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THE **FREDONIA LEADER**

SUNY Fredonia's Student-Run Newspaper

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Fredonia athletics**

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Fredonia staple EBC changes ownership
The "surprisingly chaotic" Canadaway Creek
Watching election results feels like watching a sports game
5th Quarter Column: Bills streak grows with blowout wins
Horoscopes and it's the same but I'm an alum so it's different

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“Imma keep running 'cause a winner don't quit on themselves.” -Beyoncé Knowles-Carter

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Trump wins 2024 presidential election

ABIGAIL JACOBSON

News Editor

ALEX BUCKNAM

Asst. News Editor

The election came to a conclusion early on the morning of Nov. 6. The 2024 election verdict: Republican candidate Donald Trump will be the next president of the United States.

Back in 2020, Trump was elected as the 45th president of the United States and has now been elected to return to the White House as the 47th president.

According to AP News, within the popular vote, Trump had a total of 72,833,067 votes (50.9%) while Kamala Harris, the Democratic candidate, had a total of 68,196,746 votes (47.6%).

As of 5:31 p.m. on Nov. 7 and the information provided by AP News, Trump received 295 electoral votes while Harris received 226 electoral votes.

Trump gave his victory speech in Florida alongside members of his family and his vice presidential candidate, JD Vance, around 2:30 a.m. eastern time. At the beginning of his speech, he began to thank the crowd of people gathered at this event.

According to AP News, during Trump's victory speech, he stated, "I want to thank the American people for the extraordinary honor of being elected your 47th president and your 45th president."

He also mentioned how "this is a movement like nobody's ever seen before and, frankly, this was, I believe, the greatest political movement of all time."

Later in his speech, Trump discussed how he will fight for every citizen and "will be fighting for you with every breath in my body, I will not rest until we have delivered the strong, safe and prosperous America that our children deserve and that you deserve.

"This will truly be the golden age of America, that's what we have to have," Trump said.

Towards the end of his victory speech, Trump left America with "a simple motto."

"Promises made, promises kept. We're going to keep our promises. Nothing will stop me from keeping my word to you, the people," Trump said. "We will make America safe, strong, prosperous, powerful and free again."

Harris didn't speak on election night. However, the following day she called Trump to congratulate him, where she discussed "the need for a peaceful transfer of power."

Harris went on to give a concession speech on Nov. 6 at Howard University.

At the beginning of Harris' speech, she thanked the crowd by saying, "My heart is full today, full of gratitude for the trust you have placed in me, full of love for our country and full of resolve."

She went on to say how this is not the outcome they wanted or fought for but "the light of America's promise will always burn bright as long as we never give up and as long as we keep fighting."

She went on to thank her running mate, Tim Walz, and his family, her husband and their family, and Joe Biden and his

wife. She also thanked her team, the volunteers, the poll workers and local election officials.

During her speech, Harris said, "While I concede this election, I do not concede the fight that fueled this campaign."

Harris directed her speech towards America's youth, stating, "To the young people who are watching, it is okay to feel sad and disappointed. But please know it's going to be okay."

She mentioned how sometimes the fight takes a while to win but that this doesn't mean that the people fighting should give up.

"The important thing is don't ever give up. Don't ever give up. Don't ever stop trying to make the world a better place," Harris said. "You have power ... and don't you ever listen when anyone tells you something is impossible because it has never been done before."

The Electoral College will meet on December 17, 2024, to cast their ballots, followed by a joint session of Congress on January 6, 2025, whereby Congress will certify the electors' vote. Trump will then be sworn in on January 20, 2025.

SOURCES:

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What's going on with Fredonia's water?

MAISIE STRADER
Special to The Leader

The town of Fredonia has a long-standing issue with the water treatment facility and getting clean water to its residents.

Issues include accusations of itchy and dry skin, the smell of chlorine in the drinking water and many boil water advisories.

So the question is: what are you drinking?

Fredonia's reservoir was built in 1884, and in 1938, it underwent major renovations to supply more water to the village.

In 2023, the dam was inspected by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), who deemed the reservoir as "Unsound – Fair".

According to Chautauqua County Health Department's "Fredonia's Water Supply: Understanding the Source & Treatment" PowerPoint, which was presented on April 10, 2024:

"[The] current volume of usable reservoir water is unknown. The last estimated measurement of usable water did not meet NYSDOH [New York State Department of Health] Requirements. [The] reservoir will need an immediate and long-term dredging plan if it remains in operation. An alternative connection was mandated by NYSDEC to prepare for drought events. [The] dam and spillway must be maintained; risks of failure are reduced if the reservoir volume is drawn down. Concerns about reservoir capacity, need for regular dredging/maintenance and long[-]term outlook [was] first documented in 1965."

Other concerns referenced in the PowerPoint include:

"Clarifier sludge line blocked, Generator not working, General condition of the water treatment plant building, Chemicals needed for treatment are not mixed adequately with incoming water. Plants & Algae growth in the reservoir. Complexity of disinfection process. Switching from primary to secondary chemical feed pumps. The Water Treatment Plant must be staffed 24/7."

The last boil water advisory for Fredonia residents began on April 17 of this year, and was lifted on April 21.

The Jamestown Post-Journal stated, "Since 2010, the village has suffered from numerous boil-water advisories due to lack of attention or care at the treatment facility. The longest boil-water order occurred in September 2020 and lasted for 20 days."

What does this mean for college students?

It means to boil your water or deal with an upset stomach.

The 2023 Fredonia Drinking Water Quality Report states, "Turbidity may indicate the presence of disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea and associated headaches."

Turbidity was the only violation present at the time, with the likely cause being "soil runoff."

That being said, the town has seen numerous updates since this information was released.

One update is that the Fredonia water plant is potentially decommissioning, reducing the reservoir and acquiring water from Dunkirk.

On December 26, 2023, Fredonia's trustees voted 3-2 in favor of decommissioning the Fredonia water plant and reducing the reservoir.

Trustees David Bird, Jon Espersen and Nicole Siracuse voted in support of the decommission. Trustees James Lynden and Michelle Twichell voted in opposition of the decommission.

WGRZ, a Buffalo news television station, stated, "It will take at least another year or three for the water supply to come from Dunkirk. As far as how long it will take to make this transition, there are still a lot of decisions to be made[,] including coming up with a contract between the Village of Fredonia and Dunkirk."

The village of Fredonia and the town and city of Dunkirk have major differences when it comes to the cleaning process.

In Chautauqua County Health Department's PowerPoint, it states:

"Uses pretreatment oxidation to remove organics including disinfection by-product precursors. Has sedimentation basins, Filter media – Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) and gravel absorbs/removes organics including: Disinfection byproducts and precursors. Polyfluorinated chemicals – PFOS, PFOA, PFNA. Gasoline and oils. Water is not corrosive, so no additional treatment is needed to preserve distribution lines."

While Dunkirk's water is not corrosive, as stated by the Chautauqua County Health Department, Fredonia's water is. Fredonia uses five chemicals in the treatment process and no further disinfection can be added to get rid of organic byproducts.

On April 10, Chautauqua County Health Department experts spoke about Fredonia water system concerns.

One of these experts was Natalie Whiteman, who suggested that keeping the reservoir as our clean water choice may be taking more money from taxpayers than usual.

Whiteman said, "[The] lack of redundancy [is] crippling to your water operators ... Most water treatment plants your size run an eight-hour day and that's it. It's automated for the evening hours, automated to come on as needed during the evening, or it doesn't run at all other than eight hours a day. Those personnel costs are part of what's killing you."

A LaBella engineering firm study estimated that the cost to interconnect with Dunkirk would be \$10 million.

However, if the town decides to decommission the plant, the next question is: what will happen to the workers?

From EBC to Tiki: Fredonia staple changes ownership

LEE PYE
Staff Writer

That's right, the Ellicottville Brewing Company (EBC West) restaurant in downtown Fredonia has been sold.

Replacing it is a multi-themed bar called Monster Beach Brewery & Tiki Bar.

EBC's restaurant has been running with the current owner for about 12 years, and throughout the years has had fine dining, crafted beer. Now, the restaurant serves mainly pub food, beer and cocktails.

EBC is known to be the hotspot for graduation week-end and alumni weekend, and through 'EBC lore,' has been the busiest weekend of the year for the restaurant.

Two staff members of EBC were interviewed and wish to remain anonymous.

The owners for the new restaurant Monster Beach Brewery & Tiki Bar are Robert Turley Jr., Amanda Shepp and Christopher Shepp.

According to the website, Turley is the chief operating officer (COO) and head brewer, with experience in brewing. He wants to bring his own creations to the Fredonia bar scene.

Amanda 'Mandi' Schepp is the chief executive officer (CEO) and head of design, and is known around campus from being the coordinator of special collections & archives in Reed Library at SUNY Fredonia.

Chris Schepp, the chief financial officer (CFO) and general manager, graduated two years ago from SUNY Fredonia with a B.S. in public accountancy & business administration.

Their plan for the Tiki bar is to serve higher end small-plates with about eight rotating food options, and to focus on the bar and atmosphere.

If you couldn't tell by the name, the Monster Beach Brewery & Tiki Bar will have a very heavy focus on all things Tiki, while mixing the horror element of classic monsters hanging out at a beach, sipping on Tiki drinks.

The audience demographic is 21+. They are expecting to gain traction from college students, Fredonia regulars and anyone else interested in the horror-filled Tiki. However, if you

are looking for the average Irish pub experience, this might not be the bar for you.

The original idea began when the Schepps wanted to open a Tiki bar and brewery as a retirement plan years in the future, but their friend Turley came to them and introduced the idea of opening a brewery. "When someone with the expertise comes to you and asks, 'Do you want to do this?' you just have to say yes!"

With all of the ideas for this bar, the initial idea had to come from somewhere. Chris Shepp said, "I'm a big horror guy, I'm an alt punk and alt goth. I grew up in goth clubs and under-

ground nightclubs, and grew up looking up to the cool club owners. I always wanted to be 'the guy with the cool bar.' Mandi is the one who got us into the Tiki idea."

Some of the decorations will consist of covering up all of the EBC brickwork with weaved wall coverings that will give a natural Tiki vibe. The lighting will be a lot darker, with no visible clocks to give a feel of stepping out of the normal world.

They have many plans for the future of the bar. Once things get rolling, they plan to have events with live music, karaoke, art exhibitions and theme nights.

They will also have a monthly LGBTQ+ club night called "Getting Freaky at the Tiki." Chris stated that there are a lot of LGBTQ+ people in Fredonia, yet there are no gay bars, so this new bar will be a welcoming place.

On Sept. 28, Monster Beach posted on their Facebook page that they will be taking the location of a place in Fredonia, and on Oct. 14, they announced that the location was EBC West and that there will be a launch party

held on Oct. 25 at the location. However, the staff of EBC were not told the restaurant was going out of business until after the posts went out.

"My professor told me in class. I mentioned I worked there, and he said, 'Oh, didn't that get bought out?' And I said, 'No, I don't know what you're talking about.' ... About 20 minutes later, I got confirmation from someone close to the source," said an EBC staff member. Most of the workers ended up



A before-and-after snapshot of what the changes to EBC might look like.

Photo by DREW PALUCH | Photo Editor
Graphic by ISABELLA RIZZO | Art Director

Continued onto next page

finding out about the Tiki bar from other sources before the restaurant told them.

When the staff were finally told, a few points were made. The transition will be slow, with the old owner moving out and the new owners moving in. EBC will still do business as EBC, but will technically be under the new owners of Monster Beach. Until the end of December, the owners will slowly migrate their new cocktails, beer and food into the EBC menu, keeping the current EBC staff, and then when the J-Term starts, they will close the restaurant, renovate it and open it sometime at the end of the J-Term.

The official opening date is not yet confirmed.

The new owners do not plan on firing any of the EBC staff.

According to EBC management, this process is laid out this way to have a smoother transition.

For the launch party, perspectives did not line up with the EBC staff and the new owners of EBC. Chris Shepp said, “[The event] went fantastic. EBC has been super helpful, the current owner has been offering really good deals and a lot of support and help. We did fantastic. There were a lot of people that came out to support us, and we were blown away by that.”

As for EBC, one of the kitchen staff members said, “I think to them it was a great success. I think to us it was terrible.”

The EBC staff were under the impression that the food and drinks they were promoting were going to be created by the new owners. The head chef was asked to help create the new items, to which she declined. The new owners then gave the EBC staff their own menu, which consisted of an eggroll and a chicken skewer. Chris Shepp helped prepare the new dishes with the head chef.

One EBC staff member is a chef that has worked in New York City and has experience in fine dining for multi-million dollar weddings. He answered how he thought the food tasted: “My coworker put it best, it tasted like 7-Eleven fast food. The two menu items felt uninspired [and] rushed ... Asking our head chef to create the menu for them ... was personally insulting.”

However, the same chef said he had tried the new beer that was shown at the launch party, which he praised, saying that he hoped the food would improve to match the beer.

The event sold less than 10 of each of the new foods.

The EBC staff stated that while the event was happening, the new owners were giving tours of the basement (which is off-limits to the public for safety precautions) and one staff member reported finding a drunk customer in a cooler, which halted the flow of their job.

Furthermore, multiple staff members reported that during the launch party, the smell of body odor and weed were so terrible that multiple servers had to take breaks in the kitchen. One of the kitchen staff had to step out due to feeling nauseous. The front door was opened for air, but multiple people started smoking directly outside of the restaurant, continuing to make the place smell.

EBC staff also stated that the new owners did not introduce themselves to most of the staff. If there were interactions, they were quick and impersonal: “It was a show of how unprofessional they truly are. I think they expect loyalty from the EBC staff, and they have not shown us any kind of respect that makes us want to feel loyal to them. We are loyal to the

business, not the building.”

Many of the staff reported that they plan on quitting once the ownership officially changes over.

Unrelated to the launch party, two EBC staff members stated how they think the new restaurant will affect Fredonia. “I think there is an oversaturation of bars in Fredonia. EBC is one of those places that you can get a drink, sure, but you can also get a decent meal, get trivia, hang out with a couple of friends, your family, and you aren’t surrounded by a bunch of college kids. Once I was eating out front after work, and thought, ‘This is the only ‘New York City feel’ location in Fredonia,’ and I can’t believe we’re losing something good like that.

“I think there are too many niche concepts in one small space, in one small town. I think they will have better luck in Buffalo, but I don’t think the college clientele will ditch their cheap, easy bar locations [for] something this niche. I also have a very hard time when it comes to Tiki, and how people choose to represent Tiki culture, especially as a white person who may or may not have the cultural background that they need.”

The only thing that is holding back the new owners from completely taking over the restaurant is waiting for the liquor license to be approved by the state. Once the liquor license is approved, EBC will turn into Monster Beach Brewery & Tiki Bar.

The current location for EBC is 34 West Main Street, Fredonia, NY.

One of the staff members stated that if they were able to say anything to the new owners of Monster Beach Brewery and Tiki Bar, it would be to “Get professional, fast.”

"There are too many niche concepts in ... one small town. I think they will have better luck in Buffalo, but I don't think the college clientele will ditch their cheap, easy bar locations [for] something this niche."

— **ANONYMOUS STAFF MEMBER**
Ellicottville Brewing Company

Students explore future paths with Grad School Fair



All photos by CHANDLER COTTER | Asst. Photo Editor

Life & Arts

Professor Peter Tucker reflects on his time at Fredonia

MARIANA CRUZ

Special to The Leader

Warning: This article contains strong language.

Sculpture professor Peter Tucker went on sabbatical for the Fall 2024 semester.

After a semester of knowing that half of the programs in the Visual Arts and New Media (VANM) department will be discontinued, he got a grant to buy supplies and equipment.

“It started so fantastic. I was so productive. Then shit hit the fan,” he said.

In the middle of his sabbatical, Tucker received less than a 24-hour notice to meet with human resources, the provost and United University Professions, the union representing faculty and professional staff on campus. He already knew what that meant for him and his job.

On Sept. 13, he was told that his time at SUNY Fredonia would end after the Spring 2025 semester.

Tucker started his career working as an administrator for a private school in Austin, Texas.

When he was 27 years old, he attended his friend’s evening art classes as often as he could. Tucker began to consider art school and asked his friend’s thoughts.

His friend said, “All I learned in art school was how to look at the world differently.”

That was enough for Tucker to return to school for a bachelor’s degree in fine arts and then attend graduate school at the University of Austin.

He had experience working at both smaller and larger schools, so he intentionally fo-

cus his job search on smaller schools that offered him the opportunity to connect one-on-one with students, that would allow for him to make a change.

Tucker’s first trip to Fredonia was during a snowstorm that trapped him for a day after interviewing for the art department. Despite this rocky introduction, Tucker said he was drawn to Fredonia because he loved the facilities, the town and the faculty.

He said, “When I got the call to interview here, my wife said, ‘We are not moving to Western New York.’”

They indeed moved to Western New York, where Tucker has lived and worked for the past 16 years, teaching foundational and 3D art classes. He has been heavily involved in the recruitment process for the VANM department, and active in the local community outside of the college.

There are certain things that Tucker is sure will change about the reputation and status of Fredonia after discontinuing four visual arts and new media programs.

“We are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, so with four programs gone, it will certainly hurt our standing and we will lose our accreditation,” Tucker explained.

His fear also extends to the fact that future students will not get the same opportunities and experiences that current and past students have and that a BFA from Fredonia will no longer have the same “flashiness” as it once did.

According to Tucker, part of the great experience he has had at Fredonia comes from the ability to connect with his students and watch them grow up.

“I take such pleasure in seeing the growth of students. It’s just a great reminder of why we do what we do, to see students come into their own and find their own voice, to grow up and mature,” he said.

Many students, alumni, faculty and staff have reached out to Tucker since the news came out about his job. Several art students are furious about the fact that Tucker is abruptly losing his job and hope that something can be done for him to stay at Fredonia.

“I get texts every day.” Tucker explained, “It’s really lovely. It’s a testament to the community that Fredonia used to be.”

Maya Kulick, an animation/illustration and sculpture major, said, “He’s one of those professors that you can tell is in it to actually teach because he loves it ... When I heard he was being fired, I was very upset and disappointed.”

Students for Fredonia (SFF) was formed immediately after the budget cuts were announced in 2023. Tucker was proud to see that so many students had recognized what was going on in



Photo via fredonia.edu.

their community and had decided to stand against it.

Tucker revealed, "I was probably in tears at the last protest because it makes me hopeful for the future in a 'big picture' way."

In February, Tucker traveled to Albany with SFF.

"I had to [go] because all these students are speaking up for Fredonia," he said, "Their approach has been positive, to not diminish what this place is, but to celebrate what Fredonia has and can be."

Tucker does not know what will happen in the future. He knows that he still has to teach classes next semester, despite the fact that he likely won't return for the fall. He knows that he, his wife and his two daughters are worried about whether they'll have to move somewhere else.

"It's frustrating because my children grew up here," Tucker said, "I took this job so that I could have a stable situation to raise my family in a quaint, small town."

He knows that the reputation and standing of Fredonia will never be the same as what it was before the current administration.

"I just can't imagine working anywhere where people have no respect for you."

Tucker compared the current administration to "bad houseguests." He believes that they have not been here long enough to have the respect of the faculty, staff and students.

"The entire upper level of this university is deeply flawed and

are not part of this community in any way, shape or form," he said.

"I don't know what the likelihood of me getting my job back is. None of us know where the end of this is, besides the tremendous damage [the administration] has done to the university. It is constantly sad to see them destroy what was such a great place."

"I take such pleasure in seeing the growth of students. It's just a great reminder of why we do what we do, to see students come into their own and find their own voice."

— PETER TUCKER

Associate Professor, VANM Department
SUNY Fredonia

The "surprisingly chaotic" Canadaway Creek

ALEX BUCKNAM
Asst. News Editor

During your evening walk around Fredonia, if you end up on Risley St. coming off of Temple St., you will go on a bridge that goes over Canadaway Creek. You may not realize there's college students sitting right below your feet.

Canadaway Creek ("the creek," as referred to by the majority of Fredonia students) is known for being a popular spot for students to hang out after classes and relax, but this depends on what part of the creek you go to.

There are multiple spots of the creek that are accessible, which causes it to be filled with college students.

One pathway to the creek is through Temple

St. By walking across the street in front of the Andrews dorm complex and going down the right driveway, you will find a big open field of grass, with a mown path that connects to the driveway. Follow that path, and you are likely to find students getting high.



Almost immediately when you get close to the creek, you get hit with the smell of skunk due to the abundance of weed. You can spot most friend groups passing around either a bong, pipe or a joint. You name a way to smoke weed, and there is probably one student doing it.

With so many students here, "surprisingly chaotic" is the best way to explain this place.

The students are actually not as crazy as one may assume — they aren't causing mayhem, but in-

Photo by ABBIE MILLER | Editor-in-Chief

Continued onto next page



Photo by **ABBIE MILLER** | Editor-in-Chief

stead talking about college life.

“Oh yeah, I had that professor last year, he was alright,” one college student noted when talking about class schedules. Other students just sit right next to the creek, quietly skipping rocks.

There are other spots of the creek that don't have high college students. If you go to the side of Risley St. with the white picket fence, at the beginning of the fence, you will be greeted with a narrow pathway followed by a steep path covered with large rocks that leads down to the creek.

To get to this spot you have to carefully step from rock to rock, and grab on to the rough texture of the bark on the trees. This might be painful, but the view makes this worthwhile.

This spot might not be accessible depending on what time of the year you go. During the winter and early spring when the cold air hits your face and makes your nose dribble, or late fall when the cold wind is just starting, the water might be too high and the current might be too strong for people to safely get down to this part of the creek.

So going to this spot during late spring, summer, or early/mid fall when the weather is in that not-too-hot, not-too-cold window makes this the perfect time of the year to go. This is when the water is shallow and quiet.

When you finally make it safely down to the pebble, flat area, there are multiple big rocks that you can sit on.

This spot is perfect for relaxing to the sounds of flowing water and cars passing right next to you.

You can even sit under the bridge, which is surrounded by graffiti art. The graffiti art is the only part of this spot that is chaotic. Every new thing that gets added is quickly covered up with another thing just days later, which makes it look like the art threw up.

The spot itself is quiet and peaceful. There is rarely anyone here, and you can sit down with your friends and finally get out of the college setting if you need a break. There are no longer multiple conversations in your ear about professors or what

next semester looks like — it is just you and whoever you bring.

When there are people other than you here, they are normally on the other side of the creek waiting to be alone so they can add their own personal graffiti to the wall of blob art. If you happen to run into these groups of kids and want to leave, you can follow the trail that heads away from the bridge for a fall view.

This walk is super scenic if you go during the fall time. The trees right above you are turning orange and red and some of the leaves are already beginning to fall and starting to rot.

As you step on the crunchy fall leaves, you might be able to spot shiny rocks in the creek. If you pick up a rock and it is smooth and shiny, it might be a crystal. This part of the creek has an abundance of quartz, so it is easy to find clear, milky or rose quartz here.

Crystals are not the only cool thing you might be able to find. An in-depth search may reward you with fossils. Brachiopods, and horn coral shells are noted to be found here.

According to geology student Jasper Bateman, “These two are marine animals. Brachiopods are still around to this day, but horn coral lived in the late Devonian time period, around 300 million years ago.”

Students Adrian Roberts and Bateman both say that after leaving this spot and making the 15-minute walk back to their dorms, they feel more calm. Roberts and Bateman both recommend using a trip to the creek as a way to destress.

Fredonia's violinist David Rose performs from the heart

AMARAH GHORI

Asst. Opinion Editor & DEI Chair

David Rose, an associate professor at SUNY Fredonia, brings his expertise to the Music Department.

This expertise stems from many years of professional experience, along with a passion for teaching prior to coming to Fredonia.

Before making his way to campus, Rose had quite the professional career. He performed with renowned orchestras, including the San Francisco Symphony and Vancouver Symphony, holding roles that highlighted his skill and dedication as a violinist.

Now, his focus lies in shaping the next generation of musicians, inspiring them to not just play, but to love music.

Originally from the city of Regina, Saskatchewan, Rose began his musical pursuits at a young age through a Suzuki violin program. He said it sparked when he answered the phone at age 4.

"A man called my house and asked if anyone wanted to take violin lessons," he remembered. "I answered immediately that I would very much not like to do that. I waited about 20 seconds, and changed my mind!"

Rose's relationship with music evolved quickly. By age 11, he switched to playing the viola, which is the instrument he most utilizes in his career now.

Although he faced challenges in his academic life, he found a natural connection to music and playing.

This connection supported him all the way to pursuing higher education at the University of British Columbia and Indiana University.

"Music chose me," he reflects. "I practiced viola all the time. My GPA was not very good, and my options were limited. But I couldn't imagine doing anything else."

As of late, Rose is inquiring about a new project: performing Johann Sebastian Bach's cello suites. Perform-

"If we all waited until we [were] ready to do something, nothing would ever happen."

— DAVID ROSE

Associate Professor, Music Department
SUNY Fredonia

ing this is something near and dear to his heart, as it speaks to his personal connection to music and its history.

"It's not only Bach that excites me, but sheltering under the same musical tree that has nourished the major influences in my life," he said.

For Rose, Bach offers a sense of nourishment and grounding. Playing Bach's music is a way to connect with past teachers, mentors and musicians who have also embraced these works.

Rose admits that excitement might not even be the right word to describe how he feels about playing the suites, but that he feels a "personal assurance" that playing Bach's music will "nourish others as it has nourished me."

When asked if he has ever written or composed anything of his own, Rose was quick to explain how he truly felt. "No! I have no desire to create my own music," he said, explaining his preference for playing the music of composers before him.

To him, performers play an important role in keeping these pieces alive, giving life to notes that might otherwise have been forgotten.

Rose truly enjoys his time on campus, working with various students.

He appreciates being able to work on building students' talents, helping them progress on things beyond just their music.

As Rose continues his time in Fredonia, he remains passionate about performing, teaching and nurturing students' abilities.

While in the process of preparing to perform this timeless piece, Rose considered canceling due to doubts about his performance.

He, of course, kept at it, and this determination shares an important message for students.

"If we all waited until we [were] ready to do something, nothing would ever happen."

His advice for students is clear — work hard and embrace imperfection. In his words, "Perfection will not be found on this side of heaven, and that is a good thing to remember."



Photo via fredonia.edu.

Digging into the impact of Fredonia's faculty cuts

ALEX BUCKNAM

Asst. News Editor

Warning: This article contains strong language.

If you don't live under a rock, then you know by now that SUNY Fredonia is currently facing a financial problem.

Everything is a mess, the future is unclear, and staff, faculty and students are lost with no idea of what could happen next.

One professor in the Geology & Environmental Science Department knows that very well: before he came to Fredonia, Dr. Thomas Hegna was a professor at Western Illinois University, where he was laid off due to budget cuts.

Hegna started teaching at Fredonia in Fall 2019. He has taught multiple courses here, with the most notable ones being Earth history (his favorite), moons and planets, an honors course on evolution and creationism, and a class about the age of dinosaurs.

Since being here, he has connected with a lot of students and other faculty. Kim Weborg-Benson, a geology professor who's been at Fredonia for 20 years, agrees that the department would be incomplete without him: "We need someone that fills that little niche in the department," she said.

During the job interview for his position, Weborg-Benson could truly tell that Hegna enjoys doing his job.

Hegna has done a lot of research with students, such as learning about the end of the Devonian extinction with Jasper Bateman at Dunkirk Beach.

Hegna has also worked with high school students, and has persuaded some to attend Fredonia.

Sam Post, who graduated from Springville High School in 2024, met Hegna during his senior year. Hegna let Post sit in on his classes and eventually convinced him to attend Fredonia.

"Hegna was one of the reasons I wanted to go to Fredonia. He was so clearly passionate about the geology program and he was excited to show me why Fredonia was a good choice for me," Post stated.

He has yet to have a class with Hegna but has been welcomed by him into the department nonetheless.

"The state funding situation is ... a dark cloud looming over things."

— **THOMAS HEGNA**

Associate Professor,
Geology & Environmental Sciences
Department
SUNY Fredonia

Post's favorite memory with Hegna is when he took him to the North American Paleontological Convention (NAPC) in June of 2024.

Bateman recalls when he received a letter from Hegna after he received his acceptance letter. The letter detailed that the small class sizes would make it perfect to get a very personalized education.

Four geology students who have had multiple run-ins with Hegna all stated that they enjoy his classes, and like him as a person.

"I have enjoyed his classes. He is a good professor," stated Brooklyn Pry, a sophomore geology major.

"I love Hegna. We always get out of class early," one person said after being let out 15 minutes early from his blue planet class.

Hegna has always been interested in paleontology and geology, and he recalls being captivated by extinct life in his childhood. "When I was little, I was fascinated with extinct life, in particular dinosaurs. But I always love[d] the creature that you never heard as much about," Hegna stated.

In his teenage years, he realized that the best way to pursue those passions was to get an undergraduate degree in geology.

Hegna started his academic career by attending Iowa State University in 2000, where he majored in geoscience with minors in English and philosophy. In 2004, he graduated with honors and distinction.

During his time at Iowa State University, he had multiple opportunities to work with professors. This is how he began picking microfossils for a professor, which ended up turning into a paid position.

Hegna then decided to stay at Iowa State to get his master's degree in geoscience, where he was able to do fieldwork.

"You could go straight from undergrad to PhD, and I saw people who did that, but generally, they kind of spent their first year spinning their tires. By having a master's, I had a head start," Hegna stated.

After graduating from Iowa State with his Masters of Science



Photo via fredonia.edu.

in 2006, “I kinda wanted to get away from what my masters and undergrad advisor did,” he said.

Hegna then went on to attend Yale University in 2006 to achieve his PhD immediately after graduating with his master’s.

He first started looking at brachiopods and realized that nobody really knew about them, so he wrote his dissertation titled “Fossils and Phylogeny: The Evolution of Branchiopod Crustaceans.” To this day, he is still working on studying brachiopods.

Hegna was teaching at Western Illinois University when he was working on his PhD, where his courses were roughly the same as those he teaches now. He taught history of the Earth, integrated science mineralogy, and paleontology.

He recalled his experience of being laid off due to budget cuts: “The administration tried and failed to do some firings early on. So we had a pretty good idea it was coming,” Hegna stated. “Which is a really dark place to be — knowing that your time there’s limited.”

Since Hegna knew that his time was at an end, he started applying for jobs. “I was applying to all sorts of jobs. The academic job market is not one where you choose [where] you go,” Hegna stated. “Fredonia was one of [the jobs] that came up in that cycle, and I applied to it.”

Hegna then compared his experience with financial problems at Western Illinois University with what he is seeing at Fredonia right now. “I think Fredonia has not done things as well as they could have, but compared to the shit storm that was Western Illinois, they’re pros,” he said.

He mentioned that Western Illinois failed to do cuts the first time, they didn’t bother to read the contracts and that they never telegraphed what they wanted to do.

The day he was laid off in 2018 happened to be the same day he got the job offer to teach at Fredonia. “I got this job offer

45 minutes before my layoff notice on the same day,” Hegna stated.

He mentioned that this job offer turned what was going to be a very dark day into a much better day.

Hegna did not receive a retrenchment notice from Western Illinois University.

“The state funding situation is again a dark cloud looming over things,” he said. Hegna also stated that state funding is definitely on the minds of many staff, who are thinking about where their next paycheck is going to be.

Hegna started teaching here in the Fall of 2019, a semester before the COVID-19 pandemic happened. He has felt over the past year or two that he has finally truly gotten to know the people and the area.

During COVID, his son got diagnosed with diabetes. “Because that was during COVID, we could not bring my daughter [with us], so I had to go up there [to Buffalo] to get trained [on] how to give shots for insulin, and we desperately needed somebody to watch my daughter,” Hegna stated.

So far, he’s loved his experiences at Fredonia: “I feel like I have [things] going in my favor here. I’ve got my research program moving along, I like my classes that I’m teaching and I’m enjoying teaching them.”

Since being at Fredonia, Hegna has worked on papers including “The Devonian Fossil Record of Clam Shrimp,” “A Group of Crustaceans Called Thylakoids” and “Cephalons and Their Musculature,” as well as one on tadpole shrimp.

According to Hegna, his research is similar to what he did at Western Illinois University.

If you are interested in learning more, visit his website called The Hegna Lab, which can also be found on his Fredonia profile.

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SPORTS

Why does watching election results feel like watching a sports game?

DAN QUAGLIANA
Managing Editor

Picture the scene — you're watching it live on TV, but your favorite team is losing.

More and more points are going to the other team, the one you hate.

And when the night is over, the other team emerges victorious. You jump off your couch, screaming at your television, but there's nothing you can do about it.

That sounds like a disgruntled Yankees fan watching the World Series, but it's not.

It's a politically involved person who just witnessed the other party win the presidency.

For many people, watching election results come in on Election Day is like a sports fan watching the championship game of their favorite team. On paper, these two things have absolutely nothing to do with each other.

But then why do people react so similarly to these events?

Watching the "buildup" to the election results is way more intense than watching the pre-show of a sports game, and that's because news companies place a lot more emphasis on politics than sports.

And why shouldn't they? Sports channels are typically their own dedicated thing.

But every single news channel, despite dealing with all kinds of newsworthy events, devotes the beginning of November exclusively to politics. On "Meet the Press" on NBC, viewers can watch Kristen Welker unpack poll numbers and early voting results for days before an election, let alone right before.

This gets people amped up for the actual election. They glue their eyes to the screen watching various states turn blue and red on that fateful Tuesday night, the same way as Bills Mafia does during a Buffalo Bills game.

This effect seems to have gotten worse in the 21st century. Since the election of 2000 between George W. Bush and Al Gore, the electoral college results have been consistently closer than in the past, adding to the anxiety experienced by election watchers.

According to Zara Abrams in an article published in the American Psychological Association, "In national surveys, close to half of U.S. adults say politics is a significant source of stress, citing problems such as lost sleep, shortened tempers, and obsessive thoughts."

These are extremely similar reactions to those experienced by sports fans when they're watching their favorite team.

"There is a considerable and growing amount of evidence that politics is having a negative effect on a broad range of

health outcomes," said Kevin B. Smith, PhD, a professor of political science at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. In the same article, Smith notes, "This is coming from different scholars using different data, approaches and measures, and it all triangulates on the same inference: Politics isn't very good for us."

Aaron Weinschenk and Kevin Smith, the authors of an article titled "Is political anxiety different than general anxiety?" claim that, "Politics seems to be a source of apprehensiveness and worry that affects individuals who are not necessarily suffering from general anxiety." People who become anxious due to politics aren't suffering from anxiety, but something separate.

Similarly, in an article on uchealth.com, Kate Chard, PhD, a University of Cincinnati (UC) Health psychologist and a professor of psychiatry at the UC College of Medicine, details how people watching sporting events, "Have a surge; your entire endocrine system is on high alert. You get anticipatory in your anxiety.

"It's exciting to be that invested. There's a thrill within all of us that likes to feel alive. You get your entire endocrine system firing when you're razzed up. When your team wins, the endorphin release is fantastic.

"In that sense it's good, but when you get your system amped up, what happens if your team loses? You have a crash. You have a neurochemical crash within your system that can be harder to come back from if you don't reset it cognitively."

This "neurochemical crash" is similar to what is felt when someone's preferred political candidate loses: "On days when people were experiencing more election-related stress, they also had more negative emotions and reported worse physical health," said Shevaun D. Neupert, PhD, a professor of psychology at North Carolina State University, in Abrams' article.

Chard also details how familial affiliation with a sports team is common — she calls it a "bond that spans across age."

Similarly, many young adults take on their parents' political affiliation as they become more politically involved.

Sports and politics, on paper, have nothing to do with each other — but the emotions and sensations felt by viewers of both are extremely similar.



The Bills exit Lumen Field in Seattle surrounded by Bills Mafia on Sunday, Oct. 27. Image property of the Buffalo Bills.

5th Quarter Column: Bills streak grows with blowout wins

MITCHELL HORUCY

Asst. Sports Editor

The Bills continued their winning streak with wins over the Tennessee Titans, Seattle Seahawks and Miami Dolphins over the past two weeks.

The first two games weren't close: the team won 34-10 against the Titans and 31-10 in Seattle.

The Bills needed a 61-yard field goal from Tyler Bass to make it four wins in a row.

Starting with the Tennessee game, it went almost exactly like I predicted it would go.

The Titans stayed in it with their defense playing well, but the Bills eventually settled in and ended up winning in a blowout.

Josh Allen played another clean game, adding two touchdowns through the air.

The Titans were able to keep Buffalo's run game mostly in check, but Ray Davis Jr. and James Cook each added a rushing touchdown.

The story of this game, however, was Keon Coleman.

He finished with 125 total yards, as it felt like a coming out game for the rookie.

The defense also played lights out in the second half, allowing just 47 total yards in the half. They forced two turnovers as well, one in each half.

Another big story of this game was the improvement from Greg Rousseau.

The fourth-year defensive lineman is on pace to have his best year as a pro, and it won't be very close either.

He had six quarterback hits in this game, doubling his previous career high he set a few weeks ago against Houston.

He's on pace to match his career high in sacks with eight, but

he's well on his way to surpass his career highs in both TFLs, or tackle for losses, and quarterback hits.

Following their demolition of the Titans, the Bills then traveled to the Pacific Northwest to take on the Seattle Seahawks in what I thought would be a close game.

This, however, was not the case, as the Bills won 31-10 and quieted the "12th Man" in the stadium, or what was left of it.

Allen played a great game despite the one turnover.

Coleman stayed hot the following week, as he went for five catches, 70 yards and a highlight reel touchdown.

This was easily his best play of his short career thus far, as it showcased what he does so well.

On a jump ball at the goal line, he went up over 6'4" Riq Woolen and "Mossed" him, in the style of Hall of Fame receiver Randy Moss who was known for jumping over defenders to make leaping catches.

Coleman was able to show off his vertical, length and strength all at once.

Cook also had a great game, as he took advantage of a lackluster run defense in Seattle and went for 111 yards and two touchdowns.

Khalil Shakir also exploded for nine catches for 107 yards, marking a career high in receptions for him.

In this game, Allen threw his first interception of the year, even though it may not have been his fault.

New addition Amari Cooper slipped on the slick Seattle field while running a slant, leading to the interception.

Allen pointed out in his postgame press conference that, despite the turnover, he made the tackle inside the five-yard line, which led to the team's defense getting a stop.

Speaking of the defense, they played tremendously, including

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two stops inside the five leading to zero points.

Baylor Spector once again had to step in for an injured Terrel Bernard, and he played well.

Despite not having a lot of pressure on the day, the Bills secondary didn't let Seahawks quarterback Geno Smith get comfortable in the pocket.

It was his first time not recording a passing touchdown since week 12 of last season.

When the division rival Miami Dolphins came to town, it wasn't as easy of a win as I, and a lot of Bills fans, thought it might be.

The offense once again got off to a slow start, with only six points in the first half.

Once the Bills got the ball after an early second-half turnover, the game opened up.

After a Miami fumble, there were seven consecutive scoring drives.

Allen had three second-half touchdowns, including a super-human play leading to a two-yard Quintin Morris touchdown.

While the Bills offense got going in the second half, so did the Dolphins.

A late touchdown to wide receiver Jaylen Waddle tied the game at 27.

Allen then led a game-winning drive, even needing a little help from his kicker, Bass.

Bass made a 61-yard field goal to win the game, setting a franchise record.

The previous record was held by Steve Christie, who made a 59-yard kick in 1993.

This was great to see as Bass has struggled this season, so hopefully this can help him regain his confidence.

For the Dolphins, this is maybe the best Tua has looked against the Bills in his career.

He didn't have any turnovers, he only had three incompletions and he really looked comfortable in the pocket, something he hasn't done a whole lot of in Buffalo.

Even with this, however, he and the team ultimately came up short.

As for the next two games for the Bills, they're very important for the team.

Obviously, as we hit November, every game is important, but possibly none bigger than Buffalo's last game before the bye, as



Bills defensive end Greg Rousseau (#50) is congratulated by teammates and coaches on Sunday, Oct. 27.

Image property of the Buffalo Bills.



Bills receiver Keon Coleman (#0) makes a leaping touchdown catch on Sunday, Oct. 27.

Image property of the Buffalo Bills.

Kansas City comes to town.

Before that game, they must focus on the task at hand this upcoming Sunday.

The team travels to Indianapolis to take on a competitive Colts team.

They just recently benched former fourth overall pick Anthony Richardson, a decision I don't agree with, for veteran Joe Flacco.

While the Colts aren't on the same level as the Bills, they can definitely sneak away with a victory if the Bills aren't careful.

Colts running back Jonathan Taylor can take over games, as we saw him do against the Bills in 2021.

I was at this game, it was awful.

With that being said, I think the Bills will get the win.

The pass rush will get after Flacco and create at least one turnover.

Taylor may finish with a decent stat line, which is good for his fantasy owners, but the offense as a whole won't do much.

For the Bills, Allen just has to play turnover-free football and not give the Colts opportunities with short fields.

If the defense can force the Colts to consistently drive down the field, I don't think Indianapolis scores more than 15.

The Bills get a nice win, leading to a must-win game for the Bills if they want a chance at the top seed in the AFC.

This game is also possibly the biggest regular season home game for the team in quite some time.

PREDICTION: Bills 28 - Colts 15

Reviving community through leadership on the field

GWENYTH KIRKWOOD
Special to The Leader

Being a part of a team involves leadership and community involvement.

Lindsay Hocking knows all about that.

Hocking, a senior at SUNY Fredonia, has dedicated her time in college to leadership and community involvement. A public relations major with a minor in leadership studies, Hocking's story highlights her roles in academics, clubs and campus organizations.

Born and raised in Wheatfield, New York, Hocking's involvement in sports began at a young age.

"I played every sport under the books," she said.

From gymnastics and tennis to lacrosse and bowling, Hocking was involved in nearly every sport. However, soccer has remained central for her, playing since age 5 and eventually becoming a core part of her college experience.

At Fredonia, she has continued her passion for soccer through the women's club soccer team, where she is currently the president. Initially stepping into a supporting role, she became responsible for organizing practices, coordinating team activities and encouraging participation, which in turn caused the club to thrive.

"Lindsay is a hard worker," said Lily Lavacca, the club's vice president and a close friend of Hocking. "She manages her time very well and stays on top of her responsibilities on the team and in her personal life."

"It's been so surreal and emotional this year because people show up, people are making friends and everyone's close."

— LINDSAY HOCKING

Women's Club Soccer President
SUNY Fredonia

After rejoining the team in her junior year, Hocking unexpectedly found herself taking on a leadership role and eventually became team president. According to Hocking, this role became a key learning experience as she navigated the challenges of managing responsibilities.

"I like to call myself the oil because I'm there to make sure things are running smoothly," she says, embracing her role in keeping the team connected.

With low team attendance last year, Hocking tirelessly encouraged players to come together, and her persistence paid off.

"It's been so surreal and emotional this year because people show up, people are making friends and everyone's close," she



Photo provided by GWENYTH KIRKWOOD | Special to The Leader

Continued onto next page



Photo provided by GWENYTH KIRKWOOD | Special to The Leader said. Though it's her last year, she's proud to have revived the club and created a space for team bonding and friendship.

"I like to say I brought it back to life," Hocking said.

The challenge of revitalizing the team required persistence, as Hocking managed the team with low attendance in her junior year. Over time, however, her leadership led to a steady group of players, allowing the club to strengthen its community ties.

Beyond sports, Hocking's involvement extends to her academic pursuits and other campus organizations.

Her leadership studies minor has involved her in several roles, including serving as a representative for her program and working with the Fredonia Incubator, where she collaborates with students and local businesses. Through this experience, she's gained firsthand knowledge of professional development and networking opportunities within her field.

She is also an active member of the Applied Communication Association (ACA) club, where she manages their social media presence. Her work in ACA includes organizing events like the annual Fall Sweep, aimed at fostering a stronger connection between the campus and the community through service.

Her role in ACA has allowed her to apply her public relations knowledge to benefit the campus and community, reinforcing the importance of communication in her field.

In addition to her club roles, Hocking oversees social media accounts for multiple organizations, including her internship with Fredonia's Faculty Student Association (FSA), the women's club soccer team, Fredonia's main Instagram page and the ACA Instagram.

She was first introduced to social media management through her internship with FSA, where she managed content to highlight campus events and resources. The experience helped her develop skills in digital engagement and increased her campus involvement.

Hocking's academic focus in public relations, combined with her minor in leadership studies, has prepared her with a versatile foundation for her career goals.

Her experience includes various projects in marketing, communications and writing, all of which she believes will benefit her in a PR role.

Her career goals include working in public relations for a sports team, with a specific interest in joining the Buffalo Sabres and Buffalo Bandits.

As Hocking approaches graduation, her work with the women's club soccer team remains a central part of her experience at Fredonia.

Under her leadership, the team evolved from low attendance to a supportive environment where team members have formed friendships and connections. She has aimed to provide team members with a positive space where they can enjoy the sport, connect with others and engage in physical activity outside of academic responsibilities.

"Lindsay is a very hardworking, smart, responsible, strong-willed person," said Toby Bell, Hocking's boyfriend. "She's a natural leader which has gotten her several leading roles at Fredonia."

The transformation of the team reflects her dedication to fostering a community, as she has organized regular practices and encouraged participation, creating a close-knit team.

The team's growth plays a significant role in her campus legacy, as she has seen how the club provides a way for students to balance academics and fun.

"It's my goal for people to make friends, practice a sport they love, and just have fun," Hocking said.

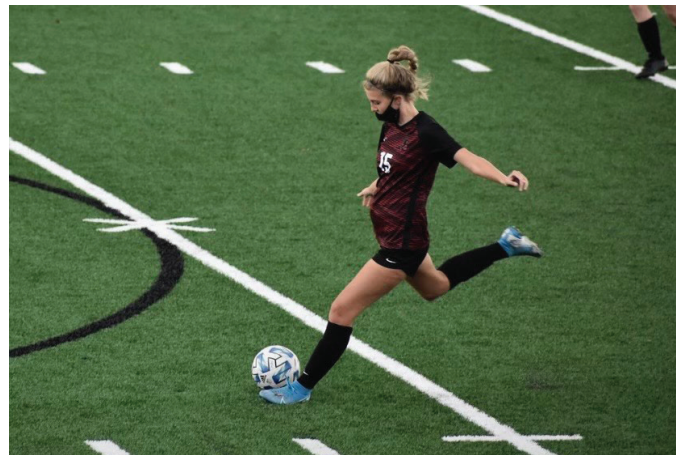


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A snapshot into Fredonia athletics



Gavin Bloder (#25), Men's Ice Hockey.



Quillan Shimp, Men's Cross Country.



Martin Garza (#21), Men's Basketball.



Katie Sellers (#7), Women's Soccer.

All photos by BECCA TORNCHELLO | Sports Photographer



Calie Hudson, Women's Cross Country.



Malik Jemison (#11), Men's Basketball.



Lucas Hyer, Men's Cross Country.



Ryan Bailey (#10), Men's Ice Hockey.

What makes a game a "girl game"?

ABIGAIL JACOBSON
News Editor

Warning: This article contains strong language.

Whether you play on an Xbox One or a PC, on every platform, you can find and play games.

Any game you want, you could have. Obviously, you would have to buy it, but you'd be able to play it. No one's going to stop you.

Unless the game is geared towards one gender.

You might be asking, what do you mean? I'll tell you what I mean.

In the video game community, people often associate a game with one gender.

For example, violent shooter games are geared more toward men, probably based on them being "strong" and masculine. You don't often hear about a violent shooter game geared towards women.

Instead, many game developers and fellow gamers believe that women should play easy video games that are bright and colorful, where they can build relationships with non-sexual characters. No violent games here. No excessively hard modes and no sexual relationships with characters. Just boring, chill and colorful games that make every girl so happy.

This is what we call a "girl game".

A "girl game" is a game that is considered to be for only women to play because it's not manly enough for a guy to play it. A "girl game" is seen as one that is not violent and has a relaxing play style. A "girl game" allows you to explore all you want and make cute things all the time. A "girl game" is for only girls to play.

People define these games as "girl games": Stardew Valley, Sims, Animal Crossing, etc. As you can see, there's no game on this list that is violent.

Oh no, girls cannot play violent video games. Those are for guys because they are manly enough. Girls can't play competitive games because they aren't competitive and they "suck" at video games. Girls can't play a majority of games because they are not men.

This term, "girl game," is stupid.

No game should be designated to one gender. Guys can play cutesy, demure games and girls can play zombie-infested shooter games.

However, the marketing behind video games is more than often geared toward a specific audience.

Violent video games are geared towards men.

Why is that? Why are violent video games not geared towards women? Why are violent games not considered "girl games?"

"No game should be only for one gender. Guys can play fun, bright-colored games and girls can play gorey, zombie shooter games. Why should my gender define what game I play?"

— **ABIGAIL JACOBSON**
Student
SUNY Fredonia

Well, some men are competitive. I've seen it in video games. They get mad that you got a few more kills than them or that you are at a higher level. God, they even get mad at you for speaking in voice chat.

Men, from my experience, also tend to be a bit over-the-top. They see this as an expression of their masculinity.

This masculinity is also represented, men believe, through other things they do, such as throwing the game because they found out you're a girl or reporting you because you're a girl or yelling many kinds of phrases at you because, oh you guessed it, you're a girl.

You got one more kill than your male teammate? You destroyed the other team? You're wearing a girly skin? You'd best be ready to hear all the basic stereotypical things about women: "Go make me a sandwich," "get off and go do your OnlyFans," or my personal favorite, "you're not a girl."

Well the last time I checked, I actually am, but thank you. There are so many things I have been told in this community and I wish I could say it just started now but it hasn't.

I first started getting into video games and playing them with other people when I was about 14, maybe 15 years old. Poor little old me did not know what she was getting into.

Around that age was the first time I had ever heard the term "girl game." I remember it vividly, probably because it changed my whole perspective of video games.

I was playing a game called Call of Duty, I can't remember which one. I was playing on a team and it was a capture-the-flag game mode.

I had gotten killed maybe within one minute or so of the game starting and I remember hearing someone say, "you suck bangtangirl2003." Yes, embarrassing gamer tag, but I was like



Promotional poster for "Stardew Valley" | Photo via Steam



Promotional poster for "Sims 4" | Photo via Epic Games

"GIRL GAMES"

15. I was like ‘eh whatever, I’m here to have fun.’

Throughout the time I played that round, it was just sentence after sentence of saying I sucked and I shouldn’t be playing this game. I remember them saying the usual things such as “you suck ‘cause you’re a girl” and “go make me a sandwich bitch.”

Then I heard it.

“This isn’t a girl game, go play Minecraft or something bitch.”

What a crazy thing to say.

I didn’t expect that sentence to influence who I am today but it kind of did. These sorts of experiences even happen to me in real life.

I walk into Gamestop and I’m immediately stared at. Yes, I’m very beautiful, but please leave me alone. There is not one time I have gone into any game store and felt like I belonged. One time, I was even shown a game that was some makeup



Promotional poster for "Call of Duty: Black Ops 6" | Photo via Amazon



Promotional poster for "Halo 4" | Photo via eBay

"GUY GAMES"

dress-up thing and the employee said, “This is probably what you’re looking for.”

Actually, I’m not, I’m here for Halo 4.

Now, every time I download a new game or play a game, I think, ‘is this a “girl game”?’

Back then, I would’ve said yes. Now, it’s different.

No game should be only for one gender. Guys can play fun, bright-colored games and girls can play gorey, zombie shooter games. Why should my gender define what game I play?

Yes, I am a girl and yes, I do play “girl games”. But I also play “guy games” and regular video games in general, and I’m pretty damn good at it.

New Prime series "The Edge of Sleep" will keep viewers awake all night

OWEN ROSE

Special to The Leader

This review will contain major spoilers. Continue with caution.

On Oct. 18, 2024, Amazon Prime released its newest original series: "The Edge of Sleep."

This TV show is based on a podcast created by Jake Emanuel and Willie Block. The show follows Dave, a night watchman with parasomnia — a disorder characterized by a disruption while sleeping such as sleepwalking, night terrors, sleep talking and more — who finds that everyone who has fallen asleep the previous night did not wake up. They all died in their sleep, mysteriously.

The series features Markiplier (Mark Fischbach) as its leading character, alongside Franz Drameh playing Matteo, Lio Tipton playing Katie, Eve Harlow playing Linda, and many other side characters.

The series took the charts by storm as it was ranked #6 on Prime Video's Top 10 Series in the World when it was released.

The characters and audience do not know how or why falling asleep causes death. Modafalyst, a drug that keeps the user stimulated and awake, is used alongside injected adrenaline to keep the characters alive. These are their only two safeguards to not falling asleep under such awful conditions.

In Episode 5, "The Nightmare," there is a thrilling shot depicting Katie falling asleep despite the Modafalyst and adrenaline. Unfortunately, later in the series, she does not make it and succumbs to sleep. During this shot, a black border closes in on the viewer, displaying the time left to save Katie. Meanwhile, the introductory song plays, "I Go to Sleep" by Peggy Lee. The speech from the characters becomes progressively distorted while they scramble to find a way to save Katie from her own human needs. The song gets louder and louder, making the viewer increasingly uncomfortable. This specific shot truly illustrates the horrible situation these characters have been placed in, as their friend, and for Dave, his ex-girlfriend, dies due to simply falling asleep.

By Episode 6, "The Dream Warrior," the group makes it to their final destination, Aristera, an ancient name for what is now referred to as Spetsopoula in Greece. Here, they are told they'd be safe to sleep without the threat of death. This episode is arguably the most chilling, as the characters are at the climax of their sleep deprivation, having gone over 70 hours without sleep. The shots include the characters wandering around the island, crying blood and going psychotic — only to find the place they were looking for.

These two examples are only small sections of the story. The rest is detailed in the series' six episodes, available on Prime Video. But these examples are incredibly telling of the acting, cinematography and passion put into this incredibly low-budget project. Those involved clearly care a lot about turning this podcast from simply an audio story to a visual medium.

In "The Edge of Sleep," the acting gets better the longer you

watch it. In the first episode, the acting feels a bit choppy and awkward, as expected of a pilot. Some of the lines feel monotone or wooden. An example is when the character Lisa tells Dave and Matteo to call anyone they can think of who could be awake, to warn them to not sleep. The line is delivered in such a dull way and it doesn't feel like a dire warning in a sleep pandemic.

Once you get past the first episode, the acting truly starts to shine. The four characters experience sleep deprivation for over 70+ hours throughout the show, and you can see them truly understand how drastic sleep deprivation would affect someone. As the show goes on, you watch the four main characters experience debilitating symptoms of drowsiness, hallucinations, psychosis and irritability. The usage of their motivations and tactics gives the audience a chilling understanding of how desperate the situation is.



Promotional poster for "The Edge of Sleep" | Photo via IMDB

Lovercolumn: Reproductive Rights

THE QUARTERBACK

Executive Producer of Lovercall

THE MUSICIAN

Lovercall Producer

RADIO REBEL

Lovercall Producer

Hello!

We are The Quarterback, The Musician and Radio Rebel: 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 are guests on the show use codenames to protect their identities when discussing potentially personal topics, hence the codenames of the writers of this column. This is your reminder that none of the hosts or guests are professionals, and everything stated is based on personal experiences.

“The Quarterback” is a 20-year-old cisgender man who uses he/him pronouns and is a junior at Fredonia.

“The Musician” is a 22-year-old gender-fluid person who uses they/she pronouns and is a senior at Fredonia.

“Radio Rebel” is a 21-year-old transgender man who uses he/him pronouns and is a senior 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 can submit their questions or seek advice either via Fredonia Radio’s Instagram, @fredonia_radio, on YikYak or through the QR code provided in this column.

We answer your questions live on the radio, then add them to this column in case you missed the episode.

The show will broadcast weekly throughout the semester 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 in print and online at fredonialeader.org.

Date idea of the week

We hope to provide fellow students with a fun and unique date idea in every episode. These date ideas aren’t just for romantic partners — you could go with your friends, classmates, or can even go solo for a fun activity in Fredonia.

For this week’s date idea, we’re suggesting that you have a PowerPoint night!

The idea of a PowerPoint night gained a ton of popularity in 2020 when people couldn’t physically get together because of the pandemic.

Many friend groups, like The Quarterback and his high school friends, got together over Zoom and made PowerPoint presentations about anything under the sun.

That’s one of the perks of this date idea, too; it can be done with a romantic partner, friends, family or anyone else!

The presentations can range from silly, to sad, to romantic and everything in between.

With friends, you might make goofy presentations like ranking the various Papa Louie games or assigning superlatives to everyone in the group like “most likely to somehow injure themselves while walking to class.”

In a family setting, you might choose something a little more heartfelt, like a collection of photos from a recent trip or all the reasons you love Grandma’s homemade brownies.

However, if you find yourself having a PowerPoint night as a date with your partner, here’s where you can really dial up the romance.

You could go for a wholesome topic, maybe something about all the things about this person that you love, or maybe a recap of all your favorite moments together.

Or, you could make it not quite as wholesome — and we’ll let you decide what that means for your relationship.

The whole point of this date idea is to be as creative as possible, and have fun with it!

There are a lot of different ways you could go with it, and that’s what makes it a date idea worth trying!

Reproductive Rights

This week’s topic was reproductive rights, which is definitely a hot-topic issue in our current society.

Reproductive rights are the legal rights people have regarding their own bodily autonomy. It affects all genders, though in the discussion of politics, female autonomy is more focused on. This includes topics such as abortions, miscarriages, contraceptive availability, funding for reproductive healthcare and access to life-saving surgeries, medication and treatment regarding anything having to do with the reproductive organs.

Guests this week discussed the importance of having these rights.

New York is considered a “safe state” for being a woman or someone with female autonomy.

The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* started to trigger laws in various red states, restricting access to medical care for female autonomy. One of the topics that was brought up is how many of the trigger laws relate to restrictions on abortion.

It was discussed how restrictions on abortion do not prevent abortions but only prevent legal, safe abortions. With this, people who have abortions and miscarriages do not have access to the proper medical treatment.

Another point discussed during the show is that people who do not identify as female yet have female autonomy, such as non-binary people or transgender men, are also restricted by these laws.

Cisgender men are ‘safe’ in many of these aspects, only affected by the emotional turmoil they would have to face when the women around them do not get safe and proper treatment with their reproductive organs such as miscarriages, cancer or other involuntary life-threatening medical issues.

Continued onto next page

Lovecall Calling...

Every week on Lovecall we answer your questions anonymously — all about love, relationships and more. Here's another reminder that none of the hosts are professionally trained, but we are college students living through the same experiences you are.

This week we got a Lovecaller who asked about how to help her transgender partner who has dysphoria. She explained how her partner has been experiencing dysphoria, but since her partner is a transgender man, and she is a cisgender woman, she knows she cannot fully understand his situation.

"Is there anything I can do to help him get past this?"

Yes! But first, dysphoria is part of many trans people's experiences, and not a lot can be done for someone else to be able to get rid of it completely.

A few suggestions on the show were to create a safe space for your partner.

It's only natural that you want to help your partner so they can feel the best that they can, and it's difficult to watch them suffer.

That being said, there is only so much that you can do. You can be there for them, be a shoulder to cry on or cheer them up when they're sad. As a partner, it can feel like you are not doing enough to help, but being there for them is the most important thing.

Another thing you can do is to praise them, compliment them and convince them to go to the kind of therapy that would best suit them. Offer to go with them if they are worried about going alone, or help them see what other options they have by doing online research.

It's very difficult on both ends of the spectrum to experience dysphoria and also to watch someone you love experience it. This hard situation can be navigated by communicating with your partner and seeing what options would be most beneficial for them.



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 Lovecall? Email wdvlonair@gmail.com or visit Fredonia Radio Systems, located in McEwen Hall 115 and open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

"The Quarterback," "The Musician" and "Radio Rebel" are members of Fredonia Radio Systems and are involved in the production of Lovecall.





Satire and parody for Fredonia

Megan's Sports Roundup: Sports from someone who DEFINITELY knows sports

MEGAN KIDBY
Scallion Editor

Y'all, I am not a sports person.

Even though the Scallion section and the Sports section of our wonderful newspaper are in an alliance to take down the other sections and ultimately reign as supreme rulers of The Leader, I find myself wondering how sports work.

That changed this week when I talked to The Leader's Sports section Editor Matt Volz. Through his wise insights, I learned a lot about various sports I didn't even know existed! He didn't even know some of these existed either.

(American) Football

Matt knows a lot about football. I mean, when I was interviewing him, he had the Bills hat and shirt on in an Orlando airport. He knows style AND football. He did get a "GO BILLS!" at the airport during this interview and two in New Orleans. I'm also writing this in his townhouse while he's pacing behind me watching the Bills vs Dolphins game. Here's what I gained from the conversation:

Ummmm okay so the team gets the ball and like that's 1st in 10? I think??? And then the quarterback throws the ball and someone catches it, which makes them 2nd in three?

Then there's someone named Pat who's worth a couple points depending on what the players do.

They also eat turnovers I think. I haven't seen that part at any of the games I've gone to though.

There are 11 players on the field at a time for both teams: five linemen, an offensive tackle and guard, quarterback, running back, tight end (hehe), and fullback. They don't really use the fullback anymore though.

The defense consists of linebackers, safeties and cornerbacks (not quarterbacks). They go nose-to-nose but they don't kiss??? I feel like football should have more kissing.

The offense tries to move to their side of the stadium and like the defense says they can't. It's like when my sister tried to get me to hug her and I didn't want to so she would block me from getting to my room until I gave her a hug (#justsiblingthings).

Equestrian Dressage

I had to show Matt a video of this before he explained it to me.

After the video, he described it as "an artistic form of horseback riding where you are responsible for equestrian but you are also responsible for dances."

Honestly, he sounded like he had a lot of respect for the jockeys and I agree.

I also told him about "Rave Horse" Mopsi, who did an EDM routine during the 2020 Olympics. He thought it was a bold choice, but understood why it made it to the Olympics.

Hockey

This is another sport that Matt knew a lot about. I don't know much though, so here's what I gained.

Hockey originated in Canada and it is played on a sheet of ice.

There are 5 players and a goalie, so smaller than football.

There are also specific penalties that go for either two minutes or five minutes. You can tell I cared more about this sport because I actually gathered more information about it.

Two-minute penalties can be tripping, interference, hooking (ayo) and high sticking. High sticking has a rule though where if you can see blood, it can be a more severe penalty. In my opinion, that's kind of crazy but like idk maybe I've been watching too much WWE wrestling so I feel like they could be faking it.

The true magic, though, lies in the lingo: "power plays" (where one team exploits their temporary superpowers), "hat tricks" (Matt didn't tell me about this one, I just know it because I'm so sporty), and "icing" (a rule so simple and intuitive that even veteran fans pretend to understand it without question).

Beer Pong

I did forget that our dear Matt is under 21, so he knows nothing about how this game is played... or so he says ...

Humans steal jobs created for AI: The irony of automation in reverse

CHATGPT

Special to The Leader

In an ironic twist to the global narrative about artificial intelligence (AI) taking human jobs, a new trend is emerging: people are taking jobs initially intended for AI.

With rising distrust in technology, companies and consumers alike are increasingly favoring the “human touch” in roles that were once the exclusive domain of AI models like ChatGPT. The result is a surprising reversal of roles in fields ranging from customer service to content generation, rekindling debates over the role of AI in society and what future employment could look like.

Artificial intelligence’s rapid adoption in customer service, marketing, content creation and data analytics was expected to ease workflows, boost productivity and even reduce costs. AI language models like ChatGPT quickly became the go-to for everything from answering customer queries to writing reports.

However, as AI’s influence grew, so did skepticism among users, fueled by concerns over privacy, accuracy and the ethical dimensions of relying on machines to shape human-centered content.

In 2024, a series of surveys indicated that customers felt more comfortable interacting with human agents rather than AI for critical or personal matters, a sentiment that led companies to reconsider their AI-first policies.

A recent report from the consultancy firm McKinsey & Company indicated that 57% of customers prefer human support in banking, healthcare and e-commerce settings. The shift, McK-insey notes, is particularly notable among older adults, who tend to distrust AI-powered services more than their younger counterparts.

This trend has sparked a resurgence in hiring for jobs previously assigned to AI, especially for handling customer complaints, inquiries and social media.

“Many people feel that AI lacks empathy and nuance, which are crucial in complex situations,” says Sarah Lin, a consultant specializing in consumer experience. “AI is great for fast, basic responses, but when issues become layered or emotional, people feel underserved by a chatbot, no matter how advanced it is.”

Customer service isn’t the only area where humans are making a comeback. Content creation roles initially earmarked for AI are now in demand for human writers, editors and even illustrators.

Concerns over authenticity and creativity have led companies to revert to human talent, especially in roles that require strong personal voices and a unique creative perspective. Brands across industries have noticed that audiences increasingly demand content that feels “real,” a sentiment that is often hard to replicate through AI-generated text or images.

For instance, in a recent marketing campaign by a major



Graphic by CHATGPT | Special to The Leader

retail brand, human writers and graphic designers replaced an AI-driven team, specifically to achieve a more “human-centered” tone. The result, according to the company, was an uptick in customer engagement and positive feedback.

“People know when something feels authentic versus generated,” says Mark Reeves, a senior manager at the company. “AI can still play a role in supporting our creatives, but the final touch — the human element — has proven invaluable.”

One of the driving forces behind the transition back to human roles is ethical concerns around AI’s influence in the workplace. Labor advocates argue that overreliance on AI can lead to significant job displacement and the pendulum swing back toward human labor could serve as a balancing measure.

Moreover, ongoing privacy concerns have prompted both companies and consumers to scrutinize the types of data AI systems use and how that data might affect consumers.

In response, some companies are committing to an “AI-augmented” rather than “AI-driven” model, where AI serves as a tool rather than a replacement for human employees. By blending AI support with human oversight, businesses aim to balance the efficiency and consistency of AI with the empathy and critical thinking that only human beings provide. This mixed approach is expected to become more common in sectors like education, healthcare and social media management, where human oversight is often essential.

“We have seen the value AI can bring to repetitive tasks, but not at the cost of eliminating human jobs,” says Angela Cortez, a labor rights advocate. “If we continue down the path of total AI reliance, we risk losing essential skills and weakening our

labor force. A collaborative approach is far more sustainable.”

While the human takeover of AI-created jobs is noticeable now, experts are uncertain about its longevity. For many companies, human workers still represent a higher cost compared to their AI counterparts, who can perform many tasks 24/7 without benefits or salary increases.

As AI models continue to improve, they may eventually address many of the shortcomings that led to the human resurgence, potentially re-claiming the jobs they once held.

Moreover, as AI ethics improve and models become more nuanced, public perception may shift once again, favoring automated solutions for their efficiency and adaptability.

For now, however, the trend of human workers stepping into AI-designed roles reflects a broader societal reckoning with the implications of automation, suggesting that people are not ready to fully surrender the workplace to machines.

As AI and humans continue their complex, intertwined dance, the evolving job market serves as a reminder that progress doesn’t always move in a straight line. Whether the pendulum eventually swings back in AI’s favor, or whether humans reclaim their place at the forefront of these roles, the push and pull between technology and humanity is far from over.

This article was written entirely by ChatGPT and is meant to be satire. The Leader does not support AI replacing real, human journalists. Additionally, the graphic for this article was generated by ChatGPT, and The Leader does not support AI replacing real, human graphic artists.



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HOROS

JACE JACOBS

Former Assistant Editor of The Scallion, “Adult” with a “Job” who “Has To Go To Work”

What’s up Fredonians? I bet you thought you had seen the last of me, with my incredibly well-crafted, tear-stained Letter from the Desk Of and my gorgeous final horoscopes.

WELL GUESS WHAT! MY BEST FRIEND IS STILL THE EDITOR OF THE SCALLION! YOU COULDN’T GET RID OF ME IF YOU TRIED!!

I’m sorry, that got a little heated... I’m just really happy to be back, despite being in a time crunch to write these horoscopes. (I am writing them at my job where I am employed. Shoutout Geva Theatre. I love you girl.)

Since I am “old” and “wise” and “employed,” I am here to provide the signs with my predictions of what they will be when they grow up ... aka what job they’ll find after they graduate. Keep reading to find out what the stars have in store for you!



Aries

Unemployed with a Degree in ???

Hey, it’s alright, buddy! You’ve got that fighting spirit in you, but it isn’t great to rely on that in the professional world... As Chappell Roan once said, good luck, babe. No one knows what your degree is actually in (probably including you), but I suppose being an international person of mystery could potentially pay the bills? Once you find out, please get in contact and let me know, because that seems like a very fun career path.



Taurus

Unemployed with Massive Amounts of Debt

So, as a Taurus who is just starting their career, it took me a month of job-searching just to find a part-time gig in my chosen field. I consider myself lucky because I know so many others who are still job-hunting to find something even remotely similar to what their degree is in! Word to the wise: do not open up a credit card unless you can pay it off. It will do nothing for your credit score if you don’t pay it off.



Gemini

Unemployed with a Degree in the Arts

Geminis are known for being creative, and as I have said to several friends... don’t work in the arts. It is incredibly rough to find work out here. But hey, freelancing and commissions are always an option! Maybe start a Patreon for your art? Online work is still work, if you catch my drift.



Cancer

Unemployed but In-Tune With Your Emotions

Hey, that’s a great quality to have! Very adult, very mature... Emotional intelligence definitely counts for something, I think? Or at least it does in my eyes. But maybe you shouldn’t place your value on what other people think, I don’t know.



Leo

Unemployed but Looking For Hot Open Positions In Your Area

Leos, I’m going to level with you. A lot of Leos have done me dirty. A lot of Leos are close friends of mine. But there is one common denominator: being open and looking. Take that how you will. Y’all are a bunch of spitfires with so much passion and energy to share, and hopefully, a job will come as easily for you as other... things... do.



Virgo

Unemployed and Upset About It

Virgos have big feelings, it is just a fact of life. Most Virgos, in my professional experience, tend to be free-spirits and like to pretend everything just rolls right off their backs. But y’all have so many feelings, and sadness is just one of them! It’s okay to be stressed about searching for a job; it is quite literally one of the worst things to ever be created in the world ever.

COOPES



Libra

Unemployed and Generally Fine With It

Listen, is it a major bummer being unemployed? Yes. Have Libras accepted that it is simply a fact of life? Most likely. You're kind, with a great head on your shoulders and a big heart, but you're a realist. You know what you signed up for by pursuing higher education and/or just by being alive, and I respect you for it.



Scorpio

Unemployed and Waiting For The Right Moment to Strike

Scorpios are fierce, like big jungle cats, stalking their prey in the shadows (the prey in question being jobs in their field). Once the right opportunity crosses your path, Scorpio, you'll POUNCE... No one will ever see it coming, and subsequently, you'll be able to tell everyone who has ever doubted you to kick rocks.



Sagittarius

Unemployed with A Lot of Friends

As one of the friendliest of the signs, Sagittariuses (Sagittari? I don't know, I don't go here anymore) are great at making and keeping connections. Don't confuse this for networking, because that's not what they're doing. They're just... being friendly. And if that helps them to a job... well, we all better take notes, I guess.



Capricorn

Unemployed and ENRAGED

Although Taurus is seen as one of the most stubborn signs, Capricorns are right up there. These individuals tend to have a lot of self-discipline and self-inflicted high standards. I see Capricorns begrudgingly moving back home with their parents, devoting several hours a day to job hunting and still getting zero bites, causing a fury like we mere mortals have never seen before.



Aquarius

Unemployed but Finding The Time To Help Their Friends Find Jobs

Hey Aquarians, I love you, but I've gotta be honest with you — it isn't a crime to put yourself first. I know, I know! You love your friends and you keep seeing gigs that would be perfect for them! But take some time to focus on yourself! And before you say it, I know. The volunteer work you somehow have found yourself taking the time for is more fulfilling than any job you could have, but you don't have to say that. No one will judge you for wanting money, girl.



Pisces

Unemployed with a Degree in Theatre

Hey girl, welcome to the club! <3 If you survive your summer stock gigs, be warned — it is real rough out here. It doesn't matter if you're a performer, designer, administrator (that's what I do) or anything else, it is just... real rough out here to get paid for your skills. And yes, I am absolutely only saying Pisces would get a theater degree because y'all are usually characterized as being over-dramatic. Sorry, but I am not immune to playing into stereotypes. Love y'all though! Kisses!

FREDONIA STATE BLUE DEVILS

