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UConn implements early decision



UConn introduced early decision for undergraduates for the first time this year. Students who apply early decision to UConn will be required to commit if accepted.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @UConn ON INSTAGRAM

by **Liliana French** | STAFF WRITER | SHE/HER/HERS | liliana.french@uconn.edu

The University of Connecticut introduced an early decision option for prospective undergraduates for the first time this year. Applications closed on Nov. 1, two and a half months ahead of the regular Jan. 15 deadline. Students who apply early decision commit to one university and, if they are accepted, they cannot attend another university.

Neag School of Education professor Kenny Nienhusser discussed which universities choose to implement early decision.

“Typically, we’re talking about institutions that are more selective and highly selective education institutions that are going ahead and engaging in those processes,” said Nienhusser.

University spokesperson Stephanie Reitz outlined the benefits of early decision for applicants in a written statement.

“For students who are sure that UConn is their top choice, it provides certainty early in their college search process as to whether they will be future Huskies, and lets them start their planning while they’re still early in their senior year,” said Reitz.

Reitz also discussed the benefits to UConn of offering early decision.

“It also helps UConn by giving us a partial picture of the potential next incoming class, including their preferred majors, whether they’re primarily from Connecticut or elsewhere, whether particular campuses are drawing strong interest, and the anticipated demand for housing and other services,” said Reitz.

Nienhusser stated that early decision is likely to benefit white, higher income populations.

“This is going to be individuals who have

more access to college search information, who have access to counsellors who are guiding them,” said Nienhusser.

He discussed the impacts of early decision on college affordability for students.

“Early decision students normally will have a higher probability of being able to tap into institutional aid,” said Nienhusser.

He explained that students who apply early decision are required to commit to one university, regardless of out-of-pocket cost and without the ability to compare aid offers at other universities.

“Early decision means that you’re bound to that decision,” said Nienhusser. “So, it’s a little bit of a gamble. Right, if you’re trying to couple admissions with financial aid because you’re only committing to that one institution so you don’t know what the financial aid

implications of that decision could be. You may never know. So that’s a drawback of early decision.”

Reitz said that statistics on early decision applicants are not being released at the moment because the acceptance notification process is currently underway.

Following U.S. Supreme Court case *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, colleges can no longer consider race in the admission decisions.

“Admissions officers are not able to look at the race and ethnicity of applicants,” said Nienhusser. “Now, that doesn’t mean that they can’t consider other elements that could be related to race in their decisions. Like hardships—that’s a common area where the Supreme Court said that that could be considered.”

Nienhusser gave the example that, in an application essay, students could mention their experience growing up in a low-income community with low quality schools as a hardship, which could be considered in a holistic way.

“Almost 46% of the Storrs first-year students this fall were students of color, about 8% were international students, and the class included a record of over 1,200 are recipients of federal Pell Grants,” said Reitz.

Reitz stated that UConn works with schools to ensure that potential applicants to UConn are aware of resources.

“UConn also continues to ensure that its programming and campus climate support the needs and cultures of diverse learners, and works with high schools and other organizations to ensure that potential applicants know of that commitment and those resources,” said Reitz.

Dog Lane Cafe wins local award

by **Sonia Ahmed** | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | isonia.ahmed@uconn.edu

Dog Lane Cafe, located in Downtown Storrs, became a recipient of the Taste of Mansfield Champion Awards on Nov. 13 at a community dinner at Mansfield Middle School.

The awards, which were announced by Taste of Mansfield and their partners Mansfield Agriculture Committee and Economic Development Commission, were nominated and chosen based on the Taste of Mansfield’s mission, which is “to connect residents to local food and farms,” according to their website.

The public was encouraged to nominate businesses and people based on the following criteria: “Sells or serves local food or an agricultural product with a focus on Mansfield farms and farm stands, educates customers/clients about where local food comes from through various media, or acts as a leader and advocate for promoting local food,” a press release reads.

Dog Lane Cafe, which has served Mansfield and Storrs

residents for over 10 years, has partnerships with 15 local growers and producers. The cafe also serves homemade soup and local meats.

Some of these partnerships include Mountain Dairy, Willimantic Food Co-op and Dragons Blood Elixir, as stated on Dog Lane Cafe’s website. These partnerships range from providing fresh produce to dairy to spices—all of which are produced in Connecticut.

Dog Lane Cafe is a member of Green Valley Hospitality, a fiscal management and marketing company that focuses on giving back to local communities and staff. This includes purchasing “from local growers and purveyors whenever possible” and working “closely with [their] year-round vendors to source top-quality foods,” according to the Green Valley Hospitality website. The Vanilla Bean Cafe, 85 Main and Fenton River Grill are also restaurants that are members of GVH.

Former recipients of the

award, including Diane Dorfer, Chelsea Cutter and Dennis Pierce, were among the residents who attended the Taste of Mansfield Community Dinner. Mansfield Mayor Toni Moran and Superintendent Peter Dart announced the 2024 winners.

Other winners of the 2024 Champion awards included Stacy Stearns, Melanie Desch and Mariah Popeleski-Tilley. Stearns is a member of the Mansfield Agriculture Committee and was chosen for her leadership in promoting local agriculture. Popeleski-Tilley is the food services director at Mansfield Middle School and was chosen for her efforts to reimagine school lunches. Desch was chosen for her volunteer work with Windham’s Mesa Comunitaria program, which serves to increase access to local food for those in need, according to the press release.

For more information on local food and awards, visit the Dog Lane Cafe website and the Taste of Mansfield website.



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NEWSLETTER

News

CT Secretary of State certifies 2024 election outcomes

by **Gabriel Duffany** | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM | gabriel.duffany@uconn.edu



PHOTO COURTESY OF CREAZILLA

Three weeks after the closing of Connecticut polls, the results of the 2024 general election have been conclusively certified by the Office of the Secretary of the State, according to a Nov. 27 press release.

Per the official statement, “Secretary of the State Stephanie Thomas, Treasurer Erick Russell, and Comptroller Sean Scanlon signed the Board of Canvassers Documents for the 2024 election, formally certifying the winners in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes sections 9-315 and 9-319.”

The certification follows a post-election period of contested outcomes, including calls for a recount in the University of Connecticut’s home senate district by Republican candidate Chris

Reddy and the completion of recount efforts for House and Senate races in Torrington, Conn..

With the formal statement from the Secretary of State, the ballot totals of these races are officially in the books. Speaking on the significance of this moment, State Treasurer Erick Russell said, “The certifying of election results is an essential act of accountability and democracy. Trust in the electoral process is the underpinning for how we shape our shared values and all of the work we undertake as one state, in service of the common good. To build the community we want, we need everyone to participate, and that can’t happen without faith in the process.”

Alongside Russell, State Comptroller Sean Scanlon shared his view of the

certification as a fundamental step in guaranteeing a fair and democratic process. “A founding principle of our democracy is certifying the will of voters regardless of which party wins,” said Scanlon. “I am honored to participate in that process today, and I am grateful to the hardworking public servants and volunteers who helped ensure the safety, fairness, and transparency of our democratic process in Connecticut and all those who came out to make their voices heard.”

Secretary Thomas further emphasized the certification as a critical step in confirming CT ballots. “Although the election ended for most voters on November 5th, this certification is another step in the process of finalizing an election,” said Thomas. “I

am grateful to the registrars, town clerks, polling place workers and those that played an important role in ensuring a fair, transparent and secure 2024 election.”

Voter turnout in the 2024 election surpassed 76% in the state, beating the national average of 64%, according to U.S. News and World Reports. Compared to the 2020 election cycle, which featured the highest national voter turnout since 1968, the number of Connecticut voters declined four points from a previous total of 80%.

The recent election was the first to feature a two-week early voting period, mandated by Connecticut House Bill 5004 passed in May 2023. According to Thomas, the additional procedures made tallying election results more time-intensive than in years past.

“This year’s results appeared to come in slowly and can be attributed to several factors including: Over 740,000 Early Voting Ballots and over 122,000 Absentee Ballots could not be opened until election day. Those ballots must be fed one-by-one through the tabulator to be counted,” read the Nov. 8 statement. “Limited equipment and long Same Day Registration lines on Tuesday evening also played a role; Registrars must manually input three types of data, and this takes time: election results, voter statistics, and ballot question results.”

Per the Nov. 27 release, the Secretary of State’s 2024 Statement of Vote detailing the ballot numbers in each race is set to be released before the end of the year.

UConn alumnus releases mental health workbook designed to help new college students

by **Samantha Brody** | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | samantha.brody@uconn.edu

University of Connecticut alumnus James Geisler, Ph.D., NCC, LPC recently released his new workbook, titled “Thrive Year One: The Essential Mental Health Workbook for First-Year College Students.” According to a press release, “The workbook aims to bridge the gap between high school and university life” and is “tailored specifically for young adults” who are making that change. According to the book’s website, ‘Thrive Year One’ is a self-paced workbook with 75+ exercises to help build resilience for incoming college students.”

Geisler graduated from UConn in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts in psychology.

According to his website, he is “currently serving as an Executive Director of Wellness Services,” and secured a Ph.D. in counseling from the University of Oregon in 2021.

“When it comes to mental health, we must look for opportunities to engage in early intervention efforts, as the alternative is responding and reacting to the suffering taking place,” noted Geisler in the press release. ‘Thrive Year One’ equips students with essential mental health exercises to help them succeed in their first year. It’s designed by someone who has witnessed these challenges firsthand and is motivated to address this gap.”

When asked about his experience as a UConn student and how it informed “Thrive Year One,” Geisler said, “I recognize myself in the challenges they face, and hope to provide them with a resource I wish I had in my early years at college.” Reflecting on his experiences as a student allowed him to “connect with today’s students and understand their unique needs.”

“Thrive Year One” is filled with various exercises, each tackling a specific problem that new college students experience. In a statement to the Daily Campus, Geisler listed developing better

communication skills, designing a wellness plan and coping with fears of failure as a few of the exercises found in the book.

“Many exercises include scenarios students may encounter in their first year of college,” explained Geisler. “They are designed to create opportunities for students to reflect on their current skills and areas they may need to improve on...These are all issues that students often struggle with as they adjust to their first year at college.”

In a CNN article, assistant professor Sarah K. Lipson at Boston University and a principal investigator for the

Healthy Minds Network noted, “[F]or many adolescents and young adults, the transition to college comes with newfound autonomy. They may be experiencing the first signs and symptoms of mental health problems while now in this new level of independence that also includes new independence over their decision-making as it relates to mental health.”

Geisler described the research for “Thrive Year One” as “extensive,” as he pulled from both his experiences...

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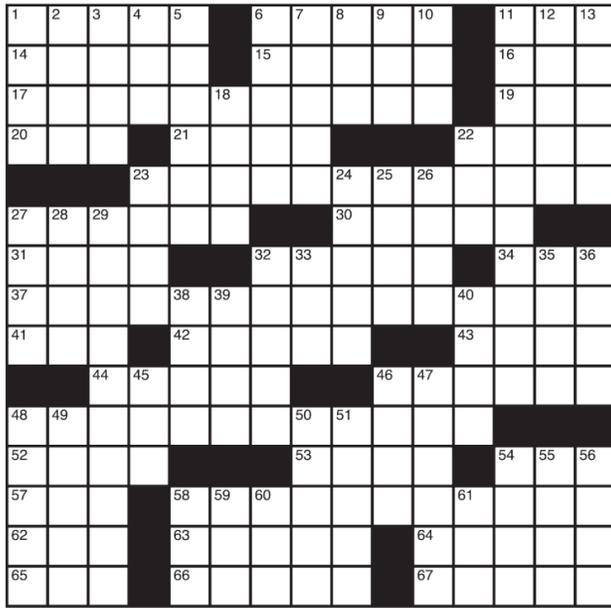
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- ACROSS**
- 1 Strongly advised
 - 6 Slangy, "Just say ..."
 - 11 Sudden pull
 - 14 "Same!"
 - 15 Ergo
 - 16 Prefix with tourism
 - 17 Petroleum giant co-founded by John D. Rockefeller
 - 19 Noodle
 - 20 Marina del ____, California
 - 21 "Here's an __ ..."
 - 22 Actress Kendrick
 - 23 Ambience setter, often
 - 27 Wood finishes
 - 30 Puts on ice
 - 31 Rainbow shapes
 - 32 Vinegary marinade
 - 34 Kissing in the open, for short
 - 37 Line for product placement?
 - 41 Farm pen
 - 42 Laden deposits
 - 43 Cold desert in northern China
 - 44 "Killers of the Flower Moon" people
 - 46 Historic events
 - 48 Martini garnish with blue cheese or red pepper
 - 52 "My __!"
 - 53 Sneeze trigger, often
 - 54 "Eh, kinda"
 - 57 Unit on a Taylor Swift tour
 - 58 Boz Scaggs hit with the lyric "One more for the road," and what can be found in 17-, 23-, 37-, and 48-Across?
 - 62 Uru. neighbor
 - 63 Like a good watchdog
 - 64 American buffalo
 - 65 Slice with caraway seeds
 - 66 Make holy
 - 67 Four-award achievements, casually



By Amie Walker

12/5/24

- DOWN**
- 1 USA rival in the space drama "For All Mankind"
 - 2 Learning by repetition
 - 3 Greeting to an Aussie pal
 - 4 Long stretch
 - 5 "The Year of Magical Thinking" memoirist Joan
 - 6 Whit
 - 7 Ride a Peloton
 - 8 Musician Yoko
 - 9 Chem or bio
 - 10 Long swimmer
 - 11 Ones who may give backhanded compliments?
 - 12 The Huskies of the NCAA
 - 13 Emergency kit
 - 18 Big fusses
 - 22 NL East city
 - 23 Fail to see
 - 24 Clickable images
 - 25 Tons
 - 26 "Give a __! Don't pollute!"
 - 27 Without
 - 28 Leisurely gait
 - 29 "Be a grown-up about it!"

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



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12/5/24

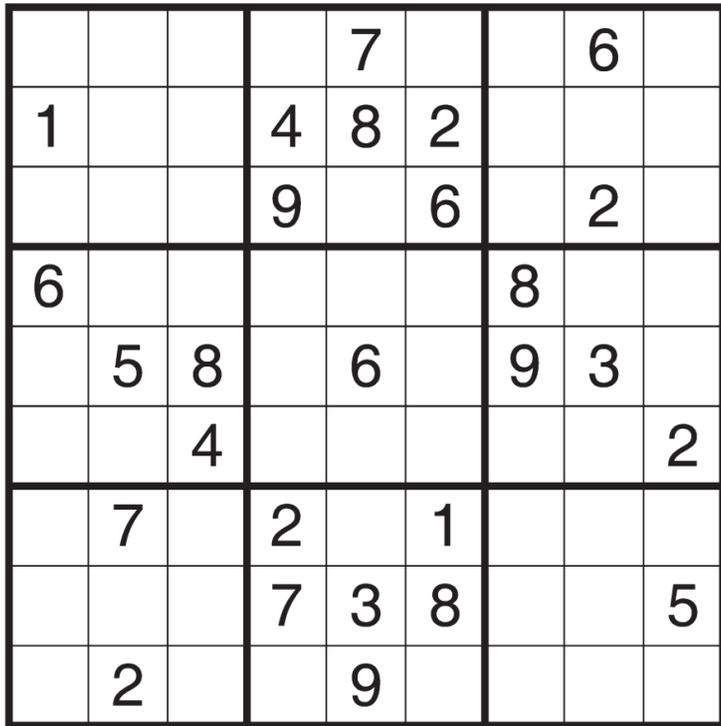
- 32 Chimed in with
- 33 Game cube
- 35 Money owed
- 36 Seller's caveat
- 38 "Frozen" snowman
- 39 Seating level
- 40 Fantasy monster
- 45 NorCal airport
- 46 __ and chips
- 47 Hosp. room hookup
- 48 Gather wool from
- 49 "America's Got Talent" host Crews
- 50 Linger scents
- 51 Years (for)
- 54 "In that event ..."
- 55 Card receiver
- 56 Female birds
- 58 9-Down class setting
- 59 Under the weather
- 60 Actor Billy Williams
- 61 Cookie fruit

THE DAILY CAMPUS

PROSEWORD AND SUDOKU

Sudoku By The Mepham Group

Level **1** 2 3 4



Solution to Wednesday's puzzle

12/5/24

7	4	5	2	3	9	6	1	8
8	6	2	4	7	1	5	9	3
3	9	1	5	6	8	7	2	4
4	8	9	1	5	3	2	7	6
5	1	3	7	2	6	4	8	9
2	7	6	8	9	4	3	5	1
9	5	4	3	1	2	8	6	7
6	3	7	9	8	5	1	4	2
1	2	8	6	4	7	9	3	5

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk.

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Life

Exploring the interrelatedness between Japanese and Indigenous American exploitation in the West

by **Maleena Muzio**SHE/HER/HERS
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Hana Maruyama, a history professor at the University of Connecticut, was the host for the history department's "Wednesday Workshops" on Wednesday, Dec. 4. The original title of her presentation, "The Land Is Fenced: The Role of Japanese American Incarcerated Labor in the Formation of Settler Property on Indigenous Lands," shifted to a more geared focus on the settlement of the West, more specifically the region of Wyoming known as Heart Mountain. In her presentation, Maruyama explored the interrelatedness between the exploitation of Japanese Americans as well as that of Indigenous people as a consequence of Western settlement in the United States.

Maruyama's research is primarily on Japanese American incarceration in the context of U.S. settler colonialism, typically through oral accounts. Her main methodology for conducting research for this pre-

sentation resided in archival records and oral history but was also extended by attending related events throughout her career, as well as working an internship at an American Indian reservation. However, her interest in Heart Mountain was sparked by her family's roots and a trip she had taken to Wyoming when she was just 12 years old, the same age her grandmother had been when she was removed from her home by the government.

Upon discovering an abandoned internment camp with her family, Maruyama noticed a plated sign describing it as a government entity, while a mark of graffiti labeled it as a concentration camp. At this moment, Maruyama realized, "Graffiti can tell us history, while the bronze plaques tell us lies." This personal anecdote stresses the importance of firsthand encounters when retelling history, rather than accepting the watered-down recounts of events often given in textbooks.

The main takeaway of the event was the degradation of native lands for the benefit of

white settlers — not just any settlers — but white people specifically, as it was marked in an accounted conversation with President Eisenhower during his time in office. During World War II, Japanese Americans had been forced out of their homes to live in work camps. Initially, these people were asked to settle inland, but when the political powers of Western states put up a fight, it was to be mandatory not only for these people to move, but to undergo unpaid labor for the benefit of the state.

Although, at the same time, extreme precautions were taken by the government to ensure that there would be no disturbances to white settlers in the areas of these camps at this time. Maruyama provided a letter written by a white woman to President Franklin D. Roosevelt expressing concerns about her family's nearby settlement. After receiving this letter, a private road was created through the internment camp for the family to pass through and they were granted permits to be on the premises at any time they needed. Simul-

taneously, the land that Indigenous people once knew to be their home was disappearing.

At this time in history, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) was looking for "moveable, excludable, alienable labor," Maruyama explained. The government found this in the Japanese people, who were easy to target during wartime and due to speculation of disloyalty to the country. Japanese Americans were being forced to irrigate the lands that once belonged to Indigenous peoples under the strict regulation by the WRA to not relocate white settlers during this process, to whitewash American society.

Still, these attempts began much before World War II. "Buffalo Bill," also known as William F. Cody, largely contributed to the settlement of Cody, Wyoming, a town not far from Heart Mountain. Buffalo Bill had built the Shoshone Dam, seeing this as his way of opening the country for the white man. Congress also funded irrigation and infrastructure for dams which contributed heavily to this opening of the land for settlers.

Jumping to the late 1940s and early 1950s, after the war ended and the Japanese concentration camps began to shut down, Japanese Americans were not welcomed to the West, once again proving the irrigation systems were put into place solely for the benefit of white Americans. The people impacted by these actions are survivors and are the true source of history.

Maruyama explained that her Japanese roots drew her to learn more about this topic and that her connection to the history empowered her to complete this project. However, in acknowledging the coexisting Indigenous history of the land, Maruyama shared that she received training in graduate school to prevent harm to the community while completing this work.

Closing her presentation, Maruyama shared that in the place by Heart Mountain where an oppressive camp was once located now stands a museum of history, which is simply one step in the right direction for preventing the horrors of the past from continuing into today.

"Pop Culture Jeopardy!" is Amazon Prime Video's newest experiment

by **Samantha Brody**SHE/HER/HERS
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Amazon Prime Video's newest show "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" has just arrived onto the streaming platform as of Dec. 4. Hosted by comedian, writer and actor Colin Jost, the show is near-identical to the original "Jeopardy!" television show—the only difference being the questions themselves. "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" focuses on—you guessed it—pop culture, with topics relating to music, celebrities, internet culture and more.

Jost is best known for his role as a co-anchor for Weekend Update on "Saturday Night Live." Born in Staten Island, Jost has a knack for interacting with the contestants on stage during "Pop Culture Jeopardy!," as he is able to joke with them while also performing the traditional hosting role.

"It's really, like—you know,

you don't want to mess it up," said Jost while discussing his experience as host during an interview with TODAY. "You don't want to, like, disgrace this hallowed ground."

One of the major changes that makes "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" stand out from its predecessor is a change in contestants. Instead of each contestant answering questions on their own, "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" instead allows its participants to work together in groups of three, with their very own team name.

As someone who has never found much appeal in the original "Jeopardy!," I was excited to see if the newer version would speak to me more. The original "Jeopardy!" covers a very wide range of topics and ideas, but "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" has a specific niche that most people can find a way into.

In addition to the more culturally relevant topics, the usage of teams on "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" contributes to a more

laid-back approach. The contestants can play with their friends by their side and the environment feels casual and approachable — even if a \$300,000 grand prize is on the line.

"Pop Culture Jeopardy!" is structured in a bracket style. According to the show's pilot, a total of 81 teams will compete against one another, advancing to the quarterfinals, the semifinals and eventually the final match. At the end of each episode, the winning team will be sent to the next round, although the losers still receive a consolation prize.

The show is set to run 40 episodes, although only three have been released as of Dec. 4. Every Wednesday, three more episodes will be released on Amazon Prime Video, until the season concludes with a winning team.

The first episode features the teams "Pop Queens," "Oops! We Guessed It Again" and "Queen City Kidz" — all named by

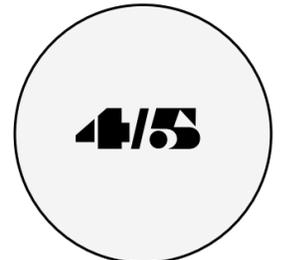
their members, of course. The participants on "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" created their teams on their own and applied as a group, meaning every team has their own story. Jost does take the time during the show to introduce the teams to the audience, allowing for a greater connection between watcher and participant.

Although "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" is made by the same companies as "Jeopardy!" and even features the same music and set, it still stands out against the traditional format through its usage of three-person teams. Jost is clearly still finding his footing as host, but he still does an excellent job in the pilot episode of the show. Despite not being a participant, he keeps the tone light and lively, joking with his contestants while also reading off questions and answers.

During his interview with TODAY, Jost aptly compared his show to "bar trivia," as opposed to the more competitive

style found in "Jeopardy!." "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" allows itself to relax, and participants can have fun despite the prize money on the line.

Anyone can watch "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" alone, but the inherent relatability of the subject matters in the questions means it lends itself easily to a group setting. The show might be even more enjoyable if watched with others, as the audience can guess the answers themselves. Overall, "Pop Culture Jeopardy!" is fun and light, without losing the intense and competitive nature of the original show.



UCHI Fellow's Talk: 'Connecticut River Views & Stories'

by **Mikayla Murphy**SHE/HER/HERS
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On Wednesday, Dec. 4, the University of Connecticut's Humanities Institute (UCHI) hosted its last Fellow's Talk of 2024. Listeners gathered inside UCHI's conference room on the fourth floor of the Homer Babbidge Library to hear Janet L. Pritchard discuss her current research project in landscape photography.

Her project, titled "Abiding River: Connecticut River Views & Stories" shares photographs of the Connecticut River and details a variety of stories from the river's history. Pritchard's talk focused on the steps she has been taking to turn her project into a book and the differences this project has from her previous project on Yellowstone Park. A response by Joscha Jelitzki, a Ph.D. candidate in German and Judaic Studies at the UConn's department of literatures, followed.

Pritchard is a professor and graduate advisor in UConn's Department of Art and Art History. She was awarded the John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2019, and since then, has used her fellowship to publish her book on Yellowstone titled "More than Scenery: Yellow-

stone, an American Love Story" in 2022, and her book on the Connecticut River. Pritchard grew up in the northeast and Rocky Mountains west of the United States. Before turning to photography, she was an outdoor education instructor.

Pritchard started her talk by giving an overview of the Connecticut River and what she was going to discuss in her presentation. The Connecticut River is the longest river in New England at just over 400 miles long. It passes through four states: New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut, and spans from just below the Canada-U.S. border to the Long Island Sound. It also is one of the most dammed rivers in the U.S.

Throughout her project, Pritchard has collected tens of thousands of pictures of the Connecticut River and is in the process of selecting which ones to show in her book. She speaks about the aspect ratios of cameras and how they play an important part in which pictures she chooses for her book. Throughout this section, she flips through slides of pictures she took of the river.

Pritchard continued with a picture of a headstone with the words "Celibate Christian Communists" on it, located in Shaker Cemetery, now a pris-

on complex, in Enfield, Connecticut. She spoke about the additional notes and stories in her Yellowstone book and how most people do not read these passages. This ties into her title of this section of the presentation, "Breaking Conceptual Continuity."

During this past fall, while she was working on her project, she had a realization and is currently changing the shape of her book. The slides she presented during this section were focused on potential formats for her book. Pritchard mentioned during the question session at the end of the talk that this book was different from her previous projects and required her to change the book's format.

Pritchard went through various potential formats of her book in a section titled "Sketches of Possibilities." A key change she detailed was changing the book from landscape to portrait. Some options had pictures spread across both pages while others had pictures only on the top sections to leave ample space for descriptions and stories. She had different ideas for photographs to include as well. One example depicted the river in two different seasons while others included pictures of wildlife, boat trips, water pipes or postcards.

Pritchard ends her talk with some examples that highlight the Connecticut River's importance to innovation and the environment around it. One photo depicts the small businesses around the river, including Frank "the Welder," who owns a bicycle fabrication shop in Bellows Falls, Vermont, right next to the river. The final format of the book is a work in progress.

Following the presentation, Joscha Jelitzki spoke about his first impressions of Pritchard's work and how his opinions changed as he gathered more information about her work. He spoke about his own research on the Connecticut River and mentioned how humans can control the pace of the water due to all the dams built along the river. Jelitzki followed with three questions for Pritchard.

The first question was about nature in the abstract and how she decided what belongs and what does not belong in pictures. The second question referred to the relationship between the medium of photography and the river, the ever-moving river and the never-moving river. Jelitzki noted that while the river in the pictures appears still, the actual river continues to flow.

Pritchard delved into her preference for still photogra-

phy, like prints and books, over moving photography. She mentioned how the societal function of photography is preservation and memorial.

The third question focuses on the target audience of her book. Since most people do not interact with the river, is it for everyone? Pritchard explained that her book is working on more than one level. It has a variety of aspects that are interesting to a variety of different people. She compares it to adult jokes in kids' movies that keep the adults interested.

Questions were opened to the audience following the response, including questions regarding her influences throughout her project, the use of symmetry in her photographs, how she knows when her project is done and who owns the Connecticut River.

Light refreshments were served after the talk's end while conversations between the audience and speakers continued. The next UCHI Fellow's Talk is on Jan. 29, 2025, with Peter Zarow in the Homer Babbidge Library. He will be discussing his project "A History of the 'Museumification' of the Forbidden City, Beijing, from 1900 to Today." For a full list of events, visit the Humanities Institute Events Calendar: <https://humanities.uconn.edu/news-and-events/>.

THE BEST INDIE ALBUMS FROM 2024

by **Elijah Polance**
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I can't speak for everyone, but I'd say 2024 was a great year for music. There were so many amazing albums released across a variety of genres, ensuring something new for everyone to enjoy. My 2024 listening catered to the indie side of things, so that's what I'll be highlighting on this list. Keep in mind, this is very subjective and the albums I talk about aren't ranked, since the order would change depending on the day.

Starting off strong is Friko, with their debut LP, "Where we've been, Where we go from here." It's a powerful first statement by the fiery indie rock duo from Chicago. In just 36 minutes, Niko Kapetan and Bailey Minzenberger slam out one anthemic rock powerhouse after another, only breaking stride for a few emotionally resonant acoustic tracks along the way. The Arcade Fire parallels are impossible to ignore, but Kapetan's restrained yet tortured vocals, the heartfelt songwriting and the mastery of stripped songs set Friko apart from the early 2000s indie rock sound they capture. The delicate start to the opener, "Where We've Been," its creeping build, and the explosive climax made it one of my favorite and most played songs of the year.

Next up is Mount Eerie's "Night Palace," a long but rewarding listen with experimental surprises around every corner. After a series of lyrically focused indie folk albums under the Mount Eerie name, this project sees Phil Elverum returning to his roots with the drowning noise, shorter songs



ILLUSTRATIONS COURTESY OF CREAZILLA

and erratic track sequencing from his early work as The Microphones. "Night Palace" might be best classified as a slacker rock and avant-folk album, but if you checked out a random song, you might hear post-rock elements, spoken word delivery or even a trap breakdown. Elverum's writing is as sharp as ever, always finding a way to connect intimate experiences with nature to emotions and societal issues. The lead single, "I Walk," is commendable for how well the wind noises in the reserved beginning transition into overbearing guitar passages. "November Rain" and "I Spoke With A Fish" also stand out for their profound lyrics and unique sounds not seen anywhere else on the album.

It's time to get a little quieter

with another one of my favorites, Adrienne Lenker's "Bright Future." This indie folk record is a cozy addition to Lenker's solo discography. Her angelic vocals and the acoustic guitar-led instrumentation create an intimate atmosphere, as if you're listening to the small group of musicians casually play by a cabin fireplace. Lenker's lyrics cover human relationships at every level, coming off as comforting and sometimes heart wrenching. It's an incredibly consistent album, and it's hard to choose my favorite between "Sadness As A Gift," "Free Treasure" and "Evol."

Staying in the folk area, I'd like to recognize the emerging English band Tapir!, with their debut LP, "The Pilgrim, Their God and The King Of My Decrepit Mountain." It follows a

three act structure that details an ambitious pilgrimage. Most songs have a skeleton of folk instrumentation that's filled with electronic drums and synths, creating a blend of folktronica and chamber pop. The drawling vocal contributions from Ike Gray complete their refreshing sound, and only time will tell where the band takes it from here.

On the complete opposite of the spectrum is Parannoul's "Sky Hundred," the loudest album I listened to this year. Here, he shifts away from the lo-fi production and layered dream pop from his prior work and goes with a blend of deafening shoegaze and noise pop. While the tumultuous songs may sound indistinguishable on first listen, the entrancing vocal and piano melodies un-

der the screeching guitars and blown out drums make each song distinct. "Gold River," the lead single, is a dazzling display that shows how beautiful and catchy his noisy music can be.

Last but not least is Geordie Greep with "The New Sound," his first solo project after the breakup of Black Idi. Greep injects progressive rock with Latin and jazz influences, bringing in a lot of eccentric instruments in the process. The dramatic vocal performances and incel caricature Greep brandishes can make it a divisive listen, but it's meant to be satirical. "The Magician," the penultimate 12-minute epic about a breakup, is the clear standout and my favorite song from the year. It's Greep's most sincere lyrical work and the expansive progression in the second half is downright breathtaking.

Here are a few honorable mentions for albums and EPs that stuck with me throughout the year, but didn't quite make my top cut: "Only God Was Above Us" by Vampire Weekend; "Patterns in Repeat" by Laura Marling; "Connla's Well" by Maruja; "Mahashmashana" by Father John Misty; "plastic death" by glass beach; "Seed of a Seed" by Haley Heynderickx; "Prelude to Ecstasy" by The Last Dinner Party; "Winter Break" by Five Point Palm Exploding Heart Technique.

I wish I could've gotten to more of the amazing music that came out in 2024, but I'm still walking away with many highlights. If you're looking for more recommendations in different genres, or you hate this list for excluding your favorites, check out the music reviews from the Life section! There are a few dozen that cover a wide array of music released this year, and I can't recommend them enough.

LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The Nice Guys

by **Isaac Grad**
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Welcome back to another issue of Your Movie Mage, where I discuss underrated movies across genres. Last issue, we discussed the directorial debut of Alex Wolff, "The Cat and the Moon" and this week we'll be talking about the underrated but star-studded cast in "The Nice Guys."

"The Nice Guys" should have been a big hit as a clever buddy cop movie starring Ryan Gosling and Russell Crowe in the 1970s. The failure of "The Nice Guys" can mostly be attributed to its release date and its marketing. Competing in the theaters during 2016 with bigger films such as "Captain America: Civil War" and "X-Men Apocalypse" in the month of May, this film never stood a chance.

Likewise, the movie's humor is arguably not for everybody, with jokes that aren't spelled out for the audience and not laugh-out-loud funny for some; personally, I did laugh a lot. Along with that, it doesn't seem to have been made clear in its abysmal marketing that the movie was a comedy. The leading two men are not known as comedic actors, although Gosling's post-Barbie phase has transitioned into the genre. For those who were looking for a comedy, the film was competing with "Neighbors 2," which was a more popular choice.

This film has been compared to the better-known "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang," as both films were directed and written by Shane Black. They both feature a similar style, though I hold the unpopular opinion that "The Nice Guys" is better. The humor of this film is unlike others, with our two leading characters starting off on bad terms when Healy (Crowe), breaks March's (Gosling) arm. They quickly

team up and all is forgiven, as it turns out they work great together.

The best part of the film is the dynamic between our two protagonists. They balance each other well with March as the irresponsible yet intelligent private investigator and Healy as the intimidating but calm investigator. Both characters are comedic in the best way—they aren't trying to be funny. March as a father is good and bad, teaching his daughter important lessons such as not saying "and stuff" after everything, but also putting her life in danger on numerous occasions. This nuance in his character is interesting and we don't often see fatherhood in buddy cop movies explored past the desire to save your kidnapped daughter.

The acting by Gosling and Crowe was phenomenal. However, there were characters whose acting took me out of the film a bit, which is unfortunate given the production value and stand-out acting from the majority of the cast.

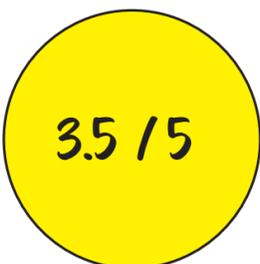
I also enjoyed the inclusion of random tidbits to the characters, such as March's strong feelings about ventriloquism. This added to the film being very character-driven, despite movies like this generally being more story and action-driven. The story is strong enough, but it's not why I enjoy the film.

Robert Downey Jr., the star of Shane Black's film previously mentioned "Kiss Kiss Bang Bang" had a small cameo in "The Nice Guys" as the dead body of Sid Shattuck. This has a minor impact on the film as a whole, but is an interesting bit of information.

The realism of the dialogue and characters stood out in a world of relatively unrealistic

situations. The dialogue between Healy and March was very strong and I appreciated their civilian solutions to movie problems. We have a pair with nuanced and varying intelligence, not just between one another, but within themselves as well. We often see characters in movies in similar settings with a character who's always level-headed and intelligent, and another who is immature and unprofessional. This film doesn't seem to do that, with neither character being stagnant. The typical cool and calm tough guy, at points, is not able to keep composure.

"The Nice Guys" is a strong film and is one of my favorites of Gosling—which is saying a lot. It's also probably my favorite movie, too. I give "The Nice Guys" an underratedness score of 3.5/5. The aesthetic is fun as most '70s movies are, and I like the style of humor a lot. I still hold onto hope that a sequel will appear eventually, as I'd love to see more of these characters and this style of film. I highly recommend watching this movie. Those who hadn't seen it before often tell me they're surprised they hadn't heard of it because it's so good.



"Churchill at War": A powerful look at an iconic 20th-century leader

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Winston Churchill, one of the most influential figures of the 20th century, is depicted in a new four-part Netflix documentary series titled "Churchill at War." The show, which was released this Wednesday, Dec. 4, delves deep into Churchill's life and career during World War II and was produced by filmmakers Ron Howard and Brian Glazer. The series also features interviews with former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and former U.S. President George W. Bush.

Churchill's powerful and sometimes complicated legacy has been the subject of numerous books, movies and TV shows for more than half a century, including most recently in Netflix's "The Crown" and in 2017's "Darkest Hour," in which he was portrayed by actors John Lithgow and Gary Oldman, respectively. Nearly all forms of media involving Churchill focus primarily on his iconic leadership as two-time prime minister of the United Kingdom and his major achievements during one of the darkest periods in human history.

This documentary series is unique, however, in that it features rare, authentic, restored and colorized archival footage shot during World War II and utilizes voice enhancement technology to present many of the millions of words Churchill wrote and delivered out loud for the very first time.

Like many previous Churchill-focused works, "Churchill at War" spotlights the late statesman's policies and achievements that led to Great Britain overthrowing the Axis powers during World War II. Churchill's iconic leadership during the war was primarily characterized by his utter disavowal of the Nazi and Fascist ideology that plagued various parts of Europe, and which left millions of people — Jews, Slavs, Roma, Jehovah's, homo-

sexuals and people with disabilities — brutally and senselessly murdered.

The show opens with Churchill coming to power in May of 1940, when Britain is on the brink of a full-scale invasion by Nazi Germany and when spirits in British society were at an all-time low. During his formative years, we learn that Churchill, who had mostly steered clear of politics, had spent much of his time trying to warn the public about the dangers that Adolf Hitler posed to society, but had proved to be unsuccessful.

But Churchill's unwavering refusal to surrender to the Axis alliance and the rare human connection he shared with the people of Britain is showcased in this documentary by the deliverance of his powerful speeches to the House of Commons, his visits to London neighborhoods that had been destroyed by the Blitz and the significant logistical actions he took during the six-year conflict. This includes his decision to evacuate over 330,000 Allied soldiers from German advancing forces in the north of France — which later became the inspiration for Christopher Nolan's 2017 Academy Award-winning film "Dunkirk," — helping to set the stage for Britain's victory and boost morale among the general public.

Indeed, Churchill's life and career were marked by significant times and unprecedented circumstances that most definitely helped to shape both his character and the moral beliefs that he held onto for much of his life. "Churchill at War" presents his authority and legacy as almost unmatched and unparalleled to any other leader in history, but at the same time successfully encapsulates Churchill as someone of high regard and great influence on the viewers at home.

Rating: 4.5/5



Life

@dailycampuslife

MAKING TINI'S FAMOUS MAC AND CHEESE

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Welcome back to another week of cooking for "I Made It So You Don't Have To." The holiday season is finally here and this is an important time for food. So, if you were planning on learning a few tips for how to make your holiday recipes shine, now would be a great time. Coming back from Thanksgiving, I was left thinking about all of the different iterations of Thanksgiving dinners. One dish that seemed to keep coming up on TikTok was Tini's famous mac and cheese. I could not let this recipe go unmade given how popular it has become. I am happy to say it very much lived up to the hype.

Let's jump right into it. This recipe comes from @tinekeyounger on TikTok, also known as Tini. First, I prepped my water for boiling by adding a generous amount of salt. While I waited for the water to boil, I used my cheese shredder and got to shredding. I really liked how in the tutorial it emphasized not buying pre-shredded cheese because preservative agents are added such as potato starch which can affect how it melts in the cheese sauce later. I never knew this before, but I can certainly see how it could make the mac and cheese grainy instead of that smooth texture you want.

If you want to avoid the arm-strain or do not have a cheese shredder, you can always add it to the food processor a little at a time. After getting a solid arm workout grating roughly 40 ounces of cheese, the water was boiling and I cooked the pasta for seven to eight minutes. While it was cooking, I made sure that the different types of cheese were evenly combined and divided the mixture into two bowls.

Now for the cheese sauce. Combine all of the seasonings like salt, pepper, garlic powder and smoked paprika into a tiny dish because the following parts require everything to be ready to add. Get two cups of heavy cream and evaporated milk ready to add as well.

Add three tablespoons of butter to a pan on medium heat. Make sure the pan is deep enough to hold all your pasta with the sauce for later. Once the butter is melted, add half of the seasoning — you will save the rest for later. This was pointed out to be called blooming the seasonings in the tutorial, which means cooking spices in fat to release flavor and aroma. I specifically enjoyed the use and explanation of cooking vocab throughout the video. Cook this while stirring for about 30 seconds to prevent burning and then add in your flour and combine. For another fun cooking vocab word, the mixture you have is now called a roux, which pertains to anything with fat and flour.

Cook your roux by stirring constantly for two to three minutes. The stirring is super important because it will affect how grainy the mac and cheese comes out at the end. Switch to a whisk if you are not already using one for the next parts. Add a can of evaporated milk starting with one quarter and progressively add more as you combine it with the roux. The roux with the milk is now called a béchamel. Stir for about a minute. You can add about a tablespoon of Dijon mustard at this point. I was fresh out of Dijon, but in the video, Tini says it is not required. Add in two cups of heavy cream spaced out, slowly stirring after each addition. Stir this for about two minutes.

Switch to low heat and slowly add one of the halves of the cheese mix previously prepared. A low heat is imperative for the way the cheese melts. Add in the cheese a little at a

time, stir and wait for it to melt, then add more. Add the rest of the seasoning after all the cheese has been incorporated.

Once the sauce is smooth and there are no lumps, add in all of the pasta and season extra to taste if needed. I thought that the spice blend was perfect and did not need any alterations.

Grab a casserole or baking dish and add a layer of mac and cheese. Then add a layer of some of the other half of cheese from earlier. Add another layer of mac and cheese. Then add a layer of the rest of the cheese on top. Once this is done, place the dish inside a 350-degree Fahrenheit oven for 25-30 minutes. If your oven does not afford you the luxury of evenly baking things as mine does, rotate the mac and cheese 180 degrees halfway through. Once the 25 minutes is up, set the oven to high broil and leave for about one to two minutes.

This recipe was great for a few reasons. For one, it was informative, teaching us words to confuse non-cooks like roux and béchamel. These are important when categorizing steps in our mind which are extremely useful when following recipes. It also uses very simple seasoning combinations that create a perfect depth of flavor not overpowered by the cheese.

This recipe will comfortably feed four people with leftovers to spare so it is perfect for meal prep. While the steps can be intimidating, especially with the threat of having grainy mac and cheese at the end looming, make sure to watch the tutorial multiple times before cooking so you can anticipate what is next.

This comfort food is great for the cold weather and holidays. I am also happy to say that this was the best mac and cheese I have ever had. I chose to serve it with broccoli which complemented it nicely and threw a few breadcrumbs on top prior to broiling.

Ingredients:

- One lb. cavatappi pasta
- 16oz mozzarella cheese, grated
- 16oz Colby Jack cheese
- Eight oz cheddar cheese
- One tsp garlic powder
- One tsp smoked paprika
- One half teaspoon of salt
- One half teaspoon of pepper
- Three tablespoons of butter
- Three tablespoons of flour
- One can of Carnation evaporated milk
- Two cups of heavy cream
- One tablespoon of Dijon mustard

Price: \$42

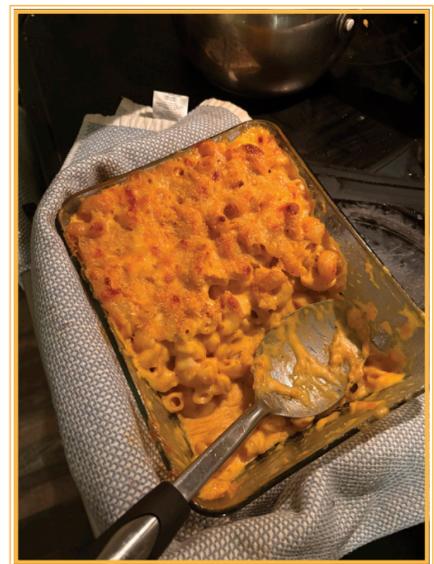
Rating: 5/5



LOGO BY LILLIAN LAFEMINA, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



PHOTO COURTESY OF OLIVER POWER, CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT/THE DAILY CAMPUS



THE MUSIC NEVER STOPS: ADAM GONZALEZ

by **Dan Stark**
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The Dog Pound has become a home for many musicians at the University of Connecticut. As the main location for basement shows in Storrs, the venue has become a hub for UConn students to share their music with their peers and showcase their musical evolution through repeat performances.

Among those who have played the most at the venue is Adam Gonzalez. Gonzalez is a singer-songwriter who sings and plays guitar in the group Lootbug, a four-piece alternative rock band that has been a staple act at The Dog Pound this semester, with Gonzalez taking front and center.

Gonzalez first started taking guitar lessons when he was young, but wasn't interested in it at first. It wasn't until two years ago that he picked up the six-string again as he started to write songs with his friend Henry Barrios. Gonzalez also plays piano, which he started doing when he was 16, and makes electronic music under the name Ragako, where he released the drum and bass/breakcore-influenced album "Machines Can't Sleep" in July 2023.

During these songwriting sessions, Barrios pitched the idea of starting a band with Gonzalez as they kept writing.

This idea marked the beginning of the group that would become Lootbug, with the duo spending the next two years developing their songwriting. Gonzalez explained that his songwriting process with Barrios, and eventually the full band, has always been very collaborative.

"The way we do it is that we write an entire song on our own, whether it's me or Henry or anyone from the band, and then present it to each other," he said. "And then from there, we make our own edits and give our input."

Writing songs together was far from a smooth process at first. Gonzalez said that both he and Barrios were learning as they went along, trying out many ideas in the process and ending up with mixed results.

"A lot of the songs we wrote were not at all usable," he said. "So, it took a year for us to reach the songwriting ability to write the songs that we play now."

After developing their songwriting chops with a set of songs that they felt confident to bring to the public, Gonzalez and the band made their live debut this past summer. Their first shows were small and intimate, taking place in backyards and basements for friends and family. The first big show for the group came in early September at The Dog Pound, which was also the first full band show the venue hosted. Gonzalez recalled the nerves he had before going on stage but went on to enjoy the



Adam Gonzalez performing with the band Lootbug at The Dog Pound in Storrs, Conn. The band has grown in popularity, having played at the notable venue several times this year.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF @JACOB_SABBAGH ON INSTAGRAM

night.

"I remember the first show at The Dog Pound, I was so anxious and I felt like I was going to faint," he said. "My hands were feeling tingly and numb. But the show was great."

Since shaking off these nerves, Gonzalez and the band have been continuously growing by playing at prominent venues in the Connecticut music scene such as 10selden in Woodbridge, Conn. and Knowhere in Tolland, Conn. The group also performed in September at WHUS Radio's Sounds of Sum-

mer concert in the heart of campus at the Student Union.

Gonzalez explained the feeling of looking out into the crowd from the stage, specifically when it comes to playing original songs that he may have doubts about how they will be received.

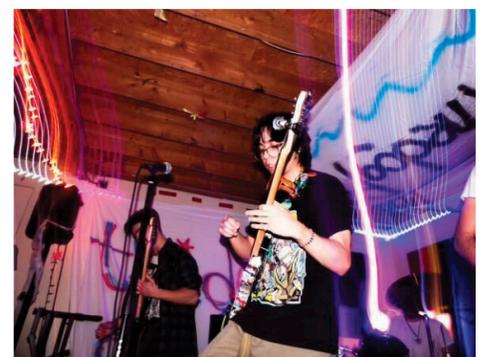
"It's always crazy playing and then you look up and you realize people are moshing to your music because you practice these songs and you think 'Man, I wonder how other people will think about this song,'" Gonzalez said.

But no place has meant more to Gonzalez than The Dog Pound, a venue that he and the band have played at three times this semester. Gonzalez expressed how glad he is to have seen the community at the venue grow as the semester has progressed.

"It's great seeing how things change and how people get used to the place," he said. "I love seeing the same faces and friends that they bring along. Whether they know it or not, people are trying to grow it by just showing up."



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS





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► Editorial

Fee Bills are here: Here's how to read yours

As we approach the end of the semester and calendar year, Huskies across campus are getting ready to enjoy their winter break and take a well-deserved rest. Though the schoolwork might stop, fee bills have recently been released, and they'll be due in the middle of our break on Jan. 8.

Whether you manage your tuition payments or not, it is imperative that you comprehend your fee bill and understand what you are paying for. The goal of this editorial is to inform students of what these various university fees cover and how they can make the most of that money.

According to the numbers outlined by the Office of the Bursar for undergraduate students in the 2024-2025 academic year, fees, not including tuition, room and board or meal plans, for just one semester add up to just over \$2,000, excluding the Husky Book Bundle. For in-state students, this makes up a significant portion of UConn's cost of attendance.

The first and most substantial mandatory fee is the General University fee, which helps support the programs that make up our entire educational experience. These include services like the One Card Office, recreational services, Athletics, the Student Union and other offices.

Next is the fee associated with Student Health and Wellness but does not include health insurance. UConn sponsored health insurance is an entirely different charge but can be waived if a student already has outside insurance. The fee entitles students to resources like the safer-sex condom delivery service GloveBox, heavily discounted pharmaceutical products, nutrition and substance use advice and other programs dedicated to keeping Huskies healthy. Since undergraduate students pay \$388 per semester for SHaW, take advantage of these resources and prioritize your health, especially during finals season.

Along with SHaW's services, we also pay \$250 for the Student Recreation Center fee, required for all Storrs students. The Rec offers a general gym, guided workout classes, rock climbing, outdoor activities and organized sports for students to find fun ways to stay active. The Rec fee is mandatory, and students should take full advantage of the facility to improve their physical and emotional health.

The transit fee, infrastructure fee and technology fee all contribute to the operations of our campus. The transit fee covers our bus service, U-Pass—a card for free bus and train transportation around Connecticut—accessible vans and Safe Rides, while the technology fee supports our classrooms, software and internet services. Students should advocate for any changes or improvements they wish to see in these services, as they are what keeps our campus running. We deserve to reap the benefits of the money we pay.

Finally, the Student Activity fee helps student programs like us, The Daily Campus, operate. It also supports other Tier-III organizations such as the Undergraduate Student Government, the Student Union Board of Governors, Nutmeg Publishing, and our fellow student media organizations UCTV and WHUS, which all give back to the campus community. Whether it be informing the student body on what is going on around campus, providing a free yearbook to every UConn undergraduate their senior year, planning and hosting free activities and events, or overall student leadership and funding help from USG, Tier-III organizations provide a tremendous asset to student life on campus. Students often have a say in the amounts of these fees, as in the past, students have been able to vote for USG referenda that have an influence on the amount of support for these organizations. We encourage students to participate in this voting process when it occurs and support the Tier-III organizations on campus.

UConn students must be aware that paying for college does not end with paying tuition. We also pay for almost every other service offered on campus and we should be a part of making sure that our money works in the ways we need it to. For a more detailed description of fees or information about your fee bill, you can visit the Bursar's description of fees and their general website.

That being said, enjoy your break, Huskies. Pay your fee bill and we will see you next year.



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Patrick's Politics: Peace is a fool's hope in the Middle East

by Patrick Minnerly | HE/HIM/HIS | WEEKLY COLUMNIST | patrick.minnerly@uconn.edu

On Nov. 27, President Joe Biden announced a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah militants based in Lebanon. The ceasefire was supposed to herald the start of renewed efforts towards peace in the region. But the next day, rebels in Syria fighting against President Bashar al-Assad's regime reignited a long-dormant civil war, now thirteen years old, advancing on and eventually capturing Aleppo—Syria's second-largest city. And, in recent days, both Hezbollah and Israel have accused each other of violating the ceasefire, all while Israel's destructive campaign against Hamas in Gaza continues. Far from being resolved, conflict in the Middle East is only spreading and threatening further destabilization.

The situation in Syria has brought new attention to one of the worst conflicts in recent memory, which has a long-running history dating back to 2011. At the time, a series of revolutionary movements known as the Arab Spring was sweeping countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen, toppling leaders and creating hopes for democratic futures. Syria, ruled by the authoritarian al-Assad, quickly descended into civil war between Assad's government and several different rebel groups. Far from leading Syria to prosperity, however, the war caused unimaginable suffering as Assad used chemical weapons against his own people and the rebels fought amongst each other. The United Nations Human Rights Office estimates a total of 306,887 civilians were killed in a ten-year period from 2011 to 2021, before the war finally wound down with a ceasefire brokered by Turkey and Russia.

The capture of Aleppo and

other advances across Syria mark a stunning success for the rebels but also raise several issues. The rebels currently leading the resurgence are members of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), a jihadist militia which was formed with direct ties to the terrorist group Al-Qaeda. Although HTS disavowed its connection to Al-Qaeda in 2016, it is still designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. and United Nations. The primary mission of HTS is to install a fundamentalist version of Islamic government in Syria should it gain power. In a country where fresh memories exist of atrocities committed by fundamentalist Islamic State terrorists, HTS in government would represent a future little better than Assad's rule.

A more concrete, less hypothetical consequence is the refugee and humanitarian crisis that would surely result from renewed large-scale civil war in Syria. During the previous stage of conflict, more than 11 million Syrians were forced to leave their homes and about 6.8 million remain internally displaced within the country. 15.3 million require at least some form of humanitarian assistance, a crisis made worse by a 2023 earthquake which devastated much of northwest Syria. The reemergence of deadly bombings and fighting will exacerbate the crisis, and although the rebels have made swift advances, Assad has the airpower of Iran and Russia at his disposal, a factor that may very well stall the offensive and prolong civilian suffering.

All of this is occurring in the shadow of separate humanitarian disasters in Lebanon and Gaza. During Israel's campaign against Hezbollah this year, 1.4 million people in Lebanon fled their homes, nearly

500,000 of whom escaped to Syria. In a twisted irony, 385,000 of that number were Syrian refugees who originally fled to Lebanon to escape the battles between Assad and the opposition. While the ceasefire in Lebanon has provided a slight respite, Israel and Hezbollah have yet to fully commit to its terms, meaning the war could soon be back on again.

The situation is even worse in Gaza. With food deliveries long being restricted by Israel amid fears of Hamas diverting the resources, famine has begun to set in across much of the territory, and the level of aid is only going downwards. The UN recently announced the suspension of food deliveries through the main entry point of Kerem Shalom due to gangs looting the convoys. The acute shortage of food has led to desperation among Gazans; a woman and two children were crushed to death in central Gaza on Nov. 29 as a crowd attempted to get bread from a bakery. Adding severe famine to a conflict that has resulted in at least 44,000 deaths—70 percent of whom were women and children—and nearly the entire population of Gaza being displaced will compound the humanitarian catastrophe.

The epidemic of human suffering in the Middle East is not a new phenomenon. What is novel at this juncture, however, is the amount happening in close proximity and at the same time. With the agencies of the UN paralyzed in their attempts to deliver aid and only fragile semblances of peace emerging, the fate of millions in the region is hanging by a thread. The renewed Syrian civil war amid the campaigns of Israel heralds the fraying of that increasingly thin thread.

Opinion

Photo of the Day | HuskyTHON



Students enjoying HuskyTHON's Winter Market, hosted in the Student Union on Dec. 4, 2024. The student-led organization fundraises yearly for the Connecticut Children's Medical Center. PHOTO BY HANNAH GRIMES, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Spotify Wrapped

and the datafication of music taste

by Kathryn Andronowitz
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'Tis the season of everyone's favorite end-of-year holiday: the Spotify Wrapped release date. This viral data-based marketing campaign gives users an annual summary of their personal music listening habits on the app, packaged in a shareable social media story format. Spotify's 626 million monthly users look forward to Wrapped with more anticipation every year. Spotify Wrapped is shrouded with so much excitement that it's easy to forget it is a giant advertisement to attract more consumers to the platform, rooted in extensive amounts of personal data. At the same time, it has fundamentally altered the way we interact with music, turning it into a numbers game and a means of displaying our individual identities more than ever before. The goal of streaming music becomes to show that we were in the top 1% of an artist's listeners or to tout our 200,000 minutes of listening. Music becomes a constant hum of tunes in the background

and a form of social capital, rather than an artistic work to actively appreciate and connect over. The implications of this go far beyond our phone screens.

Since the launch of Spotify Wrapped in 2015, music data analysis has become so popular that many turn to third-party services available year-round like Receiptify, Stats.fm and the AI-powered Spotify Bedroom for an aestheticized picture of their listening habits. Whether consciously or not, song streams become like collectible tokens to evidence our devotion to certain genres, artists, or music-listening as a whole. While music tastes have always been a component of identity, platforms like Spotify now facilitate and capitalize off this tendency with Wrapped and other features.

This speaks volumes to how our generation understands our identities through commodified forms, algorithms and what we consider to be "our" digital data (whose actual ownership rights are ambiguous to say the least). Not only do we enjoy seeing how various arrangements of personal digital

data align with our identities, but we expect it. We take credit for the unique flavor of absurdity on our social media algorithms. We define ourselves in terms of neatly defined, trendy and marketable labels like e-boys, coquette girls or Swifties. We embrace algorithms and personal data analysis without questioning the sheer volume of information being collected and stored by companies like Spotify, which faces even less scrutiny than many other tech platforms.

Yet there comes a point where one wonders whether they really are responsible for that Daylist titled, "90s divorced dad rock post-grunge Thursday evening," or whether the algorithm has taken liberties in interpreting our listening profiles to keep us engaged. Spotify's comically AI-based hyper-individualized playlists—another marketing tactic—and personalized new music algorithms may really be sending us down less diverse paths of music. Instead of shaping the algorithm, the algorithm shapes us.

Why do these individualized social media algorithms and styl-

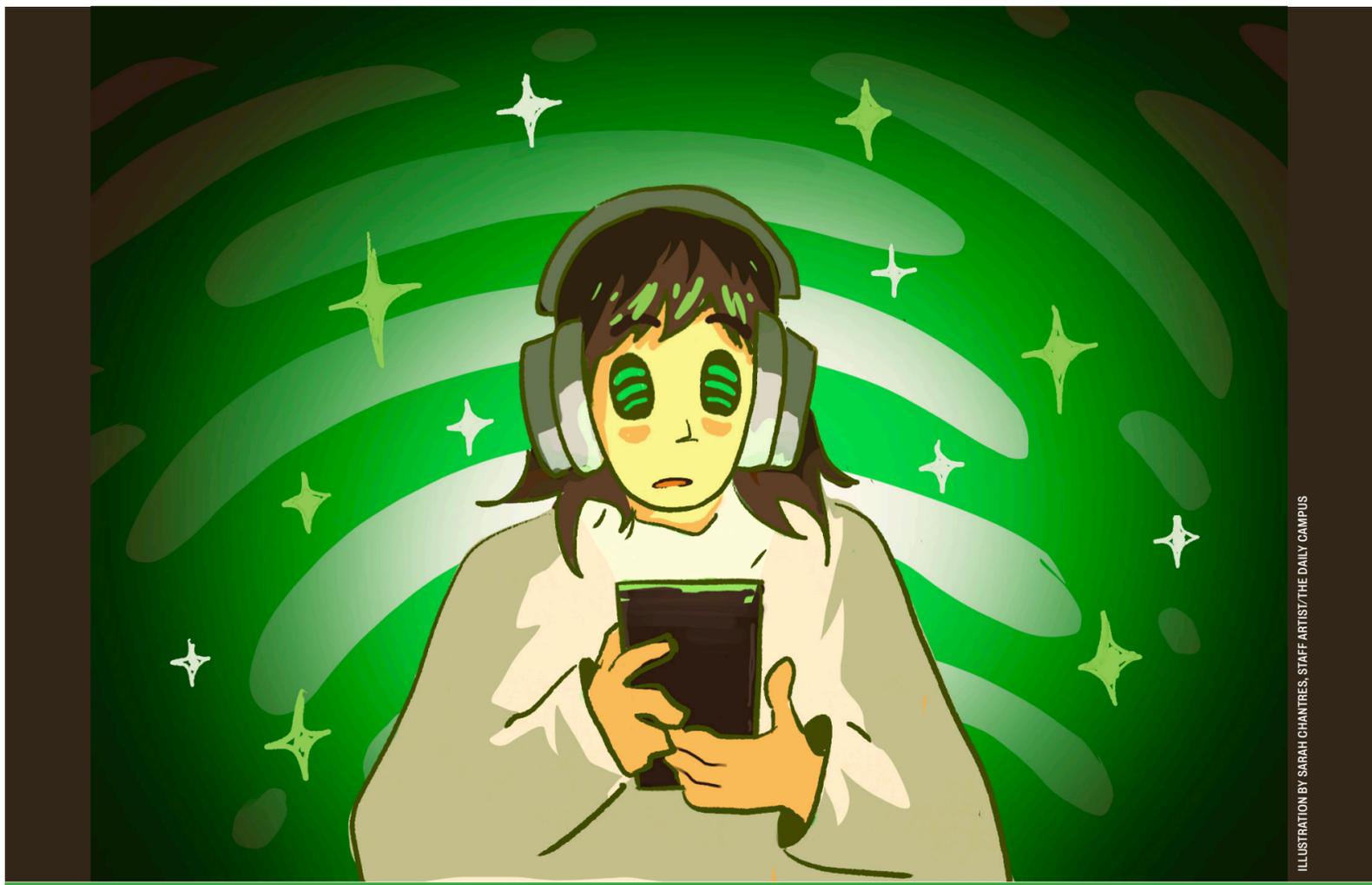
ized regurgitations of our data exist? To attract our attention as media consumers, and with our attention, our money in the form of subscriptions. As we use Spotify's services, we accumulate our self-made and platform-generated playlists, lists of Liked Songs, following/follower account and, naturally, a personal attachment to our digital music library. It is not easy to cancel subscriptions and migrate this near-and-dear music data to other platforms, and it's even harder to build a physical collection of CDs or records. Campaigns like Spotify Wrapped encourage us to bundle our music-listening onto one platform so that it will be accounted for through data, monopolizing our listening. In Spotify's words, "Wrapped or it didn't happen."

We are also further advertising on social media, which populates the platform with new musicians and listeners. We are participating in and co-creating this cultural phenomenon that deliberately leaves non-Spotify users experiencing FOMO. This social pressure draws more people to Spotify,

even if only for the free, ad-based plan. Indeed, Spotify saw a 21% increase in downloads during the first week of December 2020, according to Apptopia.

Furthermore, listeners do the labor of urging new artists to put their music on a large streaming platform like Spotify or Apple Music. This makes it easier for listeners to continue to congregate their music onto a singular platform but leaves the average artist with virtually no room to negotiate the royalties and terms set by these billion-dollar companies.

If you are like me, this might inspire you to turn some of your attention and money away from streaming giants like Spotify. Perhaps you also have an inherited collection of CDs you could listen to. Or maybe you'd like to tune into WHUS in the car to hear someone deejaying songs of political protest. Though you can still enjoy your Spotify Wrapped, it's worth thinking critically about how you're listening to music as Spotify continues dominating the market and expands data collecting practices.



Sam's Section: Tennessee wins Baha Mar; Oklahoma wins Battle 4 Atlantis & more

by Sam Calhoun
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Feast Week went on a generational run this year with a plethora of upsets around the multi-team events (MTEs) with loaded fields. The early-season tournaments can serve as a preview of what is to come for the best teams in the country this season. While this article will not cover the Maui Invitational, it is worth noting that Auburn proved that they are one of the best teams in the country, with Johni Broome leading the way to the championship.

This edition of Sam's Section will recap each of the major MTEs during Feast Week.

Tennessee beats Virginia, Baylor to win Baha Mar title

The first major MTE of Feast Week was the Baha Mar Hoops tournament which took place in Nassau, Bahamas at the Baha Mar Convention Center. The four-team field was loaded, including Tennessee, Baylor, Virginia and St. John's. Tennessee handled Virginia in the semifinal round, while Baylor won in a double overtime thriller over St. John's. Former North Florida guard Chaz Lanier went on a tear, especially in the championship game. The Nashville, Tenn. native averaged 25.5 points in the two games and drilled 13 shots from downtown. Lanier has emerged as one of the best transfer additions in college basketball.

Michigan knocks off Virginia, stomps Xavier to win Fort Myers Tip-Off

It is time to rank Michigan. The Wolverines exceeded expectations during coach Dusty May's first season in

Ann Arbor after a successful tenure at Florida Atlantic. Along with South Carolina, the Fort Myers Tip-Off was an underrated tournament during Feast Week. Former Yale center Danny Wolf impressed in the title game, scoring 20 points



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

and grabbing 14 rebounds. He played like Nikola Jokic, knocking down four 3-pointers which served for half of his made field goals. What makes Michigan special this year is that it could be someone's night for a handful of their key players. That was the case in the semifinal win over Virginia Tech, as former Ohio State Buckeye Roddy Gayle Jr. scored 20 points and handed out four assists on 6-13 shooting.

Purdue wins Rady Children's Invitational title over NC State, Ole Miss

A star is born in West Lafayette, Ind. with Trey Kaufman-Renn earning MVP honors in the Rady Children's Invitational. The tournament, located in San Diego, included Purdue, Ole Miss, BYU and NC State. Kaufman-Renn scored 15 of his 22 points in the second half of the Boilermakers' semifinal win over NC State, a rematch of the Final Four game a season ago. The title game was a thriller, as Myles Colvin had the game-winning basket, rebounding Braden Smith's missed fade-away jumper and scoring with 0.5 seconds remaining. Kaufman-Renn may not

have been the hero in the final seconds, but he was Purdue's best player with 25 points and 13 rebounds. The Boilermakers blew a 17-point first-half lead but rallied to end Ole Miss' 19-game non-conference winning streak.

Florida cruises past Wake Forest and Wichita State to ESPN Events title

The ESPN Events Invitational is located just outside Orlando, but the semi-home advantage was not the only reason Florida dominated their way to winning the tournament's championship. Two of the most underrated guards in the nation faced off in the semifinal round as Florida's Walter Clayton Jr., who had 21 points, led the Gators past Hunter Sallis-led Wake Forest. Clayton was named MVP of the MTE. In addition to his 21-point outing against the Demon Deacons, the former Iona Gael had 17 points and nine rebounds in the dominant win over Wichita State.

Butler beats Northwestern, upsets Mississippi State to win Cactus Division of Arizona Tip-Off

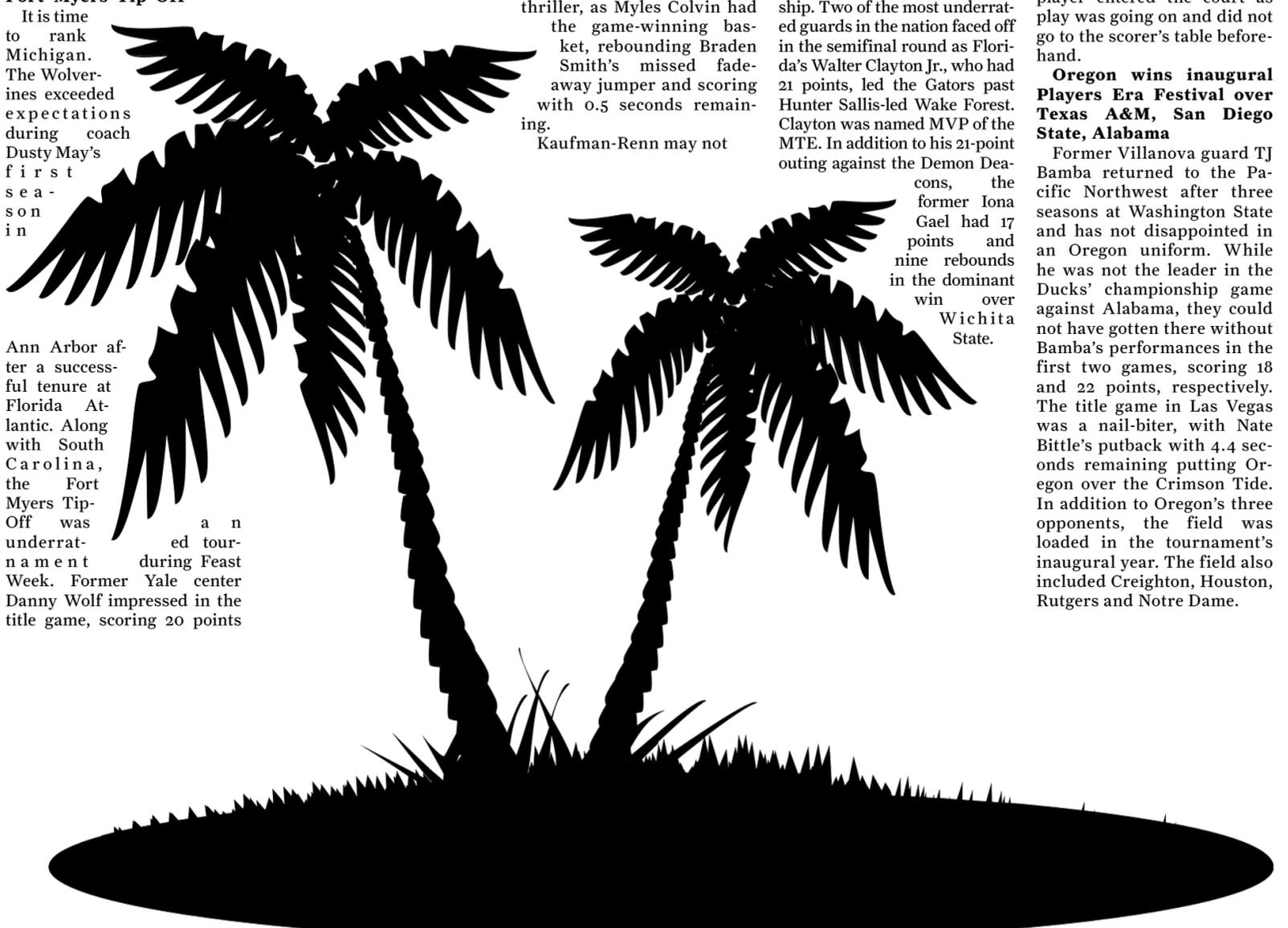
Butler became the unlikely winner of the Cactus Division of the Arizona Tip-Off. The Bulldogs were led by forward Jahmyl Telfort, who not only won MVP honors in Tempe, Ariz. but also was named the Big East Player of the Week. Even though they blew a 15-point lead, Butler held on to their lead and took down Northwestern in the semifinal round. Telfort scored 23 points, but the real MVP of the game was Andre Screen, who had 15 points, nine rebounds and three blocks. Telfort added to his prolific scoring in the Grand Canyon State, scoring 24 points as the Bulldogs upset then-No. 25 Mississippi State by 10.

Oklahoma takes down Providence, Arizona, Louisville on way to Battle 4 Atlantis title

Like the Maui Invitational, the Battle 4 Atlantis did not play out like people expected it to. Gonzaga and Indiana lost in the first round and Louisville cruised their way to the championship game after defeating Indiana and West Virginia. However, Jalon Moore turned his game up a notch in Paradise Island, Bahamas. In his second year with the program, the Birmingham, Ala. native played a leading role in wins over Arizona and Louisville, scoring 24 points in each game. Disaster nearly struck the Sooners in the first round, as they were assessed a technical foul for having too many players on the court when a player entered the court as play was going on and did not go to the scorer's table beforehand.

Oregon wins inaugural Players Era Festival over Texas A&M, San Diego State, Alabama

Former Villanova guard TJ Bamba returned to the Pacific Northwest after three seasons at Washington State and has not disappointed in an Oregon uniform. While he was not the leader in the Ducks' championship game against Alabama, they could not have gotten there without Bamba's performances in the first two games, scoring 18 and 22 points, respectively. The title game in Las Vegas was a nail-biter, with Nate Bittle's putback with 4.4 seconds remaining putting Oregon over the Crimson Tide. In addition to Oregon's three opponents, the field was loaded in the tournament's inaugural year. The field also included Creighton, Houston, Rutgers and Notre Dame.



CLIPART COURTESY OF CREAZILLA.COM

Sports

Photo of the Day | Men's basketball



UConn men's basketball ends the losing streak with a 54 point blowout against the Maryland Eastern Shore Hawks played at the XL Center in Hartford, Conn. on Nov. 30. The final score for the was 99 to 45. PHOTO BY MERCER FERGUSON, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Huskies in The Pros: Breaking down the current Huskies in the NFL

by **Tyler Pruneau**

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After looking at UConn players in the NBA, it is time to deep dive into the NFL in this week's edition of Huskies in The Pros.

Christian Haynes

Concluding the 2023 season, Christian Haynes declared for the 2024 NFL draft. As a Husky, the redshirt senior only allowed a combined total of 29 sacks in the 2022 and 2023 seasons. Additionally, Haynes secured a spot on the third-team All-Americans in both years and made the 2024 Reese's Senior Bowl. Coming into the draft, Fox Sports ranked the 24-year-old as the fourth-best interior offensive lineman on the board. Falling to the third round, the wait ended as the Seattle Seahawks selected the 6-foot-2, 318-pound beast with their 81st pick. The rookie is currently backing up Sataoa Laumea at the right guard position. Between the pre and regular-season, Haynes has played in 14 matches so far but only started once in the preseason. The future looks bright as he participated in 164 snaps, let up one sack and acquired two penalties, according to PFF.

Eric Watts

Unlike Haynes, Eric Watts had a different draft night experience. Leading up to the event, the 24-year-old showed off his talent in the 2024 Reese's Senior Bowl and the 2024 Hula Bowl. As the three-day process came to a close, Watts became an undrafted free agent. Six days later, the news broke that the New York Jets signed the defensive end to a 3-year deal worth up to \$2.85 million. The former Husky is currently behind Jets' sophomore Will McDonald IV on

the depth chart. Seeing the field nine times, the rookie made five solo and five assist tackles so far, per ESPN. Despite averaging nine and a half sacks with Connecticut in 2023, Watts has yet to get to the quarterback in the NFL. Just like Haynes, the possibility of breaking out is on the horizon.

Jackson Mitchell

Before beginning UConn's 2023 season, all eyes turned toward Jackson Mitchell. The veteran sat on the 2024 Reese's Senior Bowl and East-West Shrine Bowl 1000 watch lists. The rookie participated in the 2024 East-West Shrine Bowl 1000 and Hula Bowl alongside Watts. Fast forward to the draft, the linebacker faced free agency. Days later, the Carolina Panthers signed him but cut ties on May 10. A little over a month later, the Las Vegas Raiders picked the 23-year-old up off waivers. In October, the linebacker went back to Carolina. Despite bouncing around the league, Jackson has yet to see the field at the next level.

Travis Jones

In the 2022 NFL draft, the Baltimore Ravens added Travis Jones to their defense with their 76th pick in the third round. The third-year player sealed a four-year, \$5,301,962 deal that will end after the 2025 season. Getting the starting job at the nose tackle position, Jones has competed in 13 contests with 30 total tackles and one sack so far in

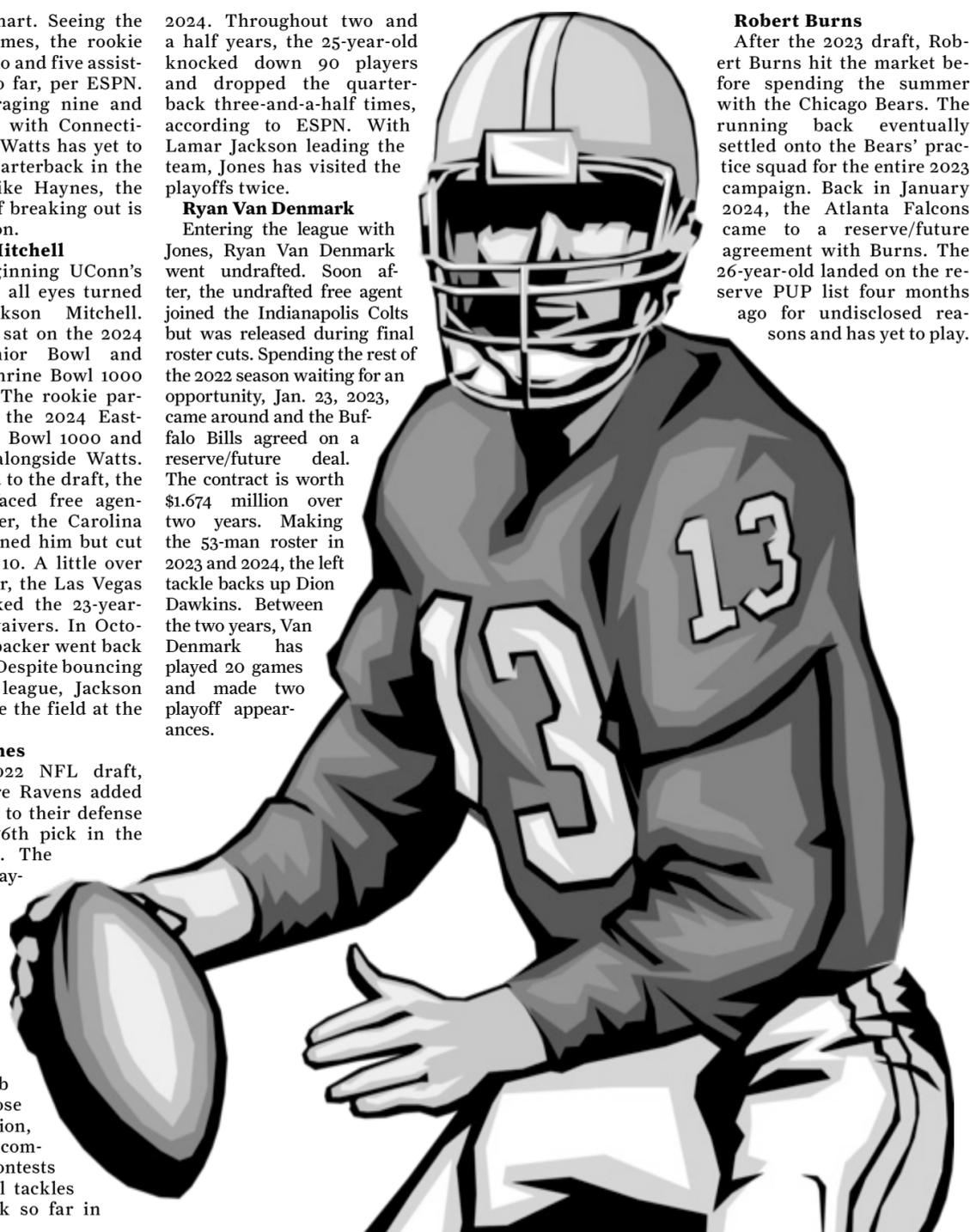
2024. Throughout two and a half years, the 25-year-old knocked down 90 players and dropped the quarterback three-and-a-half times, according to ESPN. With Lamar Jackson leading the team, Jones has visited the playoffs twice.

Ryan Van Denmark

Entering the league with Jones, Ryan Van Denmark went undrafted. Soon after, the undrafted free agent joined the Indianapolis Colts but was released during final roster cuts. Spending the rest of the 2022 season waiting for an opportunity, Jan. 23, 2023, came around and the Buffalo Bills agreed on a reserve/future deal. The contract is worth \$1.674 million over two years. Making the 53-man roster in 2023 and 2024, the left tackle backs up Dion Dawkins. Between the two years, Van Denmark has played 20 games and made two playoff appearances.

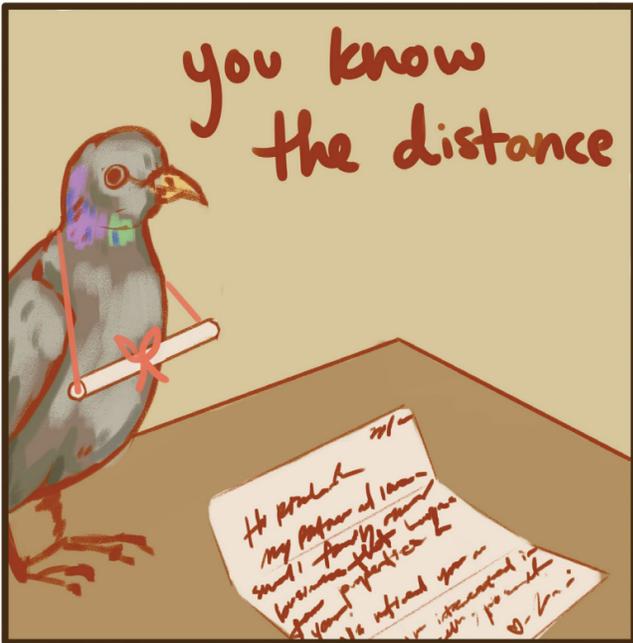
Robert Burns

After the 2023 draft, Robert Burns hit the market before spending the summer with the Chicago Bears. The running back eventually settled onto the Bears' practice squad for the entire 2023 campaign. Back in January 2024, the Atlanta Falcons came to a reserve/future agreement with Burns. The 26-year-old landed on the reserve PUP list four months ago for undisclosed reasons and has yet to play.



CLIPART COURTESY OF WANNAPIK STUDIO

COMICS



COMIC BY AH REUM KINDNESS, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



COMIC BY CONNOR SZREJNA, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



COMIC BY CHRISTIAN BARBARA, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS





Sports

Men's Basketball: No. 25 UConn redeems itself with 76-72 win over No. 15 Baylor

by Sam Calhoun
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In a packed Gampel Pavilion on Wednesday night, the No. 25 UConn men's basketball team (6-3) got their first marquee win of the season, defeating the No. 15 Baylor Bears, 76-72.

In their second consecutive game without Alex Karaban who is still in concussion protocol, the Huskies showed that they were more than just their potential All-American.

"Winning without him today is going to be good for the confidence of the group," Head Coach Dan Hurley said.

Baylor won the tip and did not waste time getting their top 10 offense going. Forward Norchad Omier, who faced the Huskies in the 2023 Final Four with the Miami Hurricanes, scored first.

The Bears started out hot, scoring the game's first seven points before Liam McNeeley made a

basket and drew a foul on Langston Love, who started over freshman star VJ Edgecombe who did not play due to a hamstring injury.

Connecticut looked like they were settling in heading into the first media timeout, with a 3-pointer from Solo Ball and two blocks from Liam McNeeley.

However, Baylor showed resilience out of the timeout, going on a ferocious 10-0 run led by Love and Robert Wright III, the latter of whom played with McNeeley at Montverde Academy.

"It was pretty exciting to play against somebody I really knew," McNeeley said regarding his former teammate. "We've been talking about it since the schedule came out, but we didn't talk today before the game

at all. I didn't text him; he didn't text me. We hugged after the game. That's my guy, I'm proud of him."

All signs point to Wright for being the reason Baylor stayed in the game. The freshman from Wilmington, Del. finished the night with 22 points and four assists.

UConn showed their own resilience out of the second media timeout, beginning with a fast break dunk by Jayden Ross.

Aidan Mahaney started to find his rhythm, hitting back-to-back 3-pointers to force

Baylor coach Scott Drew to call a timeout.

"I thought [Mahaney] saved us today," Hurley said. "When we were reeling in a bad way, he gave us a lot of life and got the crowd going and then we were able to get our bearings.

Hurley referred to Mahaney as a player

who "rose like a phoenix out of the ashes."

Hurley had a different a p -



Men's basketball takes on Baylor University at Gampel Pavilion on Dec. 4, 2024. The Huskies secured a 76-72 win.

BY EMMA MEIDINGER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



proach to the team's first AP top 25 opponent of the

season. Samson Johnson and Tarris Reed Jr. subbed each other out, as usual, but also shared the court for the first time this season.

"Offensively, it brought me back to Buffalo when we didn't have enough shooting and pass-

ing, but for this game it was necessary," Hurley said.

Despite trailing by 11 in the first half, Johnson hit four consecutive free throws to help the Huskies claim their first lead of the game.

Baylor went up at the midway point 37-36, with Wright leading all scorers with 10 points.

UConn came out swinging in the second half, going on an 8-0 run sparked by an old-fashioned

3-point play by Johnson.

However, Omier kept the Bears in the game with a putback dunk that resulted in an old-fashioned 3-point play of his own.

McNeeley continued to show the 45 credentialed NBA scouts in attendance why he's being considered an NBA Draft prospect, finishing the night with 17 points, seven rebounds and three blocks.

Duke transfer Jeremy Roach exited the game early in the second half and did not return due to a concussion. That was a major blow for Baylor, as he scored nine points in the first half.

The fouls continued to haunt the Huskies. Johnson fouled out with 1:47 left after playing 22 minutes. He had a good outing, scoring in double figures for the second time this season with 13 points and two blocks.

"Samson was just an incredible warrior," Hurley said. "He was +18 in that game. He just played so hard, and I was just so proud of that guy."

Luckily, Reed stayed out of foul trouble and contributed nine points, five rebounds and two blocks.

While UConn was out-rebounded again, they were able to absorb every one of Baylor's punches.

The Huskies will face yet another Texas-based team as they travel to Austin to take on the Texas Longhorns on Sunday evening.