Where Can You Ride Your Electric Scooter?

Limits on electric vehicles implemented after increase in accidents

A student riding on an electric scooter

Kamil Santana | Assistant News Editor

These guidelines have been implemented by the university for the safety of others with an increase of accidents on campus. You may have seen a few of your peers zooming past you on their electric scooters or bikes on campus. Let them know that Montclair State University has established rules that align with state law to ensure the safety of others.

The use of personal electric vehicles (PEVs) on campus has led to an increase in accidents on campus. The university sent out an email on March 29 highlighting the concern. The email included a link to the guidelines for those who use PEVs on campus.

The policy covers the operation, storage, charging and overall safety while riding PEVs. It has a map showing where people on campus can ride their vehicles and an infographic on New Jersey electric bike and scooter laws. Kieran Barrett, chief of Montclair State’s police department, said the laws on PEVs are not new, but the campus rules are.

“The rules are largely a reflection of N.J. law so the laws have been in place for some time,” Barrett said. “Some did not consider that the law could be enforced here and we just also wanted to be sure we recognized some of the unique terrain here at Montclair [State].”

On campus, owners and operators of these vehicles must follow state laws and campus policy in regard to PEVs to avoid consequences.

“Applicable motor N.J. vehicle laws can be enforced by police and in the case of charging in areas that are unsafe, the community member may face conduct or housing ramifications,” Barrett said.

Barrett said that people in the campus community using PEVs on campus need to be responsible, vigilant and aware of the rules that pertain to their PEVs.

“We recognize this is a mode of transport that many utilize,” Barrett said. “We ask that if using a PEV, we recognize we have the same responsibilities as others using roadways and common areas. Many work to ensure a safe experience here at Montclair [State] so we do not expect this to impact many.”

Eli Williams, a freshman computer science major, said he often uses an electric skateboard to get around campus. He can attest to the increase in injuries via PEV accidents.

“I’ve seen two people get hit in my last three weeks here,” Williams said. “It’s not really an okay hit because they’re coming at [high speeds]. I’d say regulate it up to a certain speed or just where exactly you’re going with it. During class hours when people are going to their next class, they’re always getting in the way.”

He is grateful to see the PEV guidelines in place following the accidents he has seen occur on campus.

“Honestly, I’m for it in my opinion, because I’ve seen a lot of people on the scooters [hit] people and it’s kind of like, ‘What are you doing,’” Williams said. “You [have] to be able to slow down unless the vehicle can slow down. It’s kind of like a safety hazard. Me personally, I can bail my skateboard, which will stop it immediately but some scooters, they don’t have that ability.”

Tyler Joseph, a senior exercise science major, said it is great that students have the ability to use PEVs on campus.

“I think it’s pretty cool to have one from my perspective,” Joseph said. “I think one of my friends, they go to [New Jersey Institute of Technology], they actually use one of the scooters to get around. Sometimes you might find it as a hassle to go from there to there, so having the scooter, I think that’s a good thing to have.”

Joseph said that Montclair State’s campus is large and is aware of the risk of injury. He is glad to know that the guidelines have been implemented.

“They think about us when they do that,” Joseph said. Eunice Lee, a freshman dance major, agrees with the use of PEVs on campus but that they should have designated lanes.

“I haven’t seen any accidents so far,” Lee said. “I think electric scooters [should keep being] allowed, but if there are any accidents then I think they should have a separate trail for them.”

The university has provided a map designating where operators of PEVs can use them on campus.

Photo courtesy Montclair State University Website
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The Montclarion has a commitment to accuracy and clarity and will print corrections or clarifications if information is found to be incorrect.

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

All submissions to the newspaper become property of The Montclarion. We do not print articles from anonymous contributors.

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Email Scams Under Investigation

Meagan Kane
Staff Writer

Scammers use their abilities to target professors and students. Recently, there have been numerous reports of phishing scam emails being sent out to Montclair State University students and professors.

Though some may be able to quickly recognize and report the email, others may believe that it is real. Kieran Barrett, chief of Montclair State’s police department, shared his thoughts. “Unfortunately, scams such as the one described are fairly common at colleges and universities,” Barrett said.

We do keep an eye out on [phishing emails] anytime that there’s like large-scale emails and everything,” Mills said. “It is on our radar.”

Naomi Ardon, a freshman public health major, shared the precautions she would take if she ever received such an email. “Well, I would verify if it is actually a scam email,” Ardon said. “If it was someone pretending to be a professor, I would check Canvas to see if the email is the same.”

Sarah Bramley, a sophomore psychology major, almost fell for a scam email. “The email [I received] was for an interview for an internship,” Bramley said. “I jumped on it as soon as possible and I wanted to get it [the internship] and give a good impression may alter the thought of checking to see if the email is legit.”

After thorough investigation, Bramley found out that it was indeed a scam. “[The email] got sent directly to my school email and I thought it was sent from the school,” Bramley said. “I thought it was a suspicious email would be to have an awareness of potential scams.”

Ramzi Far, an Information Technology department staff member alongside Mills, shared the best way to prevent further scams. “I think that we are working on just reacting fast to it,” Far said. “There isn’t anything anyone can do about it, it’s just telling everyone to be aware of these emails.”
From Sidewalk Chalk to Cookies: How SGA Candidates Got Out the Vote

Meagan Kane | The Montclarion

Executive president Richard Steiner-Otoo’s promotional flyer for his 2023-2024 campaign.

I made a campaign video,” Rana said. “I posted that on Instagram and TikTok, those were the two platforms I use a lot and I figured it could reach out to more people.”

Richard Steiner-Otoo, who won re-election for executive president, also created a campaign video.

“This year’s campaign video had reached 14,800 [people],” Steiner-Otoo said. “I feel like that was really successful.”

Mikayla Houston, the winner of the executive vice president election, explained her social media strategy, focusing on Instagram and Snapchat.

“I just made a poster and posted it on social media and people were reposting and spreading the word,” Houston said. “I used Instagram and Snapchat to post my flyers.”

Another way to win over student voters was by going person-to-person. Candidates had the ability to explain their campaign on a more personal level and express why students should vote for them.

Steiner-Otoo gave out cookies with a flyer that included a QR code, which led to his online promotional videos and posts. He explained the impact greeting people in person had.

“These conversations are so meaningful and impactful, it means a lot more for someone to see a face, to recognize a face and have that be familiar in the future,” Steiner-Otoo said. “Just literally telling students my name, saying that [my name] in itself [as well as] asking them about their lives and about their experiences at Montclair [State] is something that I thought was really successful.”

Rana believes going up to students and sharing her reason for running was a plus as well.

“The other part [of promoting] which I think was a huge factor in my campaigning was literally going person-to-person and campaigning,” Rana said.

She explained how campaigning is more than just sharing information on social media. “Because anyone can obviously watch my [campaign] video and they’ll get to see who I am, but when you actually go in person campaigning to individuals, they understand your message more,” Rana said.

With the help of various forms of campaign marketing, the three winners received a strong turnout.

“We had a bigger turnout this year,” Steiner-Otoo said. “I think in the past two years alone we’ve had over double the number of votes than we used to.”

With the ongoing growth of the digital era, voting numbers were over the top.

“In years prior, we used to get like 300 to 600 votes, which is very unimpressive,” Steiner-Otoo said. “We tried very hard [this year] to publicize it.”

Luisa Bicalho, the SGA’s attorney general, also believes heavier use of marketing and PR allowed for a stronger campaign than years prior.

“I think this year’s campaigning process was much stronger,” Bicalho said.

I think what made a difference this year was that all of these candidates really wanted the position and so they worked extra hard to showcase that,” Bicalho expressed how pleased she is with the candidates’ campaigns, especially with marketing themselves.

“All of these candidates did an amazing job at campaigning as I saw them pop up everywhere around campus,” Bicalho said.

Out of close to 18,000 undergraduates within Montclair State, 1,023 voted. Using several techniques to convince students to cast their votes has shown that the numbers can indeed grow higher.

Houston shared her reaction to winning executive vice president.

“I did not feel like it was real,” Houston said. “If you asked me in January or even the beginning of February if I wanted to be [vice president] I would have not had an answer.”

Rana expressed how she felt when she found out she won her second term as executive secretary.

“When I heard my name get announced, I understood that students trusted me and I got my name out there,” Rana said.

Steiner-Otoo is ecstatic to serve on the board for his second term as well.

“[I am so excited, my heart was beating out of my chest],” Steiner-Otoo said.

“[I am so excited to be able to serve our student body again.]”

For the past few weeks on campus, Montclair State University students have received a ton of information about the Student Government Association (SGA) elections, from emails in their inboxes to slogans written on the pavement...cookies. For this year’s SGA executive board elections, the candidates’ campaigns were promoted in different engaging ways, such as through social media posts, flyers, sidewalk chalk and yes, even cookies. These marketing tactics spark curiosity about how these tools affected even cookies.

As for the social media side of public relations, shared his thoughts.

“At a broad level, [public relations and advertising] defines the identity of the campaign and it turns the policy and issue statement into a comprehensible story,” Benton said.

As for the social media side of public relations, Benton believes that it is an imperative tool to use.

“Social media in particular is just so responsive,” Benton said. “If you look at political participation for people under the age of 30, social media interaction is going to be the space where they do most of it.”

Krisha Rana, who won the election for executive secretary, utilized social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok.

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UpLIFT: Free of Judgment, Full of Rewards

Scott Ackerson
Guest Writer

If you want a safe, welcoming place to start your fitness journey, then Montclair State University’s very own Recreation Center is a wonderful way to start achieving your goals. However, if the hustle and bustle of the first floor’s stations can be daunting or overwhelming, the center has a brand new weekly program that will help you feel even more uplifted.

Every Wednesday from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on the second floor of the Rec Center, you can take part in the UpLIFT program facilitated by the Rec Center’s team of undergraduate students. The UpLIFT program welcomes any Montclair State students, no matter what experience level they have, who are looking to get in some quality exercise without any sort of judgment or intimidation from the more experienced lifters.

The program specializes in compound workouts so that newer students who are looking to improve their general fitness can first get a firm grasp on the proper form of each exercise, then gradually work their way up to heavier weights and higher aspirations.

Pablo Herrera, a sophomore exercise science major and one of the leaders of the program, sees the program as a great start for anybody who is looking to get better at weightlifting or any other form of exercise, even if they are not so knowledgeable about the equipment or proper technique.

“The attendees either have been going to the gym or just touched a barbell for the first time,” Herrera said. “We try to keep it to where everyone of all levels can learn in a nice, good environment.”

Since the first class was held on March 22, the layout has changed slightly, focusing more on the camaraderie and the group aspects of exercising as opposed to the singular, independent journeys, as explained by sophomore computer science major Jeffrey Kouevi.

“Originally this was supposed to be a program that you would sign up for, we would monitor your progress for six weeks,” Kouevi said. “But for right now, we just switched it to more of a group exercise kind of thing.”

Both Herrera and Kouevi have also worked as personal trainers for the Rec Center, and that extra layer of experience in the field has made it a breeze for them to hold these sessions and know the proper way to give their students the most out of their time with this program.

“It’s been easier for us to give them more one-on-one advice on how to perfect their form,” Kouevi said. “I think that definitely helps them to get more comfortable with lifting.”

Their expertise in personal training also makes their welcoming approach to workouts so natural.

“We are all very friendly so that definitely helps,” Kouevi said. “I try to email the participants afterward with the workouts that we did so that when they come back or if they want to work out on their own, they have the workouts that we did already with them.”

As an added incentive, after the sessions are finished, the members will be receiving some prizes. These include complimentary water bottles and personalized fitness trackers so that they may continue to progress in their athletic journeys.

Despite still being in its infancy, the UpLIFT program has already found a few eager patrons, including sophomore business administration major Victor De Toussaint, who gave his first few classes a glowing endorsement.

“It’s definitely less crowded, and it’s very nice because there’s more direction,” De Toussaint said. “On the floor, it’s more of a free-for-all. Here, [the instructors] really work you through it, so it’s nice.”

Sticking with the program for multiple weekly classes is a great idea, as explained by Herrera, who finds that consistency and determination will build skill level as well as confidence.

Herrera also hopes that attendees can leave with the comforting mindset that the Rec Center is much less scary than they may believe and that the heavier lifters on the first floor are often some of the friendliest, most open people you can find on campus.

Senior linguistics major Mirit Fournier gave her unique insights as to why you should consider joining UpLIFT, offering tidbits that can help you in any facet of life.

“If you work hard it’ll pay off,” Fournier said. “Don’t be intimidated to try new things.”

The importance of good physical health cannot be overstated, and to do it in such a fun, comfortable and welcoming place as UpLIFT can get you far along in achieving such health. The classes will be running weekly until Wednesday, April 26, so get in while you can.
An array of DVDs and VHS tapes are available to rent and watch at the Multimedia Resources area of Sprague Library.

**Five Hidden Gems**

*From pianos to tennis courts: The secrets of Montclair State’s campus*

Victoria Ribarich | The Montclarion

Montclair State University is a large school that holds many secrets that you may or may not know about. Spend some time trekking around campus to find these gems that are here for you to use.

1. **Pianos Across Campus**
   If you're itching to play the piano and don't have one in your dorm or at home, there are many pianos located around the campus. Not only does the John J. Cali School of Music have pianos, but the basement of the Student Center, Fox Theatre and University Hall all have a piano where you can practice Fur Elise and other classics. The university also offers piano lessons to those who want to learn or brush up on their skills.

2. **3D Printing MIX Lab**
   Located on the lower level of the Feliciano School of Business is the MIX 3D Printing Lab. There are about 48 3D printers, and all of them are cloud-based, meaning that you can send prints on or off campus to the lab through the MIX Lab’s website. You can print just about anything except cosplay pieces and of course, weapons, drugs and paraphernalia. Just make sure to log into your Montclair State account to get free access.

3. **Commuter Commons at the Student Center**
   If you want to watch a movie or play some video games, the third floor of the Student Center has a lounge with a large flat screen television where you can hook up your console or laptop to play games with friends or just by yourself. You can also use it to catch up on a television show you haven't seen in a while. It gets very busy during lunchtime, so make sure you get there first for dibs on the television.

4. **VHS Tapes, Vinyl Records, DVDs, Oh my!**
   Take a trip to the past at Sprague Library. The Multimedia Resources section of the lower level has a huge archive of VHS tapes like Jaws, Titanic (which is split into 2 VHS Tapes), vinyl records, microfilms, cassettes and DVDs that you can rent. There are also rooms you can reserve which have the equipment needed to listen to and watch these relics. You must have your school ID to rent out the tapes and to reserve the rooms. If you aren’t sure how to operate the vintage equipment, staff can help.

5. **Tennis Courts**
   Located behind the Ice Arena is a large tennis court where you can practice your skills with the Tennis Club or enjoy the courts recreationally. Campus Recreation offers tennis racquets and other equipment for sale and to rent. Playing tennis in college is extremely beneficial, as it keeps you fit, improves mental health, gives you a break from studying and you can form forever friendships with others who enjoy the sport. Lace up your favorite pair of fitness sneakers and get onto the courts.

Montclair State has a plethora of resources for students to take of advantage if they know where to look. So stop scrolling on your phones and get out there.
“Throne of Glass” Deserved a Second Chance

Olivia Yayla
Staff Writer

I have done it. I have finally given Sarah J. Maas’s “Throne of Glass” series a second chance. It was only after 20 consecutive “Throne of Glass” TikToks and three months of my sister’s persistent badgering to get me to reread the series from the beginning. You must be wondering what I mean by “from the beginning,” but don’t worry: I’ll leave my small bone to pick for the end of this review.

I do not know why, but I’ve always been reluctant to read current best-sellers. Maybe it’s my subconscious attempt to disrupt the publishing patriarchy. Or maybe it’s my internal ego that gets fueled whenever I mention a book that no one has heard of.

Either way, I have specifically heard rumors about Maas, and how she is a notorious “fluff” writer. Meaning that her editors simply push all of her books through to publishing without reading and deriding the story from the unnecessary details. But after reading “Throne of Glass” for myself, I have decided that although that is true, she has definitely gained the title for her editors to trust her enough to publish whatever she wants.

In Maas’s “Throne of Glass,” the story began with the notorious, yet undercover assassin of Erilea, Celaenia Sardothien. Without revealing too much of the plot, Celaenia had been imprisoned by the King’s orders and sold into slavery to work in the salt mines of Endovier, described similarly to Earth’s Alcatraz. However, her identity is not entirely a secret among certain groups, and she is taken out of the salt mines by Prince Dorian Havilliard, and the captain of the royal guard; Chaol Westfall. It was at this point in the story where I had to look up pronunciations before I continued reading this man’s name as “Chole.”

After trying to find a Maas dictionary, I read on to learn that the King’s Championship is right around the corner, and a select few royals are choosing their champions to fight to the death. Celaenia, although untrustworthy, is Dorian’s best chance at winning. The opportunity is too great for Celaenia to pass up, as she would be gifted her freedom in exchange for her winning the championship. But another mission is placed upon her shoulders after a divine higher power entrusts her with the task of winning the championship to save the world. The spirit urges that there is darkness within the castle, and Celaenia is the only one who can snuff it out before it destroys not only Erilea, but the entire fictional universe.

This book is extremely descriptive and complicated, so this short summary might seem like a lot to swallow. But with the character arcs and the vivid descriptions painting each scene as accurately as it does, I have learned to love the fluff and savor each lengthy chapter.

“Throne of Glass,” specifically, is pretty mild on the “spice” meter and includes an enemies-to-lovers trope, along with a touch of forbidden romance, but that might change as the stories progress. If you’re looking for a fantasy series that is extremely plot heavy, rather than romance heavy, this series is for you.

And now, I am going to explain the issue I have with Maas. The one other than the fact that the names of her characters make me giggle like a middle schooler in “Sex Education.” Two years ago, I walked into Barnes and Noble with the hope of finding a new series to distract myself, as one normally does. Paying my respects to the “smut” shelf, I made my way to the fantasy-fiction section when a beautiful hardcover stopped me in my tracks. I looked at the book and the few beside it that matched the cover’s font and noticed that no numbers were distinguishing the series from beginning to end. Unknowingly, I purchased the third book and stopped a quarter of the way out of pure confusion.

Maas, on the slim chance that you ever fall into a self-deprecating hole, search up your name and find this book review, please number your books. To be clear, the series’s order from start to finish begins with “Throne of Glass,” then “Crown of Midnight,” followed by “The Assassin’s Blade,” then “Heir of Fire,” “Queen of Shadows,” “Empire of Storms,” then “Tower of Dawn,” ending with “Kingdom of Ash.”

Some say that you can begin with “The Assassin’s Blade,” but I do not recommend it. “Throne of Glass” has checked every box on my literary checklist and I have never been more excited to get into a series that is already complete. Stay tuned for my “Crown of Midnight” review. Sorry I doubted you, Maas.
What television or movie character do you relate to and why?

By Lynise Olivacce
Photo Editor

“The show character that I mainly relate to is probably Jay from 'Ninjago.' It’s a very nostalgic show that came out in 2011. [Our] characteristics are basically the same.”

Giovanni Carluccio
Freshman
Recording Arts and Production

“It probably is Maddie from 'Dance Moms.' Cause I put a lot of pressure on myself. I always feel like because of school that there’s a lot of pressure on me. And I need to do my best and I do it too much to the point I stress out.”

Emily Carriero
Freshman
Psychology

“I would identify as Drax from 'Guardians of the Galaxy' because he’s just vibing, he’s just silly.”

Karina Mcclard
Sophomore
Family Science and Human Development
“I think I relate to Raven from 'Teen Titans.' Sometimes people get her, sometimes we don’t get her. Yes, she has that one-sided look to her, but deeper in her there are other types of emotions she gives out.”

Chris Smith  
Freshman  
Dance

“Rigby from the 'Regular Show.' In the park where he works with his best friend, they always find a way to make their job more fun. More interesting. One of my coworkers- I'm really good friends with him, so every time we're on the same shift [we] just make jokes and try to make that boring shift 10 times funnier than it really is.”

Rene Modesto  
Freshman  
Finance

“Steven Universe. Especially in his epilogue series. He goes through a lot of mental struggles, especially dealing with helping his friends, but not feeling like he could look to people for help. So he goes through a big mental change. His character development surrounds the idea of him learning to look to those people he’s helped.”

Cedric Briones  
Senior  
Chemistry
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<td>Hey Pisces, I know that last month has been so super rude to you so I am speaking to into existence that is all up from here. The Stratosphere at Meadowlands Amusement Park (still would not go on that ride) so be as ready for life to take a turn like you're the Batman voice on Waze! Make yourself a snack (I recommended a chicken cutlet), get active (laughing uncontrollably with your friends counts) and hug your weird pets. Things will get better soon. PS: You are NOT wasting the world!</td>
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<td><strong>Aries</strong></td>
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<td>Mar. 21 – Apr. 19</td>
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<td>It's your season Aries! Hopefully, you're living it up like newly-single global superstar Taylor Swift, or like the Swifties now that we know a new album is on the way!</td>
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<td><strong>Taurus</strong></td>
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<td>Apr. 20 – May 20</td>
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<td>Witnessed a drunk man booo during the National Anthem during the New Jersey Devils Game? Yeah, me too.</td>
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<td><strong>Gemini</strong></td>
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<td>May 21 – Jun. 20</td>
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<td>Do not, my friends, become addicted to water. It will take hold of you, and you will resent its absence!</td>
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<td><strong>Libra</strong></td>
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<td>Sep. 23 – Oct. 22</td>
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<td>Read &quot;Catcher in the Rye&quot; this week. John Lennon's been a little too restless for a little too long.</td>
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<td><strong>Scorpio</strong></td>
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<td>Oct. 23 – Nov. 21</td>
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<td>KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN IN NEW YORK CITY. If you don't stay too safe, you could end up in possession of the world's worst mixtape burned to a cheap CD.</td>
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<td><strong>Cancer</strong></td>
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<td>Jun. 21 – Jul. 22</td>
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<td>Remember, never trust anyone who gets a fast food meal named after them.</td>
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<td><strong>Leo</strong></td>
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<td>Jul. 23 – Aug. 22</td>
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<td>Did you read the opinion section last week? The one where we said an acorn was God? Yeah. Read the WHOLE paper, not just the horoscopes, you astrology junkie.</td>
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<td>Aug. 23 – Sep. 22</td>
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<td>Peter Griffin tip of the week: Look up &quot;Love Trip full album&quot; on youtube and click on the one with a cat. Trust me Lois, it's so chill.</td>
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<td><strong>Sagittarius</strong></td>
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<td>Nov. 22 – Dec. 21</td>
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<td>How many times have you listened to Boygenius's &quot;The Record&quot; this week? You haven't heard of it? Check out the review on page 19!</td>
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The Montclarion Crossword Puzzle and More!

Jalen Hurts Edition

By Lynise Olivacce

Across
2. How old is he?
3. The future Mrs. Hurts
4. He finished the regular season with a total of how many passing yards?
5. What is the name of his own Philly Cheesesteak at the “Foodchasers Kitchen” restaurant?
9. What is the name of the Philadelphia Eagles Victory Song?
10. What is the last award that he won?

Down
1. What university did he transfer to?
2. What year did he join the Philidelphia Eagles?
6. What is his position in the Philadelphia Eagles?
7. What is his middle name?
8. Hometown

Sudoku

Word Search

Breed of One
Anita Baker
Man of God
Touchdowns

Philly Thing
Football
Fashion Sense
Record Breaker

Crawfish
Purpose
Eagles
Foine
The majority of us are more than acquainted with the religious protestors that stand seemingly proudly with signs containing hateful rhetoric. The Key of David Christian Center shows up every semester to tell us to repent and find salvation. They bring up today’s protests by calling it “the process of re-educating and indoctrination without criticism or question.” According to Cambridge Dictionary, indoctrination means “the process of repeating an idea or belief to someone until they accept it without criticism or question.” Religious indoctrination takes the attention to attract people prone to being manipulated. It’s one big game and we’re the losing team. Being attacked so blatantly hits right where it hurts for many of us, so it’s understandable to have the urge to react to these claims and defend what we believe to be true. These are strangers that feel entitled to tell us how to navigate the world and what we do with our lives. It’s an insult that our self-autonomy is pushed under the rug so they can follow through with their agenda.

But stooping down to their level not only does more harm than good, but it is also extremely embarrassing. Do you want to be caught lacking and arguing with a person that acts like a maniac?

According to Cambridge Dictionary, indoctrination means “the process of repeating an idea or belief to someone until they accept it without criticism or question.” Religious indoctrination takes impressionable young people and brainwashes them into harboring an ideology rather than using critical thinking skills to formulate their own opinions. It’s very uncomfortable to see people exhibit behaviors worse than a child. More than that, making the conscious choice to fight with an individual that probably has no idea of what they’re talking about, saying words that they were taught like a parrot, is irresponsible and nonsensical. You are fighting with a puppet and you stand to get nothing out of this exchange.

All participating in this buffoonery does is ruin a student’s day when it’s already tense enough being hit with hatred and bigotry-themed posters. Experiencing something like that is anxiety-inducing and has the potential to produce guilt. Be mindful of the common space you share with the rest of the student body and make it a place you want to spend time in, don’t add to the problem.
Extremist Politics Are A Threat to Our Humanity

Kayla Mulligan  
Staff Writer

W

When you hear “politics,” what do you feel? Do you cringe? Does your heart beat faster, afraid of what outraged opinion may follow? Do you jump at the opportunity to bash our current government? I’m going to guess you most likely don’t experience the most euphoric and hopeful of emotions when you hear the p-word.

Politics have become a powder keg of fear, hostility and more in our country. A divide between blue and red, right and wrong, apolitical and extreme. Difference of opinion is essential to politics. It keeps the political conversa-
tion alive and grants voices to different political views. Though it seems that today, people are tied to their beliefs so tightly that they defend them through thick and thin, casting out compromise and reason. Others strike politics away al-
together in hopes of avoiding the chaos that is present in our current system. It seems so easy to shut out politics, turn off the yelling TV personalities or avoid that dreadful conversation with your extremely political uncle at the Thanksgiving table.

Apoliticism seems like a convenient alternative because it’s a faulty con-
cept. Every day, people respond to the political environment of their lives and community whether they consider themselves “politics” or not. Some might wake up and drive their used car to a part-time job to support their family. Someone may begin their day in their high-rise penthouse or they may wake up and struggle to find clean water. Our livelihoods are a result of how we experience our political system. Apoliticism is a mirage for those who want to spare themselves the effort to effect change. The more people who engage in apoliticism and relinquish their freedom of political participation give up a right to advocate for some-
thing bigger than themselves. Isn’t that what politics should be?

At the other end of the spectrum, political extremism is just as danger-
ous. We live in a time where we can consume more media and opinions in 20 minutes than the prolific political thinkers before us could consume in one month. With that comes a hundred perspectives and beliefs on pressing issues.

These opinions have become con-
cepts we fight to the death to defend, closing our minds to the rebuttals and reasonings another view may present. Extremist ideals don’t take into ac-
count the importance of compromise or reflection. So what’s the answer then? Apoliticism as a whole is a threat to democracy. On the other hand, hold-
ing our political beliefs while expelling any alternative views is a hand on the throat of political pluralism. I think it’s important to revisit what exactly politics is and offer a less cyni-
cal view. Politics is not exclusively Democrat and Republican, who favors big busi-
ness and who approves of what policy. Rather, politics is a pulse that connects human beings in the contribution to the welfare of a community bigger than themselves. Politics is not just the suits in Wash-
ington, D.C., but the family bookstore around the corner fighting to feed their family or the people facing racial injus-tice in the land of the free. Politics is caring for our planet because Mother Nature does not care if you lean right or left. Politics is a reflection of humanity and the power to evoke change. We need compromise and reconsideration. We need to escape the entrapment of political extremism and apathy. It’s time to transform our lives through politics and venture toward the politi-
cal middle ground. Whether it be a discussion on nuclear war, climate change or gun violence, the time for change is at our door. It won’t come through having an all-or-nothing political mindset. We need to listen more than we preach and empathize more than we chastise. We’ve become so conditioned by the current chaos of our country, by the po-
larization of opposing parties, that we forget to keep humanity in our politics. If this article seems a bit too ambi-
tious or blindly hopeful about politics, then maybe we, as a society, need to revisit what politics truly stand for.

Kayla Mulligan, a junior history and political science major, is in her third year as a staff writer for The Montclarion.

School Isn’t Schooling If It’s Not Progressive

Cassandra Michalakis  
Staff Writer

L

ast summer, I took an online class on American Education, partaking in the commonplace practice of reading reviews for it. One that stuck out to me followed along the lines of “I wish I had the money to attend a private school. Too many liberal ideas being pushed, I just want a regular education.”

I would later discover, ironically enough, that the student had com-
pletely missed the objective of Module Five: Schools and Their Purpose. The comment recently resurfaced in my mind with news of politicians suppos-
edly eliciting “woke” curricula out of classrooms. There has always been controversy with what’s appropriate to educate chil-
dren on, political interpretations often clouding the actual content in question. But in order to address the question of what’s suitable for school or isn’t, we need to focus on education as a whole. That is to say, what is the true pur-
purpose of education?

We could say it’s an institution that is the catalyst of societal change. Schools harbor observations, criticism and possible solutions to our world’s problems. In following such a doctrine, it is deduced that school, by nature, is progressive. By itself, this seems like a volatile statement. We saw firsthand how oc-
currences in the political hemisphere can power a widespread, turbulent re-defining of ideas. Merriam-Webster’s definition of “progress” as an adjective is “making use of or interested in new ideas, findings or opportunities.”

Schools, particularly colleges, might be seen as a bubble where the fabric of reality is disfracted through the aca-
demic lens. Theories and propositions are possible, but only in a vacuum of a utopia. The real product of school is criti-
cism about consciously-perpetuated norms, which is promptly followed by disapproval and censorship. Fiery comebacks call these ideas unnatural, delusional and not welcomed into our children’s schools. To clarify, we should not frame this response as entirely unnatural. Society has a tendency to wrangle with the implications of drastic change. The difficulty of changing laws and the norms that trail behind it has its reasons, such as avoiding mishaps and allowing time to assess the situation. We don’t have to seek out dictatorial countries to get a sense of what this would be like. There’s not that much difference in our own backyards as sup-
posedly stoic, government-issued acts are quickly reversed, like the retraction of Roe v. Wade. Schools versus the public with government backing is a phenomenon that has always occurred from ancient times to contemporary America. We simply became more aware of this “combat” between academia and gov-
ernment because fast-traveling media amplifies these altercations. Furthermore, trying to categorize progressive versus conservative educa-
tion isn’t applicable. You either face uncomfortable truths and biases and struggle to confront them, or disregard this completely.

School should be a safe space for students to develop an awareness of their knowledge, beliefs and biases. In truth, it’s a distressing, tiresome, lifelong process. However, it is a neces-
sary force that exists. With the sup-
port of staff and adequate resources, students can navigate this flexibly and safely. In short, if it does not impel kids to struggle, learn, heal and repeat, it’s not really a school. And if schools are not an appropriate place for kids to strug-
gle and learn, where is it, then? As a student, I expect schools to present me with potentially unpopular or controversial topics. The point is that I have the guaranteed safety to be critical with making sense of this because that is what creates an “edu-
cated” person.

When we graduate, we should have become well-acquainted with the school’s purpose. That is the intro-
duction and re-introduction of ideas via social upheavals that supply the momentum for theories to eventually become serious, political change. Whether each new generation leaves school understanding that they are students of change and citizens of consistency will become apparent well after the cap and gown had their glory.

Cassandra Michalakis, a sophomore chemistry major, is in her first year as a staff writer for The Montclarion.
"The Forest Freak" (Part 3 of 5)  
by Alex Pavljuk | Fiction Editor  

"Come on, up with ya, seems like you've veered off the trail," The man, standing above Connor, said kindly. His hand still reaching out but his head and eyes scanning the distance, "So if you are trying to get back over to the parking lot near the reservoir I'd say the fastest trek is the blue path just past that fallen log, and if you are simply trying to get over to the cliff, I'd stick to the yellow trees over that a'way,"

Connor, still, shocked at what he was looking up at, reached for his camera to make sure the red light was racing, he didn't yet point it at the man.  

"You're the forest...man, right?" The gentleman tilted his head.  

"Well if you consider 21 to be a man, then sure! I'm the forest man, but, as it seems you haven't run off like most, you can call me Sawyer, Sawyer Edgemont, and you are?" Asked the forest man now known as Sawyer.  

"Uh, Connor."

"Well nice to meet you Connor! What can I do for you?" He then asked warmly and patiently. He helped hoist him back to his feet.

"So, I am a local filmmaker...well, college student, but I was actually looking for you," Connor started off which caught Sawyer's attention as his eyes raised and head tilted in interest, "you see, so many people have been spotting you around town and frankly, I think have the wrong idea of who you are and I just, ya know, was hoping to maybe make a little video for one of my classes about what you are up to, I guess like your day-to-day life, is...is that alright? asked Connor.

"Hmm," muttered Sawyer softly, his thoughtful sounds radiating more than just in his head, "Surely, I don't see what's that to fuss about but, why not! Ya know, the company would be appreciated," He then said with a soft smile, before nervously wiping some dirt off his forehead in a failed attempt to look less shabby, "where shall we start?" he then asked before spinning around frantically in a shallow attempt to seem like his day-to-day life was more than what was already occurring.

Over the course of the next hour or so Sawyer ran and jumped through the woodlands paths. He attempted to, and often failed, to climb trees, pick up large rocks and even show Connor how to defecate comfortably amongst the forest. Frankly it was an unfortunate sight. All of it, not just the pooping thing.

"Sawyer!" called out Connor as the forest man trekked ahead emphatically to show off another one of his wilderness treasures, "Out of curiosity, if you don't mind me asking. People claim to see you outside of the woods too. Is that true?"

"Hmm," muttered Sawyer softly, his thoughtful sounds radiating more than just in his head, "Surely, I don’t see what’s that to fuss about but, why not! Ya know, the company would be appreciated," He then said with a soft smile, before nervously wiping some dirt off his forehead in a failed attempt to look less shabby, "where shall we start?" he then asked before spinning around frantically in a shallow attempt to seem like his day-to-day life was more than what was already occurring.

From time to time, sure. Yeah, I do go into town on occasion," Connor nodded, Sawyer looked around and then spoke up again, "I guess, even though I threw away the trappings of civilization, I do have cravings...from time to time." Connor looked at him with a tilt of the head.

"Cravings?" Asked Connor cautiously. Would the legend finally come to fruition? Would Sawyer magically grow those fearsome paws and claws that the alleged survivors have spoken of?

"Yeah, ya know. Sometimes when I’ve been up here awhile, maybe it’s been a hard rain or snow and I just need to blow off some steam I go down into town," Sawyer’s gaze moved from Connor’s and his stare became tense, “I do a little bit of stalking, ya know, I scope out my prey,” his words became sharp and his eyes became dull of emotion as he continued on, "and just before I pounce, just before I become feral and overwhelmed with desire and lust for what I have sought, ya know?" His words hung on by a string, was this about to be the man so many have feared? But then, like a pull of the blinds to the innocent reality that is Sawyer, he said, “I head to the local pool and wash off some of the dirt and use one of my geo-caches to grab cash and then I get myself that slice of pizza and I head back off into the woods.”

That was a roller coaster.

"So you go into town for pizza?"

"Yeah! Sometimes burgers or ice cream too," Sawyer noted while nodding proudly, “I like watching the Cold Stone people do their thing.”

"But there was a spotting of you like, last week? And the week before that, how often are you heading into town for food?" asked Connor.

"Well, not often I don’t think, time and me don’t really coexist, I kinda just assume that if I’ve seen the moon like two or three times it’s probably been like a month so I just assume that the coast is clear and it’s been enough time.”

"So you wait, like, two days?" Connor questioned. Sawyer stared at him blankly.

"Is that really how long two moons are?"
Student Gallery

Photograph by Peter Di Prospero

Ceramic by Skye Parenzan

Photograph by Alex Pavljuk
“Dear Reader”  
by Anexis Matos | Staff Writer

Dear reader,
My mind is a mystery.
I discover
more than I know.
My mind is a maze
of closed doors
and unexplored corridors.
When I enter a new one,
I find something delightful.

Dear reader,
My mind spins
with new stories.
New worlds.
New universes.
New creatures.
New people.
I never have names for them,
but I can’t wait to see them.
They’re a part of me
before they become real.

Dear reader,
A good story is a cure.
An escape from the world.
A fictional world
is a place of excitement.
New adventures.

Dear reader,
It’s easy to travel through stories.
There are no expenses.
No risks.
No need to plan.

Dear reader,
Stories and their worlds
have caught me in their trap,
but I don’t plan to escape.

“The Ground Will Press”  
by Izzy Love | Staff Writer

I left my sandal in Orlando
Left behind in child-like haze
Beneath a bed, behind the stair
Somewhere lies a fragment of better days
But who knows where

I left my wisdom teeth in Oregon
I sold it for the price of Christ
Somewhere in the heart of Bend
It’s now a piece of crown
upon the head of a friend

I left my art in Lima
Buried under broken magnets
And a box of ancient kitchenware
Lies a faded sketch without a punchline
Touched with love and tucked away with care

I left my love in Jersey
It smolders in the cracks
Between the photos and the keepsake
of the time we shared
Before the shun of heartache

“Yeah, This Is About Trans People”  
by Orion Oss | Staff Writer

It seems rather strange that although the sky is overcast and gray,
I can still hear cooing and chirping and tweeting and cawing from the birds outside my window.

It’s bittersweet to see that while the sky is overcrowded with gray,
there are birds uncaringly and unrelentingly existing.

Should they not be dull and sad?
Can they not see the heavy sky?
Why do they insist on living,
when their home – the sky – says they should not?

I wonder what the sun would think about the whole debacle.
Would she lean back and assure the stars that,
“Oh, this is all of my grand plan?”

Or does she even care? Dare I say… does she even exist?
I suppose it doesn’t matter.

The birds just have to keep singing.
“The Hug” - Anna McCabe

Check out a video with the artist on TikTok! @montclarion
‘The Super Mario Bros. Movie’ Misfire

Danny Krastek
Staff Writer

I’m about to make so many enemies. Okay, here goes.

It has been almost two years since Nintendo made waves online with the announcement of the voice cast for the upcoming “Super Mario Bros. Movie.” Some choices were praised (Jack Black and Charlie Day), some were met with shrugs (Anya Taylor-Joy and Keegan-Michael Key) and some were met with hysterical laughter (Chris Pratt and Seth Rogen). Regardless of the quality of the voice cast, the movie had a whole new level of hype built around it.

It has been almost six months since the first trailer for the film was released. In that trailer, we finally got to hear Pratt’s voice for Mario and it made some waves, let’s just say. Anticipation was building, and I knew I needed to see this movie.

It saddens me deeply to report that “The Super Mario Bros. Movie” is an incredibly dull affair. And no, you can’t use “it’s just a kids movie” as an excuse to defend it. Animation can be, and should be, a medium for people of all ages to enjoy, not just children. And even more specifically, “kids’ movies” almost always have elements for adults/parents to enjoy. People complain all the time about not treating animation like a style for kids, so don’t do the same thing with this.

I digress, where was I? Going back and forth between nice things and mean things about this movie, there is a lot to analyze.

PRO: Animation. This one is a no brainer for me. Illumination did a great job bringing the iconic characters to life on the big screen. The movie looks wonderful and lively.

CON: Story and Plot. Yeah, it’s a movie based on a game where all you do is run, break blocks and stomp on the occasional enemy, so I’m not sure what you could do in terms of making a compelling story, but this has an incredibly boring and generic plot: hero shows up in a magical new land and has a goal to achieve. Of course, there’s a big, scary villain.

PRO: Score. The score is pleasant enough, but then every so often they throw in a reworked version of a typical Mario game theme. It’s pretty awesome and really immerses you in the world of the movie.

CON: Humor. It definitely doesn’t have the same level of unbearable humor as other Illumination movies, but it doesn’t land for me.

PRO: Fan service. It’s really weird counting fan service as a pro, but it’s actually handled very well in this movie. None of the references feel forced or out of place. They were actually the more enjoyable moments of the film for me.

MIXED: The cast. This was, at least for me, the most interesting part of the film leading up to it. The cast list, as stacked as it is, features some extremely questionable decisions.

Pratt gives an odd performance as the titular plumber. It’s really hard to tell exactly what he’s trying to do with this performance, but once you get used to it, it’s fairly unremarkable.

Black and Day, playing Bowser and Luigi respectively, are the easy standouts among the cast. Black was definitely born to play the power hungry dinosaur man.

Taylor-Joy and Key are very forgettable. Key actually has his voice pitched up, and his personality very rarely shines through the filter.

Surprisingly, Rogen was pretty good. He was definitely the right choice for Donkey Kong, as laughable as it sounds. Fred Armisen, who plays his father, gives what is easily the worst performance in the movie, however.

Ultimately, this is a movie that doesn’t seem to justify its existence. There’s a ton of references fans will eat up, so if all you’re looking for is a mindless popcorn flick that will please your fan brain, you will probably enjoy this. If you aren’t a huge Mario fan, then it will be the most generic movie you could possibly ask for.

“The Super Mario Bros. Movie” is a boring, basic family film, dressed up in blue overalls and a red hat.
Boygenius is Genius

Emma Caughlan, Hannah Effinger
Editor in Chief, Creative Director

Winter may be over, but there really is no reason for sad-girl season to end just yet; they do have the best music taste after all. And there’s no better sad-girl music to listen to than Boygenius.

Made up of indie sensations Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus, Boygenius released their first full-length studio album, “The Record,” on March 31. From fun rock-like an-thems to melancholic folk songs, “The Record” did not disappoint in delivering the trio’s extensive range.

Since their self-titled EP, Boygenius has fine-tuned their sound to complement each member’s tone, style and writing to create an album that truly embodies all three. Bridgers shines with a taste even further into her rock sound, something that we saw a bit of in her last album “Punisher.” Dacus’ warm vocals are a highlight throughout the project, showing how Boygenius is able to create devastatingly devotional masterpieces on any tune.

There is something to be said about the lyricism on this album, and as a long-term fan of Bridgers’, Dacus’ and Baker’s solo work, “The Record” shows their abilities to construct a narrative to the forefront of the project. My personal favorite, “Leonard Cohen,” puts you in a car with Dacus, debating the seriousness of interrupting your lover’s favorite song. “Letter to an Old Poet” immerses you in the visceral love between two lovers and how moving on can be more comforting than they ever were.

Boygenius creates this beautiful narrative of platonic and romantic love and loss throughout the project, showing how both are essential, yet the lines between the two can become blurred and crossed as time goes on. This album is truly for the girls, gays and theys. So put on “The Record,” lay on the Student Center Quad and have a happy sad-girl spring.
‘Chupa’: The Scary Legend Turned Into an Average Children’s Movie

On April 7 Netflix brought us an entertaining movie called “Chupa,” directed by Jonas Cuaron (son of award-winning Mexican filmmaker Alfonso Cuaron) and starring Christian Slater, Evan Whitten, Demian Bichir, Ashley Ciarra and Nickolas Verdugo.

The bilingual film follows Alex (Whitten), a Mexican-American boy from Kansas City who refuses his heritage. But after being forced to spend time with his grandfather, Chava (Bichir), and the rest of his family in San Javier, Mexico, he meets an extraordinary creature, a chupacabras calf (“Chupa” in the movie), who will take him on one of the craziest and most phenomenal adventures ever.

But what exactly is a chupacabra? Translated as “goat-sucker,” it is a legendary, non-existent creature known throughout Latin America for its frightening look and dangerousness.

Even though it is a legend, some people firmly believe in its existence. It all started in 1995 in Puerto Rico when a woman claimed she saw a creature with a strange appearance pass in front of her house. Subsequently, her cattle, as well as those of other farmers, were found dead all over the area. The dead animals all shared common features: bodies emptied of blood and two holes in the neck area, like a vampire’s bite.

The case went viral, and the panic spread throughout Latin America and the southern United States.

Although National Geographic states the chupacabras could be coyotes with skin diseases, theories that it could be an unknown species or an extraterrestrial being persist.

The comment section was filled with positive messages, as most of the public, including myself, seemed excited for the movie.

Now, after watching the film, I can only describe it as a charming and touching movie, appropriate for everyone to enjoy. But unfortunately, it still failed in bringing out the potential it really possessed.

"Chupa" is too stereotypical, especially with the lead character: a lonely and friendless little boy who embarks on a journey that ends up changing his life and turning him into a completely different person from who he was at the beginning of the movie.

Does that sound familiar? I’m sure most of us know a movie with this same plot.

Just because a movie follows a common storyline doesn’t mean it’s immediately a bad movie, but “Chupa” lacks development and the story is mediocre. You will easily forget it soon after watching.

The screenwriters also overlooked a specific topic that would have made the story more engaging: the loss of Alex’s cultural identity.

From the beginning of the film, it is evident he doesn’t connect with his Mexican roots, showing little or no interest, but he also doesn’t fully fit into American culture. If the film had emphasized this topic even more, then this movie and its characters would have stood out, and the plot would have been even more compelling.

Another detail is that with the film being called “Chupa,” one would expect the movie to focus mainly on the chupacabra, but it doesn’t make that much of an appearance compared to what was promised in the trailer.

There are even moments when you forget the movie is about this being. This may be disappointing, especially for those who watched the film with the mere intention of seeing a new version of the chupacabra.

But there are still positive details of the film that deserve to be mentioned.

The special effects and the audiovisual techniques used to create the character of Chupa are exceptional. The characters are entertaining and have good chemistry between them, and it is constantly noticeable throughout the film.

Although the lead character is a lonely and friendless little boy who embarks on a journey that ends up changing his life and turning him into a completely different person from who he was at the beginning of the movie.

Does that sound familiar? I’m sure most of us know a movie with this same plot.

But the movie didn’t meet its potential to delve into certain themes that are worth mentioning both for children and adults.
“SOMEHOW ART NEEDS TO FUNCTION AS A MODERN ORACLE.”
-TZENI ARGYRIOU

A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY!

This highly symbolic performance conjures a primitive aura despite a deceptively simple aesthetic. Greek choreographer Tzeni Argyriou’s ANΩNYMO draws on traditional folk dances and reexamines the significance of physical connection in a world consumed by social media. The dancers use a contemporary style to focalize what lies at the heart of art making and reclaim the lost value of anonymity and human contact.

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ALEXANDER KASSER THEATER
All Montclair State University students receive a prepaid ticket with a valid ID at the Alexander Kasser Theater Box Office.

This season was made possible, in part, by the Alexander Kasser Theater Endowment Fund, PEAK Patrons, and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.
Softball Slips Up Against Ramapo in Conference Doubleheader

Matt Orth
Sports Editor

On the day before Easter, the Red Hawks hopped into the Montclair State University Softball Stadium to face yet another conference opponent: the Ramapo College Roadrunners. Prior to this home doubleheader, the Red Hawks came in with a 17-5 record and a 3-1 record in the conference, and on a much better trajectory than last season overall.

To start the first game of the doubleheader, ace senior pitcher Ali Cavallaro went up against undefeated Marissa DiPaolo of the Roadrunners, and it proved to be a battle in the first four innings of the game. No runs were scored from either side.

But as we know, softball or baseball, the game is full of runs and ups and downs. And for Cavallaro in the top of the fifth, the peak turned into a valley real quick. Ramapo gained six hits in the frame, four of those being back-to-back, which allowed them to score four runs and get a huge advantage in the game.

In the bottom of the sixth, Montclair State tightened the lead with doubles from junior outfielder Kayla Cosentino and freshman pitcher and outfielder Liz Mullen which brought the Roadrunners’ lead down to two. But Ramapo answered right back, leading to a 6-2 victory for the opposition.

Neither team would score in the last three innings, giving Ramapo another close win. Montclair State’s next game is against Rutgers University-Camden in Camden on Tuesday, April 11.
A LOOK INTO BASEBALL’S SLUMP DURING NJAC PLAY

1 THAT’S THE AMOUNT OF RUNS IN TWO GAMES THEY SCORED AGAINST ROWAN IN THEIR LAST DOUBLEHEADER. THE LAST GAME, LOSING 14-1, WAS THEIR WORST LOSS OF THE SEASON SO FAR.

7 THE AMOUNT OF PITCHERS THE RED HAWKS WENT THROUGH IN THOSE LAST TWO GAMES. DYLAN TALIAFERRO LASTED ABOUT 5 INNINGS, WHILE PATRICK CUCCURULLO LASTED JUST UNDER 3 INNINGS.

4.57 THEIR CURRENT ERA SO FAR THIS SEASON. AS OF MARCH 27TH, IT WAS 3.29 AND LED THE CONFERENCE.

6 THE AMOUNT OF HOME RUNS SAM ANGELO HAS SO FAR THIS SEASON. A BRIGHT SPOT IN THIS SLUMP, ANGELO IS TIED FOR 2ND IN THE NJAC WITH THIS MARK.

18 THE AMOUNT OF HITS MONTCLAIR STATE ALLOWED AGAINST ROWAN IN THEIR LAST GAME, A SEASON HIGH.

2 - 5 THEIR RECORD DURING THE STRETCH SO FAR. THEY’VE ALLOWED 58 RUNS WHILE SCORING 40 RUNS IN THE LAST SEVEN GAMES.

BE SURE TO STAY TUNED FOR MORE BASEBALL COVERAGE ALL SEASON LONG!
Sideline reporter Matt Bruchez stands right on the concourse of Yogi Berra Stadium. Photo courtesy of Maria Barbieri

Red Hawk Sports Network Continues Their Major Broadcasts with Baseball Doubleheader

Matteo Macelino
Staff Writer

The Montclair State University baseball team was not the only one to come out with a win on Sunday. The Red Hawk Sports Network (RHSN) put on a stellar broadcast of the double header including a pre-game show, post-game show, multiple broadcast teams, sideline reporters, several different cameras in use and a control room producing the professional-grade action.

RHSN was able to partner with Broadcast Media Operations (BMO) for the second time this year for another live show. After a successful show in the fall with Homecoming, RHSN and BMO decided once wasn’t enough. BMO, excited about the partnership, decided to do the live show once a semester, letting RHSN choose what the event is. Professor Stacy Gitlin and Adam Goldberg, the chief engineer at BMO, immediately got to work after Homecoming to prepare for the spring.

"After Homecoming, Goldberg said, ‘What are we doing for spring, we’re ready to start planning now.’ It takes a lot of planning on BMO’s end to do walk-throughs and infrastructure and make sure they’re working," Gitlin said. "The Jackals had just left Yogi Berra Stadium. We thought it’d be really interesting and nice to showcase the stadium that is ours now.”

The idea was originally to do the Red Hawks’ home opener in March, but with five game cancellations that month, they decided to wait until the first New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) match-up of the year, which was the doubleheader against Rutgers University-Newark.

"NJAC is really where we care about the schedule anyway. It’s a team that all of our fans know. It ended up being Rutgers-Newark," Gitlin said. "That was back in November, that was the beginning of planning. That planning is really just technology, making sure the athletics department is on board with us doing it. Between myself and Professor [Vernard] Gantt, we filled out all the positions [and] we started feeling out what students would be available."

After months of planning and preparation, the day finally arrived on April 2. RHSN was split between two teams, the on-camera broadcast team, including pre-game show hosts, game commentators and sideline reporters, and the behind-the-scenes production team of producers, camera operators and a control room keeping everything in check.

Camera operator and co-director sophomore Ryan Tulio operated camera one, located at centerfield for the first game, and then headed to the control room for the second to direct the broadcast. He appreciated the opportunity to do both to further gain experience in the future.

"I like being on the production end," Tulio said. "Doing both gives me the best opportunity to be a well-rounded producer for my future career. Knowing how to do everything is definitely important and I think the sports network definitely does a good job with that."

On the broadcast side of things, junior RHSN intern Matt Bruchez explained what it was like to be one of the sideline reporters during the double-header. Bruchez had the responsibility of reporting from the field and finding people ranging from coaches and players to fans to the stands to interview during the game.

"Ever since my freshman year, I’ve loved being on camera, especially sideline reporting, I think that is what I’m going to want to do for my future,” Bruchez said. “I really love the adrenaline rush when you’re on the field talking to the coach after a crazy inning or postgame after they just lost in a heartbreaker. To interview him and see where his head’s at is very different than anything else.”

The show as well as the games were originally scheduled for Saturday, April 1, but impending rain and thunderstorms pushed everything back a day.

“We did two full days of set up from nine to four, Thursday and Friday,” Tullio said. “BMO was really good to help us out with that because it was easier with them than if we were on our own. Saturday being rained out, we were originally planning on putting cameras up on foul poles. When it rained, we couldn’t leave those cameras out so we had to do that Sunday morning which caused some issues but we eventually worked through it.”

Sunday proved to be a nicer, sunny day but was still cold, especially when the sun went down during the second game, which brought on more challenges.

"Baseball was different than football because we weren’t just preparing for the live show, but we were fighting the elements," Bruchez said. "The live show was supposed to be on Saturday, but with the impending rain and thunderstorms, we had to postpone to Sunday so we had to adapt. On Sunday it ended up being so cold and Gianna [Dagmea] and I were very cold on the sidelines. It wasn’t just how well can we present this broadcast but how can we stay warm and do our best we can.”

These types of broadcasts are such a great and important way for students to get involved and gain experience in what the real world of production and broadcasting is like. These kinds of broadcasts are also a great recruiting tool for student-athletes to put together highlight reels. RHSN had several multi-camera games during the basketball season where recruiters were in attendance and raved about the coverage they provided during the game.

The greatest thing about it is it’s all student-run.

"It’s a huge source of pride for the School of Communication and Media, for [RHSN] to know that all our productions live, Inside the Nest taped, is student-run production," Gitlin said. "We have myself, Professor Gantt, Professor [Kelly] Whiteside and Professor [Stephen] Andon overseeing and giving advice, but at no point do we take over. Our job is to guide and help produce everything. Our job is to let the students know, it’s their production.”

The plan is to do these “Big BMO Broadcasts” twice a year, one in the fall and one in the spring. But the hope is to expand further to allow more people to get involved and put even more notice on RHSN, BMO, SCM and Montclair State itself.