

Behind the scenes of ‘Senior Week’

By **EVELYN ZAVALA**
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Senior Week is a time when seniors can experience college life one last time before they graduate. Senior Week is planned to be from Tuesday, May 9, to Thursday, May 11, this year, and will include a variety of activities that are currently being planned by the senior class officers.

Class of 2023 President Shira Haus explained that planning has moved from brainstorming events to the execution of them.

Haus said the events include a champagne brunch, a bar crawl, a late-night Kinz event, a hiking trip, a senior ball, apartment starter bingo and a comp burning block party wrap-up event which, tentatively, will be attended by Meadville food vendors.

“We have about seven events so far and that may change as we move into more of the organizing stage,” Haus said. “The seniors have three days before graduation to do activities and experience things one last time. They can take in the fact that these are their last few days before they leave college.”

Because the events will take a lot of work, the committee is currently looking for students to help with executing the plans. Class of 2023 Vice President Jasmin Meyer Jaafari elaborated on the type of work they need from students who want to involve themselves in helping plan Senior Week.

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Lunch with the Deans

By **HASSAN JAVED**
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Starting on Monday, Feb. 6, several Allegheny College deans began tabling on a rotating schedule in the lobby of the Henderson Campus Center during lunch hour, noon to 1 p.m.

The dean tabling will continue daily on weekdays until at least the end of the semester and will alternate between five deans — First-Year Class Dean Niki Fjeldal, Second-Year Class Dean Amy Stearns, Third- and Fourth-Year Class Dean Jonathon May, Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley and Dean for the Student Experience Ian Binnington.

“There are other deans too but for now we are starting with this group,” Binnington said. “Perhaps in the future, we can expand this project to involve more deans and administrative members.”

Binnington said that this initiative has long been on his mind.

“I was actually inspired by President Cole and his open student hours,” Binnington said. “It worked really well for him and presented him as a transparent figure ... hopefully, students can start to become comfortable with approaching deans for their queries.”

Although the tabling is yet to have an established name, Binnington described it as “public office hours.”

Dean tabling will be alternating between the Campus Center and Brooks Dining Hall every week.

“McKinley’s and Brooks are the two most obvious favorite lunch spots for everyone on campus ... both spots get a lot of traffic,” Binnington said. “So, it made sense for us to show our faces right as you walk in. We hope that that motivates students to interact with us.”

The first week of tabling was positive, according to Binnington.

“Despite things being a bit slow, I think it was a good week because students started recognizing our presence,” Binnington said. “Also, from my perspective,

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ASG hosts Dearden for FS updates

By **SYDNEY EMERSON**
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Despite the middle of the semester looming on the horizon, new beginnings dominated the discussion at the general assembly of Allegheny Student Government on Tuesday, Feb. 14.

The meeting began with a presentation from guest speaker Jennifer Dearden, associate provost and professor of music. The presentation, which detailed the findings and proposals of two task forces, indicated big changes on the horizon for Allegheny’s cornerstone “FS” program of first- and second-year seminars, as well as its associated academic advising structure.

“Both task forces used significant research both into current practices at other institutions, professional resources, past practices at Allegheny and some surveys,” Dearden said. “Both of them had Allegheny’s mission and our institutional learning outcomes at the forefront of their work. Our goals in both of these were to maintain support for students to achieve the institutional learning outcomes.”

The current institutional learning outcomes have been in place since January 2015 and focus on critical thinking, effective written and oral communication, interdisciplinary approaches and practical application of knowledge, according to Allegheny’s website.

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Valentine’s photo booth



ELANOR BONTA/THE CAMPUS

The resident advisors who organized the event take a moment to chat and try the available treats.

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Planning Gator Day

By **MARIIA HLYTEN**
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Gator Day has been an important annual tradition for Allegheny College. It allows students to learn about the academic programs and resources available to them, as well as student life. It is an important event for prospective college students as well as for current ones. Students are officially excused from classes so that they can be fully immersed into the exploration of opportunities.

After the great turnout for Gator Day 2022, the planning committee has already started organizing the next one, to be hosted on Wednesday, Oct. 4.

However, the committee hopes to receive contributions from students to

make Gator Day better.

Third- and Fourth-Year Class Dean Jonathon May explained that many approaches for Gator Day preparation change from year to year thanks to students’ involvement and feedback.

Throughout the past 20 years, Gator Day has been a one-day, conference-style offering where students can attend different sessions about picking a major or preparing for post-college life. Recently, the festivities have been expanded.

“We turn the Campus Center lobby into a central hub where students would come and go, and what sessions are going on, get their free gifts and lunch,” May said.

The concept for Gator Day now is to bring various offices to inform students

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A big idea could win you money

By **ANNA WESTBROOK**
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A handful of students ate a free pizza for lunch during the first session of the Zingdale Big Idea Competition in the Quigley auditorium on Tuesday, Feb. 14. Run by the Bruce R. Thompson Center for Business and Economics, the competition awards winning students a total of \$25,000 for designing a business plan and pitching it to a panel of 15 alumni and faculty members.

“It’s fun for us to watch you folks grow as business people,” said Entrepreneur-in-Residence and Co-Director of the Thompson Center Chris Allison. “It looks great on a resume if you win this stuff. And the cash isn’t bad either. First prize is \$10,000.”

The Feb. 14 workshop was titled

“Creating a Big Idea” and focused on helping students find a relevant problem to solve.

“I always believe you should look for problems first and solutions second,” Allison said during the event. “A lot of failed entrepreneurs take the attitude of, ‘Build it and they will come.’ That’s a hard way of doing business.”

Allison urged attendees to identify current issues they are passionate about and want to see changed in society. For students who struggled to come up with an issue, Allison recommended trying to identify small annoyances or inconveniences that plague people’s lives and formulating a solution for them.

“It should be doable, and use your common sense,” Allison said. “Put yourself in the brain of your customer and figure out if you were them, how would you — what would you want (as)

a product? How would you want to access it? What would you want to pay for it? One of the most important things for a business is empathy.”

There was some discussion about whether entrepreneurs should pursue ideas they feel passionately about or whether they are better off pursuing whatever idea would generate the most profit. Allison said the latter idea is a markets-first approach, in which an entrepreneur would identify a growing market and become an expert in it in order to reap that market’s benefits.

“What do you think the vibe is like of people working in (those) industries in terms of taking risks?” Allison said. “Or the ability to buy something? If it’s a big market that’s growing, that means there’s a lot of money flying around.”

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LIFE IS NOT A BUZZFEED QUIZ Opinion Editor Sydney Emerson, ’23, writes about why the tendency for people to categorize themselves is unproductive to creating an inclusive, accepting community. Page 4	PISCES TAKES THE STAGE Our monthly horoscope series returns, with free tips for the month from our resident astrologer — and designer — Annaliese Stone, ’23. Page 6	‘SENIOR NIGHT’ Both the men’s and women’s basketball teams dedicate their last game of the season to their seniors. The catch: this year, both teams have only one. Page 8
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DEANS

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“The reason why we’re there isn’t to cater to extremely specific needs but just to make sure everything is fine, answer your questions or point you in the direction of someone who can answer your questions and needs.”

—IAN BINNINGTON
Dean for Student Experience,
Allegheny College

I wasn’t trying to get involved in other people’s business but just observing students walk past and hearing their conversations as they go helped to keep me in the loop of how the general feeling is.”

Students should not feel discouraged to approach any of the deans despite their needs, according to Binnington.

“Just because you’re a first-year doesn’t mean you can’t talk to Dean May when it’s his turn to be tabling,” Binnington said. “The reason why we’re there isn’t to cater to extremely spe-

cific needs but just to make sure everything is fine, answer your questions or point you in the direction of someone who can answer your questions and needs.”

Michael Abraham, ’24, was disappointed when he expected to see May tabling at Brooks on Monday, Feb. 13, but was instead met with Dean for Student Success Erin O’Daye-Frye.

“I was hoping to ask Dean May about the junior seminar and managing time during junior year,” Abraham said.

O’Daye-Frye was filling in for May who was ill that morning.

“I’m not part of the rotation but when we all met to discuss the tabling, it was established that I would come in when someone could not,” O’Daye-Frye said. “These things are bound to happen. Not everyone can be where they need to be every single time.”

Zula Stenger, ’25, had better luck when she approached Stearns who was tabling at Brooks on Tuesday, Feb. 14.

“I wanted to discuss summer internships, funding for it and where I want to be heading into junior year,” Stenger said. “Dean Stearns was very helpful in pointing me in the right direction ... it was also very easy to interact with her as she was sitting right by the steps going down into the dining hall.”

Stearns said that tabling is a good way to speed up the communication process between students and deans.

“In the last two weeks, I’ve



HASSAN JAVED/THE CAMPUS

Second-Year Class Dean Amy Stearns talks with Zula Stenger, ’25, outside Brooks Dining Hall on Tuesday, Feb. 14, during her public office hours.

seen a lot of students that I’ve had email contact with or I recognize as someone who has reached out to me,” Stearns said. “Not everyone can meet when my schedule allows but almost everyone has time to go to lunch and my table being one of the first things you see when you walk in makes it

much easier for students to communicate with me.”

Only in its second week, dean tabling is a new initiative that Binnington hopes to evaluate and improve over time.

“We will be meeting collectively to review how the tabling is going and hopefully, in the fu-

ture, we can add more elements to it that will attract students,” Binnington said. “One of the biggest things we are already thinking about is including other people, such as President Cole, in the initiative.”

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Allison also said that pursuing a markets-first approach and topics you are passionate about do not have to be mutually exclusive.

The competition is open to students of all class years and majors, as well as students from other colleges and universities. Participants can design business plans for any type of business, including non-profits.

Samone Brosier, ’24, won third place in the competition last year and received a \$1,000 reward for designing a debt-financing nonprofit that helps people assess how to pay their bills over time so that interest does not accrue at an unmanageable rate.

“My mom, she is a part of a low-income community,” Brosier said. “She works very hard — works overtime. And she actually went to college as well, but she was only able to get an Associate’s degree because the debt she accumulated was so much. She had to drop out. But she’s a very smart woman and she still deals with that debt.”

I can do.”

Reece Smith, ’25, also participated in the competition last year but did not receive any funding for his business. This year, Smith is taking Allison’s ECON 380 Economics of Entrepreneurship II class, which requires its students to participate in the competition as the class’s final project. Smith is going to build on his project from last year, which was designed to create a target end-date fund — a class of mutual fund — that would switch to bonds later in the fund’s life in order to make more money for the investors.

“I’m really doing a lot to try to make this idea more because I’m really passionate about it,” Smith said. “It’s really something that I haven’t stopped thinking about since last year.”

Smith said participating in the competition last year taught him significant persuasive and communication skills that will be useful in his future professional life.

Allison said that while the competition is challenging and work-intensive, it provides students with invaluable hands-on skills and a low-risk environment to experiment with a new trade.

While the number of participants varies each year, Allison anticipates that there will be approximately 20 teams of students.

The breakdown of the \$25,000 fund between winners also varies each year, according to Allison. For example, two students tied for first place and two students tied for second place in the 2022 competition.

New to the competition this year, in an endeavor to make the competition more accessible to students not taking an economics class, is that students will no longer be required to submit a 3-5 page executive summary of their business plans. However, Allison encouraged attendees to write one regardless because he said it helps to clarify participants’ goals.

Students will pitch their businesses to the judging panel on April 28, with finalists presenting again on April 29. Allison encouraged participants to take advantage of the opportunity to give a practice pitch to the judging panel on April 27.

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on things such as study away, health care professions, graduate school and career education, as well as to host various workshops and sessions about information that would be helpful for their future.

Despite the fact that Gator Day is usually associated with first-years and exploring majors, upperclassmen might also advance their career path with new knowledge.

Talking about the outcomes of the preparation, May called it “an exciting day off of class to grow, and to learn and develop and change.”

May mentioned the importance of students’ efforts and feedback after each Gator Day. In particular, some students participated in the focus group to “become advocates” for the future Gator Day improvement and shared their ideas in the room with committee members.

One of the student’s suggestions was adding wellness program elements to the seminar schedule, since students often have hectic schedules and high course loads during the semester. In the future, Gator Day organizers aim to provide not only educational advice, but also stress and anxiety management.

college invites all the offices that provide services —like Public Safety with parking passes, the Financial Aid Office with financial aid counseling, Career Education with resume reviews and career coaching, and Aramark with meal plans — to be out and available to students.

The committee also pays attention to the successful experience from the past events. The most prominent session the previous year was about study away, according to May. Some of the students gave a panel talk presenting what they did for study away and what their experience was to encourage audience consideration.

Sophie Larson, ’26, liked the idea of engaging students to share their stories about studying abroad.

“It was a slideshow and there were four people who have studied abroad, and they each talked about their experience while they were there,” she said. “You can relate almost because they’re your age.”

Associate Professor of Biology and Director of Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Matthew Venesky is considering discussions led by students for upcoming Gator Day.

“I’m probably going off of a model where the faculty are going to play a moderator role,” Velesky said. “I’m going to make it more student-focused because that’s what the students want and where they find the most value from that day.”

Both May and Venesky agreed that student collaboration and participation within the Campus Center into an all-day transactional fair, where the

process is beneficial.

May expects an increase in students willing to help with the actual preparation and the event running.

“We would love to have them commit some service,” May said. “It would be volunteer service. It wouldn’t be paid, but it would be a way to enhance your resume and a way to get some involvement on campus.”

Venesky said that interested students should try to find Gator Day programs that sound relevant but are outside of their wheelhouse.

“The Allegheny experience is more than the classroom,” Venesky said. “The students that succeed at Allegheny and after Allegheny are generally students that take advantage of transforming who they are in the classroom and outside of the classroom.”

To Larson, Gator Day is not a one-time opportunity and deserves to be attended annually.

“I think going to (panels) again would be helpful because I didn’t retain a lot of the information,” Larson said. “I can at least get it again, and then go from there.”

Ultimately, student participation and preparation can be beneficial for life and career.

“Take that moment and reflect on the opportunity that this is your time to participate in things that are completely outside of what you’re learning about in the classroom,” Venesky said. “And those, I think, are the experiences that help students transform where they are, and become better students at Allegheny and better graduates after that.”

“Put yourself in the brain of your customer and figure out if you were them, how would you — what would you want (as) a product? How would you want to access it? What would you want to pay for it? One of the most important things for a business is empathy.”

—CHRIS ALLISON
Entrepreneur-in-Residence and Co-Director of the Thompson Center,
Allegheny College

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Among the recommendations by both task forces was the “de-coupling” of the FS program from academic advising and the institution of an “exploratory advisor” role for first-year students. Currently, first-year students’ FS professor is also assigned as their academic advisor until they declare a major.

If the recommendation is adopted, first-year students will be enrolled in a one-credit “advising lab” course in which, once a week, they will meet with their advisor or participate in group sessions with their class dean. The advising lab would be taken credit/no credit for both first-year semesters and will incur no overload fee for students.

“Taking advising out of FS 101 provides more space for the curriculum in the FS program,” Dearden said.

Combined with the recommendation from the FS task force to pare the FS sequence down from three courses — FS 101, FS 102 and FS 201 — to one first-year and one second-year seminar, Dearden emphasized that preserving as much space as possible in FS courses for the institutional learning outcomes was a top priority.

Other recommendations from the task forces included removing the disciplinary lim-

itations from FS 201 courses and instead making them all interdisciplinary, much like how the FS 101 and 102 courses are currently structured, creating a formal institutional mission statement for academic advising and more clearly defining the allocation of responsibilities between academic advisors and class deans.

Dearden said that the committees’ recommendations, pending approval by faculty, intend to make the advising and FS experience better for first-year students while also adapting the curriculum to the college’s diminished faculty resources, as the current FS sequence is becoming “challenging” to staff.

ASG Senators expressed mixed feelings about the recommendations.

Senator Joe Leszczynski, ’25, challenged the new system’s applicability to students who declared their majors, and therefore switched advisors, as first-years.

“There are some details that we’re still working out, particularly with the Registrar’s office,” Dearden said, indicating that the proposed system will likely look different for transfer and “off-sequence” students. “But ... we don’t want to make the system so complicated that nobody can

figure it out.”

Kyrié Doniz, ’23, director of communication and press, questioned the longevity of the proposed program.

“I feel like there’s just a constant restructuring of the school and the way they want to advise students (and) help students and ... it doesn’t last more than a year or two,” Doniz said.

Dearden explained that the reduction of the FS sequence from three courses to two is meant to ease the workload of faculty members and free up their time to participate in exploratory advising, for which they will be compensated separately and required to make a two-year commitment.

“Our staffing pressures are very, very real,” Dearden said.

Turning to cabinet reports, the assembly approved \$2,426.50 from the general fund for use by the Pre-Health Club, Jazz and Dance Ensemble and Allegheny’s chapter of United States Institute for Theatre Technology.

Director of Student Affairs Amani Green, ’25, shared that the dining committee would meet with Dean for Student Experience Ian Binnington and Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley on Wednesday, Feb. 15, to review the progress of their food insecurity survey and set

goals for the committee’s future efforts.

The deadline for submitting petitions and candidacy platforms for the upcoming ASG presidential race passed before the general assembly. There are four tickets up for constituents’ consideration: Chief of Staff Ray Colabawalla, ’25, and Leszczynski; Manasvi Bantawa, ’24 and Kevin Murphy, ’24; Class of 2025 President Nicole Recio Bremer and Class of 2026 President Sam Ault; and Reece Smith, ’25.

Class of 2023 President Shira Haus updated the assembly on the planning of senior week, the celebratory week between finals and commencement, floating a preliminary request for \$5,000-\$8,000 more than the previously-allotted \$4,800 budget. She also shared that students will likely be charged \$25 each for admission to senior week, later clarifying that this would be a one-time purchase, not an individual charge for each event.

Senator Jasmin Meyer-Jaafari, ’23, added that the program for the week is now a “relatively-set schedule of events,” pre-viewing a senior gala, bar crawl, late-night Kinz, champagne brunch and hiking trip, among other activities.

The other classes outlined their intentions for a busy se-

mester as well, with the class of 2024 planning a career panel event co-hosted by the IDEAS Center and the class of 2025 organizing a soccer game.

Class of 2026 President Sam Ault put out a call for students to join the Gator Day planning committee.

“If you know someone who would be interested in (participating), we’re looking for about nine to 10 students to be involved in that process,” Ault said. “Please send them my way or to (Third- and Fourth-Year Class Dean) Jonathon May for more information.”

ASG President Veronica Green, ’23, announced that the ASG food pantry is restocked with donations from the staff advisory committee and Vice President for Institutional Advancement Matt Stinson. She then took time to acknowledge both the upcoming one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the recent shooting at Michigan State University.

“I know that it provides a lot of anxiety to college students because, typically, with us being so spread out on campus, stuff like this doesn’t happen a lot,” Green said. “Mine and a lot of other

people’s thoughts and hopes lie with the people who are critically injured in the hospital, and I know that the Dean of Students’ office is working on updating our ... emergency policies.”

The assembly’s final action of the evening was to vote to approve a proposed new club, Lift Up.

“(Lift Up) aims to create a more inclusive space for people who have been historically pushed out of strength-based sports to pursue that,” said Lift Up representative Milo Watson, ’26.

Watson outlined that Lift Up would engage in an equal mix of hands-on gym time and classroom learning about strength training, aiming to be accessible both to beginners and those who do not feel comfortable asking gym regulars for advice.

Lift Up was approved unanimously by the Senate. At their next general assembly on Tuesday, Feb. 21, ASG will vote on the club again, in accordance with its bylaws.

The meeting concluded at 8:34 p.m.

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“It would be logistical things such as reaching out to venues, coordination about contracts, submitting finance requests and attending finance meetings,” Jaafari said. “There are not a lot of us that are planning this so any help we can get would be amazing.”

Students who choose to be involved will have people guiding them through the initial stages of learning how to do finance requests and other work that may be unfamiliar to them, according to Jaafari.

“Since this is for the seniors, it would be nice to have more seniors involved so that they can have the senior week they deserve,” Haus said.

The committee had a meeting on Thursday, Feb. 9, with the Student Life Office to discuss what kind of involvement they will be providing, according to Jaafari.

“I think it would be great to have some help from them on the execution side of things because they have been providing support and advice about our

ideas, which is great, but a lot of us are comping and doing stuff seniors do,” Haus said. “It is really difficult to get a task of this size accomplished while also being under a lot of pressure.”

Jaafari said she spoke with Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley about the typical amount of help senior classes have, and learned there had been more support from administration in the past. However, due to college staff turnover, it has been difficult to keep records and notes of how certain things need to be done.

Third- and Fourth-Year Class Dean Jonathon May described the discussions had at the meeting around activities and the commencement ceremony.

“We talked about how to accept payments online for students to buy their senior week tickets and I am really proud of the senior week officers for keeping those ticket prices low and affordable for the graduating class,” May said. Tickets will be \$25. “In terms of Student Life getting more involved, they

““ (Senior Week) is one of those traditions that is so important and sacred here at Allegheny for seniors to have that culminating experience with their peers to reflect on their four years.”

—JONATHON MAY
Third- and Fourth-Year Class Dean,
Allegheny College

are definitely involved. This has been our third meeting so far and we are just getting started.”

May said he believes senior week is one of the most important traditions at many college campuses.

“It is one of those traditions that is so important and sacred here at Allegheny for seniors to have that culminating experience with their peers to reflect on their four years,” May said. “I still talk, visit, go to reunion weekends with my friends from college so it really does last a lifetime and it is also a great opportunity to expose seniors to what alumni-hood looks like.”

One of the key pieces of advice May has given the senior

week officers is making sure the events are planned with the big picture in mind.

“Plan things that are really going to appeal to a lot of different audiences,” May said. “Not everyone is going to want to go to a bar-crawl activity but some folks may want to go on a hiking trail. It’s about having a little something for everybody.”

Part of the festivities will be presenting the seniors with their class gift.

“I won’t give away what the class gift is,” May said. “But it is something very special that will create a moment where they have something to take away from their Allegheny experience.”

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.

February 3, 2023
Hazing
On Campus
Active Investigation

February 10, 2023
Act 64
Baldwin Hall
Active Investigation

February 12, 2023
Alcohol Violation
North Village II
Referred to Dean

February 12, 2023
Alcohol Violation
Crawford Hall
Referred to Dean

THE CAMPUS

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It's just me, myself and I

Lessons from loving solitude in a social world

By **SAM HEILMANN**
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One of the best days of my life was one I spent alone.

It was early May of last year, just a few weeks before my high school graduation. It was also in the midst of the Supreme Court’s decision in Dobbs vs. Jackson Women’s Health Organization leaking to the public, which is how I found myself driving alone for two hours to the nearest pro-choice protest worth going to.

I originally wanted a friend to accompany me. The company wasn’t the goal of the trip, but it would be nice going into a brand-new environment with someone by my side. But each friend I asked was busy — or they would not have participated to begin with.

So I went alone, and I happened to love it.

I called off work — this was more important to me than shelving sunscreen and shampoo would ever be

— and drove off in my Chrysler in the early morning. Tom Petty and Talking Heads played through the radio. There is a kind of peace that comes with driving, for me at least, in that there cannot be any distractions. Without passengers, this was even more apparent.

The drive was gorgeous and I was excited, even under the circumstances. I had never had both the want and the ability to do something like this. The day revealed a lot to me. I discovered a love for political participation and met a wonderful group of people in the process. I knew that I wanted more days like this one in my life.

The things I learned about myself that day are something I would have missed had my friends agreed to join me. I would not have participated in the same way had I been influenced by others’ expectations for the day.

But going alone also allowed me to listen to my music and my music alone. I visited the thrift stores dotting the path back home with no consideration for the time. When I came upon a scene

of rolling hills, blanketed in flowers and the occasional windmill, I pulled to the side of the road to take pictures and simply breathe.

It gets harder these days to find moments like that. Busy schedules don’t allow the time and social media can make the fear of missing out an all-too-present concern. But similar to the time that we carve out for friends, we should also reserve time for ourselves.

Spending time with yourself is technically something we all do when we’re in the absence of other people. But that lack of other people is only one element to well-spent time alone. The other element is what you do with that time. If you only find yourself alone while studying or can’t help but reach for your phone in a moment of solitude, you aren’t spending quality time with yourself.

It isn’t easy learning to love time alone if you’ve never experienced it before. But at the end of the day, the only company that is constant is your own — so you may as well become familiar. It’s essential to shed the idea that the only

time worth spending is the time you spend with others. Wouldn’t you like to get to know yourself, too?

“It’s essential to shed the idea that the only time worth spending is the time you spend with others. Wouldn’t you like to get to know yourself, too?”

—SAM HEILMANN
Class of 2026

Think of it as a relationship, like any other. If you’ve never truly spent time with yourself, it might be uncomfortable. Perhaps you are more of an acquaintance to yourself than you are a best friend. That’s okay. Like any relationship, the more time you spend with another person — or yourself — the more comfortable you will feel.

You’ll find that being alone is a vastly different experience from feeling lonely. Aloneness is not the same as loneliness.

Loneliness is a feeling. Aloneness is a choice. You have to choose to make time for yourself the way you would a friend. You may find that your own company is some of the best that you know.

The freedom that came with being alone is something I will never forget, and is something I intentionally include in my life to this day. The act of becoming friends with myself is not a straightforward road, but a winding one, surrounded by that blanket of flowers and windmills. It takes effort to round each bend, to freshly see parts of yourself you may otherwise ignore, but the effort is worth it. That trip, and learning about myself in the process, was one of the most rewarding experiences of my life — and it was just for me.

So I hope that you take a day, or a few hours if you can afford it, to truly exist alone. You may find that appreciating your own company opens the door to everything you’ve wanted to do but haven’t. You deserve to love your own company, even if it takes some time to get there.

Beware the BuzzFeed quiz-ification of our lives

By **SYDNEY EMERSON**
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In middle school, my best friend and I developed a tried-and-true Friday night routine. We spent hours lying on the couch in my basement listening to Fall Out Boy, demolishing a pizza, sipping cranberry Sierra Mist from wine glasses — rest in peace, Sierra Mist; you served two twelve-year-old girls well — and taking BuzzFeed personality quizzes on our phones until our thumbs cramped. We would take the same quiz at the same time, using each question as talking points in our endless quest to learn everything about one another.

Along the way, we ruthlessly debated which favorite colors and cities and animals we should pick. It was a good pastime for preteens, a gateway to deep conversation and a surface-level way to feel like we belonged. After all, there had to be plenty of other middle school girls out there who could proudly bear the stamp of being deemed just like Captain America or Gerard Way or Katniss Everdeen by 10 quick questions on BuzzFeed.

As the years have gone on, though, nobody has grown out of the categorization that occupied our young minds. In fact, it’s been ramped up and magnified. In a world where every thought is expected to be articulated in 280 characters and every person summed up in a 160-character bio to enhance their “personal brand,” categories are not only what we cling to — they sometimes feel like the only thing we have left.

We are all infinitely categorizable,

and with the exponentially-growing number of categories available — from personality tests to esoteric TikTok aesthetics that require a decoder ring to understand — it’s no wonder that our lives have become increasingly centered around declaring our own and others’ categories.

In our brave new world, Instagram bios declare zodiac signs and political affiliations — beware, libertarian Capricorns, these selfies and cat videos belong to a democratic socialist Scorpio. The Steelers or Mets sticker on someone’s car can make or break your opinion of them. Even across our campus, office doors and dorm hallways are adorned with declarations of Hogwarts houses and Clifton strengths, and I, not immune to humanity’s craving for neat categorization and habit of in-group bias, admittedly feel more at ease when I knock on the door of a Ravenclaw who scored high in the “intellection” category.

But what is the value of categories outside of the small relief of finding a place where, in some small and ultimately hollow way, you fit in? Today, when strict factions and cabalistic debates reign supreme, it seems that our penchant for categorization only drives us further into the trenches, all while imbuing us with a misguided sense of supreme understanding — so-and-so is a Leo, political science major and “South Park” fan, and they campaigned for Bernie Sanders. Case closed. As is the case in most facets of life right now, any complexity is denied at the outset and replaced with an enumerated set of judgements that leave no room for in-

dividuality.

Human connection is built on more than taxonomy, empathy is more than an exercise in uniformity and relationships must eventually transcend lying side-by-side taking BuzzFeed quizzes. But the simplification of identity trudges further still into the dangerous territory of gatekeeping — and Gen Z is the prime culprit.

Gen Z is credited with busting the binary wide open, shaking up and occasionally eliminating altogether the stiff rules of gendered and sexual expression. But from my view at the eye of the storm, I’m doubtful. No — I’m convinced that this is fundamentally untrue.

Yes, one in five Gen Z adults identify as queer, according to Gallup. I’m sure that’s accurate; in fact, I wonder if the statistic is a bit low. Yes, these queer identities are generally accepted and even celebrated by Gen Z. But — not to sound like a conservative pundit — the number of highly-specialized categories that have sprung up and the rules of personal presentation and behavior that members of said categories must follow is, frankly, becoming a bit ludicrous.

“Gender and sexuality is a spectrum,” Gen Z agreed. “Now, line up single-file and point to where on this spectrum you land so we know exactly how to sort you.” Depending on your identity, you are expected to indulge in specific stereotypes — a practice which, if applied to any other aspect of identity, seems like a highly offensive approach to life. Bisexuals cuff their jeans and drink iced coffee. Lesbians wear cargo pants. Gay men are bad drivers — or at least make jokes about being bad drivers — and can’t sit normally in a chair to save their lives.

The list goes on and on, pervading the construction of identities and dic-

tating the strictly-delineated permissible activities of certain identities until it finally infects public discourse. Just last week, for example, Harry Styles was at the center of a queerbaiting debate for, among other things, dressing flamboyantly and painting his nails, which are practices that supposedly belong only to queer men.

It is unclear if Styles identifies as queer, and if he does, he should not have to declare it publicly. There have been plenty of cases as of late in which a celebrity is “called out” for “queerbaiting” — holding hands with a woman, in the recent case of actor Kit Connor — only to be forced to publicly declare their queer sexuality to justify the permissiveness of entirely innocuous behavior to the blood-hungry public. Coming out is an intensely personal experience. Besides that fact, there are plenty of people who, far from being afraid to come out, simply feel that they do not owe anyone an explanation of their sexuality or gender. It is not a central fact to their identity but rather an incidental facet, the way that there is a difference between being a Parrothead and someone who occasionally sings “Cheeseburger in Paradise” at karaoke. Being shoved out of the closet is unacceptable, no matter how well-known or safe somebody is. Full stop.

If at the end of the day Styles buys into the BuzzFeed quiz culture and announces he’s completely straight and cisgender, he should still not be barred from flamboyant expression. Gen Z cannot seriously claim to be busting the binary when they’re also busting Styles’s chops for “stepping out of line” and wearing feather boas and sequins. All this does is reinforce a stricter, more complicated binary full of incomprehensible intricacies.

Demanding that anybody justify

their actions or expression purely by virtue of who they prefer to sleep with or how they personally construct their gender identity is just absurd. Not only does it impede any sort of progress toward a more fluid, open and accepting society, it also shuts us all up in boxes with no room to breathe. I have had innumerable encounters with fellow Zoomers who worry that they do not look or act “queer enough” to be a member of the community. As one friend pointed out to me, there is a big difference between affirming one’s identity and conforming one’s identity, but nobody seems to recognize the contrast. They see a category, apply superficial expectations and move on thoughtlessly.

There are plenty of reasons why we rush into the warm embrace of categories. They give us a sense of self. A sense of purpose. A sense of belonging in a big world. But when communities turn to policing, gatekeeping and attacking others — when they make people feel inadequate or insecure and demand that everyone consent to the BuzzFeed quiz-ification of their lives — they turn sour. I fear this is the direction we are headed in.

The binary, for a long time, was a comfortable two-room house in which we lived. Everybody slept in one room or the other: male or female, gay or straight. Depending on the room, certain stereotypes were applied to you. But we became dissatisfied with this house, how one room always seemed better-insulated than the other, with softer beds and bigger windows. Instead of moving away or constructing anew, though, we just kept building additional rooms: an attic, a basement, a turret, a staircase or three. We all got lost in the Winchester Mystery House we built.

Now is the time to seriously consider tearing down the house altogether.

SUBMIT YOUR OPINIONS!
Email newspaper@allegheny.edu with pitches for the editors.
Letters to the editors are 500 words or less.
Op-eds range from 750-1200 words.
All submissions subject to approval and edits by The Campus staff.

♥ ♥ ♥

Waste-ing away Valentine’s Day

♥ ♥ ♥

By **SAM HEILMANN**
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Love is in the air. Or maybe it’s consumerism.

Walking into any store in America in the weeks leading up to Valentine’s Day, it seems that love is not so much a feeling as it is a product.

Massive Valentine’s Day-themed stuffed animals greet you at the entrance of your local Walmart. Flawless white and red roses wrapped in plastic are not-so-subtly placed next to heart-shaped boxes of chocolate, and home decor items in shades of pink and red implore you to redefine your space, however temporarily.

Brick-and-mortar stores are not the only culprit: check your email, scroll through Instagram or catch a TV commercial in February, and you are sure to be inundated with ads for flower-delivery services and personalized jewelry. Every message surrounding the holiday seems to say that this item — practical or not — will communicate love and appreciation.

But what happens when the flowers die and the fuzzy stuffed

bear sits on the shelf? What have we done to the planet, and ourselves, in the process?

Associate Professor and Chair of Environmental Science and Sustainability Beth Choate explained that virtually every aspect of the holiday as we experience it now has a negative environmental impact.

“Really, it’s excess at its finest,” Choate said, referring to a chart on her computer indicating that Americans are expected to spend \$25.9 billion on Valentine’s Day this year. That number has only grown over the past decade, with spending on the holiday increasing by \$2 billion from last year, according to statista.com.

As someone who specializes in life-cycle analysis, Choate is well aware of the environmental impact that the holidays have, especially ones like Valentine’s Day, which demands that every element be perfect.

“Flowers for cut-flower production is a very insecticide-intense process because you don’t want those flowers to have any blemishes on them,” Choate said. “Nobody wants roses that are browning on the edges or have little chunks taken out of

them by bugs.”

From flowers to teddy bears to the wrapping paper we package our gifts in, holiday consumption is particularly resource-intensive.

“If you think of the life-cycle analysis of wrapping paper and the footprint that leaves behind, there’s paper involved, but then there’s also dyes that have to be put on to make patterns, and there’s cardboard tubes,” Choate said. “So everything has a huge footprint, and when you think about how much of that stuff some people are buying and consuming, it gets pretty overwhelming.”

Most concerning is the shift from simply romantic love around Valentine’s Day to include platonic love as well. Valentine’s Day now extends to classmates, friends and family, adding to the need to consume.

Choate said that, as a parent, the expectation of consumption is all-too prevalent.

“I don’t see it as an option to not send valentines in, because (my son) would feel left out,” she said. “There’s a whole social construct around this.”

The construct is one that relies on our expectation, in two

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Everything has a huge footprint, and when you think about how much of that stuff some people are buying and consuming, it gets pretty overwhelming.”

—BETH CHOATE
Associate Professor and Chair of Environmental Science and Sustainability, Allegheny College

directions. We want to receive gifts as a way of knowing that someone appreciates us, while also feeling the need to give gifts to keep up with the norm.

This phenomenon is one that Associate Professor and Department Chair of Psychology Lydia Eckstein explained is so strong that we are likely to participate in the holiday because it is the norm, regardless of our true feelings toward the day.

“There’s so much marketing around (Valentine’s Day) that suggests that there’s a cultural norm,” Eckstein said. “In order to show our love and care and affection, we should get something and we should give something. Whenever there’s a norm, when we violate that

norm, that makes us feel like we’re in the wrong or we’re the odd ones out.”

Katie Burgess, ’24, believes that the expectation to buy for friends and partners can be overwhelming, especially this time of year.

“It’s nice to get things for the people you care about,” Burgess said. “But gift exchanges can be a lot, especially after Christmas and the holidays.”

For those looking to have less of an impact on the environment, there are several alternatives to traditional Valentine’s Day celebrations.

“One of the alternatives is we push back against it,” Eckstein said. “In psychology we would call that reactance, whenever we feel like, ‘I actually don’t have a choice here.’ The other

alternative is to find ways to express care and affection that are not hinging on mindlessly consuming.”

The idea is not to abolish Valentine’s Day. It can be nice to take a day to show love for the people in your life, but that message does not have to come in the form of a tangible object. Cooking a meal, making a playlist or going to a concert with your significant other are all ways to demonstrate love without putting strain on the planet.

“There are lots of studies that show that experiences — and actually having that experience with someone — has a lot more meaning and makes you feel better in the way that purchasing does for a very short-term,” Choate said.

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The precipice of disaster

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How conservative politics fueled the destruction of Brazil’s Amazon rainforest

By **ANNA WESTBROOK**
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If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? If an entire soccer field filled with trees fell down every minute, would anyone notice?

The Amazon rainforest is currently experiencing its highest rates of deforestation ever, losing approximately 150 acres of land every minute, according to the BBC. The rainforest is teetering on a dangerous tipping point that, if crossed, could cause cascading, far-reaching effects across the world.

Brazil’s new president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva — commonly known as Lula — ran on a strong environmentalist platform that included prioritizing the conservation and protection of the Amazon Rainforest. Elected into office in January 2023, it remains to be seen whether or not he will be able to implement his policies.

“It’s a pretty big moment just in the sense (of) what the Amazon represents to the global — I mean to the entire planet honestly,” said Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Sustainability Matthew Bethurem, who teaches environmental policy. “There’s nothing else like it.”

The Amazon rainforest is one of the most biodiverse places on the planet, with some estimates calling it home to 10% of all known wildlife species, according to the World Wildlife Fund. The forest serves as a critical climate change-combatting carbon sink, and it supports food and water systems for millions of people. The Amazon rainforest is so large that it can affect weather patterns millions

of miles away, including rainfall levels in the middle of the continental U.S., which means that continued deforestation could threaten food production and destabilize ecosystems all over the world.

Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro was a staunch anti-environmentalist conservative who publicly and constantly derided the idea of environmentalism, according to Professor of Political Science and Latin American specialist Shannan Mattiace.

“Not only did he not seem at all abashed by the deforestation — he himself was questioning the very idea that one, international environmentalists could even say anything about Brazil,” Mattiace said. “And Bolsonaro always took a super-nationalist take on the environment. ‘This is our rainforest. This is our Amazon. Who are you all from outside to tell us what to do?’”

During Bolsonaro’s years in office, deforestation increased by 52% compared to the prior three years, and more than 8.4 million acres — an area larger than the entire nation of Belgium — was lost, according to Vox. Now, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says that some parts of the forest are releasing more carbon than they are absorbing.

In prioritizing the conservation of the Amazon, Lula is going up against the Brazilian agricultural industry, which has immense political lobbying power. The agricultural industry is a major driver of deforestation, with some experts estimating that 90% of deforestation in the Amazon rainforest is caused by illegal land grabs in order to cattle ranch, according to Vox. During his

presidency from 2019 to 2022, Bolsonaro turned a blind eye to the illegal land grabs because they created jobs and brought in revenue for Brazil.

“If Lula wants to get to the bottom of things — which I would imagine you’d have to deal with illegal logging and mining and other issues related to that — you have got to send the law after them,” Mattiace said. “You have to increase the presence of the state in that region. You have to prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. You just have to decide, ‘We are going to use the power of the state.’ And you’re going to expend capital, both actual money and putting people out there — but also political capital because you’re going to get backlash.”

On top of having to address such a complex issue, Lula is also working with a majority-conservative National Congress that still supports Bolsonaro’s political platform. Even if Brazil’s legislature did decide to pass Lula’s conservation policies, it is possible that provincial leaders or law enforcement officers will choose to not enforce them as an act of political rebellion or because they are bribed.

“It remains to be seen how much power (Lula is) going to be able to actually wield,” Bethurem said. “How is he going to be able to facilitate some agreements and consensus among those people who are in essence politically opposed to him? That might actually be the thing that really tells the tale on how much of his agenda can even be rolled out.”

One of Bolsonaro’s main arguments for preventing the conservation of the Amazon

was that resource extraction from the forest is essential to Brazil’s economic development. However, Bethurem said that while Brazil’s gross domestic product has increased, it is still unequally distributed.

“There are a hell of a lot of Indigenous people and just poor people living in favelas (a Brazilian term for a slum or ghetto) in Rio that don’t benefit at all from that economic growth that’s coming out of that,” Bethurem said.

While Bethurem disagreed with the idea that there is a tradeoff between overall economic well-being and environmental protection, he did note that economic development needs to be environmentally sustainable.

“What you often can’t have is a handful of monopolistic companies controlling an entire sector that continue to be ultra-profitable and still have environmental protection because often their profits come at the expense of both the landscape and the people who live there,” Bethurem

said. “And that’s probably what Lula’s big challenge is going to be. Can he push back hard enough against those really entrenched, wealthy, powerful industries and figures to make some meaningful changes to halt what’s been going on? The problem is, he’s got a pretty short time period to do that in. There’s already a big chunk of the Amazon that’s really in a tipping point kind of territory. If you lose much more of it, it’s going to change into a different kind of ecosystem and then you’re probably not going to be able to bring that back in any kind of decent timeline.”

Lula is an “infamous compromiser,” according to Mattiace. She believes that Lula’s decades of experience governing and ability to cut deals with multiple stakeholders will serve him well. While the large-scale conservation effort would be expensive, Mattiace said the nation could find the money to fund the initiative.

“In the same way that — does Russia have money to wage a war? No, but they are,”



Photo Source: **OPENVERSE**
The world’s largest rainforest, now reduced to 83% of its original stature.

Connecting cultures through the big screen

By **DAWIT KAHESAY**
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The 2023 International Film Festival sponsored by the Department of World Languages and Cultures at Allegheny College is here.

“A tradition that can roughly be dated back to the 1950s has returned once more to our lovely community,” said Professor of Spanish and organizer of the 2023 film festival Wilfredo Hernández, as he welcomed both students and the Meadville community to the Movies at Meadville. “We as the Department of World Languages and Cultures here at Allegheny College are excited to present a bit of our culture and stories through these select movies, and hope you are able to reflect on your culture as well.”

Hernández encouraged everyone to attend the film festival, experience films that might not usually be presented at the local theaters.

“It’s for free, it’s fun, the weather hasn’t been bad recently,” Hernandez said. “We are talking about five films in five weeks. It’s great to do something different, especially in the winter, so I hope you enjoy the wonderful films that we have presented.”

The films were selected through a nomination process where each section of the WLC department nominated three movies. With the collaboration of The Movies at Meadville, one was selected to be shown in theaters. This year, “The Man Who Sold His Skin” was the only nomination from the Arabic section, having overwhelming support from all its faculty.

Having started on Feb. 2, the festival is scheduled every Thursday night, ending on March 2. “The Man Who Sold His Skin” showcases the Arabic department. “Wolf Warrior” represents the Chinese section, with four languages represented within the movie. The French department selected “The Summit of the Gods,” a live-action adaptation of a Japanese manga of the same name. The German section chose the award winning movie “Ich bin dein Mensch.” Lastly, the Spanish department is represented by “Argentina 1985,” a true story about the people’s prosecution of a bloody militant leader.

Instructor in Chinese Xingzhi He spoke about how commonality between cultures is being portrayed in “Wolf Warrior.”

“The story is very straightforward, having a clear good guy and a villain,” He said. “Similar to Western hero ideology, it gets at the core values that they are supposedly

fighting for. In this new era of globalization, we kind of come to the agreement that it matters not the specific manners in which we survive, but understanding that people are people. No matter what government we are in, we just want to survive and help our kids survive. I hope this film made people think about how they interpret their culture to others.”

A regular attendee of the film festival and a student taking classes in the Chinese curriculum, Emily Eschenfelder, ’26, was caught by the powerful message of “The Man Who Sold His Skin.”

“The movie showcased not only the exploitation of Syrian refugees but all refugees and immigrants around the world who are seeking help only to be taken advantage of and mistreated,” Eschenfelder said. “The way the movie made such a tough topic digestible was a pleasant surprise to see.”

Allegheny students were able to go to the theater with the help of Don Sumpter, who drove shuttles to and from the movie theater so that everyone had a chance to experience the fest.

“Allegheny providing shuttle transportation for students was a great decision, especially in the winter time, but the organization was a bit lackluster as there weren’t enough seats to accommodate everyone that wanted to go,” said SooHo Park, ’25. “I know there are two shuttle runs, but for the demand I have noticed around campus, the shuttle system needs to be improved.”

The cost to rent theaters and transportation has been on a steady climb, and in accordance, Hernández has become more cognizant about the issue of money.

“There was a time a couple years ago where we would have the film festival every semester instead of once a year, but things have become too expensive to continue in the same manner,” Hernández said. “I was unaware of some of the transportation issues students were having, but transportation is something we can improve on and will strive to improve on for the remainder of the movies.”

The International Film Festival has two Thursday screenings left: Feb. 23 and March 2. Shuttles will take students to the Movies at Meadville from Brooks Walk at 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Each showing is at 7:00 p.m.

“With over a hundred people in the first screening and a packed theater for the rest, Film Fest has been a success this year and we hope you enjoy the remaining films,” Hernández said.

By **ANNALIESE STONE**
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Pisces (Feb. 19–March 20)

Happy Birthday, Pisces! You have a lot in store this month, so strap in for quite the ride. You’ve started the year with Venus and Jupiter in your sign and will continue to add to the batch with Neptune, your ruling planet, entering Pisces on Saturday, Feb. 18. Accomplishment and success are on your horizon! Use the New Moon in Pisces on Monday, Feb. 20 to get started on the things you want to achieve this month. Mercury’s transit into Pisces on Thursday, March 2 will bring an aid to communications and strengthen your intuition, but be careful when Saturn enters Pisces on Tuesday, March 7. This transit will bring shifting tides, for better or worse. Take care of yourself mentally and physically this month. Even good things can be overwhelming at times.

Aries (March 21–April 19)

The Sun will enter your 12th House of Secrets and Uncertainties on Wednesday, March 15, leaving you feeling lost and confused about your place in the universe, Aries. Mercury will join soon after on Thursday, March 16, making communication difficult to muster. This month will be difficult, but not at all impossible. Be open and honest with yourself and others. Tell the people you love that you love them and treat your body with the respect it deserves. Give gifts to future you. Good luck, champ.

Taurus (April 20–May 20)

It’s time to charge up, Taurus. Your ruling planet, Venus, will enter your 12th House of Secrets and Uncertainties on Sunday, March 12, making relationships and finances questionable at this time. This isn’t an inherently bad sign, though. Monetary benefits and new friends or loved ones may come out of the darkness to surprise you this month. When Mars enters your Second House of Wealth and Family on Monday, March 13, take time to remind yourself of your own inherent value and the family you’ve built for yourself. Your friends don’t hate you. You just need to go to sleep.

Gemini (May 21–June 21)

It’s a good work-month

Pisces season and Pluto’s new era

for you, Gemini. Your ruling planet, Mercury, will move into your Ninth House of Luck and Fortune on Monday, Feb. 27, bringing you clear signs of what lies ahead for the month. Keep your eyes and mind open to what others around you are saying and what topics become commonplace in your life. Mercury will then move into your 10th House of Work and Career on Thursday, March 16, making it a good time for job or internship interviews or asking for a little extra time on an assignment. Keep moving forward. You’ve got this!

Cancer (June 22–July 22)

Steady yourself for an increase in workload, Cancer. Use the New Moon in Pisces on Monday, Feb. 20 to prepare yourself for the month ahead. Venus — ruler of abundance in both love and wealth — will enter your 10th House of Work and Career on Sunday, March 12, marking a lucrative opportunity on the horizon. At the very least, you may gain a new work-bestie or find that a lot of tasks require your special touch for completion. Keep your head high and your worth in mind. You’re going to do amazing things.

Leo (July 23–Aug. 22)

Like Cancer, your fellow summer-baby, March is hinting at a lot of positive work for you, Leo. Your ruling planet, the Sun, will enter your 10th House of Work and Career on Wednesday, March 15, aligning you to the work you’ve been doing, or setting you up with a new project to excite you. However, be cautious of Mercury’s entrance into your Eighth House of Uncertainty and Transition on Thursday, March 16. Miscommunications and misunderstandings are especially likely to occur during this time, so take the extra time to really read through the job description before you apply. Maybe schedule some time for a mock interview or two. Good luck!

Virgo (Aug. 23–Sept. 22)

A full moon in your sign on Tuesday, March 7 sees a resolution to the struggles you’ve been facing. Take time for a breather and small celebration of how far you’ve come. Remember that progress is not linear, however, and your goals will continue to take work. Your ruling plan-

et, Mercury, will enter your Seventh House of Marriage and Partnership on Thursday, March 16, bringing you close connection and much-needed understanding between loved ones and co-workers to help you stay on top of your goals. Maybe a coffee-study date is what you need to succeed.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23–OCT. 23)

Love is in the air, Libra. Your ruling planet, Venus, will slowly transfer from your Sixth House of Health — which started on Wednesday, Feb. 15 — into your Seventh House of Marriage and Partnership on Sunday, March 12. Take extra time this month to look after your body and mind, nourishing both with good food and good thoughts. The resulting glow-up will carry you into an unexpected friendship or blossoming romance throughout the month of March. Don’t throw your heart to the wind too quickly, but keep your eyes open to those who show they care about you as much as you should care about you.

Scorpio (Oct. 24–Nov. 21)

You’re entering a new era, Scorpio. Your ruling planet, Pluto, has been in Capricorn since 2008 and is finally making an initial shift into Aquarius on Thursday, March 23. Change will take place on a global scale, with Aquarius’s ruling themes of politics, technology and communication being hit the hardest as Pluto retrogrades back and forth into Capricorn a few times before finally making its transition to Aquarius in late 2024. For now, prepare yourself for personal advances in your own relations to Aquarius’s central themes. Keep up with the news and put in the extra effort to stay in touch with the people who encourage you to be the best version of yourself you can be. Use the New Moon in fellow water-sign Pisces on Monday, March 20 to manifest and take steps towards building the future you want for yourself.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22–Dec. 21)

March brings a relatively balanced month for you, Sagittarius. Your ruling planet, Jupiter, is spending the start of 2023 in your Fourth House of Comforts and Luxury. Though it may be hard to see through your busy day-to-day, take some time to appreciate the comforts and gifts in

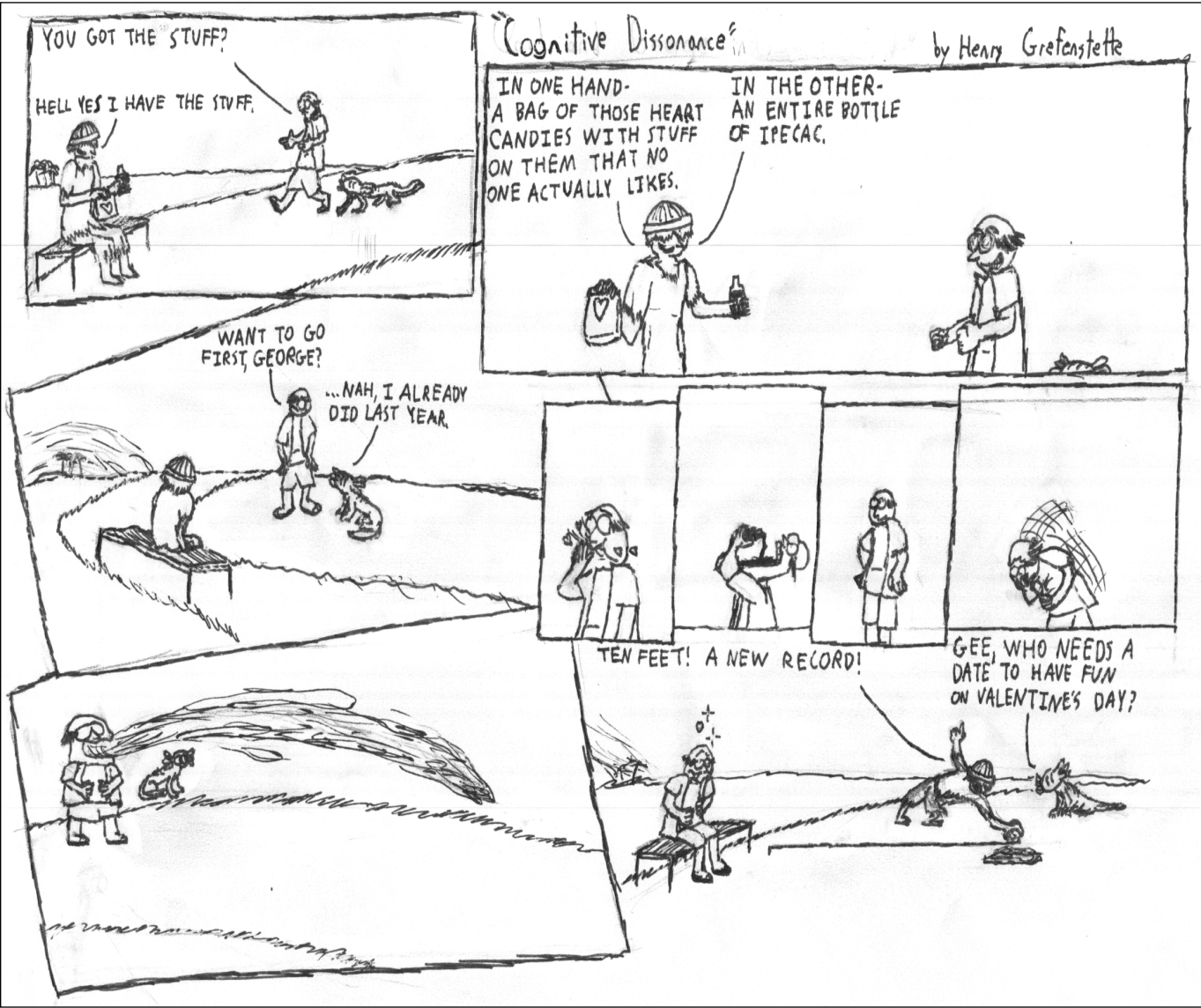
your life. When Venus enters your Fifth House of Education on Sunday, March 12, be prepared for a heavy workload in your classes but also high praise for the work you’ve done so far. Mars’ entrance into your Seventh House of Marriage and Partnerships on Monday, March 13 cautions of heightened drive and emotions in your relationships, which could present as negative or positive depending on what predates it. Check in with yourself, and be kind to yourself and others.

Capricorn (Dec. 22–Jan. 19)

Your hard work is paying off, Capricorn! Your ruling planet, Saturn, entered your Second House of Wealth and Family back in January and will stay there for the remainder of the year. Though it may feel like your self-worth and identity are tied up back home, I promise you’re more than your past. Venus will enter your Fourth House of Comforts and Luxury on Sunday, March 12, bringing you a much needed reward for your hard work and dedication. The Sun and Mercury will then enter your Third House of communication on Wednesday, March 15 and Thursday, March 16, aiding in your efforts to understand others and to be better understood. Make yourself some tea, put on a good record and pick your journal back up again. Take care of yourself and keep up the grind!

Aquarius (Jan. 20–Feb. 18)

March is set to be a great month for you, Aquarius. Like Capricorn, your ruling planet will spend the majority of the year where it began. Neptune stays in your Ninth House of Luck and Fortune, shining intuition and light upon your months ahead. With Pluto entering your sign on Thursday, March 23, the world will feel as though it’s finally starting to align with your goals and visions. Though the Sun will be leaving your sign for Pisces, it will enter your Second House of Wealth and Family on Saturday, Feb. 18, only further helping you feel like you’re right where you’re supposed to be. Mars’ move into your Fifth House of Education on Monday, March 13 will help push you forward in your classes and help you stay on top of projects. Have an amazing start to your next year of life!



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Kappa crafts valentines for fundraiser



ELANOR BONTA/THE CAMPUS

Kappa sisters advertising their valentine card stock to prospective buyers.

By **ELANOR BONTA**
Features Writer
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The Gamma Rho chapter of the Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority hosted a Cupid Cards and Kappa Kisses sale as a fundraiser for a national mental-health organization in the lobby of the Henderson Campus Center from Monday, Feb. 6, to Friday, Feb. 10.

“A group of girls looked up little Valentine’s Day cards, and they all have cute pictures on the front of them,” Ella Lengauer, ’23, said. “They’re also attached to a little bag with hearts and kisses. They can be sold to any student that walks into the Campus Center. It’s basically a way for us to raise money for our philanthropy as well as join in on the holiday spirit for Valentine’s Day.”

Not only could students purchase the valentines on their own, but KKG could also deliver the valentines to the desired receiver, according to Isabella Seng-Ma, ’25. All of the deliveries took place Friday, Feb. 10, after the last of the sales had taken place.

This is not the first place KKG has held an event like this, Seng-Ma explained.

“We did (Kappa Kisses) in the

past, about four or five years ago, and I wanted to bring it back,” Seng-Ma said. “It was right after our bid day, so I wanted to get the new members involved in something. And it’s a great way to spread some awareness about mental health and spread some love around Valentine’s Day.”

All the proceeds of the event go directly to The Jed Foundation, an organization which provides mental health services and suicide prevention for young adults and teenagers. It was “named in honor of a young man who lost his battle with mental health,” according to Vice President of Membership Kalliyan Greevy, ’25.

“It’s just completely of our own volition to hold fundraisers like this, which is something I think is really special about Kappa,” Greevy said.

By last Friday, Feb. 10, KKG had raised over \$200 for Jed from the event, according to Langauer. But the sorority does a lot more fundraisers for Jed throughout the semester, not just Kappa Kisses, according to Seng-Ma.

“We ask local businesses around here if they want to donate mac and cheese and we’ll sell some of that,” Seng-Ma said. “There’s also a philanthropy t-shirt sale going on right now, and all of these proceeds also

go to The Jed Foundation.”

KKG is involved in community service and fundraisers that focus on the Allegheny student community, too. Beside events like Kappa Kisses or the upcoming mac and cheese event, the sisters sell succulents for new students stumped for dorm decorations at the beginning of each semester.

“We do a lot of different things throughout the year,” Greevy said. “We also participate in school-sponsored events, so on Service Saturday, we’ll be sending a group to participate. We were also active in Make a Difference Day.”

KKG is also involved with Meadville Animal Rescue and Meadville Coalition as well, according to Seng-Ma.

The sisters believe community service is a way to spend time with friends and also help the community and raise money, according to Greevy.

“Events like (Kappa Kisses) are good ways for us to just hang out sometimes,” said Greevy. “We have a spreadsheet where sisters can sign up, like for Kappa Kisses, but we’ll just stop by and congregate and chat. It’s just fun to raise money with our best friends.”

Snacks galore and Polaroids at ‘Booth of Memory’

By **ELANOR BONTA**
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ELANOR BONTA/THE CAMPUS

Among the multitude of friends and couples in attendance, a few students dropped in on their lonesome to snag some chocolate-covered marshmallows and strawberries.



ELANOR BONTA/THE CAMPUS

Resident Advisor Grace Camarata, ’23, adorned with a Valentine’s Day accessory, overlooks the food table as a couple of friends grab some dips.



ELANOR BONTA/THE CAMPUS

Sha Lilley, ’24, and Michael Abraham, ’24, make their rounds at the food table. “We decided to make chocolate-covered treats for each other,” said Abraham.

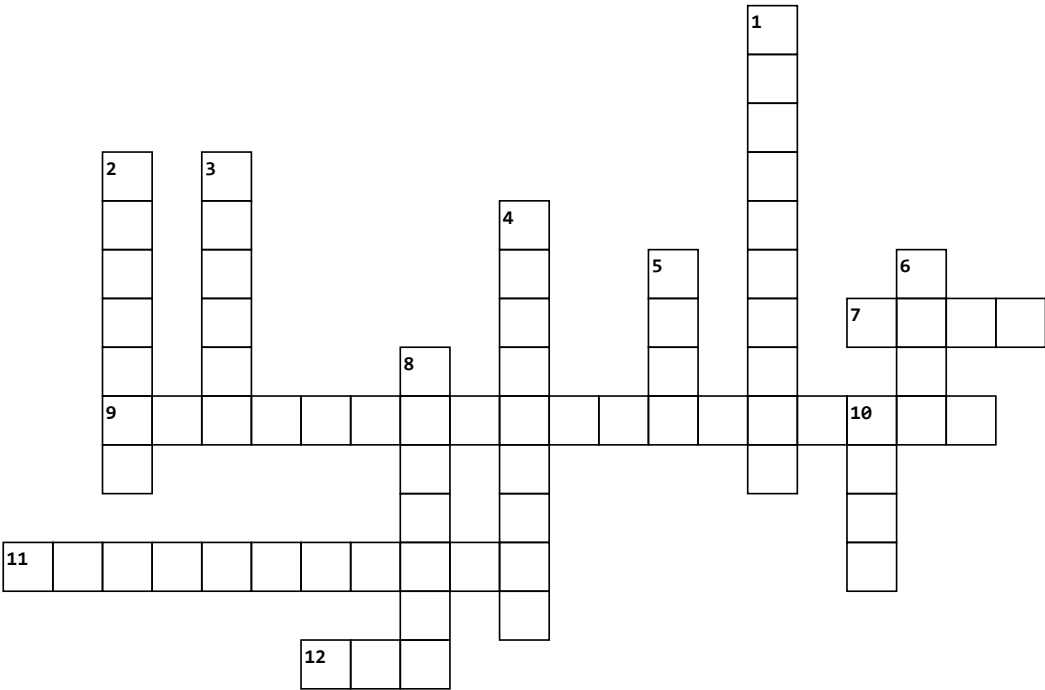


ELANOR BONTA/THE CAMPUS

Decadently decorated strawberries with chocolate and marshmallow dips, accompany the Polaroid of Lilley and Abraham. “It was really delicious — we also now have a great photos to show our kids someday.”

The crossword corner

With **SAMI MIRZA**
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Across

- 7. Number of ASG Presidential Tickets
- 9. New first-year advising system recommended by a pair of task forces (two words)
- 11. Chinese entry into the Int'l Film Festival (two words)
- 12. Sorority behind "Cupid Card" sale

Down

- 1. Cost of tickets to Senior Week (two words, spelled out)
- 2. Dean for Student Life
- 3. New club proposed at this week's GA
- 4. Former President of Brazil
- 5. Newly elected President of Brazil
- 6. Inspiration for the dean tabling
- 8. Five deans started doing this on Feb. 6
- 10. Body part sold by a Syrian refugee, shown in the Int'l Film Festival

Basketball’s ‘Senior Night’ is one last hoorah at home

By **Kyle Chandler**
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There is a reason why Senior Night is a celebrated tradition throughout high school and collegiate sports. With all the hard work athletes put in during their tenures, days accumulate into months, and months into years of dedication and commitment. It seems only fit that the school thanks them for their blood, sweat and tears that have been devoted to the playing surface.

Allegheny will continue the tradition on Saturday, Feb. 18, as both the men’s and women’s basketball teams lace up for the last home game of the regular season versus Waynesburg. Although it should be a well-performed ceremony, it will not last long. Both Gators’ rosters share a unique attribution — they have only one senior on their rosters, the class of 2023’s Alexis Caldwell and Caden Hinckley.

Caldwell has been a three-year star for Allegheny, starting every game of her career except one. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic stripping the team’s season and her sophomore campaign, Caldwell has still amassed over 640 career points, and has a chance to hit the 500 marker in total boards. She leads by example, and has been a role model for the rest of the squad.

“I can look at her, and she believes in herself and her teammates,” said Head Coach Kelly Muffley. “It is really helpful when you come in and join a new program that you can have someone like Lex.”



Photo courtesy of **ED MAILLIARD**

Caden Hinckley, ’23, wins the opening tip-off for the Gators as they square up against Chatham on Feb. 8.

Muffley was appointed as head coach in June of 2021, when Caldwell was going into her junior year. Although she missed her first two seasons, Muffley knew Caldwell would be an impact player, and she was right. The first edition of their saga together, Caldwell went to work and achieved an All-NCAC honorable mention after scoring 10.5 points and grabbing 8.4 rebounds per contest.

“I have never won an accolade like that before,” Caldwell said. “It felt pretty nice.”

Her teammates also enjoy Caldwell’s company. On the court, she brings the ability to make players laugh. Whether it is fighting for a rebound with another Gator thinking they are an opponent or being amazed at a shot that seemed almost impossible, Caldwell always knows how to keep a light-hearted spirit while also staying competitive.

Off the court, the girls hang out like a family. Oftentimes Caldwell gets unexpected knocks on the door from her teammates to hang out. Even

if she is not home, it makes no difference. She has been greeted with players hanging out in the living room when she gets out of class, but Caldwell appreciates the close bond she has helped build.

Caldwell will be missed not only for her tenacity on the court, but also for her bright-spirited personality. Muffley described her as someone who knows how to have fun while also taking things seriously when necessary. She is also the team photographer — always taking group selfies to have memories down the line.

“On and off the floor she is taking people under her wing,” Muffley said. “She is someone that people can turn to. Being supportive is always something ‘mama bear’ can thrive off of.”

The men’s team has been blessed with the talent walking through the Gators tunnel over the past several years. Jordan Rawles, ’19, and Brian Roberts Jr., ’22, have made serious impacts at the guard position. But Hinckley has left a giant footprint at the center spot, on the standards of leading for the

Blue and Gold.

“He is a very laid-back individual,” said Head Coach Bob Simmons. “That has really helped me in coaching as well — that looseness, that ‘hey we are focused and dialed in but we can have fun with this too.’ He has really taught us a way of approaching the game.”

After averaging over 10 points and five rebounds per game off the bench throughout the first 10 games of his freshman year, Hinckley became a regular starter — but that was just the beginning.



Photo courtesy of **ED MAILLIARD**

Alexis Caldwell, ’23, leaps over her defender getting off a tough shot.

NBA All-Star Weekend celebration is stacked

By **Kyle Chandler**
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The 2023 NBA All-Star Game is set in stone as the league’s best will run the court on Sunday, Feb. 19, in the mountains and valleys of Salt Lake City, Utah. The 72nd edition of the program will be hosted by the Utah Jazz, and is beloved by fans for the light-hearted spirit and superhuman highlight plays put on by the players.

While the main attraction of the weekend will without a doubt be this highly anticipated contest, other festivities and revelry have engulfed the city for an exuberant four days of liveliness.

Thursday, Feb. 16, the TNT American Express X Turner Road Show was in full effect. The Emmy-award winning TV show “Inside the NBA,” hosted by Ernie Johnson, Charles Barkley, Kenny Smith and Shaquille O’Neal, anchored the day-long event and offered a live studio broadcast, NBA on TNT attractions, and a concert. The Complex, located in downtown Salt Lake City, housed the musical performances of Wiz Khalifa and Chloe Bailey, who put on an

electric spectacle.

The events on Friday, Feb. 17, include an array of fun. Continuing the musical prowess from last night, Travis Scott has partnered with the Utah Jazz and curated a lineup of artists that will ensue throughout Saturday night, starting the Cactus Jack concert series with Don Tolliver and Sheck Wes, and ending with special guests to be announced on Saturday, Feb. 18.

The concert is a sequel to the NBA Celebrity game and the NBA Rising Stars game. Celebrities from all realms will look to get in on the action, including the likes of current and former athletes in DK Metcalf, Calvin “Megatron” Johnson and Albert Pujols. Other prominent names include rapper 21 Savage and singer Ozuna. Scotty Pippen Jr., son of Bull’s legend Scotty Pippen, will play in the Rising Stars game as part of Team Jason. He is the only member of the Super Basketball League — based out of Taiwan — competing. The rest of the cast consists of NBA rookies, sophomores and NBA G-League players, as they all compete in a three-game mini-tournament among four

total squads.

Following an already packed schedule will be NBA All-Star Saturday night. At Vivint Arena, home of the Jazz, festivities including the NBA skills challenge, dunk contest and three-point contest will all take place to build up pandemonium as the weekend inches closer to the All-Star Game.

Last season, Karl Anthony Towns showed off his range from behind the arc as he took home the trophy, but will not be participating again this year. As the game continually changes, Towns set an example showing that a seven-footer can net the deep ball. The hometown hero Lauri Markkanen, who was traded from Cleveland last season, has had the best season of his career. He will look to follow in the footsteps of Towns, while also giving the city of Salt Lake a little extra something to cheer for.

Finally, Sunday, Feb. 19, will arrive. Out of the West corner, after breaking Kareem Abdul Jabbar’s record for the most points scored in an NBA career at 38,387, “just a kid from Akron” LeBron James will reign as captain for the

sixth consecutive season since the NBA switched its format in 2018. Out of the East corner, weighing in at 243 pounds and standing 6 foot 11, the 2021 Finals MVP, Giannis Antetokounmpo will be the other captain representing the event. The two will draft teams Sunday afternoon, as a bunch of talent is up for grabs. Donovan Mitchell, Luka Dončić, Joel Embiid, Kyrie Irving, Jason Tatum, Nicolai Jokic and Markkanen have all been deemed starters, with the reserves including former world champions and seasoned veterans.

A few things to mention when keeping track of everything going on this weekend: if you have ever been to Salt Lake City, or Utah in general, there should be some appreciation for the NBA to set the events up there this year. There is nothing like seeing a mix of orange, red and yellow plateaus and mountain ranges so spectacular you cannot help but gaze in awe.

Furthermore, to see Scotty Pippen’s son as an upcoming prodigy could provide this generation of basketball fans with premium play. Pippen is an icon, and if his son lives up

to a sliver of what he was as a basketball player the crowd can see highlight plays on a regular basis. Of course, Pippen had Jordan, but the tandem was like peanut butter and jelly — you can not have one without the other.

Lastly, is there any doubt left that LeBron is the greatest player of all time? Aside from the rings, which he cannot win alone, he has achieved more accolades than possibly any other player in all of sports. People love to hate him, but after passing Kareem, he also

rebounds on Senior Night as he is three shy of passing Rawles at 773, and in the last contest he passed Gene Williams, ’89, for the number-two spot in single season rebounds at 265.

What makes Hinckley so lovable is the spirit he brings to practice and games. Above all the accolades and accomplishments he has achieved for the Gators, that is what Simmons will miss the most.

“He is always fun to be around, and he is always saying things where you look at him and (think), ‘Where did that come from?’” Simmons said. “The basketball part sure, you will miss his leadership and his shot blocking and his rebounding and his scoring. I would be lying if I told you we wouldn’t miss that. But in all honesty the thing I will miss the most is Caden Hinckley the person.”

Even after Saturday the season will not be over yet, though. Both teams have snagged a spot in the PAC playoff race, and are guaranteed at least one extra contest. Both seniors will look to make an impact and create some magic as they chase a PAC Championship.

Chiefs Super Bowl Champs

The Kansas City Chiefs won Super Bowl LVII, defeating the Philadelphia Eagles in a thriller 38-35 showdown. It came down to the final seconds after the Chiefs crawled from behind, trailing at halftime 24-14. With eight seconds on the clock, Harrison Butker legged a 27-yard field goal through the uprights to secure the Chiefs’ second Super Bowl in the past four seasons. Patrick Mahomes had 182 yards through the air, including a set of touchdowns. Per usual, he found his target Travis Kelce for a team-high 81 yards on six receptions and a touchdown. Head Coach Andy Reid picked up his third title and solidified his legacy as one of the greatest NFL coaches of all time. The Arrowhead Kingdom has another crown.