge winter coat around campus and just being able to drive around with my windows down,” said junior Erica Savoca. “I really do believe that spring has a much happier vibe than winter.”

Likewise, some students feel the spring air is rejuvenating.

“When spring comes around it is so refreshing and fun,” said junior Gianna Romagnoli. “Everyone is excited for winter to be over, and it is my favorite time to be at school and enjoy time with my friends.”

Many students are looking forward to being able to do work outdoors again.

“I love to do my work outside, so I am really looking forward to being able to do that again,” said senior Anna Pirkil.

During the spring, there are plenty of events, activities and sports games that students can attend to enjoy the season and spend time with their friends.

“I like going to many sporting events on campus during the spring because it’s something to do that is outdoors to enjoy the sun and I can get together with all my

friends,” said sophomore Abigail Mitchell.

Other students enjoy relaxing with their friends when the warmer weather comes around.

“Some days, my friends and I love taking trips to the beaches in Fairfield to spend time together and relax,” said sophomore Alexandra Licata.

Many students feel that the warm weather during the spring season has a big influence on students’ moods and emotions.

“I think that the warm weather definitely affects the lives of students and faculty on campus,” said sophomore Isabella Vaccaro. “It automatically puts people in a much better mood when they are allowed to do more activities or go to more events on campus.”

Some students enjoy when faculty members take the warm weather as an opportunity to hold class outdoors.

“I hope that this spring one of my classes are held outdoors,” said sophomore Jessica Zarilli. “I really enjoyed my classes that were outdoors last spring, and I feel that it puts everyone in a better mood.”

Some students expressed how daylight allows them more time outdoors, especially at night.

“As it starts to become nicer out in the spring, I love to walk and drive around campus, especially at night because it starts to become darker out later in the nighttime, which is one of my favorite parts about the springtime,” said sophomore Alie LeFrancis.

Some students have said that they are excited to see what Sacred Heart has in store for activities and events during the springtime.

“I am definitely going to attend some events on campus and get the most out of the SHU experience during the spring season,” said Vaccaro.

Features

Mental Health on Campus

BY SARA ANASTASI
Staff Writer

Have you noticed a decline in your mental health within the past year? If the answer is yes, you are not alone. Within the past year and a half, Sacred Heart University has seen more request leaves of absence related to mental health than the past three to five years, according to Larry Wielk, Dean of Students.

“The number of students who take a mental health leave may be going from what might have been in the past an average of three per semester to 16 to 20 or more,” said Wielk.

Covid-19 was a large contributing factor to this mental health crisis, according to Wielk. The pandemic may not have been the direct cause of these mental health issues, he said; however, it was certainly a catalyst.

“Mental health issues were increasing in our country even before the pandemic,” said James Geisler, Director of Student Wellness Services. “Add missed opportunities, various restrictions, isolation, lack of structure, to name a few, and you have a recipe for mental health to be at risk for some form of deterioration.”

In response to this, Sacred Heart has taken several courses of action including their recent partnership with the JED Foundation, the Healthy Minds Study (HMS) and the “You at College” app.

“We’re still not 100 percent sure that we’re meeting the needs of our population or meeting them appropriately,” said Wielk. “That’s part of where JED comes in.”

JED is a nonprofit organization focused on protecting the emotional health of students and suicide prevention efforts.

“This is a four-year partnership that we hope contributes to sustainable outcomes well after the four years we are

working with JED,” said Geisler.

In addition, Sacred Heart is launching the HMS survey, which is embedded within the JED initiative. This assessment will target the unique demands of students, as JED provides recommendations based on on-campus



Instagram, @belatinanews
It is important to prioritize positive self talk as this graphic encourages.

needs.

“I cannot stress enough how important it is that students complete this survey,” said Geisler.

He urges students to look out for emails throughout early March that will promote incentives and the launch date for the survey.

The new “You at College” app focuses on personalized well-being and promotes resilience. It contains over 2,500 evidence-based resources and is interactive in that students are able to complete self-assessments of their wellness and engage in goal development.

More information about the app will be coming out later in the semester, according to Geisler.

Wielk also announced that the university will be relocating its counseling staff as of this summer.

“This is an essential service,” said Wielk. “We need more space to give them a true home and a true counseling center that would be more permanent.”

Sacred Heart also offers specialized counseling for student-athletes. Kathleen Early is the university’s Athletics Counselor and has the background of being a Division I athlete herself.

She is an active member of initiatives and groups, focusing on the specific needs within the student-athlete population.

“‘Heart to Heart’ is an amazing club for student-athletes to raise awareness and feel supported by their fellow peers,” said sophomore Kate Bell, who is a member of the club herself.

According to Wielk, there is less of a stigma around mental health issues in this day and age and it is important to maintain this by not remaining silent.

“I think the biggest thing is that we have to keep this conversation going really beyond this semester, into next year, and beyond,” said Wielk.

Relay for Life is Back at SHU

BY ISABEL HAGLUND
Staff Writer

Last semester, a group of students banded together to revive Sacred Heart’s Relay for Life club. Relay for Life is a walk event with the goal to raise money for the American Cancer Society.

“The purpose of this club is to bring together the Sacred Heart community for a common cause of fighting cancer,” said senior Co-President Kristine Hawkins.

Relay for Life was a club at Sacred Heart until 2019 when interest in the club decreased. Hawkins and her Co-President Molly Kearns trail-blazed the relaunch of the club.

Hawkins and Kearns put together an executive board of Sacred Heart students that are all aspiring healthcare professionals.

“We all have the passion for helping people and the Relay for Life event and American Cancer Association does amazing work helping further research,” said Sacred Heart alumnus Elizabeth Hamilton.

Hamilton participated in the club last semester before she graduated. She is now leading a team of alumni to participate in the event.

The club works with the American Cancer Society to raise money for conducting research, supporting patients and educating individuals about prevention.

According to the American Cancer Society, 1 in 3 people will be diagnosed with cancer during their lifetime.



Contributed by FBSchedule.com
Relay for Life will be hosted on Sacred Heart University's very own, Campus Field.



Instagram, @shu_relay4life
The Relay For Life Logo used on the Instagram account.

Many members of the Relay for Life club have been affected in some way by cancer and want to help combat this issue.

“I relay for my aunt who lost her tough battle against cancer in May of 2021,” said senior club member Jillian Schuellain. “I decided to start a team named “RB” in her honor.”

The club has given students a place to gather, feel supported, talk about their personal experiences and how cancer has affected their lives.

“We want these students to know they are not going to go through this alone and that we are there to support them and their family,” said Hawkins.

All the students in the club

have one thing in common.

“We are all very passionate towards the fight against cancer,” said Schuellain. “Having a group of people who can relate to and support one another with similar experiences is extremely special and I am so grateful for that.”

The Relay for Life event is carnival themed and will be held on the Sacred Heart University football field.

“Things we anticipate to be featured are raffle baskets, various carnival games, a cornhole and spike ball tournament and even a dunk tank,” said social media chair Tara Hangerman.

Everyone is welcome to attend the event, even those who do not attend Sacred Heart. The event will take place on Friday, April 29.

“At the event, aside from raising money for the ACS, one of our biggest priorities is to honor cancer survivors and health care workers,” said Hawkins.

The first lap of the relay is the survivors lap, honoring and celebrating those who have beat their battle with cancer. While the second lap is for healthcare workers and caregivers, honoring those who care for their patients, family or friends.

“Having an event where people can come together to acknowledge a problem of that magnitude while honoring the patient and caregivers is beautiful,” said Hamilton.

The Relay for Life club meets biweekly on Tuesdays at 9:00pm in room NC107. To sign up for the event and find out more information about both the club and relay, follow @shu-relay4life on Instagram.

Spotlight



Women’s History Month

BY JILLIAN REIS AND JESSICA FONTAINE ”

In celebration of Women’s History Month, Audrey’s Corner shines a spotlight on student writers and artists whose work exemplifies the complexity and beauty of womanhood.

The Beauty in Our Shadows
By: Jessica Fontaine



Dolls and Digletts
By: Jillian Reis

I grew up as a huge nerd and to be fair, not much has changed since then. When I was a kid, I loved to play with Beyblades and Pokémon cards. I loved to play with dolls, too. At some point, I realized a difference in my mom’s reaction when I asked for a Pokémon game instead of a new Barbie.

I was a girl.

Girls were supposed to love dolls, not digletts.

As I got older, I came to fully understand gender prejudice. Girls are expected to put on makeup and love fashion and talk about cute boys. I hated having to put on makeup and although I tried to dress nice for school, I didn’t know why I had to when all the boys got to wear t-shirts and shorts. The standards have always been set higher for girls in terms of appearance because someday we’ll need to charm a man with our good looks. That’s why girls are made to play with dolls; we must learn to idolize Barbie’s perfect body and perfect face so that even as girls we know what the standard is.

Now as a college student I have learned a valuable lesson: Gender prejudice is stupid.

Learning this lesson has been freeing. I no longer worry about dressing the part while going to school. I wear whatever I am feeling for that day. That might be a killer outfit, or it might be a sweatshirt and jeans. I don’t hate makeup anymore because I don’t feel pressured to wear it. When I do, I do it because it makes me feel pretty, not because I am trying to reel in a guy. I still play Pokémon. It may seem childish at this point in my life, but it helps me remember the girl who felt like she wasn’t one because she liked something everyone else told her was not for her.

All that being said, here are some tips:

- 1.Dress for you
- Dress however you want. If you want to look like Dua Lipa, go for it! If you want to look like a human blanket, go for it! How you look is up to you!
- 2.Makeup is not a must
- If you don’t feel like wearing makeup, you don’t have to wear makeup. Your life is about loving you not trying to reel in some Chad who thinks beauty is a personality trait.
- 3.Challenge people
- If somebody tells you must do something because you’re a girl, ask them why? Call them out on their gender prejudice. If they feel the need to challenge your interests, you should challenge them right back.

At the end of the day, your life is in your hands and there’s nobody else who can love you like you.

Fashion: My Bump, My Lovely Lady Bump

BY CODI LYNDERS
Staff Writer

Have you seen Rihanna’s latest maternity fashion? Anyone scrolling through social media on Feb 2 might have seen the 34 year-old singer, entrepreneur and fashion mogul’s pregnancy announcement with partner A\$AP Rocky.

In the photos posted to her Instagram and Twitter, Rihanna is seen in New York City dressed in a pink vintage Chanel padded coat, light wash ripped jeans and multiple jeweled chains adorning her body.

“I really like her fashion choices throughout her pregnancy. I think these pieces are very on brand for her and reflect her unique style,” Fashion Club Vice President, junior Adrianna Byczko said. “I really like how she is pushing the envelope with maternity wear.”

There are many people who seem to agree that Rihanna is taking maternity fashion to the next level.

According to BuzzFeed News, “Many fans have even credited the Fenty Beauty founder with ‘inspiring’ people, pregnant or otherwise, to embrace their bodies ‘at all stages.’”

Some students at Sacred Heart University are in favor of Rihanna’s choices, saying the singer is pushing others to be more daring.

“I feel like she’s giving a lot of women confidence to do the same. Especially those who may have felt pressured to cover up and change their fashion choices just because they’re pregnant,” said junior Tania Montano.

According to BuzzFeed News, some celebrities try to cover up their pregnancy while making public appearances.

“But with Rihanna doing things differently and refusing to hide her bump, fans have praised her for ‘setting trends’ and reworking the current beauty standards in play for pregnant people, which is only to be expected, given that she’s previously enlisted several pregnant models to walk in her Savage X Fenty fashion show,” said BuzzFeed.

In an interview with Refinery29, Rihanna explained that she is trying to break away from conservative opinions surrounding pregnancy style.

In the interview, Rihanna said, “When women get pregnant, society tends to make it feel like you hide, hide your sexy and that you’re not sexy right now... So I’m trying stuff that I might not have even had the confidence to try before I was pregnant. The strappiest, the thinnest and the more cut-outs, the better.”

Rihanna wore just that during her first red carpet while pregnant at an event in Los Angeles on Feb 11 with Vogue describing her look as a “thrillingly skin-baring outfit by the cult Italian brand The Attico.”

According to Vogue, the green sequin top and silver to purple ombre pants created a shredded look that hung from her body elegantly, while her Chopard diamond earrings, Messika diamond rings and Manolo Blahnik shoes pulled the ensemble together.

With such bold choices, Rihanna has faced backlash from those who believe she should cover up. However, not everyone is quick to judge.

“I think it’s perfectly fine for people to show however much skin they want during pregnancy because it’s still their body,” said Montano.

“Even though being a mother is an exhausting job it doesn’t have to result in someone’s personality being challenged,” said Byczko.

Fashion Marketing Prof. David Loranger said that Rihanna’s maternity wear should not be shocking when Demi Moore’s iconic 1991 Vanity Fair photoshoot exists.

Loranger said that people look to those who have “uniform life experiences,” making it possible that expectant mothers might change their purchasing decisions to reflect Rihanna’s high fashion and trendy clothes.

This can “lead to diluted interpretations of the looks that Rihanna is wearing that inspire more mainstream clothing at stores like Target and H&M,” said Loranger.

Or maybe Rihanna is simply enjoying her time being pregnant and, as Loranger said, “just trying to have fun with it.”



Instagram, @badgalriri
A\$AP Rocky (left) and Rihanna (right) pose for her pregnancy photoshoot.

Arts & Entertainment

“I Will Always Love You”

BY STEPHANIE PATELLA
Staff Writer

Working nine to five, Dolly Parton is helping others make a living. Country singer-songwriter Dolly Parton and her team at Dollywood Parks & Resorts created a tuition-free plan for their employees effective on Feb. 24. According to ABC 7 News, all full-time, part-time and seasonal employees will have access to this educational opportunity and not need to worry about paying off student loans. Herschend Enterprises, the owner of Dollywood, is responsible for providing this financial compensation. They consist of privately owned enterprises, which together, hold the title of America’s largest themed attractions corporation. The CEO of Herschend Enterprises, Andrew Wexler, believes that this effort will enable endless opportunities for their employees without burdening that financial stress. According to Forbes, Wexler said “Whether it’s to pursue a new dream or advance their career with us, we care about our employees’ personal and professional growth, because we believe that their futures should be grown with love, not loans.” Assistant Director of Sacred Heart University’s Greek Life, Kathryn Ionta, was able to experience that love firsthand on a family trip to Dollywood. “It was one of the best trips we had ever taken. I remember feeling an intangible sense of wonder walking into the theme park unlike I had ever felt at other, more well-known parks,” Ionta said. “It wasn’t until I got older that I learned about all of the good Dolly Parton has brought into this world, specifically to her local community. She has clearly created a place where employees love to work which, in turn, creates a lasting imprint for their guests.” According to Forbes, in addition to eliminating Dollywood employee’s student loans, Parton has also focused on advocating for childhood education through Imagination Library. Inspired by her father’s reading and writing disability, Parton established Imagination Library in 1995 to provide children with the resources to read at a young age. According

to Billboard, the mission is to send one book per month to children enrolled in schools in Sevier County, Tennessee, Parton’s hometown. Parton said to the Imagination Library’s website, “When I was growing up in the hills of East Tennessee, I knew my dreams would come true. I know there are children in your community with their own dreams. Who knows, maybe there is a little girl whose dream is to be a writer and singer.” Ionta noticed a similarity between the philanthropy of Imagination Library and one particular Greek Life organization on campus. “Specifically at Sacred Heart, Phi Sigma Sigma puts its mission into action through their partnership with local schools and backpack and school supply fundraising drives,” said Ionta. Parton’s philanthropic acts don’t stop there. According to Fox News, she donated \$1 million to fund coronavirus research conducted at Vanderbilt University in 2021. In an interview with U.K.’s Awesome Radio, Parton said “I probably get a lot more credit than I deserve, but I was happy to be part of that and to be able to try to stop something in its tracks that’s really become such a monster for all of us.” Despite her long list of donations, upon hearing Parton’s name, philanthropist may not always come to mind for young Disney fans. “I think of ‘Hannah Montana’ when she played Aunt Dolly,” said senior Kaylie Mallegol. “I know that sounds silly, but as part of the Disney channel generation, that was the first time I ever heard about her.” While Mallegol may think of her role on Disney, Ionta believes Parton’s generosity is at the forefront of her character. “If there is one ‘celebrity’ to celebrate, it is surely Dolly. I don’t believe I can think of another individual who has used all of her success, both in influence and wealth, to help as many people,” said Ionta.

Stars, Celebrities, and Scandals

BY MICHAEL MORELLI
Staff Writer

On Feb. 2, the mini-series “Pam & Tommy” began streaming on Hulu. The series is a dramatized retelling surrounding the release of Pamela Anderson and Tommy Lee’s personal sex tape in 1996. The show stars Sebastian Stan as Lee, Lily James as Anderson and Seth Rogan as Rand Gauthier, the man responsible for the leaked tape. The final episode to the eight-episode mini-series was released on March 9. Many fans of the show said they were enjoying the series as each new episode was released. “It’s a good show, it just sucks that it’s based on real events,” said senior Colleen Bertolini. “But props to the makeup crew and the entire cosmetic crew. It’s incredible how much alike the cast looks.” According to Vogue, getting James to look exactly like Anderson was an intense process. “For each artist, transforming James was a career-defining challenge and dream project.” Preparing James to look like Anderson was a four-hour process. The team had to heavily alter James’ hair, teeth and breasts to emulate Anderson. Anderson has been reported saying she herself would avoid the show. There are also many claims that state James reached out to Anderson during production, but heard no response. Some fans were admittedly troubled by this fact. “It’s making her relive it again and I don’t think that’s a good thing,” said Bertolini. “If you’re making a show about a specific person, you’re the one telling the audience how to feel about them,” said senior Patrick Coyne. “It’s a good show, but they needed to get her consent, otherwise it’s not right.” Dr. Lori Bindig Yousman, the department chair of communications studies at Sacred Heart, said it became complicated when the tape became a part of pop culture. “We can see how she was treated, and we can see how she doesn’t want to live through that

again, which is understandable.” “The creators of the show are trying to use this as a case study to explore the internet, society and gender,” said Yousman. “While I can see why she doesn’t endorse this as a person, I can also see that the series is trying to form a social commentary, rather than a salacious movie of the week.” Yousman isn’t the only one with these beliefs. “Anderson was a sex symbol. She starred in Playboy and moved to TV. Because of how much skin she showed willingly, during the time of the tapes release, no one thought it was such a big deal for them to view it without her consent now,” said junior Alaina DeRose. According to The New York Times, the show uses the tape to explore the American culture of the 90s. “The series made the celebrity sex tape a defining artifact of the internet age. The show has more on its mind than celebrity antics... although it has those, too.” Yousman also explained that the show explores the difficulties of women very well. “As you get into that deposition episode, you can see how brutal it is as a woman in society,” said Yousman. During said deposition, Anderson is asked increasingly inappropriate and unrelated questions about the tape. Yousman added that the deposition scene was included to emphasize how poorly Anderson was treated simply for being a woman. “As much as it is about our understanding of a sexist society, the internet and the construction of femininity, there’s so much in it about masculinity and class,” said Yousman. “Anderson was collateral in this situation.”

Music Review: A Band for the Weirdos

BY MARIA JEAN ZEGARELLI
Staff Writer

Looking for that extra something to add to your playlist? Your search is over. British indie-rock band, Glass Animals, has a sound for all alternative music tastes. Led by singer, songwriter and producer Dave Bayley, along with childhood friends Joe Seaward, Ed Irwin-Singer and Drew MacFarlen, Glass Animals has hit the top charts on Billboard in the United States. According to All Music, the skilled genre-mashers bring synth pop, indie, R&B and hip-hop together in innovative and inviting ways. The band’s albums include a combination of hypnotic beats, rippling guitars and aquatic synths, resulting in slightly alien yet alluring tracks, like the certified platinum single “Goosey.” “I am a big fan of indie and rock music. Though I wouldn’t consider Glass Animals to be stuck to those specific genres. I believe that all their albums and all their songs pull pieces from different genres like techno. This is what makes them so interesting to listen to. You never know what king of sound you’re going to hear next,” said junior Nick Amato. According to All Music, Glass Animals was formed in 2010 and chose their name by selecting random words in the dictionary. Bayley began writing songs on his computer while attending King’s College and sharing them with his friend. It wasn’t long until they all started playing together. “The first song I listened to by Glass Animals was freshman year. I wasn’t familiar with the band though I remember one of their song’s ‘blowing up’ on my TikTok feed. ‘Take a Slice’ was the first song I listened to by the band, and I’ve been a fan of them ever since,” said junior Alaina DeRose. Their album “ZABA” arrived in June of 2014, inspired by William Steig’s book “The Zabajaba Jungle.” According to All Music, the album reached No. 12 on Australia’s ARIA chart and eventually topped Billboard’s Alternative New Artists Chart in the U.S. a year after its release. The album and the band’s growing popularity led to a collaboration with Joey Bada\$\$ in the Oct. 2015 single, “Lose Control.” In Aug. 2020, the band released their studio album “Dreamland,” introducing more autobiographical song writing to Glass Animal’s lively sound. According to the Governors Ball Music Festival website, the band marked their first Top debut on Billboard’s Top 200, while their global smash hit, “Heat Waves,” amassed millions of streams to date, went Double Platinum in the U.S., gave the band their first No. 1 on the U.S. Alternative Radio Chart and hit Top Five on the Spotify Global Chart. “You most likely would know the song if you heard it. The beat, the whole album frankly, has a very chill tone that falls into the indie alternative category, though the band continues to sneak in very different sounds into all their songs. This is one thing that makes them so unique,” said junior Evan Cormier. The band has upcoming shows in the U.K. but will be in the States come June for The Governors Ball Music Festival at Citi Field. Glass Animals continues to redefine what alternative can be. Recently, the band released their new single “I Don’t Wanna Talk (I Just Wanna Dance),” evidently taking over airwaves as fans celebrate their return to live shows. According to Forbes, skyrocketing to the forefront of popular culture, the band has delivered performances on “The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon,” “Ellen,” “Good Morning America” and “The Late Late Show with James Cordon.” Their music isn’t the only thing that sets them apart from other groups. Their music videos are just as weird as you would expect. Taking over sound and stage, Glass Animals is a band you don’t want to miss out on.

NEC Winter Championship Season

BY BRENDAN CAPOZZI
Staff Writer

Over the past few weeks, many of Sacred Heart’s athletic programs competed in their respective conference championships. Members of the fencing, track and field and swimming and diving teams all took home medals from their competitions.

The men’s fencing team competed in the New England Intercollegiate Fencing Conference (NEIFC) championship meet at Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. on Feb. 26. Overall, they won gold as the three-weapon team and the saber squad secured first place to become NEIFC champions.

“Going into the weekend, I felt really relaxed because I was eager to have a fun time and see how I could do,” said sophomore Vijay Ganta. “It felt amazing to get first in the saber competition because it showed that all of our hard work is paying off.”

Senior captain Cameron Silver was the motivator for the team heading into the NEIFC championship and was proud of the way everyone competed.

“As the captain, I just wanted everyone to work their hardest and feel like they were improving,” said Silver. “We went in with a mindset of ‘we have something to prove and want to show everyone that we are the best.’ What was the most important win to me was the whole team winning first because you want everyone to win.”

Another team that took home medals at their conference championship was the swimming and diving team. They headed to Geneva, Ohio to take part in the NEC conference meet from Feb. 22-26. They had several top ten finishes and placed fifth overall in the conference with a combined score of 378.5 points.

Senior Megan McLaughlin had a medal-winning performance and placed third in the 3-meter dive finals with a score of 216.20.

“I felt very prepared because two weeks up to the meet we did all the dives that we would be doing at NEC’s,” said McLaughlin. “We were very excited because of the

preparation we did leading up to the meet and were ready to show off.”

McLaughlin’s coach, Adam Vance, was also named NEC diving coach of the year. This was a big accomplishment for the program.

“I did not have one doubt in my mind that he would win the award,” said McLaughlin. “At the end of the meet, our head coach John Spadafina told us to not get changed because Adam is probably going to win this award.”

The third sport that found success at their conference meet was the men’s and women’s track and field team. They competed at the indoor NEC championship meet on Feb. 20-21 in Staten Island, NY.

One Pioneer who had a historic performance was junior Kaylee Stenderowicz. Not only did she take home first in the triple jump, but she also broke a school record with a 12.03m leap.

“It really was one of the best feelings ever, it feels like all the hard work has finally paid off,” said Stenderowicz. “Getting first would have been exciting regardless, but it was even more special to get first with a PR and a school record.”

In addition to Stenderowicz getting on the podium, the men’s 4x400 team consisting of Lance Hayes, Rafael Mahario, Jonathan Mahon and Joseph Morrone earned third place. Graduate student Abbie Mokwuah also earned two medals, winning a silver in shot put and then setting a personal best in the weight throw at 14.95m on her way to the gold. She was named NEC Field Athlete of the Meet for her accomplishments.

As the three teams reminisce about their seasons following their conference championships, the spring sports season at Sacred Heart is well underway, with hopes of bringing back as many conference championships as possible back to Fairfield.

Sacred Heart Athletics contributed to this article.

One Game at a Time

BY ROBERT FINIZIO & KENDALL VERSFELD
Sports Editor & Staff Writer

Following a 1-12 season in 2021 and a seventh place prediction in the Northeast Conference (NEC) preseason poll, the Sacred Heart University men’s lacrosse team looks to defy expectations and make some noise in the NEC as their season takes off.

“We know what happened last year and we realize that we can’t dwell on the past and we all must focus on the present,” said senior Donavon Lacey. “When we win the day, we move towards making us a better program.”

Lacey is one of the six Pioneers named to the “leadership council” by head coach Jon Basti. In his three seasons at Sacred Heart University, Lacey has put together 9 goals, 82 ground balls and 33 caused turnovers, as well as being named a First-Team All-NEC selection last season.

The other five leaders for Sacred Heart include graduate student Conor Sullivan, seniors Thomas Houlihan, Alex Weiss, and Max Lionetti and junior Nick Handy.

Basti believed the leadership among the upperclassmen was too strong to only appoint two captains this season.

“Each man brings something different to the group and has the ability to use their individual skills to help forward the culture of our program,” Basti told Sacred Heart Athletics.

Lacey has played through an NEC playoff loss to Saint Joseph’s back in 2019, a canceled NEC tournament in 2020 and a missed playoff contention last season. Despite the adversity he and his teammates have faced, Lacey takes on the mentality that whatever doesn’t kill you, makes you stronger.

“Being here for four years and seeing the highs we have had as well as our lows, I have learned not to be phased when things get tough because as seen in the past, they have,” says Lacey. “For me, it’s making sure everyone has the same mentality going to every practice, every film session, lift and so on and so forth.”

Sacred Heart picked up its first win of the season on Feb. 25 against Connecticut rival Quinnipiac University. Sophomore Sal Miccio picked up a goal and three assists in the effort.

Miccio made headlines in his rookie season last year as a dependable scorer for the Pioneers and was ranked fourth in the NEC



The team comes together after a practice. in shot

Instagram, @shumenslax

percentage at .415.

“It’s not about executing things differently, it’s more about executing what works for our team,” said Miccio. “Executing every game plan that our coaches provide to us for each game and playing with the confidence we have will help win us games on a consistent basis and lead us to a conference championship.”

In a conference that has been primarily dominated by Bryant University with six NEC championships since the inception of the tournament in 2011, the Pioneers have aspirations of giving Bryant a run for their money.

“As a team, I believe we all have the same goal of winning the conference,” said Miccio. “It’s not an easy job, and it’s never given to us, it’s earned through the hard work and dedication that I truly believe our team has.”

Not to mention, the NEC is home to five top 50 programs in the nation including No. 14 Bryant, No. 24 Saint Joseph’s, No. 31 Hobart University, No. 42 Merrimack University and No. 49 Mount St. Mary’s University, according to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rankings from the end of the 2021 season.

“Our goal is to be the best version of ourselves and play to our full potential every game,” said junior Ryan Stout. “When we are playing with confidence, I believe there is no limit to what we can achieve.”

Upcoming games for the Pioneers include home games against Hobart College on Saturday, March 19 and Mount St. Mary’s on Saturday, March 26.

Sacred Heart Athletics Contributed to this Article.

Let the Madness Begin

BY ROBERT FINIZIO
Sports Editor

68 teams, 67 games, six rounds of play and one champion. For the first time since 2019, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) will host the Division I men’s basketball tournament in its full normalcy after a 2020 tournament that was canceled and a 2021 tournament that allowed for only 25% of maximum spectator capacity.

“We are created to be interdependent and engaged,” College Sports Analyst Clark Kellogg told CBS sports. “That takes place in a really amplified way during this wonderful three-plus week run to a championship that captivates the nation in so many ways.”

In 2021, the Baylor University Bears took down the Gonzaga Bulldogs, bringing home their first NCAA title in school history after their 13th appearance in the tournament, according to NCAA.com. Although the Final Four and title game consisted of highly ranked teams, there were also a handful of major upsets early in the tournament that exemplified exactly why March is full of madness.

The No. 15 seed Oral Roberts University (ORU) out of Tulsa, Okla. took down No. 3 seeded Ohio State University and No. 7 seeded University of Florida before No. 3 Arkansas just barely defeated them 72-70 in the Sweet Sixteen. According to NCAA.com, the ORU Golden Eagles are only the second No. 15 team to make it to the Sweet Sixteen in NCAA history.

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Bruins also made history in 2021 becoming the fifth No. 11 seeded team to make the Final Four in NCAA history. UCLA upset No. 6 Brigham Young University, No. 2 Alabama and No. 1 seeded Michigan University, according to NCAA.com.

All 67 of the matchups for 2022 were squared up after Selection Sunday took place on March 13. A tradition as old as the tournament, this is when the seedings

of each team is decided by the selection committee and ultimately, when fans can see if their college team is making the tournament or taking a long offseason, according to CBS sports.

Coming out of the four divisions of the tournament, the number one seeded teams selected were the Baylor Bears, the Gonzaga Bulldogs, the Kansas Jayhawks and the Arizona Wildcats. According to NCAA.com, 23 of the last 36 NCAA men’s basketball tournament champions were dubbed one seeds on Selection Sunday.

Despite overwhelming success by No. 1 seeds, many college basketball fans are rooting against the selection committee.

“I think this year’s tournament has the opportunity to be as hectic a tournament as we’ve ever seen before,” said Sacred Heart Alumnus Dan Gardella. “I think this year’s field is much more experienced with talented veterans and that could lead to some upsets and Cinderella runs.”

The No. 2 seeds include the Villanova Wildcats, the Auburn Tigers, the Kentucky Wildcats and the Duke Blue Devils. Villanova has one the most conference titles of these four teams in the last 10 years with five Big East Conference Championships, according to the New York Post.

Back in June of 2021, longtime Duke head coach Mike Krzyzewski announced this would be his last season before retiring. Krzyzewski has served at the helm of the Blue Devils program since 1980 with 15 ACC championships and five national championships under his belt.

“Duke certainly can be the story of the tournament if they can find a way to win the tournament in Coach K’s last season on the bench,” said Gardella. “That being said, I don’t think they’ll get it done.”

The madness will begin on March 15 and March 16 from Dayton, Ohio and will conclude with the championship game on April 4 at the Caesars Superdome in New Orleans.

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Good to Be Back

BRENDAN WILLIAMS
NEWS EDITOR



When the pandemic came along two years ago sending us all to our homes, I admittedly was faced with “the pandemic blues”. Locked away in my house, I found myself listening to one song on repeat I had heard on what ended up being my last in-person day of high school. “Sunday Best” by Surfaces is a song that I blast everywhere; in my headphones, in my car and even in my room. I would sing, probably very badly, at the top of my lungs and just dance like no one was watching in something that made me look like I was “Random Dancing” on iCarly. This one song sparked a fire between me and my friends, and

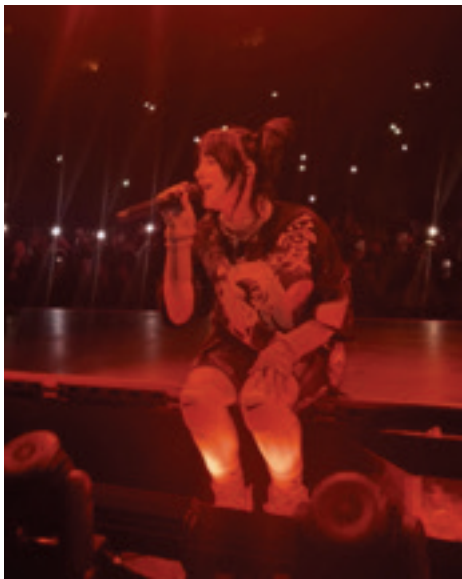
although we couldn’t see each other in person, we began sharing playlists and song suggestions. We would recommend a song or an artist we had heard. Music is truly what got me through the pandemic, and when the opportunity came to hear the musicians on our playlists in person, we jumped at the offer. To be back at a concert again, filled with people all singing the same words that you would blast in the shower, is truly an amazing experience. The house lights go down, the band starts playing and the stage lights shine bright.

A Day That Made Me Happier Than Ever

DEANNA DRAKOPOULOS
PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

Who is your favorite artist? For many, this question can be hard to answer with just one name. Not for me though. For the past few years, my answer has been the same. Billie Eilish. I discovered Billie’s work when I heard her first hit “Ocean Eyes” in 2017. I remember hearing the song and loving how soft and unique her voice was and how she had so much talent for someone so young. It was not until 2019 that I really got into her music when her debut album “When We All Fall Asleep Where Do We Go” came out. I immediately fell in love with the album and Billie’s persona. She brought such a new style to the music world with more of a demonic and electronic sound to her album. She also has an iconic style which I took extreme interest in. Basically, Billie was playing on my AirPods all the time and I never got tired of hearing her songs, whether it be the slow and soft or upbeat and exciting. Listening to her music would be my escape and therapy during my transition into college or whenever I felt down. At the end of 2019, I purchased tickets to see Billie on her “Where Do We Go” World Tour in March 2020. I was ecstatic. There is nothing better than seeing your favorite artist live. However, four days before my concert, the world shut down due to the pandemic. As we continued to be affected by the pandemic, what went from a rescheduled show became canceled all together. Fast forward to 2022, I finally got to see Billie live! I had general admission tickets to see Billie on her “Happier Than Ever” World Tour on Feb. 22nd. This was a show I will never forget for so many reasons. The way general admission works is the spot you get is first come first serve. Because of this and Billie’s large fanbase, fans had been camping out overnight to get a good spot at the shows. Don’t call me crazy, but my day started at 4:30 a.m. when I woke up at my hotel and walked to the Prudential Center to wait in the general admission line. What I thought was going to be a miserable, cold and rainy day waiting outside, turned into a pretty cool experience. I’m not going to lie, it was freezing that day, especially in the morning before the sun rose. My friend and I came prepared though,

with lots of layers, chairs, blankets and food. We wound up waiting 13 hours outside until we got into the venue. What I did not know was that I was going to meet some amazing people waiting in line from all different states. This not only made waiting outside all day not so bad, but it felt comforting to be in an environment with people that have something in common with you. We all were there to see our favorite artist and just have a good time. And that’s exactly what we did. I was in the front row for the show. I’ll never forget the environment in the arena. You could feel the excitement in the air. This was my first concert since before the pandemic, and I missed the energy and rush of concerts. Billie came out and killed it! I could not have imagined a better show. It was surreal to see her in front of me and to hear the songs that I blast in my car sung live. Nothing beat her finale performance of her hit song “Happier Than Ever.” The arena vibrated with the sound of what was literally every person in the room singing their heart out along with Billie. The early morning and long day outside were worth it for me. I will never forget this experience and it’s safe to say any day that I am listening to Billie Eilish, I am happier than ever.



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