Meet Our New Editor-In-Chief

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To report an error of fact or a Letter to the Editor, email the Editor-in-Chief at montclarionchief@gmail.com.

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Woof woof woof!

There’s a new editor-in-chief in town.

Pebbles, Montclair State University’s new pupscot, has been named editor-in-chief [EIC] of The Montclarion. Pebbles explained the new content students can expect to see, from “The Best Things to Bark at on Campus” to “Why Dogs Deserve to be Petted.”

“Bark bark,” Pebbles said.

“Bark bark bark bark bark bark bark. I just saw a van driving on the sidewalk. Woof woof woof.”

Pebbles is taking over for current EIC Emma Caughlan. Caughlan explained why she gave her position up.

“As soon as I saw this beautiful dog, I knew she was a star,” Caughlan said. “I think she is the best choice to represent the students and I think she will bring a unique perspective to The Montclarion, one that’s never been seen before.”

Pebbles is already popular and sought after by multiple campus organizations. She recently interviewed with WMSC, but she explained why The Montclarion will always be her favorite organization.

“Woof woof,” Pebbles said.

“Woof woof. The Montclarion rules! Bark woof woof.”

Another potential shakeup by Pebbles is coming to The Montclarion’s fundraising. The organization previously sold hats, tote bags and t-shirts. Pebbles has dog treats and toy sales planned.


When asked if Rocky is getting a position at The Montclarion, Pebbles’ answer was unclear.

“Woof woof,” Pebbles said.

“Woof, Rocky is my friend but bark bark.”

The other editors are confused by the sudden shakeup.

“Bark bark bark,” Pebbles said. “They play a lot of Crazy 8 but they’re okay I guess, woof woof woof.”

Pebbles even spilled on her favorite part of production day.


When pressed for her favorite topping, Pebbles said it was “Pup-Peroni.”

Will Pebbles remain at The Montclarion for the rest of the semester? The future is uncertain.

“Woof woof,” Pebbles said.

“I might go chase a squirrel instead. Bark bark.”
SGA Election Results Announced

Meagan Kane
Guest Writer

On Wednesday, March 29, the student votes were counted and the winners of the 2023-2024 SGA executive board have been selected. The executive board for the Montclair State University Student Government Association (SGA) has been announced for the 2023-2024 administration. The winners are Richard Steiner-Otoo, executive president, who held the position the prior academic year, Mikayla Houston, executive vice president and Krisha Rana, executive secretary.

The two-day voting process allowed students to pick who they thought was best fit for the three positions. This year, 1,023 students voted. The breakdown consists of 65% residential students, 35% commuter students, 709 females and 312 males, 229 freshmen, 246 sophomores, 294 juniors and 254 seniors.

Although it’s only been a few days into their term, the board is ready and working hard to accommodate everyone’s needs. Steiner-Otoo said he is focused on campus life. "One thing I’ve been really advocating for and working on as well is trying to boost campus life as a whole," Steiner-Otoo said. "Whether that be dining, activities, clubs, just trying to boost student life on campus in any way possible."

Mental health is also a strong priority for him. "Mental health is something that will be very focused on especially over the summer, just so that going into the start of the new semester, we have systems in place and we have several resources in place that students can take advantage of," Steiner-Otoo said. Houston is looking to increase safety and diversity. "I want Montclair State to be a safe, fun, diverse community where students and faculty feel comfortable whenever they are on campus," Houston said. Houston is already working with University Police on safety measures. "I have already started with campus police to implement some new systems to ensure our safety at Montclair State," Houston said. She is also looking to prioritize dining services and residence life. "Dining services and residence life are top concerns for students on campus," Houston said. "I have thought a lot about them and have some exciting ideas to bring forth to those areas."

Rana is looking to help the student body. "My main goal is to help other students expand their opportunities here at Montclair [State]," Rana said. "As secretary, I know I’m able to promote [the SGA], publicize it and really reach out to individuals, especially underclassmen because they don’t really know much about our campus." Some may not know exactly what the SGA has to offer, but Rana has the answer. "The big one [idea] is bridging the gap between students and administration," Rana says. "Overall, we do a lot. We offer a ton of free services in our office and we have two programming boards which bring the fun and help amplify other people’s college experiences which is great.

If students have concerns, the SGA is here to help. "If [students] have concerns about anything, you can come to us and we have direct communication with [administration, Montclair State President Jonathan Koppell and others such as Dean Margaree Coleman-Carter]," Rana said.
SGA Funds New Ambulance

Student Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) unveiled a new campus ambulance with the help of the Student Government Association (SGA).

The event took place on Wednesday, March 29 in front of the Student Center. The director of emergency medical services (EMS), Michelle Kight, said these new ambulances were much needed. "We needed one new ambulance to replace an older one that had run its last mile," Kight said. "As an agency that responds to 911 calls, we are indebted to the [SGA] who made the calls," Barret said. "University Police Department stands here today not only to show our appreciation for our new ambulance but to applaud each and every one of these students for their selfless dedication to the medical profession and to our community." Angell Alvarez is a senior molecular biology major. She serves as the first lieutenant in EMS. She acknowledged the value of the new ambulance. "We are a student-run organization, so we operate around campus 24/7," Alvarez said. "We really felt like the new ambulance was vital to the quality of care that we provide all around campus." Alvarez said the new ambulance was long-awaited and she is grateful EMS received it. "It’s very exciting," Alvarez said. "Being someone that started here four years ago, it’s something very rewarding to see that members that are coming after get to have this and enjoy it." Mario Rodriguez is a junior exercise science major. He’s been with Montclair State’s EMS for two years. He said he sometimes gets to drive the ambulance. "It’s really nice to see the changes," Rodriguez said. "In [these] short two years, I’ve been able to see a lot happen, and getting a new ambulance allows us to do so many new things and provide much better care for our patients." The SGA received recognition for its efforts in making the purchase of the ambulance possible. EMS awarded the SGA with a plaque. Newly reelected SGA president, Richard Steiner-Otoo, attended the unveiling. He is proud to have contributed to the investment of a new ambulance. "This is something that has actually been in the process for a long time," Steiner-Otoo said. "I was the attorney general last year in the SGA and I know the [former Ashon] Lanada administration was working hard to make this happen. I first want to shout out all the EMS students who really advocated because they came into the meeting, they spoke to legislators and convinced them and said, ‘Hey, this is why we need another ambulance.’" Steiner-Otoo said this is not only a win for EMS but for the campus community as a whole. "Without this EMS service, students would have to pay upwards of $2,000 for every single ride," Steiner-Otoo said. "It was really amazing to be able to contribute to that. We’re just happy that we were able to do it this year."
Out-of-state students attending Montclair State University may face a possible increase in tuition," he said. "It is approved by the Board of Trustees. "I'm looking for a larger potential change," Koppell said. "We are looking at larger possible changes in terms of the non-resident tuition as opposed to the state." He said it will "reflect a strategic opportunity for the university." At this year's tuition hearing on Friday, March 31, numbers, graphs, charts and percent-age figures were shown at the Conference Center in University Hall. Koppell began the hearing with a financial breakdown of Montclair State's budget, tuition, expenses and aid. Koppell emphasized the importance of students' attendance at tuition hearings before beginning his presentation. He said presenting it would help students provide feedback to the Board of Trustees. "So the reality is that we have to run a financial enterprise and this is a critical part of that, where we explain the finances and the board has the opportunity to hear from members of the community about what we're doing," Koppell said. He drew focus on the university's mission when it comes to budget considerations. "The budget is not just dollars and cents, it's about what we are trying to achieve at the university and what our purpose is," Koppell said. He likened the situation of the university to the public serving university committed to the accessibility of and equity in the way that it ensures that people not only get into Montclair [State] but have the ability to partake in high advanced, progressive and high-quality programs. Tuition makes up 55% of the revenue made by the university. Nearly tuition that revenue goes into things like instruction and student services. Koppell said he understands the revenue needs of education in New Jersey, it is extremely difficult for many students to keep up with those costs. "We've done a good job at the university at managing the cost of attending Montclair [State]," Koppell said. "I want to be clear when I talk about the relatively low cost of tuition at Montclair [State], by no stretch of the imagination am I minimizing how challenging that is for our students to afford even those costs because as an institution that's interested in access, we are constantly striving to manage those barriers, while lower than peer institutions, are still difficult to swallow and difficult to manage. Students at Montclair State are underfunded. When it comes to state funding, they get nearly half of what other New Jersey universities receive. The university receives 6.9% of base appropriations from the state. "A significant part of my job is to help underscore with the legislature the huge disparities in how higher education is funded," Koppell said. "There is no formula. The biggest chunk of funds comes in a base appropriation. That is the number that's simply determined by the legislature." The institution would not be able to stay afloat without tuition and fees. Koppell acknowledges this. "Notwithstanding the fact that we are a state institution and notwithstanding the fact that the state makes a substantial investment in this university, we live and die based on our ability to attract students and based on the revenue associated with tuition and fees," Koppell said. Koppell said that although the university is operating on a tight budget, there are initiatives meant to continue opportunities for students. "What I can tell you is we will not retreat. We cannot lose the ambition we are facing a tight budget," Koppell said. "We cannot stop innovating because we are facing a tight budget, because those investments, those innovations, those attempts to maintain programs and progress is what puts us in a position to be successful in the future." James Olatunji spoke at the tuition hearing. Olatunji said he is a senior computer science major. About tuition. He said he was there for those who want to have their voice heard. "I really don't regret coming here today because I'm graduating and I thought, Is it still my business to advocate for students at Montclair [State]?" But because of what Montclair State is helping me achieve, I thought it's only fair that I use my voice to speak on behalf of almost 23,000," Olatunji said. Olatunji said he has a friend who also attends the university and struggles to work and keep up with tuition payments. "He works full time at night to pay for his tuition here. He doesn't have insurance. He has to work every day," Olatunji said. "The state is not giving us an increase for somebody like [him] who's working two jobs to be able to pay for his tuition." He hopes the state will help students with more funding. "I don't think it's fair," Olatunji said. "And he is charging a very low price but the state is not doing their own fair share to serve the minorities of Montclair State. Olatunji called out the state for not contributing more to Montclair State. He said this is a great institution for the education and college experience and this is something he wants to see live on. "We need more funding, and we need it now, really. We cannot advocate enough for this," Olatunji said. "We are your future leaders of tomorrow. We do not want to break the dreams and the drive of students who are willing to go the long way to break the chains and curses of their families to get a degree. We don't want to do that. We want to give them all of the resources so when they get that, they will not forget where they [came from]." Shaena Kate is a senior dance major. Kate was a student affected by the flooding in Williams Hall this past December. She isn’t on board with a tuition increase and feels more funding should be allocated toward residents on campus and mental health resources for students. "The flood at Williams [Hall], we got zero mental health support for that," Kate said. "No one even mentioned the idea of Hey, if you need someone to talk to, here’s a resource." None of that. Losing your housing is an incredibly stressful situation. We’re moving to college. Most of our belongings are here and then [we found] out when we're home that all of it might be destroyed but they didn't tell us any information. Kate is an out-of-state student. She said living here is already expensive enough. "I think also the other problem is if you're raising out-of-state tuition for students, the out-of-state students have to live here, so they're already paying double to be here. They don't really have the option to commute," Kate said. "So it's already kind of pricey. It's insane. Out-of-state tuition is already expensive." Madison Pasquin, a senior dance major, feels the tuition should not increase. Pasquin says a majority of students just don't have the money. "It stinks that the only way of trying to get money [toward] the school is cashing out the already broke college students," Pasquin said. "We’re poor either way." Pasquin thinks funds should be used to cover meals that accommodate dietary restrictions. "I used to have a dietary restriction because I had celiac disease," Pasquin said. "And although the people that worked in the kitchens in Sams' Place tried to help me, they just didn't have the option to feed me. I couldn't eat because I was afraid of making myself sick and stuff. I spent like the entire year fighting because they were forcing me to pay for meals where I couldn't eat anything." Marcia Testino, a senior dance major, is also advocating for better mental health services as students are only allowed a certain amount of therapy sessions across all four years of attending the university. "You get six sessions and then they refer you out," Testino said. "Most places don't take out-of-state insurance, so you have school insurance. It's a whole mess."
SPORTS WRITERS WANTED!

E-Mail: montclarionsports@gmail.com

Room 2035, School of Communication and Media in Upper Montclair, NJ, 07043
The History Of The Montclarion

Avery Nixon, Opinion Editor

Historians have long debated the founding of The Montclarion in 1928. Was it in a lab? Was it aliens from another planet? Was it the Federal Bureau of Investigation posing as a college newspaper to stop? For years, people wondered who founded our beloved newspaper, until now.

The year was 1928. Two young men, Melvin Mont and Clint Clarion, were laying on the grass in the quad with their arms wrapped around one another, as roommates do. Their voices were just centimeters from touching and their lips closer than the width of a blade of grass.

The two roommates laid there for hours, soaking in the sun and holding each other like that really famous picture of the skeletons of those two roommates after the volcano erupted in Pompeii.

Mont abruptly sat up and looked over at the students gathered around the Student Center.

“What’s wrong, lover,” Clarion asked, calling him a funny nickname like roommates do.

“I’m not sure, darling,” Mont said and turned on the light. A light bulb appeared over Mont’s head, unclear the physics of that but rest assured it did happen because this is a historical piece, and the light turned on.

Mont, a junior English major, went to the library basement where the constantly defunded graphic design department operates. There, he was able to print multiple copies of his stories, the one with the rats fighting.

Mont’s story was a success on campus. The two roommates decided that reporting on-campus events and opinion articles about movies was their duty and life’s passion. They recruited a variety of journalists to help expand their newspaper beyond rat fights in front of the Student Center. However, the two experienced some ups and a lot of downs after the success of the newspaper, The Montclarion.

For reasons once unknown to the public, the two roommates separated their twin beds in Blanton and were no longer on speaking terms. Shortly after, Clarion packed up his things and left.

Mont scurried back to his roommate that he left on the grass.

“Yo! Never believe this! There was this rat fighting this other rat and they—”

“Woah woah woah,” Clarion said. “You're talking too fast I can’t understand a word you’re saying! Here, take this pad and paper and write down everything that happened and get quotes from students with pictures, names, majors and their graduating years.”

Clarion handed him the materials.

Mont set off and returned with an approximately 650-word piece on the two rats fighting over the cheese. Clarion read the piece and finally turned on the light. A single tear rolled down Clarion’s face as he saw Mont with WMSC, Mont’s permanent roommate.

Mont saw Clarion from across the grass and headed over. The two began to have a heated exchange.

What was said in the beginning was unknown, but thanks to the stellar reporting of The Montclarion staff, they managed to get a quote from Clarion.

“Tell you what, we could’ve had a good life together! F–kin’ real good life! Had us a place of our own. But you didn’t want it, Mont! So what we got now is The Montclarion,” Clarion said. “Everythin’s built on that! That’s all we got, boy, f–kin’ all. So I hope you know that even if you don’t never know the rest! You count the few times that we have been together in nearly 20 years and you measure the short f–kin’ leash you keep me on - and then you ask me about Mexico and you tell me you’ll kill me for needin somethin’ that I don’t hardly never get. You have no idea how bad it gets! And I’m not you - I can’t make it on a couple high altitude f–ks once or twice a year! You are too much for me, Mont, you sonefaw son b-tch! I wish I knew how to quit you.”

Clarion stormed off full of rage. Mont stood still, tears rolling down his eyes.

Mont looked back at his roommate WMSC, and back at Clarion. He knew they could never be roommates again, not after all that happened.

Mont walked shamefully back to WMSC and the two never spoke again. While the two never made up, The Montclarion continues to thrive and serve as the voice of the student body. Mont and Clarion laying in the Quad, circa 1928. Avery Nixon | The Montclarion
Albaner Eugene, Jr. is using his voice to inspire others.

Claudia Martillo
Staff Writer

With a combination of filmmaking, faith, and leadership skills, Albaner Eugene, Jr is determined to be a voice for a generation.

Eugene is a 2018 Montclair State University alumnus who has grown his platform as a multi-talented spiritual leader. Eugene moved around North Jersey often as a child but settled down for high school in Union, New Jersey.

He currently works a variety of jobs: he is the founder and president of the non-profit organization Let’s Move Inc., a minister at Love of Jesus Family Church in Orange, New Jersey, a counselor and a filmmaker for his production company, Ace Productions. Eugene never envisioned himself attending a big college like Montclair State but grew to love it.

"Montclair [State] became like a second home," Eugene said. He entered Montclair State as a business administration major before making the switch to psychology. "I knew that deep down, I had a love for people and for understanding people, why they do what they do, why we think the way we think," Eugene said.

Eugene expressed immense gratitude for the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program and staff. Although he was not a part of the EOF program, they still supported him. "All the EOF staff really did such a great job with helping students that were from the inner city or couldn’t necessarily afford college," Eugene said. "They helped their transition into college be a lot easier."

In his senior year, he was awarded the EOF Advocacy Award for his work as a videographer and photographer for the program and for consistently championing their message. "I joined together with them to help their vision come to life," Eugene said. Daniel Jean, assistant provost for special programs, met Eugene when he was a member of the EOF Male Leadership Academy. "[Eugene] was an amazing photographer and videographer and has captured some of the most pivotal moments of our program with his lens," Jean said.

After attending the ‘What’s the Word’ show at NJPAC last year, Jean was delighted to witness Eugene’s powerful words. "I was moved and left the event feeling refreshed and renewed. [Eugene] has many gifts and it is great to see him scale his impact," Jean said.

Eugene emphasizes the value of having a relationship with God and the people around them. He encourages people to be mindful rather than spending time worrying. "We could spend that time just being of his peers and went above and beyond to be a shoulder to lean on or an ear to listen," Walker said. "[Eugene] is one of those students who went from student to friend to family. [Eugene] is heaven sent and I thank God that our paths crossed and that he’s in my life."

Eugene’s mentor, Reggie Walker, director of the Educational Opportunity Program at Rider University, also met him at the EOF Male Leadership Academy. Walker described Eugene as a powerful presence and influence on the program. "He genuinely cared about the well-being of his peers and went above and beyond to be a shoulder to lean on or an ear to listen," Walker said. "I knew that deep down, I had a love for people and for understanding people, why they do what they do, why we think the way we think," Eugene said.

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Eugene credits Montclair State as "the launching pad" to his multi-career path and incorporates the skills and lessons learned into his recent work such as his tour called "What’s the Word." He describes the tour as a "cinematic live panel event," integrating themes of faith, love, fun and the arts.

The tour features guest panelists and a live Q and A to create a more intimate connection with the audience. This is the third tour, and Eugene and his team are traveling to Texas, Georgia, California and New York.

Eugene emphasized his connection with God as being one of the most important things in his life. "In growing my relationship with God, it helped me get to know myself more, which led me to get back to the drawing board of wanting to be able to communicate, reach and inspire people with my work, art and films," Eugene said.

Eugene also aims to inspire and encourage others with his non-profit organization, Let’s Move Inc. The organization is dedicated to uplifting people and motivating progress.

As the president, Eugene often oversees his staff, delegates tasks and creates digital content. Eugene founded the organization in 2018. "Everything’s starting to run like a well-oiled machine," Eugene said. Eugene hopes to be able to guide people into strengthening their relationship with God and the people around them. He encourages people to be mindful rather than spending time worrying. "We could spend that time just being present and making some meaningful memories with the people we really value," Eugene said.
Ariana Ortiz
Guest Writer

So much of young adult literature depicts the LGBTQIA+ coming out story as some terrible and tragic endeavor, so when I saw that A.S. King’s “Ask the Passengers” was a story of discovering sexuality, I was worried it would be the same. However, “Ask the Passengers” is a novel that feels so real, both in the way that it depicts coming out and in all the other themes the story explores. It is truly an emotional, but valuable read.

The story features a seventeen-year-old heroine, Astrid Jones, a girl who is full of love. It’s a love that she doesn’t share with many people immediately around her, not because she doesn’t want to, but because she feels as though she can’t. Astrid doesn’t feel like she really fits in with anybody in her life. Her mother and sister detest her. Her dad only ever smokes pot. Her best friend, Kristina, and girlfriend, Dee, are all helping her live a lie. Astrid thinks the problem is her town, Unity Valley, a place where reputation and rumors matter most. Yet Astrid’s actual problem is the fact that she’s a pushover, which she eventually comes to learn and change.

Despite her flaws, King successfully allows Astrid to be someone the audience can root for. As I previously said, she’s full of love, and even though she doesn’t feel like she can give it to the people in her life, she instead chooses to send it to passengers on planes in the sky. She lays on picnic tables, everywhere they may be, for hours at a time, sending love to total strangers. Sometimes they send it back, in the snapshot scenes King adds in from the theories of philosophers like Zeno and Socrates and even creates an imaginary version of Socrates, named Frank, to follow her around and offer her advice when she needs it most.

She’s not a perfect person, but she’s self-aware, which makes her that much easier to love. The actual plot of “Ask the Passengers,” while about sexuality, isn’t the usual coming-out story at all. For the better half of the story, Astrid isn’t even certain she’s gay. She knows she loves her girlfriend, and that in itself confuses her. She has so many questions and terrors, which is a story that seems to typically go untold. It’s authentic and sensitively approached, which marks this novel as one that is so extraordinary.

Beyond this, “Ask the Passengers,” isn’t just a journey of sexuality. It’s a story of a broken family, rocky relationships and a battle over the importance of reputation. It highlights racism and homophobia in a close-minded small town and confronts the hypocrisy of even the people Astrid cares for the most. These themes are expressed in relatable ways, which makes them hit even harder.

One of the harder parts to love in this story are the few morally ambiguous plot lines that shouldn’t be so ambiguous at all. For instance, there are a few scenes set early on in the book where Astrid’s girlfriend, Dee, refuses to respect her sexual boundaries. Astrid is quite communicative about wanting to take the relationship slow, especially in the physical aspects. However, Dee pushes these boundaries constantly, putting her hands in places Astrid doesn’t want her to, and going too far and too fast, without consent.

About a third of the way through the book, Astrid seriously confronts Dee about how she feels violated, and Dee still doesn’t take it well. They fight and break up but are quickly repaired when Dee sends a text to Astrid asking that she use a safe word, “Abra-cadabra,” for when she’s ready to go all the way. It seems like a haphazard redemption arc for a topic that should have been handled more seriously. It makes Dee hard to like, which takes away from some of the larger meanings in the story.

However, as terrible as some of the moral ambiguity seems, it all still speaks to the overarching theme of the book and Astrid’s chosen paradox of perfection is and how it can even be achieved and while the characters in this story prove that achieving perfection is impossible, King’s “Ask the Passengers” comes pretty close.

Ariana Ortiz discusses how the character development in “Ask the Passengers” makes the book so captivating.

Ariana Ortiz | The Montclarion

Sending Love to
"Ask the Passengers"

Ariana Ortiz
Guest Writer

So much of young adult literature depicts the LGBTQIA+ coming out story as some terrible and tragic endeavor, so when I saw that A.S. King’s “Ask the Passengers” was a story of discovering sexuality, I was worried it would be the same. However, “Ask the Passengers” is a novel that feels so real, both in the way that it depicts coming out and in all the other themes the story explores. It is truly an emotional, but valuable read.

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Despite her flaws, King successfully allows Astrid to be someone the audience can root for. As I previously said, she’s full of love, and even though she doesn’t feel like she can give it to the people in her life, she instead chooses to send it to passengers on planes in the sky. She lays on picnic tables, wherever they may be, for hours at a time, sending love to total strangers. Sometimes they send it back, in the snapshot scenes King adds in from the their point of view.

When she’s not completely immersed in staring at the sky, she’s instead possessed by philosophy. Her humanities class, taught by a teacher who is rumored to be lesbian, is one of Astrid’s only safe spaces. She consistently brings up and thinks about the theories of philosophers like Zeno and Socrates and even creates an imaginary version of Socrates, named Frank, to follow her around and offer her advice when she needs it most.

She’s not a perfect person, but she’s self-aware, which makes her that much easier to love. The actual plot of “Ask the Passengers,” while about sexuality, isn’t the usual coming-out story at all. For the better half of the story, Astrid isn’t even certain she’s gay. She knows she loves her girlfriend, and that in itself confuses her. She has so many questions and terrors, which is a story that seems to typically go untold. It’s authentic and sensitively approached, which marks this novel as one that is so extraordinary.

Beyond this, “Ask the Passengers,” isn’t just a journey of sexuality. It’s a story of a broken family, rocky relationships and a battle over the importance of reputation. It highlights racism and homophobia in a close-minded small town and confronts the hypocrisy of even the people Astrid cares for the most. These themes are expressed in relatable ways, which makes them hit even harder.

One of the harder parts to love in this story are the few morally ambiguous plot lines that shouldn’t be so ambiguous at all. For instance, there are a few scenes set early on in the book where Astrid’s girlfriend, Dee, refuses to respect her sexual boundaries. Astrid is quite communicative about wanting to take the relationship slow, especially in the physical aspects. However, Dee pushes these boundaries constantly, putting her hands in places Astrid doesn’t want her to, and going too far and too fast, without consent.

About a third of the way through the book, Astrid seriously confronts Dee about how she feels violated, and Dee still doesn’t take it well. They fight and break up but are quickly repaired when Dee sends a text to Astrid asking that she use a safe word, “Abra-cadabra,” for when she’s ready to go all the way. It seems like a haphazard redemption arc for a topic that should have been handled more seriously. It makes Dee hard to like, which takes away from some of the larger meanings in the story.

However, as terrible as some of the moral ambiguity seems, it all still speaks to the overarching theme of the book and Astrid’s chosen paradox of perfection is and how it can even be achieved and while the characters in this story prove that achieving perfection is impossible, King’s “Ask the Passengers” comes pretty close.
Can "The Lost Apothecary" Find Its Way To Be a New Viral Book?

Sydney Wright
Guest Writer

I am not the first to say I have read my fair share of books. However, I can not always say that I absolutely adore every single book I read. Being as it is, it is truly a special thing to find a book that really sticks with me that makes me want to share it with every avid reader I know. "The Lost Apothecary" by Sarah Penner is a special book with a storyline that had me completely hooked until the very end.

The book follows an apothecary that was in business in London during 1791 and was dispensing poisons. Who was purchasing these poisons? Women. Women from all social statuses would visit the apothecary and purchase poison to kill men in their lives who did them wrong. The apothecary was not only for hurting others, so if a woman had a simple illness that could be cured they would also go to the shop and receive medicine to feel better.

To dive into the story itself, the book switches from two characters in 1791 to another main character in the present day. Not only that, but the story contains chapters from the point of view of each of the three character’s eyes.

What part does each of them play in the story? Nella is the owner of the apothecary, who dispenses the poisons. She vows to only treat women and to only help murder men, just like her mother who originally opened the apothecary as a healing place for women. Eliza, who is just 12 years old, came to Nella one day on behalf of the woman she works for. This means Eliza actually helped murder the husband of the woman, at just 12 years old. Eliza then grew to have a connection with Nella and was fascinated by the apothecary practice. She became an apprentice of some sort to her.

Then we have Caroline, a woman who finds out her husband, James, cheated on her and runs away to London alone to clear her head, leaving James in Ohio. She had dreams of becoming a historian and attending Cambridge University but left her dreams behind for a stable life with James.

At the beginning of her trip, Caroline finds a vial in the River Thames that is from the apothecary. This is where her journey begins. The book continues to switch between these three characters in each chapter as the storyline progresses for each of them. The reader constantly travels through time, but in a way that is not confusing.

I appreciated that Penner organized it in such a way that the reader would not get lost. "POV books" are not always popular for everyone because of the complexity they can sometimes have, but I promise this will not be the case.

Not only that, but the events in each character’s life make you want to keep reading to the next character to see what happens next in their story. Along the way, their journeys entwine, even though they are two centuries apart. Once you read the book, you will understand. The almost parallel universe between characters makes you constantly turn the page to discover what happens in their two timelines.

There is always something happening to the characters, some good some bad. There are definitely scenes that make you want to scream at the characters before something happens to them. The plot twists are never-ending as well, you will be surprised to see where the story goes. You may be able to predict the ending halfway through, but there will be elements at the end that will throw you for a loop.

This book could definitely find itself in the hands of many in the reading community. It is almost like a diamond in the rough waiting to be found. It is from a smaller publisher so it is a little difficult to market to a large audience, so hopefully this article will convince you to pick it up. If you love murder mystery, history and adventure you are bound to fall in love with "The Lost Apothecary."
What title would you give this chapter in your life and why?
By Lynise Olivacce and Karsten Englander
Photo Editor and Assistant Photo Editor

“New Beginnings.' Just because I feel like I’m constantly doing what everyone tells me to do. So I kind of want to take control. And be in control of my own self.”

Samantha DeJesus
Freshman
Elementary Education

“Change is Good.’ Just because as a freshman coming from my house and coming from here is very different. I couldn’t rely on my mom or my dad. Coming here was crazy, especially with this huge campus.”

Gabriella Cortez
Freshman
Elementary Education

“Transitioning.’ Because I’m graduating and looking into master’s and doctorate programs, as well as getting work experience in my field, so I guess it’s just a very transitional phase in my life right now.”

Ta’Ja Warholic
Senior
Psychology
“Fresh Start.’ I think because I’m starting out at a new school, trying to figure out my life, and trying to figure out what I actually want to do with my major. So I would call this my fresh start chapter.”

Amanda Defuria
Freshman
Communication & Media Studies

"Improving.’ Just because I’m improving day by day, getting better.”

Elijah Ervin
Junior
Exercise Science

“Metamorphosis.’ I recently have been going through a metamorphosis in my life where I feel for the past almost a year and a half school-wise, I have been struggling so hard with my mental health and my physical health. It’s been taking a toll on me a lot. I want to get better both mentally and physically. So I’m now at the point where I’m out of that little cocoon. I’m [going to] transform into something bigger. I want to be better, so I can have a better life. So it’s tough, but it’s worth it in the end. I feel like that’s what metamorphosis is. You have to wait, but it’s [going to] be worth it.”

Mikaela Spadavecchia
Senior
Nutrition and Food Science
Horoscopes
Chat GPT
Managing Editor

Capricorn
Dec. 22 – Jan. 19
You might find yourself facing some unexpected challenges and obstacles today, but fear not, dear Capricorn, because your stubbornness and resilience will carry you through.

Cancer
Jun. 21 – Jul. 22
Cancer, today is a day for you to embrace your inner hermit crab and retreat into your shell. You may feel like crawling back into your bed and hiding from the world, but don’t worry, it’s just a passing mood.

Aquarius
Jan. 20 – Feb. 18
Dear Aquarius, the stars are predicting a day full of creativity and innovation for you. But beware, your eccentricities might be mistaken for madness today!

Leo
Jul. 23 – Aug. 22
Hey Leo, today is a day for you to let your inner lion roar! You’ll be feeling extra confident and charismatic, so don’t be surprised if everyone starts asking you for advice. Remember that humility is also a virtue, even for royalty.

Pisces
Feb. 19 – Mar. 20
Your sensitive nature might make you a bit extra emotional today. Don’t be surprised if you find yourself tearing up over a sappy movie or a heartwarming commercial. Just grab some tissues and let it out, Pisces!

Virgo
Aug. 23 – Sep. 22
Dear Virgo, today is a day for you to use your natural analytical and practical skills to your advantage. Your attention to detail and ability to problem-solve will come in handy as you tackle any challenges that come your way.

Aries
Mar. 21 – Apr. 19
Hey Aries, buckle up because today is going to be a wild ride! You’ll feel like a bull in a china shop, with your energy and enthusiasm leading you to knock over everything in your path.

Libra
Sep. 23 – Oct. 22
Fear not, dear Libra, because your natural charm and charisma will be in full force. So, if you do make a fool of yourself, just laugh it off and watch as everyone around you falls under your spell.

Taurus
Apr. 20 – May 20
Dear Taurus, today is a day for you to take things slow and steady. Your grounded nature will serve you well, as you navigate any challenges that come your way.

Scorpio
Oct. 23 – Nov. 21
You might find yourself on a wild goose chase, chasing after something that just keeps slipping through your fingers. Don’t worry, Scorpio, this is just the universe’s way of reminding you that sometimes the journey is more important than the destination.

Gemini
May 21 – Jun. 20
Hey there, Gemini! Today is a day for you to let loose and have some fun. Your natural curiosity and love of adventure will be in full swing, so don’t be afraid to try something new and exciting.

Sagittarius
Nov. 22 – Dec. 21
Beware, dear Sagittarius, your enthusiasm might get the best of you. Don’t be surprised if you accidentally over-share or talk someone’s ear off. Just remember to take a breath and let others have a turn to speak.
The Montclarion Crossword Puzzle and More!

Jack Harlow Edition

By Sekhena Sembenu

Across
1. Has a partnership with this athletic brand.
5. Hometown.
8. Name of second studio album.

Down
2. Name of upcoming movie.
3. His alter ego.
4. I can put you in...
6. Infamous line stated at the Met Gala.
7. His Comedian bestie.

Sudoku

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Jackman
Spicy Pisces
Rapper
Churchill Downs

Private Garden
Whats Poppin
Harleezy
Rapper

Sawteetie
KFC
Celtics
DJ Drama
The Student Center is Outdated. It’s Time to Replace It With A Rainforest Cafe

For over 50 years, the Student Center has been an immeasurably valuable asset to the students of Montclair State University. But times are changing and the needs of students are vastly different from what they once were. This is why it’s time for the Student Center to be replaced with a Rainforest Cafe.

It’s true that the resources within the Student Center are vital to the lives of all students, both commuters and residents alike. But there is not a single resource within the Student Center that students would rather have than a giant animatronic elephant and an Iggy’s Piggy Sandwich.

The Student Center is a little drab in its current form, but that makes it the perfect choice for a Rainforest Cafe. Imagine the spacious areas of the ballroom becoming beautifully cramped with a fake jungle and echoing with imaginary rainstorms. Picture the Red Hawk Nest with a massive aquarium of colorful tropical fish. How about the Rathskeller just looking generally presentable for once?

The Rainforest Cafe brand is undergoing a renaissance thanks to Eddy Burback’s recent road trip visiting every single North American location.

Now, whenever someone thinks about Rainforest Cafe, they don’t think of that time in early 2017 when they went to the location in Disney Springs and got food poisoning, along with everyone else on their school trip and ended up spending the entire night clutching their friend’s toilet because the bathroom in their hotel room was taken by one of their roommates. Instead, they think of the funny mustache man knockin’ back some Safari Fries.

As such, a Rainforest Cafe could bring some tourism to Montclair State, as everybody knows that should be a top priority for any self-respecting university.

Besides, let’s consider what resources the Student Center actually has. The bookstore? Who even reads anymore? The ID Card office? Come on. If you need a little plastic card to tell you who you are, you don’t belong in college, pal. The computer lab? Stop borrowing computers and start stealing laptops from Best Buy like a normal person.

Rocky the Red Hawk could use a chance to spread his wings as well. The only other animals on campus are his bird family, some random deer, and that odd, little puppy Pebbles. With the wide variety of animal characters at Rainforest Cafe, such as the aforementioned animatronic elephant, Rocky can truly earn a chance to experience world-views other than his own and stop being so close-minded.

It would also expand the dining options on campus, because as every student knows, it’s incredibly difficult to get a mediocre cheeseburger on campus. Rainforest Cafe doesn’t just have mediocre cheeseburgers, they also have mediocre chicken, mediocre pasta and chocolate lava cake that could make for a fun game of Russian Roulette for anyone brave enough to order it.

And in the end, one day, if the foolproof plan to turn the Student Center into a Rainforest Cafe mysteriously fails, Montclair State will have its very own venue for a Spirit Halloween.

---

_Uuuuhhh apparently I can never turn down a good plate of coconut shrimp, and having this on campus would allow me to get one after a hard test or just a long day. I’m very excited about this new development, but I’ll probably just order from GrubHub because the giant gorillas scare me._

_Zola Mae Caughlan_ 
Junior

_Still Undecided..._

_"I honestly do not care."_

_Oliver Gaensler-Lawrence_ 
Grad Student

_Psychology and Hooman Studies_

_"After a long, hard day of doing work for my major, Business, often referred to as the most difficult major I might add – I find myself wanting a Mongoose Mai Tai to take the edge off. I am very pro-rainforest cafe."_

_Wilma Nixon_ 
Freshman

_Business_

---
"Ice Age" world, causing anachronistic
details like diegetic music that would 
not exist for thousands of years appear -
in four of the films.

In "Ice Age: The Meltdown," there is 
not a single mention of humanity, 
and Scrat, a simple creature that knows
with a lot of clocks and acorns.

To all of our loyal film majors and 
majors the skeleton of a, clearly human,
In "Ice Age: The Meltdown," there is
that could easily be interpreted in
a religious sense. When the Lone 
Gunslinger Vulture tells the animals 
about the boat, one of the animals in
says "I don't see anything."
This line is strange and out of place
until you consider that perhaps this is 
a passing on having faith in God and 
His work. There's an awkward sequence 
where Sid is kidnapped by a tribe of 
mini-sloths, who try to sacrifice him to 
the idea of religion exists within the animal
population of the "Ice Age" universe,
which makes the assumption of God's
existence more logical.

One huge moment for this theory 
comes in the climax, where Scrat inadvert-
ently saves the herd from certain
death. When the flood is coming, proving that 
the fact that Pangea still exists at
the time "Ice Age: Continental Drift"
and the aliens in "Ice Age:
Collision Course" have such a heavily
acorn-based culture; in their great
scientific exploits, they have discovered
the idea of religion exists within the animal
population of the "Ice Age" universe,
which makes the assumption of God's
existence more logical.

One huge moment for this theory 
comes in the climax, where Scrat inadvert-
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acorn-based culture; in their great
scientific exploits, they have discovered
the idea of religion exists within the animal
population of the "Ice Age" universe,
which makes the assumption of God's
existence more logical.

So, Scrat does as Scrat does and 
gets into a variety of hijinks that even-
tually culminates in him being thrown
into some strange alternate dimension 
with a lot of clocks and acorns.

Clearly, this is some sort of rip in 
the space-time continuum, which 
prov-
ers the skeleton of a, clearly human, 
scientist buried under the snow. 
In the palm of the scientist's hand? A time 
machine?

But, would a just God be angry at 
Scrat, a simple creature that knows 
only how to fend for himself and try his 
best to survive, or would God be angry at 
those who enabled the poor sabre-
toothed squirrel to cause such dam-
age? Yes, year after year, the lewds do 
violence to the land, but God is not one 
who acts with a scalpel.

His decision is to bring the hammer 
down on all of humanity, for we 
have attempted to play God, it is 
bad luck for 
Him. He was able to catch humanity
afraid long before it truly happened,
catching it in 20,000 B.C. rather than 
what we now actually in-
vented time travel.

Unfortunately, the effects of the time 
rip are still felt throughout the greater
film, which leads to a massive 
climax splitting apart. The shattering of 
the dam holding back the flood in the sec-
ding film is started by Scrat pulling 
his acorn from its buried hiding spot.
Scrat learns from these events 
by Scrat's Missing Adventure" already 
would allow that film to exist.

That's why the rip in time 
and space was filled to the brim with 
clocks, which represented time, 
acorns, which we now know represen-
ted space. It's why the inhabitants of 
Scratatkins in "Ice Age: Conven-
tial Drift" and the aliens in "Ice Age: 
Collision Course" have such a heavily
acorn-based culture; in their great
scientific exploits, they have discovered 
the idea of religion exists within the animal
population of the "Ice Age" universe,
which makes the assumption of God's
existence more logical.

Now, it should be mentioned: with 
His Oakenness wiping out humanity,
Former President Trump Is And Always Was A Hypocrite

Avery Nixon
Opinion Editor

This week, the print edition was our April Fools’ edition full of funny and goofy articles mostly written by me and the entertainment assistant, Colin Luderitz. However, a certain orange man brought me out of my silly mood and now I have to return to critiquing the Republican Party.

Not only do I now have to write about the orange man, I also have to do my own illustration last minute and I will do it with pure anger in my soul. Happy April Fools’ to me.

March 30 was the day nobody thought would come. Former President Donald Trump, previously mentioned as the orange man, was indicted on over 30 counts of business fraud by a New York City Grand Jury.

The specific incident he is being accused of was paying hush money to adult entertainment star, Stormy Daniels. BBC reports, “WITCH HUNT,” the assistant, Colin Luderitz. However, a certain orange man brought me out of my silly mood and now I have to return to critiquing the Republican Party.

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But of course, Trump has fired back, claiming this is all a witch hunt and it’s all a big conspiracy to take him down. BBC reports, “WITCH HUNT,” the Republican wrote on his Truth Social platform shortly before traveling from his home in Florida to New York on Monday.

I am not here to claim Trump did what he is accused of or even look into the case at all. The reason I am here writing this on the Tuesday morning before our paper’s production day is that for years Trump has been calling for Hillary Clinton’s arrest and stating “Lock her up.” Trump has always been a hypocrite and anyone who believes this is a conspiracy rather than a criminal investigation is one as well.

It gets even better. I write sarcastically and still annoyed by Montclair State University’s registration being down and I had to email my advisor to get into the classes I needed. Shoutout to Kyle Courter for getting me into my classes and answering my emails right away. This article would’ve been a lot meaner if it weren’t for you.

Back to what we were discussing, Vice reported, “Trump told his 2016 Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, she’d ‘be in jail’ if he won the election, in the middle of a presidential debate. He accused former President Barack Obama of committing treason.” He slammed President Joe Biden’s ‘crime family.’ He called a journalist a ‘criminal’ for failing to report news Trump wanted to hear.”

It sadly doesn’t stop there. There are plenty of examples of Trump’s hypocrisy that show his true colors.

New York Daily News reports, “Trump preaches about the importance of living by Christian values but is a serial adulterer, insatiable when it comes to the acquisition of wealth and manically power-hungry. Trump preaches about the importance of fairness but has refused to pay contractors what he owed them, give students in his bogus university a reasonable education, or properly distribute money from his self-dealing charity.”

They continue with, “Trump preaches about the importance of compassion for the pain and suffering of others but told the grieving widow of a slain war hero that her husband knew what he signed up for.”

Let’s not forget the other time he disrespected our fallen troops. The Atlantic reported, “In a conversation with senior staff members on the morning of the scheduled visit, Trump said, ‘Why should I go to that cemetery? It’s filled with losers.’ In a separate conversation on the same trip, Trump referred to the more than 1,800 marines who lost their lives at Belleau Wood as ‘stalkers’ for getting killed.”

Trump can pretend all he wants that he is a leader, but he will always be a foul-mouthed businessman who hosted a reality TV show and had the worst Comedy Central roast.

Not only is he making his supporters believe the Democrats are out to get him, but he’s also having them pay his legal fees. Yes, the man who lived in a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees. Trump is taking money from hardworking Americans who didn’t have their fathers give them a golden penthouse is fundraising for his legal fees.
Write for Entertainment!

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ROOM 2035, SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA IN UPPER MONTCLAIR, NJ, 07043
“Opinion”  
by Avery Nixon | Opinion Editor

Our once perfect marriage was poisoned by your infidelity. 
Patricia, the office tease and your personal secretary. 
I can’t believe I once believed you would choose your aging wife over the 25-year-old blonde bombshell. 

Nevermind the vows we made, the children we raised, the family we have formed. 
It’s clear now that none of that mattered to you, all that mattered was getting some from Patricia. 

Over the months that followed the affair, I used to believe we can reconcile, work through our differences. 

Not anymore. Now, all I do is read movie opinion pieces in “The Montclarion.” That’s all that keeps me going.

“Managing”  
by Jenna Sundel | Managing Editor

Mom to a bunch of crazy editors 
Always stressed 
Never sleeping 
At least I’m not EIC 
G is for guessing because I really don’t know what I’m doing 
I don’t know, ask Emma 
Next time I see a movie opinion article I’m clawing my eyes out 
Get me a piña colada smoothie from SBUS or you’re fired.

“Copy”  
by Kim Lamparello | Chief Copy Editor

Copy editing isn’t just a job, it’s a mindset. 
I live and breathe AP Style. 
I don’t need my family and friends. 
I have my closest confidant, APStylebook.com. 
I asked them my deepest, darkest questions. 
I correct inconsistencies that never seem to change every week. 
I used to love the Oxford comma. 
But now, I see it and almost gag every time. 
I’ve grown to have a lot of patience and acceptance. 
Perhaps, I found peace in checking for the same things.

“Entertainment”  
by Colin Luderitz | Assistant Entertainment Editor

Everyday I wake up 
and I hope you’re dead! Dead, like, if I could 
guaranttee 
I’d be OK, I’d hope you 
getT 
An 
Il 
Ess and 
(Marriage Story) 
the 
N get 
by a car and die!

“News”  
by Erin Lawlor | News Editor

Needs 
Writers 
PCease 
Seriously.

“Award Winning Video Poem”  
by Katie Lawrence | Video Editor

Video 
Idea 
Deo 
Es 
O

“Feature”  
by Sal DiMaggio | Feature Editor

Free me I’m with a bunch of weirdos 
Editing constantly in the office 
Avery is so annoying 
Taking photos is fun 
U need to write for feature 
R u ready kids? 
Editing some more

“Sports”  
by Matt Orth | Sports Editor

On the Seventh pitch 
Harper hits One in the air 
Left center field back it goes 
Harper, The Swing of his life

“Production”  
by Hannah Effinger | Production Editor

Production 
PrOduction 
Production 
Production 
PrOduction 
ProductiOns 
ProductiOns 
ProductioN

“Editor-In-Chief”  
by Emma Caughlan | Editor-In-Chief

Everybody is driving me crazy 
I can’t take this anymore 
Can someone please come save me

Illustrations  
by Alex Pavljuk
Student Gallery

Photograph by Peter Di Prospero

Sketches by Skye Parenzan
Taylor Swift Adds Montclair State as a Stop on Her Eras Tour

Megan Lim
Entertainment Editor

As Taylor Swift herself once said, “Tis the damn season.” We aren’t talking about “the holidays that linger” as referenced in the artist’s 2020 song, though. We’re talking about the quick-approaching season of graduation and the gift it has brought the class of 2023: a surprise concert by miss blondie herself.

Swift visited Montclair State University’s Yogi Berra Stadium on March 22 and held an immaculate performance of her popular “Eras Tour,” an event so widely attended that if tickets had been sold through Ticketmaster, the site would have crashed for a second time.

Instead, the singer personally sold tickets to students for only $19.89. Swift hosted the affordable concert as an apology to the graduating class for occupying MetLife Stadium the days near commencement, forcing the ceremony to take place in Newark’s Prudential Center instead.

Tickets sold out just as quickly as Sam’s Place soft serve ice cream runs out on a busy day, with the crowd waiting to enter the concert stretching from Yogi Berra all the way to Freeman Dining Hall, where the ice cream supply is a bit more reliable.

But the wait was worth it for a fiery three-hour performance consisting of 44 of Swift’s songs throughout the years. It was her best performance on tour yet, as her intended atonement to the graduating class evidently left her extra emotional as she sang. Tears, in fact, ricocheted.

Those that attended the concert were equally moved. Emma Caughlan, a senior journalism major, was particularly in awe.

“I’m literally hosting a birthday party where I’m making my friends dress up as Taylor in her different eras,” Caughlan said. “To see the woman I’ll be dressing up as really made me feel some type of way, especially when she started singing ‘22’ since that’s where I’m taking inspiration from for my costume.”

Caughlan felt so overcome by emotion that she direct-messaged Swift on Instagram after the concert to ask if she could “pull up” to the upcoming celebration. The artist has yet to respond.

Aside from the clear sentiment Swift showed her fans, her vocals were, of course, the highlight of the night. The Pennsylvania native’s voice was strong and powerful as ever, only softening when the crowd would sing along to fan favorites like “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together” and “Bad Blood.”

But the true standout was her rendition of “All Too Well (10 Minute Version).” The 10-minute run of the song felt like half that length as the audience joined in singing each and every lyric. In a dazzling red dress with just two spotlights shining on her, the simplicity of the stage design put Swift and her audience’s voices at the center of attention for those few minutes.

Corey Annan, who graduated from Montclair State in 2022 with a bachelor’s in television and digital media, returned to campus for the concert as a not-so-secret Swiftie. Similar to many of those that attended, “All Too Well (10 Minute Version)” was his favorite part of the show.

“I’m usually a silly-goofy kind of guy,” Annan said. “Like my friends and I will do this thing we call ‘Corey-oke’ where I’ll sing a bunch of fun, upbeat throwbacks. That’s always been my thing, but my girl Taylor’s ballads are a guilty pleasure. Don’t tell my old frat brothers, but I actually shed a tear or five during ‘All Too Well.’”

When it wasn’t Swift’s sheer talent catching the listeners’ attention, it was her ethereal wardrobe. With several outfit changes throughout the setlist, each costume was truly something to behold, from her sparkly pink ball gown to her sequin-filled, pastel-colored bodysuit.

Senior journalism major Kim Lamparello, who admittedly is not a huge fan of the artist but “went for the vibes,” said Swift’s attire is what made the show so enjoyable for her.

“When I first saw her walk out on stage, I was like, ‘Girl, I know that’s not from Shein,’” Lamparello said. “Definitely nothing you’d see in the flash sale section at least.”

However, even with Swift’s visually stunning clothes and reliably captivating vocals, what resonated most with the Montclair State community was her kindness to the fans and desire to make amends with the graduating class. After witnessing the singer’s genuineness and undeniable effort, it’s safe to say some students and staff entered their Swiftie Era after this performance.
The One Acts Festival Brings Important Storytelling to the Stage

Alex Pavljuk
Fiction Editor

On a windswept and rainy April Fools’ Day, Players: A Programming Board of the Student Government Association (SGA) transformed the Student Center Nest into a lively, buzzing venue to host their final performance of a two-night-only series of six one-act plays, appropriately titled the “One Acts Festival 2023.”

The show focused on a range of topics with deep and compelling themes such as mental health, challenging familial constructs, profound loss and unsung desire. The passion of both the playwrights and actors was vivid and raw, which radiated beyond the sunken stage of the Nest.

With the house lights slowly dimming, the room full of attendees awaited anxiously for the maiden play, “Life in Disguise,” co-written and directed by freshman film and television major Andrew Cooper and sophomore journalism and digital media major Nino Denino to throw out the first theatrical pitch of the night.

Denino spoke of how the build-up to the show felt. “I got super nervous, like last night I was a mess,” Denino said. “I’m just so proud of everything. [The actors have] come so far.”

As the lights finally came down, the festival began with plenty of laughter radiating through the crowds as the quirky and intelligent comedy “Life in Disguise,” a play focused on the mundane and quieter moments of life despite the walls and faces people put up, not only set the stage for those to come but laid the foundation for a great night of independently written and produced student theatre.

The second play of the night, “Four,” written and directed by sophomore theatre studies major Emily Sebilia, was a sobering pivot away from the comedic chops of the previous performers. It set the tone for the coming shows as an important message to the audience as to say, “You may laugh in here, but please know there is room for reflection, education and empathy too.”

“Four,” a play that deals with the realities of living with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), was a frank and personal exploration of the complex nature of misunderstood mental health battles and the interpersonal challenges others often struggle to comprehend.

Caroline Cook, a freshman double majoring in theatre studies and political science who starred in “Four,” spoke on the play’s meaning. “OCD is a really misrepresented mental illness,” Cook said. “A lot of people think that it’s just like the obsessive cleaning or being obsessive about grades, but it’s really not that at all. I think it’s a really important story that needs to be shared.”

Important storytelling was a prominent focus of the night’s events. Even if at the surface level any number of the plays could make you laugh or cry, they also evolved so much to be appreciated and were a testament to the creative minds behind the works.

In the play “Side Quest,” a fantasy adventure story by senior filmmaking major Meredith Harmon, the great costume design and enveloping world-building permeated by clever and witty dialogue (thanks to its cast’s undeniable chemistry) resulted in an effortlessly fun and funny performance. “Alright, I Confess!” written and directed by sophomore business administration major Kate Nixon, presented the audience, through the use of on-stage conversation acting as narration, an engaging who-done-it plot with thought-out twists and turns culminating in a substantial pay-off with plenty of laughs.

The emotional “A Call Through Time” by sophomore English and film and television major Kayla Carlamore showcased arguably the best acting of the evening by all of its cast members, in part elevated by a tragic yet beautiful story about love and loss in the wake of a father’s passing.

The final and most unique show of the evening, “Distant Planet,” an interstellar musical adventure written and directed by junior film and television major Jared Tauber. It was an intuitive cosmic performance laced with moving and brilliant lyrical storytelling resulting in a fun and worthy conclusion to the night’s events.

“Distant Planet” was an anticipated show of the evening thanks to its word-of-mouth reputation from the previous night’s performance. This is in part due to its out-of-this-world premise, spectacular costume and make-up and engaging choreography.

Davin Budich, a junior business administration major, came to the show not only set the stage for those to come but laid the foundation for a great night of independently written and produced student theatre. But he was happy with the outcome, especially that of “Distant Planet.” “I’d say it lived up to the hype,” Budich said. “It was the show with the most energy, and I think the crowd was the most excited. I think it was definitely the best one. I know how hard everyone worked, so to get to see it all come to life was great.”

If viewers were to take away anything, beyond that of the content of the plays, it should have been the clear and consistent messaging about the importance of independent and collegiate-level playwriting.

The artistic director of the Players executive board, Maggie Aube, a senior theatre studies major, expressed this notion after the show. “Student-written theatre is incredibly important to produce at such a local level because this could be the next show that you see on Broadway or in New York or off-Broadway,” Aube said. “It’s really important to start here and perform it here so that [actors and playwrights] get that confidence that they need to know that they’re actually doing really great work, especially when it has such strong messages.”

Players hosts several shows and events throughout the year, including the upcoming “The Floor Is M.L.L.F.” on April 14 and 15 and “9 To 5: The Musical” on April 21 through 23. You can also check out more performances like this by visiting them on Instagram @msuplayers.
Editor’s Choice

Poe the Passenger on Spotify

If you’re looking for your new alt-rock obsession, look no further than Poe the Passenger. The group out of Los Angeles rose to popularity by promoting their single “Hologram” on TikTok, with the video getting four million views. They recently released the deluxe edition of their debut album, “ALINEA,” adding two new songs. The band describes itself as a fusion of Linkin Park and Imagine Dragons.

With sure hits, the band’s recent music is sure to get your heart pumping and blood flowing. The first song of ALINEA, “Spirit,” is a get-up-and-move anthem for all trying to figure themselves out. “Sweet Talk,” another song off the album, has over two million plays on Spotify, with electric guitar and lead singer Jeff Pridgen’s vocals coming in strong. “Hologram,” the single that exposed them to the alternative music community on TikTok, mixes alt-rock with electronic music but still makes you feel like you are in the 2000s. All the songs build a sense of community for those who might feel they don’t have a place to belong. So join the Poe fam now.

Everyone’s welcome.

‘The 100’ on Netflix

The dystopian TV series that took the 2010’s by storm, “The 100” is a show that will keep you up until four a.m. every night; at least, it did for me. The show centers around a group of juvenile outcasts who are sent down from space to see if Earth is habitable a century after a nuclear apocalypse. Viewers follow Clarke Griffin (Eliza Taylor) and the rest of the group as they face harsh conditions on the ground, facing one adversary after the next. The show also focuses on the survivors of The Ark, the space station that humanity has survived on since Armageddon.

This show is chock-full of conflict, action and adventure. The 100 on the ground must fight for their right to survive, facing outside threats and internal conflicts. Plus, the show deals with serious themes. Is it right to save one loved one at the expense of others? How does one justify sacrificing a few for the good of the many? Is “an eye for an eye” really a good philosophy to live by, especially when lives are at stake? These battles, and many more, are what make the seven-season action series worth a watch.

-Sal DiMaggio
Feature Editor

‘Scream VI’ Nicely Slashes Its Horror Conventions With Fresh Bloody Thrills

The core survivors decide to take down the infamous Ghostface once and for all.

Toan Le
Staff Writer

With the recent surprise success of “Scream” (2022), the franchise continues to thrive on its nostalgic factors with many new elements in “Scream VI.” Truly, it puts another exciting coat of paint on a cult classic.

The film continues with the four survivors attending college in New York City after the 2021 Ghostface massacre in Woodboro. Sam (Mia Lisa Barrera) and Tara (Jenna Ortega) Carpenter relocated to the Big Apple, still dealing with the trauma and loss of their friends. Surviving Woodboro with them are the Meeks-Martin siblings, Mindy (Jasmin Savoy Brown) and Chad (Mason Gooding).

Soon, their horrific past catches up with them when Ghostface returns with an aggressive rampage, roping in Gale Weathers (Courteney Cox) and Kirby Reed (Hayden Panettiere) - survivors of previous murders by Ghostface. With the help of Detective Wayne Bailey (Dermot Mulroney), the core survivors ultimately decide to end Ghostface’s terror once and for all.

With the story taking place in a new setting, the franchise neatly brings in a fresh change of atmosphere where the stakes are grander and riskier. The story does a great job of keeping a blood-rushing pace, so everything seems more like an adrenaline rush, which is what a good slasher film should be able to do. The kills and gore are more vivid and entertaining this time around. Some of the chase sequences are as entertaining as they appear, but the kills and gore are more vivid and entertaining this time around.

With the setting change and the new characters, the franchise brings a wonderful layer of nostalgia. The legacy does a great job of flipping the norms of the genre and characters. The change of atmosphere does help the movie to venture outside of the franchise’s scope, constructing new, exciting elements for future installments. Yet, its narrative and logic need to be fleshed out and re-examined, but the film still delivers a satisfying experience. “Scream VI” might not be the best in the franchise, but with many blood-pumping action set pieces and entertaining conclusions, it surely is a killer good time.
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Club Wrestling Had One of Their Best Seasons Ever in 2023

Montclair State University’s club wrestling team wrapped up a landmark season, culminating with a trip to San Juan, Puerto Rico for the 2023 National Collegiate Wrestling Championships. Nine wrestlers qualified for the event, the most in the club’s recent memory, and senior Faith Guevara took home bronze.

The team had a strong regular season leading up to the annual tournament, which took place from March 9 through March 11, by putting together a 12-6 match record. In order to punch their tickets to Puerto Rico, the wrestlers needed to place in the Mid-East Conference Tournament. In total, nine athletes earned a spot at nationals. Club president and national tournament qualifier, junior Noah Ramadan said that the team’s strong showing was validation for the program’s development.

“Everyone’s buzzing, everyone was so happy,” Ramadan said. “It was a tough season. I think we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where every weekend was a tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where we wrestled 18 dual or tri matches, it got to the point where every weekend was a tri matches, it got to the point where every weekend was a tri matches, it got to the point where every weekend was a tri matches.

One of those wrestlers Melendez guided through nationals was Guevara. She entered her national tournament already sporting a long list of accomplishments including becoming the first woman in program history to win a conference championship, the first woman to qualify for nationals and the first Red Hawk ever to be named an All-American, regardless of gender. After winning her first match, Guevara faced defeat in her next bout, meaning that in order to go for bronze, she had to wrestle her way into the third-place match. Guevara said that Melendez helped her get mentally prepared for her matches.

“He made sure that I ate before my match because [after the loss], I said ‘I don’t want to eat anymore.’ I felt awful but coach said, ‘No Faith, walk around, get your thoughts straight and don’t even think about what happened because that was in the past,’” Guevara said. “He really helped to put me in that mental space where I needed to be to do well, and I went on to win the [next] match.”

In the third-place match, she had to rematch a previous opponent in this tournament. When championship hardware was on the line, Guevara said she had to put it all on the table. “I realized [that] she’s ready to wrestle, so [I] had to get her head straight and [I] had to be ready to wrestle too,” Guevara said. “We both fought hard to get here so it was just a case of who wanted it more. I realized that I had to keep pushing.”

After a hard-fought bout, Guevara came out on top to take the bronze medal, the first medal in program history. She said that she only started to feel the significance of the moment after the match ended.

“I came into this [tournament] with the mentality that it was first place or nothing, but after [the third place match] when the referee raised my hand and I saw how happy my teammates and my coach were, I [said to myself] ‘No Faith, be proud of yourself, you’re [an] All-American,’” Guevara said. “Seeing how proud my coach was made it real for me.”

The team’s trip to the National Collegiate Wrestling Association (NCWA) Championships cemented one of the most successful campaigns in recent memory. Seven Red Hawks finished off the season ranked in the NCWA Top 30 in their weight classes.

Guevara, alongside junior Iain Shaw and junior Donald Keating were named Academic All-Americans, in recognition of their achievements in the classroom. Ramadan emphasized the pride he took in the team’s accomplishments.

“When you’re a D-I, D-II, or D-III athlete, there’s a lot of incentives there to be a student-athlete, scholarships potentially, club wrestlers have none of that, they pay dues to be on the team and it’s up to us to construct a season experience worth paying for,” Ramadan said. “These guys have jobs, classes, essays they need to prepare for. They’re cutting weight during these classes, I just have a lot of respect for all of them.”
New Sports Editor Avery Nixon Takes On The Sports Section

She doesn’t know a thing about sports.
WrestleMania 39 at SoFi Stadium turned out to be one of the best events in the history of World Wrestling Entertainment. But to end it all on Sunday night, the American Nightmare Cody Rhodes fought a great match against Roman Reigns, the Tribal Chief and the Head of the Table.

To the dismay of many fans that night, one of Roman’s members of his faction The Bloodline, Solo Sikoa, after being removed from the match, secretly came back and changed the momentum of the match. Rhodes was about to win the match but after the attack from Sikoa, Reigns went in for his famous spear move and ended a legendary match.

Reigns went in for his famous spear and used his F5 finisher on Rhodes. And after being left on the floor of the ring with medical personnel attending to him, Lesnar would put up both middle fingers as he left, turning heel immediately after being the good guy at the Showcase of Immortals. Reigns would leave right after the attack began, but when the cameras turned off, they missed a key moment after the show.

Former sports editor of The Montclarion and senior sports communications assistant Erin Blanchfield from The Montclarion wanted to find out who ran the newspaper of Montclair State University, and wanted to find out who ran the sports section at The Montclarion.

As the superstars came out, and Rhodes was getting hyped up for the match, Lesnar came up from behind and used his FS finisher on Rhodes. And then the carnage on the American Nightmare would only begin, with Lesnar using steel steps and a chair to beat up Rhodes.

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Former sports editor of The Montclarion and senior sports communications assistant Matt Orth took a secret flight from New Jersey across the country to Los Angeles and met up with WWE Chief Content Officer Paul “Triple H” Levesque. The former superstar is tired of seeing Roman Reigns as champion, as he has had a belt around his waist for about 956 days, with the 1,000-day mark quickly approaching.

Triple H wants to have a major shakeup in the WWE and the former champion happened to scroll through the Internet looking for prospects for the younger division within WWE, NXT. He looked throughout the country and when looking at New Jersey, he found some articles about former student Erin Blanchfield from The Montclarion.

Intrigued by the wonderful writing of assistant sports editor Ryan White, he looked up the e-board of the campus newspaper of Montclair State University, and wanted to find out who ran the sports section at The Montclarion.

At the time, the website was not updated to show former opinion editor Avi Levy taking over the position and showed Orth as the sports editor. Triple H was intrigued by his work ethic, his personality and most importantly, the way he does the Griddy dance. He does the dance like no other.

Triple H then reached out to Orth via email last minute and asked if he could come down to RAW in Los Angeles at what was called (and should still be called) the Staples Center and have him do a favor. Come out to the locker room where Roman is when he has been left alone, steal the belts and run away.

Orth was completely inclined to do this for Triple H as Cody Rhodes was utterly robbed of the championships and the former sports editor was left depressed that Sunday night. He would do whatever it takes to make things right in sports entertainment.

Monday night came. Orth made it to the house that Kobe Bryant built and talked to Triple H prior to him coming out to talk to the crowd. The two guys laid out the master plan, and all they had to do is wait. Orth posed as a production assistant backstage and even had Seth ‘Freakin’ Rollins sing his theme song with him midway through the show.

Then, 11 p.m. eastern time came around. Reigns was in the locker room, getting ready to leave and take an extended break from shows. When all of a sudden, Orth snuck into the door and Griddy’ed up to Reigns with his belts on his lap. Orth used his reach to grab the belts and Griddy’ed out of the locker room. Reigns tried to spear Orth but he danced out of the way and Reigns crashed into the door.

Laying in pain, Orth ran away along side Triple H and got on a helicopter back to the WWE headquarters. When Triple H asked about the ordeal, Orth only said two key words: “Acknowledged me.”

Orth plans to defend the belts at WrestleMania 40 at the Lincoln Financial Field in Philadelphia, PA with Philadelphia Eagles quarterback Jalen Hurts in his corner.

Former Sports Editor Matt Orth Named New Undisputed WWE Universal Champion