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Students call for cease-fire: 80+ people rally for Palestine

By **AB SNYDER**
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The solemn faces of more than 80 students and faculty gathered outside the Henderson Campus Center just after noon on Friday, Jan. 26.

Dozens of students held signs, written in both English and Arabic, calling for a cease-fire in the current conflict between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. One sign read, "There was never an acceptable loss — let Gaza live."

The rally was led by student organizers with the intent to educate and spread awareness of Israel's current invasion of Gaza. Israeli forces have killed almost 27,000 Palestinians and displaced almost the entire population of the strip since October, according to Al-Jazeera. Israel has defended its actions — which have been called a genocide by scholars and human rights advocates — as justified retaliation for an Oct. 7 attack by militant group Hamas that killed just over 1,100 Israelis. Hamas has ruled the Gaza Strip since 2007.

Syd Hammerman, '25, first came up with the idea of the rally in December. Hammerman described the suffering of the civilians, relaying statistics on starvation and disease as well as military attacks.

"Based on the fall 2022 population of Allegheny, which stood at 1,353 students, the total population of Gaza killed thus far is equivalent to every single Allegheny student being killed 19.3 times over," Hammerman said. "This figure increases every day."

Hammerman and nine other student organizers first introduced the idea to several professors and then Dean for the Student Experience Ian Binnington. Once they knew the college was on board and safety measures for the students were in place, the plans continued from there.

"We figured out what we wanted to say and how we wanted to say it," said Ella Rochford, '25, another organizer for the rally. "The biggest part of today was making sure we had safety for the students and everyone here."

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JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS

Julia Sonen, '24, speaks at a rally calling for a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war on Friday, Jan. 26. More than 80 students spent the lunch hour gathering to call government representatives and mourn the civilian lives lost in the war.

Boulton recognized for her impact

By **PAIGE KAGENI**
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Director of Sustainability Kelly Boulton, '02, was recently honored with a spot on the 2023 City & State Pennsylvania Impact List for her work to achieve carbon neutrality at Allegheny College.

The list recognizes 75 individuals each year who, through their efforts, help their communities become more "equitable, sustainable and prosperous."

Christine Scott Nelson '73 Endowed Professor in Environmental Science and Sustainability Eric Pallant, Boulton's former professor and colleague of over 20 years, said that what he has seen Boulton achieve over the past decades has been remarkable.

"She has really transformed and transitioned Allegheny into being one of the leading institutions in the country," Pallant said. "There's really no one else like her."

Boulton has made it her mission to amplify the message of sustainability since she became director in 2008. Since the beginning, Boulton and the rest of the Office of Sustainability have worked hard to educate students, faculty, board members and staff about the importance of lowering the college's carbon footprint.

"The Office of Sustainability was started back in 2007," Boulton said. "At that time it was created to say, 'If the college was going to do anything about our contribution to climate change, how do we know what our contribution is and how are we going to come up with a plan on how to take charge of that?'"

Beyond achieving carbon neutrality at the college, Boulton has accomplished several other notable milestones.

"She has worked on everything from improving food availability so that it's the best it can possibly be for the environment, making sure water use is as efficient as it could possibly be on campus and she has saved Allegheny hundreds of thousands of dollars in being efficient with our purchasing of resources," Pallant said.

BOULTON

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ESS searches for new professors

By **LUCAS PASQUALE**
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The Environmental Science and Sustainability Department is currently evaluating six candidates to fill two new professor positions for the next academic year.

The department's current faculty attempt to cover as much of the discipline as possible, though some things inevitably get left out.

Department Chair Terrence Bensel described environmental science as a "broad, interdisciplinary field" that "encompasses everything" from the hard sciences to the humanities.

"If you imagine an ES program that teaches everything there is to (know) about the environment, you would have 150 professors," Bensel said.

Former Chair and Assistant Professor of Environmental Science Beth Choate departed the college in August. Christine Scott Nelson '73 Endowed Professor in Environmental Science and Sustainability Eric Pallant, who founded the department, also plans to leave soon and retire at the end of the spring semester, leaving two positions open for the fall.

With two vacancies, the department sent out a single nationwide job posting for both positions at the end of October, according to the department's October 2023 newsletter. The job posting highlighted that the department was searching for individuals who specialize intopics related to food, water and climate.

Bensel said that out of the 75 people who applied for the positions, the department held interviews with 16 by videoconference this past December.

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Honor Committee details proposed code revisions to ASG

College receives PA Hunger Free Campus designation

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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The triennial Honor Code referendum planned for this semester will put significant changes to the code up to a student vote, the Allegheny Student Government heard at its General Assembly Tuesday, Jan. 30. ASG also heard good news for efforts to combat food insecurity on campus.

Honor Code

The guest speaker on Tuesday was Rachael Lutz, '24, chair of the Honor Committee. Composed of 12 students — four each from the sophomore, junior and senior class — and advised by both a faculty and staff member, the Honor Committee is designed to be a neutral, student-run adjudicator for any allegations of academic misconduct. Any potential violations of the Honor Code run through the committee.

The Honor Committee is also responsible for reviewing and proposing changes to the Honor Code, which is re-approved in a spring referendum of first-, second- and third-year students every three years. Seniors are excluded because they will graduate before changes are implemented in the fall semester.

Lutz said that the committee had already met with the Faculty Council about the revisions and had received positive feedback. On Tuesday, she was in attendance to hear ASG's thoughts.

"We want to make sure that the student voice is being heard throughout this process, so as I talk through the changes, I want to make sure that you all feel encouraged to give me any of your questions, comments, concerns," Lutz said, adding that the changes were the result of a "multi-year process."

The largest proposed change is to Article III, Section 5, the "Expedited Process." Currently, the code allows first-time offenders to admit wrongdoing in exchange for certain sanctions, as opposed to conducting a full hearing.

Lutz said that while the current system was providing a punitive service, it was not educating students to prevent them from violating the code again. Instead, the committee is proposing a "Mutual Agreement" system — one that Lutz said was already successfully implemented in student conduct.

"It requires a greater deal of student participation," Lutz said. "Rather than a student simply admitting responsibility and attending a hearing and going through the motions of it, we are asking students to write a 'letter of agreement.' In this 'letter of agreement,' we're really trying to focus on communication between the student and the professor."

The letter would detail what the violation was, why it happened, who was affected and what will be done to avoid future violations, Lutz said.

The code will also include clarifying language on the use of generative AI, which is banned by both the current and revised versions of the code.

"The Honor Code does currently prohibit the use of any outside resource without an instructor's permission, but with generative AI being a new technology, a lot of students are confused about where it falls within the Honor Code," Lutz said. "Adding this new clause about generative AI just helps to clarify things for students and make it easier for them to be able to avoid Honor Code violations."

The remaining changes involve primarily wording and clarity, Lutz added.

See ASG | *page 3*

In this week's Campus...

SEPHORA'S 'TWEENAGERS'

Recently, tweens as young as 10 years old have been filling Sephora stores to the brim. Staff Writer Emma Conti-Windle, '27, unpacks the nuances of the phenomena.

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FLY FAR AWAY

The college recently announced eight new study abroad programs. Staff Writer Evelyn Zavala, '24, has the inside scoop on what programs to keep on your radar.

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PAM HOUSE REOPENING

Contributing Writer Milo Watson, '26, attended the Islamic Cultural Association's reopening of the Prayer and Meditation House last Thursday.

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FRIDAY
H: 36° L: 24°
Rain: 13%
Sunrise: 7:31 a.m.
Sunset: 5:36 p.m.

SATURDAY
H: 44° L: 24°
Rain: 8%
Sunrise: 7:30 a.m.
Sunset: 5:37 p.m.

SUNDAY
H: 45° L: 27°
Rain: 7%
Sunrise: 7:29 a.m.
Sunset: 5:39 p.m.

RALLY *from page 1*

College students around the country that have spoken out in support of a cease-fire have faced backlash — most notably at Harvard University, when members of the Harvard Undergraduate Palestine Solidarity Committee signed a statement in which they held the Israeli government "entirely responsible for the unfolding violence," according to the Harvard Crimson.

"There have been a lot of incidents on other campuses where people who protest have been doxed, kicked out of school and refused jobs," Rochford said. "We wanted to make sure that didn't happen here, that everyone was safe, so there were a lot of safety precautions."

Just hours before the rally took place, the International Court of Justice released preliminary rulings in which they called for the prevention of genocide in Gaza, though the court stopped short of calling for a cease-fire. A full ruling in the case, brought by South Africa against the Israeli government, is not expected for years.

Rochford said the fact that the timing of the rally coincided with the court's decision wasn't intentional, but did work in their favor.

"We wanted to do something as soon as possible, at a time where as many people could be here as possible," Rochford said. "We weren't sure how many people were going to come, but it was a success."

There were seven speakers in total at the rally. Aside from the harrowing death toll, the students also spoke about the civilians caught in the crossfire of violence in countries such as Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ukraine, Syria and more.

One such act of violence hit closer to home, as Julia Sonen, '24, mentioned the murder of six-year-old Wadea Al-Fayoume, a Palestinian-American boy stabbed to death by his landlord in Chicago, Illinois.

Each speaker urged students to stay educated on the conflict and to be aware of the world outside of the Allegheny community "bubble."

"I talked to people, and a lot of people said that they can't make much of a difference, but I don't think that's true," said Hussain Minhas, '24. "Raise awareness, make people learn something that they didn't already know…That's a step in the right direction."

Minhas read aloud "If I Must Die," a poem by Refaat Alareer, a Palestinian writer, poet and activist. Alareer was killed in an Israeli airstrike on Dec. 6 along with six of his family members.

Minhas, who serves as the Islamic Cultural Association treasurer, is originally from Pakistan, which was part of his motivation for participating in the rally.

"Back in Pakistan, we've always had solidarity with the Palestinians, more so because of the religion that we share," Minhas said. "But in the U.S., I know there's a lot of hatred and discrimination towards brown people and Muslim people and the U.S. media doesn't really show that these people are suffering. For years and years, Palestinians have been asking that the world shares what they are going through and raises voice for them, and that's not really happening in this country as the government actively tries to suppress them."

During the rally, several speakers mentioned the impact of language in the media. This stemmed from the bias many speakers believe the U.S. government has in favor of Israel, a longtime American ally.

"Language affects how you approach what you hear," Associate Professor of Arabic Language and Literature Reem Hilal said after the rally.

Hilal offered her counsel during the initial planning stages of the event and helped rally organizers figure out what exactly they wanted to say. Hilal said when she sees students being passionate about something important, she wants to support them.

In November, Hilal participated in a panel on the Israel-Hamas war where she explained the effects of language bias in the media. Hilal said that in the reporting of Gaza in particular, the subtle difference between "killed" and "died" can convey two very different meanings.

"We generally will be more sympathetic if someone is killed by someone else and see them as a victim," Hilal said. "Versus 'died' — you may not necessarily see them as a victim unless you knew who killed them. So language completely affects how people approach this conflict."

Aside from being an academic, Hilal's presence at the rally was personal.

"As an Arab-American, it's been challenging to see everything unfold," Hilal said. "On a personal level, I have kids and I can see my kids' features, and they share similar features, so it's hard to see young children suffering and being fortunate that my kids are safe."

Hilal also recalled Dina Dalloul, Fulbright Teaching Assistant who worked at Allegheny. Dalloul was originally from Gaza City, where she lived with her young child and family members. Hilal last heard from Dalloul on Oct. 11, 2023.

After the speeches were finished, students and faculty were asked to have a moment of silence. Afterward, all were encouraged to plant a white flag in honor of the Palestinian lives lost, each one representing 130 people killed.

When the rally concluded and the crowd dispersed, all that remained were the dozens of small white flags in remembrance of lives lost.

JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS

Zaynab Jebur, '26, and Sofia Hassan, '25, speak at the gathering outside the Henderson Campus Center.

JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS

Students gathered outside the campus center with handmade signs and Palestinian flags to listen to speakers talk during the rally.

JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS

Above: Syd Hammerman, '25, speaks during the rally.
Left: When leaving, some attendees left their signs leaning against the gator statue in the Gator Quad.

JOSEPH KLEPEIS/THE CAMPUS

Right: At the end of the event, students planted white flags in the grass on the Gator Quad. Each flag represents 130 Palestinian lives lost.

BOULTON *from page 1*

"That's amazing that one person can save the college hundreds of thousands of dollars and save the environment."

Boulton's work also serves as a blueprint for other institutions who are embarking on their path to becoming more sustainable.

"We get calls all the time from new colleagues at other institutions who are starting up programs," said Sustainability Coordinator Kurt Hatcher, '07. "They see Allegheny as an example to follow. We get calls or emails from students at other universities who don't have a sustainability program on how we take on our greenhouse gas inventory. So (Kelly) kind of being recognized for the success that (she's) had in making this work is important to everybody on campus and visible to people off campus."

Boulton does not hesitate to bring people into the fold who want to learn about sustainability, according to her peers.

"What I like to think about what Kelly has done is create a more hopeful future by engaging students — not just environmental science majors — all kinds of students from all over Allegheny," Pallant said. "Everybody is welcome to join her in thinking about what will make the world a better place."

While Boulton appreciates the recognition, she said it was not the end goal for her work at Allegheny.

"I don't do this for the attention," Boulton said. "I do this for the work that's being accomplished. Yeah, I got an award, but I'm also just like, 'Let's put our heads back down and keep working.' For me, more than getting the state award, the part that felt really great was the fact that someone at Allegheny had to nominate me for this award."

For individuals who want to get started in the field of sustainability, there is often the worry of not being able to do enough as one person or not knowing exactly where to start. Boulton and Hatcher have an answer for that as well. The Office of Sustainability offers numerous types of internships, giving students a variety of places to start.

"It's an internship in change making and change management," Hatcher said. "It's getting to the idea that students want to be engaged in this work. But the theoretical work that you do in classes doesn't always translate to the logistical challenges that you face in your head to implementation."

Boulton said that the internships are a good preparatory step for those hoping to have a career in a field related to environmental science. She also explained some of the difficulties incoming sustainability experts might face when entering the field.

"We have graduates who go into sustainability who call us, and a lot of what we talk about is that we know what we want the outcomes to be, but the difficulty is in the implementation," Boulton said. "Our internship focuses on how do you take an idea and then back it up and build a foundation of an implementation plan under it."

Boulton said the key to succeeding in the field is planning out each step one at a time.

"That's the only way we get to those big lofty goals," Boulton said. "It's easy to just focus on the big lofty goals and we'll never get there unless we focus on the steps."

SEARCH *from page 1*

Based on those interviews, the list of potential candidates was narrowed down to the six that have been — or will be — coming to campus this spring.

It can be a challenge to find somebody who has expertise in all those fields that ESS encompasses and can communicate all that information effectively, according to Bensel. So, the department is looking for "interdisciplinary teachers and scholars who are willing and able and excited about working closely with undergraduate students in the classroom and research environments," Bensel said.

Using Pallant as an example, many articles in the department's January 2024 newsletter take note of his ENVSC 230 class "Soil to Plate," which dove into the link between product life cycles and food manufacturing methods. Also noted are Pallant's contributions to the designs of many buildings on campus, including North Village I.

Candidates will come to campus to give presentations about their research on either a Monday or a Friday during lunch hour in Carr 239. The lectures will be attended by two committees responsible for providing feedback on the candidates: an environmental science faculty committee and a student committee composed of environmental science majors. The lectures are open to all students and will be finished by Tuesday, Feb. 6.

Candidates come in the day before their lectures and are welcomed by some of the faculty. The next day, from 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., is spent not just lecturing to and having lunch with students, but also meeting with various deans and all the members of the ESS department. The meetings conclude the next morning with a debrief from Bensel.

After the lectures, the student committee has the opportunity to have lunch with the candidate where they can provide them with a student's perspective on life at Allegheny.

"Just our experiences here, whether that's in the community or on campus," said Bianca Sanchez, '24.

It also provides an opportunity to ask the candidates for a "more specific and in-depth plan of how they plan to incorporate their research into Allegheny classes and what classes they would be proposing or what classes they would be interested in teaching," Sanchez said. The two candidates that she had the opportunity to meet proposed "a microbial ecology class," a "quantitative data analysis class," as well as classes about land rights and agro-ecology.

The student committee's feedback is crucial in selecting a candidate, Bensel said, adding: "You can't be successful here if you can't get along with the students."

Bensel said that he's "been a part of faculty searches where the faculty are really excited about a candidate and we get the student evaluations and the students are like 'This guy was a jerk.'"

Because of this, the candidates' amiability with students is the most important factor being considered.

To decide who would be chosen for the student committee, the department brainstormed a list of more than 20 ESS majors. Sophomores and juniors were the main focus of the search since they will be on campus in the fall when the new professors will be teaching. Seniors were included since they have more experience regarding how the department works.

From that point on, the main determining factor for students was availability. Bensel informed the students that they only have to go to four of the six presentations if possible. Only 10 students could attend all of those presentations, and of those 10, only five could attend lunch with the candidate afterwards.

After seeing the candidate's presentation and having lunch with them, the students fill out a "Report of Student Experience"-like questionnaire that asks about the candidates' strengths, weaknesses and whether the student would want to take a class with said candidate or be their academic or comprehensive project advisee.

Bensel will not review the feedback the candidates received until after all six have visited. Similarly, reference letters will not be read until the visits are over.

"Typically as a department we do these things on a consensus basis," Bensel said, adding that the faculty will make decisions based on their own notes, the feedback the students provided and the letters of reference.

The new hires will sign contracts in March or April and will begin teaching this fall. The current plan is to slot them into existing courses with the hope that they will eventually produce their own based on their personal expertise.

ASG *from page 1*

"For example, the new Honor Code revisions specify very clearly that it's up to the professor to specify within their syllabus what constitutes unauthorized aid and what aid would be authorized," Lutz said.

Following her presentation, Lutz took questions from ASG. Among them was a question from ASG President Nicole Recio Bremer, '25, who asked what would happen if the referendum was not approved.

"If the Honor Code is voted down by the student body then an administrative honor code would be put into place for the next academic year," Lutz replied. "That would likely be very similar, if not identical, in what it decides is and isn't a violation of the Honor Code — but it would likely not include some of the benefits of the (student) Honor Code, like taking unsupervised exams."

Recio Bremer also asked how many votes were needed to pass the code, to which Lutz replied that it was "a majority" of first, second and third-year students. Lutz clarified in an email Wednesday that this majority is of all students eligible to vote, not just students that vote — meaning that the referendum needs more "yes" votes than both "no" votes and non-voting students.

After the meeting, Lutz said she was confident that the Honor Code would be reapproved, noting that the program has been supported by students since it was established in the 1960s. The code has been put up for a student vote since 1990 — and has passed every time, according to the committee's website.

"In all of the years we've had the Honor Code, it's always passed," Lutz said. "I'd say I'm pretty confident.

PA Hunger Free Campus

During their cabinet report, Co-Director of Student Affairs London Dejarnette, '24, mentioned that they had submitted an application for Allegheny to be designated a "PA Hunger Free Campus."

When Dejarnette said this, Dean for the Student Experience Ian Binnington raised his hand from where he sat in the back of the room.

"We got it," Binnington said.

"We got it?" Dejarnette asked.

"We got it," Binnington replied.

This set off two rounds of knocking on the tables — ASG's form of applause.

Once the chamber had settled down, Dejarnette added that the designation had been, "a long time coming."

"If you didn't know, the (Pennsylvania) Department of Education has a program called PA Hunger-Free Campus, which essentially provides funding to address food insecurity on campus," Dejarnette said.

The designation is good news for food security advocates, as it opens up additional state grant funding opportunities for the college. For example, around $1 million was awarded through the initiative to 30 different institutions at the start of 2024.

Dejarnette shared a number of other food security updates, including that data from last fall's food insecurity survey had been processed and will be released soon. Dejarnette also shared data from the Food Resource Center, which had been restocked Monday evening.

"We found that 70.58% of the refrigerated goods were taken within the first day, and 90.12% of the dry pantry goods were taken in the first day as well," Dejarnette said. "So it's turning over very fast."

They added that the new data demonstrated that the food pantry needed to be restocked more often.

Credit overload fee

During his report, Class of 2026 President Lorenzo Scarnati brought up a letter penned by two of his classmates — Olivia Alexander, '26, and Graham Carr, '26. The duo are "trying to open up a discussion within the student body" about Allegheny's course overload fee, Scarnati said. The college currently charges $2,263 per credit hour past 20 credit hours in a semester, a policy that only applies to students that joined in the fall of 2022 or later.

Scarnati noted that the letter is available to sign in Grounds for Change, and a digital copy is available by contacting Alexander and Carr.

Chief Information Officer Katrina Yeung will be the guest speaker next week, to discuss a potential capital project for ASG's roughly $500,000 Surplus Fund. ASG will reconvene next Tuesday, Feb. 6, in room 301/302 of the Henderson Campus Center.

CRIME BLOTTER

Editor's Note: The weekly Crime Blotter is compiled using the Daily Crime Log available on the Office of Public Safety's web page. Crimes reported may still be under investigation. Crimes listed below are collected the Thursday before publication.

January 14, 2024	January 24-28, 2024	January 30, 2024
Sexual Assault	**Criminal Mischief**	**Criminal Mischief**
College Court	Edwards Hall	Ravine Hall
Title IX	*Active Investigation*	*Active Investigation*

THE CAMPUS

Since 1876

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Buying womanhood

An analysis of 'Sephora preteens'

By EMMA CONTI-WINDLE
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When I think back to the first time I expressed a desire to wear makeup, I'm reminded of the Neutrogena face lotion infused with SPF that my mother had taught me to always apply to my face in a circular motion, and the sparkly silver eyeshadow I was allowed to borrow for special occasions. And at nine or 10, I felt content with that.

At 12 and 13, I started putting drugstore concealer under my eyes and over blemishes and wearing clear mascara that my mother has assured me would make my eyes pop just as much as the black. This year for Christmas, I received my first tube of retinol cream which, according to the Cleveland Clinic, is a form of Vitamin A that "has anti-aging effects." Even with what some would say is a late start, as a legal adult woman with what I consider to be a pretty established makeup routine, I'd say I'm overall satisfied with the trajectory of my makeup and skincare usage over the years.

Which is why I first would like to clarify one thing; I am not bitter that now every time I look at my "For You" page, I see a video of an 11-year-old making a "Get Ready With Me for School" video featuring a multitude of skincare products, followed by a subsequent video of a stressed Sephora patron or employee with a storytime of preteens running rampant throughout the store expelling verbal abuse and destroying test products — otherwise known as "testers." Instead, I will admit that I am altogether amused, confused and concerned.

At the risk of sounding even older and more crotchety as I sit on my college campus and lament about "kids these days," my first gripe is with the kinds of products that are in such high demand amongst prepubescent girls. One particular brand name comes to mind: Drunk Elephant.

The brand was founded in 2013 by stay-at-home mom Tiffany Masterson to remedy her own struggles with her skin, according to women's magazine "Glamour" and the Drunk Elephant website. The site, of course, lists all of the skin care products for sale — ranging from the $69.00 "Bora Barrier Repair Cream" to the $82.00 "Protini Power Peptide Resurf Serum" and beyond. Some of the products include acids and retinols. In an early December 2023 Instagram post from the company's official account, Masterson cautioned tweens against using products with retinol, as they are "more potent," adding that young skin "does not need these ingredients quite yet." The post also included a list of products that are safe for young skin.

And so, I can't say that my problem is with the brand itself marketing potentially harmful products to young people and not offering any alternatives. Drunk Elephant is operating with transparency and is in fact offering alternatives. Instead, I take more issue with the brand's explosivity on social media and how this is impacting what highly complex, very expensive and potentially harmful products young people are demanding and how they are demanding them.

Enter the TikTok videos I mentioned earlier. One creator — "@devi" — posted a video earlier this month with the caption "the 10 year olds taking over Sephora is real." The video shows testers that were covered with a mess of other lotions and serums, rendering them unsanitary and unusable for other customers.

Another creator, Olivia Vaphiades, used to work at Sephora and offered a personal story in which a young girl approached her requesting a Drunk Elephant product that was in very high demand. The product was no longer in stock and when Vaphiades communicated this to the young girl and offered alternatives to the product, the young girl responded with an expletive and then requested a product with retinol. When Vaphiades cautioned her against the product, the young girl told Vaphiades that she did not need her opinion and that she was going to buy whatever she wanted. The young girl then proceeded to walk around the store and begin mixing products from multiple testers — creating what Vaphiades called, "the biggest mess." Eventually the young girl's mother came in and also questioned why the young girl would want a product with retinol. The young girl told her mother that it was Vaphiades who had encouraged her to get the product, causing the mother to confront Vaphiades. The mother later apologized for "coming on too strong," and asked how bad the retinol would really be for her daughter's skin. Despite Vaphiades' warnings, the young girl and her mother left with the retinol serum and another anti-aging product.

Of course, we would hope that stories like these — of young children swearing at customer service workers and lying and getting away with it — would be few and far between, but it is impossible to regulate each person's parent-child relationship style. That's another article that I'm not sure I'm qualified to write. Check back in 20 years.

I do, however, think that instances like these speak to a much larger issue when we look at the impact that social media is having on the beauty industry and young girls' desires to grow up faster and faster.

As more preteen girls watch TikTok, a platform in which there are countless adult influencers doing "GRWM" routines featuring some of these products, they are seeing the women that they want to be without taking into account the vast age difference between creator and consumer. Social media has a way of blurring those lines, especially when there is something being sold. Soon, for young people, consumption becomes less about what they need or want and more about what they want people to know that they have. In this case, a complex skincare routine that costs hundreds of dollars is a sign of womanhood and beauty.

Girls aren't wrong to want to chase womanhood. Though bittersweet, I believe it is normal to want to grow up. I've certainly been there. But it is irresponsible to not note the fact that girls will also want what other girls have. And not every girl can have hundreds of dollars worth of skincare or makeup. Better yet, no girl should put chemicals on her face that will hurt her young skin.

The swearing, yelling, running, begging and blatant disrespect for public property goes beyond the annoyance that Sephora patrons or workers will have to face, though this frustration is valid. Behavior like this actually demonstrates a certain level of mania and anxiety within young girls to have copious amounts of products that they don't need and that may actually hurt them just to achieve a certain status or feel like a woman.

That's not a mess for Sephora, but a mess for society.

> "Soon, for young people, consumption becomes less about what they need or want and more about what they want people to know they have. In this case, a complex skincare routine that costs hundreds of dollars is a sign of womanhood and beauty."
>
> — EMMA CONTI-WINDLE
> Class of 2027

Social media is a public health hazard: Now what?

By SAM HEILMANN
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When asked about what the impact of the internet would be one day, rock legend David Bowie responded: "I don't think we've even seen the tip of the iceberg. I think the potential of what the internet is going to do to society — both good and bad — is unimaginable.

"I think we're actually on the cusp of something exhilarating and terrifying," he said.

The BBC interviewer who asked the question looked puzzled, tilting his head and tightening his brow in confusion.

"It's just a tool though, isn't it?" the interviewer asked.

"No, it's not," Bowie replied with a smile. "It's an alien life form."

That interview took place in 1999. It's clear 25 years later that Bowie was right, and ahead of his time in the way that he thought about the internet. The internet was a stationary place, a tool, as the interviewer called it. And now, well, maybe "alien life-form" is in fact an accurate way to describe the system, or the social internet specifically.

On Jan. 24, New York became the first major city to designate social media as an environmental toxin and "public health hazard," according to The Hill. Mayor Eric Adams said during his State of the City address that social media tech companies are "fueling a mental health crisis," specifically in teens and younger users. He also announced that the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Ashwin Vasan issued an advisory to classify "unfettered access to and use of social media" as a public health hazard.

As is usually the case with hegemony, or dominant cultural ideas, our acceptance of the internet as a stable part of life keeps us from questioning it much of the time. If we do question the safety or accuracy of online content, there is not a way to change the system itself; our reliance on the internet in daily life lets us take it for granted. Put simply, it is what it is. The way it makes us feel won't stop its operation.

In reality, though, we know that the internet has changed the way each and every one of us operates. I for one cannot imagine a childhood without the internet. I'm sure many millennials, Gen Z and now Gen Alpha would agree to an extent; before our brains were fully developed, or even before we reached our teen years, we could engage with the entire world.

We're also at an interesting point in the internet's history in that we are aware of its proven detrimental effects as it is causing those effects. We are the self-aware guinea pigs of the internet era. We know that social media can lead to increased rates of depression and anxiety and that it can disrupt sleep, especially in younger users, according to Mayo Clinic.

The truth is that social media does not exist to make us happy or to socialize us. It may do those things, even rarely enough, but it truly exists to make money. Our eyes, our attention, is something that advertisers are willing to pay money to the largest corporations in the history of the world for access to. Five of the largest companies in the world are tech companies. The "Big Five" media companies, as they are called — Apple, Microsoft, Google parent company Alphabet, Amazon and Meta — have a combined market value of over $10 trillion, according to Fortune.

In other words, these companies have an immense amount of power and are motivated to keep our attention at all costs. The more we interact with their sites, the more money they make. That's also to say that, again, our enjoyment of the "product" is irrelevant. In reality, consumers are the product, our consciousness sold to advertisers by social media sites. The capitalist system of entertainment is catered to advertisers, not the user.

So, when tech companies and social media sites meet backlash for the way they treat their users and the harmful means by which they keep their attention ... nothing happens. Our mental health as users of the social internet is entirely in our hands, influenced by this oligopoly. We don't have to be happy for these companies to make money. We just have to be present.

And so the global mass of users, from casual posters to government leaders, have to be the ones to adapt the way we live for the better. We know that these systems are damaging our health and yet we cannot stop using them. That's by design. Nowhere in that design is an exit plan, a place to opt out aside from deleting the app entirely.

Since there's no reversing the effects that the internet has had on its users already, there is an emphasis in discourse — as seen in the New York City classification — to protect future users. The advisory recommends that parents and caregivers do not grant social media access to kids until at least age 14. It also encourages families to create a "family media plan" to establish healthier habits.

The New York City advisory at this moment mirrors the advice you would find from other reliable sources about the dangers of social media. Just like the advisory, Mayo Clinic's advice for parents and caregivers suggests checking privacy settings, setting rules and limits on screen time and talking regularly with your child about what is and is not okay online.

Don't get me wrong, I think the advisory is a step in the right direction. We cannot address the issues of social media if we do not acknowledge the problem in the first place. But I also think we are missing the root of the problem if we think that we as users are flawed in some way. We are perfect users for social media companies, even if it costs our sanity.

Making social media safer, more enjoyable or healthier is against the interests of the companies who created the systems themselves. New York cannot be the only city to declare social media a public health hazard. It is ubiquitous, but that doesn't mean we can't think deeply about it. It's harmful, but that doesn't mean we can't aim to change how we as users regulate and react to it.

Just as it was impossible to conceptualize the current internet in the '90s, it is impossible to imagine what the internet will become over the next several decades. Acknowledging that it is a detriment to our health is one positive step. Another would be recognizing who holds power when it comes to the internet. Because it isn't us.

> "We don't have to be happy for these companies to make money. We just have to be present."
>
> — SAM HEILMANN
> Class of 2026

International Film Festival returns this week

By **ZAYNAB JEBUR**
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Starting on Feb. 1, the Movies at Meadville will bring back the annual International Film Festival where it will showcase a film from each section in the Allegheny language department every Thursday at 7 p.m. for the month of February. Each language section submits three films and the rest of the faculty decides which one will be shown.

Chinese

The first movie — shown on Thursday, Feb. 1 — is the three-hour long Chinese science-fiction adventure film, "The Wandering Earth II" which is a sequel to the 2019 film, "The Wandering Earth." The essential story of the movie is a future where the sun is rapidly burning and threatening Earth's existence, inciting the humans to build engines on the Earth's surface to drive it into a different solar system. The journey iinvolves a group of young people that will "execute a dangerous, life-or-death operation to save the earth," according to Rotten Tomatoes.

It was also submitted as China's entry for the Best International Feature Film category at the upcoming 96th Oscars, but it did not place.

French

The second movie on Feb. 8 will be the hourlong 2021 French fantasy drama film, "Petite Maman."

"Petite Maman is about a young girl dealing with her grandmother's death and learning more about her family and her relationship with her mother," said Associate Professor of French Briana Lewis. "It incorporates fantasy elements that blur the line between magic and a child's imagination. It is simple, in that it is a story about childhood, but it includes surprising emotional subtleties."

The 2021 movie was received well by critics and the faculty, according to Lewis.

"We chose this film because we found it sweet and charming," Lewis said.

German

The third movie on Feb. 15 is the hour-and-a-half long 2023 German drama film, "Afire." The movie is about a pair of friends who are vacationing around the Baltic Sea at a family member's holiday house. As they get entangled with multiple strangers who join their group, tensions rise in the house while the forest near them catches on fire and slowly encroaches on them, leading them to a dangerous situation that they have to work through.

"The director, Christian Petzold, is one of the most innovative artists working in film today. He has created subtle, yet intense stories centered on complex characters," said Associate Professor of German Julia Ludewig. "This one, 'Afire', brings together interpersonal dynamics with questions of existential thread and climate change through the thread of wildfires."

The movie was submitted by Germany as one of its entries for the Best International Feature Film category at the upcoming 96th Oscars, but it did not recieve a nomination.

Spanish

The fourth movie on Feb. 22 is the 2023 two-and-a-half-hour Spanish survival thriller film, "Society of the Snow," based on the 1972 crash of the Uruguayan charter plane Air Force 571 flight into the Andes.

"The movie is probably the third or fourth time a story's been told about what happened," said Professor of Spanish Wilfredo Hernández. "Traditionally these kinds of movies exploit fears and show the worst of the worst. This director took a different route by deciding to tell the story from a different point of view."

The director does that in his movie by basing it off of the documentation of the survivors. Hernández explained that "the point of the movie is how a group of humans are able to survive in the worst conditions and how our humanity is tested."

It was submitted by Spain as their entry for the Best International Feature Film and is currently one of the five nominations in that category and in the Best Makeup and Hairstyling category.

Arabic

The last movie, which will show on Feb. 29, is the Arabic film — which has not yet been decided. While posters around the campus state that the Arabic section is planning on showing the 2021 Lebanese film "C-Section," the actual movie has not been picked yet.

"It is to be determined; the theater is having a hard time locating the films," said Associate Professor of Arabic Reem Hilal. "There are a lot of factors apparently that go into showing a movie at an independent theater, like American distribution rights. So far, we have offered four titles and they have not been located so we are waiting on two more titles."

This leaves the final movie a surprise — for now.

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>
> —REEM HILAL
> Associate Professor of Arabic, Allegheny College

Allegheny expands its list of study abroad programs

By **EVELYN ZAVALA**
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Allegheny College is expanding its study abroad program offerings to provide more opportunities for students in a wider variety of majors.

Faculty members traveled to different locations worldwide to find programs that best fit the college curriculum so that students could receive credits for their study abroad experience. The new program locations include Stockholm, London, Copenhagen in Denmark; Cork and Dublin in Ireland; and Florence, Siena and Rome in Italy.

Assistant Dean for Global Education Brita Doyle has been leading the effort to add more programs since March 2022 and explained how locations and programs were chosen.

"These programs fill, I think, a variety of academic and regional gaps in our existing programming that we've had for some time," Doyle said. "For example, you know, nationally, the U.K. is the number one destination for U.S. study abroad students, London being one of the most popular destinations for U.S. students and Allegheny didn't have a program there."

The programs located in London are meant to place English and theater students in a dynamic city while also filling gaps in the academic offerings available, according to Doyle.

"Italy is the number two destination nationally for U.S. students studying away, and Allegheny also never has had a semester-long program there," Doyle said. "The programs we selected in Italy — specifically, a program in Rome is geared to help our Business and Economics students to be able to have an opportunity abroad."

Imaging courtesy of Google Maps

The programs in Florence are focused on business and the programs in Siena are for computer science students. The programs selected are in English in order to address language barriers that may arise.

Assistant Professor of Art Paula Burleigh was invited along with many other educators to attend a program by Geographic Information Systems, in which educators around the world could explore their campuses in Stockholm and Copenhagen. The purpose of the event was to evaluate how the institutions can be integrated into home institutions.

"I think it is a really amazing program, it is academically rigorous but also there's just an amazing array of cultural opportunities at both campuses in Stockholm and in Copenhagen," Burleigh said. "I was particularly interested to visit and observe the courses where the curricula related to Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies."

The curriculum Burleigh observed included courses on sex work, constructions of masculinity, transgender identity and feminism. Additionally, the curriculum offers courses in a broad range of liberal arts topics.

"They have classes in STEM, they have classes in art, other humanities, disciplines in history," Burleigh said. "They do a really nice job integrating site visits and travel into their programming so you will go to local area museums, you will explore the cities."

Associate Professor and Chair of Computer and Information Science Janyl Jumadinova was a part of the computer science program selection which is located in Australia, England, Ireland, Italy and Spain.

"One thing we noticed is that we didn't really have anyone other than maybe one or two students, here and there going abroad," Jumadinova said. "When we started looking into why, we saw that the programs that we had on the books didn't really have a computer science curriculum."

Jumadinova said it is really important for everyone to have access to the opportunity to gain different perspectives on the world and different cultures.

"I think it helps all of us become more well-rounded," Jumadinova said. "It promotes some of the values at Allegheny, which is building diverse viewpoints in students and being able to incorporate them."

The process of selecting programs included mapping their courses into categories and basing it on the kinds of courses students typically take during their second or third year according to Jumadinova.

"There were a lot of liberal arts-type of schools that were looked at abroad that unfortunately did not have enough course offering to make it a feasible program for us," Jumadinova said. "The other thing we looked at in terms of elective courses was whether they were offering something we don't offer because we are a relatively small department."

In order for students to gain approval to study off campus in the fall, they must submit their application on the Global Education website by Feb. 20 at 5 p.m.

ICA hosts 'reopening' event in the PAM House

By **MILO WATSON**
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Thursday, Jan. 25, may have been wet and gray outside, but as dusk fell it was bright and warm inside the Prayer and Meditation House, where the Islamic Cultural Association put on a reopening celebration to encourage more students to make use of the space. The PAM House provides students with round-the-clock access to space to pray and meditate.

Sandwiched at the midway point between Brooks Hall and Carr Hall, the building's cherry-red exterior is unmistakable — but many students remain unsure about how the space functions.

"People know about the PAM House, but I feel like so far the crowd is limited to people who already know about it, or friends of those people," said ICA Treasurer Hussain Minhas, '24. "So we kind of wanted to open it up to the rest of the campus. Even though it's been around for a long time, for a couple years now, we call it kind of a 'PAM House opener event' so people could get to know the space, make some food, watch some movies … Hopefully people use the space more now."

The event attracted students who had already formed many positive memories at the PAM House, like Syd Hammerman, '25, Charlie Schwartz, '25 and Simon Swanson, '25, as well as students like Isabelle Kane, '25 and ASG Senator Chezka Quinola, '27, who shared that this event was their first introduction to the PAM House.

"I think maybe sometimes there's some people that don't know what it is," Hammerman said. "You want a meditation space? You want a safe space? This is literally why it exists — and if students feel overwhelmed in, like, their room or other campus spaces, it's a great place to just come and center yourself. I encourage people to do it."

Swanson emphasized that he's glad to be back in the PAM House after spending his fall semester abroad.

"It's just a really cool place that brings cool people," Swanson said.

For some, the event provided reassurance that they are welcome back in the house anytime.

"I feel like now that I'll have interacted with the space, I'll be like 'Hmm, maybe I will actually come by and utilize it sometime,'" Kane said.

Quinola observed feeling a sense of belonging in the house.

"I feel like the PAM house brings a lot more of the international community together," Quinola said. "It'll be fun to come back."

On the first floor, students simmered a pot of chai on the kitchen stove, while others chatted over snacks like dried dates, samosas and fried moong dal in the dining room. Some people perused Netflix from perches on the couch, eventually landing on "The Queen's Gambit."

The second floor of the building contains dedicated rooms for Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim students to pray and another nondenominational room reserved for meditation. Out on the building's porch swing, over chatter from inside the house, Minhas explained that the house also functions as a gathering space.

"We have a whole kitchen, so if you want to come in and cook, you can come in and cook," Minhas said. "We have our dining room if you want to have a dinner party with your friends, play some board games, anything like that."

For security reasons, the PAM House door code is not posted publicly on the college's website. Instead, students must fill out the QR code located on the front door that asks for their student ID in order to be instantly sent the entrance password.

SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
The PAM House is a small red house located in between Arter, Carr and Brooks halls, and is open 24/7 for members of the Allegheny community.

Hammerman explained that the house's interior adds to the space's welcoming atmosphere.

"The decor is really comforting," Hammerman said. "String lights are always very cozy. It's just a very peaceful vibe, and every time that I've had events here in the past, they've gone really well and comfortable so that's why I get excited, because I know that that will continue on. And the people that work here and the people that, like, do things here make a strong effort to make sure that it is cozy and that it is a safe space. And so I really appreciate that."

"The space is open 24/7 — there's no specific time that you need to be here to get in," Minhas said. "You can use it whenever you want, you can use it for whatever purpose you want, as long as you be respectful and clean about it."

ICA is planning a number of spring events that will take place in the PAM House.

"Every Friday we have our Jumu'ah prayer which is the Friday prayer." Minhas said. "We gather around for that to pray or to discuss before and after, so at least, like, every Friday. Other than that, we — I would say bi-monthly or monthly we'll do, like, a movie screening or something or watch a show together in the PAM House."

The third week of February is Islamic Awareness Week, and Minhas said ICA plans to host several events in celebration, as well as several events per week during the month of Ramadan.

Minhas emphasized that students from all religious and spiritual backgrounds on campus can find refuge from the pressure of everyday campus life at the PAM House.

"During the day whenever I'm out and about and I have to pray, I usually come here to pray if I wanna clear my mind and stuff," Minhas said. "It's in the name, 'PAM House,' you know — it's kind of like a home away from home."

The Comedy Corner: A dam grant and a flying pig

By **JOSEPH KLEPEIS**
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The Meadville Tribune reported on Jan. 19 that the borough of Conneautville had been awarded a $265,000 grant to repair the Conneautville Dam.

"I'm glad to hear we got the funding," said a Conneautville resident. "Sounds like a damn grand dam grant."

Florida Governor Ron Desantis suspended his presidential campaign on Jan. 21, according to the Miami Herald. He has pledged his support for Donald Trump.

"You can be the most worthless Republican in America, but if you kiss the ring, he'll say you're wonderful," Desantis told a group of Iowans about Trump (real quote).

I wonder how the ring tastes.

In other news, Trump has released a statement deeming Desantis a "wonderful guy."

The Hill reported on Jan. 22 that Rep. Dean Phillips (D-MN) will not run as a candidate with political party No Labels.

"If I'm going to lose this election, I'm going to do it my way," Phillips said.

Politico reported on Jan. 23 that Republicans had rapped a Department of Defense nominee over border policy and the incursion of a Chinese spy balloon.

"I've never been a part of something like this in my life," said the nominee. "I didn't realize so many senators were so well versed in the likes of Drake, 21 Savage and Nicki Minaj."

A pig is currently recovering at a clinic in Franklin after a plane crash.

Pig, an aptly named male pot-bellied pig, was on board a plane that crashed on Jan. 15 at the Venango Regional Airport.

To anyone who promised to do something when pigs fly, remember that you probably never specified that they had to land properly.

The Milwaukee Bucks have hired Doc Rivers to be their new head coach after the firing of Adrian Griffin.

This hiring has all but guaranteed the Bucks will make the second round of the NBA playoffs — where they'll swiftly be eliminated due to Rivers' coaching ineptitude.

WVNews reported on Jan. 26 that Don Blankenship has filed to represent West Virginia in the U.S. Senate.

Blankenship is most well known for his time as Massey Energy CEO when the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster occurred, killing 29 people. He is also known for his unsuccessful run for a Senate seat in 2018.

In that 2018 race, he ran as a self-described "radical" Republican. This time around, he is now a registered Democrat.

I look forward to his 2030 senatorial campaign, when he will run as an independent.

Tesla Inc. shares have dropped 26% this month, erasing $205 billion in market valuation, according to Bloomberg.

This will be the sixth consecutive week of the stock closing lower — the longest losing streak since 2016 for the company.

"Nobody can lose like me," said Elon Musk, the CEO of the company. "X losing money and Tesla losing money, I'd be bothered by it if I wasn't still the world's richest man."

Bloomberg reported nearly six hours before the last headline that Bernard Arnault — the CEO of luxury goods company LVMH — has now passed Musk in becoming the world's richest man.

"LVMH shares are going through the roof," Arnault said. "This is a great time for my family and myself."

Musk appeared to handle the news quite differently.

"I've deactivated the LVMH Twitter and Arnault's personal accounts," said Musk. "Oh no! I mean their X accounts."

Time magazine reported that Donald Trump is opposing the ongoing border funding negotiations happening in Congress.

President Joe Biden released a statement promising to shut down the border if the plan became law.

"Only I can shut the border down," Trump said. "I was able to shut the government down for 35 days when I was president. Imagine how long I can shut the border down for!"

Billions of cicadas are expected to surface this year. The two groups that will make an appearance in the spring are the Great Southern Brood, which appears every 13 years, and the Northern Illinois Brood, which appears every 17 years, according to CNN.

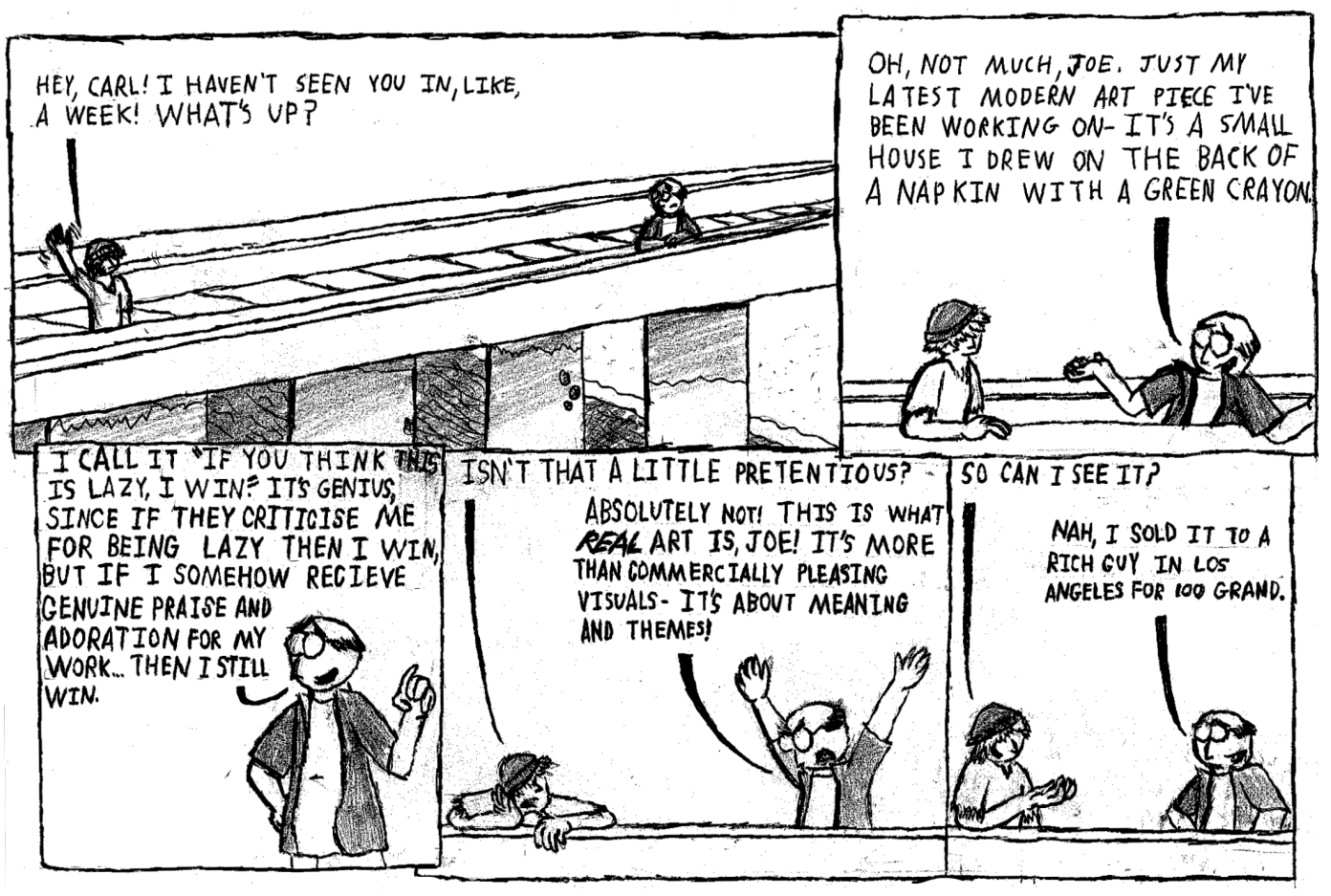
Such a cicada congruence hasn't happened since Thomas Jefferson was president.

You have to respect the organizational skills of cicadas, no doubt.

This is also a big win for fans of background noise.

Disclaimer: All quotes are fictitious unless otherwise noted. We claim no responsbility for any stomach pain as a result of laughing.

Cognitive Dissonance



By **HENRY GREFENSTETTE**
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WACKY WEATHER

SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Above: The Bicentennial Lawn between Schultz Hall and Bentley Hall was covered with snow as late as last Wednesday, Jan. 24. However, the snow — which had already melted a significant amount at the time this photo was taken — would not last much longer.

Top right: Around 24 hours later, the Bicentennial Plaza was green and free of snow, though a fog had descended on campus. Allegheny has been snow-free since then, with weekend temperatures forecasted in the 40s.

Right: Cold temperatures did briefly return in the form of rain and sleet midday Sunday, Jan. 28. Caught in the crossfire were Allegheny's fraternities and sororities, who held Runout on Brooks Walk that day.

PRIDE NIGHT IN THE WISE CENTER

Gators split doubleheader, raise funds for Trevor Project

SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Elaina Ginsburg, '25, claims a free T-shirt at halftime of the women's basketball game during the Pride Night doubleheader on Wednesday, Jan. 31.

SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Anne Butcher (left), executive assistant for the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion, tables with Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Dom Turner. This table held information about pronouns, as well as free Pride gear.

SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Top left: Allegheny students cheer a score during the women's basketball game on Wednesday night.

Top center: Jess Bickart, '26, dribbles around a Westminster defender during the women's game. Bickart scored 23 points, leading the Gators to a 62-52 victory over the Titans. The women's team improved to 10-5 in conference play, good for third place in the standings and a game ahead of Saint Vincent.

Later in the night, the men's team fell 83-61 to Westminster, remaining at the bottom of their conference in the standing.

Top right: Turner lobs free stress balls into the crowd at halftime of the women's game on Pride Night.

Left: Sofia Genareo, '25, angles for a pass during the women's game.

Right: Dagney Javes, '25, (left) and Kylie Thompson, '27, prepare to hand out T-shirts. The first 25 attendees at each game got free shirts, while anyone after could recieve one for making a donation to the Trevor Project, an organization that works to support LGBTQ youth and prevent suicide.

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To get ready, participate in our Big Idea Workshops held in the Quigley Hall Auditorium @ 12:30 p.m. on the dates listed. Lunch will be provided.

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Tuesday, February 20: Developing Your Big Idea
Tuesday, March 12: Marketing Your Big Idea
Tuesday, March 19: Financing Your Big Idea
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