



THE
FREDONIA LEADER

SUNY Fredonia's Student-Run Newspaper

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John B. King
Unexpectedly
Visits Fredonia**

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Front and back cover: HUNTER HALTERMAN | Staff Writer

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"HAGS!" – The Leader Staff

Proud member of The Associated Collegiate Press.

Regarding our previous issue: A statement

THE LEADER STAFF

First and foremost, The Leader would like to apologize to students of color and anyone else who was impacted by the harm caused by the recent article and its associated graphic that has been published in our previous issue on April 23.

We have removed the graphic and article from our website and digital pdf in an attempt to reduce further harm and exposure to those impacted.

The Leader understands the implications of the history surrounding the dehumanization of people of color in the media.

Each of the staff members that examined the article before its publication was horrified to learn that the article and graphic fed into harmful racial stereotypes.

As an organization, we are committed to including every voice on this campus, and the publication of the article and graphic harms the community in ways that are deeply upsetting and completely inexcusable.

The Leader would like to validate the concerns shared by the people of color on this campus.

Although we never intended for the image and the article to be racist, intent does not equal impact, and it's important to take responsibility for the harm that we have caused people of color on this campus.

Despite the intent, irreversible harm was done, and intent does not matter in a case such as this where the impact is so grave.

We take full responsibility and accountability for the negative impact created by the article and graphic.

It is not the duty of people of color to educate or provide concerns to The Leader regarding the actions that we have done to harm them, and we are disgusted to have put people of color in this situation.

In regards to all of the individuals that have been defending The Leader over social media platforms, please refrain from invalidating the feelings of people of color on this campus.

The criticisms that we have received for the article and graphic are valid, and should not be discounted for the sake of defending the harmful actions that our team has participated in with the publication of the article and graphic.

We have apologized to President Kolison privately, as we understand that this article and graphic undermined his dignity and dehumanized him in a way that was both racially insensitive and absolutely unacceptable.

The Leader is committed to instituting systems to ensure that actions like this that target and harm communities are never taken again.

Firstly, we will be combing through every article, photo and graphic that we publish henceforth to ensure that there is not any aspect of it that can be harmful to any community within this campus and beyond.

Secondly, we will be adding a diversity, equity and inclusion chair position within our executive board.

As previously stated, it is never the responsibility of people of color to educate on the harms that may be caused by what The

Next Steps for The Leader

Amend the constitution to create the position of a Diversity Equity and Inclusion Chair as a member of the Eboard and other diversity changes

Hold elections for the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Chair

Have the Eboard staff sign a Diversity Challenge Pledge from the Title IX Office

Work to build stronger relationships with campus intercultural groups

As always, The Leader is always looking for feedback on improvements it can make.

These can be emailed to leader@fredonia.edu

Leader publishes, but we want to acknowledge and act accordingly in response to several individuals that have asked for this position to be added.

The Leader cannot take back the harm that our actions have inflicted upon the community. What we can do is apologize and do better by implementing change. We will do better.

The Scallion editors and Art Director have also included separate statements below:

The editors of The Scallion take full responsibility and accountability for the harm created by this piece. They are committed to learning from the feedback they have received from the community.

The editors of The Scallion apologize for the massive oversights that occurred during every step in the process of creating this piece and understand that although the piece was not intended to cause harm, the intention behind the piece does not negate the impact that it has had to the students of color that were harmed by the piece.

The Art Director for the graphics department takes full responsibility for the graphic's inception.

They apologize for not flagging the graphic and thinking more in-depth about the harm that it could do.

They apologize to the artist for putting them in a difficult situation. They apologize to everyone who was hurt by this graphic.

And they apologize to President Kolison for creating an image that was racist and dehumanizing to him.

There is no excuse for this situation, and they are taking steps to make sure this never happens again.

SUNY Chancellor John B. King unexpectedly visits Fredonia

DAN QUAGLIANA

News Editor

On the morning of Monday, April 22, the SUNY Chancellor, John B. King, Jr., made a surprise visit to SUNY Fredonia.

His visit was not announced, and many students and faculty were not aware of the chance to speak with him about the issues plaguing the university.

When he arrived on campus early that morning, King met with two members of the university's faculty: Dr. Bruce Simon, an English professor, and Dr. Rob Deemer, a music composition professor and the director of the Department of Theatre and Dance. Simon and Deemer are the current and next chairpersons of University Senate, respectively. University Senate is the governing body of faculty members on campus. According to political science professor and senator Dr. Jonathan Chausovsky, other faculty members were not given the chance to meet with the chancellor.

King also met with executives of Fredonia's Student Association (SA), but this was done under great secrecy. According to SA President Rosemarie Rapisarda, "We told at our Student Association Budget Meeting where [President] Kolison had to endorse our SA budget for the fiscal year. It was the Friday before [April 19]."

"When we met with him, we were able to introduce ourselves. He then asked us questions about what we would change on campus," she said. "We mainly used this time to speak directly to Kolison, as we knew our tips would have a better outcome when telling them to Kolison himself. We told him that he should not just rely on hearing concerns from only us (the Student Association). We recommended him to possibly host forums where students come in and tell him their concerns directly [and] not just from the 'grapevine.' We offered our help as the Student Association to assist [in] things like this in the future."

Rapisarda thought the meeting with King went "well." She described it as "mainly an outlet for him to hear concerns from the Student Association."

"It was almost like a journalistic interview," she said. "I thought he was very nice, professional and intelligent. However, I do wish he chose to allow the school to make it public that he was visiting. It could have given him the opportunity to hear concerns from struggling students in the programs that are being cut or even talked to UUP [United University Professions] about the budget issues our campus is facing."

After these meetings, King delivered a roughly 15-minute-long news briefing from Fredonia President Stephen Kolison's office in Fenton Hall. Local news organizations such as the Dunkirk Observer, a newspaper serving the Northern Chautauqua region, were given the opportunity to report on the event, but Fredonia's student-run media, including The Leader, Fredonia Radio Systems (FRS) and WNYF-TV, were not invited to attend or made aware of the event, although FRS News Director Lee Pye was allowed into the news conference

"I am furious at the fact that he came to Fredonia, saw firsthand ... how our campus is struggling, yet decided to give funding to the big four again."

—ROSEMARIE RAPISARDA

SA President
SUNY Fredonia

after being alerted that it was happening.

The chancellor spent his time talking about the issues that Fredonia has been experiencing over the last few months, including the university's declining enrollment and financial difficulties, the strategic plan to address enrollment decline and the potential for the new budget to bring new students into the SUNY program.

King was referencing the new budget for New York State. As unveiled on May 3, the SUNY Board of Trustees only allocated an additional \$1.4 million to Fredonia, far short of the university's annual deficit, which has been said by various campus administrators to range anywhere from \$9 million to \$21 million.

"It's been a great opportunity to visit with the president and his leadership team to spend time with faculty and staff leaders to hear about their perspective on the future of Fredonia ... and then to spend time with students, talking with the leadership of their student assembly, as well as some of the students who are involved as tour guides for the campus about their experience," King's speech began.

Someone in the room, presumably one of the reporters present, asked, "So the big news this week is the budget has been passed ... [There's] a lot of talk about SUNY getting more money. Is it enough?"

Due to the lack of students and faculty in the room, a lot of details are not exact, save for an audio recording of the speech obtained by The Leader.

"Well, look, you know, we ... we did this long-term report for the governor and the legislature on SUNY's long-term financial trajectory. And what we pointed out in that report is that if we didn't get additional state support, we would end up with a billion-dollar system-wide deficit over a 10-year period. And so we made the case that we need regular increases in state support," King answered.

"And the state stepped up to do that. The governor and our ... legislative champions are delivering not only the \$54 million that was promised in the governor's executive budget, but \$60 million of operating support on top of that 54 [million dollars] to help us to address some of the costs associated with our new UUP contract. The contract for our faculty members [were] well-deserved raises that we think were very fair, but we need the state's help to pay for it."

King went on to say that he was "very optimistic about the

future” of Fredonia. “We, in looking at the plan, see both smart investments as well as thoughtful efforts to adjust staffing and programming to align with the change in student population,” he said.

King’s views on the recent campus events are in stark contrast to those of the majority of students, faculty and staff, who have all widely criticized the recent gutting of 13 different majors across the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

“And President Kolison and his team put forward, I think, a very thoughtful approach to say, ‘We’ve got to change in order to be sustainable for the long term.’ And at SUNY, we’re very committed to the future of SUNY Fredonia. We want SUNY Fredonia to be successful for the next 200 years, and so in order to make sure that happens, the campus has to make smart financial decisions,” King finished.

He went on to say that he is “deeply committed to all 64 of the communities where [SUNY has] campuses ... Fredonia is working closely with Jamestown Community College and Erie Community College to make it easier for students to transfer from those two-year institutions ... We think that’s very smart.”

Next, King answered a question from Lee Pye, a junior majoring in English and audio radio production and the News Director of FRS.

“I asked about why they are adding the new business stuff if this is a liberal arts school,” Pye said. He is referring to the new Master of Business Administration degree that Fredonia is adding at some point in the near future.

“Look, the 13 programs that are being discontinued are programs that served about 74 students. So these were programs that were under-enrolled,” King responded. “The plan now is to invest in areas that are growing like a new master’s program in mental health counseling. We know that’s a huge need for the region [and] for the state. So we’re gonna make those investments. And the president has recruited a strong vice president for enrollment management ... I would also say that President Kolison and his team are working hard on retention ... And so that’s why we really think this is a plan that will get us to a healthier future.”

King concluded his briefing by saying that, “Institutions that are clear-eyed about their financial challenges, make hard choices [and] make investments in areas of growth are actually going to be the ones that are positioned to survive and thrive for the long term. And SUNY Fredonia is doing that.”

“This is the ... strategy for the future and we’re going to be around [and] remain relevant for the next two or three [hundred] years,” Kolison said after King had finished speaking. “We’re going to have to do some of those things. If we insist that we can’t change anything, then I think we’re going to have a harder time for the future. That’s what it’s about. Thank you.”

“Everything that was said in that meeting was already said by Kolison months ago,” Pye said after King’s speech. “I don’t think anything important was said during that meeting. [The only difference was in] the chancellor being there.”

Pye believes that he was the only student in attendance at the speech, although this fact could not be confirmed. He was only able to gain attendance on the insistence of Elmer Ploetz, a journalism professor in the Communication Department.

It has been confirmed by Ploetz that Pye was the only student in attendance.

“I feel very used ... He came to Fredonia, made this impression and had a quick meeting that none of the media were in-



SUNY Chancellor John B. King.
Photo via suny.edu

vited to,” Pye said. “They said that they did invite the medias and I think that’s important to note that they did not ... They are not contacting student media, which is the main source of media that we have on campus.”

Regarding the content of King’s speech, Pye said, “Now [that] we know that a lot of the money didn’t go to Fredonia, I feel like [King’s visit] was just a show. He looked me in the eyes and saw my concern and had a smile on his face ... And having someone look at you and know they’re hurting you, and then they smile at you, that hurts, especially [when it’s coming from] someone in power. It’s very clear to me now, at least in my opinion, that he showed up to make a show and to present himself as better and good. And then he does this not good thing.”

“I [do] not blame Kolison or the administration for this,” Rapisarda specified. “When the chancellor demands to visit Fredonia and talk to the higher-ups but wishe[s] it to be secretive, they have to agree with that. Or else he could have potentially denied to come.

“I am furious at the fact that he came to Fredonia, saw firsthand ... how our campus is struggling, yet decided to give funding to the big four again. If I am correct, the chancellor also visited another school [SUNY Cortland] the same day as Fredonia (which is why the visit was so short) ... I just think it was ridiculous that he basically wasted the school’s time to hear concerns from different departments to then, once again, not do anything about it and give money to the big four who quite literally do not need anything more. They are not struggling. We are.”

Pye said, “If I had the chance to go back to that meeting, knowing what I know now, knowing that that was the chancellor, knowing what they didn’t tell me ... I would ask him, ‘Why would you show your face to a place where you know they will hate you?’”

UUP and Students For Fredonia hold protest for fair funding



All photos by BECCA TORNCHELLO | Staff Photographer



Mayor Ferguson. Photos by BECCA TORNCHELLO | Staff Photographer





All photos by BECCA TORNCHELLO | Staff Photographer



Fredonia continues to face budget issues

DAN QUAGLIANA
News Editor

On May 2, the SUNY chancellor and Board of Trustees unveiled the budget for the system of 64 colleges and universities, one month before the anticipated date.

A press release from the aforementioned date states, “The State University of New York Board of Trustees today announced the additional allocation of \$114 million in Direct State Tax Support across the State-operated SUNY campuses from the FY 2025 Enacted New York State budget.”

“SUNY has been able to allocate the significant resources our campuses deserve so that we can retain and attract stellar faculty, enroll the largest class of students in a decade, increase paid internships and expand our research capabilities. There is a place at SUNY for every New Yorker, and this funding further positions SUNY as a leading academic institution that delivers on the promise of student success at an extraordinary value,” said SUNY Chancellor John B. King, Jr.

Despite King’s and the Board’s announcement, the new money was not as equitably distributed as their language made it seem. Fredonia’s annual deficit has been listed as ranging from \$9 million to \$21 million, according to various campus administrators, but the university only received \$1.4 million in new funding.

“I am disgusted by Chancellor King’s actions, as yesterday he and the SUNY Board of Trustees once again allocated the historic gains in state funding to campuses that do not need the extra funds like we do,” said Christopher Taverna, Fredonia’s United University Professions (UUP) chapter president and an applications administrator/applications trainer in Information Technology Services.

UUP is the union representing professional faculty and staff across the SUNY system.

Last year, the Board of Trustees distributed \$163 million in new funding across the SUNY system, but most of that money was given to the four big “university centers”: SUNY Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo and Stony Brook. This year, the same thing happened with the new \$114 million.

On May 3, student advocacy group Students for Fredonia (SFF) led a protest around Fredonia’s campus, where student leaders of the group explained why SUNY’s lack of funding is harmful to the university.

“SUNY got that money, and they gave almost all of it to the big four schools,” said Ben Evans, a co-vice president of SFF. “[They] screwed us over royally.”

According to King’s memo dated May 2 about the budget to the Board, the new money was meant to maintain “the allocation of the \$163.0 million provided in 2023/24 in the same manner as approved in that year.”

“For the second year in a row, the Trustees approved an allocation plan that sends the lion’s share of funding to the financially secure university centers and doles out what’s left to the rest of the campuses — including those dealing with multimillion-dollar deficits,” said a UUP press release that was also dated May 2. “Some of those campuses, like SUNY Potsdam and SUNY Fredonia, have announced program and staff cuts to reduce deficits of \$9 million and \$17 million, respectively.”

“The chancellor and the Trustees have again refused to do the right thing by not allocating state funding to our campuses based on need,” said UUP President Frederick E. Kowal. “It’s unconscionable and it ignores nearly two decades of SUNY underfunding under the Cuomo administration.”

Do you have suggestions for The Leader?

Contact us via email, leader@fredonia.edu

OR

Direct message us on Instagram, [@leaderfredonia](https://www.instagram.com/leaderfredonia)

Students For Fredonia upholds legacy

CHLOE KOWALYK
Editor in Chief

Students For Fredonia (SFF), a student advocacy group, has organized several protests, panels and events throughout the semester following the announcement of 13 programs being cut at SUNY Fredonia.

Many students have joined SFF in the fight for fair funding for Fredonia. As commencement grows near, some students involved in the club are reflecting on their experiences.

Abby Tartaro is a senior psychology major and co-president of SFF. She explained that she first got involved in SFF after hearing about the program cuts, just as many other students did.

“As an advocate, I was not going to watch a social injustice unfold in front of me without combating it in every way that possibly I could,” Tartaro said. “I wanted the chance to make a difference for the people that I care about. I am proud to call the faculty, staff and students at Fredonia my family.”

As Tartaro approaches her graduation day, she is hoping to leave behind positivity and advocacy, and is also hopeful for the future of the club.

“Every voice that makes up Students for Fredonia is crucial, and I know they will continue to remain a strong and powerful group after I graduate,” she said.

Tartaro reflected on many of the memories she had made throughout the short time SFF has existed, as the club started late in the Fall 2023 semester. “The e-board has become my family and we support each other in events that occur both inside and outside of Students for Fredonia,” she said.

Tartaro shared that her favorite memory was when SFF visited Albany to advocate for state legislators to allocate fair funds to the college. “I got to know some incredible people that have influenced me in so many ways,” she said.

Tartaro also enjoyed attending e-board meetings. “Many of us cope with humor, and our sarcasm bouncing off of each oth-

er when we are frustrated is hysterical,” she added.

While she is proud of everything the club accomplished this year, Tartaro has some goals for next year.

First, she hopes the trip to Albany continues each year until Fredonia receives fair funding. She also hopes SFF will continue hosting their events and protests.

In addition, Tartaro hopes SFF will continue to establish a relationship with administrators.

“I want SFF to work collaboratively with our administrators so that we can all be effective and on the same team, but that needs to be a goal of our administrators as well in order for that to become a reality,” she said. “I know that the group will continue to accomplish great things and I am so proud of each of the people involved.”

In addition, Tartaro mentioned that she hopes SFF can join other SUNY campuses, inspiring them to also create their own campus advocacy groups.

For students still at Fredonia, Tartaro wants students to continue to support SFF, as they will support them.

“Students should know that we are their biggest supporters,” she said. “We will do everything in our power to fight for what is right for our students and teach people how to effectively use their voices.”

As Tartaro concludes her time at Fredonia, she said, “I really hope that our administrators will advocate for us the way that their jobs require them to. I hope that the students realize that although we are students, we actually have more power than our administrators. We can use our voices in ways that they can't.”

Finally, Tartaro advised current students and faculty to utilize the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) to request information that is being hidden.

“We deserve to know what is happening to our education and employment and we will not stop until we get what we need — transparency and funding,” she said.



Students For Fredonia and UUP members at the recent protest. Photo provided by Students For Fredonia

Fredonia continues to face boil water orders, this time two in one semester

ALEXANDER BUCKNAM
Staff Writer

Many students remember having to boil their water during the semester.

Fredonia has been having boil water alerts due to an old water treatment system, according to Fredonia's mayor, Michael Ferguson.

"We have had seven since 2020," Sarah Laurie, the director of environmental health and safety and sustainability at SUNY Fredonia, said.

According to Ferguson, most water treatment systems need to be upgraded every 25 years, while Fredonia's system is 135 years old.

"Fredonia water alerts happen so often because we have a deteriorating system, and multiple system failures," Ferguson said.

According to Laurie, there could be several reasons why Fredonia keeps having boil water alerts.

"Fredonia water treatment is at its max capacity. It's a manual process," said Laurie.

According to Laurie, if there's not an employee at the plant to make certain changes at the right time, a component can fail and it won't complete its part of the process; that's when the water is determined not safe to drink. "Many other plants have multiple parallel lines, so if one line goes down, water can be treated through the other one. Fredonia doesn't have that, we have one line," Laurie stated.



Fredonia's Water and Tax Collection and Billing Office.
Photo by DREW PALIUCH | Photo Editor

According to the mayor, there is a certain amount of silt that sits on the bottom of the clear tank and they have to go in to vacuum it up. This could cause the silt to go everywhere and that silt could contain some toxins.

During this process, they have to keep an eye on the levels of turbidity because a boil water alert occurs when turbidity levels get too high.

Another reason for the boil water alerts is the source of the water.

Ferguson stated, "We plan to fix this by getting our water from Lake Erie."

Fredonia will be switching over to the treatment center that the City of Dunkirk uses, where they have much better equipment to do high-power things, according to Ferguson. He also said that Fredonia plans to fix their water lines.

This process could take a few years if we switch to Dunkirk. According to Ferguson, "We would need to get a permit to go through or under the interstate thruway [Interstate 90]."

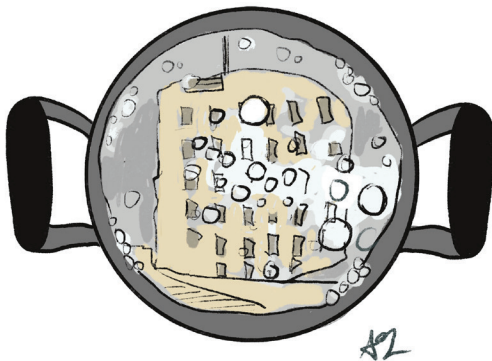
It could also be extremely pricey, costing anywhere from \$20-30 million.

"This could take up to three years before we even get a shovel in the ground," stated Ferguson.

"We try our best to communicate with Fredonia State University when a boil water alert is happening," Ferguson said.

The school communicates with students by sending them an email.

Getting these emails before paying your deposit to go to Fredonia could play some discussion on where a person attends a school, Laurie explained. However, she believes, "they don't happen frequently or within that time where it would make such an impact."



Graphic by ADELIZ GOTTINGER | Staff Artist

This past boil water alert that the village had on April 17 of this year and lasting until April 21, 2024 was due to high levels of turbidity when cleaning out the clear tank, according to Ferguson.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, turbidity is "the clarity of water and it is an important factor in water quality."

Cleaning out the clear tank can cause silt to go everywhere, which can cause extremely cloudy water, which would then lead to a boil water alert, Ferguson said.

ITS unveils strategic plan for technology

KRYSTYNA PORTUGUES-KLOS

Staff Writer

As the world progresses and technology becomes more and more futuristic, colleges and students have to prepare for what they will encounter in the digital world.

The Information Technology Service Center (ITS) at Fredonia has a strategic plan for the advancement of technology, and how to incorporate it into the lives of students and faculty, making it accessible for everyone.

A committee was made to create a strategic plan concerning the evolving technology available for colleges and how to make it available for students to use. Chief Information Officer (CIO) Michel Kouadio and the student representative for the IT Strategic Planning Committee, EJ Jacobs, explained the plan, detailing what may come next for Fredonia.

The main point of the plan is to inspire innovation with new technology, create collaborative spaces for students and faculty, have the best resources available for students and create more effective management of the resources on campus.

Jacobs, a senior English major, explained, "This plan has been in discussion for a while, starting last semester. This semester was mainly finalizing details."

The plan is scheduled to be finished or mostly complete by 2027.

With the committee taking nearly two semesters to come up with this plan, there have been many ideas set in place, and some have already been approved and set in motion.

One example of this is the switch to Microsoft Authenticator from DUO. Kouadio states that the move resulted from "the need for a more user-centric approach to technology and education."

With the change, students will not need to sign in every single week for their Google account, but only every two weeks, relieving a weekly burden off their shoulders.

One of the many differences students will experience with

this plan is the unveiling of innovation labs around campus, one of them being in Fenton Hall. In these technology centers, students will be able to rent laptops from laptop lockers without having to go to a person, making it a communication-free way to get the resources for assignments and other student needs. Students can simply scan their FREDcard and take a laptop.

There will be new technologies and systems in these labs as well, helping students connect to newer platforms that can help them with their learning and integrate technology into their education.

AI is one of the biggest innovations in technology the University has incorporated, and it will be utilized on this campus and on the school's websites more often with this plan.

On the Fredonia website, there will be a 24/7 AI chatbot capable of answering questions and relaying users to web pages where they can find what they need. This will not get rid of customer service, as calls will still be taken at the ITS Service Center and other offices on campus for student needs.

More AI research and resources will be available as well, and safe ways to use AI will be discussed. Classroom usage of AI is a hot topic, but there are several ways that AI can help facilitate learning instead of asking ChatGPT to write your essay.

Cybersecurity will also be increased, and the protection of University platforms like FredLearn and YourConnection will be improved.

This plan, set in motion and with more details to be approved, will allow students to learn in an environment with some of the newest technologies and the opportunity to explore what the tech world has to offer.

Krystyna Portugues-Klos, the author of this article, is a student worker at the ITS center on campus.

EJ Jacobs, who was interviewed for this article, is the Life & Arts Editor of The Leader.

Open positions on The Leader for the 2024-2025 school year

Design Editor
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Asst. Copy Editor
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Social Media Manager



Dr. Kathryn Kendall takes on enrollment

DAN QUAGLIANA
News Editor

SUNY Fredonia's looming enrollment problems have been ongoing for many years. This year, the university has taken its most radical step yet in trying to fix them — the hiring of a dedicated vice president for enrollment management and services (VPEMS), Dr. Kathryn Kendall.

The VPEMS position was unveiled to University Senate, the campus' governing body composed of faculty members, early last semester. Later on, President Kolison said at the April 2023 meeting that, "Before this was created, I had meetings with various people. I stressed the urgency of having this position. [I h]ad [a] robust discussion explaining what it is we are trying to do ... I did receive support for the position, because, again, I would endeavor to explain the relevance and importance of this position."

"As the VPEMS, I serve as a member of the President's Cabinet and work collaboratively with the Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Finance and Administration and University Advancement to accomplish the enrollment goals of the university," Kendall explained. "I directly oversee the strategic vision and coordination of all functions of enrollment management at the university, including the Office of Admissions, Financial Aid, Recruiting and other related areas."

At the August 2023 meeting, the membership for the search committee to find a VPEMS was unanimously approved by Senate. That committee was chaired by Dr. Andy Karafa, the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Rob Deemer, a music composition professor and the chair of the department of theatre and dance.

Kendall's appointment to the position was announced to students on March 1, in a news article released that day by Marketing and Communications.

"I applied for the position through a national search firm, RPA Inc.," Kendall remembered. "The process included a multiple-stage interview process in which I was invited onto the campus as a finalist for a two-day interview visit. During those two days I presented on strategic enrollment management, and met and interviewed with several groups comprised of faculty, staff, students and administrators."

As part of that interview process, Kendall participated in an "open session" that students were able to go to, on Nov. 30, 2023. At that session, she gave a presentation on the topic of "the use of data when developing and implementing a strategic enrollment management plan."

Karafa described how the search committee was "looking for somebody who had comprehensive experience with enrollment management, and evidence that they've been successful."

"Kendall had progressive experience," he said. "Her focus was on the social work program up at the University at Buffalo (UB). She had various responsibilities in that role there."

Kendall graduated from Fredonia in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. After graduating, she earned a master's degree in Social Work from UB and an Ed.D. at the Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester.

"From the perspective of a SUNY Fredonia alum, it's won-



Dr. Kathryn Kendall. Photo via fredonia.edu

derful to be back at my alma mater. I have great memories of my time here and it feels very comfortable being back on campus," Kendall related. "Some of the new building construction came about after I graduated, but for the most part everything is very familiar.

"Over the course of my professional career, I have crossed paths with many fellow Fredonia alumni who all shared similar regard for their alma mater. Many of the faculty who influenced my career path have since retired, and yet their encouragement and guidance will always stay with me," she said.

Before accepting the VPEMS position, Kendall worked as the senior assistant dean for enrollment and online programs in the School of Social Work at the University at Buffalo, a position she has held since 2016.

"As a candidate, I brought over 20 years of higher education enrollment experience," she said. "I held leadership roles overseeing enrollment, marketing, recruitment, admissions, retention, strategic planning and data analytics, for both online and on-campus programs. In these previous positions I have used data analytics to drive enrollment objectives and support retention efforts. Building from descriptive data and trend analysis, I have identified actionable steps through predictive and prescriptive analytics. By leveraging technology and data, I have improved and implemented evidence-based solutions to achieve enrollment goals."

Kendall described how the only challenge she's faced in her new role so far has been the "ongoing technical issues with the new 2024-25 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) implementation."

Kendall is referencing how the FAFSA rollout of this year is taking longer than in past years, causing problems for many students both at Fredonia and elsewhere.

“This has certainly been a challenge for all of higher education, not just Fredonia. Currently, our financial aid office is well-positioned to move forward with financial aid packaging once we receive updated FAFSA data,” she explained.

The university’s administration saw value in those skills, as Karafa relates how the final decision for the VPMS choice was the University’s president, Stephen Kolison’s: “The president made the final decision. We digitally provided strengths

and weaknesses of candidates.” Members of the search committee did not have any input on Kolison’s decision.

Kendall hopes to use those skills to implement “a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan to complement the institution’s Strategic Plan.” She described how, “It’s the mission, vision and guiding principles that will steer enrollment management strategies. I started the VPMS position here at SUNY Fredonia about three months ago and I have spent much of it meeting key stakeholders and familiarizing myself with process, procedures and resources. I really have only scratched the surface and will continue to set up collaboration meetings well into the future.”

Why have SUNY Fredonia's enrollment and acceptance rates increased?

ABIGAIL JACOBSON
Asst. News Editor

As you’re walking to class, you may have seen a few tour guides going around the SUNY Fredonia campus.

Most of these groups we’ve seen have been large, and some may be coming in for the Fall 2024 semester.

The question is: Why?

According to an article published by The Dunkirk Observer, “SUNY Fredonia: Gains are a step in the right direction, but only the first step” they claim, “[SUNY Fredonia’s] applications for next fall have increased 7%, with acceptance numbers up 6%.”

These percentages of projected enrollment have been the highest for SUNY Fredonia since 2010.

According to Kimberlie Ball, the interim director of admissions and the associate director of operations within the admissions office, applications have been going up because of the absence of COVID-19.

“I think students are now kind of getting over that COVID home, and aren't afraid to apply to additional colleges and aren't afraid to apply to colleges outside of their area,” said Ball.

She also believes another reason Fredonia’s enrollment rate increased was due to SUNY’s two-week free application period.

Although students who apply here might not decide to go to Fredonia, “we're on their radar and then they might not have thought about us ... then they start to at least look at us and ... they can kind of see what we're all about,” said Ball.

It can also be important to consider how Fredonia increased enrollment.

According to Ball, “We just jumped right back into what we know how to do.” This includes recruiting at schools as far as Long Island, New York and attending virtual events.

According to the 202430 Admissions Tracking Bi-Weekly spreadsheet, data shows that SUNY Fredonia needed an estimated 5,590 full-time first-year (FTFY) applicants and as of

“If we can get the enrollment up, ... we can help bring in some more money to the college”

—KIMBERLIE BALL

Interim Director of Admissions,
SUNY Fredonia

May 1, Fredonia has received 6,209 applications.

Also according to the spreadsheet, Fredonia needed 4,120 FTFY students and as of May 1, Fredonia accepted 4,802 FTFY students. SUNY Fredonia also needed an estimate of 725 deposits paid and as of May 1, Fredonia had received 524 paid deposits.

According to Ball, she believes the incoming students from the increased enrollment and acceptance rates will help the school’s budget.

“If we can get the enrollment up, ... we can help bring in some more money to the college,” she said.

Ball also believes the increased enrollment and acceptance rates will help pay off our approximate \$17 million deficit.

SUNY Fredonia has officially gone through with the cutting of 13 programs, ranging from early childhood education to visual arts and new media degrees.

With these cuts being made, it’s said by The Observer, “The roadmap college leadership proposes cuts \$10 million from that deficit [\$17 million].”

At the end of the day, administrators and students alike agree that SUNY Fredonia needs all the money it can get to pull it out of its deficit.

If enrollment is the next step towards achieving this goal, then it’s the job of Fredonia administrators to do all that is possible to improve enrollment.



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Every Tuesday at **7 p.m.**



What will happen with all of the empty dorms and buildings on campus?

ALEXANDER BUCKNAM
Staff Writer

A total of three buildings on campus no longer serve their purpose at SUNY Fredonia: The Andrews Complex, Erie Hall and Jewett Hall.

The Andrews Complex is located next to the campus and community children's center.

The complex consists of Schulz, Igoe, Hemingway and Hendrix Hall. The Andrews Complex is currently not being used for its purpose of housing students; instead, there is an office, a gym, an aerobic center, a TV station, an eSports lounge and a Visual Arts and New Media Photography lab still being used within the building.

Schulz is where one would find the Wellness Center and the eSports Lounge. Igoe has the Visual Arts and New Media Photography lab. Hemingway has the Aerobic Center and Hendrix is where the Facilities Planning and Environmental Health and Safety offices are as well as the campus student-run TV station.

The complex stopped housing students at different times, according to Alicia Wroblewski, the program aid for Residence Life. "Schulz and Hemingway went offline in Fall 2023, Igoe went offline in Fall 2022 [and] Hendrix went offline in Fall 2020," Wroblewski said.

According to Markus Kessler, the director of facilities planning, this is due to low student enrollment.

The Andrews Complex is not closed forever, and still could stand a chance at reopening if student enrollment continues to rise, according to Kessler.

He also thinks having halls closed is beneficial. "Because we have empty dorms, it gives us the opportunity to work in a dorm and move people to a closed dorm. We don't have to



Jewett Hall.
Photo by **REBEKAH GERACE** | Staff Photographer

worry about getting it done in the summer," Kessler stated.

There also have been rumors that Fredonia is planning on moving out WNYF-TV's station headquarters, the Wellness Center and other things located in the complex. Owen Wagner, a first-year English major, said, "Yeah, I overheard people mentioning that they are soon moving the TV station out."

"I think it's in discussion, it's not that they are disrupting anything, they are just kinda in an odd spot," Kessler stated when asked about the rumor.

Erie Hall is located in the middle of the Kirkland dorm complex. It once served as a dining hall and closed down in 2013, according to Kessler. The building was closed because "FSA [the Faculty Student Association] said there wasn't enough traffic flow to keep it open to serve meal[s]," he said.

Kessler also mentioned it was because of the student population getting low, and "there wasn't a need for three dining halls."

But Daniel Laurie, a graduate of the Class of 2002 and a current English lecturer, said this was not true: "It was busy because of where it's located," he stated.

There's an ongoing rumor that Erie Hall closed because of black mold. Morgan Rybak, a graduate of the Class of 2017, said that rumor was a thing when she was a student: "The rumor was it was either black mold or asbestos."

Kessler said that these are only rumors. "The rumor of black mold is false," he stated.

He said that Erie Hall is also currently being used for storage.

According to Kessler, there are no plans to reopen Erie Hall as a dining hall, but there are plans to reopen it as something different.

"In our plan, we are currently looking for a different purpose for Erie Hall, but it will be something revolving around the students," he stated.



Erie Hall.
Photo by **REBEKAH GERACE** | Staff Photographer



Andrews Complex. Photo by **REBEKAH GERACE** | Staff Photographer

Kyle Piscitelli, the resident director of Grissom Hall, thinks it would be amazing to open an animal shelter. “I think it would be beneficial and it can give us the opportunity to open a veterinary program,” he said. “Students could also volunteer to walk the animals. It could also be used for the Health Center. When we had the therapy dog here students loved it. Also, I know people would choose this school if we had dogs; it would be really good marketing.”

Fredonia is starting to look at what would work best for Erie Hall. Over the summer, they are fixing up the courtyard in the Kirkland complex, and they are fixing up the radio behind Erie Hall, and this is helping them decide on what they want to do, according to Kessler.

Jewett Hall was once the science building before the new one was built in 2014. Once the new Science Center was built, Jewett was used as a storage space to house the geoscience and physics departments so they could fix up Houghton Hall, Kessler said.

This was finished in the fall of 2021, which was the last semester that classes were held in Jewett Hall.

Jewett is currently being redesigned as a student service center and should hopefully reopen within the next year, according to Kessler.

“And this includes the registrar, financial aid, student accounts, career and development and academic advising all on the first floor, and on the second floor would be honors, international education: English as a second language, international services, EDP [also known as the Educational Opportunity Program] and also adding some classrooms,” Kessler said.

This all relates to the Facilities Master Plan of 2011, which gave the college three options: renovate Jewett Hall, add on a

new part to Jewett for student services or demolish Jewett and build a new structure. According to Kessler, “We chose option one because New York State said they will no longer provide funding for new builds or additions, but only renovations.”

“The only thing that is needed to start this shift is approval for the architects to go into the construction document phase, and that is where we will lay out the blueprint and finish up contracts, and then we go into construction,” Kessler said.



Hemingway Hall.
Photo by **REBEKAH GERACE** | Staff Photographer

Why are fewer classes being offered?

SARA LODESPOTO
Special to The Leader

As you look around your classroom in Thompson Hall, the chairs are filled with students from wall to wall. When you made your schedule, you didn't want to take this class, especially at 8:30 a.m.

You were left with no choice since every section was full by the time you registered and, not to mention, the classes you wanted to take were gone.

This situation of dwindling classes has been an increasing problem, with students having fewer classes to choose from. In the fall of 2013, there were approximately 3,600 classes available across every major. This upcoming fall semester only holds 3,100 classes.

In the graph included with this article, the trendline shows the decrease in classes in the past 15 years. The number of classes has been decreasing for years, but has dramatically dropped since the COVID-19 pandemic.

What is the cause of this? Daniel Smith, a senior academic advisor, believes it is due to a lack of funding and faculty. Since there are fewer students, Fredonia is trying to save money.

Not only has Smith noticed that the number of sections of classes lowered, but that the actual classes offered have lowered as well. "When you used to search [the history foundations], you would [usually] see 15, 20 different options for courses and now, it's like one or two." This applies to all departments, not just history.

Smith's job helps students create their schedule, which has become more challenging with fewer classes. Students struggling the greatest with creating their schedules, according to Smith, are the students that sign up late or are underclassmen, since most of the class's chairs have been filled by the time they register.

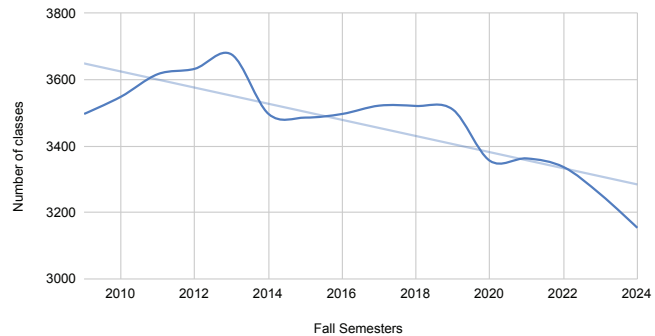
"With [fewer] offerings, it [gives] the flexibility for students to select classes not even based on their times, but based on their needs," he said.

Kelly Ibach, a senior double majoring in psychology and video production who is graduating in May, had difficulties with her major due to the limited space available for her classes. When she was a sophomore during the quarantine guidelines, she was originally only a psychology major with all her Fredonia Foundations courses finished.

However, when looking for classes for the next semester, she realized that, because the classes were filled up, she would not be able to get into any of her required psychology classes. "I just couldn't get into the classes I need for my major, so I [thought that I] might as well just add another major and have it be a productive semester," Ibach said. She added a major in communication: video production to ensure she didn't waste a semester.

Another senior, majoring in video production, Brian Austin, shared his experience trying to get into a special topics class.

"Writing for RPGs" is a course only provided every other spring semester, which Austin really wanted to get to take because he is a creative writing and English minor. However, when finding out that the class space was filled up, he emailed



Graph detailing the number of classes in decline.
Graphic by SARA LODESPOTO | Special to The Leader

the professor for an override. After a couple of weeks, he acknowledged how lucky he was for his override to be a success.

Many academic departments have been increasingly stricter on the overrides. According to Smith, professors aren't allowed to exceed the capacity of the class because classroom experience would shift and professors would have more constraints on their capabilities to teach the students. "Now you have less offerings and less flexibility from professors. There's just no choice for students to take a course," Smith said.

Not only are students struggling, but faculty are, as well. Even though there are fewer classes, faculty members are still expected to keep up with the workload.

Smith points out how professors have always been overworked, but it has increased since COVID-19. Professors have been asked to teach more courses, instead of hiring more faculty.

Tenured professors are more affected by this because the more courses they teach, the less time they have to aid struggling students in class or internships and their own scholarship work.

"It seems like a small impact ... but the scholarship that they do and the research they do is really, really valuable to both the university and to the student experience," Smith said.

Out of 16 professors who have more than 10 years of working experience at SUNY Fredonia, more than 70 percent have noticed an increase in workload. A professor in the English department explained that this is "because the number of faculty lines has shrunk dramatically across departments."

Many students, professors and faculty are affected by changes made to schedules.

So, how can students get into the classes they need?

Smith suggests being flexible with your schedule and understanding that you might not get the times, professors or even foundation classes that you want.

If the course is filled up now, have patience, and remember you can take it the following semesters.

Kelly Ibach, who was interviewed for this article, is currently the PR & Event Chair for The Leader.

New changes made to encourage enrollment in Fredonia's dance program

MIA CIECHALSKI
Special to The Leader

The current low enrollment issue that SUNY Fredonia is facing makes many wonder how it affects certain programs.

One of the programs currently facing low enrollment is Fredonia's dance major.

For the 2024-2025 academic year, there are currently nine Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) dance majors enrolled in the program, not including incoming students.

Along with the low BFA major enrollment, there are also no seniors who will be graduating for the next academic year (2024-2025).

This means the next graduating class in this program will be the class of 2026.

However, having a low number of students in this major isn't stopping the Dance Area Coordinator, Sam Kenney from recruiting current students and new prospective students to join the dance major.

After attempting to reach out to Kenney, she did not answer about meeting for an interview.

However, what she has achieved in just one academic year has not gone unnoticed.

During the beginning of the Fall 2023 semester, Kenney got rid of an old rule that former department head Paula Peters made when she first started working at Fredonia seven years ago. This decision was to get rid of the rule that the BFA dance majors weren't allowed to be double majors.

Kenney made this announcement at the dance major meeting that the department holds at the beginning of each academic year.

This was a positive change because many current students would have to fight with the old department head to get permission to add on another major.

This is also a positive change for potential new incoming students because they will now be able to continue their dance career, while also getting to learn about another career that interests them.

One of the people that this decision influences the most is Mackenzie Phelps, a sophomore BFA dance and psychology major.

She said, "With Paula, I had drawn up an entire spreadsheet of how I was gonna manage it and graduate with both majors on time. But when I walked into her office, I was met with a straight-up 'no' and told that I wasn't equipped to handle the task."

However, she didn't let that one opinion stop her from making this decision and ended up adding a second major in psychology.

Then, after she added it, everyone in the department found out that Peters ended up leaving.

"When I had my first advising meeting with Sam, it was like a breath of fresh air," Phelps said. "Not only did she really take the time to look through and approve my four-year plan and let me know she thought it could work for me, I was met with ap-

plause and encouragement for how hard I have been working and she told me that she would do whatever she could to help me achieve my goal."

Alongside allowing students in the program the chance to add another major, Kenney has also finalized the Bachelor of Science in Dance degree by making the guidelines for the major more stabilized.

This major was just added in the Spring 2023 semester. Many of the BFA dance major students didn't know much about the newly added major because it wasn't advertised by the old department head that well.

However, once Kenney took over she immediately started to finalize the major guidelines and requirements to help the current students in the major know what they should be doing and to also start preparing for their senior capstone projects.

Kaylee Brott, senior BFA dance major said, "Before the major was so confusing and many of the current BS majors had very little guidance or idea on what was supposed to be happening.

Then once Sam came in, she made sure to start hardening the requirements and it really helped the senior BS majors relax a little because then they could start figuring out everything that they need to do in order to graduate."

With Kenney officially hardening up the major, she took this opportunity to start recruiting freshman and sophomore dance minors to consider adding the BS in dance major as a second major depending on how far they were with the minor.

This is because many of the classes that are required for the dance minor are also required for the BS major plus a few extra classes.

She did this by looking at certain students' Degree Works progress and then reaching out to the students by getting them to consider adding on the major.

Kenney has successfully added 10 new majors to join the dance department. This now makes the dance department have 19 majors.

This may not seem like a lot, but it's a very big improvement and once more people start to talk about the major then more people over time will join it as well.

Kenney has also been giving personalized tour groups for prospective students around Fredonia's visual and performing arts building, The Rockefeller Arts Center.

During these tours, Kenney makes sure to highlight what our department has to offer.

She shows each tour group the learning classrooms, dance facilities and having the tour groups getting to see certain dance classes depending on what time they schedule their tour.

Michael Aini, senior BFA dance major said, "She's trying to improve the department and get more diversity here, so a bunch of others and I really like what she is doing!"

Mia Ciechalski, the writer of this article, is a dance major.

Fredonia Ticket Office offering new Executive Transportation Service of WNY bus service to Buffalo

DAN QUAGLIANA
News Editor

In order to better facilitate transport between Fredonia and Buffalo, the university's ticket office has added a new transportation option between the two locations.

In an email sent out by Jefferson Westwood, the Director of Rockefeller Arts Center and the interim manager of the ticket office, it was stated that, "Executive Transportation Service of WNY will run one bus each Saturday[,] starting May 4 through the end of the semester[,] and one bus each morning of finals week, starting on Wed., May 15."

The rationale for this new bus service, according to the email, is that "Coach USA has reduced its daily schedule from five buses per day down to just one." This had been the norm until "fairly recently," according to Westwood.

"For the last several weeks, it has been just one bus per day in each direction," he said. "And the company can't tell how soon they expect to return service to 'normal.' Sunday service (two buses per day in each direction) has not been affected, only Monday through Saturday."

Coach USA is an independent busing company that runs scheduled buses from Jamestown to Buffalo multiple times a day.

It stops at multiple different places on its route, the SUNY Fredonia campus being one of them.

The addition of this new busing service was caused by "a general labor shortage in our region," Westwood said.

"Using an allocation from the student transportation fee, we are offering this service at \$25 per trip," Westwood's email explained. "Although this is more than the Coach USA price, it is a discount of almost 30% off our normal [University-managed] shuttle service price. Please note that tickets must be purchased at the Campus Ticket Office at least 48 hours in advance of departure and that these tickets are non-refundable."

The Ticket Office says that this is only the second year that portions of the transportation fee have been used to help fund services that they produce for students.

Historically, that fee has only been used to fund campus-facilitated transportation, such as the park-and-ride shuttle. The University is not funding this new bus service — rather, its stopping on campus is merely a courtesy of the Executive Transportation Service of WNY.

Westwood is unsure of how many students will use this new service, calling it an "experiment."

"I think that during finals week, we will probably hit at least the four-person minimum, especially for students trying to make airline connections," he said. "The 6:29 p.m. bus that Coach USA [offers] does not get to downtown Buffalo until about 8:00 p.m. and then it's another half hour to the airport. Given the requirement to be at the airport at least 90 minutes before flight time, all the planes will have left."

This means that if Coach USA were a student's only way to get to the airport, they would have to go up the night before and spend the night in a hotel. I just think our students deserve better options than this," Westwood said.

Join The Leader for General Body meetings!



Date and time for next semester
to be announced soon!

In The Leader Office!
S206 Williams Center



The impact of low enrollment on Reed Library

GWENYTH KIRKWOOD

Special to The Leader

Is student enrollment on campus affecting the library?

The Reed Library has come a long way since the pandemic in 2020.

Christina Hilburger, the research and information literacy service librarian of Reed Library, says, “Since I started two months before the pandemic, I saw it dip, and now I see our numbers going up.”

Hilburger said, “Things shifted for a little while; when we’re thinking about impact, that was huge, because it brought folks out of the library for a couple of years.”

Scott Richmond, the associate library director, said student enrollment has not really impacted the library that much. He said, “We haven’t seen a change in any of our services or our resources, but we are trying to be innovative, doing outreach, and holding many different events to try to engage with students and also promote our services and our resources.”

Hilburger said, “Even though there may be fewer students on campus, we still have a lot going on.”

The Coordinator of Tutoring Services, Adam Hino, said, “Over the past few semesters, our usage has been increasing, and we’ve also seen an increase in first-year students utilizing our services.”

Hilburger and Richmond provided insight on all the outreach they do to increase the number of faculty and staff using the library, with Hilburger stating, “We’ve really been kind of the last two years trying to encourage folks to get back into our spaces.”

Hilburger said, “Our individual research appointments have gone up significantly. That is something in terms of numbers going up as far as people in the library since I’ve started. I think we’ve seen an increase, but that’s starting with my comparison, from pandemic time to now.”

Hilburger said, “I was looking back at some of the historical aspects of the building, and a lot of the folks always talked about the library being the center of the heart of campus. And this in their design really was the heart of campus.”

One of the big events that Reed Library partakes in is during the new student orientation, where the freshmen are introduced to the library. They are given tours and are able to see what the library offers them.

“What we’re trying to do is make sure people feel like this is their space, where people can come in here and know that they’re able to do what they need to do,” Hilburger said.

Hino said, “Last fall, the library included us in their orientation program, and we brought up every student who attended orientation to the fourth floor of the library, and we had tutors available to talk to students about our services.”

“In Spring 2023 and Fall 2024, we had over 1,000 visits each semester,” said Hino.

In addition to the new student orientation, they also participate in the new faculty orientation. Richmond said, “So that is where we, the support services, come together for a session and we talk about all the things that the librarians and library can do for faculty reference instruction and interlibrary loan,



because every library is a little bit different about the services they provide.”

Hilburger explains that they not only have events for students but for faculty as well. She says this is their second time offering the “faculty staff mingle.” She said, “We’re doing different types of outreach to try and encourage folks to bring students into the library.”

Kerrie Fergen-Wilkes, the director of Reed Library, said another way to collaborate with the faculty is a “newsletter that goes out once a month for Academic Affairs.”

They work with faculty members and deans directly, one-on-one.

“We’re occasionally invited to faculty meetings, so that at the beginning of the semester we can tell them what we are with new resources or new services, things like that,” Richmond said. “We have a really good partnership with a lot of the faculty and staff on campus.”

Richmond explained how these connections to both faculty and students, once they’ve established a relationship, help “promote our services by word of mouth.”

Richmond said that they are also “always looking for new partnerships.”

Hilburger explains that the library has been doing very well with instruction.

She said, “We’re getting a lot of classes, and we’ve been incorporating a variety of different workshops.”

Wilkes talks about the excitement of the library through a redesign starting in 2025.

Wilkes said, “We’re hoping to have a twenty-four-hour space, but for me, it’s about safety; it’s about where, so we’re still figuring all those out.”

The staff size has been declining significantly since the early 2000s.

With the pandemic hitting and retirements, the staff size has decreased in recent years, going from over 30 to 10 staff members, including Wilkes.

The number of student employees has also decreased because the need isn’t there at the moment.

During the week prior to finals and finals week, the library extends its hours, but Wilkes says, “We’re just not seeing the numbers at night.”

Hilburger says, “I always can emphasize that the library isn’t just a storage place for books; there’s a lot going on here.”

“We want this to be a space for everyone,” she added.

Life & Arts

Student highlight of the arts: Becca Torncello

EJ JACOBS

Life & Arts Editor

Amidst the unsettling news of potential program cuts, students in these majors are grappling with a profound sense of uncertainty about their future.

The looming possibility of these programs being discontinued has cast a shadow of fear and anxiety over their academic journey.

This fear is present in the completion of their major and beyond.

This feeling is especially prevalent for Becca Torncello, a junior photography major, who is also one of our staff photographers.

“I think it's been tough because the school is all about the arts, music and arts, and I feel like it's a disappointment that most of the programs are being cut off from the art department,” said Torncello. “...knowing that they're cutting it doesn't give me hope that they're gonna still give us the best education possible that we signed up for.”

With the photography major up for discontinuation, students have started to wonder if the program will end up being the same as the one they thought they signed up for before they knew about the cuts.

On a large majority of resumes, people include the college they went to.

With this pivotal time in SUNY Fredonia's degree offering, students begin to wonder what the job market will look like for them when they receive a degree for a no longer



Becca Torncello.

Photo provided by **BECCA TORNCELLO** | Staff Photographer



Photo by **BECCA TORNCELLO** | Staff Photographer

existing program.

“I think that if I'm applying for a job and they're looking at my resume and seeing that I did photography at Fredonia, and then they look back and see that there's no longer a major there, how are they going to know that I got a good enough education to be qualified for that job?” Torncello said.

Photography students also take many photos for the Marketing and Communications at Fredonia. With these students gone, much of the photography on campus will be limited to those employed by the college rather than a collaboration between students and staff. Torncello is also a staff photographer for The Leader.

“I take the mainstage [theater] photos that they post and then I do the photography for the athletic department as well, which they also put a lot of [my work] on social media. So I mean, without photo majors, who's gonna do that stuff?” said Torncello.

Students do a lot for SUNY Fredonia behind the scenes and their absence will be noticed.

New club, Students Against Suicide, to begin Fall 2024

CHLOE KOWALYK

Editor in Chief

Trigger warning: mentions of suicidality and death

SUNY Fredonia is about to see the start of a new club on campus: Students Against Suicide (SAS).

The new club is currently being planned and headed by Chandler Cotter, a sophomore photography major.

According to Cotter, the goal of SAS is “to provide our campus with a safe space to gather amongst peers and share stories or experiences relating to self-harm, suicide or any other mental health struggles someone may have gone through.”

According to the University of Michigan, suicide is the second leading cause of death in college students.

Relatedly, the University of Michigan also reports that 25% of people know of someone who has died as a result of suicide, and 40% know of someone who has attempted.

Although these statistics can be intense and hard to accept, many students believe that it is important to acknowledge and act on the issue.

Cotter is currently planning to serve as the president of SAS and chose to start the club because of how meaningful it is to her to help students dealing with poor mental health.

“For a while, I have wanted to take part in some sort of suicide prevention advocacy, but I wasn’t sure exactly what I wanted to do,” she said. “Recently, the idea came to me to start a group on campus that could help people going through some of the struggles that I had been through in years past. I feel that I am at a place now where I can turn my own experiences into something positive.”

Cotter believes SAS can serve as a safe space to help students discuss sensitive subjects such as suicidality and self-harm without pressure.

Several recent studies have found that support groups can help improve mental health and decrease feelings of suicidality.

For instance, Hom et al. (2018) completed a study that discovered a relationship between support groups and the improvement of mental health in suicide attempt survivors.

However, support groups can also benefit those impacted by suicide, whether personally or through family or friends.

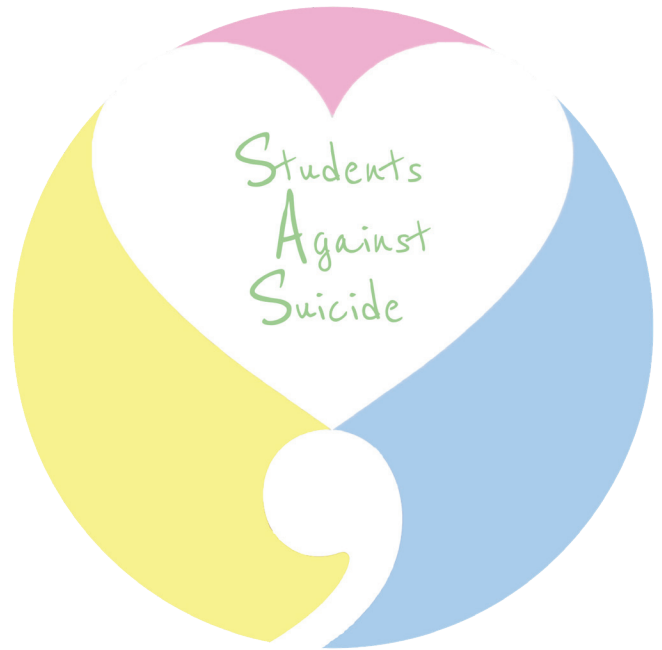
As of right now, Cotter is planning to hold weekly SAS meetings to facilitate that support group.

This will “give members a designated time during the week to gather and de-stress amongst peers,” Cotter said.

Cotter also said that she is planning to hold events throughout the semester that will be open to all students, allowing people to “come and enjoy an activity while learning about SAS and what we stand for.”

Relatedly, SAS is open to all students, regardless of major or background. “Whether you have experienced mental health struggles, someone you know has, or you simply want to support the cause, SAS welcomes you,” Cotter said.

With this passion, Cotter has decided to kickstart this project



Logo by **CHANDLER COTTER** | Asst. Photo Editor

Cotter is planning to hold events throughout the semester that will be open to all students, allowing people to “come and enjoy an activity while learning about SAS and what we stand for.”

for the upcoming Fall 2024 semester.

“In the meantime, we will be posting content and updates on our social media,” Cotter said.

As the club is both new and open to all students, Cotter is hoping to gain members to help the cause.

“Anyone who is interested in SAS is encouraged to message us on Instagram, @sas_fredonia, and let us know of any questions or comments you may have,” she said. “Please spread the word to any peers or friends who may be interested.”

For students struggling with their mental health, or those who are just looking for someone to talk to, appointments both in-person and online can be made at the campus counseling center by calling 716-673-3424.

In addition, the national suicide hotline can be reached at 988.

Chandler Cotter, who was interviewed for this article, is the Assistant Photo Editor for The Leader.

FredFest: How did we get here?

DAN QUAGLIANA
News Editor

Trigger warning: This article contains depictions of violence and injury.

SUNY Fredonia used to be known as a “party school” a few decades ago.

The last, biggest remnant of that bygone era is undoubtedly the giant, infamous event known as FredFest, which is always held two weekends before final exam week.

FredFest, for the uninitiated, is a giant, weekend-long “street party” that takes place on Canadaway St. in downtown Fredonia. Imagine a giant frat party taking up an entire street and lasting for about 72 straight hours, and you have a pretty good idea of what FredFest is.

The first thing a FredFest newbie will see is how attendees openly carry around borgs. Not to be confused with the cybernetic race from Star Trek, a borg is a mixed drink in a jug consisting of water, vodka and a powdered drink mix (usually Kool-Aid) — and as long as the event stays confined to the yards of Canadaway, the village police usually won’t bother anyone too much, as long as nothing gets out of hand.

People jumping off roofs and hanging out of moving cars are common sights, along with nudity.

And things do get out of hand occasionally — in 2023, a stabbing occurred, and the entire event was shut down a night early by the police. Even though the stabber and stabbed were both non-students, the crime still reflected poorly on the University.

This year, a shooting occurred, although details are still unfolding about that event considering its recency. According to an article by The Dunkirk Observer, one victim was shot in the leg and back and was transported to Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) in Buffalo. They were shot by a drive-by shooter on Green St., after “an earlier altercation with unknown individuals at a residence on Green Street.” Witnesses claim they heard several gunshots, and no arrests have been made as of the morning of May 7.

The increase in violence at the event is largely attributed to the fact that FredFest used to be a college-sanctioned event.

“When I was a student here, in ‘96, ‘97, [FredFest] was right outside of the Williams Center, between [it] and the quads,” remembered University Police Lieutenant Benjamin Miller, a 1998 graduate of Fredonia. “[The college] would set up a stage and everybody would just come out. They’d have local bands and one really big, popular band come on and perform and people [would] just come out and have a good time. And then, when the band stopped, everybody went downtown. And now there’s nothing on campus, so everybody just goes downtown.”

The college eventually had to stop associating itself with FredFest in 2015 because of rowdiness concerns. The amount of alcohol on campus, which has always been against University rules, became too much for event organizers to handle. Students began to get out of control, especially in the village, where University Police and other campus officials have no jurisdiction over them.

“They’d have local bands and one really big, popular band come on and perform and people [would] just come out and have a good time. And then, when the band stopped, everybody went downtown. And now there’s nothing on campus, so everybody just goes downtown.”

—**BENJAMIN MILLER**
Lieutenant,
University Police

Today, Miller says that statement is still accurate: “Most of our arrests involve non-students.”

FredFest began in 1978, but back then it was called “Spring Fest.” In 1980, the name was changed to the one it still retains today.

“Spring Fest was a six-hour ‘day of fun, beer, hot dogs and activities,’” reads a Leader article published on April 28, 1986, written by Donna Hoke. “There were sales, exhibits, games, volleyball courts, tug-o-war matches and departmental competitions.

“According to the Spring Fest Committee, ‘the main objective of the event is to bring faculty, students and staff together for a few hours of fun and relaxation, to celebrate spring and the end of the academic year.’”

The article continues to say how only the date remains the same, as even by nine years later, the event had fundamentally changed.

“By 1980, the six-hour, dorm sponsored Spring Fest had been taken over by UBG [meaning unknown], given live rock bands, [sic] and turned into a two day [sic] celebration of spring that had Todd Hobin [a performer that year] asking the crowd, ‘Is this any way for college students to act?’”

But even only a few years ago, back when student enrollment was higher, FredFest was a much bigger event than it is today. “There was a year where we would clear out one street and then move to the other street and then re-clear that [first] street. It’s not as big [now], even though we did have that stabbing,” Miller said.

He also believes that there’s one specific incident that “preempted the canceling of all FredFest activities on campus.”

At a house on Temple St., across from the dorm quads, “A young lady was ... burned when a student was doing a shot of very high-proof alcohol. They lit it on fire, while he did the shot, and then he spit it out ... onto the girl that was in front of him. She catches on fire, gets really burned ... We’re pretty sure she got disfigured. And this was like, ‘Maybe we should stop doing FredFest.’ But now they don’t have FredFest on campus anymore,” he explained.

In 2015, then-Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. David



FredFest in 2023. Photo by IZZIE INZINNA | Staff Writer

Herman announced at a Student Association meeting on Feb. 5 that FredFest would no longer be officially sponsored by the college.

“Are we going to have FredFest this year? No, we’re not. We are not having the University connected with FredFest,” he said at that meeting. “We are putting FredFest behind us; we’re not going to talk about it anymore. We’ll have other events, we’ll develop other traditions, we’ll develop things we can all be proud of ... We’re not going to have everything consolidated on that weekend before finals so that it becomes a destination for everyone that wants to blow off steam and raise hell.”

Herman added in an email to all students on Feb. 9 that, “Many of us are disappointed that this approach has become necessary, but we can’t stand by idly and watch students and community members get hurt.”

That was also the year that the University started banning visitors in the dorms on FredFest weekend.

Due to incidents like the burning of a student in the past, University Police have been taking steps to make sure that nothing like that happens again.

“We increase our patrols, obviously,” Miller said. “We used to put more people on [patrol] during the FredFest activities, but it’s been such a non-event anymore that we don’t have anybody extra on.”

Miller is referencing the fact that student “incidents” during FredFest have “definitely” dropped in recent years, something that the Office of Student Conduct concurs with: “Over the

years that I’ve been here at Fredonia, the number of incidents have dropped, at all times of the year, not just at the end of the spring semester,” explained Lisa Newell, the director of that office.

But FredFest continues to be a problem, both for the police and for the image of the University. “We still have our typical incidents on campus with open containers, underage possession of alcohol,” Miller said.

Mitch Horucy, a sophomore communications journalism major who will be living on Canadaway St. next year, said that he has “a lot of mixed emotions” about living in FredFest’s epicenter.

“It’s exciting and cool to be right where it happens, but that’s also what makes me nervous,” he said. “I’m nervous to really leave my yard with the fear that someone will break in or something of that matter. There’s also the chance that something happens on my lawn and then I’d technically be responsible for what happened and [I] could get in trouble legally. I think it’ll have its pros and cons.”

Horucy also added that he plans on “cooking and selling hot dogs to make some extra cash, so that could be fun.”

While it has gotten “better” in the last few years, FredFest continues to be a problem for both the University and the surrounding community, and despite efforts by both of those parties, it doesn’t seem to be going away anytime soon.

Mitch Horucy, who was interviewed for this article, is the Assistant Sports Editor of The Leader.

FREDGrows hosts annual Garden Gala

EJ JACOBS

Life & Arts Editor

SIERRA MILLS

Chief Copy Editor

When living in Fredonia, many will do anything to ward off the bad weather.

What better way to promote a clear sky than a Garden Gala?

Plants, snacks and second-hand books and clothing were just some of the items that you could have found at the Garden Gala. FREDGrows, Fredonia's sustainability club and the ENGL 399 Campus Garden class hosted their annual Garden Gala on Saturday, April 27 as a fundraiser for Greystone Nature Preserve and to celebrate the opening of the campus garden located in the Science Center.

Not only were there garden tours to show people what has been done to the campus garden through the class and FREDGrows, but there were books and clothing swaps, vendors where student artists sell their work, tables with displays from the nature preserve and the other associated clubs.

There were also tables with crafts such as rock painting and doing tie-dye with vegetables.

The Garden Gala would not have been possible without the people who helped with it.

One person who was a big help was English professor Dr. Christina Jarvis.

When asked about her role in this event, Jarvis said, "My primary role was supporting the FREDGrows and English 399 (Campus Garden) students who organized, promoted and pulled off an incredibly successful event. While I helped with things like room reservations and baking for the event, I really just wanted to help give wings to their ideas. FREDGrows and my campus garden students really deserve all the credit."

The Garden Gala is a pretty young event. "The first Garden Gala was held in 2021 to celebrate the recently reclaimed campus garden. [The idea] grew out of my first English 399 class [Sustainability Living Laboratory: Campus Garden]," said Jarvis. "Those students also started FREDGrows as a way of maintaining the garden."

Katherine Studt, president of FREDGrows and social studies adolescence education major, said, "The very first Gala was a celebration of the efforts of the course within the campus garden through the arts. It included rock and flag painting, art showcase, jams and good vibes. While they did not originally call themselves FREDGrows, they still held the same beliefs that are the foundation of the club: to introduce sustainable lifestyles to students and the local community, as well as to provide students with opportunities to connect with the nature around them. FREDGrows was officially established August 20, 2021."

When looking at the different activities held, it can be assumed that everyone has a different favorite part of the Gala.

Studt said, "I ... also love[d] being able to give The Greystone Nature Preserve a donation of all of our proceeds. We made \$195 for them through the worm adoption and the raffle. Diane Clark and Bill Moran [owners of the nature preserve] are some of the best people I have ever met. They've been a



T-Rex holds Garden Gala sign in Science Center.

Photo by GIULIANNA LALOMIO | Asst. Copy Editor

bright light during rough times and have taught me so much about life and our environment. It means the world to me that we were able to give back to them."

Other students also expressed having a great time at the event.

"I genuinely loved being able to show off the work that the Campus Garden team has done to President Kolison. It was great to see the college's president show up to the Gala, and it meant a lot to me to be able to show off our hard work to one of the most influential people on campus," said Claire Patanella, English major and member of the English 399 class.

"My classmate Katie Carnevale and I took [President] Kolison through the greenhouse and out to see the plum trees, the to-be-built B Zone (an all-native pollinator garden) and the campus garden. Knowing that the folks up in the administration see the hard work we're doing to improve the campus and that they genuinely encourage it means the world to me as a student, even if I'll be gone by May," she added.

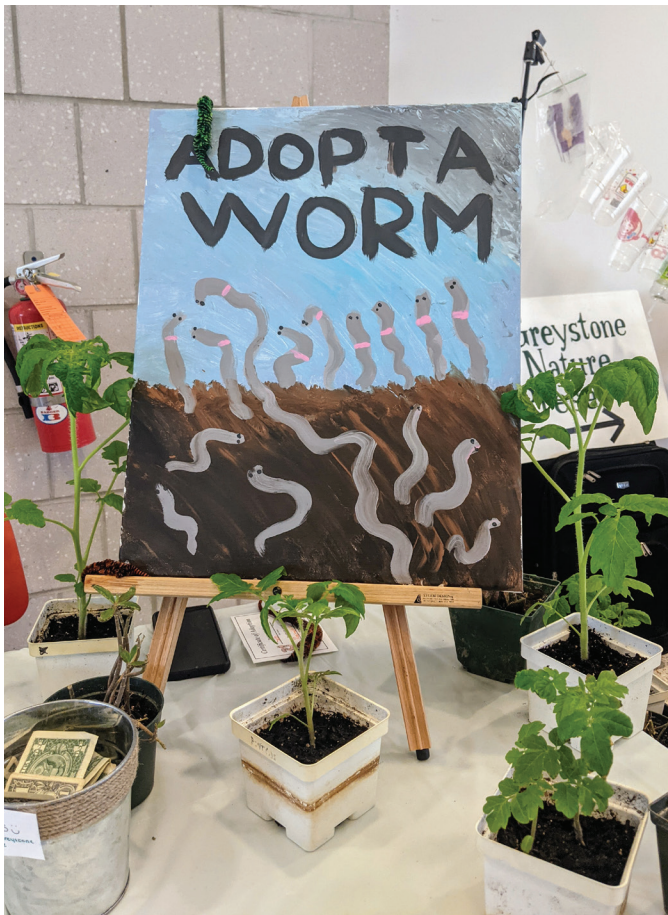
With hopes of promoting sustainability on campus, another Garden Gala will be held around the same time next year, with other sustainability events to be held in the future by FREDGrows.

To be up to date with what the club and the campus garden are doing, follow @fredoniagrows and @fredcampusgarden on Instagram.

Ej Jacobs and Sierra Mills, the co-authors of this article, both serve on FREDGrows' eboard.



HitGRL performs during Garden Gala.
Photo by GIULIANNA LALOMIO | Asst. Copy Editor



"Adopt a Worm" program sign.
Photo by GIULIANNA LALOMIO | Asst. Copy Editor



Students take plants home from the Gala.
Photo by JEAN CESTARO | Staff Photographer



Students tabling at the Gala.
Photo by JEAN CESTARO | Staff Photographer

Music Industry Club hosts 'Fredchella' Music Festival

ELENA FITZGERALD
Staff Writer

The Music Industry Club put a spin on their yearly spring event, which was known as Soulstice Jam, and is now Fredchella.

Soulstice Jam was a Music Industry Club event that was primarily held during the spring semester for one day. The winning band of Battle of the New Bands, another Music Industry Club event, would play at that springtime event as a prize.

It was Vice President Olivia Castiglione that came up with the idea to change Soulstice Jam to Fredchella, an event that would be a festival for the students that could not make it to Coachella.

Fredchella was held as a two-day event, on both April 20 and April 21 at Barker Commons in town and the Williams Center Multi-Purpose Room, with five performances each day.

Alongside the performances, there were vendors selling their merchandise from Valerie Ann's Institution, Recollected, TeddyBara and more.

Students were walking around as the music was playing to look at the vendors, as well as having a good time watching the performers.

Day one of the event began outdoors at Barker Commons, where the music could be heard all throughout the town.

Performances included Sienna Strain, Prairie Pavement, Asteroid Day, Amphobia and Chatterbox.

Chatterbox won Battle of the New Bands this past fall and headlined day one as part of their prize. They performed a set of original songs, including the debut of their new song called "Placebo Effect."

The mix of the bill brought together many different Fredonia bands that had never played together before, as well as Prairie Pavement, who traveled from Buffalo to perform.

On the flip side, there was a reunion performance, as Asteroid Day and Amphobia played together in Battle of the New Bands two years ago.

Andrew Springer, senior sound recording technology major, plays the drums in Amphobia who played both Soulstice Jam last year and Fredchella this year.

"Fredchella was a new opportunity for us in Amphobia, with this event being our first festival-like experience," he said.

Unfortunately, the weather was not ideal for the outdoor concert, which made it challenging to continue the event that day.

Ahmani McKoy spoke about the weather, as he is the events coordinator of the Music Industry Club.

"The process for setting up Fredchella was hard because we had everything in the bag and then the weather just started getting worse," McKoy said.

Even though it was very brisk outside, the bands and audience persisted for Fredchella on day one.

However, on day two of Fredchella, it was moved to the Williams Center Multi-Purpose Room because the weather continued to be too cold.

This day included Puddle, Sadboymanii, Violent Graffiti,



Gordon Hall, Joe Wigal and Andrew Springer of Relentless Moisture.
Photo by ELENA FITZGERALD | Staff Writer

Relentless Moisture and Clayton Duffy and the 80 HRS.

Similarly to day one, there were mainly sets from Fredonia-based bands, with the one band from Buffalo being Clayton Duffy and the 80 HRS.

The collaboration of the Fredonia campus overall was staggering, with the Music Industry Club bringing not only the Animation and Illustration Club but also Sound Services, as they provided sound for the shows.

There was also collaboration between the performers and the club, as McKoy himself performed as Sadboymanii.

Sadboymanii performed some of his songs, such as "LOML," "My (not so) Ordinary Life" and "Loves All Mine."

In terms of booking the event, as it is a two-day festival, this was a big accomplishment for Music Industry Club.

McKoy booked Fredchella alongside Castiglione, with McKoy taking on the responsibility of communicating with the various performers as well as making sure the day of the performance went smoothly.

As McKoy focused on communicating with the bands, Castiglione took the time to search for the artists and bands that would fit the event.

"I chose bands that I felt had a good stage presence and took as much inspiration from actual Coachella as I could," Castiglione said.

Castiglione stuck to that idea and it worked very well in the long run. "For example, Sienna Strain's band ended up doing a cover of "Pawn Shop" by Sublime, who performed at this year's Coachella," she said.

The event overall was a hit, not only for the audience, but

also for the performers, as Springer played on both days.

Springer said, “The festival did a great job of showcasing many genres of music, whether that was pop, folk, punk or alt-metal, so it really felt like there was something for everybody.”

Castiglione mentioned a goal of hers when first thinking of the idea, which she strived to achieve for Fredchella.

She said, “I just wanted to commit to the idea of having a knock-off Coachella even if it sounded a little weird or odd be-

cause the event is meant to be fun and it’s something that everyone can recognize whether you know the music scene or not.”

Music Industry Club did just that, bringing together people who knew the Fredonia music scene and people who knew nothing about it for two days of fun.

Elena Fitzgerald, the author of this article, is the manager of Relentless Moisture.

Fredonia 'Lit Fest'

features student work and clubs

EJ JACOBS

Life & Arts Editor

SIERRA MILLS

Chief Copy Editor

The English Department knew how to get lit this past Friday.

On April 26, Fredonia’s English Department held its second annual Literary Festival in celebration of National Poetry Month.

“This is our second year of the Fredonia Literary Festival. The event grew out of The Day of Poetry and Prose, an English department event that featured faculty reading tributes to our late colleagues. That event was paused during Covid and then we planned a bigger day-long celebration of poetry and prose that brought in student organizations and publications, plus guest writers, alumni writers, booksellers, vendors and more,” said English Professor Michael Sheehan.

Tabling was located in the William’s Center Multi-Purpose Room (MPR), with Sigma Tau Delta, The Trident, Writer’s Ring and local authors and artists selling their work.

Sigma Tau Delta hosted a book sale with donated books, with a discount for Fredonia students and other prices for other people who attended.



The Trident tables at Lit Fest.

Photo by SIERRA MILLS | Chief Copy Editor



Photo by SIERRA MILLS | Chief Copy Editor

A series of panels were also held in the Blue Lounge, with subjects pertaining to the humanities and English, including book bannings, literary magazines and local authors.

At the end of the festival, the ENGL 400 Senior Seminar students read poetry or selections of short stories in memory of previous professors.

Dr. Christina Jarvis, an English professor, said, “I was in charge of planning the memorial readings portion of the festival, and I was thrilled to involve my senior seminar class in organizing the event. The English 400 students carefully selected literary passages that honored deceased faculty members’ favorite authors and research specialties, and then shared them following brief tributes by current English professors.”

This event was all about the students, faculty, staff and community coming together.

“I think in this moment, it’s really critical to have this campus take note of the humanities and the arts, not only because we’ve experienced these program cuts and any of us could be next, but because the humanities are being eroded piece-by-piece because the administration has chosen not to replace faculty who have retired or left,” said Dr. Jeanette McVicker, an English professor.

All about the upcoming Reverberation Music Festival

LEE PYE
Staff Writer

Last year, a student-run, all-day music festival celebrated folk with folks, and the Reverberation Music Festival is coming back a lot bigger, and a lot louder.

Jacob Kantner is a fourth-year English Adolescent Education BA/MA student at SUNY Fredonia, balancing his major, being a singer/songwriter and being co-president of Sigma Tau Delta.

In May of 2023, Kantner decided to put on a mini music festival for the end of the year to celebrate the completion of the semester and school year.

At the time, the event was in the backyard of the apartment he lived in, where most of the area was a concrete parking lot. Entering the backyard, people parked their cars on the left side, and the music was on the right. At the very end of the fenced backyard was a pop-up tent and a mini do-it-yourself stage with a tapestry hung behind the tent spelling REVERBERATION.

The bands performed in front of the tapestry out to the crowd of college students, all either sitting on picnic blankets, chatting at picnic tables or dancing in front of the stage. People were ordering drinks from “Tony’s Rocktail Bar”, where student Ryan Terry sells his non-alcoholic mocktail-mixing concoctions.

Another student, Sarah Burke, sold her hand-crafted earrings, necklaces, rings, prints and more, using the art tag name “Oopsie Art”. Even the Fred-favorite thrift shop “Recollected” made an appearance, showing off and selling some of their finest vintage and secondhand clothing.

The bands that played last year were Hal & Pals, T.T.T.T. and Jacob King, Violent Graffiti, Jacob Kantner with Livitria, Dylan Rohr & Jackson Rotella, Isabella Mowers and Dylan Murawski. Most of the bands were either a type of folk music genre, or if they weren’t, they dialed it down with acoustic guitars to fit the Reverb setting.

Now, this year, Kantner is pulling all the strings to set up for the new and improved Reverberation, now working with the school and the town to make this festival happen.

“I was going to do it on campus but I wanted to be somewhat different [with the location], so I sent the mayor an email, and then had a meeting with him, and he basically granted me the space at Barker Commons.”

In order to hold an event at Barker Commons, there needs to be insurance attached to the event for liability reasons. The insurance money was too much for Kantner to afford, so he turned to the school to see if any clubs were interested in co-sponsoring the event. “Basically by their names being attached to it, the campus covered the insurance.” The clubs sponsoring the event this year are Sigma Tau Delta (English Honors Society), Writers’ Ring, Fredonia Radio Systems, FREDGrows and the campus literary magazine, The Trident.

He is not only sponsored by the clubs but is also working with some of them. The radio show The Local Lo-Down will have a table for the event, as well as The Trident.

The Trident is releasing its latest issue on Thursday, May 9, at 7 p.m. in the Blue Lounge. Two days later, at Reverberation,



Students enjoy last year's Reverberation Fest.
Photo by LEE PYE | Staff Writer

they will be doing live readings of the literature, as well as announcements during the event and in-between band sets.

To improve something for this year, Kantner said he wants to “sell [snacks and] water ... We had Tony’s last year — Ryan Terry’s little thing — and we’re going to have Tony back. I have to post it, but Tony is back! But this year he is going to also have snacks and water.”

Ryan Terry, also known as Tony when he bartends, said, “I’m very excited. Reverb was super fun, people seemed to really enjoy it. It’s nice to see something different at an event like this. Seeing craft mocktails at a DIY music event is really something else.”

As for the sound, Kantner is doing the setup by himself, just like last year. “It’s just going to be me and my friends running the sound, and I wanted to keep it as simple as possible last year, and I think this year I hope it goes the same. The first four acts are acoustic, and then the acts keep building on top of each other.”

None of the bands are paying to play, and none of the clubs or vendors are paying for a table. He is attempting to keep it as free as possible for participants in order for everyone to be able to relax and enjoy the music.

“FredFest kind of gives Fredonia a bad wrap in the news because of how it ended last year, but I wanted Reverberation to be a good ending to a good arts school,” Kantner said.

“I just want it to be a celebration of everything coming together, everyone relaxing for one last time before the semester ends. It’s kind of a reverberation of the sounds of the year, and everyone meets back together in the end.”

This year, Reverberation performances will be from Michael Hogan (12:00 p.m.), Ryan Buechel (12:30 p.m.), Jacob King (1:00 p.m.), Cornflake Car (1:30 p.m.), Galactic Waste (2:00 p.m.), HitGRL (2:45 p.m.), Jasmine Comet (3:30 p.m.), The Ryan Terry Family Band (4:20 p.m.), Chatterbox (5:40 p.m.) and finally, Jacob Kantner and Friends will be rockin’ until the festival ends at 8:30 p.m.

Burke will be there once again selling her art though her tag @oopsi3doop.

This year’s Reverberation Music Festival will be held in Barker Commons on May 11, starting at 12 p.m.

They can be found at @reverberationmusicfestival on Instagram for more information about the festival.

Last Call Entertainment to hold BJ's Fest

CHLOE KOWALYK

Editor in Chief

Last Call Entertainment is ending off the semester with a bang with the upcoming BJ's Fest.

Last Call is an entertainment group that books local and touring bands at BJ's, a local bar in downtown Fredonia, located at 51 W. Main St.

Those working at Last Call are commonly students, gaining experience booking bands, doing promotions and running a venue.

This year, Last Call is being run by senior journalism and music industry major Jordan Budd and junior music industry major Elena Fitzgerald, with senior sound recording technology major Bryce McCandless running the sound and senior music industry major Tristan Lolonardi helping as well.

Several shows are offered each semester with artists of varying genres.

For instance, local bands such as Relentless Moisture, Mimic, Science Man, Jacob King and Autoignition, among others, have all played at BJ's in the past year.

At the end of the year, Last Call holds a big show with many bands in a lineup.

This year's BJ's Fest includes B-Roll Kazper, The Weather Might Say Otherwise, Gas Station, Robbery Club and Magazine Beach.

Budd handles most of the booking, while Fitzgerald works mostly on promotions, but the two work together on much of the responsibilities of putting on a show.

Fitzgerald has enjoyed the collaborative effort between her and Budd. For instance, Fitzgerald was able to book a band for the upcoming show and Budd has worked on promotions.

"It's just been really cool to really work the show together, especially for our last show," she said. "It's our last thing that we're doing together with the music scene, so it's really important to me."

Fitzgerald explained that some of the bands playing have a close connection to Fredonia.

For instance, members of The Weather Might Say Otherwise went to Fredonia, while members of Gas Station used to work for Last Call.

Because of this, Fitzgerald feels the show will be a closer connection to students and the community.

"It's really an overarching show for the music scene and specifically the Fredonia music scene," she said. "Overall, the groups that are playing have been very close to the music scene, besides Magazine Beach."

Magazine Beach is a group from Washington, D.C. that is visiting Fredonia for the show.

Getting the confirmation from Magazine Beach that they could play BJ's Fest was exciting for Budd and Fitzgerald.

The duo had wanted to book the band for a while, but always ran into issues with the group being far away from Fredonia.

"The fact they were able to do it this semester was a very nice cherry on top," Fitzgerald said.

BJ's Fest is being held on Thursday, May 9 at BJ's. Doors



Poster by HARPER FISCHER | Special to The Leader

open at 9 p.m. and music begins at 10 p.m.

In addition, the show is open for those 18 years and older, with a \$5 admission fee for those who are 18-years-old and \$2 for those who are 21 years and older.

Fitzgerald encourages people to come to the show to support the graduating seniors who are involved in Last Call, and to get a taste of the local music scene in Fredonia.

She especially encouraged coming to the show "if people really want to see what the music scene has become through the years."

For updates on local shows, Last Call can be found on Instagram @lastcallmgmt.

In addition, BJ's is also on Instagram @bjsfredonia.

"It's really an overarching show for the music scene and specifically the Fredonia music scene."

—ELENA FITZGERALD
Concert Promoter,
Last Call Entertainment

FROM THE DESK OF

Nicole Thorson, Art Director

Heyyo!



For those who don't know me, I'm Nicole Thorson. Senior, RA, and Art Director of The Leader.

you also may know me as the Rollerblade Girl.



Over these past 4 years, I've been making Comics + graphics for our school newspaper.

I remember when they asked me to be a staff artist, I was hyped!



sophomore year Nicole

Then a semester later they asked me to be the **ART DIRECTOR**.



Bro, you know I just make comics I got no EXP in this.

But they really needed someone at the time, so took a leap of faith.



I'm not gonna lie, this sh*t was hard! I already had bunch of responsibilities, so being in charge of a big collaborative club like this was spooky.



But just like my hair, I changed and grew...



THERE WERE A LOT OF BUMPS IN THE ROAD



Late work



All nighters



Fatigue



Sickness



Things I couldn't control



But I always make it work.

And with the support from my staff, friends, family, and everyone I've met over these 4 years. I gained the confidence I needed to work at this club.

THANK YOU!!



The main thing I'm really proud of is the legacy I made in college.



And it makes me happy to see more rollerbladers



So now I pass the baton to my assistant Isa Rizzo.



Chloe Kowalyk, Editor in Chief

CHLOE KOWALYK
Editor in Chief

I've earned many titles during my time here at Fredonia — a student, friend, club president, researcher, host, anchor, producer, station manager, Chancellor's Award recipient — but I am the most proud of earning the title of Editor in Chief of The Leader.

No other aspect of my college career has led me through some of the hardest, yet most rewarding experiences as those I've had at The Leader.

I came into college in 2020 — right in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first club I joined happened to be The Leader, and it was here that I found a strong community of equally passionate students.

I started out by setting a goal for myself: to write at least one article for the paper each week.

At the time, I wasn't really sure what I was doing, and I hadn't even switched my major to journalism yet (I actually started out as an English major!).

But what I did know was that I wanted to be a part of The Leader.

I wanted to take on that role as a reporter and get to know the campus around me. It was my way of socializing and meeting new people at a time when doing so was quite difficult.

It didn't take long until I was asked to be a Staff Writer.

I ran for the position and continued my goal of writing weekly. At the end of my freshman year, I ran for News Editor and began taking on more difficult, hard-hitting stories.

I've covered topics ranging from the Kershner situation, to food quality issues on campus, to the pandemic, to the program cuts.

The Leader taught me how to be fearless when tough stories and tough situations come up.

Serving as the News Editor also taught me the impact journalism can have.

For instance, following my series of articles about the food on campus and the lack of allergen information provided to students, there was an increase in access to that allergen information.

Willy C's obtained a filtering Kiosk that allows you to see all vegan and vegetarian options separate from the normal menu.

In addition, more allergen information was posted online.

At the end of my sophomore year, I was elected as the next Managing Editor.

This role was one I was excited to hold after witnessing a few incredibly talented alumni in this place before me.

I got the opportunity to work closely with the staff and even developed a strong relationship with the section editors I was managing. It was here that I made most of the friends I have on staff today.

My news coverage continued in this role, and I was even able to keep that weekly article goal, despite how crazy things would get with helping to run the paper.

At the end of my junior year, I was elected as the incoming



Chloe Kowalyk after receiving the Chancellor's Award.
Photo by **SHERRY KOWALYK** | Special to The Leader

Editor in Chief. And let me tell you, it was an incredible honor to take on this role.

I had worked so hard in The Leader for the past three years, and now was my chance to finally lead the team.

Although I was nervous coming in, I got to work with the greatest team I've ever witnessed.

I can honestly say that I've witnessed The Leader become such a strong, kind-hearted club that fights hard for what's right.

Whether it's working on the paper for long hours in the office, solving problems, writing and editing or even making the silliest memories with the rest of my staff, being involved in The Leader has been one of the best things that has ever happened to me.

Together, we have been a strong and important voice to our campus community, advocating for our fellow students and bringing a voice to those without one.

We have raised money and donated our time to various charity events. We were able to help some animals in need at Lakeshore Humane Society, as well as raise over \$100 to help bring menstrual products onto campus.

We have supported our peers in other organizations, and have worked hard to serve our community as best as we can.

Plus, we did all of this while continuously putting out strong issues of The Leader, editing, writing, drawing and working for long hours.

I can easily say I am so extremely proud of each and every one of you.

Outside of The Leader, I want to thank everyone for everything you have done for me, whether it was helping me through whatever crazy incident I got myself into, being a shoulder to cry on or even just being my friend.

I've learned that college, as cliché as it sounds, really is about finding yourself.

I feel as though throughout the past four years, I've lived so many lives. I have enough memories here to last me a lifetime.

For those of you who are still here for another year, or maybe are even just coming in, don't take it for granted. These truly are the best years of your life.

I want to extend my thanks to the following people:

To The Leader staff:

Thank you for your hard work and enthusiasm towards The Leader.

You've made my time here incredible, and I am so honored to have gotten to work with you.

You all have such bright futures ahead of you, and I'm looking forward to watching you lead The Leader to success from the other side.

I have absolutely no worries, and I know The Leader is in great hands with all of you.

Keep fighting the good fight.

Hold them accountable.

Keep the stories coming. It's up to us to facilitate that change and be that strength others are looking for.

I'll be sure to keep reading!

To Elmer:

Thank you for taking my insane ideas for The Leader and helping me accomplish them.

Whether it's allowing Lovercolumn to be written and included in our publication to okaying the Pool Party, you have always been one of my biggest supporters throughout my time here.

It's because of you that I am where I am today, and I thank you for that.

To the faculty and staff:

Thank you to all of my professors and other staff members who have educated me, guided me and helped me throughout my academic journey.

I attribute a lot of my success to the great faculty and staff here at Fredonia.

Your expertise and your compassion for students like me has changed my life in more ways than you know.

To FRS:

In my time here, I have also been fortunate to work at our campus radio station, Fredonia Radio Systems.

In fact, within the past year or so, the bond between FRS and The Leader has grown so very strong.

I could not be happier to see this, as both organizations share a big part of my heart.

FRS has offered me some of the best support and encouragement I could ask for.

Thank you, FRS, for everything: the memories, the skills, the friends.

To my family:

My family is a big attribution to my success today.

I'd like to extend my gratitude to my parents, Sherry and Nick Kowalyk, and my grandparents, Joanne and Michael Ramsey, as well as Billy Back, for your continuous support of me.

They have read nearly all of my articles, and have kept up on every issue.

You've helped me to grow into the independent, strong woman I am today.

I could never have done it without you by my side.

To my friends:

Thank you for all you have done for me.

Whether it is playing Rockband in our living room late at night after a long day, starting radio shows together, traveling with me to conferences and to Albany, taking ice skating classes together, anchoring news with me, letting me cry and gossip over at the sports desk, going with me to shows, visiting Applebees and Denny's late at night on a whim or even just being there to support me, I wanted to thank you.

To Hunter Halterman, thank you for being my biggest supporter here for the past four years. I am so eternally grateful for the time we have spent together so far, and I have you to thank for the advice and guidance you have provided me not just in The Leader, but also in life.

It is because of my friends that I can truly say that I have lived, and I am so happy with my college experience.

If I'm being honest, I don't want to say goodbye. I don't want this time to end, and I can't imagine my nights without you in them with me.

To the readers:

It's because of you that The Leader has existed for about 200 years. Your continued support and contributions are what matter.

It's because of you that a student-run publication can continue to advocate for and represent us as students.

You, as a reader, no matter what your contributions include, are a part of The Leader family. It is because of you all that I love what I do, and do what I love.

Never change, and never doubt the power that you hold.

Thank you.



Chloe Kowalyk in 2021 holding a copy of The Leader.

Photo by SHERRY KOWALYK | Special to The Leader

Sierra Mills, Chief Copy Editor

SIERRA MILLS
Chief Copy Editor

I'm sure everyone has told you that "College is the time when you're supposed to find yourself," but no one expects that journey to have many twists and turns. Well, mine certainly did.

I was already set up for a bumpy road ahead when I decided to transfer from Villa Maria College to Fredonia, a decision that is never easy for anyone to go through. But getting my portfolio denied from the animation major and having to declare myself as "undecided" was another bump in the windy road that would be my journey.

Having a feeling of a lack of purpose or end goal was something that I never anticipated when it came to going to college; I thought this was when my purpose in society would start to click and I would start the mad dash to my goal of a career.

Going through the hustle and bustle of orientation festivities as an undecided student made me feel as though college was just something I would have to hike my pants up and march through.

This feeling remained through my sophomore year, as I would just attend class and immediately go home — a lack of effort that I wanted to maintain just to get my degree in the fastest way possible.

The pattern would continue throughout my first semester as a junior, and would also make me hate going to school and make me feel disconnected from Fredonia.

This disconnect would also affect my GPA as I felt that it didn't matter anymore.

Turns out what I was going through was "transfer shock," which is a pretty common phenomenon for transfer students, according to Inside Higher Ed.

But suddenly, on one fateful day, I took a look at a copy of *The Leader* sitting on the table with a blurb stating that they were looking for people to join, especially copy editors.

After bothering *The Leader* into joining, I became infatuated with delving into everything I possibly could, especially with the support of Alyssa Bump, who was the previous Chief Copy Editor, pushing me to do more.

After Alyssa graduated, I took the position of Chief Copy Editor and started to join a multitude of different clubs such as Fredonia Radio Systems, FredGrows, Transfer Student Organization and the Student Association.

Finding a home at Fredonia definitely wasn't easy. Taking a look at my Google Calendar can give you a hint as to how much I am running like a chicken with my head cut off, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

Being asked to be the Transfer Student Mentor was something I never thought would ever happen, as I wouldn't have seen myself as someone to look up to.

So to conclude my mentoring: to all my fellow transfer students, you can and will find a place at Fredonia, it just takes a bit of a jump in the right direction.



Sierra Mills.
Photo provided by SIERRA MILLS | Chief Copy Editor

Moving forward, the friendships that I have gained here and the mentorship that I have received from my professors and my supervisors from my internships have helped me gather up the courage to take a large step forward in my life: grad school.

While I am absolutely terrified to walk across the stage and move on to Buffalo State, I know that I will have people behind me cheering me on.

I'll be leaving Fredonia feeling better than when I came in, and I am excited to see what Giulianna Lalomio and the other future *Leader* e-board members will do to continue *The Leader's* legacy.

I would like to thank Alyssa Bump, Chloe Kowalyk, Abbie Miller, EJ Jacobs, Dan Quagliana (honestly the entire *Leader* E-Board, you all deserve love and recognition).

I would also like to thank those who have mentored me throughout my time at Fredonia, including Dr. Natalie Gerber, Dr. Christina Jarvis, Elmer Ploetz, Josh Croxton (honestly everyone from Academic Advising), Erin Mroczka and so many more!

For the first time in my life, I feel that I am on the right track of the windy road known as my life, and I am ready for that next step.

FROM THE DESK OF

EJ Jacobs, Life & Arts Editor

EJ JACOBS

Life & Arts Editor

Dyslexia, by definition, is depicted by the Mayo Clinic as “A learning disorder that involves difficulty reading due to problems identifying speech sounds and learning how they relate to letters and words (Decoding).”

In the journalism field, it is hard to admit to your peers that you have something that makes your job harder than it might be for someone else.

In 2012, when I was in fifth grade, my parents could tell that I just wasn't keeping up with everyone else when it came to reading and writing.

This was very apparent to me as well. I could see that students were reading books that I could only dream of.

After various tests, we discovered that I am dyslexic.

It was a relief to find out that I was dyslexic.

This was because I could finally get the help I needed.

Fast forward, I got the proper school help I needed and was able to read and write like my peers by the time I was done with high school.

One of my fears when I was thinking about joining The Leader was that everyone would be smarter than me and I would not even be able to join.

I was scared that everyone would be able to tell that I couldn't keep up.

I was scared that I wouldn't be able to succeed in my role.

I was scared that I would not be as skilled as my counterparts in both writing and editing. After I wrote my first article, I was a ball of anxiety. I thought that

the editors at the time would rip it apart. I thought every word I wrote was the wrong one.

A few hours later, I opened the document I had handed in, fearing what might be awaiting me.

But to my surprise, all the comments were really constructive and nice, and most of the article stayed true to what I had originally written.

Then I was a writer for a while and eventually became a Staff Writer, then the assistant to the Life & Arts Editor and then this



EJ Jacobs.

Photo provided by EJ JACOBS | Life & Arts Editor

whole school year, I was the Life & Arts Editor.

While the Life & Arts Editor, I was also treasurer for FREDGrows, president of Hillel and 2024 Senior Class president.

When reflecting on my time at The Leader, I think about how I found a place on campus to call home base.

The Leader helped me grow my teamwork skills by having to put a paper together with a lot of moving parts.

I was also able to improve my writing and editing skills.

During my time at The Leader, I have learned that everyone has their own set of skills.

Even in areas you might not be great in, there are people who excel.

Thank you to everyone who has gotten me to this point and supported me the whole way. I would like to thank The Leader for completely changing the trajectory of my life.

Not only has this paper helped me grow as a writer, but it has also helped me grow in many other aspects of my life. The friends I made and the experiences I have had are ones I will never forget.

Stay Groovy!

-EJ



EJ Jacobs.

Photo provided by EJ JACOBS | Life & Arts Editor

Henry Domst, Design Editor

HENRY DOMST
Design Editor

I've been a part of many aspects at Fredonia, but The Leader is one of my most memorable.

Coming out of my shell was something very important to me when I stepped on campus.

I was approached by the previous Editor in Chief Will Karr, who was one of my previous classmates, to check out The Leader and meet the Design Editor at the time, Alyssa Bump.

Since joining The Leader, Will and Alyssa have become role models and lifelong friends.

Coming to Fredonia as a graphic design student, I haven't changed my major, but I have added another. It was up in the air between art history and computer science, but last year I would formally add art history as my second major, with computer science becoming my minor.

This addition would later go on to fuel my drive for activism with Students For Fredonia.

Earlier this semester, we traveled to Albany with 50 students to lobby the legislation. While we got the money we asked for from State University of New York (SUNY), the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees once again thought it was more important to send the majority of the money to the big four SUNY schools, with a plan to eradicate the smaller schools.



Henry Domst.
Photo provided by HENRY DOMST | Design Editor



Henry Domst in the senior exhibition 'Midnight Oil'.
Photo provided by HENRY DOMST | Design Editor

I am an incredibly determined artist, and took on the responsibility of showing my art in two separate exhibitions in my final semester. The first was a show with one of my best friends, Jimmy Keller, 'Biophilia,' where we explored the intersection of human relationships with nature.

The second was the senior show, 'Midnight Oil,' a yearly exhibition that comes to the Marion Art Gallery every spring semester, showing off the work of 14 very talented artists.

The time I have spent in the studio has allowed me to grow and develop my passion.

I am incredibly thankful for receiving the Cathy and Jesse Marion Art Gallery Award for this year's senior exhibition.

I also stood as a visual arts and new media (VANM) Ambassador, a role that students take on to act as a tour guide for prospective students and a liaison between students and professors.

Being able to design a newspaper for my campus is one of the most fulfilling things I have experienced in my time here. Working as a team in a college setting has allowed us to experience and learn lessons. Every member of the staff has been nothing but kind and respectful, and I will miss everyone so much!

I also had the opportunity to design this year's issue of The Trident, our college literary magazine. Working with a team of editors in an effort to represent the school year within a magazine was an intense but incredibly fun experience.

The countless relationships I have formed throughout my career

at Fredonia will last a lifetime.

This upcoming fall, I will be enrolled at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY, starting my M.F.A. in interior design.

I would like to extend a special thank you to every professor I have had a class with, and have had the pleasure of conversing with. Jason Dilworth, Megan Urban, Peter Tucker, Leesa Rittelmann, Michele Bernatz, Tom Machovitch, Michael Sheehan, Barbara Racker, Hyla Stellhorn, Lou Pozantides and absolutely everyone else — I cannot thank you enough.

You have allowed me to explore myself and grow as an artist and as a human.

I will end this with a critique of the SUNY administration: Chancellor King, if you really cared about the students of Fredonia, you wouldn't be scared to meet with us and understand the importance of the arts at Fredonia. We need a leader who we are confident can represent everyone in the SUNY system. To the Board of Trustees, you should consist of only people who have graduated from SUNY; to understand what we are, you should be one of us. We need these funds, not the big four. I hope you can comprehend what this university means to the community, and none of us want Fredonia to vanish.

View my work at hdomst.com



'd/2.' Photo provided by HENRY DOMST | Design Editor



The senior exhibition 'Midnight Oil'. Photo provided by HENRY DOMST | Design Editor

Jace Jacobs, Asst. Scallion Editor

JACE JACOBS
Asst. Scallion Editor

This is the third time I've written this piece in an attempt to tell a meaningful story about myself and my time at Fredonia.

As someone who struggles immensely with clinical depression and anxiety, taking pride in myself and my achievements has always been difficult, and is something I am still learning to do.

Instead of looking at a wide view of my time at Fredonia, I want to focus on my time with *The Leader*, and how special writing for the paper has become to me.

Before I was the Assistant Editor of *The Scallion* (or “the horoscope guy”), I started writing pieces for *Life & Arts*. My first-ever piece for *The Leader* was a review of the Fredonia Dance Ensemble's Fall 2021 chamber concert.

I got the idea to sign on to the *Life & Arts* section email list from my former suitemate (and current *Life & Arts* editor) EJ, and fell in love with journalistic writing, even though I had next to no idea of what I was doing.

After writing for *Life & Arts*, I realized that I had a somewhat unique perspective on the goings-on around campus as an out-and-proud transgender man.

I pitched an opinion piece about my experience of using the bathroom as someone who didn't pass as cisgender at the time, and I am immensely proud of how well the piece was received both by the *Leader* staff and by the general public.

It's still my favorite piece I've ever written, and I realized I loved sharing my perspective on issues.

After writing a few pieces for *The Leader*, I was given the title of “Staff Writer,” but I had to give up writing for *The Leader* for most of my junior year.

I was devastated, as I loved taking on stories or creating my own, but my mental health had reached an all-time low, and I needed to focus on myself, my schoolwork and the one extra-curricular that I kept around.

I joined the acapella group Premium Blend that semester.

Although I hate that I gave up writing when I did, I'm still glad that I poured my energy into a group that has also significantly impacted who I have become as a person.

At the end of my junior year, my best friend and current Scallion Editor Megan Kidby reached out to me and asked if I would be interested in writing the horoscopes for the last edition of *The Leader* for the semester.

I was thrilled to get back to writing and try my hand at something new.

After my horoscopes went out, Megan encouraged me to apply to be their assistant editor, and I was thrilled at the idea. I was cautious at first as I had only written one piece in the satire section, but my friend recommending me for the position and believing in me meant everything to me.

Comedy is something that, unfortunately, runs in my family.

My dad worked as an amateur stand-up comic for years, and I've always been told I should follow in his footsteps (no thank you).

Although I won't be getting up to crack jokes in front of a



Jace Jacobs.
Photo by DREW PALUCH | Photo Editor

crowd any time soon, getting to write comedic pieces, unserious journalistic articles and horoscopes has proved to be a great artistic outlet and has helped me to develop a greater understanding of my sense of humor versus what is perceived well by the public, along with helping me to develop stronger writing skills.

Beyond gaining better writing and comedy skills, I've also gained an incredible group of friends I wouldn't trade for the world.

Whether it's just hanging out in the *Leader* office, going to trivia at EBC West or partying on the weekends, I always have fun with the other staff members of *The Leader*, and I am so beyond proud to call this group of wonderful people not just my colleagues, but my friends.

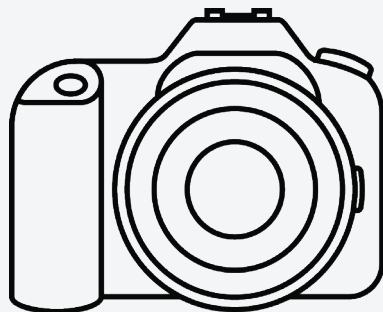
Although I'm devastated I didn't get to know everyone sooner, I know I have made memories with them that will last a lifetime.

I'm so sad to be leaving this wonderful group of people, but I'm excited to see where the future takes everyone, and can't wait to see what the future holds for me.

P.S. My friends at *The Leader* have been immortalized on my laptop so I can't be too sad about leaving them behind. I made everyone in the Sims 4 for the bit, and now it's my responsibility to take care of them forever. Yay!

Drew Paluch

PHOTOGRAPHY



Website:

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WEBSITE



INSTAGRAM

SPORTS

30 years on: A look back at Fredonia's 1994 hockey run, where are they now?

MATT VOLZ
Sports Editor

This is the second of a two-part series highlighting Fredonia's 1993-94 hockey season. Part one can be found in Issue 6.

It's been 30 years since the Blue Devils tore through Division III on the way to a 29-1-4 record and a third-place national finish.

A year after the magical 1993-94 season, Fredonia embarked on another deep run, finishing 24-5-4 and going all the way to the national championship game.

The Blue Devils lost that championship game in 1995, a 1-0 loss that marked the end of the college careers of many of the team's stars.

Five players from those teams were later inducted into the Fredonia Athletics Hall of Fame: Craig Conley, Jim Pinti, Eric Preston, Jeff Lupu and Doug Florkowski.

The 1993-94 and 1994-95 teams were also later selected into the Hall of Fame together as "Teams of Distinction".

In the three decades that have followed, many of them have gone their separate ways and begun their own journeys.

They haven't all stayed in the area, either.

"We're in Detroit, Phoenix, Indianapolis, Florida ... [We have] a few guys still in Western New York, a couple guys in Rochester, a guy in Pittsburgh," said Marty Diamond, who currently lives in Tennessee. "We're all over the place, pretty much."

Some of them went on to pursue professional hockey in various leagues.

Conley, one of the team's All-Americans, played a couple of seasons in the now-defunct Colonial Hockey League (CoHL), most notably putting up 39 points in 59 games across three different teams in 1996-97.

He later played two seasons with the Fort Worth Fire of the Central Hockey League (CHL), recording better than a point per game in both campaigns.

The CHL has also since disbanded, having ceased operations in 2014.

Conley finished his hockey career playing in the Texas-based Western Professional Hockey League (WPHL), recording 13 points in 23 games with two different teams in 1999-2000.

The WPHL ceased operations in 2001, shortly after the end of Conley's career.

Today, Conley resides in Arizona, as does the former All-American and team captain Pinti.

Pinti also briefly played in the CoHL, playing five games with the Utica Blizzard in 1994-95 and recording four points.

The Preston brothers, Eric and Brad, spent time in both the CHL and WPHL.



Marty Diamond (left), Craig Conley (middle), Mike McDonald (right).
Photo provided by JEFF MEREDITH | Fredonia Hockey Head Coach

They actually played together for a couple of teams, suiting up for the Oklahoma City Blazers of the CHL in 1997-98 and the Central Texas Stampede of the WPHL in 1999-2000.

That year marked Brad's final pro season, while Eric played 29 more games with the Stampede in 2000-01.

Eric currently lives in Arizona, and he said he still skates with Conley and Pinti on occasion.

Brad didn't go too far after graduation, as he lives in the Rochester area.

Diamond also played professionally after his Fredonia career ended, including stints in the CHL and WPHL.

His best professional season came in 1998-99 with the San Angelo Outlaws of the WPHL, recording 61 points in 66 games during the regular season and adding nine points in 12 playoff games.

Before that, however, Diamond had one small issue.

He never graduated.

Following the 1993-94 season, Diamond had no more eligibility to play college hockey, but he was still 30 hours short of receiving a degree.

In 1996, while he was playing with the Lakeland Prowlers



Craig Conley (left), Jim Pinti (middle), Brad Preston (right). Photo provided by JEFF MEREDITH | Fredonia Hockey Head Coach

of the former Southern Hockey League (SHL), he received a phone call from a familiar voice.

It was Jeff Meredith.

“I don’t care what you do afterwards, but you need to get back up here and finish [school],” Diamond remembered Meredith saying in the phone call. “This is what you have to do because I told your mother that you would get done [with your degree] here. You haven’t yet.”

Meredith brought on Diamond as an unpaid assistant since Diamond couldn’t play at the collegiate level anymore.

That season, the Blue Devils reached the SUNYAC final, ultimately falling to Plattsburgh.

Diamond also finished his degree, taking 35 credit hours across the fall and spring semesters.

After graduation, a ceremony that featured then-Bills coach Marv Levy as its keynote speaker, Diamond recalled Meredith asking him the same question many graduates face: “What are you going to do now?”

Diamond told his coach that he would return to professional hockey.

“Good. At least I can check this one off my list,” Meredith said. “Thanks for coming back.”

Even after three decades, many members of the 1993-94 Blue Devils stay in touch.

Diamond said they have multiple different group chats, and former players often chat about various topics.

One day this past March, Meredith was sitting at his kitchen table at 5 a.m. eating oatmeal for breakfast.

At the same time, he was receiving texts from several of his former players who were at a casino in Las Vegas.

“It’s special,” Meredith said of the bond between the group. “They were just a great group of guys.”

The impact that the team had on the community was immeasurable, too. Several players remembered being treated like celebrities around town.

Dave Simpson’s jersey still hangs in Coughlan’s Pub, as the Coughlan family was a significant hockey booster in those days. Simpson, who now lives near Brad Preston in Rochester, said he brought his son to Fredonia recently, and his son was surprised to see the lasting impact of his father and the team.

“My son was blown away that we had made that much of an impression that a bar owner would still have our jersey hanging in a bar 30 years later,” Simpson said.

Pinti also noted that he, Conley and Eric Preston still feel connected to the community despite the fact that they all live on the opposite side of the country.

“We’re still in touch with Perry [owner of Old Main Inn],” said Pinti. “We always get together, have a couple of lunches together and reminisce.”

When the Blue Devils host Plattsburgh and Potsdam next season, many members of the 1993-94 team will be back in Fredonia.

“I already booked my plane ticket,” said Pinti.

Pinti estimated that at least half of his former teammates will make the trip.

The legacy left behind by these Fredonia hockey teams may not include a national championship, but the 1993-94 and 1994-95 seasons still remain the best in program history.

Their success on the ice led to far more than just a few banners, though.

It created a lifelong bond between a group of men who, three decades ago, came together and created a lasting impact that the campus and community will surely never forget.



Dave Simpson’s jersey hanging at Coughlan’s. Photo provided by JEFF MEREDITH | Fredonia Hockey Head Coach

5th Quarter Column: NFL Draft recap

MITCH HORUCY

Asst. Sports Editor

After three days, 257 picks and a lot of chaos, the 2024 draft season has come to an end.

The Bills made a total of 10 picks, including seven between rounds two and five.

As mentioned in my pre-draft article, this was an important draft for the Bills, and I believe they handled it fairly well.

The first selection the Bills made was a wide receiver out of Florida State, Keon Coleman.

This selection was made at pick 33 and not 28, however. The Bills made a trade with the Chiefs to move from 28 to 32, and then another with the Panthers to go from 32 to 33.

When it comes to this pick, I'm still not sold on it.

Although he'll likely come in and start day one, I'm not sure he was the best move.

Coming in at 6'3", 213 lbs, he's a contested catch specialist who will stretch the field for the Bills' offense.

According to Bills general manager Brandon Beane, Coleman was the receiver Josh Allen wanted and Beane was able to deliver.

After running a 4.61 40-yard dash, people questioned his speed, especially since he would likely be asked to play outside receiver for a team.

This worry was reasonable, as his 40-yard dash time was the second-slowest among wide receivers at this year's combine. Luckily for Coleman, straight-line speed and play speed are two different things.

Next Gen Stats was able to record the speed at which receivers ran certain routes.

The routes that were measured were a slant, a dagger, a go and a slant strike route.

While running these routes, his speed amongst receivers ranked third and fourth, tied for second and second.

After his first visit to Orchard Park and introductory press conference, we were introduced to his fun and infectious personality.

With a quarterback who is all about having fun, the sky's the limit for this duo.

With their second second-round pick, the Bills selected safety Cole Bishop from the University of Utah.

While not as flashy, Bishop is a great selection and should be a week one starter.

He'll likely be the replacement for Micah Hyde in the free safety position.

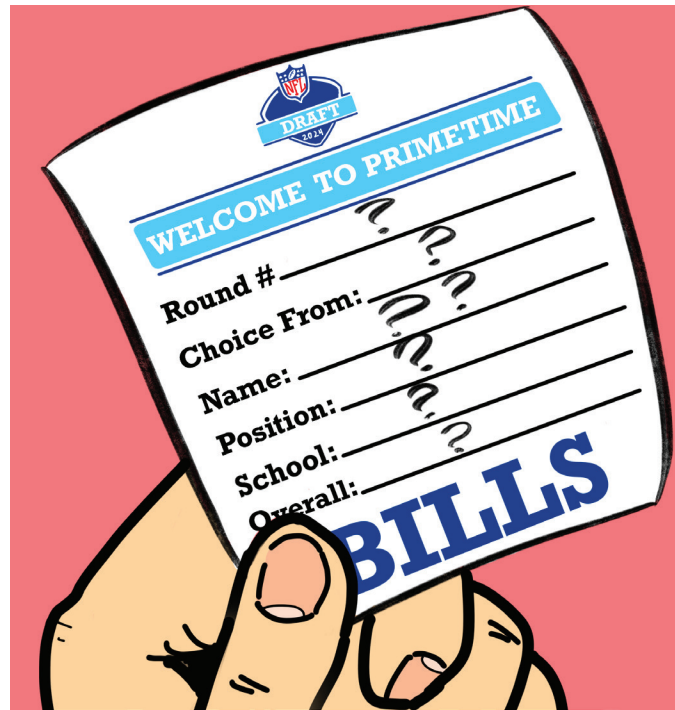
At 6'2", 205 lbs, he has a nice frame that will allow him to step into the box, as well as being able to cover.

His 4.45 40-yard dash at the combine was also good for the 86th percentile amongst safeties.

As the Bills went through a roster turnover, they lost five captains, including other team leaders.

Bishop was a captain at Utah and will bring new leadership to a defense that had the same starting safety duo for seven consecutive years.

Keeping the theme of leadership, the Bills selected a defensive tackle from Duke, DeWayne Carter, at pick 95.



Graphic by NICOLE THORSON | Art Director

At Duke, Carter was the first three-time captain in school history. On the field, he was awarded First Team All-ACC, team MVP and the team's best defensive player while at Duke.

He won't be a starter, as he's behind Ed Oliver on the depth chart, but he'll play a lot of snaps, as Sean McDermott is known to rotate defensive linemen.

At pick 128, the Bills took Kentucky running back Ray Davis.

Similar to Carter, Davis won't start because the Bills found a gem in James Cook, but he will contribute to the team.

At 5'8", 211 lbs, Davis is a tough-to-bring-down back who can wear down a defense.

As a fifth-year senior at Kentucky, he averaged 5.7 yards per carry, along with 13 rushing touchdowns.

Perhaps the most intriguing thing about Davis is his pass-catching ability.

This past season, he had 33 receptions for 323 yards and seven receiving touchdowns. His seven touchdowns through the air were the most amongst FBS running backs.

He may be able to find time on the field as a third-down back in this new Bills offense.

Heading into the back half of the team's selections, the main emphasis is depth with upside.

In the fifth round, the Bills selected offensive lineman Sedric Van Pran-Granger from Georgia.

He made 44 consecutive starts at center for Georgia and was a part of the 2022 and 2023 teams that won back-to-back national championships.

With their next two selections, the Bills added talent to the defense with linebacker Edefuan Ulofoshio and edge rusher Javon Solomon.

Ulofoshio fits the athletic off-ball linebacker style that McDermott likes to have.

He won't play a lot of snaps but can contribute as a special teamer and add much-needed depth to the position.

Solomon led the nation in sacks last season at Troy with 16 and could make an impact on day one.

As mentioned previously, McDermott likes to rotate his defensive linemen, and Solomon could quickly contribute to that rotation.

With two of their last three picks, the Bills added depth to the offensive line with Tylan Grable and Travis Clayton.

Their other pick was used on a cornerback out of Penn State,

Daequan Hardy.

A notable UDFA, or undrafted free agent, the Bills added is the son of former Bill and future Hall of Fame running back Frank Gore, Frank Gore Jr.

Gore Jr. has 30 total touchdowns over his collegiate career and could add some depth to the roster or practice squad.

Overall draft grade: B+.

While it was an interesting yet important year for the team, I think they added some players who could make an immediate impact as well as a few who can add immediate depth and turn into impact players.

Buffalo what? Back-to-back champions, maybe

MATT VOLZ

Sports Editor

In the sports world, Buffalo is often seen as a city of losing.

Because the Bills and Sabres have never brought home their respective league championships, outsiders often see the city as a sports disaster.

Don't tell that to the Buffalo Bandits, though.

Buffalo's indoor lacrosse team is headed to the National Lacrosse League Finals for the fourth straight season, in hopes of bringing home a second consecutive championship.

The Bandits reached the NLL Finals in 2019, losing to the Calgary Roughnecks. After that season, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the championship wasn't played in either 2020 or 2021.

When the league's playoffs returned in 2022, the Bandits again reached the NLL Finals and lost a winner-take-all game to the Colorado Mammoth in Buffalo.

Last year's playoffs played out almost the exact same way they had in 2022. Buffalo swept the Toronto Rock in the Eastern Conference Finals to reach the championship series, and again, they were staring down the Colorado Mammoth.

In the same fashion as 2022, the Bandits won Game 1 at home before dropping Game 2 in Denver, setting up a winner-take-all third game at KeyBank Center.

However, it was different this time. The Bandits steamrolled the Mammoth, 13-4, to bring home their first championship since 2008 and the fifth in franchise history.

As a lifelong Buffalo sports fan, the championship felt like an 800-pound weight being lifted off my shoulders.

I couldn't make it to the championship game, as I was doing play-by-play for a local baseball team, but I watched from my living room as my team, finally, celebrated a championship.

I'll admit, as the final seconds ticked off the clock, I dropped to my knees and cried tears of joy and relief on my kitchen floor.

My Bandits journey began when I was about ten years old, and my family was visiting some friends in Buffalo. We had never been to a lacrosse game before, and we watched as the Bandits defeated the Minnesota (now Georgia) Swarm, 12-9.

I remember seeing current team captain Steve Priolo get into a fight in that game, and from that moment on I was hooked.

One of my favorite Bandits-related memories was from my second Bandits game.

Again, we were visiting our friends in Buffalo, and we had gotten some sort of ticket package deal that was sponsored by McDonald's.

We had 14 of us going to the game, so we all needed to eat obviously.

Next thing we knew, we had hundreds — yes, hundreds — of Chicken McNuggets and fries sitting on the table in front of us.

I think one of my friends ate nearly 50 McNuggets by himself.

It was the coolest and most disgusting thing I've ever seen to this day.

Although my Bandits game trips don't include an obscene amount of fast food anymore, I still love going to the games.

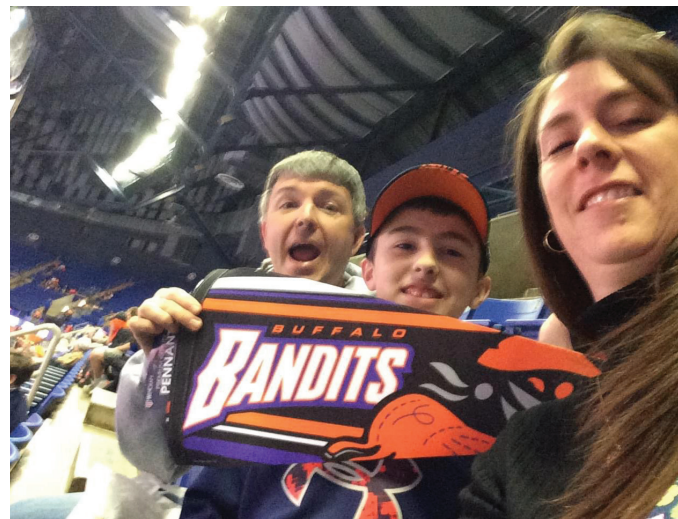
I became a first-time season ticket holder this year, and it's been one heck of a ride.

I'll be there for Game 2 of the NLL Finals, which will be at KeyBank Center on Saturday, May 18 at 7:30 p.m.

If Buffalo wins the first game of the series, they could clinch the title with a win in Banditland.

It would be a dream come true for that 10-year-old version of myself, the kid who hoped, but never believed he'd see one of his teams win a title.

His team has a chance to make that dream twice as real.



Matt Volz with his parents, Dave and Kelly, at a Bandits Game.

Photo provided by MATT VOLZ | Sports Editor

5th Quarter Column:

Sabres go back to the future with Lindy Ruff

PARKER GURNETT

Staff Writer

“Just a chance that maybe we’ll find better days” will be playing loudly through speakers in Buffalo.

“Better Days” by the Goo Goo Dolls is, as many Sabres fans hope, what the hiring of ‘new’ head coach Lindy Ruff will bring.

The hiring of Ruff comes just six short days after the Sabres fired their former head coach Don Granato. For many Sabres fans, including myself, this marks the beginning of a new era for the team.

The Sabres have been nothing short of a disaster since the 2012-2013 season — the season in which Ruff last coached for the Sabres. Since his departure from the team in 2013, the Sabres have gone through six head coaches.

On top of that, the Sabres have missed the playoffs every season since the 2010-2011 season, when they lost in the Eastern Conference Quarterfinals four games to three to the Philadelphia Flyers.

Since then, they have held the NHL record for most consecutive seasons without a playoff appearance and tied for longest in all four North American sports leagues, only behind the New York Jets of the NFL at 13 seasons.

So why is this hire such a big deal to Sabres fans? Just as the intro song suggests, it brings us back to the better days of Sabres hockey.

During Ruff’s first tenure with the Sabres, they had an identity and spirit to the team that seemed to lack in the years following his departure.

His return hopes to bring an identity to this extremely young and talented roster.

The Sabres missed the playoffs by one point in 2022-2023. Then, this past 2023-2024 season seemed to take a noticeably steep decline in the highly powerful offensive attack we saw just a season before.

The 2022 season saw the Sabres score 296 goals, which was third best in the league, but, in 2023, dropped to 246 for only 22nd best in the league.

Young stars Tage Thompson, Dylan Cozens and Mattias Samuelsson are under contract until 2030, Rasmus Dahlin until 2032 and Owen Power until 2031.

They also have a few other players like Jeff Skinner, Alex Tuch and Zach Benson under contract through at least 2026.

But why do these young stars matter so much? It is not just because they are under contract for so long or are the ‘faces of the franchise’.

They matter because they fall perfectly into Ruff’s identity. Ruff has a knack for finding the talents in his young players and having them succeed at what they do best.

Tyler Myers won the Calder Memorial Trophy in 2010, an award given to the league’s top rookie.

Thomas Vanek scored 25 goals his rookie year and went on to then have 3 consecutive 35-plus goal seasons.

Jason Pominville thrived, scoring over 30 goals. Chris Drury and Daniel Briere had some of their most productive seasons

with the Sabres under Ruff.

What is so special about Lindy Ruff anyway? Well, for starters, he has now been employed by the Sabres in every decade of their existence after being drafted 32nd overall by the Sabres in 1979.

Ruff would play for the Sabres from 1979 until he was traded at the 1989 trade deadline to the New York Rangers for a draft pick.

He served as the Sabres captain for three years during his time in Buffalo.

Ruff would retire from playing professional hockey in 1993, finishing his NHL playing career with 691 games played, 105 goals and 195 assists for 300 NHL points.

Ruff would be hired as the 15th head coach of the Sabres on July 21, 1997, where he had immediate success.

Ruff led the Sabres to the conference finals in his first season and the Stanley Cup Finals in his first two seasons as head coach, unfortunately losing in each series.

Following the 2005-2006 season, Ruff was the winner of the Jack Adams Award for coach of the year in the NHL.

During the 2006-2007 season, Ruff became the first Sabres head coach to lead the team to back-to-back 50-win seasons.

On January 6, 2011, Ruff became only the 16th coach in NHL history to win 500 games, and just the second ever to win 500 games while only coaching one team.

The following game on January 8, he became the winningest head coach in NHL history who only coached one team, passing Montreal Canadiens Hall of Fame coach Toe Blake.

Ruff is also only the fourth NHL head coach to coach 1,000 games with a singular team.

Ruff was fired by the Sabres midway through the 2013 season on February 20, 2013, ending his time as the NHL’s longest active-serving coach with one team and second only to Gregg Popovich of the NBA in the four major sports in North America.

Ruff would finish his time with the Sabres having coached 1,165 games and leading them to a 571-432-78-84 record, which is a Win-Loss-Tie-Overtime Loss record.

Out of all the teams Ruff coached, the 2005-2007 teams that each lost in the conference finals and the current teams bear a resounding resemblance.

Those teams had young stars like Jason Pominville, Thomas Vanek, Maxim Afinogenov and Derek Roy — similar to the young stars the team has locked up now.

Those were the first teams I remember watching when I was younger.

Even though I was extremely young at the time, I have faint memories of those teams.

Now that I have gotten older and gone back and watched the highlights of my team, I have really noticed the similarities.

Ruff was able to tap into the strong suits of each of those players and I really believe that he will be able to continue his ability to tap into those abilities that his current players possess.

I hope that he will be able to get the team to get the grit back that they used to have.

Overall, this hire by the Sabres should push the team to a new level with the work ethic that Ruff instills into the team.



The Sabres playing against the Calgary Flames at KeyBank Center on Oct. 19, 2023 . Photo by PARKER GURNETT | Staff Writer

The ethics of coaching

MARISSA BURR

Opinion Editor

With Fredonia being a Division III athletics university, scholarships are not offered to encourage athletes to play a sport during their time here.

Because of this, the team atmosphere must be supportive enough of its athletes to keep them coming back for multiple seasons. This starts with the coach.

The environment that they build for their athletes can show in performance, as well as attitude.

Head Women's Basketball Coach Sarah Cartmill is in her sixth year in this position and has been in collegiate coaching for 19 years.

When it comes to her approach to coaching, she said, "I like to think that I challenge my athletes but also am caring and understanding of what they're going through. I strive to hold them accountable but also make sure they all know that I care about them beyond basketball, beyond playing time, as a person" in an email interview.

Alon Haimovitz, a senior on the men's basketball team, is in his third year on the team and believes a coach should try and build a family atmosphere for their team.

He said, "[With this] everyone has a place, and everyone can be open and honest with each other to make everyone better."

Cartmill stressed the importance of her team treating her players as valued members of the group. Her intended locker room atmosphere is "relaxed, welcoming, accepting [and] communicative."

Beyond this, Cartmill is big on players keeping up with their academic responsibilities, in addition to their athletic ones.

She said, "They are STUDENT-athletes, their studies and course work should always be a priority. We attempt to be flexible with their schedules so that they are able to get everything done."

From a player's perspective, Haimovitz said, "Academics is very important to me, as the thing that helped me get the opportunity to play on a college level. I take my classes very seriously, and [hope] to use my future degree to build myself for the future."

Athletes are still expected to complete their course load and stay on track to graduation.

The time commitment that sports require has the chance to overtake academics, so coach support can make a big difference in their player's success.

But it doesn't all come down to the coaches — the institution itself has an effect.

Sports Editor of *The Leader*, Matt Volz, spoke on his experience around Fredonia athletics.

He said, "I think that there are definitely improvements that need to be made. I see that teams have to practice really really late at night because of complicated class schedules. This means sometimes it's almost 11 [p.m.] when you get home."

Practice is where coaches have the team run drills, try out new plays and perfect strategies.

That way, when the game comes, players are prepared for whatever may come up. But is there a different atmosphere



Graphic by GUINEVERE DEVLIN | Staff Artist

while the players are practicing versus when they are in a game situation?

Haimovitz responded, "I think there is a difference, mostly because a game is like a fresh start. You play against a team that knows what you are doing, but they never saw how each player is playing in the actual game. Practice is usually harder, and games [are] when the preparation meets expectations, and how hard you work."

In slight contrast, Cartmill stated, "I think that there are times in practice when we can all be a little more relaxed but I don't think there is a big difference."

In the way that every player on a team is different, each coach has their own style.

An article from the Institute for Coaching Excellence at the University of Florida states, "No longer is the tyrant coach the ideal method of coaching. In today's world of sports, athletes are more in touch with their mental health and are able to articulate the needs they have and want from their teammates, leaders and most importantly coaches."

Dr. Laura M. Miele has studied the concept of the "whole athlete" and creating positive environments for anyone in an athletic environment.

She looked closely into two types of coaching, one consisting of praise and the other being more dictatorial. Her findings showed that the praising style was "more conducive for success on and off the field of play."

The new ethical coach emphasizes learning, growth and confidence-building while also being inclusive and advocating for autonomy.

Cartmill stated, "Every one coach is different in ways that

they approach their sport, preparation, athletes, game-plan, etc. There is no ‘right’ way to connect with your athletes and teams, variety is what makes coaching and athletics so special.”

This is consistent through both men’s and women’s sports. All three of those interviewed spoke about how there are differences between how to coach the two, but when it came down to it, it was more about each player being different regardless of gender.

Each player is different, so every combination of them on a team will be too.

Throughout Volz’s interview, he made the point to keep mentioning how a coach needs to build relationships with each player.

He said, “I think that coaches should be there as a shoulder

to cry on, be approachable if their athlete is having a problem [so that] they can come to them, [and] understand that they have a personal life outside of the sport — they need time to be college kids.”

Further proof of this is when Haimovitz said, “I think the strong connection I have with my coaches is what [helps] me develop my game and do what is being asked of me. The coaches have trust in me, and that is how I rise during the game.”

When it comes down to it, sports may be about the team effort, but each individual has their own impact, whether they’re a player or a coach.

Matt Volz, who was interviewed for this article, is the Sports Editor of The Leader.

MATT VOLZ
Sports Editor

Be sure to tune in to “Big Blue Sports Podcast” every Wednesday afternoon from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.!

Each week, I talk about Fredonia sports, provide sports news updates, recap Bills games and more! I’ll also make my picks for the upcoming NFL games and recap the games of the week before.

You can tune in on WCVF 88.9 FM in Dunkirk and Fredonia or stream live on fredoniaradio.com.



Revisiting the 'Transgender Issue': An exploration of trans joy

JACE JACOBS

Assistant Editor of The Scallion

In my time writing for The Leader, I chose to be vocal about my personal experiences as a transgender man, specifically concerning the campus of SUNY Fredonia and the United States as a whole.

As I reflect on the pieces I've written, there's a lack of positivity.

In response to my piece centered around the death of non-binary teen Nex Benedict, a reader sent me an email asking me to write a piece focusing on trans joy and successes.

As I look to the future while gearing up for graduation, I want to celebrate how far I've come in my transition, as well as being able to celebrate the transitions of others.

Although the fight for trans rights is far from over, I'm more than glad to take a moment to uplift the successes of my community. I asked trans friends for their biggest moments of trans joy, along with asking the same of individuals on the anonymous social media app YikYak.

Below is a list of the top 10 most celebrated moments of trans joy:

10. Seeing other trans people represented positively in the media

As it can be gathered from my intro to this piece, trans joy and positivity are rarely reflected in the media these days, but when they are, trans folks are typically ecstatic and eager to share the news around as widely as they can!

Seeing trans celebrities like Elliot Page, Jinx Monsoon and Kim Petras living their best lives is often enough to boost trans morale and make trans people feel more joyful!

9. Choosing a new name that fits your "new" identity

When beginning one's transition, finding a new name can be the jumping-off point. Finding a new name can be a long process, and trans/gender-nonconforming folks can cycle through several potential options before landing on one that feels right.

No matter how many names one tries on or how long the process takes, there's one out there that will fit, and the patience shown by loved ones and friends often makes the process smoother and can ultimately help the individual make a choice.

It is always such a relief to feel like oneself in any capacity, and beginning with a name can often help one to restructure their public persona.

8. Living in a safe state

In the current political climate of the United States, not all

states are safe for transgender individuals to exist in, let alone seek affirming care in.

Certain states have begun declaring themselves as sanctuaries in anticipation of the upcoming presidential election.

This item is ranked so low on the list because those living in these sanctuary states have expressed both guilt and glee at living in these states.

They can see the struggle many of their fellow trans people are going through, and despite their safety being guaranteed, they can't help but feel for those not in safe spaces.

But those in unsafe states have expressed joy at just hearing about these sanctuary states, knowing that there is somewhere to go in the chance something bad happens.

7. When gender-affirming undergarments actually work

As stated by a fellow trans man, nothing beats the feeling of having a flat chest that actually looks flat!

Although the most common transmasculine undergarment is a chest binder, some people choose to use trans tape, which is medical-grade tape used to pull breast tissue to appear to be flat.

It can be incredibly finicky, and getting it to work is always a reason to celebrate! Some trans-feminine people have expressed similar experiences with a similar tape-like product made to assist with tucking, along with difficulties using tucking underwear.

Tucking can be difficult to endure but, similar to trans tape, when it works it's a great reason to celebrate!

6. Having trans friends

Similar to being in a T4T relationship (discussed later on in this list), having transgender friends is such a joy!

No one understands the pitfalls and positives of being trans quite like other trans people and being surrounded by a group of trans folks provides both a greater network of empathy and compassion, but can also create a sense of safety.

5. Receiving gender-affirming clothing items

In the beginning stages, individuals socially transition to the gender they want to be perceived as.

Gender-affirming clothing items can be something visible, like a trans woman's first dress, or something with results that are only seen externally, like a trans man's first binder.

These items, along with many on this list, can be life-changing, and are often the first gender-affirming experiences had by trans people.

Never underestimate the positive effect of clothing on how



Jace Jacobs, the writer of this column. Photo by DREW PALUCH | Photo Editor

gender is perceived!

4. Getting the go-ahead for medical procedures

For many transgender people, pursuing hormone replacement therapy (HRT) or surgeries marks major milestones in transitioning.

When it comes to gender-affirming care, trans people are often made to jump through several hoops before they can begin doing anything.

This depends on the state the individual lives in, their insurance and more recently the laws surrounding trans healthcare in the area.

Most medically-based aspects of transition cost exorbitant amounts of money and can result in trans individuals starting GoFundMe campaigns to help fund their transition, which is most often seen with surgeries.

Getting the go-ahead from doctors to begin planning on these procedures is often like a breath of fresh air, or a feeling of re-birth.

Transgender healthcare saves lives.

Transgender healthcare changes lives for the better.

3. Passing as cisgender/being perceived as you want to be

Although passing as cisgender isn't the ultimate goal of all transgender people, it is an important element of transition for those who identify within the gender binary.

From those that I've spoken to who are pursuing medical transition, passing is especially exciting pre-HRT or surgeries. For non-binary/gender-nonconforming individuals, some find joy in confusing others and presenting so androgynously that people are unable to tell exactly what gender they are.

Some find joy in presenting in ways that result in them getting referred to as the opposite gender than what they were assigned at birth.

The joy found in passing/being accurately perceived in public is up to the individual's identity and their personal transition goals, but it is generally agreed upon that passing in some form or another is a great source of pride for many trans people.

2. Being in a "trans for trans" relationship

In the transgender community, it's often seen that trans people prefer to date other trans people.

This occurs for many reasons. Most obviously, the rate of transphobia is reduced.

In addition to a partner who is essentially guaranteed not to be a transphobe, you also have a partner who understands your struggles on a more intimate level.

It also provides advantages sexually, where some of the awkwardness surrounding explaining how your body and needs differ from cisgender individuals is diminished.

Although this is a good jumping-off point for discussing the intimate nature of "T4T" relationships, no words can come close to describing the beauty of being in that kind of relationship, and I sincerely hope all trans individuals can experience this kind of love at least once in their lives.

1. Waking up and recognizing yourself in the mirror

Another largely indescribable experience comes in the form of experiencing gender euphoria.

Living in a body that doesn't feel like yours for years on end can be, in a word, painful. Transgender individuals can pursue transition in many different ways, through either hormone replacement therapy and surgeries, or just in the way that they dress or style their hair.

Reaching a point where you like your reflection, take pride in it and feel like yourself is a wonderful phenomenon as a transgender person.

Experiencing gender euphoria as a transgender person is such a beautiful thing!

A Playlist for Every Mood: Songs of the rainbow

MARISSA BURR
Opinion Editor

As someone who spent 18 years of my life not accepting the fact that I was a bisexual woman, I heard plenty of songs that made me feel all sunshine and rainbows inside, without knowing why.

I would gravitate towards openly queer anthems thinking it was just the ally or activist in me, but once I came out everything made more sense.

Over the years, I've added more songs to my "rainbow" playlist, whether they were actually talking about LGBTQIA+ relationships or not.

These are some of my favorites, and yes, I am fully aware that the artists have openly said for some of these that they are about heterosexual relationships — but not to me.

"History Hates Lovers" by Oublaire

This is by far my favorite song on this playlist.

It is so fun and upbeat, but also has a unique premise that you don't hear a lot on the radio — not that I've heard this song on the radio, especially not around here (there'd probably be a coup).

The idea of the song is that throughout history, people will go to any length to hide the fact that there are queer relationships happening around them, whether that be celebrities or family members or neighbors.

The chorus of this song is so catchy, and it essentially makes fun of how people try to hide this.

It goes "close friends, besties, roommates, colleagues, anything but lovers. History hates lovers. Sidekicks, family, good pals, buddies, anything but lovers."

The bridge implies that as much as people tried to keep these couples in the closet, people still figured it out anyway.

When letters are signed "to my dearest with love" or they wear matching wedding bands and have a golden retriever, people can see through that.

The most beautiful line in this song is "21 centuries of hate, some things may not have been okay back then, but they're sure alright today."

This is the way the world needs to be; keep hatred in the history books.

"Betty" by Taylor Swift

Yes, I know Swift did not write this about a queer relationship, but I listened to this for over a year before I went to her Eras Tour concert and she openly admitted that it was about a teenage boy.

I came from the perspective that the three characters in the story, Betty, James and Inez were all named after Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds' children who are all girls.

I loved listening to this as if it were about a young, high school queer relationship because those in non-heterosexual relationships can also make stupid mistakes.

The metaphors in the song about "patching your broken wings" and making up in the garden and "standing in your car-

digan" all scream the kind of relationship I would've wanted if I was in a relationship with another girl in high school.

Plus, as Swift points out, it is complete fantasy that a teenage boy would ever apologize like this song describes, so I stand true to the fact that this is about two young girls in love.

"Boyfriend" by Dove Cameron

This song totally switches the vibes I know, but not every queer relationship consists of a cottage-core aesthetic.

Sometimes it's raw and sexy and dangerous, and that's what this song is.

The idea is that Cameron sees her crush's boyfriend leave her at an event, and she starts fantasizing about how she would make a better partner.

She wouldn't grab her wrist, she'd be up all night having sex, and all of her clothes would fit.

It would just be better to leave with her instead.

Before I realized I was bisexual, I thought it was totally normal to believe that women would be better at sex than men because they knew what felt good with their sexual organs.

There's definitely some truth to that, which is one of the reasons why it's fun for platonic girlfriends to talk about what sex is like.

Men, never be afraid to ask a woman what kind of things your girlfriend might like both in and outside the bedroom, rather than swinging and missing.

"Born this Way" by Lady Gaga

I distinctly remember this song raising controversy when it came out in the very early 2010s.

The fact that it said "no matter gay, straight, or bi, lesbian, transgender life" had people in uproar.

Yet, in the next phrase it also talks about being proud of your race and other different qualities that make someone who they are.

The point of this anthem is that you should own who you are and love yourself.

However, this was more open than any other song I was hearing at the time.

Gaga slams people for using their religion to hate others, and counters their arguments with the fact that "God makes no mistakes."

The way people responded to this song, you would've thought she cussed up a storm and used all sorts of slurs and explicit references.

No, this is a beautiful anthem about being yourself and accepting your unique qualities as something positive.

"Brave" by Sara Bareilles

I remember when this song was first released in 2013 and it was one of those that just stuck with me and made me feel warm and fuzzy inside without any real explanation.

This also isn't as openly about being queer as Oublaire's song was; that's why it was a radio sensation. I had no idea why this song filled me with such confidence, but as I listen to it now, it

A Playlist for Every Mood



Graphic by JOHN LEAHY | Staff Artist

all comes together.

Lyrics like “maybe there’s a way out of the cage where you live, maybe one of these days you can let the light in” are obviously a callout to being “closeted” and not having the ability to show your true self to those around you.

Being brave means facing the hatred and the bigots and not letting anyone’s unsolicited opinions stop you from being yourself.

This song has a double meaning to me now.

It inspires me to use my ability to write to stand up for those who have no voice.

Bareillies sings “let your words be anything but empty, why don’t you tell them the truth.”

To me, this means writing about controversy, and damn whoever’s feathers it ruffles.

In one year at Fredonia, I’ve called out the campus multiple times, as well as workplaces, the government, sexists, misogynists and more.

And I will continue to be brave and do so unapologetically.

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0WgkfygwkkkozqtmwL-ljNzg?si=0c1eae472e744e23>

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College students feel more pressure than ever: A look at American grind culture

CHLOE KOWALYK

Editor in Chief

For the past four years, just like many of you, I have spent my life as a college student here in the United States.

I have found myself saying “yes” to nearly every opportunity that has come my way.

This can-do-will-do attitude has led me to be extremely busy, taking up two majors and two minors, as well as a variety of extracurricular activities and an on-campus job as a tutor.

It has gotten to the point where I thrive off of being busy. I genuinely don't know what to do with a free hour. Usually, that time is spent finding something else to do. It's almost paralyzing for me not to have something planned.

A gap in my Google Calendar is almost nonexistent for me. Sometimes, I even schedule when I am going to eat.

But, I've come to learn that my experience is not unique. In fact, many other students feel the same way as I do.

The pressure to continuously be busy in hopes of success and achieving a future career is known in popular culture as “American grind culture.”

An article published by the blog “Mighty Pursuit” lays out the idea of American grind culture well.

They write, “In pursuit of our goals, we're sold the mentality that we should be going hard at all times. Don't let up, or you're going to fall behind the pack.”

This is especially true when it comes to the highly competitive job market many potential employees are facing today.

Many believe that if they do not continuously work towards their goals, they won't achieve them.

David Mascotta is a writer for the news publication “The Atlantic,” and described similar ideas.

Back in 2013, Mascotta wrote an article titled “How America's ‘Culture of Hustling’ is Dark and Empty.”

In his article, Mascotta writes, “American culture preaches as the means of accessing the good life—careers, professional ambition, the drive for prestige, etc.”

Every move is intentional and goal-oriented. This grind culture perpetuates the idea of “hustling” to keep doing things, to be busy all the time.

“Results-obsessed perspectives overlook meaning — and leave little room for creativity, pleasure or accepting the importance of sadness,” Mascotta said.

This grind culture has of course made its way into colleges and universities across the United States.

Many students, on the path towards a career, are feeling that exact pressure.

Vanguard, the student newspaper at The University of North Georgia, goes as far as to assert that American grind culture is “setting students up for failure.”

This is because grind culture is harmful, as it puts excess pressure on students to succeed and take on as many responsibilities as possible; I can certainly attest to this.

Growing up, I always had this idea of success in my head. I

“It's about trying to compensate for a lack of self worth built in by a society that wants you to feel this way so that it can keep on producing and dominating everything.”

—NISHANTH PETERS

Blogger,
Medium.com

assumed I would get a good education and an even better job.

But honestly, I never really had a career aspiration in mind. Throughout my college career, I have considered becoming a teacher, a professor, a lawyer, a neuroscientist, a researcher, a counselor, a journalist or a psychologist.

I have pretty much always been unsure about what I want to do with my future.

I even came into college as a double major in English and psychology, eventually added communication as my minor, then switched my major to journalism and my minor to English and finally added a minor in political science during my junior year.

It's safe to say I'm all over the place, within my passions and academic and future goals.

I'm honestly not sure where I want to be in a career, but that never stopped me from playing into American grind culture.

Even though I have never truly decided what to do for the rest of my life, I always felt the pressure to succeed.

I have taken a crazy amount of credits every semester, and I've strived to get an ‘A’ in every single one.

I participate actively in four different clubs — three of them campus media organizations. I have written over 100 articles for this paper in the hopes of building a strong portfolio.

Because of this, I truly haven't relaxed much.

I'm fortunate that many of my friends are in the same things as me, so doing clubs is actually a way for us to unwind.

However, I wonder if I have simply become accustomed to this life, always “on the grind.”

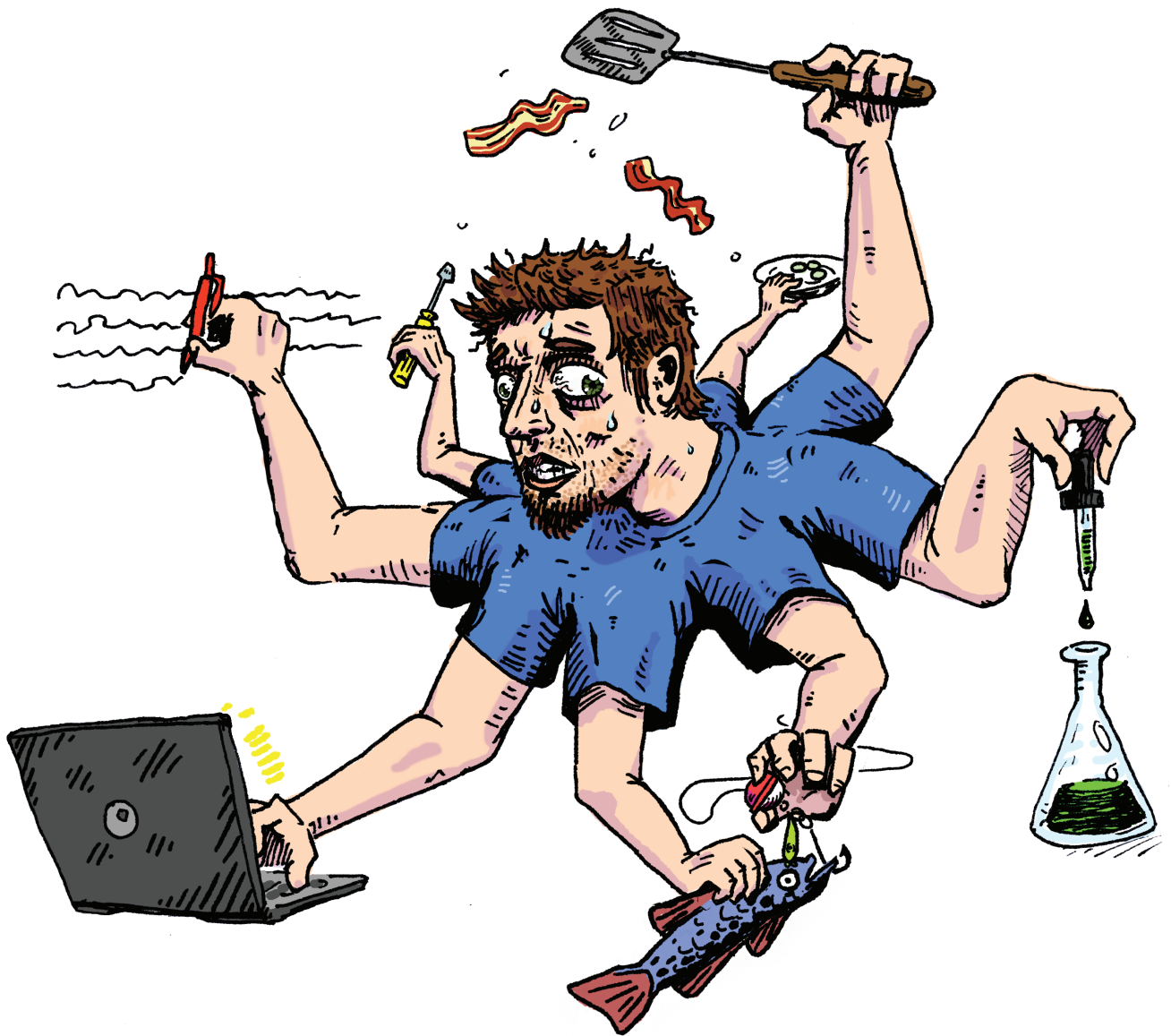
If I'm honest, having nothing to do is tough for me mentally. It's like I never truly got comfortable with my own thoughts.

Nishanth Peters, a blogger on Medium, also discussed the mental toll on grind culture.

“It's about trying to compensate for a lack of self worth built in by a society that wants you to feel this way so that it can keep on producing and dominating everything,” Peters wrote.

I will admit though, I like the busy life.

As much as it hurts when my alarm goes off in the morning after working a late shift at the campus radio station or staying up to put this paper together, in some sick and twisted way, I



Graphic by ROEN CLOUTIER | Staff Artist

kind of enjoy it.

It's like I always get to be around my friends, and most of the time I feel productive and accomplished, but also drained and exhausted.

I feel that being so active on campus has given my life meaning.

My advice for students now is not to let that pressure control your life.

Yes, you should always strive to do well, but don't let that stop you from enjoying your college experience and having fun.

Work hard, but play hard too, as these are memories that will last you a lifetime.

Links to more information about American grind culture:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2013/08/how-americas-culture-of-hustling-is-dark-and-empty/278601/>

<https://ungvanguard.org/30776/academics/american-grind-culture-setting-students-up-for-failure/>

<https://medium.com/artfullyautistic/what-the-hell-is-grind-culture-and-why-is-it-so-toxic-and-also-ableist-20901d7458a6>



Lovercolumn: Birth Control

THE ELECTRICIAN

Executive Producer of Lovercall

THE ARCHITECT

Lovercall Producer

THE QUARTERBACK

Lovercall Producer

Hello!

We are The Electrician, The Architect and The Quarterback: producers and hosts of the radio show Lovercall right here at Fredonia. Lovercall is an anonymous late-night talk show about love, relationships and more. Students who come on the show use a codename to protect their identities when discussing potentially personal topics, hence the codenames of the writers of this column.

“The Electrician” is a 21-year-old cisgender female student who uses she/her pronouns and is a senior at Fredonia.

“The Architect” is a 21-year-old cisgender male student who uses he/him pronouns and is a senior at Fredonia.

“The Quarterback” is a 19-year-old cisgender male student who uses he/him pronouns and is a sophomore at Fredonia.

On each episode, the hosts and guests of Lovercall participate in a variety of segments. The cast discusses a relevant news story, a date idea, a wacky game and a main topic for the episode.

Listeners also write into the show, either via Fredonia Radio’s Instagram, @fredonia_radio, on Yik Yak or through the QR code provided in this column.

We typically answer the questions asked right here in this column, so be sure to look out for student stories and questions in future columns.

The show is now being streamed weekly on Wednesday nights from 10 p.m. to 12 a.m. on WDWL 89.5 on www.fredoniaradio.com.

This column runs in conjunction with Lovercall and can be found both in print and online at fredonialeader.org.

Date idea of the week

We hope to provide our fellow students with a fun and unique date idea in every column. These “date” ideas aren’t just for romantic partners — you could go with your friends, your classmates or you can even go solo for a fun activity in Fredonia.

For this week’s date idea, we’re kicking it back to your high school days with a fake prom!

You could string up some lights, hang some streamers, put together a playlist or maybe even set up a photo booth!

Not to mention, who doesn’t love an excuse to dress up and dance?

Many young people dream of having the perfect prom, like one you might see in an ‘80s rom-com.

But, it doesn’t always live up to expectations.

This can be your chance for you and your partner to reclaim some of that “prom night magic” that you might not have gotten at your actual prom.

Also, some people didn’t get a prom because of COVID-19, so this can be a great way to reclaim those memories.

You don’t even have to have a date to fake prom — you could have just as much fun with your friends!

This idea might not be for everyone, especially for those who might not have had the best high school experience.

But for those who might want to bring back that magic, having a fake prom could be a great way to do just that.

Birth Control

This week, our topic was birth control.

Our hosts and guests had a productive conversation about the stigmas and lack of education surrounding birth control.

Everyone agreed that there wasn’t much education about birth control methods or safe sex in school.

In fact, several guests explained that they were told that abstinence is the only “true” method of birth control.

“Juno,” one of this week’s guests, explained that in her school, a lot of sex education was fear-based. Many teenagers were told just not to have sex, which we argue can be extremely harmful.

Avoiding sex education and discussions about birth control can limit the understanding students have about sex and their bodies.

In addition, many young adults become curious and are likely to explore their sexualities anyways. So, when a person does have sex, it is best for them to be equipped with a strong sexual education to help them make safe and informed decisions.

It can be difficult to make the decision to start birth control, especially with this lack of education on the topic.

We discussed that there are 19 different types of birth control recognized by the FDA, including the pill, IUDs, diaphragms, cervical caps and more.

Deciding which one is best for you is never an easy task.

However, we advise anyone looking to start any form of birth control to consult a doctor first.

It is very common for the first three months of a new birth control method to be a little weird, sometimes with increased symptoms.

But, after this transition period, many find their method to be more comfortable.

However, we at Lovercall feel that you know your body better than anyone. If you are doubting the method you are using, never hesitate to get a second opinion, whether that means do-

ing further research from places such as planned parenthood or talking to a gynecologist.

As described above, many birth control methods can have several side effects.

For instance, hormonal birth control pills can have symptoms anywhere from nausea to weight gain to mood changes. It's important to remember that these symptoms are normal, and it isn't always guaranteed that you will have them.

The Electrician started hormonal birth control pills while in college, and was fortunate enough to only experience moderate side effects.

We here at Lovercall advise both people looking to start birth control and partners to avoid panicking about this topic. We feel that being mindful and centered is the best way to make careful and informed decisions.

Having discussions like this one can help bring a taboo topic such as birth control into the forefront of conversations.

It is important to have these talks to help educate students like ourselves on a matter as impactful as this one.

Resources

Planned Parenthood:

<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/birth-control>

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: https://www.nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/contraception/more_information/resources

Center for Disease Control and Protection:

<https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/contraception/index.htm>

Your Lovercall crew for next year

The Electrician and The Architect will be graduating this May. This means that two new producers will join the crew along-

side The Quarterback.

The Quarterback will become the executive producer of Lovercall, and will be joined by The Musician as a co-host and Radio Rebel as a producer.

This means that this is the final Lovercolumn including The Electrician and The Architect!

We thank you for your support, and wish the new team all the best in the future!

Reach out!

Do you want to ask the authors of Lovercolumn a question? Do you need advice? Fill out the form by using this QR code.

Interested in being a guest on Lovercall? Email frs@fredonia.edu or visit Fredonia Radio Systems, located in McEwen Hall 115 and open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“The Electrician,” “The Architect” and “The Quarterback” are members of Fredonia Radio Systems and are involved in the production of Lovercall.

<https://forms.gle/pFHcFzJ7Qc9fcsLP9>



Lovercall



Is looking for your questions, stories or advice about love, sex and relationships! Scan this QR code for a chance to be featured in the next edition of Lovercolumn or on Lovercall the show!

Lovercall airs weekly on Wednesdays from 10pm - 12am on WDVL 89.5, fredoniaradio.com

What COVID-19 inadvertently taught us

AMARAH GHORI
Asst. Opinion Editor

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected so many lives across the globe.

As a 2021 high school graduate, I too can attest to the difficulties many students have faced when adjusting to in-person learning post-COVID-19.

Students and teachers have been suffering since the pandemic to readjust to in-person learning.

Students aren't used to learning from the same teaching methods teachers used pre-COVID-19, causing students to fall behind on their curriculum, which in return causes an increase in mental health concerns for students.

Mental health has gotten worse for students, giving an explanation as to why learning has been harder for them post-COVID-19.

For teachers, adjusting to a new teaching style tailored to students who were affected academically during the pandemic, has been rather difficult as well.

As Megan Kuhfeld et al. wrote in a 2022 Brookings Institution commentary on the decline in achievement, "Even more concerning, test-score gaps between students in low-poverty and high-poverty elementary schools grew by approximately 20% in math (corresponding to 0.20 SDs) and 15% in reading (0.13 SDs), primarily during the 2020-21 school year." SD stands for standard deviation.

Achievement in school is going down and it's up to us to figure out what can be done.

Teachers and administrators have begun to notice a developmental difference among the students who had their primary years of learning cut off for online Zoom learning during COVID-19.

These students who have come out of COVID-19 learning aren't comprehending their curriculum in the same way as students did pre-pandemic.

This is a scary thing to think about. How will students be able to catch up? Are school leaders going to have to adjust their teaching methods to make up for this "lost" time?

A news article by the Harvard Graduate School of Education (May, 2023), stated that, "Test scores declined more in places where the COVID death rate was higher, in communities where adults reported feeling more depression and anxiety during the pandemic, and where daily routines of families were most significantly restricted.

This is true even in places where schools closed only very briefly at the start of the pandemic."

After getting the chance to interview a few middle school teachers at different levels, I was able to get a better understanding of their experiences.

I first spoke with Amanda Cendrowski, who is a fifth-grade math teacher at the Buffalo Academy of Science Middle School.

Cendrowski had a lot to say about the changes in learning post-COVID-19. She felt that students were "academically lower" than they were pre-pandemic.

Cendrowski also noted that when students went back to

school they "lacked a strong understanding of basic skills," skills which they should've learned in prior school years.

I also spoke with Marta Ulinger, a seventh and eighth-grade science teacher at the Buffalo Academy of Science. Ulinger brought up a great point about kids wanting to put less effort into the work that they do.

She thinks that students prefer using "less energy [and] put less effort" into their work post-COVID-19. Ulinger speaks of the fact that these students could use Google and the teachers became the ones that did a lot of the work for them.

This is not something that is talked about enough. Students had to adjust to new ways of learning their material and it's hard to do that without in-person instruction.

These students fell back onto Google, and since then, that has become an easy outlet for them to get their work done. That's not the greatest thing for them.

Critical thinking skills could get lost because of this and that's something that a lot of students have to come back from now in the post-COVID-19 world.

Not only have students and teachers have suffered, but the parents have as well, of course.

Parents and their involvement in their child's learning in the midst of the pandemic had an impact on how their child continued to learn while schools were shut down.

During the rise of COVID-19, some people lost their jobs, some people were working from home and on top of this, parents had to suddenly deal with having their kids stay at home when they needed to get work done.

Regardless of whether they were okay with it or not, this took individuals out of their normal routine.

How can we help people adjust to life after the pandemic? Will it ever go back to normal?

Perry Stein, writing in the Washington Post (September, 2021), talks about the delays of students. She really puts into perspective how many years of learning children and students have lost to COVID-19.

"Preschoolers in the spring of 2020 are now in the first grade. Pre-pandemic fourth-graders are now in middle school. And 2020's tweens in the seventh grade are weeks into their freshman year of high school."

Stein continues, "Last spring, education leaders said they knew it would take time for students to readjust to sitting in a classroom all day. Teachers of the youngest learners say their students had been out of school for so long that they didn't remember how to line up at the door."

One second-grade teacher said that after more than a year at home, she notices her children crave alone time more. When she gives them quiet time to read or write, they now want to go beyond the allotted time.

This is something so mind-boggling. At the earliest stages of life, children and their social interactions are important in teaching and shaping their young minds.

Students aren't able to do tasks like usual and yes, they will hopefully adjust, but it's something that will continue to affect them for a long while. Students aren't even used to having to listen to their own teachers, as their teachers weren't able to give them full instructions to follow during the process of online learning.



Amarah Ghori, the writer of this column. Photo by DREW PALUCH | Photo Editor

When you think about it, students were able to do whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted.

Yes, in a lot of ways that was helpful to them while being at home, but they got used to this norm, that's not necessarily a norm at school.

In-person school is very structured. Students have certain times that they can eat, certain times to go outside and certain times to work on different projects for class.

When they were at home, structure wasn't something that they needed.

Mental health comes into play for this as well. Let's take a moment to think about an older generation.

College students are suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. Seniors in high school in 2020 were also the same students who were affected when going to college.

Enrollment has fallen for students going into college since COVID-19. Because of the decline in learning since the pandemic, fewer and fewer students have decided to further their education and attend college.

In a Washington Post article by Nick Anderson from 2022, he speaks about the enrollment rates going down in correlation to COVID-19.

Anderson interviewed Doug Shapiro, who is the executive director of the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. "Shapiro said the initial data suggest that steep drops after

the pandemic disrupted colleges globally in early 2020 have not been reversed. Many high school graduates in 2020 and 2021 who ordinarily would have gone to college did not. And they might never do so."

How does this affect our communities? How will this affect the world when three separate years of students decided not to go to college?

Would these students have had a different outlook on furthering their education if COVID-19 and Zoom learning weren't a thing?

This is something that needs to be further discussed.

The same article by Anderson for the Washington Post stated that maybe this fall in students attending college could also be related to jobs.

Anderson says, "When the economy booms and jobs are plentiful, many young people will delay going to college."

The pandemic made a lot of people have to change their routines and the result is that we as a society have to work that much harder to get back on track.

In order to fix the disconnect between students and teachers, we must acknowledge that students need to be able to be nourished in a real-life school setting to be able to grow.

These changes that we're seeing will not be resolved unless they're given proper attention, whether that's by parents or school administrators.

THE SCALLION



Satire and parody for Fredonia

An interview with **Henry Domst**, winner of **The Leader's Bachelor** event

ABIGAIL JACOBSON
Asst. News Editor

Good day, ladies, gentlemen, non-binary people and, of course, the contestants of 'The Bachelor'!

I have some very, VERY exciting news to share with all of you, dear readers.

As some of you may know, there was a recent event titled "The Bachelor," which involved our dear Assistant Scallion Editor, who might I add is also the most amazing bachelor we have ever seen, Jace Jacobs.

The Bachelor, a one-of-a-kind wonderful event, was held in search of finding our dear bachelor, the love of his life.

Whoever won the heart of our bachelor, was rewarded a date with Jacobs. Truly an amazing experience, but only one could win Jacobs' heart.

So who stole Jacobs' heart? Who made Jacobs' heart skip a beat?

It was none other than Henry Domst, The Leader's own Design Editor.

How did Domst win the heart of our dear, beloved Assistant Scallion Editor?

It's quite simple: No one wants a faker and Domst made sure he was far from that.

"I just wanted to make sure I was myself [and] made sure I presented myself in a good way," Domst said.

When Domst first saw Jacobs, he could tell our bachelor was a bit nervous (I mean who wouldn't be when you have all these people wanting to go on a date with you).

"[I think he] didn't realize it was going to be such a big whole thing, but he thought he had a great time during the whole thing," said Domst.

There were many contestants and all fell short of Jacobs' heart.

Did Domst believe he would win our horoscope writers' heart? Was Domst's sign, Cancer, compatible with a one-of-a-kind Taurus?

"I didn't expect it at all," said Domst.

But when it was down to just two people and our beloved bachelor had to pick one, Jacobs picked Domst.

"I was surprised," said Domst.



Henry Domst holds his winning bouquet.

Photo by **CHLOE KOWALYK** | Editor in Chief

The last event was karaoke, and according to Domst, he wasn't the best singer.

Instead of singing his heart out to Jacobs, he provided a performance in order to be his true self and capture Jacobs' heart.

In the end, Domst won the heart of Jace Jacobs.

The two friends went on a beautiful date to the Ellicottville Brewing Company in Fredonia, NY.

According to Domst, the date spent with Jacobs was good and he would, of course, go on a second date with him.

To all of the other contestants who lost the battle for Jacobs' heart, Domst had one thing to say to all of you.

"They put up a good effort but clearly the winner was chosen rightfully so," said Domst.

Why everyone should watch 'Bluey'

MARISSA BURR

Opinion Editor

As seen in my byline, I am a very opinionated person, especially when it comes to things I am passionate about.

These include being an activist for human rights issues, allergy awareness and respect (I am really tired of people almost killing me) and obviously my “quirks.”

When I say “quirks,” I mean obsessions. I can’t just like something a little bit, it’s all or nothing. In 2020, it was the TV show “Friends” that led to half a dozen t-shirts, a backpack, mugs, a light-up wall sign and more.

In 2021 and 2022, it was the Netflix series “Julie and the Phantoms” which meant a tattoo, entire merchandise lines, a dedicated TikTok page, floor-to-ceiling song ranking and way way way more.

Since 2023, it has been the popular Australian cartoon, “Bluey.”

Yes, I said cartoon. Yes, it is supposed to be for kids. Yes, I watch it religiously. Every night before bed, every morning when I wake up, in my car in the hour between work and school.

At first, I was embarrassed about my obsession. I’d play off my intricate knowledge of the show by the fact that I lived with a four-year-old or I was a preschool teacher.

But now, it is just a fun fact about me. I am unashamed about the joy it brings me. “Bluey” heals my inner child and brings peace to my totally chaotic life.

I’ve made my partner watch it. I’ve made my best friend watch it. I’ve made my parents watch it. I will make you watch it too.

First of all, “Bluey” may be aimed at kids but the creators are fully aware that adults are obsessed with the show. The amount of mature jokes inserted into the eight-minute episodes is far too many to be without intention.

Hell, season three episode twenty-two, “Whale Watching,” centers around the fact that Mum and Dad are hungover from New Year's Eve and don’t have the energy to play with the kids.

The adults in the show are constantly poking fun at their kids in ways that both on-screen and off-screen, children don’t understand but parents think are hilarious.

As I mentioned before, “Bluey” heals the inner child, no matter how good of a childhood you had. Mum and Dad are constantly taking responsibility for their mistakes and apologizing.

Even when they didn’t do anything wrong, if Bluey or Bingo are upset, they will apologize for their role. This is something that most people our age probably didn’t get growing up because of the generation our parents were raised in.

The parents also play with their kids a lot — almost unrealistically — but it’s nice to see. They’ll feed into their kid’s crazy storylines no matter what it does to them. But, if you’ve watched episodes like “Hospital” and think that kids don’t act like that, you’re very wrong.

In this episode, Dad (Bandit) has to get surgery on his belly to get a cat out that jumped in after a mouse through his belly button.

In similar fashion, when playing doctor with my preschoolers, I had to get eye surgery because I fell asleep and the doctors sent me to space and spaghetti-worms from space crawled behind my

eyes at that time.

Kids are insane, and at least “Bluey” isn’t afraid to show that — the accuracy makes it 10 times funnier.

In addition to all of the laughs, you’re going to cry while watching Bluey.

They present ideas like marital struggles, parenting differences, miscarriages, infertility, loneliness, divorce and stress to kids in a safe environment that helps kids understand them better.

This way, kids are exposed to these issues outside of their home life and know they aren’t alone.

But to adults who can grasp every serious situation in its full force, it gets emotional.

A classic example is “Baby Race,” where Mum (Chili) is upset because her first child, Bluey, hasn’t started walking yet like other kids her age.

Mum says, “It feels like I was doing everything wrong.” But then, a veteran parent of nine kids, Bella comes in and lets her know that she’s doing great, no matter what it feels like.

“Bluey” subtly reassures parents that as long as kids are happy and healthy, things will be okay.

With every parenting struggle, a door is opened for partners to discuss how they would handle certain situations. My partner Zach and I have had many serious conversations that were brought on by scenes in “Bluey.”

Circumstances are brought up that we never would have thought to consider before we became parents, but it has allowed for an open dialogue that can be healthy for any relationship where a future goal is kids.

You can find out where your partner stands on issues and avoid a fight farther down the line when little humans are in the picture.

The characters in “Bluey” are whole and represent every type of person and relationship. There are two-parent households, single-parent households and heterosexual and homosexual relationships.

There are different sibling dynamics, grandparents in and out of the picture and every insecurity. They are addressed respectfully and presented in a way that sets children up for success.

There are also no gender role stereotypes in the house or workplace either, which is so refreshing.

Dad and Mum clean the house together, as well as hang out the laundry, take care of the kids and go to work. “Bluey” even addresses the parental stereotypes in “Mums and Dads.”

Rusty, a red kelpie boy, thinks that Dads go to work and Mums stay home and watch kids. He gets into an argument when Indy, an Afghan hound girl, thinks that Mums go to work and Dads stay home and mow the lawn.

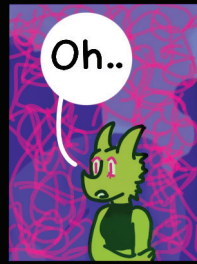
Through interactions with other characters, they realize that all that matters is they both love their child and try to keep them safe. Name any show from our childhood that addresses this, because I can’t.

So yeah, I’m a 21-year-old who watches the 151 “Bluey” episodes on repeat. But I know it has made me a better teacher, partner and person by showing empathy and kindness alongside anger and sadness.

If the world watched Bluey even an eighth as much as I do, it would be a much better place to exist in.

THE PARTY B4 GRADUATION

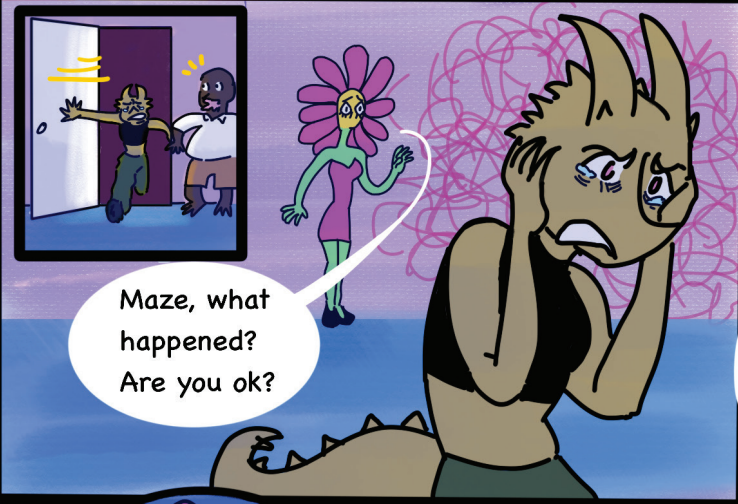
The Final Pages
Comic by NICOLE THORSON | Art Director





MAZE?!

MAZE!!



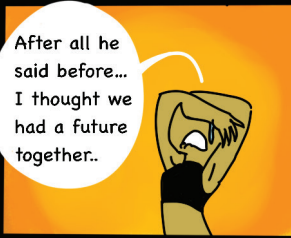
Maze, what happened? Are you ok?



NO! I saw him!!



And he acted like I was a complete STRANGER!



After all he said before... I thought we had a future together..



But now.. I'm not sure what's going to happen.. And I'm scared..



Oh girl..

I know it's scary. I'm scared too.

I don't know if we're going to get jobs after college.

Or what partners we're going to have in the future..

But I know that we have time. Hell, our 20's are a freebie for F**kups.



And where-ever we end up..

I'll always be there for you. You're my ride or die

I love you Jemah.

I love you too. Now let's go home.

THE END

HOROS

Life Lessons From The Signs

JACE JACOBS

Asst. Editor of The Scallion, Senior! Graduating! Woohoo!

My dearest Fredheads,

I regret to inform you all that this will be the last time you'll read my wonderful, beautiful, incredibly accurate, always hilarious horoscopes. Although I am overjoyed to be leaving America's favorite dog food town, I am so sad to be leaving behind The Leader and having an excuse to write about the star signs every other week. For this final edition, I wanted to share some life lessons I've gathered from the signs and pass them along to you lovely people out there! Bonus: Someone on YikYak told me to stop making these about myself and in response, I'm adding a bonus which is assigning each sign one of my favorite moments from my time at Fredonia.



Aries

Standing up for yourself can be scary, but it's always worth it to give it a try. More often than not, the result will be positive.

Bonus: Lighting Febreeze on fire "just to see what would happen" with my friends EJ and Luke



Taurus

As a Taurus, I am prone to thinking that I know everything and that I have nothing left to learn. Not true. Like at all. From my sign, I've learned that stubbornness is not always a positive thing and that I still need to learn how to utilize it in the right moments.

Bonus: Hosting Easter brunch at my apartment and cooking a beautiful meal that took three hours to make (worth it, I love my friends)



Gemini

First and foremost, I would like to formally say that I was never a Gemini hater, which has been solidified through writing horoscopes for you all. Geminis have taught me not to doubt my creativity, and even when I feel lacking in that specific department, to keep pushing through with the foresight that a creative spark will find me again.

Bonus: Performing with Premium Blend at Chilloween 2023 in my "I'm Just Ken" costume



Cancer

In my experience, Cancers tend to be highly sensitive people, and I'm beginning to learn that that isn't a bad thing. Embracing one's sensitive side can be a challenge, and it's one I think we can all learn to embrace!

Bonus: Being brought to the pier for my 20th birthday so I could sit in the wind (like a dog)



Leo

Leos love the spotlight and tend to love attention, which is something I am also learning to embrace. Although I received a lot of attention this year because of The Bachelor, it wasn't something I was prepared for, nor was it something I particularly enjoyed. But I'm learning that it's okay to accept attention when it's the time and place for it!

Bonus: My first-ever PowerPoint Night, in which I made a case for why I would make a great Dictator of Cuba



Virgo

Virgos are free-spirits, and like Virgos, I'm learning to embrace my weird side and not be ashamed of it. It's easier said than done, and I seriously respect all Virgos who have mastered their weird side!

Bonus: The Leader's TikTok street-reporting sensation, Scallion On The Street, which we really should have done more of

COOPES



Libra

The biggest lesson I've taken from Libra is how to balance being friendly without being taken advantage of. It's a lifelong skill to learn, and I'm a work in progress, but I'm happy to be on the ride!

Bonus: Attending a (fake) wedding where my best friends got married



Capricorn

I have always seen Capricorns as uptight and too serious, but in delving more into their personalities, I've learned that the uptightness that I saw was due to incredible self-discipline and determination. I feel inspired by Capricorns to restructure my life in order to implement self-discipline practices.

Bonus: Getting a month off of school in my sophomore year (I had pneumonia and bronchitis back-to-back, not as cool as it sounds)



Scorpio

In my experience, Scorpio is a polarizing sign, mostly because they're unwilling to be told what to do. I crave that kind of independence and am happy to be learning that lesson thanks to Scorpio.

Bonus: My accidental 12-hour layover at the beginning of my J-Term study abroad trip



Aquarius

Aquarius is a sign I never really understood until I started writing horoscopes. I love how open and trustworthy Aquarians tend to be, and the optimism they have seemed to gain from that has encouraged me to start lowering my defenses and letting more people into my life.

Bonus: My friends Georgia and Hattie forcing me to watch all of the Twilight movies our freshman year (I hate to admit it but I loved them)



Sagittarius

As one of the most optimistic signs, Sagittariuses have taught me to lean into putting a positive spin on every tough situation I encounter. Although that's much easier said than done, I appreciate having the idea of optimism always in the back of my mind.

Bonus: Late night karaoke sessions with my friends Josiah and Lizzie after hours in RAC our freshman year



Pisces

I have always loved Pisces, and despite the bad rap they seem to get for being overly dramatic and hyper-emotional, I think that's a strength. I want to be as in-tune with my emotions as Pisces are, and I don't think the overdramatic label really suits this sign at all. They're locked in on their own emotional needs, and I admire that a lot!

Bonus: When I had a breakdown in the park on my 21st birthday

