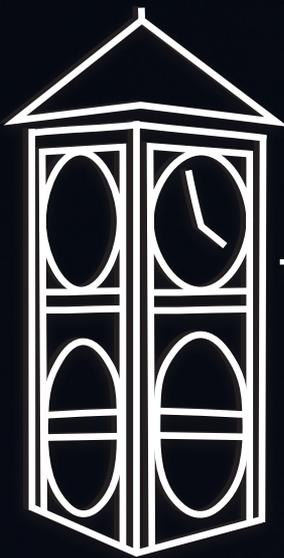


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THE LEADER

SUNY Fredonia's Student-Run Newspaper



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This issue of The Leader is dedicated to the memory of Dr. David Stringham.

Proud member of The Associated Collegiate Press.

Fredonia alum elected Buffalo mayor

MATT VOLZ
Editor in Chief



Sean Ryan. Photo via nysenate.gov.

A former Blue Devil is set to become the leader of the City of Good Neighbors.

Sean Ryan, a 1987 Fredonia graduate, was elected as the next mayor of Buffalo on Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Ryan was the Democratic candidate, winning the election with 72 percent of the vote, according to the Associated Press.

While he is on his way to running the second-largest city in New York State, Ryan was once a student like many others on campus.

After growing up in Lackawanna, N.Y., he started at Fredonia in the fall of 1983.

“I wasn’t a strong student coming in,” he admitted.

Ryan was a political science major, largely due to his long-time interest in politics.

“I was always fascinated by politics and government, but more as an observer, not realizing it could be me in a political position,” he said. “I was always acutely aware of local politics and national politics.”

Outside of classes, Ryan was a member of the political science club and played for Fredonia’s men’s Blackhorse rugby team.

During his four years at Fredonia, Ryan had opportunities that expanded his love for politics.

He spent a semester studying in Washington, D.C., as Fredonia had a program that operated similarly to a study abroad program.

“It really opened my eyes that there were a lot of opportunities out there in the world,” he said.

Ryan also had the opportunity to meet the U.S. ambassador to Qatar, who was brought in to speak by the chair of the political science department.

“To be able to sit face to face and listen to a lecture by an ambassador ... It was incredible,” he said.

Ryan attributed much of his success as a student to the limited number of students in each class.

“All my memories around Fredonia revolve around when I was in small classes, and the discourse between the professors and the students,” he said. “You don’t realize that when you’re going through it, how exceptional that is.”

Upon graduation, Ryan enrolled in Brooklyn Law School in New York City, and he worked as a lawyer for several years.

In 2011, he was elected to the New York State Assembly, serving Buffalo and its surrounding communities.

He held the role until 2020, when he was elected to the New York State Senate.

He said that throughout his political career, the influence of his time at Fredonia has remained with him.

“So many of the things that I’m doing with my current life,

whether that’s being a successful lawyer, assembly member, state senator and now mayor-elect, it was all based on the foundation that I received at Fredonia,” he said.

Ryan has also surrounded himself with fellow Fredonia graduates. Several members of his staff are also former Blue Devils, including chief of staff Cody Meyers, transition team co-chair Trini E. Ross and campaign manager Nicholas Beiling.

Ryan said that none of them went to Fredonia with him; rather, they were each “high quality” candidates who happened to be fellow Fredonia graduates.

“I think employers view a Fredonia education as a positive degree,” he said. “They look at Fredonia graduates as capable, problem-solving employees.”

Ryan said he isn’t able to come back and visit very often due to his busy schedule.

He did return last year when SUNY Chancellor John B. King was visiting campus, and Ryan had dinner with both King and President Kolison.

Even though he has gone off to bigger places, Ryan still looks back on his Fredonia experience fondly.

“I thought it was a perfect school because it had this blend of small academic settings, which were really engaging, and there was a really positive social life,” he said. “You got to meet people from all over New York State. It was just a wonderful experience at a wonderful school.”

Ryan will be officially sworn in as the mayor of Buffalo on Jan. 1, 2026.

He hopes that one of the first events of his mayoral tenure will be a Bills Super Bowl parade, as he added, “We are ready, willing and able to host a very big parade.”

If that comes to fruition, Buffalo will celebrate with a former Blue Devil at the front of it all.

One year after election, Trump's plans haven't gone as planned

ALEX BUCKNAM

Managing Editor

On the morning of Nov. 5, 2024, major media outlets announced that Donald Trump was the projected winner of the 2024 presidential election.

His speech that morning focused on his campaign promises, but where are those promises now?

During Trump's victory speech, he made multiple promises, but the three big ones were securing the border, becoming energy independent and helping the economy.

He said his plans would start the moment he was sworn into office.

Trump kept that timeline. On his first day, he signed several executive orders related to what he had talked about more than two months earlier.

These ranged from pulling out of the Paris climate treaty to pardoning those arrested for crimes connected to Jan. 6, 2021.

In the days after he took office, he also issued an order telling the Department of Homeland Security to arrest more than 3,000 people a day suspected of being in the United States illegally.

Trump also signed an executive order titled "Securing Our Border." The order called for more personnel at the border, more physical barriers and the creation of additional detention centers.

The most notable detention center created under this plan was "Alligator Alcatraz," built in Ochopee, Fla. The facility received major criticism for unsafe environmental conditions but remains in operation today.

Trump has claimed his primary reason for securing the border was to lower crime rates, taking credit for crime rates dropping in 2025.

However, studies show there are no links between his executive actions and falling crime rates.

Trump's second promise was to avoid war and end ongoing conflicts. Multiple sources contradict this.

While some conflicts abroad have been reduced because of his actions, several wars have continued, and major clashes are still happening.

For example, Trump promised to quickly end the war in Ukraine, but the war is still ongoing as of Nov. 14, 2025.

In June, Trump launched an attack on three Iranian nuclear sites in response to rising tensions after Iranian attacks on a United States military base.

There has also been growing tension between the United States and Venezuela, with Trump ordering an attack on boats in the Caribbean Sea that U.S. officials said were carrying drugs out of Venezuela.



Donald Trump. Photo via [whitehouse.gov](https://www.whitehouse.gov).

There have also been moments where Trump took credit for reducing conflict.

In May 2025, India and Pakistan spent four days attacking each other. Trump said he convinced the nations to agree to a cease-fire.

India's foreign secretary, Vikram Misri, disputed that, saying the talks were between Pakistan and India, and denied any foreign involvement.

Trump's third promise was to boost the economy and reduce inflation, primarily through tariffs.

Trump has imposed high tariffs on certain countries, only to pause them days later.

According to CFI Knowledge, tariffs are defined as a tax on imported goods or services.

This means the company importing the product is the one paying the tariff.

Trump's tariff policies have gotten a lot of backlash, with critics saying companies will raise prices to make up for the money they lose from paying tariffs.

When it comes to the rest of the economy, experts say it is not much better than last year. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate has risen 0.3% in the months Trump has been in office.

Inflation is up 0.03% since January of this year.

It is also important to note that this 0.03% only accounts for September, since the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has not released figures for the last two months.

SOURCES:

<https://www.bls.gov/>

<https://www.bcg.com/capabilities/international-business/navigating-international-trade/what-is-a-tariff>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/securing-our-borders/>

Police Blotter

UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT SUNY Fredonia

The Police Blotter, run and shared with The Leader by the University Police Department (UPD), aims to provide information to students, faculty and the community in and around SUNY Fredonia. All information is provided on the University Police Department's website, <https://www.fredonia.edu/about/offices/university-police/blotter>. The Police Blotter will continue every issue, with new information regarding any new criminal acts that occur on the SUNY Fredonia campus.

All information printed in The Leader's police blotter is a matter of open public record. No retractions or corrections will be made unless a factual error is shown. Anyone who is cleared of charges has the right to have so printed. It is the responsibility of the accused to provide notice and proof of the dropped charges.

On-campus:

- Oct. 17: A report was made about a subject leaving human waste in the Erie Hall loading dock; the status of this report is arrest complete.
- Oct. 24: A student was receiving harassing texts from a former partner; the status is closed by investigation.
- Oct. 28: A "persona non grata," or unwelcome visitor, was found to be on campus; this was closed by an investigation.
- Nov. 02: A report was filed for theft of Amazon packages; this is an ongoing investigation.
- Nov. 04: Computer equipment was reported stolen from the Rockefeller Art Center; the investigation remains ongoing.
- Nov. 05: A fire was started in the Erie Hall loading dock; an arrest was completed.
- Nov. 08: A Mason Hall door was found to be damaged; the investigation is still ongoing.

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Printing points introduced for students, staff

MATT VOLZ
Editor in Chief

Since Fredonia's printing operation changed from PaperCut to FREDprint at the beginning of the semester, students, staff and faculty noticed they no longer had a quota to limit printing.

As of Monday, Nov. 17, that is no longer the case.

Information Technology Services (ITS) announced the new FREDprint quota system in an email sent to all students and faculty.

In previous years, students had a quota of \$20, while staff and faculty had \$75 worth of printing available.

Each page cost a few cents, with a higher charge for color printing than black and white.

Instead of dollars, the printing quotas will now be points-based.

It is important to note that these points are separate from student meal plans, and points that are apart of a meal plan cannot be used for printing purposes.

At the beginning of each semester, students will have 2,500 points in their printing account, which will be labeled on the FREDprint website with the name of the semester.

Each page printed will subtract a few points from the total. For example, according to ITS, a single-sided page printed in black and white will cost four points.

Color printing will come with a slightly higher charge, costing 12 points for each single-sided page, according to the FREDprint FAQ section of Fredonia's answers database.

ITS is also incentivizing efficient printing, as it will cost less to print double-sided and therefore use less paper.

Using the previous example of a black and white page, printing two pages that are not double sided will cost a total of eight points.

However, if a student prints these pages double sided, it will only cost six points, as the cost would then go down to three points per page.

Color printing will also be cheaper if it is printed double sided, costing 20 points for a double-sided sheet instead of 24 points for two single-sided sheets.

Faculty and staff will also print on a points-based system, and they will start each semester with 5,000 points.

"This update is a step forward for our campus, helping us be more mindful of our resources while continuing to support your academic and professional needs," the email read. "This change applies to all students, faculty and staff, and it establishes new print quotas to help us align with SUNY Fredonia's commitment to fiscal responsibility and environmental health."

Over the course of a full semester, students, faculty and staff may run out of points.

For any students in need of more points, they can be purchased at the ITS Service Center in Thompson Hall or at the Student Accounts office in Maytum Hall.

The cost will be \$1 per 100 points.

Students can also use FREDFunds to buy more points, and those purchases can be made in Reed Library.

If students have work study or other employment positions that require significant printing, they can request a separate quota by emailing help@fredonia.edu.

Any faculty and staff in need of additional points can fill out a form to increase their balance or reset their quota entirely.

Unlike meal plans, printing points do not roll over from the fall semester to the spring. At the start of each new semester, student quotas will be reset to 2,500 points, and faculty/staff quotas will be reset to 5,000 points.

Anyone in need of further assistance is encouraged to email ITS at help@fredonia.edu, call the ITS Service Center at 716-673-3407 or visit the FREDprint FAQ section of Fredonia's answers database.

Printing points: How do they work?

- **Students start each semester with 2,500 points**



How much does it cost to print?

- **1 black/white page, single-sided = 4 points**
- **1 color page, single-sided = 12 points**



Environmental printing

- **Double-sided printing costs less and uses less paper!**

The Walter Gloor Mainstage Series 2025-2026

PRESENTS

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(abridged)

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Illustration by Jessica Lustig



Life & Arts

College of Music, Theatre and Dance mourns death of dean

MIA CIECHALSKI

Life & Arts Editor

Dr. David Stringham, dean of the College of Music, Theatre and Dance, died on Nov. 10.

Students and staff members were notified on Nov. 10 via email sent by President Kolison.

Stringham became the dean of the School of Music in May of 2023. Kolison said he was chosen because of his “exceptional communication skills, leadership in organizational change and deep commitment to expanding student access and success through the learning opportunities provided by the School of Music.”

Throughout his two and a half years here at Fredonia, Stringham accomplished much for the School of Music.

All of his fundraising efforts and dedication to building relationships with donors helped the School of Music raise \$1.5 million in his time with the school.

Stringham also created new academic programs for the School of Music, which include the B.A. in Music Studies and the Mus. B. in Jazz Studies, which is currently in the review and approval stages.

In his email, Kolison mentioned how Stringham “worked tirelessly to strengthen enrollment.”

He created partnerships with multiple institutions, such as the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts and Rochester’s School of the Arts.

Many other professors knew Stringham well before his tenure at Fredonia.

Dr. Rob Deemer had known Stringham since 2007. Deemer also sent an email to the College of Music, Theatre and Dance on Nov. 10.

Deemer met him when Stringham was still a graduate student at Eastman School of Music.

They had worked together numerous times over the years.

Deemer also made sure to mention how Stringham fought for the Department of Theatre and Dance time and time again.

“His hiring here was an incredible stroke of luck for us at Fredonia, and his passing will impact us in many ways,” said Deemer.



Dr. David Stringham.

Photo by LORI DEEMER | Marketing and Communications

Not only have faculty members spoken out with fond memories of their beloved dean and friend, but many students have as well.

Some students have taken to social media to share how Stringham impacted their lives.

Fredonia student Lucas West created a post dedicated to Stringham and how impactful his presence was in the School of Music.

In his post, he said, “Dean David Stringham was a mentor to me and one of the best humans I’ve ever known.”

West met Stringham at Fredonia in 2023 and expressed in his Facebook post how personal and inspiring the relationship between the two of them was.

West spoke of him very highly as he stated, “He was always a part of my support system, and someone I felt always cared about me. He was a man of great character, high value, tireless work ethic, morals, intelligence and empathy.”

Student Aidan Carney also took to Facebook to express what this loss meant to him as well.

“I had the great fortune of meeting with Dr. Stringham every week, or more frequently for nearly two years. In every conversation we shared, his dedication to the Fredonia community was evident. In these conversations, it became abundantly clear that Dr. Stringham was a lifelong learner and a lifelong teacher. I learned so much from him,” said Carney.



Stringham and Aidan Carney.
Photo by AIDAN CARNEY | Special to The Leader

In countless responses to Stringham's death, many have said how he was a kind-hearted human, loving father and husband who was dedicated to creating a better future for everyone.

Not only have students and faculty joined together through social media, but they have also joined together by creating a way to remember him on his office door.

There, you will find Post-it notes on his door from multiple people with heartfelt messages to him, memories of him and even drawings. You will also find flowers by his door.



Stringham (right) and Lucas West (left).
Photo by LUCAS WEST | Special to The Leader

Not only have they created that memorial for him, but they also all joined together on Nov. 14 where all students and staff members came together to share stories of Dr. Stringham.

Multiple people came to share or to just be around the company of others.

There were a multitude of stories shared no matter how big or small their stories were; you could tell that Stringham played a part in everyone's lives he crossed.

The school also responded to Stringham's death by putting flags at half-staff for him on Nov. 11-18.

The Leader extends their deepest condolences to Dr. Stringham's wife and children and to anyone who had the pleasure of knowing him.

This is a loss that has hit the SUNY Fredonia community in many ways. Dr. David Stringham will be sorely missed.

The Leader staff extends our deepest condolences to the loved ones of Dr. David Stringham.

Hillman Opera show connects Cold War to modern day

MIA CIECHALSKI

Life & Arts Editor

The Hillman Opera performed their fall production of “Menotti’s The Consul” on Nov. 13-16. This performance had many political themes that mirror our current political climate.

“The Consul” was written in 1949 and takes place during the Cold War, which took place during the years of 1947-1991. Throughout this production, you see many refugees trying to leave Eastern Europe after World War II.

This production was directed by Daniel Lenzian and conducted by Emily Schaad. The opera also had a double cast, meaning two cast members would play the same role and alternate each night.

The sets were created by Hyla Stellhorn, costumes by Jessica Lustig, lighting design by Jaydon Zullo and hair and makeup by Simon Szentgyorgyi.

This was my first time ever watching an opera performance, and while there were certain times I didn’t fully understand what was happening, I can still say I wholeheartedly enjoyed this production and all of the elements that were put into it.



Photo by NOVA KOWALSKI | Special to The Leader

When you first walked into the Marvel Theater, you were welcomed by a stage that looked like the home of the main characters, Magda and John Sorel.

The first set design was simple but effective, with all of the design elements that were chosen. From the glass kitchen light to the old-fashioned oven, it really made you feel like you were in a classic 50s-style home.

Another element that indicated that they were in a different time period was the costuming.

There weren’t your old cliché poodle skirts in this show, but seeing all of the chosen patterns and accessories still tends to the classic 50s era.

The hair and makeup also helped pull together the costumes because without having all the elements that were in style back then, it wouldn’t be cohesive.

The lighting design also did a wonderful job, not only fitting in with where the setting took place, but it also helped the audience know when there was a change in the plot and how the characters were feeling.

While watching the performance, you also had a whole orchestra playing in the pit to accompany the actors while they were singing.



Photo by NOVA KOWALSKI | Special to The Leader

Not only was the orchestra right on time with all the actors, but it made it feel like you were actively living all the events that were happening in the characters' lives because of the added dramatic music effect.

All the actors' singing was also phenomenal and very impressive to watch.

You would hear some of the highest and lowest notes that not many people can hit. The amount of time they would hold these long notes also showcased how trained they are and how much practice this kind of singing requires.

The one thing that I wish the actors had were microphones, because at certain points throughout the show it could be difficult to hear what the actors were singing.

Most of the time, you could still make out what they were saying even if you couldn't fully hear them. Luckily, above the set design, there were captions playing throughout the entire show on a projector.

This was very helpful for not only me, but for other audience members as well because some parts would suddenly speed up or actors would sing different parts at the same time.

In one instance, there was an actor whose part was sung in Spanish, so the captions were extremely helpful for me since I've never taken a Spanish class.

All the actors' storytelling throughout this production was very strong, showing the audience that something very serious and taxing was going on in all their lives. Almost every character had to deal with an unresponsive bureaucracy.

Many of the characters try to flee their country that is under dictatorship, but no matter what their circumstances were, the consulate refuses to announce a timeline of when they can receive their visas.

However, despite all of the uncertainty that these characters face, you can enjoy many themes of love, faith and loyalty through it all.



Photo by NOVA KOWALSKI | Special to The Leader

Main character Magda Sorel's main priority is to reunite with her husband who fled the country to save his life.

Unfortunately, she soon realizes that she is alone, as she selflessly longs to keep her husband safe from the dictatorship. This production ends in a tragedy for both of our main characters.

"Menotti's: The Consul" can be seen as a timeless piece, as it mirrors struggles of the past that can still be found in society today.



Photo by NOVA KOWALSKI | Special to The Leader

When music meets movement: The Merrins Fall Chamber Concert

MAISIE STRADER

Special to The Leader

I may not know much about dance technique, but I do know the joy of watching dancers move as one.

At the Merrins Fall Chamber Concert, that joy was unmistakable.

On Nov. 6, 7 and 8 at 7:30pm, student performers came together to share their passion on stage at the James and Marsha Merrins Dance Studio, located in the Michael C. Rockefeller Arts Center. A final matinee performance was held on Nov. 9 at 2 p.m.

Walking into the scene, there was no doubt about the effort put into creating this show.

What is usually a class studio was transformed into a stage, with seats that pulled out from the wall.

Whether a dancer is eligible to perform at a college level depends on the rules of the college program.

However, most dancers at Fredonia are able to dance at a college level while also pursuing jobs.

The evening opened with “Fleeting Hope of Tomorrow,” choreographed by Adjunct Lecturer Charles Fuller.

It featured slow music choices, such as “Moon” by Sleeping at Last and “Close Encounter” by Penguin Cafe, to set the emotional perspective one may have while watching.

The dance was unifying, focusing on community.



'Made in The Bronx,' choreographed by Destiny Hernandez-Diaz. Photo by CZERTON LIM | Special to The Leader

The eight dancers, dressed in muted blues and whites paired with black pants, moved as if tethered to one another — reaching, leaning and circling as a collective.



'When the Heart Finds Its Rhythm Again,' choreographed by Brianna Blair Kelly. Photo by CZERTON LIM | Special to The Leader

The tone shifted with the second piece, “When the Heart Find its Rhythm Again,” an Irish Contemporary fusion choreographed by Lecturer Briana Blair Kelly in collaboration with the dancers.

The note attached to the program read: “I’m unsure which pain is worse, the shock of what happened or the ache for what never will. But within our broken hearts, sorrow and joy can co-exist. Grab hold of life and let it pull you forward.”

A dance-trained friend pointed out the Irish roots embedded in the fast footwork, the tight jumping sequences and the circular formations.

To me, the movement read as a metaphor for loss and support — friends lifting one another through the weight of loss, circling back to offer strength.

The next dance, titled “Made in the Bronx,” was choreographed by SUNY Fredonia alum Destiny Hernandez-Diaz.

This was the first dance with a prop: a red brick painted board that had subway signs and graffiti on it.

This one was my personal favorite; with what I thought was the best energy.

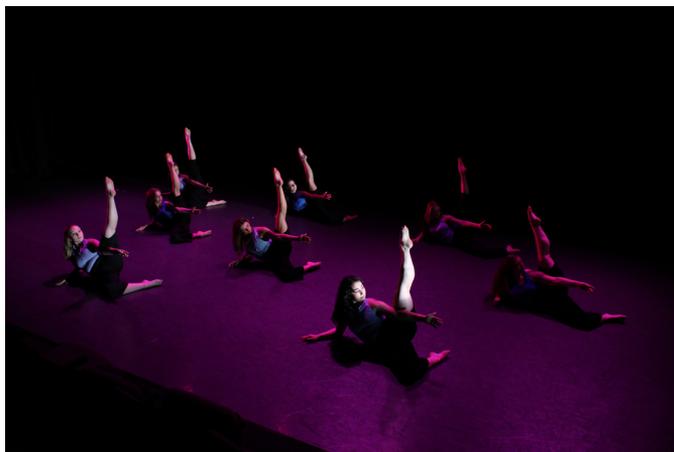
Dressed in white shirts, blue jeans and Yankee hats, the dancers hyped up the crowd with playful gestures and bold confidence.

The choreography mirrored the spirit of a street-style dance battle — sharp isolations, quick footwork, and bursts of attitude.

The following dance, “Chapters,” was choreographed by Lecturer Angela McDonough DiFiore in collaboration with other dancers.



‘Chapters,’ choreographed by Angela DiFiore.
Photo by CZERTON LIM | Special to The Leader



‘Fleeting Hope of Tomorrow,’ choreographed by Charles Fuller.
Photo by CZERTON LIM | Special to The Leader

This dance was dedicated to mothers and all who provide motherly love. The piece featured eight performers and incorporated symbolic costumes that represented a daughter and mother growing up.

Each dress carried personal meaning for DiFiore: a pink bridesmaid dress worn by her daughter, her own wedding gown and a purple mother-of-the-bride dress she wore at her daughter’s wedding. A rocking chair was woven into the choreography as well, serving as a stepping stool marking one chapter of life to the next.

The final dance was titled “I Am (and Beyond),” choreographed by Assistant Professor Parisha Rajbhandri, and featured nine dancers. This dance is being performed at the American College Dance Association (ACDA).

The dance is in remembrance of the West African-rooted jazz dance “Funga Alafia” or “We are United in Truth.”

The dance started with no sound, which I thought was amazing; it was just the noise of the dancers in movement.

The final moments radiated joy, and it was clear the cast was fully immersed and had an incredible time. It was a beautiful and fitting ending to the entire showcase.

These performances really opened my mind up to dance culture. There doesn’t have to be music, and there doesn’t have to be props — it’s all about energy.



‘I Am (and Beyond),’ choreographed by Parisha Rajbhandri.
Photo by CZERTON LIM | Special to The Leader

A native New Yorker's review of an NYC-based play: 'Stop Kiss'

GIANNA BOCCONE

Special to the Leader

Maybe it's a little unfortunate for the cast and crew that I was in the audience last night.

This play took place in New York City in the 90s.

I had a feeling this wasn't going to be the love letter to the Big Apple I had hoped it to be.

My diminishing hope was expedited by the fact that every third line was referring to how filthy and misfortunate the Bronx was.

The characters probably brought up the fact that the families in the Bronx definitely don't have/cannot possibly have cars about five times, to which I say: the Bronx is connected to mainland United States, unlike the rest of metro N.Y. It is most definitely a drivable borough, and they most definitely have cars there.

And it's not like the characters think the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) is this godsend, either. I mean, the comments are constant.

Sarah moves to New York City because of a fellowship she was awarded, and so many times it is implied that this position teaching at a public school is worse than no fellowship at all.

It's implied that Sarah is a "nut" for pursuing anything she is actively pursuing throughout the show.

Could it also be implied that she's a nut for pursuing Callie, albeit subconsciously?

It's proven to be that way, with both of them being punished in some way for their attraction to each other.

I couldn't pay attention to the parts of the story that I'm sure were meant to get more attention because this is a story of lesbianism, not New York City.

What does the playwright have against New York City?

There isn't a single comment about grabbing a slice of pizza, but there are several comments referring to how the quality of life in the city is nothing short of horrifying, no matter how much Sarah loves her job and the poor, dirty kids from the Bronx.

And why is it that, in the cast of seven comprising this intermission-less show, there is the one character who is beat within an inch of her life, and the actor that was cast to play her is black?

They do not hold back in letting the audience know just how gruesome this gaybashing was, either.

And it's not like Sarah's role is traditionally written for black women, because that was the first thing I Googled last night.

Sandra Oh originated the role. It was one aspect I could not shake from my mind, especially as things began to ramp up in the show, and we see the night unfold as it did.



The cast of 'Stop Kiss.'

Photo by **GABI FARR** | Special to The Leader

A few times, it's implied that Sarah provoked the attack, that though she is a victim, she had it coming — not even because she was a lesbian, but because of everything else.

She's loud and brash in telling the assailant to "f-- off," all tropes that have consistently been bestowed upon black women over and over again.

Everyone thinks Sarah's nutty for wanting to live in New York, but because there's a black actress playing her, the implication there to me is, "of course she loves it, she fits right in with the dirty poor Blacks and Hispanics!"

That is verbiage pulled directly from the show.

Then again, if Sarah was played by a white actress, I'd be calling her a white savior, which isn't better!

That would be the writing itself, the author herself; it's sad how little there is that actors can do with the material that is given to them.

So many weird, racist comments were written into the show, which made it hard to not question the casting decisions.

With Sarah being played by a black actress, too many loose ends revealed themselves to me.

Callie doesn't exactly defend Sarah when the Detective begins to imply that she brought the bashing on herself.

And, by the end of the play, there is no resolve for current-day Callie and Sarah.

It's up in the air as to whether Sarah is to return to "quaint" (Callie's words, not mine) St. Louis to be in the care of her family and ex-boyfriend, or if she is to remain in the city with Callie taking care of her.

Sarah's agency is plainly taken away, her assault a plot point in Callie's quasi-coming out story. Callie, in the span of 32 pages, looks at lesbianism from the outside and is able to do this because Sarah was the one that got beat up, not herself.

It mimics the unfortunate white-feminist trope of black characters only existing to teach their white counterparts what they need to know about themselves.

The actors on stage didn't do a terrible job, no—there were plenty of moments that had the audience in stitches... though, there were equally as many moments where the audience was a little unsure of how they should be reacting.

I call into question the desire to put this play on at all, simply due to its surface-level obtuseness.

Again, maybe I'm nit-picking; maybe I'm just from New York City, the Big Apple, I can't help that I'm sensitive.

But then I think about the fact that there are dangerous aspects of living in the city, or any city!

It's not that the city isn't dangerous, it's that Diana Son has an opinion that she let bleed out all over her work.

Homophobia is (and most definitely was) rampant ... It wasn't something that needed to be proven to the extent that it was.

The digs at the Bronx, at the "crackheads," were too much.

This story could have happened anywhere, in any city.

In terms of creative liberties, it would be cruel to ask Farr to take out every line referring to New York City, and so again I say, it's unfortunate that I was in the audience last night.

This work is for non-New Yorkers about non-New Yorkers written by not a New Yorker.

And nobody had an accent: radiator was ray-diator, not ra-diator... you'd think that Callie, who totes and boasts her status as a New Yorker (she isn't one, she's just lived there for some time) would have a little bit of affectation to her voice.

Actually, Callie reveals she's not a real New Yorker in so many ways.

The previously mentioned reason was one of them, and the second was that when Sarah accuses her of not spending any time in the Bronx, Callie responds with, "I fly over it every day, more than most New Yorkers."

To me, that's a non-answer.

To me, that's an admission, as well as ownership, of Callie's own white feminism as she sits next to Sarah.

To me, it's Son's opinion that New Yorkers are ungrateful to the city they were born in, and that someone from the middle of nowhere such as Callie would be the better choice for these opportunities.

When it's revealed that Callie is from somewhere like Fredonia, essentially, my eyes nearly rolled out of my head.

It's too much, because of course everyone in the Blue Devil Lounge laughed at the idea of Sarah's third-grade student, Malik, standing up to a "crackhead" for her.

It's a caricature that made me uncomfortable.

It was all perpetuated by the fact that I'm sitting there not knowing whether this is an attempt at racial commentary, a poor casting decision made by the director or Son's own prejudices as a Korean American woman who grew up in Philadelphia.

The bottom line is that this would not have been my first choice in terms of how I'd make my directorial debut — perpetuating someone's prejudiced opinion through lesbophobia, racism and violence.

The worst part is, I don't know if this is something that anyone in the cast or crew was thinking about, or if it was just me.

But maybe there was an ethnic and gender studies major in the room doing similar mental gymnastics to my own.

I can't remember the first time I laughed out loud at a line or a choice made by the actors.

That's not to say it didn't happen at all!

I laughed a few times; there were times when I thought Sarah was so adorable, like each time she tried getting Caesar to come out of hiding.

I thought Mrs. Finsley was great.

I laughed at any double entendre involving food, such as, "She eats meat, why wouldn't she" or "Cmon, I need a sushi fix!"

I got over myself, though, once the show finally waned on how dingy and dangerous New York City was and started being about how homophobia ruins lives and how it kills.

It took a while to get there, though, because even though I think Callie is supposed to get off her high horse in terms of where she has been living for the past 11 years, but by curtain call, there wasn't a clear resolution.

Is Callie out and proud by the end of the show, confidence bolstered by the brutal attack on her new love interest, Sarah, or scared into submission by Sarah's newfound disability, as well as her own realization that this is the 90s, and being gay is hard?

It's unclear as to which one she is meant to be, especially when Callie frequently looks disgusted instead of flustered, and is floundering rather than stammering endearingly.

It was hard to tell which parts were the actors' choices and which parts were poor storytelling, which is the fault of Son herself.

Who is to be credited then, with any sort of accolade or insult?

It's almost as though there was so much to the show that it ended up being about nothing, that we sat for 90 minutes and heard about the way this black girl was beaten to a pulp, speculated as to what injuries she had (it's not confirmed in the show), and watched her remain unresponsive even out of the coma.

The actors did a fine job of reciting the lines on stage.

There was just so much subtext there that it was impossible to ignore.

SPORTS

Fredonia's hockey recruiting extends across the nation, world

MITCH HORUCY

Sports Editor

For most North American sports, the path to becoming a collegiate athlete is straightforward.

Most, if not all, will play in high school, then come to college as a 17 or 18-year old freshman.

However, that isn't the case when it comes to college hockey.

Hockey is also unique when it comes to the team's makeup.

For example, the men's soccer team here at Fredonia only has two players on its 25-man roster that aren't from the state of New York.

When it comes to the men's hockey team, only four members of the team are from New York.

"Everyone is on video now," said head men's hockey coach Jeff Meredith. "We watched a game last night in Saskatchewan."

Recruiting players from outside of the area isn't new for Meredith, though, as he's been doing it since the 1990s.

"We recruited the junior guys out of Michigan, the North American League, and that was a time when everybody was still recruiting kids right out of high school," said Meredith when talking about the 1994 and 1995 teams that went to back-to-back Frozen Fours.



Antoine St. Onge (#18) battles for the puck, Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025.

Photo by RILEY OLSON | Special to The Leader



Peter Burfent finishes a check, Saturday, Nov. 8, 2025.

Photo by RILEY OLSON | Special to The Leader

He said quickly after that, there was an avalanche of teams recruiting from various junior hockey leagues around the country.

One of the players he recruited from a different corner of the world is his captain, Ethan Pitzman.

From Homer, Alaska, Pitzman traveled over 4,000 miles to Fredonia, although he's used to the travel at this point.

After graduating high school, Pitzman traveled to both Minnesota and Wisconsin to play.

He played in his final year of juniors for the Northern Colorado Eagles, where he thrived with 43 points (17 goals and 26 assists) in 49 games.

It was during this season when he decided to commit to Fredonia to continue his hockey career.

Pitzman reached out to numerous teams in the SUNYAC, but Meredith was the first one to get back to him.



Xavier Fortin (#8), Cash Anderson (#29) and Ethan Pitzman (#12) celebrate after a goal, Saturday, Nov. 8, 2025.

Photo by RILEY OLSON | Special to The Leader

“He’s the ultimate recruiter,” said Pitzman.

Anyone who talks to Meredith can find out quickly that Pitzman is correct.

He has a stack of papers with information on recruits, who he calls weekly.

“If you keep showing up once a week and talking and listening and hearing what they’re saying and, you know, telling a story or whatever, that trust builds up,” said Meredith.

For Meredith, building these connections is incredibly important.

His office is filled with photos of his past teams, but also photos of alumni off the ice.

On his calendar, he has the birthdays of all of his former players.

Having a family such as the one he created is special for a number of reasons, but it helps current players as well.

“If a guy sits on the couch here and he says, ‘Well, I’m interested in finance,’ right away I can think of a dozen guys right off the top of my head,” said Meredith. “[They may] be able to mentor him, reach out to him, help him, guide him, provide an internship.”

Pitzman got to experience it firsthand this past summer, as he almost got fishing gear from a Fredonia alum.

“Everyone is getting to men’s league eventually,” said Meredith. “It’s our job to help [the players] get to the next place in life.”

As mentioned earlier, the path hockey players take to get to college is a bit different than most other athletes that play collegiate sports.

Pitzman played his entire high school career, which some don’t do, but then played juniors, which everyone on the team played some variation of.

Most players play for three years at the junior level, but Pitzman only got two based on his late birthday.

After that, they can go and play college hockey, however most are a few years older than normal college freshmen.

Pitzman came in as a “young 20-year-old” and is now 24 years old.

Despite the small age difference, Pitzman thinks he and the team fit right in with the rest of the student body.

The team is at home next on Friday, Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. against Buffalo State in their first of a three-game home stand.



Sam Chrenka (#14) attempts to steal the puck, Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025.

Photo by RILEY OLSON | Special to The Leader

5th Quarter Column: Allen regains MVP form with six scores

MITCH HORUCY

Sports Editor

Somehow, somehow, the Buffalo Bills are 7-3 after week 11 of the NFL season.

When most Bills fans thought all hope was lost, the team sits comfortably in a playoff spot.

With seven games remaining in the regular season, a lot can happen, but the Bills are still very much in the conversation to win a Super Bowl.

In an exciting back and forth game, the Bills won a shootout over the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, with a final score of 44-32.

Josh Allen reintroduced himself to the MVP conversation with a sensational game, finishing with 357 total yards and six total touchdowns.

I was a big fan of how the ball was distributed, with nine players having a reception and six with multiple.

Tyrell Shavers was a pleasant sight to see and should surpass a 50% snap count in every game moving forward.

The run game wasn't very effective, but the Bucs have a top 10 rush defense in the league.

I don't feel too strongly about the bad performance, and I assume James Cook and the rest of the run game is fine.

It was great to see the offense produce at this level, especially after their performance against Miami.

The defense played well when Tampa Bay had to throw the ball, but the run defense continues to be a problem.

They give up more than 150 yards per game, which is in the bottom three of the league.

I'm not sure how much in-season adjustments can help, but they have to do something.

In what feels like forever ago, the Bills didn't make a single move at the trade deadline on Nov. 4. I wasn't a fan when it happened, and I still am not too happy about it.

In the game against the Miami Dolphins in week 10, Buffalo's biggest weakness was on full display: the lack of an alpha receiver.

Allen had an average time-to-throw of 3.53 seconds in their loss that game, the longest mark in his career.

While having time to throw is a good thing, there's a sweet spot when it comes to this stat.

Out of the quarterbacks with the top 10 total EPA, expected points added; Allen is the one of two quarterbacks with an average time-to-throw over 2.7 seconds, with Allen at 2.80 seconds and Jalen Hurts at 2.86 seconds.

His sack percentage is also 7.07%; this would be the highest in his career since his 2019 campaign.

His pressure percentage is higher than last year's, but it's right around where it's been for the past three seasons.

This is a result of not having a receiver that can constantly win on the outside and down the field.

Tight end Dalton Kincaid has been good, already matching his yardage from last season and is on pace to set career highs in almost every receiving category.



Bills safety Cole Bishop (#24) celebrates after an interception, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2025. **Image property of the Buffalo Bills.**



Josh Allen celebrates with Tyrell Shavers after a touchdown, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2025. **Image property of the Buffalo Bills.**

Cook and Khalil Shakir have also been good, with Cook being closer to great.

However, Keon Coleman hasn't taken the step they wanted and needed him to take this season.

Coleman was a healthy scratch this past Sunday after reportedly being late for a team meeting on Friday.

The report from Tom Pelissero that the Bills and Dolphins couldn't agree on terms for wide receiver Jaylen Waddle is disappointing, to say the least.

Pelissero's report is that the Bills offered a 2027 first-round pick, but the Dolphins wanted it to be a 2026 first-round pick.

If this is the case, this is a huge stain on Brandon Beane's tenure as General Manager for the Buffalo Bills.

While he's done great things, i.e. drafting Josh Allen, he has failed Allen over the past couple of seasons.

He famously went on The Joe & Jeremy Show on WGR 550, the leading sports radio station in Buffalo after the NFL draft this past April.

"You guys were b---ing in 2018 about Josh Allen, you wanted Josh Rosen," Beane said of hosts Joe DiBiase and Jeremy White. "And now you guys are b---ing that we don't have a receiver. I don't get it."

At the time, I could understand where Beane was coming from, but after seeing Allen and the receivers struggle and fail to make a move, that's a huge letdown by Beane.

Offensive coordinator Joe Brady has also had a disappointing season, even with the lack of talent at receiver.

NFL analysts have called the offense "predictable" amongst other things.

Going forward, I think the offense needs to commit to playing under center for a majority of the game, lower Coleman's snap count and give Cook a minimum of 20 carries a game.

The defense has been banged up, but it's been solid over the past few weeks.

The Bills have a short week this week, as they travel to Houston for a Thursday night matchup.

Last season, Houston was a house of horrors for the Bills, but I think that changes.

At the time of writing, it hasn't been determined what C.J. Stroud's health for the game will be, but I think the Bills win regardless.

The Texans' defense is legit; Buffalo's offense will need to come to play.

On the other side of the ball, I think the Bills defense sees a ton of success against the Houston offense.

Outside of Nico Collins, the Texans' offense doesn't have any true threats on the perimeter.

An inconsistent run game also favors the Bills.

Where I think Buffalo's defense will really see success is against the Texans offensive line.

They are bad, in the bottom five in the league in most metrics.

I think Deone Walker, Joey Bosa and Greg Rousseau all have great games en route to a win.

Going on the road on a short week is always reason to worry, but I think the Bills start to get hot and win.

**Final prediction:
Bills 33 – Texans 16**

I've said this in past issues, but the AFC is as wide open as it's ever been.

Watching the Bills throw away maybe their best opportunity at a ring due to lack of offensive consistency would be heartbreaking.

As they enter their toughest stretch of the season, the Bills will need to play great football, which they have shown they can do.

The question is whether they can do it consistently. Only time will tell.

The reality behind dispute between YouTube, Disney

JACK HOADLEY

Assistant Sports Editor

Recently, you would be shocked to find a sports fan who hasn't been impacted by the conflict between YouTube TV and ESPN/Disney.

While the conflict itself is rather simple, and unsurprisingly money related, the fallout has been a major topic over the past few weeks in sports.

While it didn't live up to the hype, Monday's primetime football game was supposed to be a battle of NFC juggernauts that many would want to watch.

As a result of this dispute between ESPN and YouTube, many were unable to watch the game.

The dispute lasted nearly two weeks after YouTube TV removed all Disney and ESPN broadcasts from their sight on Halloween.

Both sides were adamant they were right, but from a fan perspective it is incredibly difficult to agree with Disney in this case.

YouTube argued that if Disney got its way, then subscription prices would be raised as a result, which fans were not happy about.

Objectively, fans are already paying a ton of money for YouTube TV, so a raise sounds like a different level of greed on the part of Disney/ESPN.

This is a modern example of what battles between two industry giants can do to fans, as the parent companies of these groups are some of the largest in the world.

Google (YouTube's parent company) does not want to pay major distribution fees just to feature ESPN on their service, while Disney argues they aren't paying a fair rate.

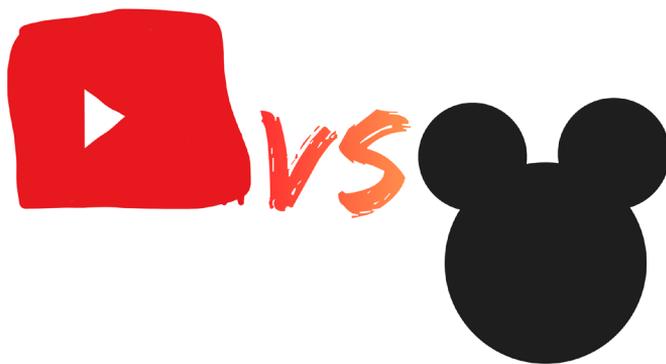
This whole issue has completely taken away much of what sports fans subscribe to the service for, while also hurting both companies' pockets significantly.

I think it's interesting to see that when it comes down to just simply supporting fans, neither side can sacrifice money for the fans.

A deal was eventually reached, but the whole ordeal shows that neither side tried to focus on a short-term solution that would get ESPN, ABC, FX and more back on the service for fans.

Both companies lost around \$30 million a week to this dispute while fans continued to be caught in the crossfire.

During this two-week span, fans who use YouTube TV to watch sports missed out on numerous NBA games and two NFL primetime games, as well as countless college football games.



Graphic by **MATT VOLZ** | Editor in Chief

Many fans are so frustrated over the lost content at pivotal points in both the NFL and NBA season that they have canceled their subscriptions.

It's hard to even see why you would stay subscribed when there are other alternatives to YouTube TV that provide sports fans with what they want.

These alternatives also may be cheaper than the Sunday Ticket package offered by YouTube currently.

The sad truth that many already knew but is being confirmed from this is that these companies could care less about what the fans want.

Ultimately, this contract will continue to damage the sports fan experience as long as neither side can shove their own greed.

I am certain the fallout from this will see many fans drop their subscriptions and find live sports elsewhere.

While these billion-dollar companies argued about extra zeros, their squabble was to the detriment of sports fans everywhere.



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TheWhiteInn.com

Food lover ranks Thanksgiving dishes

ALEX BUCKNAM

Managing Editor

I have a love-hate relationship with Thanksgiving.

For one, it means winter is upon us. But it also means free food, and family, I guess.

(Just kidding, I'm very grateful for my family and friends.)

But back to the food. Since I'm a food lover and stuffing my face is the best part of my Thanksgiving, I decided to rank the top 10 foods my family serves from worst to best.

10. Green beans

Starting with a less controversial opinion, I rank green beans at number 10 because there are so many better options I'm grabbing first.

I'm not saying they're horrible, getting your greens in is important, but they're never my priority.

9. Mashed potatoes

Okay, listen. I'm just not a mashed potatoes person. They're plain, and the texture never pleases me.

Even though it's one of my family's classics, I only take a little.

I know you can add a lot to mashed potatoes to make them better, but there are way more flavorful food options, and I can't get past the texture.

8. Gravy

To be honest, I had this spot empty and felt gravy fits here.

Yes, gravy makes food better, but if food requires gravy to taste good, is it really good? In my opinion, no.

It also ranks low because it's not standalone food.

No shame to anyone who drinks a cup of gravy, though. I get you.

7. Stuffing

I love stuffing, but I love other stuff more than stuffing. It also has to be made right for it to be truly good.

I have nothing else to say; to me, it's kind of mid.

6. Apple pie

My family and friends are going to be shocked.

I ranked this one in the middle because of how much I enjoy apple pies. This also applies to any pie.

But by the time desserts come out, I need a minute or two before I go back in for desserts.

I love apple pie, and I know I have said this about pretty much everything on this list, but it's one of my favorite things to bake.

But it ranks middle because I like to eat a slice after everyone is done eating their main dish, and we clean up a little and I can only eat one slice because how full I am.

5. Sweet potato casserole

This is a staple in my family, and I love it.

A lot of people have told me it's nasty or that their family doesn't serve it.

And yes, this contradicts the fact that I don't like mashed potatoes. I have no idea how the texture of sweet potato casserole is okay for me, but mashed potatoes aren't.

Maybe it's the marshmallows...

4. Mac and cheese

I love mac and cheese, especially when it's slow-cooked in a crockpot. The only downside is that it doesn't make the best leftovers.

3. Cranberry sauce

I don't know what everyone else's opinions are, but my family doesn't really like cranberry sauce, except for me.

This was the one food my mom had to buy just to please my grandma and me.

2. Turkey

Yes, turkey comes in at number two because there's just one thing that's so much better.

But I LOVE turkey. I remember as a kid trying to help out, and my grandma always joked that you had to slap the turkey to make it taste better.

Turkey is delicious, and it's the second thing I stuff my face with the most.

1. Dinner rolls

Yes, dinner rolls are number one, and this is a valid choice.

What food do you snack on all day while waiting for everything else to finish cooking? I'll wait.

The moment I wake up and smell food that's already in the oven, I start inhaling dinner rolls.

By the time dinner is served, I'm basically full of rolls.

Well, that's my ranking of Thanksgiving foods.

I hope you agree with me. If not, I'm sorry... kind of.

Anyways, I hope everyone has a fun Thanksgiving and that it's filled with delicious food.

Get home safe, enjoy your weeklong break and, when you get back, enjoy your final weeks of the semester.

Happy Thanksgiving!

I'm now going to dream of all the yummy food I am going to consume next week.

When is the right time to listen to Christmas music?

IZZIE NOELLE

Fall Girly / Photo Editor

It's Nov. 2, and when you walk into Walmart, all the Halloween items are up to 50% off.

The aisles have been absolutely scavenged.

In place of Halloween decorations and costumes are fuzzy socks, hot cocoa mugs and wrapping paper.

"She" is defrosting.

Or maybe ... "She" already has defrosted.

This is something I feel we've normalized waaaayyyy too much as a society.

The second Halloween is over, we're always jumping right into Christmas.

I mean, the Starbucks on campus is already playing Christmas music.

To be honest, I've always been very against this jump straight to Christmas.

I'm an October baby and have always loved the fall season, with pumpkin spice and the leaves changing colors.

I mean, the bias is basically built-in on a genetic level. Since I'm born in the fall, I've always been super into Halloween.

However, this year seems to be a bit different.

I'm not sure what's happening, and honestly, it's a bit scary.

This year, I feel the Christmas spirit sneaking in, just a bit early. I'm planning presents and dreaming of a White Christmas.

I've already made a playlist for my Christmas radio show.

I'm dreaming of indulging in all the fun winter traditions, such as ice skating and hot cocoa.

Although I am partial to ice skating, considering that I've learned to skate backwards.

(I'm so cool, I know.)

BUT I WANT TO GET ONE THING STRAIGHT.

While you may feel the Christmas spirit earlier in the year, I believe there is a time and place for Christmas music.

And no, it's not Nov. 1.

We still have a whole lotta fall to get through.

In my personal opinion, the socially acceptable day to start listening to Christmas music is the day after Thanksgiving.

This year, that's Nov. 28.

If you celebrate Thanksgiving, or if you don't, there is still sooo much to do during the fall, before skipping to the winter holidays.

You're in the perfect weather, where it usually isn't too hot or too cold.

It's the ideal sweater weather. Go on some walks and enjoy that beautiful fall breeze before it turns into a nasty winter wind.

Speaking specifically on the holiday, you can look at it as spending time with family, eating some good food and being thankful.



Graphic by ELLIOT MORSE | Special to The Leader

I think there are lots of things we overlook that we can be thankful for, especially the little things.

After we've properly appreciated fall, when we're all rushing to the stores to get Christmas gifts at the cheapest prices on the planet, THEN you can listen to Christmas music.

Enjoy all the Mariah Carey, Frank Sinatra and Michael Bublé you want.

And you know what? If you are feeling the cheer a little early, maybe you can even listen to Christmas music at the end of the Thanksgiving Day parade.

You can see Santa at the very end of the parade, welcoming in the Christmas cheer.

So just wait a liiiiiittle bit longer to start that Christmas music up.

Lovercolumn: Fantasy vs. Reality

THE QUARTERBACK

Executive Producer of Lovercall

THE MUSICIAN

Lovercall Producer

BUMBLEBEE

Lovercall Producer

Hello!

We are The Quarterback, The Musician and Bumblebee: producers and hosts of the radio show Lovercall, right here in 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 21-year-old cisgender man who uses he/him pronouns and is a senior at Fredonia.

“The Musician” is a 23-year-old gender-fluid person who uses they/she pronouns and is a senior at Fredonia.

“Bumblebee” is a 19-year-old questioning person who uses he/she/they pronouns and is a sophomore at Fredonia.

On each episode, the hosts and guests of Lovercall participate in a variety of segments.

The cast discusses a relevant news story, a date idea, a wacky game and a main topic for the episode.

Listeners can submit their questions or seek advice 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 is 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 or 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 even go solo for a fun activity in Fredonia.

For this week’s date, it’s time to fire up the console because you’re going to play some video games!

Video games can be a great way to get to know one another on a deeper level, and it can also provide an opportunity for collaboration towards a common goal.

Many video games involve strategy and teamwork, so you and your partner(s) can work together to accomplish a mission.

If you’re feeling competitive, you can also go head-to-head with them in the game of your choosing — just make sure it doesn’t get too competitive!

While you’re playing, don’t be afraid to reveal your true, authentic self.

It can be endearing to them if you show just how passionate you are. In fact, some people find it very attractive when they see their person’s true colors.

If you’re not too much of a gamer, that’s okay! You can also sit back and watch them play if you choose.

This can be an opportunity to learn a new game you’ve never played, which could also show you a side of them you haven’t seen before.

Either way, try your best to have some laughs and not take it too seriously.

One way to do this is to try a game none of you have played before or a game none of you are good at.

Not only will this show that you’re able to laugh at yourself, but it’ll also give you a chance to laugh along with them.

Have fun and play away!

This week's date idea is:

Playing video games!

Fantasy vs. Reality

Most of us have, at some point, held the belief that there exists a “perfect partner” just waiting for us to stumble into their orbit.

They’re flawless in temperament, aligned with all 27 of our political, spiritual and dietary preferences and possess the ideal ratio of emotional depth to meme literacy.

The myth persists — it’s intoxicating. It suggests that love is an achievement unlocked, not a relationship nurtured.

It tells us we don’t have to compromise, grow or adapt because perfection requires nothing from us.

And, conveniently, the myth keeps us from facing the real work of intimacy: vulnerability, accountability and the occasional argument about whose turn it is to take out the trash.

Fantasy is not inherently bad. In fact, imagination plays a healthy role in desire.

Fantasies can help us understand what excites us, what scares us and what emotional experiences we long for.

They can even make a good relationship better, adding playfulness, novelty and a bit of mystery.

Reality isn’t shiny, but it’s far more compelling.

Real relationships include awkward misunderstandings, mismatched libidos, dishes left in sinks and unresolved questions about who is paying for whose Starbucks order.

But they also include the quiet warmth of being truly known, the intimacy of shared routines, the joy of stupid inside jokes and the comfort of partnership that is not based on performance.

While we have ideals of a perfect relationship, it is important to remember that just like you, your partner is human.

We all make mistakes and almost never does your partner try to do something purposely to hurt you.

We all have unique ways of doing things and with those come mistakes that are just a fact of reality.

You will mess up, and so will your partner, but take comfort in that it can help you get through life, and those relationships, even if we do have our fantasies of a perfect relationship in our heads.

Reach out! Do you want to ask the authors of Lovercolumn a question? Do you need advice? Fill out the form using this QR code.

Interested in being a guest on Lovercall? Email mvolz@fredonia.edu or visit Fredonia Radio Systems, located in McEwen Hall 115 and open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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The ultimate cran-baby tier list

AVA-CLAIRE BORING

Special to the Leader

Ocean Spray cranberry juice is notorious for having cran-babies with every fruit imaginable.

I'm sure if you've ever stepped foot in a grocery store, you're familiar with this concept.

I decided to pool together eight cranberry juice flavors (almost \$20 and two meal swipes later) to taste test and rank each one amongst my friends.

I will put them in a tier list, with "A" being the best, "B" being the middle and "C" being the worst.

My friends and I gave each juice a grade out of 10, and I averaged out each score to determine the best one.

First off: Cranston Marche cranberry juice.

What is there to say? It's not bad, but in comparison to every fun flavor of cranberry juice, it's nothing special at all.

4/10, C-tier. This is where you belong.

Next, the only Ocean Spray cranberry juice offered on campus, Cran-Grape.

I hesitated to try this one because I really hate grape-flavored things — they never taste like grape!

To my surprise, I didn't hate this one nearly as much as I thought I would.

You lose most of the cranberry, though, a theme that will be persistent throughout this study.

I'm gonna be honest, this one was mid.

It's only fitting to give it a 5/10 and in the C-tier, next to your grape-flavored, cough-syrup mother.

Next up is Cran-Pineapple.

I only tried this and my friends didn't, so this one is purely based on my opinion and nobody else's.

If this were the only cranberry juice combination on the planet, I could still die happily.

I'd be fine with not knowing all of the cran-baby possibilities, because this one is perfect.

Who wants to mess with perfection?

9.5/10 because it would be wrong to say 10/10 so early on.

Just know I'm comparing every other cranberry juice to cran-pineapple, sorry.

You have a padded cushion with free room service and all you can eat breakfast in Hotel A-Tier, queen.

Next is Cran-Tropical.

This one was widely mid, to my shock.

I liked this one a lot, but when subjected to the experimental group (my friends), they ranked this amongst the lowest cranberry mutants.

The cran-to-trop-ratio was noted.

It was "Hard to taste the cranberry," which is valid.

Part of the ranking was the ratio, and unfortunately, Cran-Tropical did not deliver.

Not the worst, but also not in the top three or even top five.

Sorry, cran-tropical, I think you deserved better.

6/10, placing you in B-tier with the "Cars" movie during the 2007 Oscars, since both of you were famously snubbed.

(Can you believe "Happy Feet" won the Oscar against "Cars"?)

Following Cran-Tropical's failure is Cran-Raspberry.

Everybody loved cran-raspberry, and I'm going to have to agree.

It was the perfect mixture of tartness to sweetness, and the ratio is remarked with a very astute and enlightened direct quote from a member of the experimental group.

"Good."

That's really all there is to it!

This was among my top three and was ranked very high on the list with a whopping 7.5/10, putting you in the A-Tier with an all-expenses paid trip to Miami.

Next off is Cran-Pomegranate, a flavor I had no idea even existed before I went to Walmart for this experiment.

I must say, you have to like pomegranate in order to like Cran-Pomegranate, as it has a very natural flavor.

This one was very close to Cran-Pineapple for me, and I think they're sisters in my head.

The ratio was remarked as very balanced, and no flavor really took over.

Almost everybody I had try this had this in their number one spot, but how will it withstand next to Cran-Pineapple on judgment day? (A random Tuesday night at 9:45 p.m.)

I'd give this one an 8.5/10 and tuck you into a soft, warm bed in A-Tier.

Next is Cran-Mango. You should be ashamed of yourself. I don't think this, but it seems like everyone else did.

There's a very common theme of people hating the ones I love, but I swear I'm right about the Cran-Pineapple.

It was widely hated and averaged out at the bottom of the list because of its significant artificial mango flavor.

Apparently, it had too much mango.

I probably also shouldn't have done this experiment with a group full of mango haters; I only came to find out AFTER the experiment.

I won't stand for mango haters.

3.5/10 and sentencing you to death row in C-Tier (I'm sorry).

Finally, we have Cran-Apple.

This was wildly loved, which was shocking to me, as I, again, had no idea this one existed before I went to Walmart.

The ratio was remarked as "Didn't pair well together," but somehow was the fourth most liked?

We need to make up our minds.

I'm deciding for everyone and putting you in B-Tier with a 6.9/10 alongside a cat that will rub up against you but then bite when you try to pet it.

The top three has been decided...

In first place, to nobody's surprise, is Cran-Pineapple!

I don't even care that nobody else tried it (because I drank it all before we could have the test), this is the best one by a landslide (to me).

Following very closely, we have Cran-Pomegranate!

This one was favored by almost everyone who tried it, and I think it deserves its spot in second place.

In third place, we have Cran-Raspberry.

At the bottom of the pyramid, we have Cran-Mango.

You deserved so much more than this...

That concludes Ava-Claire's Cran-Baby tier list.

On another note, if you're interested in trying some cranberry juice, shoot me an email.

I have plenty left over.



Graphic by ELLIOT MORSE | Special to The Leader

A girlfriend's guide to watching your partner play video games

MEGAN KIDBY

Scallion Editor

My girlfriend is a gamer.

I have known Olivia for close to three years and there is one thing that has always been consistent.

When I sleep over at her house (mom, dad, I'm sorry) we usually end the night with her playing a game before we fall asleep.

It's one of those things I cherish, but sometimes she'll play something and I'll have no clue what is happening.

I'm not 100% lost on video games. I've been playing "Date Everything" on the Switch, so I know a good game when I see one, but the games she plays have more serious plots than trying to have sex with a d20.

I realized after watching the YouTube channel "Girlfriend Reviews" that other people feel the same way.

Hopefully, if you feel this way too, this article can help you.

Also, if you have advice for other games, please bestow your knowledge upon me so I can understand.

Liv's been talking about "Ghost of Tsushima," and I need to know if I'm losing her to the game.

Lies of P

IN "LIES OF P," YOU PLAY AS P!

Ahem...now that I've gotten that out of the way.

"Lies of P" is an action soulslike game inspired by Pinocchio.

Do I know what soulslike means? I mean...kind of?

I think it has something to do with Dark Souls? Liv talks about them a lot.

They are third-person games that are difficult as hell.

I'm still watching Liv play this one, so I don't have a full grasp on how the game plays out, but I'll do what I can.

There's a lot of fighting in this game, and honestly, if you tune out for the fighting and pay attention to the sick cut scenes and the lore, you'll do pretty well.

There's also a cat you can find in the main hub of the game, so make sure you force your partner to look every time they enter.

The boss fights have like two or three stages sometimes and your partner will die multiple times, so Instagram is your best friend.

Make sure your partner recalibrates their P-Organ.

God of War: Ragnarok

...Boy...

That's all you need to know.

NieR: Automata

"NieR: Automata" tells the story of androids 2B, 9S and A2 as they fight to take back a world overrun by powerful machines.

Players jump between different kinds of attacks while battling tons of enemies and tough bosses across wide, open areas.



Graphic by SAFFRON LARREA | Art Director

This is one of the most beautiful games I've ever seen my girlfriend play.

I first saw her play "NieR" three years ago, and I haven't gotten it out of my head since.

During the period of time we weren't together, I saw it in my local library and almost rented it so I could be closer to her. (I'm a D1 yearner, what can I say?)

This is another game where you might need to go on your phone, but I've used my phone less while watching this game.

There's a character named Emil, who I thought was the cutest thing I've ever seen. He is absolutely scary to look at, but he's so adorable.

I don't know, I like weird characters.

The Machines are the bad guys, but you're going to feel bad when you see them die.

They look so innocent and so cute, it's hard to see them get killed; however, they are mean and they will kill your partner if they don't kill them first.

Make them feel bad for doing it though, I do that all the time.

Peggle

"Peggle" is a puzzle game where the goal is to hit all orange pegs to win the level, while avoiding running out of your 10 starting balls.

Hitting green pegs activates special abilities for your chosen character, and hitting purple pegs gives you bonus points.

I watched Liv play Peggle so much, it's insane. I don't get bored of watching this one though, because each level is new and exciting.

You're not running around for 20 minutes trying to find the next level; it's right there, and you know what you must do. There are strategies to use and different characters to choose from.

I also love the classical music aspect of it. When you boot up the game, you're greeted with "Peer Gynt: Morning Mood" and when you win, you get "Ode to Joy."

That piece makes any win feel like the greatest achievement you will accomplish in your lifetime.

Slay the Spire

"Slay the Spire" is a roguelike deck-building game where you play as one of four characters: the Ironclad, the Silent, the Defect or the Watcher.

You try to climb a tower made up of randomly generated floors, fighting all kinds of enemies and bosses along the way.

I can only describe this one as Wizard101, but it is more challenging.

I can't give you much on this one because the only time I tried to focus on her playing it was when she was in the hospital, and I was more focused on the fact that she was going into surgery instead of the game mechanics.

I guess the fact that I don't pay attention speaks for itself. You'll be bored but pay attention to the cards so you can help out sometimes.

Spelunky

"Spelunky" is a platformer where each time you die, you restart in a new randomly generated set of levels.

You don't get to keep the stuff you find on the journey, either.

Liv said, "It's the closest thing we have to a rogue like at this point."

Once again...don't really know what that means. Just let your partner explain it to you and watch their eyes sparkle while they explain it to someone they love.

Doom: Dark Ages

"Doom: Dark Ages" is a first-person shooter game where you're put in the role of the DOOM Slayer during a brutal medieval war against the forces of Hell.

Guys, this one legit made me motion sick the first time I watched my girlfriend play it.

The plot is super sick, and I like the gore aspect, but I couldn't make it past the jerky movements in the fighting parts.

If you're sensitive to movement, maybe take a nap for this one or get the Dramamine ready.

Hopefully, these help you understand a little bit of what's going on when you watch your partner's screen.

If you have any other questions or want to know my opinion on other games, feel free to leave them in the comments below.

Thanks for watching and remember to subscribe, now I'm going to watch my girlfriend genuinely rage when P falls down another rickety bridge.



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HOROS

IZZIE NOELLE
Dessert Connoisseur

Thanksgiving is fast approaching, which means most of us are heading home for the holiday. OR maybe you have a Friendsgiving party or a potluck coming up. You may begin to wonder about what to bring to your Thanksgiving, Friendsgiving or potluck, and the answer should be dessert. Here is the dessert you should bring to your festive fall event. Reminder, we're not going to be toooo basic; we're getting a little creative here.



Aries

Pumpkin pie:

Sticking with a classic fall treat, pumpkin pie! Make it from scratch, or buy it from the store, but regardless, everyone will love a good pumpkin pie.



Taurus

Tiramisu:

Now, at least in my family, this isn't a typical dessert, BUT I think it could be pretty fun to bring to a party. I mean, who doesn't like chocolate or coffee? Whip up, or buy, a tiramisu this fall season.



Gemini

Cinnamon macarons:

Everyone loves a bite-sized dessert, and cinnamon is such a fall flavor in my opinion. So, combine the two and make, or buy, cinnamon macarons!



Cancer

Skillet cookie:

There are not enough words in the English language to describe how delicious skillet cookies are. Throw some ice cream and chocolate drizzle on top, and you'll easily have one of the best desserts at the function.



Leo

Creme brulee:

I had one heck of a time typing the name of this dessert into Word, and I hear making it isn't any easier, but then again, anything is easier than working with Microsoft. If you show up to your fall-themed event with this (I won't try typing it again), you'll be sure to impress all your friends and family.



Virgo

Apple crisp:

I feel like apple crisp is soooo easy and sooooo underrated. Chop up some apples, toss them in sugar, make a cinnamon sugar oatmeal mix, top with butter, and bake. Super simple and super delicious. Bring some vanilla ice cream along and you'll have an amazing yet simple dessert.

COOPES



Libra

Caramel cheesecake:

Caramel feels like a very fall flavor to me, and cheesecakes are delicious. We're gonna mix them together. Maybe spice things up with some cinnamon? Either way, a caramel cheesecake would be soooo delicious.



Scorpio

Dark chocolate truffles:

Chocolate truffles are a yummy and seemingly simple dessert. Dark chocolate truffles? They would be a hit at any party, and you can even do some fruit filling, I think. I don't know much about chocolate truffles to be honest.



Sagittarius

Churros with chocolate dip:

Now I know this isn't quite a classic dessert, but it's yummy! I think making churros is pretty easy if you have a good recipe. The chocolate dip could easily be bought or made. I highly recommend breaking tradition a bit this year and bringing a fun dessert.



Capricorn

Carrot cake:

I'm not sure why carrot cake screams "FALL" to me, but it just does. Maybe it's the mix of spices like cinnamon and nutmeg, I don't know! Either way, I think a carrot cake could be pretty yummy.



Aquarius

Sweet potato gelato:

Now we all love a little cold treat, and sweet potatoes are a classic dish. Now, I think sweet potato gelato would be soooo good. I used to absolutely love sweet potatoes when I was younger. If you try this, please contact me and let me know. I want to know how it goes.



Pisces

Fruit and whipped cream:

Super classic dessert: fruit and whipped cream. I think strawberries are a good pick to be honest. Get a tub of Cool Whip if you're feeling like it, and just let everyone dig in. I feel like you can't go wrong here.

