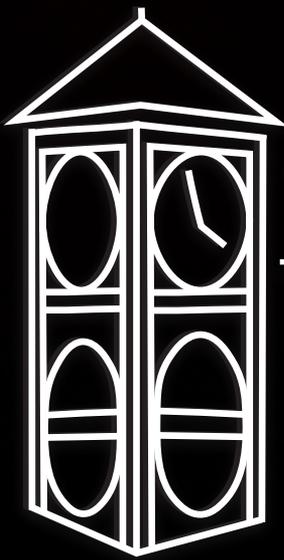
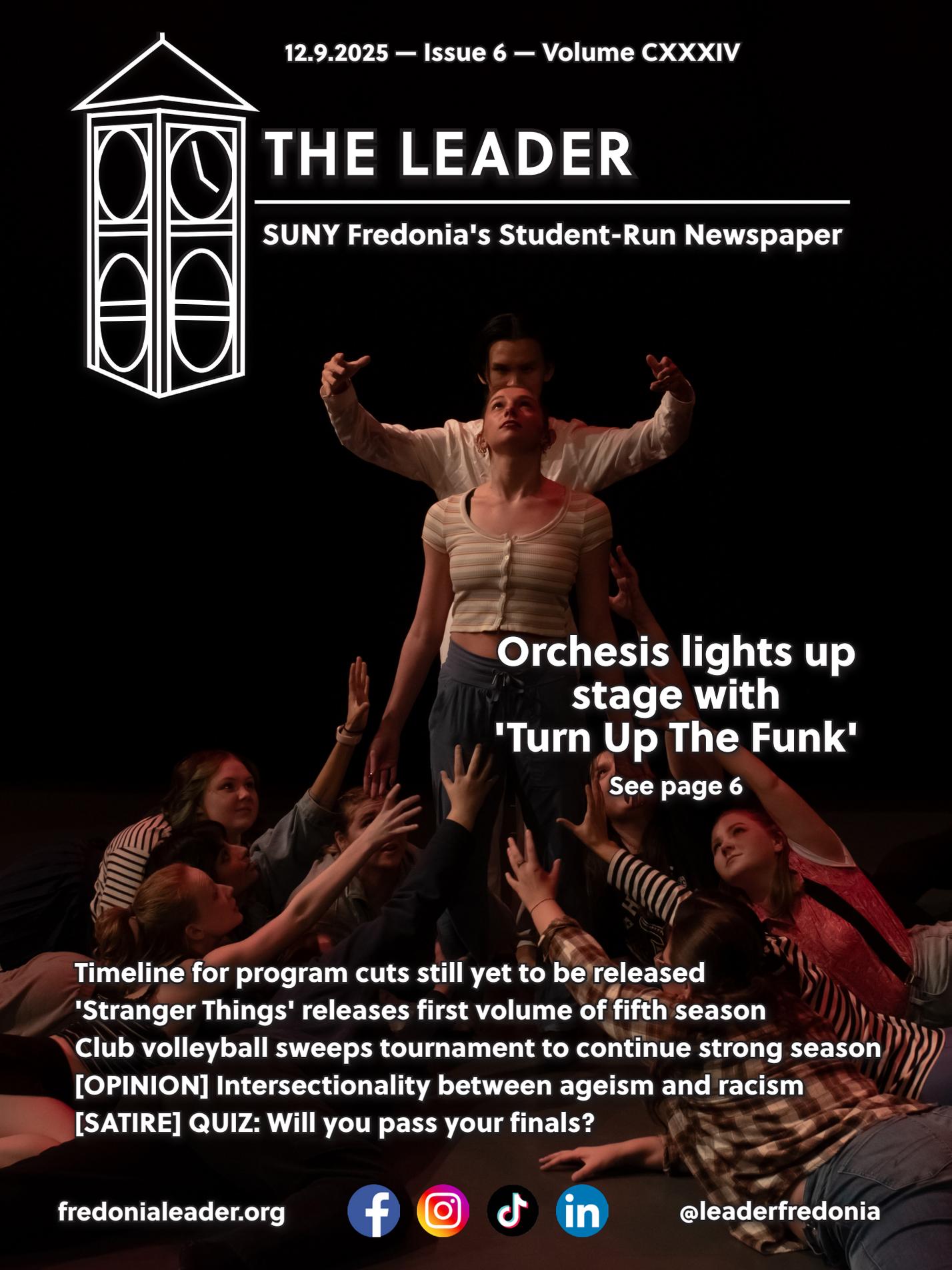


12.9.2025 — Issue 6 — Volume CXXXIV



THE LEADER

SUNY Fredonia's Student-Run Newspaper



**Orchesis lights up
stage with
'Turn Up The Funk'**

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'Stranger Things' releases first volume of fifth season
Club volleyball sweeps tournament to continue strong season
[OPINION] Intersectionality between ageism and racism
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"There are far better things ahead than any we leave behind." - C.S. Lewis

Proud member of The Associated Collegiate Press.

Timeline for program cuts still yet to be released

ALEX BUCKNAM

Managing Editor

One thing that has been on the minds of many students is the potential for more programs to be discontinued.

But as the end of the semester approaches, students are wondering: Where are the program reviews?

The latest email students received from Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Judith Horowitz came Oct. 31, listing a timeline for programs being reviewed.

It mentioned that throughout November, data would be shared with faculty, including information regarding their departments. “By November 3: Share data and sources with departments; include parameters for discontinuation,” the email from the provost’s office read.

Faculty did receive the shared data link, which was filled with graphs that showed how much the program was spending vs. how much money the program had; it also contained how many students were in the department each year.

Faculty explained that these graphs were confusing and sometimes difficult to read.

Horowitz mentioned this was a possibility and encouraged faculty to set up dates to meet with her so she could explain the models shown.

Horowitz said students would not have access to this data.

In a separate email sent to *The Leader*, the provost explained the reason why the models were not shared with students.

“The role of reviewing these program models and providing information on centrality, quality, and any other variable a department feels important is a responsibility of our faculty and not of our students,” she said. “Sharing this data implies the students need to do something with it, and that’s not the case.”

Her initial email from October also said that at the beginning of December, the provost’s recommendations would go to the president’s cabinet.

The email cut off after this date and encouraged faculty to meet with the provost if they had any questions about the shared link that would be sent to them.

In a previous email sent Oct. 3, following the provost’s meeting with the president’s cabinet, the plan stated that recommendations would go to the president on Dec. 5 and that, by the last day of finals, Dec. 19, the president would release his decision to the public.



Interim Provost Dr. Judith Horowitz. **Photo via fredonia.edu.**

“December 5: Recommendations for discontinuations delivered to the President. By December 19: President announces decisions about program discontinuation and program strengthening (departments hear about this information first, as do students in impacted programs),” the email stated.

But there has been another change to the dates and timeline of program reviews.

As of Dec. 5, the timeline for when students, faculty and staff will be notified of the final decision from campus administration is unclear.

In an email sent to Horowitz regarding the timeline, Horowitz said the dates are off. “No, we’re waiting on the updated models to be completed,” she said. “Once they’re sent to faculty, I’ll figure out the new dates and distribute them.”

Horowitz explained that the reason the dates are off, and why new dates have not been given, is because rather than revising and resending the information every time there is a delay, the administration will wait until faculty receive the newer models.

“Rather than sending out dates and needing [to change them] if there’s a delay in Finance and Admin, we decided to wait until the models were in the hands of the faculty before we came up with a new timeline.”

When Horowitz is referring to new models, she is referring to the data shared with faculty at the beginning of November that will be run again and shared with faculty again.

The *Leader* will provide updates as this story progresses.

Trump calls for death of Democratic lawmakers

ALEX BUCKNAM

Managing Editor

Washington has been busy recently, with a new special election, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene announcing she will resign from Congress and former President Donald Trump's post on Truth Social calling for veteran members of Congress to be arrested.

Most recently, a special election took place Dec. 2 to fill Tennessee's 7th Congressional District, which was left empty by Republican Mark Green, who effectively resigned from Congress on July 20.

In the 2024 presidential election, Trump won Tennessee's 7th District by 20 points.

In this special election, the Republican nominee, Matt Van Epps, won with 97,019 votes, or 53.9%.

Democratic nominee Aftyn Behn received 81,101 votes, or 45.1%.

This now brings the 119th Congress to 220 Republicans and 213 Democrats, with two seats vacant.

Both seats were previously held by Democratic representatives before becoming vacant.

But that number will change again in January, with Republican Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene announcing that she will resign on Jan. 5.

Greene released a video explaining her resignation to her constituents.

In the video, she expressed frustration with President Trump for calling her a traitor after she signed the discharge petition that would force the House of Representatives to vote on releasing the Epstein files.

"Standing up for Americans who were raped at 14 years old, trafficked by powerful men, should not result in me being called a traitor and threatened by the president of the United States," she said.

Greene was a longtime Trump supporter who worked with him during his successful 2024 campaign and stood by him in the wake of the Jan. 6, 2021, incident.

Greene said that if she is cast aside by the president and MAGA, then the average American has been cast aside.

She also said the reason for her resignation is that she did not want to endure a contested election with a Republican candidate who was endorsed by Trump.

She added that she believes Republicans will lose control of the House during the 2026 midterms.

Trump also posted a response calling for veteran members of Congress to be arrested for treason, describing it as "seditious behavior punishable by death."



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

On the morning of Nov. 20, Trump posted in response to a Washington Examiner story titled "Dem veterans in Congress urge service members to refuse unlawful orders."

Trump wrote, "This is really bad, and dangerous to our country. Their words cannot be allowed to stand. SEDITIOUS BEHAVIOR FROM TRAITORS!!! LOCK THEM UP???"

He then re-Truthed a few other posts, including "Traitors," "Unlawful is the key word, folks! UNLAWFUL!" and "HANG THEM. GEORGE WASHINGTON WOULD!!"

He concluded this rant by posting, "SEDITIONOUS BEHAVIOR, punishable by DEATH!!"

The video in question was composed of five Democratic lawmakers with military or intelligence community backgrounds, telling the military they can refuse illegal orders.

"Nobody has to follow orders that violate our laws or our Constitution," the video stated. "We know this is hard and a difficult time to be a public servant. But whether you're serving in the CIA, the Army, our Navy, the Air Force, your vigilance is critical."

In the video, the lawmakers did not mention what orders they deemed illegal, only that service members do not have to follow illegal orders.

The video was made as a public service announcement.

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.

As of Dec. 5, The Police Blotter has not been updated.

UPD Announcement:

The UPD is aware of recent reports involving individuals approaching students on campus to engage them in conversations about their religious beliefs.

UPD has made contact with these individuals and is actively addressing the situation.

While some students have described these interactions as uninvited or insistent in nature, at this point, UPD has not received any reports of physical assault.

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.

We want to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the importance of staying aware of your surroundings and reporting interactions or activities on campus that feel concerning, unwelcome or out of the ordinary.

If anyone encounters individuals engaging in outreach, solicitation or conversations that you do not wish to participate in, we encourage you to trust your instincts and prioritize your comfort.

If you feel uneasy or pressured at any point, please remove yourself from the situation and notify UPD (716-673-3333).

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Life & Arts

Orchesis lights up stage with 'Turn Up The Funk'



The cast of "Turn Up The Funk." Photo by PAIGE SMITH | Design Editor



Piece choreographed by Emma Steffenhagen.
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Piece choreographed by Ava Sargente. Photo by PAIGE SMITH | Design Editor

One last adventure in Hawkins: Reviewing 'Stranger Things'

MIA CIECHALSKI

Life & Arts Editor

The first volume for the fifth season of “Stranger Things” came out on Nov. 26, and it threw everyone upside down.

This popular Netflix show started in 2016 and has taken 10 years to get to its final season.

When it first came out, I was in sixth grade, and I am now a senior in college with the first part of the final season finally out.

Before I jump into what I thought with the first volume, I think having to wait a total of 10 years for five seasons is a little ridiculous.

The fact that many others and I are still so invested in this show shows how much time and effort the cast and crew put into this series to keep their viewers coming back for each new season.

However, there were some factors that played into the long-awaited finale, such as COVID-19 and the writer’s strike.

If you haven’t watched the first volume of season five, then I highly recommend you stop reading before you get some massive spoilers.

My first initial thought with the first volume for season five was that it was a little slower than normal for my liking.

It felt as if there were a lot of filler.

I understand why they had to put certain things in to show how they’ve all been living their lives ever since Vecna tore up Hawkins, especially since season four came out in 2022.

I also really liked getting to see Steve and Robin’s new job at the radio station, and the only reason they have the job is because a good majority of the town is leaving to go live somewhere else.

This gave the viewers a good indication of how all of these hard-to-explain events have affected the town and all of the characters’ environment.

Another part that tells the audience what has been happening since their last Vecna encounter is how the military set up base as a way to protect Hawkins and as a way to be as prepared as possible.

I do hope we get to see them finally realizing that Eleven isn’t the reason for everything that has happened to Hawkins and stop trying to find her.

They’ve been told so many times that it isn’t her, and you would think at some point that they would start some kind of realization that this isn’t all her fault.

While the military is focused on the wrong person, you see our main characters making sure to be prepared and ready for their next Vecna encounter, as none of them have seen him since the last time he tried to destroy Hawkins.



Photo via @strangerthingstv on Instagram.

I thought this was good, but also just a way to fill in certain parts of the episode. I feel like it goes without saying that our main group always has to be prepared, because they’re the only people who truly know the most about what is happening.

It was fun to watch them all do their part and work so well as a team like they always do during the previous seasons.

It shows that even though a lot has happened to them and so much has changed, they’re all still a close-knit group who can rely on one another.

You can see that even though they’re all still sticking together, they have had some changes to their personalities because of everything that has happened, mainly with Lucas and Dustin.

This is because of how badly Eddie Munson’s death has affected Dustin, and how Lucas is handling Max still being in a coma.

I’m glad they made sure to showcase some of the negative effects from everything for some of our main characters because I think it gives our characters some more depth, other than all of them being super close and obsessed with “Dungeons and Dragons.”

Then, of course, we still have our love triangle with Steve, Nancy and Jonathan.



Photo via @strangerthingstv on Instagram.

This may be an unpopular opinion, but I really hope Nancy ends up with Steve. I never liked her with Jonathan.

In previous seasons, they always made sure to show that love triangle in some way, shape or form, but what we don't see is Steve and Jonathan basically flaunting their masculinity in front of Nancy so much before.

I thought this was really funny to watch but also made sense because of how everyone's feelings were with each other during season four.

That mainly had to do with the fact that Nancy and Jonathan were long distanced during that season, and we got to see Nancy and Steve spending more time with each other as a result.

I hope we finally get to see who she sets all of her feelings on because while everyone loves a good love triangle, this one is starting to get overdone, and I feel it's time for her to stick with her decision.

We also finally get to see Joyce and Hopper be with each other after all the secret feelings they've had for each other since at least season three.

This made me so happy to see, since they've been waiting to have their first official date since season three and now, they're fully committed and what looks to be a healthy relationship.

There is one couple who I'm not totally sure are still together, and it's Mike and Eleven.

I know they never mentioned if they're together or not, but they don't seem as lovey-dovey as they were in previous seasons.

If they did end up breaking up, I honestly don't think that would be as much of a loss.

I feel like we have stronger relationships in the show when it comes to comparing all of the characters who are together.

We also don't see much action until Holly is taken, which is pretty normal.

After every season, they all think things will be better, but like always, it turns out that their fight with protecting Will and their home isn't done yet.

I also really like that the Demogorgons are taking the children because of Will being Vecna's test subject; it really connects all the seasons together perfectly.

I was jumping out of my seat seeing Mrs. and Mr. Wheeler using a golf club and broken wine bottle when they tried to fight the Demogorgon that was trying to take Holly.

That was easily one of my top favorite scenes.

However, if Mrs. Wheeler dies, I will be very sad and will most definitely be crying once the rest of the season comes out.

I could live without Mr. Wheeler, though.

It'll still be sad that he died, don't get me wrong, but he didn't do much in the show up until the episode in season five.

There's also a lot of speculation on which character will die next because there's always at least one character that the Duffer brothers decide to kill off.

Many people believe it to be Robin, and I honestly really hope none of our main cast ends up dying.

After making it through everything, it would be so disappointing that the very last season is when one of them dies.

If my man Steve "The Hair" Harrington doesn't die, then I know my tears will be saved.

He is easily my favorite character, if you couldn't already tell.

Continued from previous page

I also thought Holly's imaginary friend, Mr. Whatsit, actually being Henry/01/Vecna was so easy to predict.

This is mainly because we don't see or hear anything from him, so of course he would be secretly there right in front of everyone all along.

Once everyone figures this out, thanks to Mrs. Wheeler, they immediately get into their planning mode as a way to prevent any more kids from getting taken.

I also thought that connecting the dots about why Will was able to see through the Demogorgon's eyes was really cool to watch because they used an analogy as if he's also part of the hive mind, and once they said that, I knew their gears would be nonstop turning on why that was happening.

We also finally got to see who Tina is in this season as well.

This was kind of funny because we see Erika talk about Tina multiple times ever since her character got introduced, and now after all this time, the viewers finally get to see who this girl is.

The plan they made for Tina's little brother, Derek, who is the next child to be taken by a Demogorgon, was once again a classic scene to watch because of all of them brainstorming together.

I did think it was funny that Joyce, who is a 5'3" woman, could take on a 9' Demogorgon, but that just shows what a mother is willing to do for her child.

Then while half of the group was making sure to protect Derek, the other half was trying to be proactive by getting all of the kids that the military took from them using the children as bait.

This was so great to watch because of all of the time and effort they put in.

Of course, there is no such thing as a perfectly executed plan, and they all ended up getting found out by multiple different Demogorgans.

The biggest event in the first volume happened, too, and it was easily one of the most jaw-dropping events for all of the viewers to watch.



Photo via @strangerthingstv on Instagram.

I thought it was really cool, but at the same time it was a smidge predictable just because of all of the events that have happened since the beginning of the show.

It seems to have made sure that the show was packed away neatly with a bow on top.

I know I spoiled a good majority of the first part of the season, but I made sure not to spoil the biggest scene.

I wanted to save some mystery for those who haven't watched the first part of season five, and I hope it lives up to its expectations like it did for me.

There is still more to tell with the fifth and final season of "Stranger Things," and the second volume of season five which will be released on Christmas Day on Netflix.

Additionally, more to come will be included in the final two-hour episode which will be released on New Year's Eve on Netflix and in theaters.



Photo via @strangerthingstv on Instagram.



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Fredonia Radio Systems hosts semesterly 24-hour radio marathon

LONDON NICKOLAI

Special to The Leader

Ready, set and take to the airwaves!

Fredonia Radio Systems hosted its annual 24-hour Radiothon again this year, to close out the semester with a bang.

A decades-long tradition was kept alive in the station's lively dwelling in the corner of McEwen Hall.

The celebration kicked off with the legacy show "High Noon Friday," and for a full 24 hours, show hosts, station members and members of the community came together to create a variety of shows, from music to games and to late-night talk shows.

This was my third time experiencing the event, and now as a slightly better-adjusted sophomore, I could truly embrace just everything that went into the production of Radiothon.

I also hosted two of my own shows, "WCV-CLASIX" and "Uno at Uno."

"Uno at Uno" was originally started by former member and News Director Lee Pye.

Included in the rotation were other legacy shows, such as Lovercall, anonymously hosted by The Quarterback, The Musician and brand-new member this year, Bumblebee.

Other special features included classic hits on my show, "WCV-CLASIX," slow jams to kick back to on "5:00 Somewhere" and fresh served jams on "New Music Friday."

At other times, hosts would tug at the heartstrings of listeners on shows like "RyFi's Yearning."

After that, if listeners needed something more uplifting and comedic, they could find it in the so-called high-class acts of "Prefelton," which runs from classy to chaotic real quick.

Plenty of other titles and alternative variations of existing shows were introduced throughout Radiothon.

WDVL Program Director Megan Kidby reflected on their adventures of attending and producing such an event.

"The radio station is such a nice community that everyone is your friend and has your back. And Radiothon stands as that reminder," said Kidby.

Station Manager Matt Volz was excited about preparing the special edition of Lovercall.

"It's my senior year and my seventh Radiothon, which is crazy. It's been a tradition for years and years," Volz said. "I'm actually on three times, including Lovercall at midnight, where we'll be answering your curious questions."

A 24-hour event like this required station members to put in time.

Some members planned to hunker down for the entire day at the station, like freshman member Ryan Fink.



Freshmen Ryan Fink (left) and Palmer Witt (right) compete in 'The Big Cheeseburger Challenge, Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025.

Photo by ABBY JEFFERYS | Special to The Leader

"I feel ready, I have a full bag of food and goods. It's exciting," said Fink.

Fink was on air for six different shows, capping it off with an exciting announcement of switching his major from theatre to journalism.

While the shows kept rocking and rolling in the recording booths, members came together like family out in the lobby, sharing snacks and food.

They played games like Smash Bros, JackBox and Crosswords, bringing together the radio crew and fostering new connections.

Business Manager Abby Jefferys said that it's not just about the radio and the music, but also the friends you make, the support you get from them and the moments you get to share.

All in all, this year's Radiothon stood as a great success, building memories and laughs both in the station and over the airwaves.

If you'd like to join in on the festivities for Radiothon, the next one will be hosted in May.

London Nickolai is a member of Fredonia Radio Systems.

*Happy Holidays
from
The Leader!*

SPORTS

Club volleyball sweeps tournament, continues strong season

JACK HOADLEY

Assistant Sports Editor

While many are focused on Division III success here at Fredonia, one club team at this school had a standout season.

Fredonia women's club volleyball has gone to new heights this season and deserves to be recognized for that success.

In the past, success came at a premium for the team; between good moments and highlights, there just weren't wins coming with.

This year however, the team did not just win, but swept an entire tournament this year, which, as President Rachel Bayer would agree, is a massive win for the team.

When asked about how she felt about the season, Bayer said, "Really happy, [I] can't really even describe it."

Bayer was not surprised by the team, but certainly, the immediate tournament sweep was a welcome step forward this year.

The tournament won was hosted at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), and as mentioned, the team refused to lose a single set, completing a sweep for Fredonia.

Although it's not simply success on the court that made the season such a win for the team, as there are many qualities that led to that major victory.



Photo by LIN BAYER | Special to The Leader

Bayer listed a number of traits that made the team so resilient.

"[We are] definitely hard-working, and all of our girls are the kind of people that don't give up just because there's a point deficit," she said.



Photo by LIN BAYER | Special to The Leader



Photo by JESSICA GROUP | Special to The Leader

On a social side, the team has become a close group and uses that to their advantage.

“Everyone on the team is getting along really well ... Like our team chemistry is really strong,” she said.

She credits the team as “truly being like a family” and says that it isn’t specific to team bonding, but just overall chemistry that makes them so close.

Bayer added, “Having that team chemistry and everyone getting along really well contributes to the win.”

One major factor in this success, according to Bayer, is freshman setter Rebecca Phillips, who had an impressive season in her first year.

Against Canisius, Phillips had 17 serves in a row, which is an unheard number of unanswered points.

To follow that up, Phillips had 13 straight serves against a very strong RIT team, playing a huge part in those victories.

Phillips herself credited her quick success on the team for being extremely welcoming and allowing for a seamless jump onto the team.

Phillips seconds the impact of chemistry on success, “That was one reason we were so successful, because we had really good team chemistry.”



Photo by LIN BAYER | Special to The Leader

Obviously, an influx of immediate success from a new student will have a major effect on success and not just for one year, but for the future of the club.

The team will try to build off a great season where they finished tied for third in a league of 23 teams, a significant mark for any team.

Make sure to support the Fredonia women’s club volleyball team in the future as they begin to build off a very successful season this year.



Photo by JESSICA GROUP | Special to The Leader

5th Quarter Column: Bills take down Bengals in snow-filled shootout

MITCH HORUCY

Sports Editor

After a 39-34 win, the Bills broke a 17-17 tie in the all-time series against the Bengals, now leading 18-17.

The win keeps them in reach to snatch the AFC East back from the New England Patriots, who currently hold a two-game lead over the Bills.

This game had just about everything, which was nice because I was there to witness it.

While there are still questions about the defense and the passing game, Josh Allen reminded everyone who he is with a monster performance, doing his best to make a two-man MVP race into a three-man race.

He had 329 total yards to go along with four touchdowns, including a 40-yard rushing touchdown in the snow.

He'd have to win out and have big games in both the Patriots and Eagles games, but the MVP is still a possibility for Allen.

In terms of the team as a whole, it's a big win, but also one that showcased flaws that could be the downfall of this team.

Joey Bosa was inactive for this game, and it showed.

He was on pace for his highest sack total since 2021, including a league high in forced fumbles so far this season.

The team had just one sack against the Bengals and posted just a 2.7% pressure percentage.

It was his second lowest pressure percentage in a game in his career.

If the Bills defense can't figure out how to get pressure on the quarterback, a quick exit in the playoffs may be in their future.

On the positive side, it was nice to see the \$14 million man, Dawson Knox, make some plays against one of the worst defenses in the league when it comes to covering tight ends.

With 93 yards, it was his highest total since Dec. 17, 2022, and his first time totaling over 40 yards this season.

Even with Dalton Kincaid being the feature player at the position, having Knox contribute opens up more opportunities for both Kincaid and the rest of the offense as a whole.

James Cook, despite a very bad fumble, had another effective game with 111 yards on 20 touches.

This moves the Bills to 8-1 when Cook has 19 or more touches.

He needs to continue to be a focal point of the offense, even if he isn't being as efficient as he can be.

With three receptions, this marked the sixth straight game with a reception for Cook, having multiple in his last five.

With the offense currently lacking a productive downfield passing attack, consistently getting the ball in Cook's hands in the perimeter and in space three or more times a game is crucial.

This sets up a huge game against the Patriots with the division on the line.



Mitch Horucy's view from the broadcast booth, Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025. Photo by MITCH HORUCY | Sports Editor

Even with a win this upcoming Sunday, the Bills would still need help from some familiar foes.

After their matchup with the Bills, the Patriots play at Baltimore, at the Jets and home against Miami.

They'd have to lose one of their games against Miami or New York for the Bills to win the division, though, as the second tiebreaker behind head-to-head games is division record.

After reaching that threshold of tiebreakers, there are many moving parts that would need a whole separate article to explain, but we'll cross that road if we get there.

That being said, I think the Bills will beat the Patriots this upcoming Sunday.

I think the Patriots are legit despite their easy schedule, but so are the Bills.

The rushing attack for the Bills has to stay hot if they want to win, and I think it will.

For the Pats, their run defense has been good, but they've only played five teams that have been in the top half of the league in rushing yards per game.

They'll also be without stud defensive lineman Milton Williams, whom they gave a \$104 million contract to this offseason.

Getting James Cook going early in this game will be a key to success, especially if they can keep Drake Maye and the rest of the Pats offense on the sideline.

In the pass game, getting Dalton Kincaid involved is crucial to the team's success.

When these teams played in week five, he had possibly the best game of his career, catching all six of his targets for 108 yards, moving the chains on five of those receptions.

He needs to replicate, or at least come close to doing so, if the Bills want to steal one on the road.

For the defense, the run game needs to be stout.

New England's rushing attack isn't anything that wrecks games; don't let it wreck this one.

Containing Maye will also be important.

He has yet to throw for 300 yards as a pro. If he breaks that streak against the Bills, it'll be hard to overcome.

Maye has also done a great job of protecting the football.

If he can play a clean game, it'll be huge for the Pats.

I think the game comes down to which quarterback can play a clean game.

It will be close, but I think the Bills remind the Pats who they are.

Prediction:

Bills 33 – Patriots 26

This will be the last issue that The Leader has until late January of 2026.

But fear not, I'm not going anywhere.

As I've done in years past, I'll be doing weekly columns that will be posted on The Leader website every Tuesday.

Check them out at fredonialeader.org.



Bills tight end Dawson Knox (#88) slides through the snow, Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025. Image property of the Buffalo Bills.

Bandits begin title defense with win, aim for fourth straight Cup

MATT VOLZ
Editor in Chief

“Piss ‘em off and go for four.”

That’s a line that many Buffalo sports fans of a certain age will remember fondly.

In 1993, the Bills were attempting to reach their fourth consecutive Super Bowl, getting up off the mat after three straight Super Sunday losses.

Many NFL fans wanted nothing to do with another Super Bowl featuring the Bills, feeling that the team had “ruined” the past three championship games with their stain of losing.

The Bills didn’t care, and they even wore T-shirts donning the less-than-PG slogan mentioned above.

32 years later, another Buffalo team is in a position to “go for four” — the Bandits.

The Bandits are arguably the most successful organization in the National Lacrosse League (NLL), boasting a league-best seven championships.

That success has been on display even more over the past few years, as the Bandits have won the last three NLL titles.

After a 15-year gap between titles that featured three NLL Finals losses, the Bandits reclaimed the mountaintop with a 2023 victory over the Colorado Mammoth.

They went back-to-back with a 2024 sweep of the Albany FireWolves, and Buffalo capped off the three-peat by beating the Saskatchewan Rush last season.

Like any other dynasty, the Bandits had to face the harsh truth of not being able to keep everyone.

Chase Fraser and Chris Cloutier, two of Buffalo’s top secondary scorers, left in free agency to sign with the Las Vegas Desert Dogs.

Defenseman Sam La Roue also departed, heading to the Ottawa Black Bears.

The remainder of their core stayed intact, as players such as Tehoka Nanticoke, Kyle Buchanan, Paul Dawson, Steve Priolo and Nick Weiss were all re-signed.

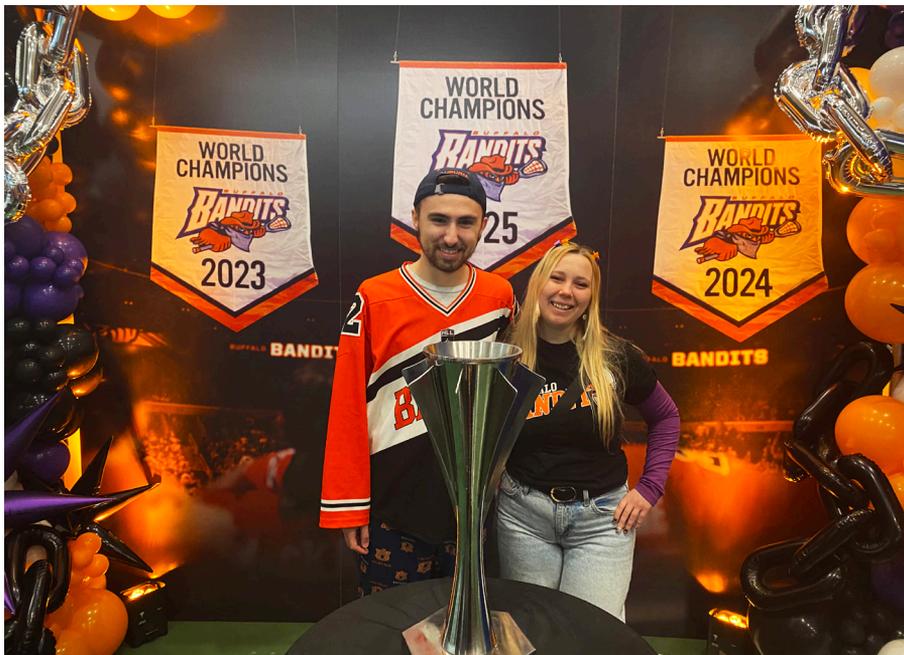
The Bandits also brought back their goalie, as Matt Vinc is back for his 21st season in the NLL.

Vinc, who turned 43 in June, is the only player in league history to win three straight championships for two different teams.

He was in net for the Rochester Knighthawks when they won three straight from 2012 to 2014.



The Bandits raise their 2025 championship banner, Saturday, Nov. 29, 2025. **Photo by MATT VOLZ** | Editor in Chief



Matt Volz and Chloe Kowalyk with the 2024 NLL Cup. **Photo by MATT VOLZ** | Editor in Chief

In addition to several players being re-signed, the Bandits also brought back two former players during the offseason.

Ryan Benesch signed a one-year deal to help Buffalo's offense after the departures of Fraser and Cloutier, and he returns to a place where he was once one of the league's top scorers.

Benesch played for the Bandits for four seasons from 2014 to 2017. He recorded his best statistical season during that stretch, scoring a league-best 55 goals in 2015.

He has played for 10 different teams over the course of his lengthy career, and the soon-to-be 41-year-old is in search of his first championship.

The Bandits also made a late offseason trade to boost their defense, acquiring Mitch de Snoo from the Philadelphia Wings.

De Snoo's career began in Buffalo, as he played his first five seasons with the Bandits from 2016 to 2020.

He joined the Toronto Rock in 2022, remaining there until the Rock traded him to Philadelphia at last year's trade deadline.

Like Benesch, de Snoo returns to his old team in hopes of winning his first championship.

The Bandits began their season on Saturday, Nov. 29, hosting the Georgia Swarm in front of a sold-out crowd.

The pregame ceremony included the raising of last year's championship banner, something Bandits fans have gotten quite used to.

Fraser and Cloutier returned from Las Vegas to celebrate with their old team before their season began.

Buffalo's opponent proved to be no pushover, as the Swarm have made the playoffs in each of the past two seasons.

Just 32 seconds into the game, Shayne Jackson drew first blood for Georgia. Dhane Smith quickly responded for Buffalo to tie the game before the game reached the one-minute mark.

After another goal from Jackson, the Bandits rattled off four straight goals, including a goal from both Benesch and de Snoo.

The Swarm scored twice in a row to close out the quarter, and Jackson began the second quarter by completing the hat trick to tie the game at 5-5.

The teams traded goals for the rest of the quarter, which included Smith picking up a hat trick of his own.

It was an 8-8 game at halftime, despite Buffalo holding a heavy advantage in shots on goal.

The fireworks continued early in the third quarter, as a Georgia goal in the first minute was met with two Buffalo goals, scored 30 seconds apart.

With the Bandits holding a 10-9 lead, Georgia goalie Brett Dobson delivered a hit that landed him in the penalty box with a five-minute major.

Devlin Shanahan, a former Bandit, filled in for Dobson while he was serving the penalty.

I'm pretty sure this is the first time I've seen a goalie actually go to the box for a penalty.

It was absolutely hilarious.

The Swarm killed off the entire five-minute major, but immediately after the penalty expired, Nanticoke stripped the ball from Shanahan and scored to put Buffalo ahead by two.

A power play goal from Ian MacKay gave the Bandits a three-goal lead heading into the fourth quarter, but Jackson kept Georgia in the game with his fourth goal of the night.

Buffalo scored two of the next three goals, including a short-handed goal from Smith for his fourth of the game.

An empty net goal from Dylan Robinson sealed the win for the Bandits, as they began the season with a 15-11 win.

The Bandits are home again on Saturday, Dec. 13, hosting the Halifax Thunderbirds at 7 p.m.

It's still early in the season, but Buffalo looks primed to "piss 'em off" and go for four."

The intersectionality between ageism and racism

SEASAI DH LIDDELL

Special to The Leader

Intersectionality is the concept that multiple different social characteristics, such as race, age, gender, class and sexuality, all work together to create systems of privilege and discrimination in our society.

Many of these oppressive systems are often intertwined, compounding discrimination.

Specifically, ageism and racism work hand-in-hand to target older adults of color, resulting in health and economic disparities.

Taking Foundations of Social Justice (WGST 202) has allowed me to gain much-needed knowledge about inequalities between groups in our society.

As a sophomore with a social work major, my future career path will involve all demographics of people, including elderly people of color.

The negative impacts of the ageism and racism they face are blatantly seen here in Western New York.

By choosing the path of social work, it is vital that I educate myself and bring attention to these issues that directly affect my future clients.

Older populations experience a compounding force of discrimination through the effects of not only racism, but ageism as well.

Systemic, institutional racism within healthcare results in a lack of trust in those systems among older Black populations.

In turn, older people of color are disproportionately at risk for many health concerns.

According to a 2024 article by KFF titled "Five Facts About Older Adults' Health Care Experiences by Race and Ethnicity," Black and Hispanic adults on Medicare are more likely than white adults to report higher rates of chronic conditions such as hypertension, higher rates of hospital admissions and a greater likelihood of receiving care in the lowest-rated hospitals.

Additionally, "one in seven (15%) older Black adults report experiencing unfair or disrespectful treatment in the past three years compared to smaller shares of older white adults (7%)."

These figures prove that systematic racism remains a major issue in our society and continues to greatly impact the lives of older adults of color.

These issues can also be seen through the wage gap between white people and people of color.

This imbalance results in older people of color lacking the equity to comfortably live in their retirement years.

Racism intersects with ageism, as the economic and social disparities experienced by younger generations display themselves in new ways as they grow older.

A lack of access to proper education, job opportunities and high wages causes adverse life experiences for older people of color.

It's easy to overlook these issues when talked about in a global manner.

However, these figures apply directly to the Western New York area.

A 2025 study done by The Center for an Urban Future showed that the number of older adults living in poverty has grown exponentially across all races.

However, Black and other minority groups have been affected disproportionately.

The study states, "In Syracuse, 43.2% of Black older adults live in poverty, in Albany 35.8%, in Erie County 25% and 26.8% in Buffalo."

These percentages are more than double that of their white counterparts, showing a clear pattern of racism within ageism here in New York.

To expand on the health conditions mentioned above, a 2022 article by the Buffalo Toronto Public Media reports that "in predominantly Black zip codes across New York, the state has deemed certain areas as cancer clusters with life expectancy as low as 60 years old."

Discrimination and oppression through racism and ageism is so severe that it can result in a population's life expectancy decreasing.

In turn, mortality rates such as these cause greater mental health issues in minority populations, highlighting the necessity for well-educated mental health services.

Through my social work education, I found this information greatly troubling.

Racism and ageism are proven to work hand-in-hand, causing significant disparities in life experiences for older adults of color.

It is crucial that society stays informed about these issues and acts against them.

In the health care system, we should listen and avoid expressing personal biases that will affect quality care.

Everyone should stay informed on the intersectionality of racism and ageism and should not shy away from educating others when needed.

Staying silent helps no one. It is important that we fight for each other, no matter race or age, to ensure a more equitable and equal society.

SOURCES:

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<https://www.btpm.org/health-wellness/2022-02-28/buffalo-black-older-adults-face-their-own-share-of-health-economy-inequities>

"One in seven (15%) older Black adults report experiencing unfair or disrespectful treatment in the past three years compared to smaller shares of older white adults (7%)."

- KFF, 2024

"In Syracuse, 43.2% of Black older adults live in poverty, in Albany 35.8%, in Erie County 25% and 26.8% in Buffalo."

- The Center for an Urban Future, 2024

"In predominantly Black zip codes across New York, the state has deemed certain areas as cancer clusters with life expectancy as low as 60 years old."

- Buffalo Toronto Public Media, 2022

Lovercolumn: Protecting Your Peace

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.

This week's date idea is:

Watching Hallmark movies!



Photo via imdb.com.

Date idea of the week

We hope to provide fellow students with fun and unique date ideas 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, you’re going to watch some Hallmark movies!

These movies are often cheesy, but that’s the fun of it! Snuggle up on the couch and embrace all those warm, fuzzy feelings that come with Hallmark movies.

If you’re a film buff, feel free to analyze it for content, but remember: Hallmark movies aren’t meant to be high quality.

Any Bills fans, like The Quarterback, might be interested in seeing “Holiday Touchdown: A Bills Love Story,” the new Hallmark movie about our hometown team.

In the film, next door neighbors Morgan and Gabe are lifelong friends united by their love of the Bills.

When Morgan discovers her uncle has received mysterious holiday gifts for decades, the two friends embark on a search for the mysterious sender.

Gabe, however, has a secret of his own — he’s been in love with Morgan for years, which is apparent to everyone except Morgan.

Several current and former Bills have cameos in the film, and Gabe even serves as the Vice President of Stadium Development for the team’s new stadium.

The Quarterback has seen this movie multiple times already. No matter which Hallmark movie you choose to watch, remember that the most important part of this date is the time you’re spending together.

Protecting Your Peace

What does it mean to protect your peace?

That is what we asked the guests on the latest episode of Lovercall.

Protecting your peace can look like a lot of different things, from taking time to yourself to setting boundaries in certain situations.

Everyone has their own definition of peace, making the way you keep that peace unique.

Some people protect their peace by physically distancing themselves while maintaining strong relationships and prioritizing their own well-being.

By protecting your peace in this way, you can better relax and enjoy your time after a long day.

As stated before, peace looks different to everyone, this means you might enjoy reading and decide to do it alone.

This doesn’t mean you dislike spending time with others or that you are upset; it is simply how you reset.

By focusing on yourself, you can better take care of both yourself and those around you.

When you focus on yourself, you can find out what makes you feel good and connect to yourself on a deeper level.

By understanding yourself and making sure you are at your best, you can take better care of those you love.

If you are like me, you never want to make others feel bad because you were frustrated and didn’t take time to protect yourself and your peace.

It is also important to recognize protecting your peace can look different from the people you interact with.

For example, a friend you love spending time with might leave you feeling bad at the end of the day, or maybe they did something you can’t forgive them for.

It’s important to think about how you want to handle that relationship going forward in order to protect your peace.

By taking time to consider your peace in a situation and how being with a person affects you, you can determine how to set boundaries.

This could be asking for distance, talking about issues and coming to a boundary that is respected or whatever you deem reasonable.

Setting these boundaries not only helps others support you, but it also helps them respect and enjoy their time with you.

No one can read minds, so by effectively communicating your boundaries and needs you helps others understand you better.

In any relationship, whether platonic or romantic, there should be a level of respect and understanding that allows boundaries to be upheld.

But how can someone know your boundaries without being told?



Without a basic understanding of how you protect your peace, how can someone respect you and help you relax?

Now, this shouldn’t be taken as something you should test out; it is good to ask people what they are comfortable with before you do something, but it is still good to make sure people are aware of how you protect your peace and how you take care of yourself.

Reach out! Do you want to ask the creators of Lovercolumn a question? Do you want advice? Fill out our 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.

“The Quarterback,” “The Musician,” and “Bumblebee” are members of Fredonia Radio Systems and are involved in the production of Lovercall.



Which Starbucks holiday menu items bring the most Christmas joy?

ALEX BUCKNAM

Managing Editor

Food lover Alex is back, and lately, too much time has been spent at Starbucks.

It's that time of the semester when you realize you have too many points, which means you can suddenly justify going to Starbucks multiple times a day.

With the amount of work I've had in the past few weeks, I've needed that caffeine.

So, I decided to try the Starbucks holiday menu and rank it.

As a food lover, I found it hard to rank my favorite drinks, so this list is based on one thing: how much Christmas joy each item brought me.

10. Hot and Iced Eggnog Latte

Eggnog is a Christmas classic, but this latte tasted off.

You can taste the eggnog, but the way it's steamed throws the whole thing off.

9. Hot Gingerbread Latte

Maybe it was a one-time thing, but honestly, it tasted like water with cinnamon.

I didn't feel any Christmas joy in this drink.

8. Iced or Hot Chestnut Perline Latte

This was decent, though it lacked the flavor I was looking for.

It mainly tasted like hot water, and hot water does not bring me Christmas joy.

7. Mocha Frappuccino

This was delicious. I have nothing else to say other than a must-try. But if it's a must-try, then why is it ranked No. 7?

Short answer: it's iced, and it's a Frappuccino.

I only get Frappuccinos in the afternoon after I'm done for the day and headed home.

I don't want to walk in cold weather with a cold drink.

It makes me cold just thinking about it, and being cold only brings me Christmas joy when I get to sit in a warm room afterwards.

6. Cranberry Bliss Bar

I love the Cranberry Bliss Bar once in a while.

This is the first item on this list that actually brings me a lot of Christmas joy.

I can't explain how, but in the afternoon when I want to go present shopping, a Cranberry Bliss Bar puts me in the right mood. It's like a breakfast bar, but it's for Christmas.

5. Iced Sugar Cookie Latte

I had this once, so I can't say much about it, other than it was good and brought me Christmas joy.

When I first tried it, I was scared that it was going to be too sweet, but it wasn't, which surprised me.

It didn't fully taste like a cookie like I wanted it to, but hey, if I wanted it to taste exactly like a cookie, I would just eat a cookie.

Safe to say, this would probably pair up well making Christmas cookies, and then so after eating them, so it ranks five for that reason.

4. Hot Chocolate

Starbucks hot chocolate is decent, nothing bad about it.

When I want something chocolate but just can't handle any more caffeine, I can go for it.

It's a nice drink to have when cozying up at night and then falling asleep.

I would get this more if we had a Starbucks that closed later; I'm just not a Tim Hortons hot chocolate guy.

3. Sugar Plum Danish

Another food item on this list that is fantastic.

If you haven't gotten this yet, you need to. It tastes like a toaster strudel with a hint of Christmas.

If you pair it with your favorite festive drink, it's sure to put you in the Christmas spirit.

2. Peppermint Mocha

To no surprise, a key ingredient you need to create the perfect Christmas-season day is hot chocolate with peppermint.

Drinking this while watching a movie is perfect.

The only downside is that it can be too pepperminty, which is not a problem for me.

Peppermint has been scientifically proven to make a person's heart three times larger.

That's right, it wasn't the Whoville ham; it was peppermint.



Graphic by SAFFRON LARREA | Art Director

1. Hot Caramel Brulée Latte

This one slaps.

It's the drink I'm always ordering from Starbucks.

Something about it makes me want it to snow so I can relax in a cozy room while working on schoolwork or reading a book.

There's no wrong time to get this — any time of day is the right time.

If you haven't had it yet, I recommend getting it later in the afternoon, heading back to your dorm and making your space comfortable.

You'll definitely feel like putting on "Home Alone" or "Elf."

Anyway, thanks once again for reading my rant about the Starbucks menu.

No hate to any of the Starbucks workers, this was based off the multiple locations I have been to; you all make my coffee perfect.

I would say that I'm going to go get a coffee, but I'm already drinking one ... Have a good Christmas and a happy New Year!

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THE SCALLION



Satire and parody for Fredonia

Happy holidays from The Scallion!

MEGAN KIDBY

Scallion Editor

Dear Loyal Readers, Occasional Readers and Accidental Readers,

As the semester winds to a merciful close and the campus enters its annual migrational pattern — students fleeing to homes with functional heating — I bring you this heartfelt holiday message from the cluttered desk of The Scallion.

Please ignore the empty coffee cups and the faint smell of printer ink; that's just the aroma of journalistic excellence fermenting.

First, I would like to congratulate all of you on making it to December without spontaneously combusting.

The finals-induced stress levels on campus recently surpassed the legal limit in 17 states and at least one small Canadian province.

Yet here you are — alive, conscious and capable of skimming at least 30% of this letter.

That, my dear readers, is a true holiday miracle.

As editor of The Scallion, SUNY Fredonia's most beloved source of satire, it is my solemn duty to reflect on the semester.

And what a semester it was.

We saw some critical issues affect the student body, such as the Great Starbucks Line Crisis, the alarming rise in emotional support succulents and the mysterious phenomenon of freshman herds clustering on the sidewalks making it almost impossible to get to class on time.

We also fearlessly exposed the truth about campus squirrels, who I'm convinced are one tuition increase away from unionizing.

But now, as the holiday season arrives, I urge you to put aside your heavy concerns.

Try, for example, to forget the finals you definitely won't study enough for.

Forget the notifications you've been ignoring.

Forget the group project where you did 98% of the work while your teammates contributed "moral support" and a poorly formatted PowerPoint slide.

Winter break is the time to let it go.

Before we all scatter to the winds, taking with us our laundry and various unresolved academic responsibilities, I want to send you off with a few pieces of holiday wisdom:

1. Do not, under any circumstances, let your relatives ask you about your major. If they insist, simply give them the Gen-Z stare until they get scared.
2. If someone asks you how your semester went, say "good!" with the same confidence you use when clicking "I have read and agree to the terms and conditions."
3. If you plan to rest, hydrate and establish a healthy sleep cycle over break, that's adorable. Genuinely. I believe in you. You'll fail, but I believe in you.
4. If you find yourself missing campus, don't panic. It's temporary, like that optimism you had at the start of the semester.

As editor, I want to thank you — yes, you — for reading, supporting and occasionally tolerating The Scallion.

Your laughter sustains us.

Your emails accusing us of "fake news" also sustains us, but in a different, spicier way.

So, from all of us here in the Scallion newsroom (population: me, three stressed writers and a decorative plant), we wish you a warm, safe, questionably productive and gloriously chaotic happy holidays and an even happier winter break.

See you next semester, whether you like it or not.

Warm regards,

Megan Kidby <3

QUIZ: Will you pass your finals?



Graphic by **KEN BISHOP** | Special to The Leader

MEGAN KIDBY
Scallion Editor

I hate hate hate hate HATE finals with a burning passion.

I'm the worst test taker you will ever meet in your life, so finals season is the perfect way to stress me out.

Should you be stressing out with me, or will you pass with flying colors?

Take this quiz to find out!

Question #1: How's your study schedule looking?

- A. Color-coded Google Calendar, printed version, laminated
- B. A sticky note that says "STUDY!!"
- C. Schedule? I thought finals were next month

Question #2: What did you have for breakfast this morning?

- A. Protein, fruit and ambition
- B. A latte and a prayer
- C. A bag of despair-flavored chips

Question #3: When you open your textbook, you...?

- A. Highlight strategically like a scholar
- B. Highlight everything because all of it "seems important"
- C. Immediately fall asleep

Question #4: How many times have you checked your grades this week?

- A. Once. I trust the process
- B. Fifteen. I trust nothing
- C. I can't open the page without hearing the "Jaws" theme.

Question #5: What's your motivation level right now?

- A. I'm 10000% focused. "Eye of the Tiger," baby.
- B. I'm mildly caffeinated, so 50% focused
- C. I couldn't focus if my life depended on it

Question #6: How is your mental state during group study sessions?

- A. Calm, focused and helpful
- B. Thinking about studying while also adding in a little fun
- C. Quietly panicking while pretending to look up answers

Question #7: How many practice problems have you completed?

- A. Enough to teach the class myself
- B. A handful... it's mostly guesses
- C. Zero, but I've thought about doing them... does that count?

Question #8: What's your relationship with procrastination?

- A. We broke up YEARS ago
- B. It's complicated
- C. Soulmates

Question #9: What is your reaction when the professor says, "This WON'T be on the exam"?

- A. Sweet relief
- B. I give him a suspicious side-eye
- C. I panic because that means it definitely IS.

Question #10: On a scale from "prepared" to "Lord help me," where are you?

- A. Prepared as hell
- B. I think I've got this... nothing a last-minute cram sesh won't fix
- C. HELP ME LORDDDDD

IF YOU GOT...

Mostly A's — YOU ACED IT!

You're passing your finals and curing diseases in your free time. Give me some of your study tips please.

Mostly B's — YOU PASSED!

I mean...you did what you had to do, and you made it. C's get degrees and you're going to get that degree for sure.

Mostly C's — YOU... UH... WELL...

Heyyyyyyy bestie. You took the test at least. A grade is better than no grade at all, I always say.



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S206 Williams Center**



HOROS

IZZIE NOELLE
Photo Editor

Now we're getting to the time of year when Christmas presents are being wrapped up and ready for delivery. If you're looking at all the pretty and cute wrapping paper designs, at a loss for what you want to use, then look no further. I'll be telling you which wrapping paper you should use based on your zodiac sign (with pictures!).



Aries



Photo via sugarandspiceinvitations.com.



Taurus



Photo via zazzle.com.



Gemini



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Cancer



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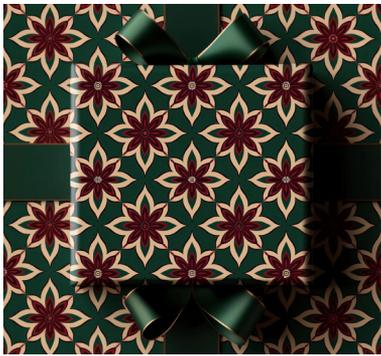


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